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 220 E/01)

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(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007085/12
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(16 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Flotas piratas de origen chino — Atún rojo en el Mediterráneo

Ante la alarma creada como consecuencia de las prácticas ilegales de pesca de atún rojo en el Mar Mediterráneo por dos flotas «al parecer» piratas de origen chino, según la información facilitada por los medios de comunicación y la organización WWF, nos gustaría saber qué medidas ha tomado la Comisión Europea para investigar si esta denuncia es cierta, tal y como ha declarado el Sr. Oliver Drewea, portavoz de la Comisión Europea para la pesca.

En caso de ser cierta la presencia de dichas flotas piratas, ¿qué acciones va a emprender la Comisión para que esto no vuelva a suceder?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de octubre de 2012)

Efectivamente, un determinado número de palangreros con pabellón chino fueron detectados por la Comisión, la Agencia Europea de Control de la Pesca (AECP) y las autoridades italianas y españolas, cuando transitaban por el Mediterráneo en mayo de 2012.

Dado que los buques en cuestión no figuraban en el registro de la Comisión Internacional para la Conservación del Atún del Atlántico (CICAA) de buques autorizados para la pesca de túnidos y de especies afines en la zona del Convenio de la CICAA, y teniendo en cuenta que estos buques se encontraban en zonas de pesca del atún rojo durante la campaña de pesca, por lo que suponían un riesgo de pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada, la Comisión envió también a todos los Estados miembros una solicitud oficial de asistencia mutua para llevar a cabo investigaciones, al amparo del Reglamento relativo a la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (asistencia mutua — artículo 49, apartado 2, y artículo 50, apartado 3, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1010/2009 de la Comisión).

La AECP vigiló constantemente esta flota a través de sistemas de identificación automática por satélite y, por otra parte, los buques también fueron localizados y fotografiados por los equipos de vigilancia aérea italianos y de Frontex.

Los buques chinos cruzaron el estrecho de Gibraltar en la mañana del 26 de mayo de 2012 y prosiguieron su ruta hacia los caladeros de Mauritania, su destino supuesto.

Los sistemas de seguimiento y vigilancia funcionaron con éxito en la EU durante todo ese período y seguirán operativos las 24 horas del día, con el fin de impedir las actividades de pesca ilegal en aguas de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007085/12
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Chinese 'pirate fleets' fishing bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean

Allegations in media reports and information from the World Wildlife Fund of illegal fishing of bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean by two Chinese 'pirate fleets' have caused much concern in Europe. Following the statement by the Commission's fisheries spokesperson, Oliver Drewes, that it would investigate the allegation, what steps has the Commission taken to determine whether or not the claims are well-founded?

If the reports are verified, what will the Commission do to ensure that such fleets do not operate in EU waters again?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(5 October 2012)

A number of Chinese flagged longliners were indeed tracked by the Commission, alongside the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the Italian and Spanish authorities, as they transited through the Mediterranean in May 2012.

Given that the vessels concerned were not registered in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Registry of authorised vessels to fish tuna and tuna-like species in the ICCAT convention area, together with the fact that these vessels were located in areas associated with fishing for bluefin tuna within the fishing season and as such presented a risk of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, the Commission also launched a formal mutual assistance request for investigations to all Member States under the IUU Regulation (Mutual Assistance — Article 49 (2) and 50 (3) of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009).

The EFCA continually monitored this fleet through satellite based Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). The vessels were also located and photographed by Italian and Frontex air surveillance missions.

The Chinese vessels crossed the strait of Gibraltar on the morning of 26 May 2012 and continued their passage to fishing grounds in Mauritania, which is understood to have been their intended destination.

Monitoring and surveillance systems within the EU were successfully deployed throughout this period and will continue to be in operation around the clock to ensure that illegal fishing activities do not take place in EU waters.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007086/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16. juli 2012)

Om: Eurolandenes ideelle kurs i forhold til den fælles eurokurs

Der synes på finansmarkederne at være enighed om, at euroen for eksempelvis Tyskland er undervurderet og for eksempelvis Grækenland overvurderet, for sidstnævntes vedkommende med op mod 60 %.

Vil Kommissionen foretage en analyse af, hvordan dette valutaforhold ser ud for alle 17 eurolande og herunder fremsende et skøn over, hvor meget den fælles eurokurs ligger over eller under hvert af eurolandenes ideelle valutakurs?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Olli Rehn
(29. august 2012)

Euroens vekselkurs er frit flydende på valutamarkederne og bør afspejle de grundlæggende økonomiske forhold i euroområdet som helhed, i hvert fald set over tid.

Kommissionen afgiver ikke udtalelser om euroens vurdering og foretager ikke indgreb på valutamarkederne, og den blander sig heller ikke i den uafhængige Europæiske Centralbanks pengepolitiske beslutninger.

Vi gør imidlertid det ærede medlem opmærksom på, at Kommissionen offentliggør oplysninger om effektive valutakurser for hver enkelt af de 27 medlemsstater, euroområdet som helhed og flere ikke-EU-lande. Især den reale effektive valutakurs har til formål at vurdere et lands (eller et valutaområdes) pris- eller omkostningskonkurrenceevne i forhold til dets hovedkonkurrenter på det internationale marked. For øjeblikket er de seneste tilgængelige oplysninger fra slutningen af 2011, men nye vil snart blive tilføjet. De kan findes på følgende websted: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/db_indicators/competitiveness/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007086/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Ideal exchange rate for euro countries as compared with the common euro rate

There appears to be unanimity on the financial markets that the euro is undervalued for Germany, for example, and overvalued for other countries — by as much as 60% for Greece.

Will the Commission carry out a study to show how this monetary ratio stands for all 17 euro countries, and issue an opinion on the extent to which the common euro rate is above or below each euro country's ideal exchange rate?

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

The euro exchange rate floats freely in foreign exchange markets and, over time, it should reflect the economic fundamentals of the euro area as a whole.

The Commission does not issue opinions on the valuation of the euro and does not take actions to intervene in currency markets nor can it intervene in the monetary policy decisions of the independent European Central Bank.

Nevertheless, we would like to raise to the attention of the Honourable Member that the Commission publishes effective exchange rates data for the 27 individual EU Member States, the euro area as a whole and several non-EU countries. In particular, the real effective exchange rate aims to assess a country's (or currency area's) price or cost competitiveness relative to its principal competitors in international markets. Currently data are available until the end of 2011, but new data will be added soon. It can be found in the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/db_indicators/competitiveness/index_en.htm

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007087/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16. juli 2012)

Om: Bankpakker og Europas skatteydere

Vil Kommissionen, idet der henvises til artiklen »Grand Casino Europa« i det danske finansmagasin Lundgreen's Quarterly (side 6-9) ([1]), oplyse, hvorvidt den er enig i de fremsatte analyser og konklusioner og herunder specielt tilkendegive, om den finder det rimeligt, at det er de europæiske skatteydere, der skal redde Europas bankaktionærer?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(31. august 2012)

Kommissionen noterer sig de analyser og meningstilkendegivelser, der er fremsat i den artikel, som det ærede medlem henviser til.

Det er korrekt, at redning og omstrukturering af kreditinstitutterne udgør en stor byrde for skatteyderne over hele Europa. Med udgangspunkt i EU's konkurrence- og statsstøtteregler har Kommissionen løbende søgt at minimere skatteydernes omkostninger, særligt ved at kræve af indehaverne af egenkapital og hybridkapital, at byrden fordeles på passende vis.

Statsstøtteværktøjer kan imidlertid kun anvendes ex post. Der er behov for en omfattende indsats for at forbedre håndteringen af omstruktureringen og afviklingen af kreditinstitutter i knibe. Med henblik herpå vedtog Kommissionen den 6. juni 2012 et forslag til et direktiv om et regelsæt for genopretning og afvikling af kreditinstitutter ([2]). Forslaget giver myndighederne et omfattende sæt værktøjer og beføjelser til håndtering af fremtidige bankkriser. Formålet er at sikre, at fremtidige bankkrak kan håndteres med mindst mulige forstyrrelser af den finansielle stabilitet og de offentlige finanser. Som hovedregel skal tab dækkes af bankernes aktionærer og kreditorer, inden der gives offentlig støtte. Kommissionen håber på en hurtig vedtagelse af dette direktiv, som vil minimere behovet for offentlig støtte til bankerne og indføre disciplin på markedet.

([1]) http://flipflashpages.uniflip.com/3/17973/152104/pub/.
([2]) KOM(2012)0280.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007087/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Bank aid packages and Europe's taxpayers

With reference to the article entitled 'Grand Casino Europa' in the Danish financial magazine *Lundgreen's Quarterly* (p. 6-9) ([1]), can the Commission state to what extent it agrees with the analyses and conclusions set out there, and can it in particular say whether it feels it is reasonable that the European taxpayer should save Europe's bank shareholders?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 August 2012)

The Commission takes note of the analysis and opinions expressed in the press article referred to by the Honourable Member.

It is true that the rescue and restructuring of credit institutions has imposed a heavy burden on taxpayers across Europe. Acting under the EU competition and state aid rules, the Commission has consistently pursued the goal of minimising the cost on taxpayers, in particular by requiring adequate burden sharing from holders of equity and hybrid capital.

State aid tools can however be applied only *ex post*. There is a need for comprehensive action to improve the way credit institutions in difficulty can be restructured or resolved. To this end, on 6 June 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on the recovery and resolution of credit institutions ([2]). The proposal provides for a comprehensive set of tools and powers that will enable authorities to deal in an efficient way with future banking crises. The objective is to ensure that future bank failures can be managed with minimal disruption of financial stability and public finances. As a general principle, losses must be imposed on bank shareholders and creditors before any public support is granted. The Commission hopes for a swift adoption of this directive which should minimise the need for public support to banks and bring discipline to the markets.

([1]) http://flipflashpages.uniflip.com/3/17973/152104/pub/.
([2]) COM(2012) 280.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007088/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(16. juli 2012)

Om: Grundlæggende rettigheder

Kommissionen har i et svar på forespørgerens spørgsmål (P-005315/2012) forklaret, at den ikke kan tage stilling til, hvorvidt et lovforslag fremsat af den danske regering om kontrol af sort arbejde er i overensstemmelse med Unions charter om grundlæggende rettigheder, idet bestemmelserne i chartret kun er rettet til medlemsstaterne, når de gennemfører EU-retten.

Kommissionen nævner dog også i sit svar, at direktiv 2009/52/EF om minimumsstandarder for sanktioner og foranstaltninger over for arbejdsgivere, der beskæftiger tredjelandsstatsborgere med ulovligt ophold, forpligter medlemsstaterne til at sikre, at der foretages inspektioner for at kontrollere, om der beskæftiges tredjelandsstatsborgere med ulovligt ophold

Den danske regerings lovforslag L 170 er den 13. juni 2012 blevet stemt igennem med et flertal i det danske folketing, og dermed kan der nu, som det står skrevet i paragraf 86, stk. 3, i kildeskatteloven, »gennemføres kontrol … på en ejendom, der tjener til privatbolig eller fritidsbolig, hvis der synligt kan konstateres udendørs aktiviteter af professionel karakter.« I paragraf 86, stk. 5, hedder det endvidere: »På forlangende skal personer, der ved kontrollen skønnes at udføre beskæftigelse på en arbejdsplads, oplyse deres cpr-nummer og forevise gyldig legitimation«. Dermed har de danske myndigheder ret til at inspicere en grund uden dommerkendelse.

1. Er Kommissionen, eftersom anvendelsesområdet for L 170 omfatter alle beskæftigede uanset deres nationalitet og dermed også tredjelandsstatsborgere med ulovligt ophold, af den opfattelse, at L 170 er med til at gennemføre direktiv 2009/52/EF?

2. Vil EU's charter om grundlæggende rettigheder i så fald være gældende, og vurderer Kommissionen dermed, at L 170 kan være i strid med chartret, særlig artikel 17? Hvilke skridt påtænker Kommissionen i bekræftende fald at tage over for Danmark?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(5. september 2012)

Danmark er ikke bundet af direktiv 2009/52/EF på grund af opt-out-klausulen for alle spørgsmål vedrørende indvandring. Derfor er Danmark ikke forpligtet til at gennemføre direktivet, og Kommissionen har ikke mulighed for at kommentere den nationale lovgivning, det ærede medlem nævner.

Hvad angår spørgsmålet om de grundlæggende rettigheder, som det ærede medlem rejser, minder Kommissionen om, at ifølge artikel 51, stk. 1, i chartret om grundlæggende rettigheder er chartrets bestemmelser kun rettet til medlemsstaterne, når de gennemfører EU-retten. I dette tilfælde skal de nationale myndigheder foretage den vurdering, som det ærede medlem henviser til, under hensyntagen til de foreliggende omstændigheder og under overholdelse af de relevante nationale og internationale retsregler.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007088/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Fundamental rights

In its answer to my Question P-005315/2012 the Commission stated that it is not in a position to comment on whether a bill tabled by the Danish government on monitoring of undeclared work is compatible with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, since the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

However, the Commission also mentions in its answer that directive 2009/52/EC for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals requires the Member States to ensure that inspections are carried out to control the employment of irregularly staying third-country nationals.

On 13 June 2012 the Danish Government's Bill L 170 was adopted by a majority in the Danish Parliament (Folketing), and it is now possible, as stated in Section 86(3) of the Withholding Tax Law, to 'carry out inspections… on a property used as a private or holiday residence if outdoor workplace activities are visibly being carried on there'. Section 86(5) states that: 'On request, persons observed during the inspection carrying out workplace activities shall provide their personal identification number or show valid proof of identity'. Thus the Danish authorities have the right to inspect premises without a warrant.

1. Given that the scope of Law L 170 covers all workers irrespective of their nationality, and thus also illegally staying third-country nationals, does the Commission consider that Law L 170 is implementing Directive 2009/52/EC?

2. If so, would the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union apply, and does the Commission consider that Law L 170 could conflict with the Charter, particularly Article 17 thereof? If so, what measures does the Commission propose to take against Denmark?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2012)

Denmark is not bound by Directive 2009/52/EC, due to its opt-out clause for all immigration issues. Therefore Denmark is under no obligation to implement the directive and the Commission is not in a position to comment on the national laws referred to by the Honourable Member.

Regarding the fundamental rights issues raised by the Honourable Member, the Commission recalls that, according to Article 51 (1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. In the present case, it is for national authorities to make the assessment requested by the Honourable Member, according to the surrounding circumstances and context, and in conformity with relevant national and international law.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007089/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(16. juli 2012)

Om: Kommissionens trafiksikkerhedsforslag (COM(2010)0389)

Kommissionen vil med sit forslag af 13. juli 2012 ændre direktiv 2009/40/EF og indføre obligatorisk syn hvert år for biler over seks år for herved at forbedre trafiksikkerheden i EU frem mod år 2020.

Forenede Danske Motorejere (FDM) fastslår, at Kommissionens forslag vil medføre 800 000 ekstra bilsyn hvert år og dermed en ekstraregning på op mod 335 mio. DKK for danske bilister, som er indehavere af køretøjer, der er ældre end seks år. Det skyldes, at bilisterne, hvis forslaget gennemføres, er nødsaget til at sende deres køretøjer til syn hvert år i stedet for hvert andet år.

I det MEMO/12/555, som Kommissionen har offentliggjort, anfører den, at der er en korrelation mellem bilens alder og alvorligheden af ulykker. Til gengæld viser erfaringer fra Danmark, at det ikke er tekniske fejl, som forårsager de alvorlige ulykker.

1. Har Kommissionen data for hvert enkelt land, og hvilke uafhængige variabler støtter Kommissionen sig til for at påvise, at korrelationen mellem bilens alder og ulykkens alvor også er årsagssammenhængen?

2. Har Kommissionen i denne sammenhæng for eksempel analyseret korrelationen og en eventuel årsagssammenhæng mellem bilens alder og ejerens/førerens alder?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(5. september 2012)

Kommissionen modtager regelmæssigt oplysninger vedrørende trafikulykker fra medlemsstaterne, og de aggregerede data offentliggøres på Kommissionens websted for trafiksikkerhed:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm.

1. Disse oplysninger omfatter generelt ikke detaljeret information om alderen på de biler, der er involveret i ulykkerne. Denne oplysning er dog tilgængelig for Frankrig, Grækenland, Italien, Letland, Malta, Nederlandene, Portugal, Rumænien, Slovakiet, Spanien, Tjekkiet, Tyskland, Ungarn og Østrig. Disse lande repræsenterer mere end 60 % af befolkningen og de ulykker, der sker i EU.

2. Kommissionen har i sin analyse af trafiksikkerheden i EU medtaget faktorer såsom ulykkesåret, ulykkens alvor, bilens registreringsår, kategori, alder og type samt førerens alder. Disse oplysninger suppleres med resultaterne fra tilbundsgående undersøgelser foretaget efter hver ulykke.

Med henvisning til konklusionerne i konsekvensanalysen vedrørende køretøjssikkerhedspakken
(http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2012_07_13_press_release_en.htm)
og ovennævnte analyse kan der således påvises en klar korrelation mellem ulykkens alvor og bilens alder.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007089/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Commission's proposal on road safety (COM(2010) 0389)

In its proposal of 13 July 2012 the Commission seeks to amend Directive 2009/40/EC and introduce compulsory annual inspections for cars over six years old, so as to improve road safety in the EU by 2020.

The Danish Automobile Owners Club (FDM) notes that the Commission's proposal will lead to an extra 800 000 extra car inspections per year and thus an extra cost of some DKK 335 million for Danish motorists who own vehicles that are more than six years old. This is because, if the proposal is implemented, motorists will have to send their vehicles for inspection every year instead of every other year.

In the Commission's MEMO/12/555 it states that there is a correlation between severity of accidents and vehicle age. However, experience from Denmark shows that it is not technical defects which cause the serious accidents.

1. Does the Commission have data for every country, and on what independent variables does the Commission base its finding that the correlation between severity of accidents and vehicle age is a causal one?

2. Has the Commission in this connection, for example, studied the correlation and possible causal relationship between vehicle age and age of owner/driver?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2012)

The Commission receives regularly road accident data files from Member States and publishes this aggregate data on the Commission's road safety website:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/care_reports_graphics/index_en.htm.

1. In general this data does not contain detailed accident information on the age of vehicles involved in accidents. However information on the age of the vehicle is available for Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. These countries represent more than 60% of the population and accidents occurring in the European Union.

2. The Commission has included into its analysis of the road safety situation in the EU such factors as the year and severity of accidents, registration, category, age and type of vehicles as well as the age of drivers. This information has been complemented with the results of in-depth investigations after accidents.

As concluded in the impact assessment on the roadworthiness package:
(http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2012_07_13_press_release_en.htm) and based on the abovementioned analysis, a clear correlation can be established between severity of accidents and age of vehicles.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007090/12
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(16. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Umfassendes Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) zwischen Kanada und der EU

Nach den neun Verhandlungsrunden zwischen Kanada und der EU über das umfassende Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) geht die Kommission davon aus, dass die Verhandlungen noch dieses Jahr zum Abschluss kommen. Nach Angaben der Kommission müssen nur noch Detailfragen geklärt werden.

1. Wird die Durchsetzung von Urherrechten im digitalen Raum nach den bisherigen Verhandlungsergebnissen in dem Abkommen eine Rolle spielen? Wenn ja, welche? Falls nein, warum nicht?

2. Wird die Kommission sämtliche Dokumente öffentlich zur Verfügung stellen, die mit den Verhandlungen um das CETA in Verbindung stehen? Falls ja, wann? Falls nein, warum nicht?

3. Plant die Kommission, Bestimmungen im CETA vorzuschlagen, die bereits im ACTA vorzufinden waren? Wenn ja, welche?

4. Kann die Kommission ausschließen, dass Teile des Artikels 27 des ACTA in der Endfassung des CETA vorzufinden sind?

Um Verwaltungslasten zu reduzieren, wurden diese Fragen in einer Anfrage zusammengefasst und die einzelnen Fragen mit einer laufenden Nummer versehen. Der Fragesteller ersucht höflich, die einzelnen Fragen unter Anführung der jeweiligen Nummerierung zu beantworten.

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(21. August 2012)

Wie alle bilateralen Handelsabkommen der EU soll auch dieses umfassende Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) ein Kapitel zu Rechten des geistigen Eigentums (IPR) enthalten, das unter anderem die Durchsetzung von Urheberrechten regelt. Für die Interessenträger in der EU ist diese Frage im Hinblick auf ihre Interessen als Handelspartner von Kanada von besonderer Bedeutung.

Der Verhandlungstext wurde dem Rat und dem Ausschuss „Internationaler Handel" (INTA) des Europäischen Parlaments vorgelegt. Beide Organe werden darüber hinaus regelmäßig über die Fortschritte informiert. Da der Text derzeit Gegenstand von Verhandlungen ist, kann er nicht der Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung gestellt werden. Wenn der endgültige Text feststeht, wird — wie bei internationalen Verhandlungen üblich — in enger Abstimmung mit unseren Verhandlungspartnern der früheste mögliche Veröffentlichungstermin vereinbart.

Da das Übereinkommen zur Bekämpfung von Produkt- und Markenpiraterie (ACTA) vom Parlament abgelehnt wurde, wird das IPR-Kapitel des CETA derzeit überarbeitet. Im Wesentlichen sollen mit diesem Kapitel Bedenken ausgeräumt werden, die Interessenträger in der EU hinsichtlich der kanadischen IPR-Regelungen hegen. Die Bestimmungen zur Durchsetzung von Rechten des geistigen Eigentums im CETA werden auf bestehenden EU- und WTO-Regelungen beruhen und Ähnlichkeiten mit den Bestimmungen von anderen Freihandelsabkommen, wie beispielsweise dem Abkommen mit Korea, aufweisen.

Die Bestimmungen zur IPR-Durchsetzung im Internet, unter anderem Artikel 27.3 und 27.4 des ACTA, werden im CETA nicht zu finden sein. Über andere in Artikel 27 des ACTA geregelte Sachverhalte, wie technische Schutzvorkehrungen und die Verwaltung digitaler Rechte, wird noch auf Grundlage des Acquis und der sogenannten WIPO-Verträge verhandelt, was sich auch teilweise in den Formulierungen der Artikel 27.5 bis 27.8 des ACTA widerspiegelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007090/12
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the EU

After nine rounds of negotiations between Canada and the EU on a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the Commission believes that the negotiations will be concluded later this year. According to the Commission, there only remain a few details to be clarified.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Will the enforcement of copyright rules in a digital environment play a role in the Agreement, judging by the outcome of negotiations so far? If so, what kind of role? If not, why not?

2. Will it publish all documents relating to the CETA negotiations? If so, when? If not, why not?

3. Does it intend to propose provisions in the CETA such as already exist in ACTA? If so, which ones?

4. Can it rule out the possibility that parts of Article 27 of ACTA will find their way into the final version of the CETA?

For the sake of administrative simplification, these questions have combined in one question and each separate question numbered. The Commission is kindly requested to answer each question under the respective number.

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

Like with all of the EU's bilateral trade agreements, it is the intention to include a chapter on intellectual property rights (IPR), covering also the enforcement of copyright rules, in CETA. This matter is considered by EU stakeholders as being particularly relevant for their trade interests with Canada.

The negotiating text was shared with the Council and the Parliament's International Trade Committee (INTA). Indeed, both institutions are regularly updated about progress. The text is currently under negotiation and cannot thus be divulged to the public. As soon as it is finalised, the earliest moment of publication will be determined in close coordination with our negotiating partner, as is usually the case in international negotiations.

The IPR chapter of CETA is currently being reviewed in the light of the rejection of ACTA by the Parliament. In essence, the chapter is meant to address concerns identified by EU stakeholders in Canada's IPR regime. CETA's IPR enforcement provisions will be based on existing EU and WTO rules and will be similar to those existing in other FTAs, such as the recently adopted one with Korea.

The provisions on IPR enforcement on the Internet, including Article 27.3 and 27.4 of ACTA, will not be found in CETA. Other matters addressed in Article 27 ACTA, such as technical protection measures and digital rights' management are still being negotiated and will be based on the EU *acquis* and the so-called WIPO Treaties, which was partially reflected on the language of Article 27.5 to 8 of ACTA.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007091/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(16 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χιλιάδες παιδιά στην Ελλάδα θα βρεθούν έξω από τους παιδικούς σταθμούς

Χιλιάδες οικογένειες στην Ελλάδα βρίσκονται αντιμέτωπες με την αδυναμία πολλών παιδικών σταθμών των δήμων, να φιλοξενήσουν τα παιδιά τους τον προσεχή Σεπτέμβριο. Οι ελλιπέστατες έτσι κι αλλιώς δημόσιες υποδομές για βρέφη και νήπια, που σε πολλές περιπτώσεις στεγάζονται σε ακατάλληλους χώρους, συρρικνώνονται ακόμη περισσότερο, καθώς πληθαίνουν οι δημοτικές αρχές — ειδικά στην Αττική — που ανακοινώνουν το κλείσιμο σταθμών και την απόλυση παιδαγωγών, που σε πολλούς δήμους παραμένουν απλήρωτοι για μήνες.

Οι δημοτικές αρχές αποκλείουν χιλιάδες παιδιά, αφού στερούν τη δυνατότητα υποβολής αίτησης στις άνεργες ή ανασφάλιστες μητέρες και στις συζύγους των αυτοαπασχολούμενων που βοηθούν στην οικογενειακή επιχείρηση. Αποκλείονται ταυτόχρονα και τα παιδιά των μεταναστών, λόγω της ανεργίας ή «μαύρης» εργασίας των γονιών τους. Χιλιάδες μητέρες που έχουν ανάγκη εργασίας για να συνεισφέρουν στο πενιχρό εισόδημα της οικογένειας αναγκάζονται έτσι να μένουν άνεργες, παραμένοντας στο σπίτι για την φροντίδα των παιδιών τους. Στην περίπτωση που οι γονείς έχουν να προσκομίσουν βεβαίωση εργασίας και ασφάλισης, ανταγωνίζονται για μία θέση στους παιδικούς σταθμούς με βάση το περσινό οικογενειακό εισόδημά τους, που έχει μειωθεί δραματικά από τις μειώσεις μισθών, την εκ περιτροπής εργασία, τα απανωτά χαράτσια, την αύξηση των τιμών, με αποτέλεσμα — αν επιλεγεί το παιδί — να επιβαρυνθούν με ακριβά τροφεία, αναντίστοιχα με το τωρινό πενιχρό εισόδημά τους. Όλα αυτά, τη στιγμή που στελεχωμένοι, ασφαλείς και σύγχρονοι παιδικοί σταθμοί είναι απαραίτητοι για τη σωστή διαπαιδαγώγηση, την ομαλή εξέλιξη, ανάπτυξη και κοινωνικοποίηση των παιδιών.

Οι δημοτικές αρχές, η Ένωση των Δήμων της Αττικής και τα κόμματα της ΝΔ-ΣΥΡΙΖΑ-ΠΑΣΟΚ- ΔΗΜΑΡ που βρίσκονται στις διοικήσεις τους, έχουν διαχρονική ευθύνη για αυτή την καταστροφική πορεία, ενώ δεν λένε κουβέντα για τη χρεοκοπία των δήμων και την αντικατάσταση των δημόσιων κοινωνικών υποδομών από τα λεγόμενα δίκτυα «αλληλέγγυας οικονομίας και φιλανθρωπίας», που καθησυχάζουν το λαό και συντηρούν τη μόνιμη εξαθλίωση του. Το φασιστικό κόμμα «Χρυσή Αυγή» κρύβει τον πραγματικό ένοχο, εμφανίζοντας τους μετανάστες και τα παιδιά τους σαν την αιτία του προβλήματος και συνολικότερα για το τσάκισμα της ζωής των λαϊκών οικογενειών και απειλεί ότι θα πετάξει τα παιδιά των μεταναστών έξω από τους παιδικούς σταθμούς.

Καταδικάζει η Επιτροπή τις απολύσεις των εργαζομένων και το κλείσιμο των παιδικών σταθμών που αφήνει χιλιάδες βρέφη και νήπια στο δρόμο;

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

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να ενημερώσει το αξιότιμο μέλος ότι, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 165 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η αρμοδιότητα για το περιεχόμενο και την οργάνωση των συστημάτων εκπαίδευσης και επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης ανήκει στα κράτη μέλη.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών για τη βελτίωση της παροχής της προσχολικής εκπαίδευσης και φροντίδας, κυρίως μέσω της ανοικτής μεθόδου συντονισμού. Τον Φεβρουάριο του 2011 η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε ανακοίνωση ([1]) σχετικά με την προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα, την οποία ακολούθησαν συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου τον Μάιο του 2011. Στα συμπεράσματα αυτά, τα κράτη μέλη κλήθηκαν να αναλύσουν τις σημερινές διατάξεις τους σχετικά με την προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα, εστιάζοντας ιδιαίτερα την προσοχή στην προσβασιμότητα και την ποιότητα τους και να ενισχύσουν τα μέτρα για την εξασφάλιση και τη γενική πρόσβαση σε υπηρεσίες προσχολικής εκπαίδευσης και φροντίδας υψηλής ποιότητας, καθώς και να επενδύσουν στην προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα ως μέσο ενίσχυσης της ανάπτυξης. Το Συμβούλιο κάλεσε επίσης την Επιτροπή να υποστηρίξει την ανταλλαγή ορθών πρακτικών, να διευρύνει τη βάση τεκμηρίωσης για την προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα και να παρακολουθήσει και να αναφέρει σχετικά με την πρόοδο προς το κριτήριο αναφοράς της ΕΕ. Τέλος, κάλεσε τα κράτη μέλη να χρησιμοποιούν πιο αποτελεσματικά τα υφιστάμενα ευρωπαϊκά χρηματοδοτικά μέσα, όπως τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία. Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία μπορούν να υποστηρίξουν μεταρρυθμίσεις και επίσης να χρηματοδοτήσουν εκπαιδευτικές υποδομές και η Ελλάδα θα πρέπει να επωφεληθεί της δυνατότητας αυτής.

([1]) Ανακοίνωση σχετικά με την προσχολική εκπαίδευση και φροντίδα: παροχή σε όλα τα παιδιά μας του καλύτερου δυνατού ξεκινήματος για τον κόσμο του αύριο (COM (2011)66).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007091/12
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Thousands of children in Greece to be deprived of access to nurseries

Thousands of families in Greece are faced with the inability of many nurseries of municipalities to accommodate their children in September. The public facilities for infants and toddlers, which are in any case in very short supply and are often housed in unsuitable premises, will soon see their capacity reduced still further, since an increasing number of municipalities — especially in Attica — have announced that they are closing nurseries and firing staff, who in many municipalities have not been paid for months.

The municipal authorities are excluding thousands of children, since they do not allow unemployed or uninsured mothers and the wives of the self-employed who lend a hand in family businesses to apply for a nursery place. The children of immigrants are also excluded, because their parents are unemployed or working illegally. Thousands of mothers who need to work to contribute to the meagre family income are thus forced to remain unemployed, staying at home to care for their children. If the parents provide an employment and insurance certificate, they find themselves competing for a nursery place on the basis of last year's family income — an income which has since fallen dramatically due to wage cuts, job rotation, the successive taxes and price increases; this means that, if the child is selected, they face high charges quite out of keeping with their current meagre income. Such is the situation in Greece at a time when properly staffed, safe and modern nurseries are essential for the proper education, normal development and socialisation of children.

The municipal authorities, the Association of Municipalities of Attica and the ND-SYRIZA-PASOK- DIMAR parties which run their administrations have a long-term responsibility for this disastrous state of affairs, but have nothing to say about the bankruptcy of municipalities and the replacement of public social infrastructures by the 'solidarity economy and charity' networks which are intended to reassure people and ensure their the permanent impoverishment. The fascist 'Golden Dawn' party occludes the real culprit, and instead points to immigrants and their children as the cause of the problem, claiming more generally that they are responsible for the fact that the lives of working families have been shattered. This party is now threatening to throw immigrant children of out of nurseries.

Will the Commission condemn the dismissal of nursery workers and the closure of childcare facilities that will deprive thousands of infants and toddlers of access to nurseries?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests with Member States.

However, the Commission supports Member States' efforts to improve the provision of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), notably through the Open Method of Coordination. In February 2011 the Commission adopted a communication ([1]) on ECEC which was followed by Council conclusions in May 2011. There, Member States were invited to analyse their current ECEC provisions with particular attention to their accessibility and quality and to reinforce measures to ensure equitable and generalised access to high-quality ECEC services, as well as to invest in ECEC as a growth enhancing measure. The Council also invited the Commission to support the exchange of good practice, to broaden the evidence-base on ECEC and to monitor and report on progress towards the EU benchmark. Finally it invited Member States to make effective use of the existing European financial tools, such as the Structural Funds. The Structural Funds can underpin reforms and also finance education infrastructure and Greece should take full advantage of this possibility.

([1]) Communication on early childhood education and care: providing our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow (COM(2011) 66).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007093/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: REACH and animal testing

In its report entitled 'The use of alternatives to testing on animals for the REACH Regulation 2011', the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) identified 107 animal tests that appear to have been conducted without prior consultation, contrary to the REACH legislation requirements that third-party consultation should take place to identify possible alternative testing methods. ECHA confirmed that it would examine these cases.

1. Will the Commission state whether ECHA has provided the Commission with an update of the number of such cases that have now been investigated, the findings of such investigations, and the actions taken in consequence?

2. Can the Commission state what efforts are now being made by ECHA to ensure that procedures to avoid unnecessary animal testing are followed in future?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

The public consultation required under REACH prior to approving a testing proposal submitted by a registrant serves the purpose of identifying available information which fulfils the information requirement for which the test is being proposed. It does not serve the purpose of identifying alternative test methods for obtaining the information. REACH sets out specific separate provisions for obtaining acceptance of alternative test methods for use under REACH. According to the update provided by ECHA the subsequent analysis showed that the '107 tests in question', were submitted in 91 registration dossiers. 18 dossiers were originally submitted under the previous Directive 67/548/EEC ([1]) where no testing proposals were required. For the remaining 73 dossiers, only individual examination is possible and this is undertaken if the dossier is subjected to a compliance check. 10 dossiers are already undergoing a compliance check and the rest may be subject to compliance checks conducted in the future.

In addition to data sharing, processing inquiries and assessment of testing proposals, ECHA has informed the Commission about following up on tests that have taken place without test proposals. In respect of the 91 dossiers, further checks will be conducted in the future and so investigation of these cases will be an ongoing process. ECHA has in place a system to inform the Member States of any potential non-compliance detected during compliance checks as it is for the Member States and their National Enforcement Authorities to take actions if necessary. ECHA also promotes alternatives to testing on animals, by providing information on the opportunities and limitations of alternative test methods.

([1]) OJ 196, 16.8.1967.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007094/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Skin irritation tests on animals

Will the Commission confirm that the EU Test Methods Regulation recognises that the *in vitro* skin irritation method based on reconstituted human skin (Method B 46, OECD TG 439) is a viable alternative to skin irritation tests practised on rabbits?

1. If this is the case, will the Commission state whether the European Chemicals Agency is now advising that, where scientifically possible, the *in vitro* test should be used instead of that involving live rabbits for the purpose of complying with Annex VIII requirements?

2. Is it the Commission's intention to update Annex VIII to make it clear that the *in vivo* test should continue to be used only in exceptional cases?

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

Test Method (TM) B 46 is a suitable alternative to *in vivo* skin irritation tests for most substances.

Annexes VII to X to the REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 ([1]) contain rules for the adaptation of the standard tests listed as information requirements; these rules outline the circumstances in which a particular animal test does not have to be conducted. REACH Guidance (CSR Guidance R.7.2) ([2]) also details a stepwise strategy to examine all existing data before *in vivo* testing.

ECHA, the European Chemicals Agency, also provides a wealth of information on the use of *in vitro* methods on its website. It released in June 2010 a Practical Guide On 'How to avoid unnecessary testing in animals' ([3]) which refers explicitly to the possible use of *in vitro* tests for the skin irritation testing requested in Annex VIII to REACH. ECHA is also updating its current Practical Guide on 'How to report *in vitro* data' ([4]) explicitly to address how registrants can use *in vitro* data to address the REACH information requirement for an *in vivo* skin irritation test. This Guide is in the final stages of publication.

Thus, the registrants should examine the possibility to meet the information requirement for skin irritation/corrosion by alternatives to animal testing, including the *in vitro* tests, instead of (rabbit) *in vivo* test. REACH Annex XI and REACH Guidance detail of how to apply this approach appropriately.

The Commission considers that the provisions and guidance documents outlined above are sufficient to avoid *in vivo* testing for skin irritation tests and therefore does not currently plan to amend Annex VIII to REACH for this specific section.

([1]) OJ L 396, 30.12.2006.
([2]) Available at http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13632/information_requirements_r7a_en.pdf, p. 200.
([3]) Available at http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13655/pg_avoid_animal_testing_en.pdf
([4]) Previous version available at http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13655/pg_report_in_vitro_data_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007095/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Louis Grech (S&D)
(16 ta' Lulju 2012)

Suġġett: Riforma tar-regoli dwar il-protezzjoni tad-dejta tal-UE

Il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni għal regolament ippreżentata f'Jannar 2012, dwar ir-riforma tar-regoli dwar il-protezzjoni tad-dejta tal-UE tal-1995 intlaqgħet kemm minn min ifassal il-politika u kemm mis-soċjetà ċivili. Id-dokument tal-Kummissjoni jiffavurixxi l-ħolqien ta' soċjetà aktar ħielsa fl-era diġitali, filwaqt li jsaħħaħ id-drittijiet għall-ħajja privata (Artikolu 7) u għall-protezzjoni tad-dejta personali (Artikolu 8) imħaddna fil-Karta tad-Drittijiet Fundamentali tal-Unjoni Ewropea u, finalment, jimplika l-implimentazzjoni sħiħa tal-Artikolu 16 TFUE, li skontu l-UE għandha kompetenzi leġiżlattivi biex tistabbilixxi liġijiet armonizzati dwar il-protezzjoni tad-dejta fl-Unjoni kollha.

L-istruttura li tgħaqqad imressqa mill-Kummissjoni għandha xi aspetti interessanti:

— regoli u inċentivi ċari għall-kontrolluri tad-dejta jiżguraw trattament prudenti tad-dejta f'kull stadju;

— id-drittijiet taċ-ċittadini huma msaħħa, fost l-oħrajn bl-istabbiliment ta' definizzjoni ċara ta' "kunsens" u l-introduzzjoni ta' prinċipju ġenerali ta' trasparenza, id-"dritt li tintesa" u d-"dritt għal portabbiltà tad-dejta".

L-iskop sottostanti ta' din il-proposta hu li jitwaqqaf, permezz tar-regolament, sistema ta' servizz komplut li tiżgura li ċ-ċittadini jkunu dejjem jistgħu jikkonsultaw l-awtorità tal-protezzjoni tad-dejta nazzjonali meta jkollhom xi problemi ma' xi kumpanija jew xi entità oħra, irrispettivament mill-post fiżiku fejn ikun jinsab iċ-ċittadin jew il-kumpanija jew l-entità. Dan ifisser li l-konsumaturi u ċ-ċittadini se jeħilsu mill-burokrazija żejda u mhux meħtieġa li tirriżulta jekk jiġu obbligati biex jippruvaw jikkomunikaw fuq bażi individwali mal-awtoritajiet fi Stati Membri oħra (jiġifieri minn naħa għal oħra tal-fruntieri).

— Fuq il-bażi tal-esperjenzi ta' inizjattivi simili adottati għad-Direttiva dwar il-Kwalifiki Professjonali u d-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi, il-Kummissjoni ħadet il-prekawzjonijiet neċessarji biex tiżgura li din is-sistema ta' servizz komplut tkun ta' aktar suċċess u assorbita aħjar fuq livell nazzjonali mis-sistemi ta' qabel? Jekk iva, liema huma?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Settembru 2012)

Il-kunċett tal-"one-stop-shop" huwa msejjes fuq il-prinċipju li awtorità ta' superviżjoni waħda tkun kompetenti fejn l-istess kontrollur jew proċessur jipproċessa dejta personali f'għadd ta' Stati Membri. Madankollu, l-awtorità ta' superviżjoni kompetenti ikollha toqgħod fuq il-kooperazzjoni mal-awtoritajiet ta' superviżjoni fi Stati Membri oħra. Filwaqt li d-Direttiva dwar il-Protezzjoni tad-Dejta ([1]) fiha biss obbligu ġeneriku għall-awtoritajiet ta' superviżjoni biex jikkooperaw ma' xulxin, ir-Regolament propost jipprovdi għal regoli dettaljati dwar kooperazzjoni u assistenza reċiproka bħal din.

Qabel ma l-awtorità ta' superviżjoni kompetenti tadotta miżura li tkun tikkonċerna tali attivitajiet ta' pproċessar, b'mod partikolari meta marbuta mal-offerta ta' prodotti jew servizzi lil suġġetti tad-dejta f'diversi Stati Membri, għandha tissottometti l-abbozz ta' miżura fi ħdan "mekkaniżmu ta' konsistenza" lill-Bord Ewropew għall-Protezzjoni tad-Dejta, li jikkonsisti mill-kapijiet ta' awtoritajiet ta' superviżjoni nazzjonali u mill-Kontrollur Ewropew għall-Protezzjoni tad-Dejta. Meta mqabbla ma' mekkaniżmi simili ta' kooperazzjoni u ta' assistenza reċiproka li jeżistu bħalissa taħt il-liġi tal-UE, mekkaniżmu ta' konsistenza bħal dan huwa innovattiv. Huwa se jiżgura l-involviment sħiħ tal-awtoritajiet nazzjonali kollha kkonċernati u jiffaċilita — flimkien mal-armonizzazzjoni ulterjuri tar-regoli ta' protezzjoni tad-dejta fil-livell tal-UE — l-aċċettazzjoni u l-implimentazzjoni minnhom tal-prinċipju tal-one-stop-shop, biex b'hekk tiġi żgurata l-effettività tiegħu.

Barra minn dan, fejn jidħlu miżuri marbuta mal-investigazzjoni u t-tiswiħ fit-territorju ta' Stat Membru ieħor, ir-regolament propost jipprovdi regoli ċari u skadenzi stretti għall-assistenza reċiproka bejn l-awtoritajiet nazzjonali ta' superviżjoni kkonċernati.

([1]) Id-Direttiva 95/46/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-24 .10.1995 dwar il-protezzjoni ta' individwi fir-rigward tal-ipproċessar ta' dejta personali u dwar il-moviment liberu ta' dik id-dejta, ĠU L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007095/12
to the Commission
Louis Grech (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Reform of the EU's data protection rules

The Commission proposal for a regulation, presented in January 2012, on reforming the EU's data protection rules of 1995 was welcomed both by policymakers and by civil society. The Commission's paper advocates the creation of a freer society in the digital age, reinforcing the rights to private life (Article 7) and protection of personal data (Article 8) enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and, ultimately, entails the full implementation of Article 16 TFEU, under which the EU has the legislative competence to establish harmonised, Union-wide data protection laws.

The unifying structure put forward by the Commission has some interesting aspects:

— clear rules and incentives for data controllers ensure prudent data handling every step of the way;

— citizens' rights are strengthened, *inter alia* by the establishment of a clear definition of 'consent' and the introduction of a general transparency principle, the 'right to be forgotten' and the 'right to data portability'.

The underlying purpose of this proposal is to set up, through the regulation, a one-stop-shop system which will ensure that citizens will always be able to consult the national data protection authority when they have a problem with a company or other entity, irrespective of the physical location of the citizen or the company or entity. This means that consumers and citizens will be spared the unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape that would ensue should they be obliged to try to communicate on an individual basis with authorities in other Member States (i.e. across borders).

— On the basis of the experiences of similar initiatives adopted for the Services Directive and the Professional Qualifications Directive, has the Commission taken the necessary precautions to ensure that this one-stop-shop system will be more successful, and better absorbed at national level, than the previous systems? If so, what are they?

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

The concept of the 'one-stop-shop' builds on the principle that a single supervisory authority will be competent where the same controller or processor processes personal data in several Member States. However, the competent supervisory authority must rely on cooperation with the supervisory authorities in other Member States. Whereas the existing Data Protection Directive ([1]) contains only a generic obligation for supervisory authorities to cooperate with one another, the proposed Regulation provides for detailed rules on such cooperation and mutual assistance.

Before the competent supervisory authority adopts a measure which concerns such processing activities, in particular when related to the offering of goods or services to data subjects in several Member States, it shall submit the draft measure within a 'consistency mechanism' to the European Data Protection Board, consisting of the heads of national supervisory authorities and of the European Data Protection Supervisor. Compared to similar cooperation and mutual assistance mechanisms currently existing under EC law, such consistency mechanism is a innovative. It which will ensure the full involvement of all national authorities concerned and facilitate — together with the further harmonisation of data protection rules at EU level — the acceptance and implementation of the one-stop-shop principle by them, thereby ensuring its effectiveness.

Furthermore, as regards measures relating to investigation and enforcement in the territory of another Member State, the proposed regulation provides clear rules and strict deadlines for mutual assistance between the national supervisory authorities concerned.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281 of 23.11.1995, p. 31.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007096/12
an die Kommission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE) und Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(16. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Das ungarische Bildungssystem

1. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von dem ungarischen Gesetz CXC aus dem Jahr 2011 über die nationale öffentliche Bildung, das die Finanzierung von Schulen betrifft?

2. Ist der Kommission bewusst, dass seit Inkrafttreten dieses Gesetzes immer mehr öffentliche Schulen von den Gemeinden an Kirchen übergeben wurden? 2011 wurden 82 Schulen an Kirchen übergeben. Es wird davon ausgegangen, dass im Jahr 2012 140 Schulen an Kirchen übergeben werden ([1]).

3. Ist die Kommission sich der Tatsache bewusst, dass dadurch viele Kinder und Lehrkräfte in ehemals staatlichen Schulen plötzlich von Religionsbehörden festgelegte Regeln befolgen müssen, zum Beispiel verbindliche Beteiligung am Gebet, ohne dass der fünfjährige Übergangszeitraum beachtet wird, der früher obligatorisch war?

4. Ist der Kommission bekannt, dass seit dem Inkrafttreten dieses Gesetzes Lehrkräfte entlassen und durch andere ersetzt worden sind, die mit der Kirchenbehörde, die für die betreffende Schule zuständig ist, verbunden sind? Hält die Kommission dies für vereinbar mit der Richtlinie 2000/78/EG, in der Diskriminierung am Arbeitsplatz aus Gründen der Religion oder des Glaubens verboten wird, sowie mit ihrer eigenen begründeten Stellungnahme vom 31. Januar 2008 an die niederländische Regierung betreffend die Vertragsverletzung Nr. 2006/2444?

5. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass ein System der Schulfinanzierung die Religions- und Glaubenfreiheit effektiv aufhebt, wenn es indirekt eine Situation herbeiführt, in der Eltern, Studierende und Lehrkräfte, insbesondere in ländlichen und abgelegenen Gebieten, nicht länger die freie Wahl haben, sondern sich stattdessen Regeln beugen müssen, die die Kirche festgelegt hat? Hält die Kommission dies für einen Verstoß gegen die EU-Vorschriften über die Religions-, Glaubens- und Gewissensfreiheit?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(28. September 2012)

Wie den Abgeordneten bekannt ist, tragen gemäß Artikel 165 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union allein die Mitgliedstaaten die Verantwortung für die Lehrinhalte und für die Gestaltung des Bildungssystems. Darunter fallen auch die Vorkehrungen für den Betrieb und die Finanzierung von Schulen.

Die Religionsfreiheit ist neben der Gedanken- und Gewissensfreiheit in der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union und in der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention verankert. Innerhalb ihres Zuständigkeitsbereichs ist die Kommission verpflichtet, dafür zu sorgen, dass dieses Grundrecht gewahrt wird. Gemäß Artikel 51 Absatz 1 der Grundrechte-Charta gilt die Charta für die Mitgliedstaaten jedoch nur bei der Durchführung des EU-Rechts. Außerhalb des Anwendungsbereichs des EU-Rechts müssen die Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, dass die Grundrechte angemessen geschützt werden, und zwar gemäß ihren eigenen nationalen Vorschriften und ihren völkerrechtlichen Verpflichtungen.

Die Richtlinie 2000/78/EG ([2]) untersagt Diskriminierung in Beschäftigung und Beruf aufgrund der Religion oder der Weltanschauung, einer Behinderung, des Alters oder der sexuellen Ausrichtung. Gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 2 der Richtlinie dürfen die Mitgliedstaaten jedoch vorsehen, dass Kirchen und andere Organisationen, deren Ethos auf religiösen Grundsätzen oder Weltanschauungen beruht, von einer für sie tätigen Person dieselbe Religionszugehörigkeit verlangen können, wenn die Art der betreffenden Tätigkeit dies rechtfertigt. Die Kommission wird die Übereinstimmung des ungarischen Gesetzes über die nationale öffentliche Bildung mit der Richtlinie 2000/78/EG prüfen. Die Entlassungen einzelner Lehrkräfte müssten im Rahmen nationaler Verfahren vor nationalen ungarischen Gerichten angefochten werden.

([1]) http://hvg.hu/itthon/20120626_egyhaz_kormany_iskolak_vita.
([2]) Richtlinie 2000/78/EG des Rates vom 27. November 2000 zur Festlegung eines allgemeinen Rahmens für die Verwirklichung der Gleichbehandlung in Beschäftigung und Beruf (ABl. L 303 vom 2.12.2000, S. 16).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007096/12
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE) en Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(16 juli 2012)

Betreft: Het Hongaarse onderwijssysteem

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van Wet CXC uit 2011 inzake het nationaal openbaar onderwijs in Hongarije, met betrekking tot de financiering van scholen?

2. Is de Commissie zich bewust van het feit dat sinds de invoering van deze wet de overdracht van openbare scholen van gemeentes naar kerkgenootschappen in een stroomversnelling is geraakt? In 2011 zijn 82 scholen overgedragen aan kerken. Verwacht wordt dat in 2012 140 scholen zullen worden overgedragen aan kerken ([1]).

3. Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat als gevolg hiervan veel kinderen en leerkrachten op scholen die voorheen openbaar waren plotseling onderworpen zijn aan regels van het kerkelijk gezag, zoals verplichte deelname aan het gebed, zonder dat de eerder verplichte overgangsperiode van vijf jaar in acht is genomen?

4. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het feit dat sinds de inwerkingtreding van de wet leerkrachten zijn ontslagen en vervangen door leerkrachten die verbonden zijn aan het kerkgenootschap dat het toezicht op de school in kwestie uitoefent? Acht de Commissie deze praktijk in overeenstemming met Richtlijn 2000/78/EG die discriminatie op het werk op grond van godsdienst of overtuiging verbiedt, en met haar eigen met redenen omkleed advies aan de Nederlandse regering van 31 januari 2008 in het kader van inbreukprocedure nr. 2006/2444?

5. Is de Commissie ook van mening dat de vrijheid van godsdienst en geloofsovertuiging feitelijk wordt beknot door een financieringssysteem voor scholen dat indirect leidt tot de situatie dat ouders, leerlingen en leerkrachten, vooral in plattelands- en afgelegen gebieden, geen keuzevrijheid meer hebben maar onderworpen zijn aan door de kerk ingestelde regels? Is de Commissie ook van mening dat dit een schending is van de EU-voorschriften inzake vrijheid van godsdienst, overtuiging en geweten?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(28 september 2012)

Het zal de geachte Parlementsleden bekend zijn dat overeenkomstig artikel 165 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie de verantwoordelijkheid voor de inhoud van het onderwijs en de opzet van de onderwijsstelsels volledig bij de lidstaten berust. Dit geldt ook voor regelingen voor het beheer en de financiering van scholen.

De vrijheid van godsdienst is, evenals de vrijheid van gedachte en geweten, vastgelegd in het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie en het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens. De Commissie zet zich binnen haar bevoegdheden in voor de waarborging van dit grondrecht. Volgens artikel 51, lid 1, van het Handvest van de grondrechten zijn de bepalingen van het Handvest echter uitsluitend gericht tot de lidstaten wanneer zij het recht van de Unie ten uitvoer brengen. Wanneer de lidstaten buiten het kader van het recht van de Unie optreden, is het hun taak te garanderen dat de grondrechten doeltreffend worden beschermd in overeenstemming met hun nationaal recht en hun verplichtingen uit hoofde van het internationaal recht.

Richtlijn 2000/78/EG ([2]) verbiedt discriminatie op grond van godsdienst of overtuiging, handicap, leeftijd of seksuele geaardheid op het gebied van de arbeid. Artikel 4, lid 2, van de richtlijn staat de lidstaten echter toe te bepalen dat kerken en andere organisaties met een godsdienstige of levensbeschouwelijke grondslag kunnen verlangen dat de aangestelde persoon tot dezelfde godsdienst behoort wanneer dit is gerechtvaardigd door de aard van de activiteit in kwestie. De Commissie zal onderzoeken of de Hongaarse wet op het nationale openbare onderwijs in overeenstemming is met Richtlijn 2000/78/EG. Ontslagen van afzonderlijke leraren zullen moeten worden aangevochten via een gerechtelijke procedure bij een nationale rechtbank.

([1]) http://hvg.hu/itthon/20120626_egyhaz_kormany_iskolak_vita.
([2]) Richtlijn 2000/78/EG van de Raad van 27 november 2000 tot instelling van een algemeen kader voor gelijke behandeling in arbeid en beroep, PB L 303 van 2.12.2000, blz. 16.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007096/12
do Komisji
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE) oraz Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Węgierski system oświaty

1. Czy Komisji znana jest węgierska ustawa CXC z 2011 r. o publicznym systemie oświaty dotycząca finansowania szkół?

2. Czy Komisja wie, że od wejścia w życie tej ustawy przyspieszeniu uległ proces przekazywania władzom kościelnym szkół publicznych pozostających wcześniej w gestii gmin? W 2011 r. kościołowi przekazano 82 szkoły. Oczekuje się, że w 2012 r. kościół otrzyma 140 szkół ([1]).

3. Czy Komisji wiadomo, że w związku z tym wiele dzieci i nauczycieli w niegdyś publicznych szkołach podlega nagle zasadom ustanawianym przez władze religijne, takim jak obowiązkowe uczestnictwo w modlitwie, i że nie jest przy tym przestrzegany pięcioletni okres przejściowy, który był wcześniej obowiązkowy?

4. Czy Komisja wie, że od wejścia w życie tej ustawy zwalnia się nauczycieli, a na ich miejsce zatrudnia nauczycieli powiązanych z władzami kościelnymi nadzorującymi daną szkołę? Czy zdaniem Komisji jest to zgodne z dyrektywą 2000/78/WE, która zabrania dyskryminacji w miejscu pracy ze względu na wyznanie lub światopogląd, oraz jej uzasadnioną opinią z dnia 31 stycznia 2008 r. skierowaną do rządu holenderskiego w sprawie naruszenia nr 2006/2444?

5. Czy Komisja uważa, że system finansowania szkół eliminuje w praktyce wolność wyznania i wiary, jeżeli pośrednio prowadzi do sytuacji, w których rodzice, uczniowie i nauczyciele, w szczególności na obszarach wiejskich i oddalonych, zostają pozbawieni swobody wyboru i zostają podporządkowani zasadom ustalanym przez kościół? Czy zdaniem Komisji stanowi to naruszenie zasad UE dotyczących wolności wyznania i wiary oraz wolności sumienia?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(28 września 2012 r.)

Jak Szanowni Państwo zapewne wiedzą, zgodnie z art. 165 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej odpowiedzialność za treść i organizację systemów kształcenia i szkolenia spoczywa wyłącznie na państwach członkowskich. Dotyczy to również rozwiązań w zakresie zarządzania szkołami i ich finansowania.

Wolność religii wraz z wolnością myśli i sumienia są zapisane w Karcie praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej oraz europejskiej konwencji praw człowieka. W ramach swoich uprawnień Komisja jest zaangażowana w zapewnienie poszanowania tego podstawowego prawa. Zgodnie z art. 51 ust. 1 Karty praw podstawowych UE postanowienia karty mają jednak zastosowanie do państw członkowskich wyłącznie w przypadkach, w których stosują one prawo Unii. Jeśli państwa członkowskie prowadzą działania niezwiązane z wdrażaniem prawa Unii, wówczas to do nich należy zapewnienie skutecznej ochrony praw podstawowych zgodnie z ich prawodawstwem krajowym oraz zobowiązaniami na podstawie prawa międzynarodowego.

Dyrektywa 2000/78/WE ([2]) zabrania dyskryminacji ze względu na wyznanie lub poglądy, niepełnosprawność, wiek lub orientację seksualną w obszarze zatrudnienia. Przepis art. 4 ust. 2 dyrektywy zezwala jednak państwom członkowskim na umożliwienie kościołom i innym organizacjom, których etyka opiera się na religii lub przekonaniach, wprowadzenie wymogu, aby osoba zatrudniona wyznawała tę samą religię, jeśli jest to uzasadnione charakterem danej pracy. Komisja zbada zgodność węgierskiej ustawy o publicznym systemie oświaty z dyrektywą 2000/78/WE. Natomiast skargi w sprawie zwolnień poszczególnych nauczycieli powinny być kierowane do sądów krajowych zgodnie z krajowymi procedurami.

([1]) http://hvg.hu/itthon/20120626_egyhaz_kormany_iskolak_vita.
([2]) Dyrektywa Rady 2000/78/WE z dnia 27 listopada 2000 r. ustanawiająca ogólne warunki ramowe równego traktowania w zakresie zatrudnienia i pracy, Dz.U. L 303 z 2.12.2000, s. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007096/12
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Joanna Senyszyn (S&D), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE) and Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Hungarian education system

1. Is the Commission aware of the Hungarian Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education, relating to the funding of schools?

2. Is the Commission aware that the handover of public schools from municipalities to church authorities has accelerated since the entry into force of this law? In 2011, 82 schools were handed over to churches. It is expected that 140 schools will be handed over to churches in 2012 ([1]).

3. Is the Commission aware that, as a result, many children and teachers in formerly public schools are suddenly subject to rules set by religious authorities, such as compulsory participation in prayer, without the five-year transition period that was previously compulsory?

4. Is the Commission aware that, since the entry into force of this law, teachers have been dismissed and replaced by teachers affiliated with the church authority overseeing the school concerned? Does the Commission consider this to be in line with Directive 2000/78/EC, which bans discrimination in the workplace on grounds of religion or belief, and with its own reasoned opinion of 31 January 2008, addressed to the Dutch Government, regarding Infringement No 2006/2444?

5. Does the Commission take the view that a system of school funding effectively eliminates freedom of religion and belief if it indirectly leads to a situation in which parents, pupils and teachers, in particular in rural and remote areas, no longer have a free choice, but are instead subject to rules set by the church? Does the Commission consider this to be in violation of EU rules on freedom of religion and belief and freedom of conscience?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 September 2012)

The Honourable Members will be aware that in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. This includes arrangements for the management and funding of schools.

Freedom of religion, along with freedom of thought and conscience, is enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights. Within its competences, the Commission is committed to ensuring that this fundamental right is respected. However, according to Article 51(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. Where Member States act outside the implementation of Union law, it is for them to ensure that fundamental rights are effectively protected, in accordance with their national legislation and their obligations under international law.

Directive 2000/78/EC ([2]) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in the field of employment. However, Article 4(2) of the directive allows Member States to provide that churches and other organisations with ethos can require that the person employed is of the same religion where this is justified by the nature of the job in question. The Commission will look into the conformity of the Hungarian Act on National Public Education with Directive 2000/78/EC. Dismissals of individual teachers would have to be contested via national proceedings in national courts.

([1]) http://hvg.hu/itthon/20120626_egyhaz_kormany_iskolak_vita.
([2]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007097/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(16 juillet 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Détention du rappeur marocain Mouad Belghouat

Mouad Belghouat, rappeur marocain, est membre du Mouvement du 20 février**. Il a été arrêté le 9 septembre dernier à Casablanca pour agression. Relâché en janvier, il a à nouveau été arrêté et condamné en mai à un an de prison ferme et mille dirhams d'amende, la plus lourde peine prévue pour outrage à la police.**

La chanson qui a déclenché la plainte de la police circulait depuis 2008 sur internet, sans avoir attiré l'attention des autorités. Selon la presse, le verdict a été lu devant une salle quasi vide ce vendredi 11 mai 2012. Le jugement avait en effet été avancé de deux heures à la dernière minute.

Il a reçu le soutien de nombreuses organisations des Droits de l'homme dont Human Rights Watch (HRW) qui a appelé les autorités marocaines à «annuler les accusations» et a réclamé la libération du rappeur.

Début juillet, Mouad Belghouat est entré en grève de la faim pendant 48 heures pour protester contre le report de l'examen de son appel et ses conditions de détention.

1. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante est-elle informée de la situation actuelle de Mouad Belghouat?

2. La délégation de l'Union européenne au Maroc assure-t-elle un suivi de la situation?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(27 août 2012)

L'UE est informée de la situation de Mouad Belghouat, qu'elle suit de près par l'intermédiaire de sa délégation à Rabat. Cette question a été soulevée à plusieurs reprises avec les chefs de mission des États membres de l'UE à Rabat.

La question des Droits de l'homme est une des problématiques fondamentales du dialogue politique entre l'UE et le Maroc et est régulièrement abordée lors des réunions des structures conjointes établies par l'Accord d'association. La Commission considère que, globalement, le Maroc progresse dans le respect des principes des Droits de l'homme. La nouvelle Constitution comprend un certain nombre de mesures importantes en ce qui concerne les Droits de l'homme et les libertés fondamentales, comme la création du Conseil national des Droits de l'homme. Des améliorations supplémentaires sont néanmoins nécessaires. Il est encore possible, notamment, de renforcer la liberté d'expression. La Commission compte sur le Maroc pour faire respecter pleinement la liberté de parole et de la presse, garanties par la nouvelle Constitution.

Le statut avancé auquel le Maroc a accédé dans ses relations avec l'UE implique que des progrès soient réalisés dans le domaine du respect des Droits de l'homme et l'UE s'engage à assurer un suivi attentif à cet égard.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007097/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Detention of Moroccan rapper Mouad Belghouat

Mouad Belghouat is a Moroccan rapper and a member of the 20 February Movement. He was arrested for assault in Casablanca on 9 September 2011. He was released in January 2012, but was then re-arrested in May 2012 and sentenced to one year in prison and a MAD 1000 fine, the most severe penalty possible for insulting the police.

The song which prompted the police to lodge their complaint had been circulating online since 2008 without attracting the attention of the authorities. According to press reports, the sentence was handed down in front of an almost empty courtroom on 11 May 2012. This was because the judgment was brought forward by two hours at the last minute.

Mouad Belghouat has received support from many human rights organisations, including Human Rights Watch (HRW), which has called on the Moroccan authorities to withdraw the charges and has demanded the release of the rapper.

In early July, Mouad Belghouat embarked on a 48-hour hunger strike in protest against the postponement of his appeal hearing and his conditions of detention.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of Mouad Belghouat's circumstances?

2. Is the delegation of the European Union in Morocco monitoring the situation?

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

The EU is aware of the case of Mouad Belghouat, and follows it closely with the assistance of its Delegation in Rabat. This issue has been raised several times with the Heads of Mission of the EU Member States in Rabat.

Human rights are one of the core issues in the EU-Morocco political dialogue and are regularly addressed in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. The Commission considers that overall Morocco is making progress in compliance with human rights principles. The new Constitution includes a number of important measures with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms, for example the creation of the National Council for Human Rights. Further improvements are however necessary. Notably, there is still scope to improve freedom of expression. The Commission counts on Morocco to ensure full respect for freedom of speech and the press as enshrined in the new Constitution.

The Advanced Status, to which Morocco has acceded in its relations with the EU, implies that progress is being made in the area of respect for human rights and the EU is committed to ensuring close follow up in this regard.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007098/12
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Tadeusz Cymański (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Problem demograficzny w Europie

Europa stoi przed wielkim kryzysem demograficznym o czym informują nas analitycy. Statystki pokazują, że w krajach Unii Europejskiej rodzi się średnio 10,5 dzieci na tysiąc mieszkańców, tym czasem w USA liczba urodzeń wynosi 13,5, a w Chinach 12,31 na tysiąc mieszkańców.

Mimo tych danych Komisja Europejska forsuje ustawodawstwo niesprzyjające posiadaniu większej ilości dzieci. W 2010 r. zagroziła ukaraniem Polski, jeśli ta nie wdroży dyrektywy zwiększającej podatek VAT na ubranka i akcesoria dziecięce z 8 % do 23 %. Zmiana ta, dokonana w 2011 r., spowodowała znaczny wzrost kosztów utrzymania dziecka, co przy narastającym kryzysie gospodarczym powoduje podjęcie przez wielu młodych ludzi decyzji o rezygnacji z posiadania dzieci.

1. Czy Komisja zamierza zmienić swoją decyzję, tak aby to państwa ustalały wysokość podatku VAT na ubrania i akcesoria dziecięce?

2. Jakie działania planuje podjąć Komisja, aby zachęcić młodych ludzi do posiadania potomstwa, a państwa do prowadzenia aktywnej polityki prorodzinnej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(30 sierpnia 2012 r.)

Wykaz towarów objętych obniżoną stawką podatku VAT powstał w wyniku kompromisów osiągniętych w Radzie, które zostały jednomyślnie przyjęte przez ministrów finansów.

W swoim komunikacie w sprawie przyszłości podatku VAT ([1]) Komisja poinformowała, że do końca 2013 r. przedstawi Radzie wniosek legislacyjny w sprawie stawek podatku VAT. Ponadto w celu zwiększenia skuteczności systemu podatku VAT Komisja opowiada się za ograniczonym stosowaniem obniżonych stawek podatku VAT. Obecna sytuacja gospodarcza i finansowa, która wymaga intensywnej konsolidacji fiskalnej budżetów krajowych, stanowi kolejny powód do ograniczenia stosowania stawek obniżonych, a nie podnoszenia stawek podstawowych. Aczkolwiek nie należy pomijać możliwych korzyści płynących z ograniczonego stosowania stawek obniżonych, pod warunkiem że są one racjonalnie zdefiniowane i stosowane.

Komisja odsyła do oceny ekonomicznej systemu VAT ([2]), która potwierdza opinie sformułowane we wcześniejszych analizach ekonomicznych, zgodnie z którymi stosowanie obniżonych stawek podatku VAT często nie jest najodpowiedniejszym instrumentem realizacji celów polityki, w szczególności zapewnienia redystrybucji dochodu do ubogich gospodarstw domowych, czy wspierania konsumpcji dóbr uważanych za społecznie pożądane.

Polityka rodzinna leży wyraźnie w kompetencjach państwa członkowskiego – rolą Komisji jest zapewnianie wsparcia, między innymi poprzez promowanie wymiany doświadczeń i dobrych praktyk.

([1]) COM(2011)851.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/publications/studies/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007098/12
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Tadeusz Cymański (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Europe's demographic problem

According to analysts, Europe is facing a major demographic crisis. Statistics show that, on average, there are 10.5 births per 1000 people in the EU Member States, compared with 13.5 in the USA and 12.31 in China.

In spite of these figures, the Commission is forcing through legislation that puts large families at a disadvantage. In 2010, the Commission threatened to punish Poland if it did not implement a directive increasing VAT on children's clothing and accessories from 8% to 23%. This change was made in 2011 and resulted in a significant rise in the costs of bringing up a child, which — against the backdrop of a worsening economic crisis — is causing large numbers of young people to decide not to have children.

1. Does the Commission intend to modify its decision so as to enable the Member States to set their own rates of VAT on children's clothing and accessories?

2. What steps does it plan to take in order to encourage young people to have children andMember States to implement active pro-family policies?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2012)

The list of supplies eligible for a reduced VAT rate is the result of compromises reached in the Council that were unanimously adopted by the Ministers of Finance.

In its communication on the future of VAT ([1]), the Commission has indicated that it will present by the end of 2013 a legislative proposal to the Council on VAT rates. In addition, in order to increase the efficiency of the VAT system, the Commission favours a restricted use of reduced VAT rates. The current economic and financial context, which demands a strong fiscal consolidation of national budgets, is a further reason for limiting their use as compared to increasing standard rates. Nonetheless, the potential benefits of a limited use of reduced rates, if rationally defined and applied, should not be disregarded.

The communication refers to an economic evaluation of the VAT system ([2]) which confirms the views expressed in earlier economic studies that the use of reduced VAT rates is often not the most suitable instrument for pursuing policy objectives, particularly ensuring redistribution to poor households or encouraging the consumption of goods that are deemed socially desirable.

Family policy is clearly a Member State responsibility: the Commission's role is to provide support, *inter alia* by promoting exchanges of experience and good practice.

([1]) COM(2011) 851.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/publications/studies/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-007100/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kuba: wybuch epidemii cholery

Liczba potwierdzonych ostatnio przypadków cholery we wschodniej części Kuby wzrosła do 85. Jednak Miami Herald donosi za dysydentem mieszkającym w prowincji Granma, że zachorowało już ponad tysiąc osób. Według rządu liczba ofiar śmiertelnych wynosi nadal 3. Niezależne źródła twierdzą, że liczba ofiar śmiertelnych waha się od 5 do 15.

Należy zauważyć, że amerykańska kongresmen Ileana Ros-Lehtinen zarzuca kubańskiemu rządowi zatajanie informacji, by nie odstraszać turystów. Biorąc pod uwagę rozbieżność między oficjalnymi informacjami reżimu a informacjami z niezależnych źródeł, zarzut ten wydaje się jak najbardziej uzasadniony.

— Jakimi informacjami na temat wybuchu epidemii cholery na Kubie dysponuje Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji/Wysoka Przedstawiciel oraz czy ESDZ monitoruje rozwój sytuacji?

— Jaka jest sytuacja na miejscu według naszej delegatury na Kubie?

— Biorąc pod uwagę, że w ramach unijnego instrumentu finansowania współpracy na rzecz rozwoju na lata 2011-2013 przeznaczono dla Kuby indykatywną alokację w wysokości 20 milionów euro, jak można wykorzystać te fundusze, by pomóc obywatelom Kuby, jeżeli nie uda się szybko powstrzymać rozprzestrzeniania się choroby?

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

Eksperci z delegatury Unii i Komisji (DG ECHO) uważnie monitorują sytuację na Kubie.

Z dostępnych informacji wynika, że epidemia wydaje się cofać. Prowadzone jest dochodzenie mające na celu wykrycie źródła epidemii, a władze kubańskie są zaangażowane w zwalczanie tego problemu.

Komisja nadal uważnie śledzi sytuację i jest przygotowana na uruchomienie środków, jeśli zaistnieje taka potrzeba.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007100/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuba: outbreak of cholera

The number of cholera cases confirmed recently in eastern Cuba has risen to 85. However, according to the *Miami Herald*, a dissident who lives in Granma Province has stated that more than 1 000 people have fallen sick. According to the government, the death toll remains at three. Independent reports put the number of deaths at anywhere from five to 15.

It should be noted that US Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen has accused the Cuban Government of withholding information to avoid scaring away tourists. Given the discrepancy between the regime's official information and that of independent reports, this seems like a compelling claim.

— What information does the Vice-President/High Representative have on the outbreak of cholera in Cuba, and is the EEAS monitoring these developments?

— What is the situation on the ground, according to our delegation in Cuba?

— Given that an indicative allocation of EUR 20 million was earmarked for Cuba for the 2011-2013 period under the EU Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), how can these funds be utilised to help the people of Cuba in the event that this outbreak is not contained quickly?

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

The EU Delegation and Commission experts (DG ECHO) are following very closely the situation on the ground.

Available information indicates that the outbreak seems to be in regression. The authorities are dealing with the problem. An investigation as to the source of the outbreak is on going.

The Commission continues to monitor the situation very closely, and is prepared to mobilise resources should the need arise.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007101/12
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Skutki ekologiczne Gazociągu Południowego i presja wywierana przez Gazprom na Bułgarię

Według doniesień mediów Bułgaria znów znalazła się pod presją Federacji Rosyjskiej, która nalega na podpisanie ostatecznej umowy inwestycyjnej w sprawie Gazociągu Południowego do 15 listopada 2012 r. W przeciwnym razie Gazprom grozi anulowaniem obiecanego 11 % rabatu na dostawy gazu ziemnego. Istnieje uzasadnione przypuszczenie, że Rosja zamierza zakończyć negocjacje z Bułgarią i rozpocząć budowę Gazociągu Południowego, aby uniknąć obowiązku przestrzegania nowych przepisów UE wchodzących w życie w marcu 2013 r. (Trzeci pakiet energetyczny UE określa zasady dostępu przedsiębiorstw unijnych do rurociągów budowanych przez państwa spoza UE). Cena, jaką Bułgaria płaci za rosyjski gaz, jest najwyższą w Europie (do 600 dolarów za 1000 m^3 gazu w porównaniu do średniej ceny rosyjskiego gazu w Europie na poziomie 450 dolarów), a uzależnienie Bułgarii od rosyjskiego gazu ziemnego sięga 80 % zużycia.

— Z relacji mediów wynika, że obowiązkowe oceny środowiskowe dla budowy Gazociągu Południowego nie zostały nawet jeszcze zlecone. Czy Komisja była zaangażowana w ocenę wpływu Gazociągu Południowego na środowisko naturalne?

— Czego wymaga się od Bułgarii jako państwa członkowskiego PE w odniesieniu do przestawienia oceny ewentualnych zagrożeń ekologicznych wynikających z projektu tego gazociągu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(4 września 2012 r.)

Projekt tego rodzaju musi spełniać wymogi dyrektywy 2011/92/UE ([1]) w sprawie oceny skutków wywieranych przez niektóre przedsięwzięcia publiczne i prywatne na środowisko (dyrektywa OOŚ). Według publicznie dostępnych informacji ([2]) ocena oddziaływania na środowisko (OOŚ) została niedawno rozpoczęta, ale jeszcze się nie zakończyła.

Ponieważ na realizację tego projektu nie przeznaczono na razie środków finansowych UE, Komisja nie posiada więcej informacji na temat OOŚ. W rzeczywistości przeprowadzenie OOŚ dla projektu infrastruktury wchodzącego w zakres dyrektywy OOŚ, tak jak ten projekt, jest obowiązkiem danego państwa członkowskiego. Rolą Komisji w takich przypadkach jest dopilnowanie, aby przestrzegano odpowiednich unijnych i międzynarodowych przepisów dotyczących ochrony środowiska.

([1]) Wersja ujednolicona dyrektywy Rady 85/337/EWG w sprawie oceny skutków wywieranych przez niektóre przedsięwzięcia publiczne i prywatne na środowisko naturalne ze zmianami, Dz.U. L 26 z 28.1.2012.

([2]) http://www.south-stream-transport.com/news/press-releases/south-stream-transport-ag-officially-initiates-environmental-impact-assessment-eia-procedure-in-bulgaria-12/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007101/12
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Ecological impact of South Stream gas pipeline, and pressure placed on Bulgaria by Gazprom

According to media reports, Bulgaria is again under pressure from the Russian Federation to sign the final investment agreement on the South Stream gas pipeline by 15 November 2012. Otherwise, Gazprom is threatening to cancel a promised 11% discount for natural gas supplies. There is justified speculation that Russia is seeking to complete negotiations with Bulgaria and begin constructing the South Stream pipeline in order to avoid complying with new EU regulations that will come into effect in March 2013 (the EU's Third Energy Package regulates access by EU companies to pipelines built by non-EU countries). The cost to Bulgaria of Russian gas is the highest in Europe (up to USD 600 per 1 000 cubic metres of gas, as compared with an average price of USD 450 for Russian gas in Europe), and Bulgaria is dependent on Russian natural gas for 80% of its consumption.

— Media reports have noted that mandatory ecological assessments for the construction of the South Stream pipeline have not even been ordered yet. Has the Commission been involved in assessing the impact on the natural environment of the South Stream pipeline?

— As a member of the EU, what is required of Bulgaria in terms of providing an assessment of potential ecological threats from this pipeline project?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

This type of project needs to meet the requirements of Directive 2011/92/UE ([1]) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the EIA Directive). According to the information publicly available ([2]), an environmental impact assessment (EIA) has been recently initiated, but it has not yet been concluded.

As the project does not receive EU financial assistance for the time being, no further information is available to the Commission on the EIA. In fact, carrying out an EIA for an infrastructure project covered by the EIA Directive as this one is the responsibility of the Member State concerned. The role of the Commission in such cases is to ensure that related EU and international environmental laws are respected.

([1]) Codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

([2]) http://www.south-stream-transport.com/news/press-releases/south-stream-transport-ag-officially-initiates-environmental-impact-assessment-eia-procedure-in-bulgaria-12/.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007102/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Rosja: nałożenie na organizacje pozarządowe obowiązku ponownej rejestracji jako „organizacji pełniących funkcje zagranicznych agentów"

Rosyjska Duma poparła wstępnie ustawę, zgodnie z którą na międzynarodowe organizacje pozarządowe nałożony zostałby obowiązek ponownej rejestracji jako „organizacji pełniących funkcje zagranicznych agentów". Zgodnie z ustawą organizacje, które nie zarejestrują się ponownie jako zagraniczni agenci w terminie 90 dni po wejściu w życie ustawy zostaną zamknięte na okres sześciu miesięcy. Ustawa przewiduje, że wszystkie rosyjskie organizacje pozarządowe korzystające z zagranicznej pomocy finansowej będą poddane przez władze surowszym kontrolom, w tym kontrolom finansowym, oraz dwa razy do roku będą musiały przedstawiać sprawozdanie ze swojej działalności. Organizacjom, które przedstawią niepełne sprawozdania będzie groziła grzywna w wysokości do miliona rubli. Za łamanie tych przepisów grozić będzie kara pozbawienia wolności do czterech lat.

— Uwzględniając oświadczenie rzecznika Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel Catherine Ashton z dnia 10 lipca 2012 r. w sprawie poprawek do rosyjskiej ustawy dotyczącej organizacji pozarządowych, jak ustawa ta odbiłaby się na organizacjach pozarządowych wspieranych z funduszy Unii Europejskiej?

— Jak UE wyrazi swoje obawy dotyczące potencjalnie negatywnego wpływu tej nowej ustawy na organizacje pozarządowe w Rosji?

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

Co się tyczy konsekwencji, jakie niosą ze sobą zmiany we wspomnianej rosyjskiej ustawie dotyczącej organizacji pozarządowych, wzrost obciążeń administracyjnych wydaje się nieunikniony. Rosyjska ustawa jest zatem przedmiotem głębokiego niepokoju, nawet jeśli rząd rosyjski zaznaczył, że dotyczy ona głównie procedur ujawniania informacji i że nie wyklucza zagranicznego finansowania. Zatem to, w jakim zakresie właściwe organizacje pozarządowe ponownie rozważą możliwość wnioskowania o dofinansowanie z funduszy UE dla wsparcia ich działań, może zależeć również od sposobu, w jaki nowa ustawa będzie stosowana w praktyce.

Oprócz przedstawienia oświadczeń publicznych Unia Europejska niedawno wyraziła swoje obawy przy okazji rozmaitych kontaktów dwustronnych ze stroną rosyjską oraz wezwała Rosję do poszanowania zobowiązań międzynarodowych dotyczących wolności zrzeszania się, szczególnie postanowień europejskiej konwencji praw człowieka. Szef delegatury UE w Federacji Rosyjskiej przedstawił przewodniczącemu właściwej komisji w Dumie, jak również wiceministrowi sprawiedliwości poważne zastrzeżenia UE dotyczące projektu ustawy, jeszcze przed jego przyjęciem. Zastrzeżenia te zostały również zgłoszone przez stronę europejską podczas ostatnich konsultacji UE-Rosja dotyczących praw człowieka, które odbyły się w dniu 20 czerwca 2012 r. Unia Europejska będzie uważnie śledzić wdrażanie wszystkich elementów nowego pakietu legislacyjnego za pośrednictwem swojej delegatury w Moskwie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007102/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Russia: NGOs to re-register as 'foreign agents'

Russia's lower house of parliament has given initial backing to a bill that would force internationally funded NGOs to re-register as 'foreign agents'. Organisations that fail to re-register as foreign agents within 90 days after the law comes into force would be shut down for a period of six months. Under the bill, all Russian NGOs funded from abroad will have to submit to more rigorous checks by the authorities, including financial audits, and will be required to issue biannual reports on their activities. Those who file incomplete reports will face fines of up to one million roubles. Violations of the new measures would be punishable by prison terms of up to four years.

— Having regard to the 10 July 2012 statement by the spokesperson of the Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton on the amendments to the Russian NGO law, how would this law affect NGOs that are aided by funds from the European Union?

— How will the EU voice its concern about the negative consequences that this new law could have on NGOs in Russia?

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

As regards the effects of the amendments to the Russian law referred to on the NGOs concerned, it appears inevitable that the administrative burden will increase. The Russian law is therefore a reason of deep concern even though the Russian government has indicated that it focuses primarily on disclosure procedures and does not prohibit foreign financing as such. To what extent relevant non-governmental organisations will reconsider the possibility of applying for EU funding in support of their activities may therefore also depend on how the new legislation will be implemented in practice.

Apart from public statements, the EU has also recently voiced its concerns in different bilateral contacts with the Russian side, and has called on Russia to respect its international commitments on freedom of association, notably the European Convention on Human Rights. The Head of the EU Delegation to the Russian Federation has conveyed the EU's strong concerns on the bill already before its adoption to the chairman of the responsible Duma committee, as well as to the Deputy Minister of Justice. These concerns were also raised by the EU at the latest EU-Russian Human Rights Consultations which took place on 20 July 2012. The EU will follow closely the implementation of all elements of the new legislative package through its Delegation in Moscow.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007103/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Rosja: zatwierdzona przez rząd czarna lista nielegalnych stron internetowych

W rosyjskiej Dumie Państwowej trwają prace nad ustawą, która wprowadza zatwierdzoną przez rząd czarną listę stron internetowych zawierających „nielegalne" treści oraz zobowiązuje dostawców Internetu do blokowania tych stron. Zdaniem władz ustawa ta jest niezbędna do walki z pedofilią i pornografią dziecięcą w Internecie. Jej przeciwnicy uważają, że będzie ona wykorzystywana do ograniczania internetowej działalności opozycyjnej. Rosyjska Wikipedia tymczasowo zamknęła swoje strony w ramach protestu przeciwko proponowanej ustawie.

— Rodzą się obawy, że jeśli projekt zostanie przegłosowany i ustawa wejdzie w życie, doprowadzi ona do cenzury Internetu w Rosji. Jaka jest opinia Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel w tej sprawie?

— Czy UE mogłaby udzielić władzom rosyjskim wsparcia i zaoferować konsultacje na temat najlepszych praktyk dotyczących tego, jak chronić dzieci w Internecie i jednocześnie zapewniać wolność słowa i swobodę dyskusji politycznej w sieci?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest poinformowana o niedawno zatwierdzonych przez Radę Federacji nowych przepisach umożliwiających wpisywanie na czarną listę niektórych stron internetowych. UE wyraziła swoje obawy dotyczące potencjalnych skutków tych przepisów zarówno publicznie, jak i w kontaktach dwustronnych z władzami rosyjskimi. W oświadczeniu wydanym dnia 10 lipca 2012 r. rzecznik Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej poruszył kwestie budzące głębokie obawy UE, również te dotyczące Internetu. Ponadto w dniu 19 lipca 2012 r. Unia Europejska wydała oświadczenie na forum Stałej Rady OBWE.

Nowe przepisy były przedmiotem dyskusji w dniu 20 lipca 2012 r. podczas ostatnich konsultacji UE-Rosja dotyczących praw człowieka. UE wyraziła zaniepokojenie możliwością stosowania zbyt szerokiej definicji „szkodliwych treści" i zachęciła Rosję do zagwarantowania, że nowe prawodawstwo nie będzie ograniczać wolności słowa w Internecie. Władze rosyjskie wyjaśniły, że intencją prawodawcy było ograniczenie pornografii dziecięcej, rozpowszechniania narkotyków i nakłaniania do samobójstw w Internecie.

UE dąży do bliższej współpracy z Rosją w zakresie różnych aspektów ochrony dzieci w Internecie. W szczególności zaś, wspólnie ze Stanami Zjednoczonymi, Unia zachęciła Rosję do przystąpienia wraz z innymi krajami do światowego sojuszu przeciwko niegodziwemu traktowaniu dzieci w Internecie w celach seksualnych. Rosja została także niedawno zaproszona do udziału w posiedzeniu ministerialnym, które odbędzie się w Brukseli w grudniu 2012 r., na kiedy zaplanowano powołanie wspomnianego światowego sojuszu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007103/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Russia: government-approved blacklist of illegal websites

A law establishing a government-approved blacklist of websites containing 'illegal' content and requiring Internet service providers to block those sites is working its way through the Russian State Duma. The authorities say this law is necessary to combat paedophilia and child pornography on the Internet. Opponents say it will be used to suppress opposition activity online. The Russian version of Wikipedia temporarily shut down its site to protest against the proposed legislation.

— There are voices of concern that, if passed and signed into law, this could pave the way for Internet censorship in Russia. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's opinion on this matter?

— Could the EU provide the Russian authorities with support and best practice consultations on how to protect children online while allowing freedom of expression and political discussion on the Internet?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the new legislation on the possibility of blacklisting certain websites, which was recently approved by the Federation Council. The EU has conveyed its concerns both in public and in bilateral contacts with Russian authorities regarding possible implications of the new law. In a statement issued on 10 July 2012, the spokesperson of the HR/VP also expressed wider EU concerns, including as regards the Internet sphere. The EU also delivered a statement in the OSCE Permanent Council on 19 July 2012.

The new legislation was discussed during the latest EU-Russian Human Rights consultations on 20 July 2012. The EU expressed its concerns at the possible use of too wide a definition of what could constitute 'harmful content' and encouraged Russia to ensure that the new legislation would not hamper freedom of expression online. The Russian authorities explained that the intention of the legislator was to curb child pornography, drug promotion and incitement to suicide on the Internet.

The EU is seeking closer cooperation and engagement with Russia on different aspects of protecting children online. In particular, the EU has together with the United States invited Russia to join together with other countries a 'Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online'. Russia has recently been invited to join a ministerial meeting in December 2012 in Brussels when this Global Alliance is planned to be launched.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007104/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Peru: cywile zabici w Celendín

Troje cywilów zmarło w wyniku ran postrzałowych odniesionych w dniu 3 lipca 2012 r. w mieście Celendín podczas starć między demonstrantami a oddziałami policji i wojska przed miejscowym ratuszem. Według przedstawicieli tamtejszego szpitala ponad 30 innych cywilów odniosło obrażenia, w tym kilka osób od kul. Rząd ogłosił stan wyjątkowy w trzech prowincjach departamentu Cajamarca.

Mając na uwadze, że podpisana ostatnio umowa handlowa między UE a Kolumbią i Peru obejmuje dalekosiężne środki w zakresie ochrony praw człowieka i praworządności, a także zobowiązania do skutecznego wdrożenia międzynarodowych konwencji dotyczących praw pracy i ochrony środowiska, jak UE zareaguje na niedawne strajki i protesty w departamencie Cajamarca?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wie o ostatnich wydarzeniach w departamencie Cajamarca, na które zwraca uwagę Szanowny Pan Poseł. Temat konfliktów społecznych związanych z inwestycją w górnictwie, taką jak projekt kopalni złota, który był przedmiotem protestów w Cajamarca, został poruszony na najwyższym szczeblu przez Przewodniczącego Rady Europejskiej i Przewodniczącego Komisji Europejskiej podczas wizyty prezydenta Ollanta Humali w instytucjach UE w dniach 12 i 13 czerwca 2012 r. Kwestia ta była również przedmiotem dyskusji pomiędzy Szanownymi Posłami Parlamentu Europejskiego i prezydentem Humalą w czasie jego wizyty w Parlamencie Europejskim w Strasburgu. Przywódcy UE podkreślili znaczenie promowania rozwoju, który sprzyjałby włączeniu społecznemu i gospodarczemu w Peru i z zadowoleniem odnieśli się do postępu osiągniętego w zwiększaniu udziału obywateli w procesie podejmowania decyzji dotyczących projektów związanym z wydobyciem. Przykładem takiego postępu może być niedawne wprowadzenie ustawy o uprzednich konsultacjach z ludnością tubylczą. Inicjatywę tę pochwaliła, między innymi, Międzyamerykańska Komisja Praw Człowieka. Po przetasowaniach w rządzie, w dniu 23 lipca 2012 r. nowy premier, Juan Jiménez Mayor, zadeklarował zdecydowane zaangażowanie rządu w kwestii rozwiązania problemu konfliktów społecznych na drodze pogłębionego dialogu. W swojej przemowie inauguracyjnej w dniu 28 lipca 2012 r., prezydent Humala uznał potrzebę dalszej poprawy ram prawnych i politycznych Peru w celu pogodzenia działalności wydobywczej z uzasadnionymi interesami dotyczącymi ochrony zasobów naturalnych, a także poprawy w zakresie zapobiegania konfliktom społecznym w tym kraju i zarządzania nimi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007104/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Peru: civilians killed in Celendín

Three civilians died from gunshot wounds on 3 July 2012 in the city of Celendín during a confrontation between protesters and police and army units outside the city hall. More than 30 other civilians were injured, several of them reportedly with bullet wounds, according to local hospital officials. The government declared a state of emergency in three provinces of the Cajamarca department.

Considering that the newly signed trade agreement between the EU, Colombia and Peru includes far-reaching measures on the protection of human rights and the rule of law, as well as commitments to implement international conventions on labour rights and environmental protection effectively, how will the EU respond to the recent strikes and protests in Cajamarca?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the recent events in Cajamarca Department that are described by the Honourable Member. The topic of social conflict linked to investment in mining, such as the Conga gold mine project that was the focus of the protests in Cajamarca, was raised at the highest level, by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, during the visit of President Humala to the EU institutions on 12 and 13 June 2012. There were also discussions on the issue between Honourable Members of the European Parliament and President Humala when the latter visited the EP in Strasbourg. The EU leaders stressed the importance of promoting inclusive socioeconomic development in Peru and welcomed progress achieved in enhancing public involvement in the decision-making process for extractive projects, for example the recent enactment of a law on prior consultation of indigenous peoples that has also been praised by, among others, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Following a Cabinet reshuffle on 23 July 2012, the new Prime Minister, Juan Jiménez Mayor, has pledged the government's strong commitment to address the issue of social conflicts through enhanced dialogue. In his state of the nation address on 28 July 2012, President Humala acknowledged the need to improve further Peru's legal and policy framework with a view to reconciling extractive activities with legitimate interests in preserving natural resources, and also to improve the prevention and management of social conflict in the country.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007105/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Nigeria: kryzys humanitarny w Port Harcourt

Z doniesień mediów wynika, że w Port Harcourt (Nigeria) tysiące mężczyzn, kobiet i dzieci śpi na ulicach, w samochodach i kościołach po ich eksmisji z Abonnema Harf, przeprowadzonej wbrew prawu przez siły zbrojne działające na rozkaz gubernatora Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, który nakazał oczyścić ten teren. Eksmisje rozpoczęły się 27 czerwca 2012 r.

Program na rzecz Nigerii na lata 2008-2013 realizowany w ramach dziesiątego Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju (EFR) rozpoczął się w listopadzie 2009 r. Nową strategię współpracy na rzecz rozwoju sformułowaną wspólnie z Federalną Republiką Nigerii wyposażono w środki w wysokości 667 miliona EUR na lata 2008-2013, które mają umożliwić sfinansowanie programów i projektów w trzech głównych obszarach pomocy wspólnotowej, tj. pokój i bezpieczeństwo, dobre rządy i prawa człowieka oraz handel i integracja regionalna, a także w kilku pobocznych obszarach obejmujących kluczowe zagadnienia dotyczące rozwoju, takie jak zmiana klimatu, zdrowie oraz współpraca kulturalna, naukowa i techniczna.

— Czy Unia Europejska monitoruje bieżącą sytuację kryzysową w Port Harcourt? W jaki sposób Unia Europejska może pomóc?

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

Promowanie praw człowieka, w tym praw socjalnych i gospodarczych, jak również zasad dobrych rządów należą do najważniejszych priorytetów polityki UE w Nigerii. Szefowie misji UE w Nigerii z uwagą śledzą sprawę eksmisji w Port Harcourt i w innych częściach kraju. Delegatura UE pozostaje ponadto w ścisłym kontakcie z lokalnymi organizacjami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego aktywnie działającymi na tym obszarze. W dniu 3 sierpnia br. zorganizowała ona spotkanie z przedstawicielami organizacji pozarządowych i przedstawicielami wspólnoty dyplomatycznej w Nigerii w celu omówienia tej kwestii.

Omawiany problem nie ogranicza się do Portu Harcourt. Istnieje on również w innych dużych miastach. Członkowie naszego Przedstawicielstwa odwiedzili ostatnio miejsca dotknięte tym problemem w dwóch miastach i spotkali się z przedstawicielami organizacji pozarządowych oraz lokalnymi liderami.

Wraz z innymi zagadnieniami w dziedzinie praw człowieka kwestie te są również podejmowane na szczeblu politycznym w regularnym lokalnym dialogu z Nigerią na temat praw człowieka. Dialog ten jest otwarty i konstruktywny i sam w sobie jest przejawem znacznego ogólnego postępu w zakresie praw człowieka, jaki nastąpił w Nigerii od czasu przywrócenia rządów demokratycznych w 1999 r. Jest on również ważnym narzędziem wspierania postępu w dziedzinach, w których nadal istnieją niedociągnięcia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007105/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Nigeria: humanitarian crisis in Port Harcourt

According to media reports, thousands of men, women and children in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, are sleeping on the streets, in cars and in churches after they were illegally evicted by military forces from Abonnema Wharf, following orders from Governor Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi to clear the area. The evictions began on 27 June 2012.

The 10th European Development Fund (EDF) programme for Nigeria for the period 2008-2013 was launched in November 2009. The new development cooperation strategy formulated jointly with the Federal Republic of Nigeria has an allocation of EUR 677 million for the period 2008-2013 to fund programmes and projects in three focal areas — peace and security, governance and human rights, trade and regional integration — and in several non-focal areas involving key development issues such as climate change, health, and cultural, scientific and technical cooperation.

— Is the EU monitoring the current crisis in Port Harcourt? What can the EU do to help?

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

The promotion of human rights, including social and economic rights, as well as good governance principles are among the key priorities of the EU's policy in Nigeria. The EU Heads of Mission in Nigeria are closely following the matter of evictions in Port Harcourt and elsewhere in the country. In addition, the EU Delegation is in close contact with local civil society organisations active in this area and organised a meeting on 3rd August with a representative of an NGO and a number of representatives from the diplomatic community in Nigeria to discuss the matter.

The problem is not confined to Port Harcourt. There are issues also in other major cities. Our Delegation has recently visited affected sites in two cities and met with NGOs and community leaders.

Together with other human rights matters, such issues are also addressed at the political level in the regular local human rights dialogue with Nigeria. This dialogue is open and constructive and in itself indicative of the considerable overall progress regarding human rights which Nigeria has experienced since its return to democratic rule in 1999. It is also an important tool to support progress in areas where shortcomings remain.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007106/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kuba: przypadek Yaqueline Garcii

Członkini kubańskiej organizacji „Kobiety w bieli" (Las Damas de Blanco) doniosła, że policja biła ją i poniżała, by uniemożliwić jej wzięcie udziału w niedzielnej mszy w Bazylice Matki Boskiej Miłosiernej w El Cobre (prowincja Santiago). Yaqueline García w oświadczeniu złożonym w „Háblalo Sin Miedo" („Powiedz to bez strachu"), ośrodku umiejscowionym w Miami, który gromadzi i upowszechnia doniesienia o naruszeniach praw człowieka na Kubie, stwierdziła, że całe jej ciało stało się „czarne i niebieskie". Oświadczyła, że policja zatrzymała ją w drodze do świątyni i wypuściła dopiero późno wieczorem w niedzielę 1 lipca 2012 r., na odległej wiejskiej drodze, wyrzuciwszy jej rzeczy osobiste pod nogi.

— Czy ESDZ wie o przypadku Yaqueline Garcii?

— Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji/Wysoka Przedstawiciel mogłaby złożyć protest na ręce kubańskich władz, wraz z oświadczeniem dotyczącym represji stosowanych wobec „Kobiet w bieli", mając na uwadze, że stanowiłoby to ważny sygnał podkreślający, że UE uważnie śledzi sytuację w zakresie praw człowieka na Kubie i uznaje złe traktowanie członkiń tej organizacji za niedopuszczalne?

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

Żaden z kubańskich pokojowych ruchów opozycyjnych ani żadna międzynarodowa organizacja praw człowieka nie powiadomiły ESDZ, ani w Brukseli ani w Hawanie, o zgłoszonym przypadku. Delegatura UE w Hawanie jest jednak świadoma, że według doniesień członkinie organizacji „Kobiety w bieli" są systematycznie nękane przez funkcjonariuszy państwowych służb bezpieczeństwa przy próbach zgromadzenia się w Santiago, czy też w świątyni w El Cobre.

Delegatura UE w Hawanie wraz z szefami misji UE monitoruje sytuację w zakresie praw człowieka na Kubie. Prawa człowieka i podstawowe wolności leżą u podstaw stosunków UE z państwami trzecimi. UE wielokrotnie podkreślała znaczenie, jakie ma kontynuowanie przez władze kubańskie działań zmierzających do pełnego poszanowania wszystkich praw politycznych i obywatelskich Kubańczyków, w tym wolności wyrażania opinii i zgromadzeń. UE wyraziła wobec władz kubańskich zaniepokojenie z powodu wzrostu liczby tymczasowych zatrzymań. Kwestie te zostały poruszone w kontekście dialogu politycznego UE-Kuba.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007106/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuba: the case of Yaqueline García

A member of the Cuban organisation 'Las Damas de Blanco' ('Ladies in White') has reported that police beat and humiliated her to prevent her from attending Sunday mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Charity in El Cobre (Santiago province). Yaqueline García stated in a declaration for 'Háblalo Sin Miedo' ('Say It Without Fear'), a Miami-based facility that receives and disseminates reports of human rights abuses in Cuba, that her whole body was 'black and blue'. She declared that the police detained her on her way to the shrine, releasing her only late on Sunday, 1 July 2012, on a remote farm road after throwing her personal belongings at her feet.

— Is the EEAS aware of the case of Yaqueline García?

— Could the Vice-President/High Representative make representations to the Cuban authorities with a statement concerning the ongoing repression directed against 'Las Damas de Blanco', given that this would send out a strong signal to the effect that the EU is closely monitoring the human rights situation in Cuba and considers the ill-treatment of members of this organisation to be unacceptable?

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

The specific case reported was not brought to the attention of the EEAS, neither in Brussels nor in Havana, by any of the Cuban peaceful opposition movements or by international human rights' organisations. However the EU Delegation in Havana is aware that members of the Damas de Blanco reportedly are being regularly harassed by the state security when they attempt to gather in Santiago or in the Sanctuary of el Cobre.

The EU Delegation in Havana, together with the EU Heads of Mission, monitors the human rights' situation in Cuba. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are at the core of EU relations with third countries. On several occasions the EU has reiterated the importance for the Cuban authorities to continue to make progress towards full respect of all political and civil rights for the Cuban people, including freedom of expression and assembly. The EU has expressed concern to the Cuban authorities about the upsurge of temporary detentions. These questions are addressed in the context of the EU-Cuba political dialogue.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007107/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kuba: przypadek Franka Montero

Frank Montero rozpoczął 36 dni temu strajk głodowy, by zaprotestować przeciwko aresztowaniu go w dniu 19 lutego 2012 r. (aresztowano go wraz z bratem Danielem) na podstawie zarzutów o próbę opuszczenia Kuby. Bracia twierdzą, że wybierali się na ryby. Władze odmówiły poinformowania rodziny F. Montero o jego stanie zdrowia oraz o miejscu jego pobytu po przeniesieniu go z więzienia Aguadores. Zgodnie z doniesieniami mediów F. Montero został w pośpiechu przyjęty do szpitala w ostatni weekend.

— Czy ESDZ wie o przypadku F. Montero?

— Pamiętając o śmierci więźniów politycznych – Orlando Zapaty Tamayo i Wilmana Villara Mendozy – w następstwie prowadzonych przez nich długich strajków głodowych (O. Zapaty w 2010 r., a W. Mendozy na początku bieżącego roku), czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel mogłaby poruszyć sprawę F. Montero w rozmowach z kubańskimi władzami?

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

Unia Europejska jest poinformowana o sprawie pana Franka Montero. Według najnowszych dostępnych informacji pan Montero zakończył swój strajk głodowy, najwyraźniej dlatego, że niedawno możliwe było potwierdzenie zwolnienia jego oraz jego brata z aresztu. UE wielokrotnie podkreślała znaczenie, jakie ma kontynuowanie przez władze kubańskie działań zmierzających do pełnego poszanowania wszystkich praw politycznych i obywatelskich Kubańczyków, w tym swobody przemieszczania się. Kwestie te są poruszane w ramach dialogu politycznego między UE a Kubą.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007107/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuba: the case of Frank Montero

Frank Montero went on a hunger strike 36 days ago to protest his arrest on 19 February 2012 (along with his twin brother Daniel) on charges of trying to leave Cuba. The brothers claimed they were going fishing. The authorities have refused to inform Mr Montero's relatives about his health or whereabouts after he was removed from Aguadores prison. According to media reports, Mr Montero was rushed to hospital over the weekend.

— Is the EEAS aware of Mr Montero's case?

— Bearing in mind the deaths of political prisoners Orlando Zapata Tamayo and Wilman Villar Mendoza following their lengthy hunger strikes (Mr Zapata in 2010 and Mr Villar early this year), could the Vice-President/High Representative take up Mr Montero's case with the Cuban authorities?

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

The EU is aware of Mr Frank Montero's case. According to the latest information available, Mr Montero ended his hunger strike, seemingly because his release — as well as that of his brother — could be confirmed shortly. The EU has reiterated on several occasions the importance for the Cuban authorities to continue to make progress towards full respect of all political and civil rights for the Cuban people, including freedom of movement. These questions are addressed in the context of the EU-Cuba political dialogue.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007108/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Białoruś: sprawa białoruskiego duchownego prawosławnego Mikałaja Hajduka

Według Radia Wolna Europa/Radia Swoboda Mikałajowi Hajdukowi, białoruskiemu duchownemu prawosławnemu z Grodna (zachodnia Białoruś), grożą zarzuty administracyjne za odmowę poddania się pobraniu odcisków palców. Po zamachu terrorystycznym w Mińsku z dnia 4 lipca 2008 r. białoruskie władze zarządziły pobranie odcisków palców wszystkich mężczyzn w kraju, a władze Grodna przeprowadzają w tym celu wizyty domowe.

— Czy Wiceprzewodniczącej Komisji/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel znana jest sprawa Mikałaja Hajduka? Czy ESDZ zainterweniuje w jego imieniu?

— Jakie jest stanowisko UE w sprawie wprowadzonego przez reżim białoruski obowiązku poddania się pobraniu odcisków palców?

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

Unii Europejskiej znane są doniesienia medialne dotyczące sprawy Mikałaja Hajduka, o których wspomina Szanowny Pan Poseł, jak również informacje o innych podobnych przypadkach.

UE jest wciąż poważnie zaniepokojona nasilaniem się represji wobec przedstawicieli społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, opozycji politycznej i niezależnych mediów na Białorusi od czasu wyborów prezydenckich, które odbyły się 19 grudnia 2010 r. Nałożenie wymogu pobierania odcisków palców może w tym kontekście stanowić dalsze bezprawne ograniczanie praw człowieka i podstawowych wolności na Białorusi i może być nadużywane jako kolejne narzędzie kontroli i represji.

UE będzie nadal uważnie śledzić rozwój wydarzeń oraz wzywać władze Białorusi do wycofania się z represyjnej polityki i do podjęcia kroków w kierunku poszanowania praw człowieka, praworządności i zasad demokratycznych zgodnie z międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami Białorusi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007108/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Belarus: the case of the Belarusian Orthodox priest Mikalay Hayduk

According to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Mikalay Hayduk, a Belarusian Orthodox priest in the western city of Hrodna, is facing administrative charges for refusing to be fingerprinted. Belarusian authorities introduced mandatory fingerprinting for all men in the country after a terrorist attack in Minsk on 4 July 2008, and Hrodna authorities have been making home visits.

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the case of Mikalay Hayduk? Will the EEAS intervene on his behalf?

— What is the EU's position on the mandatory fingerprinting ordered by the regime in Belarus?

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

The EU is aware of the media reports referred to by the Honourable Member regarding the case of Mikalay Hayduk, as well as of reports of other similar cases.

The EU remains seriously concerned about the increased repression against representatives of civil society, the political opposition and the independent media in Belarus since the 19 December 2010 Presidential elections. In this context, the imposed collection of fingerprints may well add further illegitimate restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms in Belarus and could be misused as yet another tool of control and repression.

The EU will continue to follow developments closely and call upon the authorities of Belarus to roll back their repressive policies, and to take steps towards the respect for human rights, the rule of law and democratic principles, in line with Belarus' international commitments.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007109/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Afganistan: publiczna egzekucja dwudziestodwuletniej kobiety

Opublikowano niedawno nagranie wideo z publicznej egzekucji młodej zamężnej Afganki w prowincji Parwan (kobieta była oskarżona o cudzołóstwo). Rozstrzelano ją przy gromkich okrzykach tłumu mężczyzn. Afgańskie władze winą za egzekucję obarczają bojowników talibskich. Talibowie utrzymują, że nie brali udziału w zdarzeniu oraz że proces kobiety nie przebiegał zgodnie z prawem szariatu. Prezydent Hamid Karzaj potępił to zabójstwo, nazywając je sprzecznym z islamem i niewybaczalnym.

Biorąc pod uwagę niedawne powołanie Karla Åke Roghego na szefa misji policyjnej UE w Afganistanie (EUROPOL Afganistan) oraz fakt, że w okresie od 2002 do końca 2011 r. UE przeznaczyła około 2,5 mld EUR na pomoc dla Afganistanu, w tym 382 mln EUR w postaci pomocy humanitarnej – co może zrobić UE, aby pomóc chronić kobiety w Afganistanie przed takim brutalnym i niehumanitarnym traktowaniem?

Nowe programy wsparcia o łącznej wartości 200 mln EUR, które są przygotowywane, zostaną przeznaczone jako środki na zobowiązania w 2012 r. W okresie od 2011 r. do 2013 r. UE przeznacza rocznie kwotę 200 mln EUR na programy rozwojowe.

— Jak można wykorzystać te środki UE, aby chronić kobiety w Afganistanie?

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

UE będzie w dalszym ciągu promować większe poszanowanie praw człowieka, a w szczególności praw kobiet. UE wielokrotnie przedstawiała swoje stanowisko na ten temat, na przykład w konkluzjach Rady z dnia 14 maja 2012 r. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca regularnie podnosi kwestię konieczności większego poszanowania praw człowieka w Afganistanie z rządem tego kraju, ostatnio w kwietniu na spotkaniu z ministrem spraw zagranicznych Afganistanu.

W dniu 8 lipca 2012 r. na konferencji w Tokio rząd Afganistanu potwierdził swoje zaangażowanie w ochronę praw człowieka i podstawowych wolności obywateli, a zwłaszcza praw kobiet. Jest to jeden z elementów ram wzajemnej rozliczalności, które będą stosowane zarówno przez społeczność międzynarodową, jak i rząd Afganistanu w celu wzajemnego egzekwowania realizacji podjętych zobowiązań.

UE udziela pomocy rządowi afgańskiemu oraz społeczeństwu obywatelskiemu w zwalczaniu przemocy wobec kobiet, w szczególności za pośrednictwem Europejskiego Instrumentu na rzecz Wspierania Demokracji i Praw Człowieka, a także wspiera reformy wymiaru sprawiedliwości i jego instytucji, które są niezbędne dla ochrony praw kobiet. Pomoc UE na rzecz policji cywilnej skierowana jest na reformę instytucjonalną i przyczynia się do wzrostu liczby kobiet w służbach afgańskiej policji. UE oferuje pomoc dla najbardziej potrzebujących w zakresie usług socjalnych, które obejmują doradztwo, pomoc prawną i mediację dla kobiet w trudnej sytuacji rodzinnej lub będących w konflikcie z prawem. Dodatkowe programy zmierzają do osiągnięcia celów długoterminowych, takich jak wzmocnienie istniejących organów służących ochronie socjalnej oraz ochronie praw kobiet i dziewcząt afgańskich narażonych na ryzyko przemocy domowej lub będących jej ofiarami.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007109/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Afghanistan: public execution of a 22 year-old woman

Video footage has recently been released of the public execution of a young, married Afghan woman in Parwan Province who was accused of adultery. The 22-year-old woman was shot dead as a crowd of men cheered. Afghan authorities have blamed the execution on Taliban militants. The Taliban says it was not involved and that the woman's trial was not in accordance with Sharia law. President Hamid Karzai condemned the killing as un-Islamic and unforgivable.

Bearing in mind the recent appointment of Mr Karl Åke Roghe as head of the EU police mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan), and the fact that between 2002 and the end of 2011 the EU committed some EUR 2.5 billion in assistance to Afghanistan, including EUR 382 million in humanitarian assistance, what can the EU do to help protect women in Afghanistan from such brutal and inhuman treatment?

New support programmes worth a total of EUR 200 million are in preparation for commitment in 2012. For the 2011-2013 period, the EU is allocating an annual sum of EUR 200 million for development programmes.

— How can these EU commitments be implemented to help protect women in Afghanistan?

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

The EU will continue to champion greater respect for human rights, in particular those of women. The EU's position has been restated on a number of occasions, for instance in Council conclusions of 14 May 2012. The HR/VP raises the need for greater respect for human rights in Afghanistan with the Government on a regular basis, most recently in a meeting with the Afghan Foreign Minister in April.

The Government of Afghanistan has, at the Tokyo Conference of 8 July 2012, reaffirmed its commitment to uphold the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens, in particular women. This is one component of the Mutual Accountability Framework which will be used by both the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to hold each other accountable for the fulfilment of commitments made.

The EU provides assistance to the Afghan Government and civil society to combat violence against women, particularly through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, and supports reform of the justice sector and its institutions, which are indispensable for protecting the rights of women. EU support to the civilian police supports institutional reform, including increasing the number of police women within the Afghanistan National Police corps. The EU supports social services to the most vulnerable including counselling, legal aid and mediation for women faced with difficult family circumstances and/or at odds with the justice system. Additional programmes address long-term objectives, such as strengthening existing bodies to exercise social protection and protect the rights of Afghan women and girls at risk or victims of domestic violence.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007113/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Entrada da Venezuela no Mercosul

A integração da Venezuela no Mercosul é oficializada a 31 de julho, tendo sido anunciada pela Presidente argentina, Cristina Kirchner, na Cimeira do Bloco da América do Sul.

O Uruguai já afirmou que é contra a entrada da Venezuela, uma vez que o Paraguai não participou na referida Cimeira, por ter sido suspenso após a deposição do Presidente Fernando Lugo pelo Congresso.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual a sua posição relativamente a esta matéria?

2. Como vislumbra as futuras negociações do Acordo de Associação da UE com o Mercosul, agora que aparentemente a Venezuela estará a um passo de se tornar membro efetivo deste mercado comum?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(24 de agosto de 2012)

A Comissão toma nota da decisão sobre a adesão da Venezuela ao Mercosul como membro de pleno direito, adotada pelo Conselho do Mercosul em 30 de julho 2012. Na sequência desta decisão, a Venezuela deverá participar nas negociações entre a UE e o Mercosul, um processo a que já foi associada na qualidade de observador, desde o relançamento das negociações em 2010.

Até agora, a Venezuela nunca tomou qualquer posição pública sobre os elementos comerciais do Acordo de Associação UE-Mercosul, pelo que não há elementos concretos que indiquem de que forma a entrada da Venezuela pode afetar a dinâmica das negociações. Além disso, recorde-se que a UE apenas negoceia com o Mercosul enquanto região e não com cada um dos Estados-Membros a nível bilateral.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007113/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Venezuelan membership of Mercosur

Venezuela will officially join Mercosur on 31 July: the announcement was made by President Cristina Kirchner of Argentina at the Mercosur summit.

Uruguay has raised objections to Venezuelan membership, given that Paraguay did not attend the summit in question, having been suspended after President Fernando Lugo was impeached by Congress.

1. What attitude is the Commission taking to this matter?

2. What prospects does it see for the negotiations on the EU's association agreement with Mercosur, now that Venezuela is apparently on the point of becoming a full member of the latter organisation?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

The Commission takes note of the decision about the accession of Venezuela into Mercosur as a full member, adopted by the Mercosur Council on 30 July 2012. As a result of this decision, Venezuela is expected to participate in the negotiations between the EU and Mercosur, a process to which it was already associated as an observer since the relaunch of the negotiating process in 2010.

Until now, Venezuela has never taken any public position regarding the trade elements of the EU-Mercosur Association agreement and there are therefore no concrete elements indicating how the entry of Venezuela might affect the dynamics of the negotiation. Besides, it should be recalled that the EU only negotiates with Mercosur as a region and not with individual member countries bilaterally.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007114/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Plantação legal de marijuana no Uruguai

Segundo notícias veiculadas recentemente pela comunicação social, o Uruguai prevê começar em setembro a plantação legal de marijuana.

Esta decisão tomada pelo Governo do Presidente José Mujica aprovou a legislação que prevê a comercialização de canábis com o objetivo de travar a criminalidade e o mercado negro.

Assim pergunto à Comissão:

— Tendo em conta que o Uruguai integra a delegação Mercosul, qual a posição da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

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

A UE está a acompanhar o debate no Uruguai relativo à legalização da produção de marijuana e o projeto de lei que deverá ser discutido no Parlamento uruguaio nos próximos meses.

A Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre os Estupefacientes de 1961 (com a redação que lhe foi dada pelo Protocolo de 1972) estabelece o quadro jurídico para a produção/cultivo, comércio e consumo de estupefacientes, e embora proíba, nomeadamente, a produção ilícita e a posse destas substâncias, incluindo a canábis, não proíbe o seu consumo. Cabe às partes na Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre os Estupefacientes de 1961, entre as quais o Uruguai, adotar as medidas que considerem adequadas, em conformidade com as suas obrigações jurídicas. A Convenção permite uma certa margem de manobra a nível da sua aplicação, juntamente com as reservas já expressas por alguns países.

Na UE, nenhum Estado-Membro legalizou a produção/cultivo ou posse de canábis para consumo pessoal. Ao mesmo tempo, a maioria dos Estados-Membros não criminalizaram a utilização de canábis, tendo *de facto* ou *de jure*, despenalizado a sua posse para consumo pessoal, bem como, em alguns casos, a produção/cultivo de uma quantidade limitada de plantas de canábis para consumo pessoal. A UE não é Parte na Convenção das Nações Unidas de 1961 sobre os Estupefacientes. As diferenças de pontos de vista entre os Estados-Membros impedem que seja tomada uma posição formal por parte da UE semelhante à posição tomada pelos países da América Latina e anunciada pelo Uruguai.

O facto de o Uruguai ser membro do Mercosul não tem qualquer impacto nesta questão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007114/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Legal planting of marijuana in Uruguay

According to recent media reports, Uruguay is planning to start legal planting of marijuana in September.

This decision has been taken by the Government of President José Mujica, which has adopted legislation legalising the sale of cannabis in an attempt to curb crime and the black market.

Bearing in mind that Uruguay is a member of Mercosur, what is the Commission's view on this matter?

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

The EU is following the debate in Uruguay regarding the legalization of marijuana production and the draft bill which is due to be discussed in the Uruguayan Parliament in the coming months.

The UN 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs (as amended by the 1972 Protocol) provides the legal framework for the production/ cultivation, trade and use of narcotic drugs, while — *inter alia* — prohibiting the illicit production and possession of these substances, including cannabis, but not its use. Parties to the 1961 UN Convention on Narcotic Substances, among which Uruguay, take the measures they consider appropriate in conformity with their legal obligations. The Convention allows for a certain leeway in its implementation, combined with reservations to the implementation made by some countries.

Within the EU, no Member State has legalised the production/ cultivation or possession of cannabis for personal use. At the same time, a majority of Member States have not criminalised the use of cannabis and de-facto or de-jure decriminalised the possession for personal use and — in some cases — also the production/ cultivation of limited amount of cannabis plants for personal use. The EU is not a Party to the UN 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs. The different views between Member States prevent a formal EU position similar to the position taken by Latin American countries and announced by Uruguay.

Uruguay's membership of Mercosur has no impact on this issue.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007115/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Mercosul e Unasul suspendem o Paraguai até 2013

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela comunicação social, o Mercosul e a Unasul, os maiores blocos de países sul-americanos, suspenderam, em duas resoluções adotadas em cimeiras realizadas na cidade argentina de Mendoza, o Paraguai até às eleições de abril de 2013, devido à destituição de Fernando Lugo.

No entanto, Fernando Lugo alerta para uma «quebra da democracia» e cria um gabinete paralelo, atacando a legitimidade do governo que o substituiu.

Qual a posição da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente manifestou preocupação pelos acontecimentos no Paraguai e pela celeridade do processo de impugnação de Fernando Lugo. Sublinhou igualmente que era essencial respeitar a vontade democrática do povo paraguaio.

A UE acompanha de perto a situação no Paraguai bem como a evolução dos acontecimentos em toda a região. Deverá ser evitada qualquer medida que possa ter um impacto negativo na vida do povo paraguaio.

A UE também segue as ações legais lançadas por Fernando Lugo na sequência da sua destituição.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007115/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Mercosur and Unasur suspend Paraguay until 2013

According to various reports in the press, Mercosur and Unasur, the two main blocs of South American countries, have suspended Paraguay until the elections due to be held in April 2013. The decision was taken in two resolutions adopted at summits held in the Argentinian city of Mendoza in response to the removal from office of Fernando Lugo.

In the meantime, Fernando Lugo has warned of the collapse of democracy and is setting up a parallel cabinet, challenging the legitimacy of the government that replaced him.

What is the Commission's position on this matter?

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

The HR/VP expressed concern about events in Paraguay and about the speed of Fernando Lugo's impeachment process. She also underlined that respecting the democratic will of the Paraguayan people was paramount.

The EU closely monitors the situation in Paraguay as well as developments in the wider region. Any measure that could have a negative impact on the livelihood of the Paraguayan people should be avoided.

The EU also follows the legal processes launched by Fernando Lugo following his ousting.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007116/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Síria abate avião militar turco

A Turquia acusa a Síria de ter abatido um avião de reconhecimento desarmado quando este se encontrava 1,6 quilómetros dentro do espaço aéreo internacional e de ter alvejado um outro avião de busca quando participava nas operações de socorro que se seguiram. As forças armadas da Turquia encontraram os corpos dos dois pilotos do caça RF-4E a 1 000 metros de profundidade no Mediterrâneo.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual a sua posição relativamente a esta matéria?

2. Considera que este ataque possa pôr em risco o *status* quo da região?

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

Nas conclusões do Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros de 25 de junho de 2012, a UE condenou o abate inaceitável de um avião militar turco pela Síria, tendo-se congratulado com a reação prudente e responsável da Turquia. A UE apelou à Síria para que cooperasse inteiramente com a Turquia e autorizasse um inquérito imediato. Exortou a Síria a garantir que cumpre as normas e obrigações internacionais.

A UE continua profundamente preocupada com as repercussões da crise síria nos países vizinhos em termos de segurança e estabilidade. Apela ao regime sírio para que respeite a integridade territorial e a soberania dos países vizinhos. A brutalidade do regime tem tido efeitos trágicos na Síria e repercussões graves nos países vizinhos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007116/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Syria shoots down a Turkish military plane

Turkey has accused Syria of shooting down an unarmed reconnaissance plane that was 1.6 km inside international airspace and of targeting a search plane that was taking part in the ensuing rescue operations. The Turkish armed forces found the bodies of the two pilots of the RF-4E fighter plane in the Mediterranean at a depth of 1 000 m.

1. What is the Commission's position on this matter?

2. Does it believe that this attack could endanger the status quo in the region?

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

In its Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 25 June 2012 the EU condemned the unacceptable shooting down of a Turkish military plane by Syria. It commended Turkey's measured and responsible reaction. The EU called on Syria to cooperate fully with Turkey and allow full access for an immediate investigation. It urged Syria to ensure that it complies by international standards and obligations.

The EU remains deeply concerned about the spill-over effects of the Syrian crisis in neighbouring countries in terms of security and stability. It calls on the Syrian regime to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of neighbouring countries. The regime's brutality has had tragic effects in Syria and serious repercussions in neighbouring countries.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007118/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Trabalho forçado na UE

Considerando que:

Segundo a Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), existem 880 mil pessoas vítimas de trabalho forçado na UE, incluindo exploração sexual.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta realidade?

2. O que tem sido feito para evitar esta situação?

Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão
(29 de agosto de 2012)

Em junho, a Comissão adotou a nova estratégia integrada da UE para a erradicação do tráfico de seres humanos (2012/2016), que enuncia um conjunto de medidas a tomar. Esta surge na sequência da diretiva de 2011 ([1]) que adota uma abordagem holística e que define o trabalho forçado como um dos aspetos do tráfico de seres humanos.

De acordo com dados preliminares, tal como apresentado na estratégia, a maior parte das vítimas registadas nos Estados-Membros são sujeitas a exploração sexual (76 % em 2010). As outras são vítimas de trabalho forçado (uma diminuição de 24 % em 2008 para 14 % em 2010), mendicidade (3 %) e servidão doméstica (1 %). Em termos de género, os dados preliminares para 2008/2010 mostram que as vítimas eram predominantemente do sexo feminino (79 %, dos quais 12 % eram jovens), sendo 21 % do sexo masculino (dos quais 3 % eram jovens). É essencial dispor de dados fiáveis e comparáveis; a Comissão publicará resultados mais pormenorizados no outono de 2012.

A UE tomou igualmente medidas para proteger melhor as crianças contra a exploração sexual, nomeadamente através da adoção da Diretiva 93/2011 sobre o abuso sexual e a exploração sexual de crianças e a pornografia infantil ([2]). Esta harmoniza sanções para vinte infrações e prevê a criminalização de uma nova gama de infrações como o aliciamento em linha. Reforça também a proteção das vítimas e prevê medidas contra violações repetidas, tais como avaliação obrigatória dos infratores e um acesso mais fácil para os organizadores de atividades de voluntariado que envolvem crianças aos registos criminais dos potenciais voluntários.

([1]) Diretiva 2011/36/UE relativa à prevenção e luta contra o tráfico de seres humanos e à proteção das vítimas, e que substitui a Decisão-Quadro 2002/629/JAI do Conselho.
([2]) Diretiva 93/2011, JO L 335 de 17.12.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007118/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Forced labour in the EU

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), there are 880 000 people in the EU in forced labour, including sexual exploitation.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above fact?

2. What action has been taken to combat this situation?

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

In June, the Commission adopted the new integrated EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016, which outlines a set of actions to be taken. This followed on from the 2011 Directive ([1]) which takes a holistic approach and which defines forced labour as one aspect of trafficking in human beings.

According to preliminary data, as presented in the strategy, most of the registered victims in Member States are subject to sexual exploitation (76% in 2010). The others are forced into labour (a decrease from 24% in 2008 to 14% in 2010), begging (3%) and domestic servitude (1%). In terms of gender, preliminary data for 2008-2010 show the victims were predominantly female (79%, of which 12% were girls); with males accounting for 21% (of which 3% were boys). Comparable and reliable data is essential and the Commission will publish more detailed results in the autumn of 2012.

The EU has also taken action better to protect children against sexual exploitation, in particular through the adoption of the directive 93/2011 on the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography ([2]). This harmonises penalties for twenty offences and provides for the criminalisation of a range of new offences such as online grooming. It also reinforces victim protection and provides for measures against repeat offences, such as mandatory evaluation of offenders and easier access for organisers of volunteer activities involving children to the criminal records of potential volunteers.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA.
([2]) Directive 93/2011 OJ L 335/1 of 17.12.2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007119/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Manipulação das taxas «Libor» e «Euribor»

Considerando que:

Tem sido noticiado que vários bancos no Reino Unido podem ter manipulado a taxa «Libor» em benefício próprio. O mesmo poderá ter acontecido com a «Euribor».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento de que tal situação se possa também ter verificado com a «Euribor»?

2. Que medidas vão ser tomadas para evitar que situações desta gravidade não voltem a ocorrer no futuro?

Resposta dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(31 de agosto de 2012)

As autoridades competentes estão neste momento a efetuar investigações sobre a manipulação das taxas LIBOR e Euribor por parte de diversos bancos. Na pendência do resultado dessas investigações, a Comissão não está em condições de comentar o que pode ter acontecido em relação à Euribor.

Há no entanto que referir que a Comissão atuou rapidamente para evitar a repetição de situações como a do escândalo que se verificou em torno da LIBOR, adotando propostas alteradas de um regulamento ([1]) e de uma diretiva ([2]) relativos ao abuso do mercado, com vista a proibir expressamente e a responsabilizar penalmente, em toda a União, a manipulação de indicadores de referência, incluindo a LIBOR.

A Comissão está também a estudar a regulamentação dos indicadores de referência em geral e está atualmente a analisar os factos em cooperação com as autoridades competentes, o Banco Central Europeu e os seus parceiros internacionais, para identificar as novas medidas que são necessárias. O Parlamento Europeu será informado sobre os progressos realizados.

Por último, a Comissão está a investigar diversas possibilidades de acordos de cartel que envolvem indicadores de referência incluindo a Euribor e a LIBOR, bem como a negociação de produtos derivados conexos. Se os bancos se tiverem concertado para manipular um indicador de referência com vista a beneficiar de posições conexas em derivados, tal facto constitui um cartel, suscetível de distorcer gravemente a concorrência. Compete à Comissão aplicar as regras *anti-trust* da UE, nomeadamente o artigo 101.° do Tratado, e impor sanções sempre que necessário.

([1]) Proposta alterada de um regulamento relativo ao abuso de informação privilegiada e à manipulação do mercado, 2011/0295 (COD).
([2]) Proposta alterada de uma diretiva relativa às sanções penais por abuso de informação privilegiada e manipulação do mercado, 2011/0297 (COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007119/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Manipulation of the Libor and Euribor rates

It has been reported that a number of banks in the United Kingdom may have manipulated the Libor rate to their own advantage. The same thing may have happened with the Euribor rate.

1. Does the Commission know whether a similar situation has been confirmed in relation to the Euribor rate?

2. What steps will be taken to prevent such serious situations from recurring in the future?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 August 2012)

Investigations by competent authorities into the manipulation of LIBOR and EURIBOR by several banks are ongoing. Pending the outcome of these investigations the Commission is not in a position to comment on what may have happened in relation to EURIBOR.

However the Commission has acted promptly to prevent the recurrence of situations such as the LIBOR scandal by adopting amended proposals for a regulation ([1]) and for a directive ([2]) on market abuse, to clearly prohibit and criminalise throughout the Union the manipulation of benchmarks including LIBOR.

The Commission is also examining the regulation of benchmarks more broadly and is currently exploring the facts in cooperation with competent authorities, the European Central Bank and its international partners, to determine what further action is required. The European Parliament will be kept informed of progress.

Finally the Commission is investigating several possible cartel arrangements involving benchmarks including EURIBOR and LIBOR and trading in related derivatives. If banks have colluded to manipulate a benchmark to benefit from related derivative positions, this would constitute a cartel which could seriously distort competition. It is the Commission's responsibility to enforce EU antitrust rules, in particular Article 101 of the Treaty, and to impose sanctions where necessary.

([1]) Amended proposal for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation, 2011/0295 (COD).
([2]) Amended proposal for a directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation, 2011/0297 (COD).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007120/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Recessão em Portugal

Considerando que:

As previsões, para Portugal, do Banco de Portugal foram revistas em alta, prevendo-se agora uma recessão mais suave e um aumento das exportações de 3,5 % este ano e 5,2 % no próximo. No entanto, o Banco de Portugal avisa que existem vários riscos, entre os quais uma taxa de exportação inferior devido a fatores externos, diminuição nas receitas e aumento das despesas do Estado devido ao aumento do desemprego. O Banco de Portugal refere «que um aumento das medidas de austeridade para alcançar o objetivo do défice pode aumentar a recessão».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento destas previsões do Banco de Portugal? Como as comenta?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(7 de setembro de 2012)

O Banco de Portugal é um dos principais interlocutores no contexto do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal, sendo o seu governador um dos cossignatários do Memorando de Entendimento. Durante as missões de revisão trimestrais, a Comissão troca pontos de vista sobre a evolução macroeconómica e a política orçamental com o Banco de Portugal, bem como com o Ministério das Finanças, o FMI e o BCE. Os pontos de vista da Comissão são expressos nos relatórios de revisão trimestrais, que figuram no sítio Web da Direção-Geral dos Assuntos Económicos e Financeiros. A mais recente análise pode ser consultada em:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op95_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007120/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Recession in Portugal

The Bank of Portugal's forecasts for Portugal have been revised upwards, and it is now forecasting a less severe recession and a rise in exports of 3.5% this year and 5.2% next year. The Bank of Portugal is nevertheless warning that there are various risks, including a lower export rate owing to external factors, a fall in revenue and a rise in government spending owing to increased unemployment. The Bank of Portugal also notes that additional austerity measures to reach the deficit target may lead to a deeper recession.

Is the Commission aware of these forecasts by the Bank of Portugal? What comments would it make?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 September 2012)

Banco de Portugal is one of the main interlocutors in the context of Portuguese Economic Adjustment Programme and the memorandum of understanding is co-signed by the Bank's governor. During the quarterly review missions, the Commission exchanges views on macroeconomic developments and fiscal policy with the Banco de Portugal, as well as the Ministry of Finance, IMF and ECB. The Commission views are communicated in the quarterly review reports, which are published on the Economic and Financial Affairs Directorate-General's website. The latest review can be found under:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op95_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007121/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Setor do leite

Considerando que:

— A situação do setor do leite é caracterizada por um excesso da produção e preços baixos na produção;

— Segundo a Federação Europeia do Setor do Leite (European Milk Board), o litro de leite está a ser pago a 25 cêntimos, enquanto os custos da produção rondam os 40 cêntimos;

— Em Portugal, o setor em causa é composto por quase 8 mil produtores, cuja produção de leite vale cerca de 650 milhões de euro/ano;

— Segundo as conclusões de um estudo encomendado pela Federação Nacional das Cooperativas de Leite (Fenalac), o impacto das recentes propostas legislativas da Comissão Europeia para a PAC 2013/2020 sobre o setor do leite pode implicar uma perda de 81 % dos apoios comunitários para os produtores de leite em Portugal e a diminuição de 46 % no rendimento líquido das explorações leiteiras.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Que medidas tenciona a Comissão apresentar, tendo em conta as necessidades de salvaguarda da produção nacional, evitando um desfecho desastroso num setor agrícola já ameaçado pelo anunciado fim das quotas leiteiras na UE em 2015, sabendo que tais propostas legislativas implicariam o desaparecimento de grande parte dos produtores de leite em Portugal, em particular nas regiões de Entre Douro e Minho e Beira Litoral (cerca de 67 % da produção de Portugal continental)?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(29 de agosto de 2012)

As análises mostram que, embora os preços de mercado tenham caído desde 2011, mantêm-se acima dos níveis de intervenção. O preço do leite cru em maio de 2012 comunicado por Portugal foi de 30,8 c/kg, próximo da média de 31,3 c/kg na UE. Durante a maior parte de 2011, o aumento dos custos de funcionamento na UE foi compensado pelo aumento dos preços do leite na União Europeia. Estima-se que as margens leiteiras na UE tenham diminuído no primeiro trimestre de 2012, mas continuam a ser superiores às do primeiro trimestre de 2011. Desde maio de 2011, os preços da manteiga e do leite em pó desnatado têm subido ligeiramente e apresentam uma tendência de estabilização. Os preços do leite nos mercados à vista revelam uma tendência semelhante.

Na sua proposta de apoio direto, a Comissão propõe que todos os direitos convirjam num valor forfetário, por ser cada vez mais difícil justificar a existência de diferenças significativas entre os níveis de apoio por hectare, decorrentes da utilização de valores históricos de referência. Propõe-se, porém, que os Estados-Membros possam optar por proceder a esta adaptação ao longo de um período de transição — a terminar em 2019 —, durante o qual o valor dos direitos pode ser diferenciado com base no valor dos direitos de que os agricultores sejam titulares em 31 de dezembro de 2013.

A proposta prevê ainda a possibilidade de diferenciar o valor dos direitos à escala regional. Para isso, os Estados-Membros poderão definir regiões com base em critérios objetivos e não-discriminatórios. Propõe-se ainda que, em certas circunstâncias, os Estados-Membros possam decidir conceder apoios associados a setores ou regiões, quando tipos de agricultura ou setores agrícolas específicos enfrentem determinadas dificuldades. A Comissão não confirma, portanto, o cenário apresentado, de acentuado decréscimo dos apoios da UE aos produtores de leite portugueses no âmbito da proposta de reforma da PAC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007121/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Milk sector

In the milk sector there is overproduction, and producer prices are low.

According to the European Milk Board, producers are being paid EUR 0.25 per litre of milk, whereas production costs are in the region of EUR 0.40.

The milk sector in Portugal consists of nearly 8 000 producers, and the total value of their annual production is approximately EUR 650 million.

A study by FENALAC, the Portuguese national federation of milk cooperatives, has concluded that, as far as the milk sector is concerned, the Commission's recent legislative proposals on the CAP for the years 2013 to 2020 could deprive Portuguese producers of 81% of their EU support and lead to a 46% drop in net dairy farm profits.

Given the need to safeguard Portugal's national production, what measures will the Commission submit in order to avert disaster in an agricultural sector already being placed in jeopardy by the plan to abolish milk quotas in the EU in 2015, bearing in mind that its legislative proposals could spell the demise of a great many Portuguese milk producers, especially in the Entre Douro e Minho and Beira Litoral regions (which account for about 67% of production in mainland Portugal)?

Answer given by Mr Çioloş on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2012)

Analysis shows that market prices have fallen since 2011, but remain above intervention levels. The raw milk price for May 2012 notified by Portugal is 30.8 c/kg, close to the EU average of 31.3 c/kg. During most of 2011, increasing EU operating costs were compensated by increasing EU milk prices. EU milk margins are estimated to have decreased in the 1st quarter of 2012 but remain above those of the 1st quarter of 2011. Since May 2012, prices for butter and skimmed milk powder are slightly upward and stabilising. Milk prices on spot markets show a similar trend.

In its proposal on direct support, the Commission proposes that all entitlements converge to a flat rate value, as it has become increasingly difficult to justify the existence of significant individual differences in the level of support per hectare resulting from the use of historical references. However, it is proposed that Member States may chose to operate this move over a transition period — ending in 2019 — during which the value of entitlements may be differentiated based on the value of the entitlements a farmer held on 31 December 2013.

The proposal also contains the possibility to differentiate the value of entitlements at regional level; for this purpose Member States may define regions in accordance with objective and non-discriminatory criteria. Moreover, it is proposed that, under certain conditions, Member States may decide to grant coupled support to sectors or regions where specific types of farming or agricultural sectors undergo certain difficulties. Therefore, the Commission cannot confirm the scenario presented concerning the accentuated decrease in EU support to Portuguese milk producers under the CAP reform proposal.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007122/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Fusarium circinatum

Considerando que:

— Fusarium circinatum é um fungo que causa a morte das coníferas da UE;

— Tal doença vem concorrer com outra, o nemátodo do pinheiro, ambas pondo em causa as florestas e as economias daí emergentes;

— O Comité Fitossanitário Permanente aprovou recentemente a decisão da Comissão relativa a medidas de emergência contra o nemátodo da madeira do pinheiro;

— A Comissão Europeia comprometeu 38,4 milhões de euros para cofinanciar a implementação de medidas obrigatórias, que incluem a eliminação imediata de todas as árvores coníferas na área infestada e a demarcação de uma área muito maior de condições estritas para um acompanhamento intensivo, a remoção de todas as árvores em declínio e ainda tratamento térmico de toda a madeira de coníferas que saia dessas áreas;

— O Fusarium, um organismo de quarentena tal como o nemátodo, por sua vez não é contemplado por nenhuma compensação financeira por parte da UE para destruição de plantas;

Assim pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Prevê algum apoio específico para o Fusarium, na mesma ótica do Nemátodo, para ações preventivas e de controlo, em casos que tenham de ser tomadas providências e medidas de erradicação da doença?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(29 de agosto de 2012)

Na União Europeia, o fungo *Gibberella circinata*, também conhecido como *Fusarium circinatum*, está regulamentado através de medidas de emergência provisórias contra a sua introdução e propagação na União (Decisão 2007/433/CE da Comissão ([1])). A regulamentação relativa ao *Gibberella circinata* na UE tem por base informações científicas que revelam que este fungo pode provocar uma mortalidade significativa nas espécies de pinheiro suscetíveis amplamente disseminadas na Europa.

No âmbito do regime fitossanitário da UE, estabelecido pela Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho ([2]), os Estados-Membros podem receber, a seu pedido, uma participação financeira da União, para efeitos de controlo fitossanitário, para cobrir as despesas diretamente relacionadas com as medidas necessárias que tenham sido adotadas para efeitos da erradicação ou contenção dos organismos prejudiciais em questão. Sob certas condições, especificadas na Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho, seriam elegíveis os processos de cofinanciamento dos Estados-Membros para o controlo do fungo *Gibberella circinata* na UE. A Comissão gostaria de informar o Senhor Deputado de que não recebeu a esta data nenhum pedido das autoridades fitossanitárias nacionais portuguesas referente ao fungo *Gibberella circinata* para um possível cofinanciamento pela União das medidas de controlo fitossanitárias contra este organismo.

([1]) Decisão 2007/433/CE da Comissão, de 18 de junho de 2007, relativa a medidas de emergência provisórias contra a introdução e a propagação na Comunidade de Gibberella circinata Nirenberg & O'Donnell (JO L 161 de 22.6.2007).

([2]) Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho, de 8 de maio de 2000, relativa às medidas de proteção contra a introdução na Comunidade de organismos prejudiciais aos vegetais e produtos vegetais e contra a sua propagação no interior da Comunidade (JO L 169 de 10.7.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007122/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Fusarium circinatum

Fusarium circinatum is a fungus which causes the death of conifers in the EU.

This disease runs hand-in-hand with that caused by pine nematodes. Both diseases pose a threat to forests and the economies which depend on them.

The Standing Committee on Plant Health recently approved a Commission decision on emergency measures against pine nematode disease.

The Commission allocated EUR 38.4 million to co-finance the implementation of compulsory measures, which include the immediate felling of all conifers in the infested area and the delineation of a far larger strictly controlled area to be closely monitored, the removal of all declining trees and heat treatment for all conifer timber extracted from these areas.

Although *Fusarium circinatum* is an organism which, like the pine nematode, requires treatment by quarantine, the EU provides no financial compensation to cover the destruction of plants.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does the Commission intend to provide any specific support to combat *Fusarium circinatum*, as it does for pine nematode disease, for the prevention and control of this disease, in cases where action has to be taken to eradicate it?

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

In the European Union the fungus *Gibberella circinata*, also known as *Fusarium circinatum*, is regulated through provisional emergency measures aimed at preventing its introduction into, and spread within, the Union (Commission Decision 2007/433/EC ([1])). The regulation of *Gibberella circinata* in the EU is based on scientific information showing that this fungus can cause significant mortality on susceptible pine species, which are widely distributed in Europe.

Under the EU plant-health regime, established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([2]), Member States may receive, at their request, a 'plant health control' financial contribution from the Union to cover expenditure relating directly to the necessary measures which have been taken for the purpose of eradication or containment of the harmful organisms in question. Under certain conditions, which are specified in Council Directive 2000/29/EC, co-financing dossiers of Member States to control *Gibberella circinata* in the EU would be eligible. The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it has not received to date any application concerning *Gibberella circinata* from the Portuguese national plant health authorities for a possible co-financing by the Union of plant health control measures against this organism.

([1]) Commission Decision 2007/433/EC of 18 June 2007 on provisional emergency measures to prevent the introduction into and the spread within the Community of Gibberella circinata Nirenberg & O'Donnell. (OJ L 161, 22.6.2007).

([2]) Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000 on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community (OJ L 169, 10.7.2000).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007123/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Nova praga do sobreiro

Considerando que:

— Na maior mancha de montado de sobro do mundo, localizada na região do vale do Tejo-Sado, uma área com quase meio milhão de hectares voltou a ser afetada pela praga da lagarta do sobreiro (Lyamantria dispar L);

— A eclosão da larva do inseto provoca o desfolhamento das árvores, afetando o crescimento e a qualidade da cortiça, podendo também causar problemas de saúde devido aos pelos urticantes da lagarta;

— O sobreiro é a segunda espécie florestal em Portugal, ocupando cerca de 737 mil hectares;

— A indústria associada à extração de cortiça é amiga do ambiente, tem sido secularmente experimentada e representa um setor vital na cadeia de valor acrescentado dos países do sul da Europa;

— O montado de sobreiros é um dos ecossistemas mais ricos em biodiversidade do continente europeu e estima-se que absorva, por ano, 4,8 milhões de toneladas de CO_2, um dos principais gases causadores do efeito de estufa e do consequente aquecimento global.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. De que informações dispõe a Comissão sobre a disseminação desta praga em Portugal?

3. Está em posição de fornecer dados concretos sobre a atual situação da implantação e propagação desta praga no território da UE?

4. Existem apoios para o combate a esta praga? Quais?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(28 de agosto de 2012)

O organismo nocivo *Lymantria dispar*, a lagarta do sobreiro, é de origem Eurasiática e está largamente presente no território da UE. Por esse motivo, o organismo *Lymantria dispar* não é elegível para regulamentação na UE enquanto organismo nocivo de quarentena, ao abrigo da Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho ([1]), nem para uma participação financeira da União na «luta fitossanitária». A Comissão não dispõe de dados específicos sobre a situação na UE deste organismo nocivo nativo, na medida em que os Estados-Membros não são obrigados a comunicar esta informação à Comissão.

No âmbito da política de desenvolvimento rural, o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1698/2005 do Conselho ([2]) prevê o apoio da UE aos investimentos não produtivos nas florestas. A Medida 227 do Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural de Portugal Continental (Proder) prevê o apoio da UE às ações de controlo de organismos nocivos em áreas florestais. A participação prevista do Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural (Feader) para esta medida eleva-se a 58 050 000 euros para o período 2007/2013. O sítio Web da autoridade de gestão portuguesa contém informações pormenorizadas sobre esta medida e as respetivas condições de execução em Portugal:
(http://www.proder.pt)

([1]) Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho, de 8 de maio de 2000, relativa às medidas de proteção contra a introdução na Comunidade de organismos prejudiciais aos vegetais e produtos vegetais e contra a sua propagação no interior da Comunidade (JO L 169 de 10.7.2000).
([2]) JO L 277 de 21.10.2005, p. 1-40.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007123/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: New pest infestation of cork oak trees

In the world's largest cork oak woodland (*montado*), which lies in the Tejo-Sado valley, an area just under half a million hectares has been reinfested with gypsy moth caterpillars (*Lymantria dispar* L.).

Hatching of gypsy moth larvae leads to defoliation of trees, adversely affecting growth and the quality of the cork. The urticating caterpillar hairs can also cause health problems.

The cork oak is the second most common forest species in Portugal, and approximately 737 000 hectares are planted with it.

Cork stripping is an age-old environment-friendly industry and a vital link in the added value chain for southern European countries.

Cork oak woodlands are, in terms of their biodiversity, one of the richest ecosystems in mainland Europe. It is estimated that, every year, they absorb 4.8 million tonnes of CO_2, one of the main greenhouse gases and a correspondingly significant factor in global warming.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What information does it have about the spread of this pest in Portugal?

3. Can it provide specific data on the present status of the pest and its spread within the EU?

4. What forms of support, if any, are available for pest control?

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

The insect pest *Lymantria dispar*, the gypsy moth, is of Eurasian origin and is widely distributed in the EU territory. Therefore, *Lymantria dispar* is not considered eligible for regulation in the EU as a quarantine pest under Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]), nor for a 'plant health control' financial contribution from the Union. The Commission does not have specific data on the situation in the EU of this native pest, because Member States are not requested to provide this information to the Commission.

In the framework of Rural Development policy, Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([2]) foresees EU support for non-productive investments in forests. Measure 227 of the Rural Development Programme Mainland (Proder) foresees the EU support to pest control actions in forest areas. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) contribution foreseen for this measure amounts to EUR 58,050,000 for the period 2007-2013. Detailed information about this measure and the conditions of its implementation in Portugal is available at the Portuguese managing authority website: http://www.proder.pt.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000 on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community (OJ L 169, 10.7.2000).

([2]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005, p. 1-40.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007125/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Violação dos Direitos Humanos no Afeganistão

Considerando:

— as últimas cenas de grande violência e atentado aos Direitos Humanos no Afeganistão, designadamente, a execução pública de uma mulher de 22 anos;

— que, durante a última década, depois da queda dos talibãs, as mulheres afegãs conquistaram o direito à educação, ao voto ou ao trabalho;

— que está prevista a saída gradual, mas para breve, das forças estrangeiras destacadas no território,

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante:

Não considera muito provável que a retirada daquelas forças e a deficiência das forças afegãs para que por si só mantenha a ordem e a paz implique o ressurgimento dos talibãs, com todas as consequências decorrentes e matéria de violação dos mais básicos Direitos do Homem?

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

Os avanços obtidos pelas mulheres afegãs na concretização dos seus direitos fundamentais na última década foram uma das histórias de sucesso no Afeganistão. Não poderá haver um retorno às perseguições ocorridas durante o regime talibã. Lamentavelmente, exemplos como a execução pública mencionada continuam a existir em regiões em que o controlo do Governo é fraco. No entanto, as capacidades do exército nacional afegão e da polícia continuam a ser reforçadas com o apoio da comunidade internacional. Só no presente ano assistiu-se a inúmeros incidentes em que o exército nacional afegão e a polícia repeliram ataques concertados de rebeldes, por exemplo os ataques de 15 de abril de 2012 a Cabul.

A Cimeira de Chicago realizada em maio de 2012 definiu uma estratégia para a prossecução do desenvolvimento do exército nacional afegão e da polícia, apoiado por uma formação contínua e um financiamento da comunidade internacional, que reforçará a sua capacidade para manter a segurança após a retirada das forças de combate internacionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007125/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights abuses in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has recently witnessed scenes of great violence involving serious abuses of human rights, in particular the public execution of a 22 year-old woman.

During the last decade, following the overthrow of the Taliban, Afghan women won the right to education, to vote and to work.

The international forces deployed in Afghanistan are to be gradually withdrawn in the near future.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative not consider that it is highly likely that the withdrawal of these forces and the inability of the Afghan forces to maintain peace and order unaided is likely to lead to a resurgence of the Taliban, with all its attendant consequences in terms of violation of the most fundamental human rights?

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

The advances made by Afghan women in realising their basic rights in the past decade have been one of the success stories in Afghanistan. There can be no return to the persecution of the years under the Taliban. Regrettably, instances such as the public murder cited continue to take place in areas where government control is weak. But the capability of the Afghan National Army and Police continues to increase with the support of the international community. This year alone has witnessed several incidents where the Afghan National Army and Police has repelled concerted insurgent attacks, for example in 15 April 2012 attacks on Kabul.

The Chicago summit in May 2012 set out a strategy for the further development of the Afghan National Army and Police, supported by continued training and funding from the internatiuonal community, which will enhance their ability to maintain security after the withdrawal of international combat forces.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007127/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Richiesta di fondi diretti

L'Associazione La Serra è ufficialmente riconosciuta dal CONI ed è inserita nell'albo nazionale delle associazioni sportive. Dedita da anni allo sviluppo dello sport e dei suoi valori, dalle attività riservate ai più piccoli fino ai tornei amatoriali per i più grandi, essa esalta i principi più nobili delle varie discipline sportive.

Dal 2001 collabora con il comune di Mola di Bari nell'integrazione di minori socialmente ed economicamente svantaggiati attraverso il progetto denominato Campo Estivo La Serra con il quale inserisce un numero sempre maggiore di minori nelle attività ricreative e sportive organizzate nel periodo estivo dall'associazione con l'ausilio dei servizi sociali che periodicamente segnalano le situazioni che meritano attenzione e sostegno; il progetto è attualmente in attesa del riconoscimento ufficiale della Regione Puglia.

La Serra ha come obiettivo la promozione dello sport nella vita dell'individuo e per farlo prodiga la sua azione nella realtà a lei più prossima, ovvero a livello comunale.

Volta a promuovere un proficuo impiego del tempo libero attraverso iniziative sportive dilettantistiche per educare gli individui alla salute e al benessere nonché iniziative culturali, turistiche e ricreative e d'impegno sociale partecipativo in genere, essa si prefigge l'obiettivo di contribuire all'elevazione civica degli associati.

L'UE incoraggia i 27 Stati membri a proporre iniziative che ricorrono allo sport per migliorare la salute, educare le nuove generazioni e promuovere l'inclusione sociale.

Pertanto, può la Commissione far sapere se è possibile per la suddetta associazione, visto il grande impegno messo in atto nel campo dello sport, e in virtù dell'interesse dell'Unione europea verso l'inclusione sociale nello sport e attraverso lo sport, usufruire di fondi diretti per migliorare le manifestazioni organizzate?

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

Nel concedere finanziamenti sotto forma di sovvenzioni, la Commissione applica i principi della parità di trattamento e della trasparenza e ricorre ad inviti pubblici a presentare proposte.

Dal 2009 la Commissione realizza azioni preparatorie nel settore dello sport. Sino ad oggi 40 progetti sportivi internazionali hanno ricevuto finanziamenti dall'UE. L'invito a presentare proposte 2012, inteso a sostenere azioni in quattro settori, è rimasto aperto fino al 31 luglio 2012. Per potervi partecipare era necessaria una rete internazionale di partner provenienti da almeno cinque Stati membri. Un nuovo invito a presentare proposte è previsto anche nel 2013.

La Commissione non ha la facoltà di concedere sovvenzioni a un'organizzazione al di fuori dei suddetti inviti a presentare proposte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007127/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Request for direct funding

The association 'La Serra' is officially recognised by the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) and included in the national register of sports associations. For years it has devoted itself to developing sport and its values, from activities for children to amateur tournaments for adults, bringing out the noblest principles of the various sporting disciplines.

Since 2001 it has been working with the town of Mola di Bari towards the integration of socially and economically disadvantaged children through a project called La Serra Summer Camp. The project involves a growing number of children in organised sports and recreational activities during summer camps, with the help of the social services, which regularly report on particular situations that merit attention and support. The project is currently awaiting official recognition from the Apulia Region.

The aim of La Serra is to promote sports in individuals' lives. To do that, it focuses on working close to home, i.e. at the municipal level.

The association, seeking to promote a profitable use of leisure time through amateur sports, thereby educating individuals on health and well-being, not to mention the organisation of cultural, tourist, recreational and social activities in general, has set itself the goal of helping to promote public spiritedness among its members.

The EU encourages the 27 Member States to propose initiatives that use sport to improve health, educate the new generations and promote social inclusion.

Can the Commission therefore say whether this association, given the great efforts it has made in the area of sport, and by virtue of the EU's interest in social inclusion in and through sport, might be able to receive direct funding in order to improve the events it holds?

Answer given by Mrs Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2012)

When awarding funding in the form of grants, the Commission applies the principles of equal treatment and transparency and organises open calls for proposals.

The Commission has been implementing Preparatory Actions in the field of sport since 2009. So far 40 international sport projects have received EU funding. The 2012 call for proposals, designed to support actions in four areas, was open till 31 July 2012. For the purpose of this call, an international network of partners from at least five Member States was required. It is expected that a call for proposals will be organised also in 2013.

The Commission is not in a position to award a financial grant to an organisation outside of the abovementioned calls for proposals.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007128/12
alla Commissione
Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Costruzione del MUOS (Mobile User Objective System)

La costruzione del MUOS (Mobile User Objective System), il nuovo sistema di telecomunicazioni satellitare delle forze armate USA, che sorgerà a 2 km da Niscemi (Caltanissetta), è oggetto di numerosissime proteste a causa delle possibili conseguenze negative sulla salute, in quanto il sistema trasmetterebbe segnali a grande potenza e ad un ampio spettro di frequenze per un raggio d'azione di circa 130 km;

— considerato che a Niscemi c'è già un tasso elevato di mortalità per cancro dovuto molto probabilmente alla presenza di 41 antenne americane che dal 1991 trasmettono a livelli che hanno superato la soglia di preoccupazione;

— considerato inoltre che la base in cui sorgerà il MUOS si trova nella riserva naturale de «La Sughereta» in contrada Ulmo, considerata Sito di Importanza Comunitaria (SIC);

1. Non ritiene la Commissione europea che sia necessario raccogliere informazioni al fine di valutare se sussista una violazione della direttiva 92/43/CEE relativa alla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali nonché della flora e della fauna selvatiche?

2. Non ritiene la Commissione europea che sia necessario valutare se sono state eseguite tutte le verifiche riguardanti l'impatto di tale impianto elettromagnetico sulla salute della popolazione e dei lavoratori sulla base della direttiva 2000/40/CE?

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

La direttiva Habitat 92/43/CEE ([1]) non vieta la costruzione di infrastrutture di telecomunicazioni satellitari all'interno o nei pressi di siti Natura 2000. La compatibilità di un progetto di questo tipo con gli obiettivi di tutela del sito deve essere stabilita caso per caso. Ai sensi dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva citata, qualsiasi piano o progetto che può avere incidenze significative su un sito Natura 2000 è oggetto di una opportuna valutazione e le autorità competenti possono dare il loro consenso a tale piano o progetto soltanto dopo aver accertato che esso non pregiudichi l'integrità del sito.

In base alle informazioni in suo possesso, alla Commissione non risulta alcuna potenziale violazione delle summenzionate disposizioni da parte delle autorità italiane. Pertanto, la Commissione non ritiene giustificata un'ulteriore ricerca di informazioni.

Quanto alla tutela della popolazione contro i potenziali effetti dei campi elettromagnetici, il Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea conferisce agli Stati membri la competenza legislativa in materia. Una raccomandazione non vincolante del Consiglio (1999/519/CE) ([2]) propone linee guida in materia di esposizione, intese ad assicurare un livello elevato di protezione della popolazione. Tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE hanno adottato un quadro normativo almeno equivalente, in termini di protezione, a quello raccomandato.

In merito alla protezione dei lavoratori, la direttiva 2004/40/CE ([3]) stabilisce le prescrizioni minime di sicurezza e di salute relative all'esposizione dei lavoratori ai rischi derivanti dai campi elettromagnetici. Questa direttiva è attualmente soggetta a riesame in base a una proposta della Commissione ([4]). Ad oggi alla Commissione non risulta che, per effetto di sistemi come il MUOS, i lavoratori nelle normali condizioni operative possano essere esposti a radiazioni in misura superiore al limite di esposizione definito nella direttiva 2004/40/CE.

([1]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([2]) Raccomandazione del Consiglio 1999/519/CE, del 12 luglio 1999, relativa alla limitazione dell'esposizione della popolazione ai campi elettromagnetici (da 0 Hz a 300 GHz).
([3]) GU L 184 del 24.5.2004.
([4]) COM(2011)348 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007128/12
to the Commission
Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Construction of the MUOS (Mobile User Objective System)

The construction of the MUOS (Mobile User Objective System), the new US military satellite telecommunications system to be located 2 km from Niscemi (Caltanissetta, Sicily), is the subject of numerous protests because of its possible adverse health impact. This is because the system would transmit high-power signals at a wide frequency range covering around 130 km.

Given that:

— in Niscemi there is already a high mortality rate from cancer, most likely due to the presence of 41 US antennas which, since 1991, have been transmitting at levels that have exceeded the alarm threshold;

— the base on which the MUOS is to be built is in the 'La Sughereta' nature reserve in the district of Ulmo, a site of Community importance (SCI);

1. Does the Commission not agree that information should be gathered to assess whether Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora is being breached?

2. Does the Commission not agree that it should assess whether all checks have been carried out in relation to the impact of such an electromagnetic system on the health of the population and of workers, in accordance with Directive 2000/40/EC?

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

The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) does not prohibit the construction of satellite telecommunication infrastructures in or near Natura 2000 sites. The compatibility of such a development with the conservation objectives of a site needs to be determined case by case: according to Article 6 of that directive, any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site has to be subject to an appropriate assessment and the competent authorities may agree to this project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

The information available to the Commission does not indicate any potential breach of the above provisions by the Italian authorities. Therefore, the Commission does not see any reason for gathering further information.

Regarding protecting citizens from the potential effects of electric and magnetic fields, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union confers the responsibility to the Member States to legislate. A non-binding Council Recommendation (1999/519/EC) ([2]) proposes exposure guidelines meant to ensure a high level of protection of the public. All EU Member States have put a regulatory framework in place at least equivalent to this framework of protection.

Concerning the protection of workers, Directive 2004/40/EC ([3]) lays down the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from electromagnetic fields. This directive is currently under review on the basis of Commission proposal ([4]). So far the Commission has no indication that systems like MUOS would expose workers to radiation above the exposure limit as set in Directive 2004/40/EC under normal working conditions.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) Council Recommendation (1999/519/EC) of 12 July 1999 on the limitation of the exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz-300 GHz).
([3]) OJ L 184, 24.5.2004.
([4]) COM(2011) 348 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007129/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa l'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari del periodo 2007-2013 da parte dei Comuni di Urbino, Ancona, Pesaro e Macerata

Nell'ambito del quadro finanziario dell'Unione europea 2007-2013 sono stati inseriti numerosi programmi intesi a sostenere le politiche comunitarie in varie aree tematiche quali, ad esempio, ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico, programmi di formazione, promozione della cultura, ambiente, trasporti, energia nonché tutela della salute e del consumatore.

Per quanto riguarda i Comuni di Urbino, Ancona, Pesaro e Macerata può la Commissione far sapere se ciascuno di essi ha presentato progetti per i programmi ICT-PSP, Protezione Civile, Progress, Daphne?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007130/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa l'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari del periodo 2007-2013 da parte dei comuni di Arezzo, Grosseto, Firenze, Siena, Pistoia, Carrara, Pisa, Massa, Livorno

Nell'ambito del quadro finanziario dell'Unione europea 2007-2013 sono stati inseriti numerosi programmi intesi a sostenere le politiche comunitarie in varie aree tematiche quali, ad esempio, ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico, programmi di formazione, promozione della cultura, ambiente, trasporti, energia nonché tutela della salute e del consumatore.

Per quanto riguarda i comuni di Arezzo, Grosseto, Firenze, Siena, Pistoia, Carrara, Pisa, Massa, Livorno, può la Commissione far sapere se ciascuno di essi ha presentato progetti per i seguenti Programmi:

— ICT-PSP

— Protezione Civile

— Progress

— Daphne?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007131/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa l'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari del periodo 2007-2013 da parte dei Comuni di Perugia, Terni, Città di Castello, Spoleto, Gubbio, Nardi e Corciano

Nell'ambito del quadro finanziario dell'Unione europea 2007-2013 sono stati inseriti numerosi programmi intesi a sostenere le politiche comunitarie in varie aree tematiche quali, ad esempio, ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico, programmi di formazione, promozione della cultura, ambiente, trasporti, energia nonché tutela della salute e del consumatore.

Per quanto riguarda i Comuni di Perugia, Terni, Città di Castello, Spoleto, Gubbio, Nardi e Corciano, può la Commissione far sapere se questi Comuni hanno presentato progetti per i programmi: ICT-PSP, Protezione Civile, Progress, Daphne?

Risposta congiunta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(7 settembre 2012)

L'allegato fornisce l'elenco richiesto dei progetti presentati alla Commissione nell'ambito della gestione diretta.

L'onorevole parlamentare è invitato a mettersi in contatto con le autorità nazionali o regionali competenti per i progetti attuati mediante gestione concorrente, in quanto la Commissione non partecipa direttamente alla loro selezione e controllo.

La Commissione nota che l'onorevole parlamentare è interessato ai finanziamenti concessi direttamente alle città italiane nell'ambito di specifici programmi dell'UE gestiti dalla Commissione. Se l'onorevole parlamentare lo desidera, la Commissione può fornirgli una tabella contenente queste informazioni per le principali città italiane che potrebbero partecipare a tali programmi. In questo modo la Commissione potrebbe risparmiare il tempo impiegato per rispondere a ogni singola interrogazione e fornire all'onorevole parlamentare un unico esauriente insieme di dati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007129/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Information about the use of EU funds over the period 2007-2013 by the municipalities of Urbino, Ancona, Pesaro and Macerata

Under the EU financial framework for the period 2007-2013 many programmes make funding available to support EU policies in a number of thematic areas, such as research and technological development, training programmes, promotion of culture, the environment, transport, energy and health and consumer protection.

Can the Commission state whether the municipalities of Urbino, Ancona, Pesaro and Macerata have submitted projects for the following programmes:

— ICT-PSP

— Civil Protection

— Progress

— Daphne?

Question for written answer E-007130/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Information about the use of EU funds over the period 2007-2013 by the municipalities of Arezzo, Grosseto, Firenze, Siena, Pistoia, Carrara, Pisa, Massa and Livorno

Under the EU financial framework for the period 2007-2013 many programmes make funding available to support EU policies in a number of thematic areas, such as research and technological development, training programmes, promotion of culture, the environment, transport, energy and health and consumer protection.

Can the Commission state whether the municipalities of Arezzo, Grosseto, Firenze, Siena, Pistoia, Carrara, Pisa, Massa and Livorno have submitted projects for the following programmes:

— ICT-PSP

— Civil Protection

— Progress

— Daphne?

Question for written answer E-007131/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Information about the use of EU funds over the period 2007-2013 by the municipalities of Perugia, Terni, Città di Castello, Spoleto, Gubbio, Nardi and Corciano

Under the EU financial framework for the period 2007-2013 many programmes make funding available to support EU policies in a number of thematic areas, such as research and technological development, training programmes, promotion of culture, the environment, transport, energy and health and consumer protection.

Can the Commission state whether the municipalities of Perugia, Terni, Città di Castello, Spoleto, Gubbio, Nardi and Corciano have submitted projects for the following programmes:

— ICT-PSP

— Civil Protection

— Progress

— Daphne?

Joint answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(7 September 2012)

The attached annex presents a list of requested projects submitted to the Commission under direct management.

The Honourable Member is invited to contact relevant national or regional authorities with regard to projects implemented through shared management as the Commission is not directly involved in selecting and monitoring them.

The Commission notes that the Honourable Member is interested in the funding granted directly to Italian cities from specific EU programmes managed by the Commission. Should the Honourable Member so wish, the Commission could prepare a table providing this information for the major Italian cities likely to take part in these programmes. This would save the Commission time needed to reply to each individual question and provide the Honourable Member with one single set of comprehensive data.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007132/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Tragedia nel Canale di Sicilia

Attraverso la testimonianza dell'unico superstite, un cittadino eritreo, si è appreso dell'ennesima tragedia consumatasi nel Canale di Sicilia. Cinquantaquattro migranti sono morti nei giorni scorsi su un barcone in balia delle onde in viaggio dalla Libia verso l'Italia. L'eritreo sarebbe il 55esimo passeggero dell'imbarcazione e avrebbe visto i suoi compagni di viaggio morire per disidratazione. L'uomo ha raccontato che a fine giugno lui e altre 54 persone, la maggior parte di origini eritree, si sono imbarcate su un gommone alla volta dell'Italia.

Dopo un giorno avrebbero cominciato a vedere le coste italiane, ma poi i venti li hanno spinti indietro verso la Tunisia. Nel giro di pochi giorni, il gommone ha cominciato a sgonfiarsi e stante la mancanza d'acqua molti hanno cominciato a morire per disidratazione. Dall'inizio dell'anno a oggi circa 1 300 persone sono giunte via mare in Italia dalla Libia. Un'imbarcazione con 50 fra eritrei e somali sarebbe tuttora in mare aperto dopo che i passeggeri hanno rifiutato nelle ultime ore il soccorso delle forze armate maltesi. Nel 2012 sono finora giunte a Malta circa 1 000 persone in 14 sbarchi.

L'UNCHR stima che quest'anno siano circa 170 le persone morte o disperse in mare nel tentativo di giungere in Europa dalla Libia. Considerato che l'Italia, nonostante si sia sempre impegnata nella soluzione del problema legato all'immigrazione, è stata accusata di superficialità riguardo alla questione, può il Commissione riferire:

1. se era al corrente di tale situazione;

2. come intende aiutare l'Italia nella tutela dei migranti;

3. che strategie intende attuare per evitare che continuino a verificarsi tragedie di questo tipo?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei fatti citati dall'onorevole parlamentare e deplora profondamente la perdita di vite umane.

Nel corso degli anni sono state adottate alcune iniziative per prevenire il ripetersi di tali frequenti tragedie; in proposito, la Commissione richiama l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sulla risposta data all'interrogazione scritta E-003726/2012 ([1]).

Inoltre, a seguito del nuovo drammatico caso citato dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione ha invitato Italia, Malta e Frontex a individuare le modalità che consentano di aumentare la probabilità di localizzare e prestare soccorso agli immigranti in situazioni di emergenza in mare. Ciò potrebbe significare potenziare i sistemi di sorveglianza o ampliare ulteriormente la zona operativa. La Commissione ha offerto assistenza e sostegno ai fini di eventuali discussioni in proposito.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007132/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Tragedy in the Sicilian Channel

Through the testimony of the only survivor, an Eritrean national, we have learned of yet another tragedy in the Sicilian Channel. 54 migrants recently died on a boat adrift at sea en route from Libya to Italy. The Eritrean was the 55th passenger on the boat and apparently saw his fellow passengers die from dehydration. The man said that in late June he and another 54 people, mostly of Eritrean origin, had set sail to Italy in a rubber dinghy.

After one day they apparently began to see the Italian coast, but the winds then drove them back to Tunisia. Within a few days, the rubber dinghy had begun to deflate and, given the lack of water, many began to die of dehydration. Since the beginning of the year to date some 1 300 people have reached Italy by sea from Libya. A boat carrying 50 Eritreans and Somalis is apparently still out on the open seas because its passengers recently declined to be rescued by the Maltese armed forces. In 2012 around 1 000 people have so far arrived in Malta in 14 separate landings.

The UNHCR estimates that this year around 170 people have died or gone missing at sea in their attempts to reach Europe from Libya. Given that Italy has been accused of superficiality regarding this issue, even though it has always worked hard towards solving the problem of immigration, can the Commission say:

1. whether it is aware of this situation;

2. how it intends to help Italy protect migrants;

3. what strategies it will implement to prevent such tragedies from repeatedly occurring?

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

The Commission is aware of the incidents mentioned by the Honourable Member and deeply regret the loss of human lives.

Over the years, some initiatives have been taken in order to prevent such recurrent tragedies and the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-003726/2012 ([1]).

In addition, following this new dramatic case, the Commission invited Italy, Malta and Frontex to consider on how the further increase the probability of detecting and rescuing migrants in distress at sea. This could involve increasing surveillance assets or further extending the operational area. The Commission offered its assistance and support for any discussions for this purpose.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007133/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: «Italian sounding» e indicazioni di origine

Il fenomeno dell'italian sounding, cioè la commercializzazione di prodotti che in tutto e per tutto «suonano» come italiani nel nome e in alcune caratteristiche del marchio originale ma che non hanno affatto un'origine italiana, provoca ingenti danni economici e di immagine al Made in Italy e ai prodotti Doc e Dop italiani, in particolare le eccellenze gastronomiche delle nostre regioni. Secondo le associazioni di categoria il danno causato da questo fenomeno d'imitazione quanto al fatturato del Made in Italy ammonterebbe a sei milioni di euro all'ora. Negli Stati Uniti e in Canada in particolare, il «simil-italiano» supera il vero Made in Italy con un rapporto di quasi 10 a 1. In questi paesi, infatti, si predilige la tutela dei marchi registrati rispetto alle Indicazioni geografiche e alle Denominazioni d'origine: ciò comporta situazioni paradossali come quella del «finto» prosciutto di Parma canadese. Un'azienda canadese ha registrato il marchio «Parma», per cui il vero prosciutto di Parma italiano viene venduto in Canada con un altro nome, «Prosciutto originale», mentre il falso prodotto italiano (quello canadese) viene venduto con il nome di «Prosciutto di Parma».

ACTA avrebbe potuto rappresentare un valido strumento per affrontare il problema, ma nell'accordo internazionale anticontraffazione non si faceva alcun riferimento alla tutela delle denominazioni d'origine protette (DOP) e delle indicazioni geografiche (IG), elementi fondamentali per il tessuto produttivo italiano. Anche con CETA, l'accordo di libero scambio in fase di negoziazione con il Canada, sembra che non si potranno raggiungere risultati davvero soddisfacenti, ma che, nelle migliori delle ipotesi, si otterrà l'autorizzazione alla coesistenza dei due marchi sul mercato, cioè in Canada saranno legalmente in vendita due tipi di prosciutto denominati «Prosciutto di Parma», uno italiano e uno canadese.

1. A fronte delle problematiche sopra esposte e dei risultati dei negoziati del CETA che potrebbero tutelare solo parzialmente il settore agroalimentare italiano, come intende agire la Commissione per proteggere le eccellenze dei nostri territori dalla contraffazione?

2. Quali altre strade intende essa percorrere concretamente?

3. Può infine informare se e come negli accordi di libero scambio dell'UE con paesi terzi le indicazioni di origine e la loro tutela sono state incluse e affrontate?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2012)

La Commissione è informata del fatto che in alcuni paesi terzi, tra i quali il Canada, si verifica un certo numero di abusi concernenti le indicazioni geografiche (IG) protette dall'Unione europea e dei danni economici che questo fenomeno produce ai relativi prodotti dell'UE.

Per questo motivo la Commissione, su mandato del Consiglio, sta attualmente negoziando un accordo globale TRIPS-plus per la protezione delle IG del settore agroalimentare dell'UE. La Commissione ritiene che questa protezione costituirà un elemento basilare del futuro CETA UE-Canada, che stabilirà per questo paese una tutela generale, inclusa la protezione contro nuovi marchi, l'accettazione della coesistenza coi marchi registrati esistenti e norme chiare sui diritti di utilizzo.

Negli accordi di libero scambio negoziati con paesi terzi la Commissione cerca sempre di ottenere garanzie di massima tutela per le IG. Ciò avviene anche con il Canada grazie alla conclusione del CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement) bilaterale. D'altra parte tra le competenze della Commissione non rientra l'intervento nel contenzioso tra imprese private di fronte a un'autorità di un paese terzo su possesso/domanda di singoli marchi da parte di una delle imprese in questione. La situazione sarebbe evidentemente diversa qualora in Canada vi fossero carenze sistemiche in materia di tutela dei marchi e in particolare se le norme canadesi a questo proposito non rispettassero gli impegni assunti dal Canada nell'ambito dell'accordo TRIPS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007133/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Italian sounding products and indications of origin

'Italian sounding' products, i.e. products which are marketed and named in such a way as to sound Italian, having some features of the original brand, but not originating in Italy, are causing considerable economic damage to Italian-made products and Italian registered designation of origin (RDO) and protected designation of origin (PDO) products. They are also harming Italy's image, especially in relation to the culinary excellence of our regions. According to trade associations, the damage caused by such imitation, also to Italy's turnover, amounts to EUR six million per hour. In the United States and Canada in particular, sales of fake Italian products have overtaken real ones by almost 10 to 1. These countries prefer to protect registered trademarks rather than geographical indications and designations of origin. This leads to absurd situations such as 'fake' Canadian Parma ham. A Canadian company has registered the trademark 'Parma', so that real Italian Parma ham is sold in Canada under another name —'Original ham' — while the fake Italian product (i.e. the Canadian ham) is sold under the name 'Parma ham'.

The Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) could be a valuable tool to address this problem, but it makes no reference to the protection of designations of origin (PDOs) and geographical indications (GIs), which are key aspects for the Italian production system. Even with the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the free trade agreement currently being negotiated with Canada, it will apparently be impossible to achieve genuinely satisfactory results, but, at best, authorisation may be obtained for the coexistence of both brands on the market. This means that in Canada, two types of ham called 'Parma Ham' will be able to be sold legally — one Italian and one Canadian.

1. Given the above issues and the outcome of the CETA negotiations that might be able to protect the Italian agricultural and food sector only partially, what action does the Commission intend to take to protect the excellence of our territories from counterfeiting?

2. What other specific courses of action does it intend to take?

3. Lastly, can it say whether and how indications of origin and their protection have been included and addressed in EU free trade agreements with third countries?

Answer given by Mr Çioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2012)

The Commission is well aware of a number of misuses of protected EU geographical indications (GIs) in certain third countries, including in Canada, as well as of the resulting economic damage this represents to the respective EU products.

It is for this reason that the Commission, mandated by the Council, is currently negotiating a comprehensive TRIPS plus protection of EU agri-food GI's. For the Commission such protection will be one of the key elements in the future EU-Canada CETA, which is to comprise overall protection in Canada, including protection against new trademarks, acceptance of co-existence with existing trademarks and clear rules on the right of use.

The Commission is constantly making efforts to obtain maximum GI protection in FTAs negotiated with third countries, as is the case with Canada via the conclusion of the bilateral CETA. It is on the other hand not the responsibility of the Commission to intervene in litigation between private companies before a third country authority about individual trade marks owned/requested by one or the other company. It would evidently be different should there be systemic failures with trade mark protection in Canada, and in particular if Canadian trade mark rules would not respect Canada's commitments under the TRIPS agreement.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-007134/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(16 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παραβιάσεις της ΑΟΖ και του εναερίου χώρου της Κύπρου

Αεροναυτική άσκηση στο θαλάσσιο και στον εναέριο χώρο της Κύπρου πραγματοποίησε η Τουρκία, στις 12 Ιουλίου, χωρίς την άδεια των κυπριακών αρχών. Δεδομένου ότι η άσκηση πραγματοποιήθηκε σε περιοχή που καλύπτει τα Οικόπεδα 2, 3, 8, 9, 12 και 13 της κυπριακής ΑΟΖ και αμφισβητήθηκε σαφώς το FIR της Λευκωσίας, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

Πως σκοπεύει να αντιδράσει στην προκλητική αυτή κίνηση της Τουρκίας;

Θα συνεχίσει να «επιτρέπει» στην Τουρκία, ως υποψήφια χώρα, να μη σέβεται τις αρχές, τις αξίες και τα θεσμικά όργανα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, αφού η Κύπρος αυτή τη στιγμή προεδρεύει του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007278/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(19 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση της κυπριακής ΑΟΖ από τουρκικές αεροναυτικές δυνάμεις

Στις 12 Ιουλίου, μία κορβέτα και δύο πυραυλοφόρα σκάφη του τουρκικού πολεμικού ναυτικού, μαζί με ελικόπτερα και μαχητικά της τουρκικής πολεμικής αεροπορίας, εκτέλεσαν χωρίς προηγούμενη ενημέρωση πολύωρες ασκήσεις σε διεθνή ύδατα νότια της Κύπρου. Οι ασκήσεις αυτές έλαβαν χώρα σε τμήματα της κυπριακής ΑΟΖ και συγκεκριμένα στα ενεργειακά «οικόπεδα» 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, και 13.

Μάλιστα, στην περίπτωση του «Οικοπέδου 12», τα τουρκικά σκάφη ήταν ορατά από την εξέδρα της Noble Energy, την οποία πλησίασαν σε απόσταση μικρότερη των 5 μιλίων, δηλαδή σε απόσταση βολής του πυροβόλου των σκαφών.

Σημειώνεται ότι τρίτες χώρες, πριν την έναρξη ασκήσεων στην ίδια ή και στην ευρύτερη περιοχή, έρχονται σε συνεννόηση με τις κυπριακές αρχές.

Κατόπιν αυτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι ενήμερη για τα γεγονότα αυτά;

— Πώς αξιολογεί τη στάση αυτή της Τουρκίας υπό το φως της ζωτικής στρατηγικής ανάγκης της ΕΕ να διασφαλίσει τη μέγιστη δυνατή ενεργειακή της επάρκεια και ασφάλεια;

— Ποια είναι η αντίδρασή της στην επίμονη άρνηση συμμόρφωσης της υποψήφιας προς ένταξη χώρας στις συνεχόμενες και σαφείς συστάσεις της ΕΕ για σεβασμό των κυριαρχικών δικαιωμάτων των κρατών μελών;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Αυγούστου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντησή της στις ερωτήσεις αριθ. E-005033/12, P-006009/12, E-006140/12, E-005956/12 και E-006223/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007134/12
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Violations of Cyprus' EEZ and airspace

On 12 July Turkey conducted air exercises in Cyprus' territorial waters and in its airspace, without the permission of the Cypriot authorities. Since these exercises took place in an area over Blocks 2,3,8,9, 12 and 13 of Cyprus' EEZ and clearly challenged Nicosia's FIR, will the Commission say:

How will it react to this provocative move by Turkey?

Will it continue to 'allow' Turkey, as a candidate country, not to respect the principles, values and institutions of the European Union, particularly since Cyprus currently holds the presidency of the European Council?

Question for written answer E-007278/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(19 July 2012)

Subject: Violation of Cyprus' EEZ by the Turkish Air Force and Navy

On 12 July a Turkish navy corvette and two rocket-equipped vessels, along with Turkish Air Force helicopters and fighter jets, carried out many hours of exercises in the international waters south of Cyprus without giving prior notice. These exercises took place in sections of Cyprus' EEZ, namely energy 'blocks' 2, 3, 8, 9, 12 and 13.

Indeed, in the case of 'block 12', the Turkish vessels were visible from the Noble Energy platform, which they approached to within a distance of less than five nautical miles, i.e. within range of the vessels.

It should be noted that, before beginning exercises in the same area or in the broader region, third countries normally come to an agreement with the Cypriot authorities.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Is it aware of these incidents?

— How does it view the position adopted by Turkey in light of the EU's vital strategic need to ensure maximum energy efficiency and security?

— What is its reaction to the persistent refusal of a candidate country to comply with the EU's repeated and clear recommendations that it should respect the sovereign rights of Member States?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(31 August 2012)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to parliamentary Questions E-005033/12, P-006009/12, E-006140/12, E-005956/12 and E-006223/12.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007135/12
a la Comisión
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(16 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Acuerdo Unión Europea — Japón

El pasado 31 de mayo la Comisión Europea presentó al Consejo su estudio sobre Japón para valorar la pertinencia de abrir negociaciones para un Acuerdo de Libre Comercio entre la UE y el país asiático. El 18 de junio, la Comisión aprobó un borrador del mandato negociador y recomendó al Consejo que otorgara un mandato para iniciar negociaciones con Japón al estar ante una buena oportunidad para iniciar negociaciones.

Desde el Parlamento Europeo, el año pasado y éste hemos presentado sendas resoluciones pidiendo garantías por parte de Japón para que el Acuerdo se negocie en clave de equivalencia, teniendo en cuenta sectores más sensibles como es el caso del automovilístico. Asimismo, en el pasado Consejo del 31 de mayo, un gran número de Estados miembros mantuvieron su postura expresando serias preocupaciones sobre el resultado del estudio y el mandato para abrir negociaciones.

¿Cómo valora la Comisión la posición del Consejo? ¿Cree que los Estados miembros comparten la posición de la Comisión sobre la idoneidad de iniciar las negociaciones con Japón?

En lo que respecta al estudio realizado por la Comisión, ¿considera la Comisión que Japón está dispuesto y tiene voluntad de fortalecer la cooperación en la armonización de las normas internacionales? ¿Piensa que Japón está comprometido con la eliminación de todas las barreras no arancelarias y con evitar la creación de nuevas barreras de este tipo?

Antes de finalizar el estudio, ¿consultó la Comisión a la industria sobre el resultado del mismo y, más específicamente, sobre el establecimiento de una hoja de ruta para la eliminación de las barreras no arancelarias en los sectores clave? En caso afirmativo, ¿han trasladado estos sectores su apoyo al compromiso de Japón sobre la hoja de ruta de las barreras no arancelarias?

¿Ha llevado a cabo la Comisión un estudio de impacto en sectores específicos sobre las consecuencias del Acuerdo de Libre Comercio Unión Europea-Japón? En tal caso, ¿qué tipo de impacto estima la Comisión que tendrá el Acuerdo en la dimensión social, especialmente en lo relativo al empleo en la UE y, en concreto, en la industria automovilística europea?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de septiembre de 2012)

La Comisión aprobó el borrador de directrices de negociación sobre un futuro acuerdo de libre comercio (ALC) con Japón el 18 de julio de 2012. El Consejo todavía no ha adoptado una posición formal al respecto. Los Estados miembros de la UE seguirán debatiendo este asunto hasta otoño de 2012 y la Comisión está a la espera de su decisión.

La Comisión finalizó el «ejercicio exploratorio» sobre un Acuerdo de Libre Comercio (ALC) entre la UE y Japón dado que el texto acordado expresa el total compromiso de Japón en negociar un ambicioso ALC que contemple todas las prioridades de la UE. En lo que respecta a los obstáculos no arancelarios, el «ejercicio exploratorio» hace referencia al objetivo común de conseguir una mayor convergencia entre las disposiciones nacionales de Japón y las normas internacionales pertinentes. No obstante, si se inician las negociaciones, la Comisión evaluará el progreso realizado por Japón en la eliminación de los obstáculos no arancelarios tras un año de negociaciones, y las interrumpirá en caso de que su ejecución no haya sido satisfactoria.

Se consultó a los sectores pertinentes durante todo el proceso del ejercicio exploratorio y la elaboración de las hojas de ruta específicas sobre los obstáculos no arancelarios.

A la Comisión le complace informar a Su Señoría de que la evaluación de impacto, llevada a cabo en la preparación del futuro ALC con Japón, ha sido publicada en el sitio web de la Comisión:
(http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/july/tradoc_149809.pdf). La evaluación de impacto analiza, entre otras cuestiones, sectores específicos y el impacto que el futuro acuerdo tendrá en la UE por lo que se refiere al empleo.

Además, la Comisión mantiene informado al Parlamento con regularidad a través de la Comisión de Comercio Internacional (INTA) y estará representada en el próximo seminario de la INTA sobre negociaciones comerciales entre la UE y Japón, que tendrá lugar el 19 de septiembre de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007135/12
to the Commission
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement

On 31 May 2012, the Commission presented to the Council its study on the pertinence of opening negotiations on an EU-Japan free trade agreement. The following month, on 18 June, the Commission approved the draft negotiating mandate and recommended to Council that it award a mandate to begin negotiations with Japan, on the grounds that it was a good time to proceed.

In both 2011 and 2012, Parliament adopted resolutions calling for Japan to provide guarantees that the agreement will be negotiated in a way that reflects the interests of both parties, and which takes account of the most vulnerable sectors, such as the automotive sector. At the most recent Council meeting held on 31 May 2012, many Member States continued to express serious concern at the result of the study and the mandate to open negotiations.

What is the Commission's view of the position adopted by Council? Does the Commission think that Member States share its opinion that now is an appropriate time to begin negotiations with Japan?

Having completed a study on the issue, does the Commission believe that Japan is ready and willing to strengthen cooperation to harmonise international standards? Does it think that Japan is committed to eliminating all non-tariff barriers and preventing the imposition of new barriers of this kind?

Before completing the study, did the Commission consult with industry on the result of the study and, more specifically, on the establishment of a roadmap for the elimination of non-tariff barriers in key sectors? If so, have these sectors made clear their support for Japan's commitment to the roadmap concerning non-tariff barriers?

Has the Commission carried out impact assessments to determine what the consequences of the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement would be for specific sectors? If so, what social impact does the Commission think that the Agreement will have, particularly with regard to employment in the EU and, more specifically, the European automotive industry?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2012)

The Commission adopted the draft negotiating directives for a future free trade agreement (FTA) with Japan on 18 July 2012. The Council has not yet expressed a formal position. The EU Member States will continue discussing the issue in autumn 2012 and the Commission looks forward to their decision.

The Commission concluded the 'scoping exercise' for an EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) because the agreed text spells out Japan's full commitment to negotiate an ambitious FTA covering all EU priorities. As far as non-tariff barriers (NTBs) are concerned, the 'scoping exercise' refers to the common objective to seek greater convergence of Japan's national requirements with the relevant international standards. Nevertheless, if negotiations are launched, the Commission will take stock of the progress Japan has made on dismantling the NTBs after one year of negotiations and will stop the negotiations if the implementation has not been satisfactory.

The relevant industries have been consulted throughout the process of the scoping exercise and the specific roadmaps on Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).

The Commission is pleased to inform the Honourable Member that the impact assessment, which was completed in preparation for the future FTA with Japan, has been published on the Commission's website: (http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/july/tradoc_149809.pdf). The impact assessment analyses, among other issues, also specific sectors and the impact of the future agreement on employment in the EU.

Furthermore, the Commission regularly updates Parliament via the INTA Committee and will be represented at INTA's forthcoming workshop on EU trade negotiations with Japan on 19 September 2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007136/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(16 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ασυδοσία και αθέμιτες πρακτικές φορέων με εισπρακτικό ρόλο

Αυξάνονται διαρκώς οι καταγγελίες πολιτών για παράνομες πρακτικές εταιριών ενημέρωσης οφειλετών και δικηγορικών γραφείων που έχουν αναλάβει εισπρακτικό ρόλο. Ο πρόσφατος νόμος που θεσπίζει τους κανόνες λειτουργίας των εταιριών ενημέρωσης οφειλετών, αποδεικνύεται τελικά ανεπαρκής, καθώς στις αθέμιτες πρακτικές των τραπεζών έχει προστεθεί και η ανάθεση εισπρακτικού ρόλου σε δικηγορικά γραφεία και εισπρακτικές υπηρεσίες που δεν εμπίπτουν στο σχετικό νόμο και λειτουργούν σε αντίθεση με τα συναλλακτικά ήθη και προσβάλλοντας τα συνταγματικά κατοχυρωμένα δικαιώματα της προσωπικότητας, της τιμής, του οικογενειακού ασύλου και των προσωπικών δεδομένων. Εκτεταμένα είναι εξάλλου τα περιστατικά επαναλαμβανόμενων και καθημερινών ενοχλήσεων σε ακατάλληλες ώρες, απειλών για κατασχέσεις και πλειστηριασμούς, αυθαίρετων «γνωμοδοτήσεων» για το αν κανείς υπάγεται ή όχι στο νόμο για τη ρύθμιση χρεών και ασφυκτικής πίεσης η ακόμα και σε ευπαθείς ομάδες όπως άνεργοι, συνταξιούχοι και ανάπηροι.

Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με καταγγελίες καταναλωτικών ενώσεων, υπάρχουν τράπεζες που προκειμένου να ξεπεράσουν τους περιορισμούς και τις απαγορεύσεις του εν λόγω Νόμου, εκχωρούν τις απαιτήσεις τους ακόμα και σε εταιρίες του εξωτερικού, χωρίς να προβαίνουν σε αναγγελία στους οφειλέτες, όπως ο Αστικός Κώδικας ορίζει. Δεδομένου ότι η προαναφερθείσα ασυδοσία εις βάρος των οφειλετών, των υπερχρεωμένων νοικοκυριών και των ευπαθών ομάδων λαμβάνει ακόμα σοβαρότερες διαστάσεις εάν συνδυαστεί με την αυξημένη απελπισία και απόγνωση που αισθάνονται οι έλληνες πολίτες και σε περιπτώσεις μπορεί να οδηγήσει ακόμα και σε φαινόμενα αυτοχειρίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς προστατεύονται οι έλληνες δανειολήπτες από την ανεξέλεγκτη δράση φορέων όπως δικηγορικά γραφεία και εισπρακτικές υπηρεσίες τραπεζών, που έχουν αναλάβει κατ' επάγγελμα εισπρακτικό ρόλο, χωρίς να εμπίπτουν στις διατάξεις και στους κανόνες που προβλέπει η σχετική νομοθεσία; Τι ισχύει στο σύνολο των κρατών μελών στον εν λόγω τομέα;

2. Είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με παρόμοιες πρακτικές σε άλλα κράτη μέλη; Με ποιο τρόπο αντιμετωπίστηκαν ώστε να διασφαλίζεται η προστασία των δανειοληπτών, των υπερχρεωμένων νοικοκυριών και κυρίως των ευπαθών ομάδων;

3. Προτίθεται να προβεί σε συστάσεις προς τις αρμόδιες σχετικές αρχές με στόχο να δημιουργηθεί ένα ευρύτερο πλαίσιο ρυθμίσεων σχετικά με τις εκχωρήσεις χρεών από χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα σε τρίτους;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Σημειώνουμε τις παρατηρήσεις του κ. βουλευτή σχετικά με τις πρακτικές για την είσπραξη οφειλών στην Ελλάδα. Ωστόσο, δεν υπάρχει ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία που να διέπει τη λειτουργία των εταιρειών είσπραξης χρεών. Η Επιτροπή πρότεινε ένα σχέδιο οδηγίας σχετικά με τις συμβάσεις πίστωσης για ακίνητα κατοικίας, η οποία προς το παρόν βρίσκεται στο στάδιο της διαδικασίας συναπόφασης. Το εν λόγω σχέδιο οδηγίας δεν ρυθμίζει τη διαδικασία είσπραξης οφειλών. Το σχέδιο οδηγίας σχετικά με τις συμβάσεις πίστωσης συνοδευόταν από έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τα εθνικά μέτρα και τις πρακτικές για την αποφυγή της διαδικασίας κατάσχεσης για ενυπόθηκα δάνεια κατοικίας (SEC(2011)357final) ([1]), σκοπός του οποίου ήταν να περιγράψει τα υφιστάμενα εθνικά μέτρα που μπορούν να λαμβάνουν οι δανειστές, προτού χρειαστεί να προσφύγουν στην κατάσχεση. Οι τρόποι που αναφέρονται στο έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής θα πρέπει να εξεταστούν σε συνάρτηση με τα αντίστοιχα εθνικά πλαίσια.

Όσον αφορά τις διαδικασίες εξόφλησης χρεών και κατάσχεσης, αυτές ορίζονται σε εθνικό επίπεδο και συνεχίζουν να εμπίπτουν στη δικαιοδοσία των αρμόδιων εθνικών αρχών.

Επομένως, το θέμα που περιγράφει ο κ. βουλευτής είναι θέμα εθνικής νομοθεσίας (ελληνικής στην παρούσα περίπτωση) και η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη για τα μέτρα που λαμβάνονται σε εθνικό επίπεδο από το εκάστοτε κράτος μέλος.

Η Επιτροπή δεν προβλέπει την έκδοση συστάσεων προς τα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με τις εκχωρήσεις οφειλών από τα χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα σε τρίτα μέρη.

([1]) Έγγραφο διαθέσιμο στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0357:FIN:EN:PDF.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί με ιδιαίτερη προσοχή τα προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζουν τα υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά και ήδη διεξάγει μελέτη σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό. Η εν λόγω μελέτη έχει σκοπό να εξεύρει επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία, να αναλύσει τα αίτια και τις οικονομικές επιπτώσεις της υπερχρέωσης των νοικοκυριών, και, αφετέρου, να προτείνει δράσεις για την άμβλυνση των επιπτώσεών της.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007136/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Impunity and unfair practices of asset recovery agencies

There has been a steady increase in the number of complaints by citizens about the unfair practices of debtor information companies and law firms engaged in asset recovery. The recent law laying down operating rules for debtor information companies has ultimately proved insufficient, since, in addition to the unfair practices of banks, an asset recovery role has now been assigned to law firms and asset recovery services that fall outside the relevant law and operate in defiance of common practice and violate the constitutionally guaranteed rights of the integrity of the person, honour, the inviolability of the home and personal data. A large number of incidents are occurring involving daily and repeated harassment at inappropriate times, threats of foreclosure and compulsory auctions, arbitrary 'opinions' about whether or not a person is subject to the law on the settlement of debts and intolerable pressure even on vulnerable groups such as the unemployed, pensioners and the disabled.

Furthermore, consumer associations complain that some banks circumvent the restrictions and prohibitions of this Law, going so far as to cede their claims to foreign companies without notifying the debtors, as they are required to do by the Civil Code. Since the aforementioned impunity vis-à-vis debtors, heavily indebted households and vulnerable groups becomes an even more serious matter, given the increasing desperation and despair felt by Greek citizens which may in some cases even lead to suicide, will the Commission say:

1. How are Greek borrowers protected from the uncontrolled actions of agencies such as law firms and banks' asset recovery services, which have professionally assumed an asset recovering role, without being subject to the provisions and rules provided by the relevant legislation? What is the state of affairs in all Member States in this area?

2. Is it aware of similar practices in other Member States? What action has been taken to address theses practices so as to ensure that borrowers, heavily indebted households and especially vulnerable groups are protected?

3. Will it make recommendations to the competent authorities in order to create a broader framework of rules governing the ceding of debts by financial institutions to third parties?

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

We have taken note of the observations of the Honourable Member on the practices concerning debt collection in Greece. However, there is no European legislation on the functioning of debt collecting firms. The Commission has proposed a Draft Directive on credit agreements relating to residential property that is at present in the co-decision process. This Draft Directive does not regulate the process of debt collection. The Draft Directive on credit agreement was accompanied by a Staff Working Paper on National Measures and Practices to Avoid Foreclosure Procedures for Residential Mortgage Loans (SEC(2011)357final) ([1]) the purpose of which was to give a picture of the existing national measures that can be undertaken before lenders need to resort to foreclosure. The practices mentioned in the Staff Working Paper should be considered within their respective national contexts.

As far as debt settlement and foreclosure procedures are concerned, these are dealt with at national level and remain within the jurisdiction of the national authorities concerned.

Therefore, the issue described by the Honourable Member is a matter of national legislation (Greek, in this case) and the Commission is not aware of measures taken, at national level, by the individual Member States.

The Commission does not envisage issuing recommendations to the Member States on ceding debts by financial institutions to the third parties.

However, the Commission is very attentive to the problems suffered by over-indebted households and is currently carrying out a study on households' over-indebtedness. This study aims at finding updated information, analysing its causes and financial consequences, and listing actions for alleviating its impact.

([1]) Available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0357:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007137/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE) και Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(16 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Συνεχείς τουρκικές προκλήσεις προς την Προεδρία του Συμβουλίου της ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με έγκυρες πληροφορίες, υψηλόβαθμοι Τούρκοι αξιωματούχοι, με επιστολές τους προς την τότε απερχόμενη Δανική Προεδρία του Συμβουλίου της ΕΕ, στα τέλη Ιουνίου, ενημέρωσαν ότι δεν θα συμμορφωθούν με καμία επίσημη απόφαση που θα λάβει η ΕΕ στο πλαίσιο διεθνών οργανισμών (ΟΟΣΑ, Οργανισμός για την Απαγόρευση των Χημικών Όπλων κ.ά.) ή στο πλαίσιο ακόμα και του ΟΗΕ, για την περίοδο 1 Ιουλίου έως 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2012.

Σύμφωνα με τις ίδιες έγκυρες πληροφορίες, παρόμοιου περιεχομένου επιστολή έχει σταλεί και στον Γενικό Γραμματέα του ΝΑΤΟ, η οποία αφορά την συνεργασία ΕΕ-ΝΑΤΟ στο εξάμηνο της ανάληψης της Προεδρίας του Συμβουλίου της ΕΕ από την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία.

Είναι ενήμερη η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος για τις ενέργειες αυτές της Τουρκίας;

— Έχει σταλεί αναλόγου περιεχομένου επιστολή στην Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης, ειδικά σε ό,τι αφορά τις σχέσεις ΕΕ-ΝΑΤΟ; Αν ναι, υπήρχε απάντηση προς την τουρκική πλευρά και ποια είναι αυτή;

— Θεωρεί ότι η στάση αυτή αντιβαίνει στο καθεστώς, τις δεσμεύσεις και τις υποχρεώσεις της ως υποψήφιας προς ένταξη χώρας;

— Ποιος θα είναι ο αντίκτυπος της θεσμικής αυτής αμφισβήτησης από την πλευρά της Τουρκίας;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Αυγούστου 2012)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος παρακολουθεί προσεκτικά το ζήτημα της θέσης της Τουρκίας όσον αφορά την τρέχουσα εκ περιτροπής Προεδρία του Συμβουλίου. Μέχρι σήμερα, η ΕΥΕΔ δεν έχει λάβει επιστολή από τις τουρκικές αρχές σχετικά με τις σχέσεις ΕΕ-ΝΑΤΟ.

Στα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου της 5ης Δεκεμβρίου 2011 σχετικά με τη διεύρυνση και στα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου της 9ης Δεκεμβρίου 2011 καθορίζεται η θέση της ΕΕ όσον αφορά τη θέση της Τουρκίας για την Προεδρία.

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο εξέφρασε τη σοβαρή ανησυχία του και ζήτησε τον πλήρη σεβασμό του ρόλου της Προεδρίας του Συμβουλίου, η οποία αποτελεί θεμελιώδες θεσμικό χαρακτηριστικό γνώρισμα της ΕΕ, προβλεπόμενο στη Συνθήκη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007137/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE) and Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Ongoing Turkish challenges to the Presidency of the EU Council

According to reliable sources, at the end of June senior Turkish officials addressed letters to the outgoing Danish Presidency of the EU Council stating that they would not comply with any formal decision taken by the EU within the framework of international organisations (OECD, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, etc.) or even of the UN during the period from 1 July to 31 December 2012.

According to the same reliable sources, a letter similar in content was addressed to the Secretary General of NATO concerning EU-NATO cooperation during the Republic of Cyprus' six-month tenure of the Presidency of the EU Council.

Is the High Representative cognisant of these actions by Turkey?

— Has a letter similar in content been addressed to the European External Action Service, especially as regards EU-NATO relations? If so, has there been a response to the Turkish authorities and what has this response been?

— Does it believe that this stance is incompatible with Turkey's status, commitments and obligations as a candidate country?

— What will be the impact of this institutional challenge on the part of Turkey?

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

The HR/VP is following closely the question of Turkey's position with regard to the current rotating Presidency of the Council. So far, the EEAS has not received a letter from the Turkish authorities regarding EU-NATO relations.

The Council conclusions of 5 December 2011 on enlargement and the European Council conclusions of 9 December 2011 set out the EU's position with regard to Turkey's position on the Presidency.

The European Council expressed serious concern and called for full respect for the role of the Presidency of the Council, which is a fundamental institutional feature of the EU provided for in the Treaty.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007138/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(16 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Violazioni dei diritti umani delle popolazioni che vivono lungo il fiume Omo in Etiopia

Il progetto di costruzione della diga idroelettrica Gibe 3 in Etiopia, voluto del governo etiope e finanziato per il 90 % da investitori esteri, è iniziato nel 2006 nella valle del fiume Omo. La costruzione della diga è finalizzata alla produzione di energia elettrica che l'Etiopia esporterà verso il Kenya, il Sudan e altri paesi. Oltre a non portare energia alle popolazioni locali etiopi, la diga avrà un devastante impatto ambientale sul delicato ecosistema delle comunità indigene che vivono lungo le sponde del fiume. Inoltre, il governo etiope sta sfrattando con la forza migliaia di indigeni dalle loro terre nella valle dell'Omo. Secondo Human Rights Watch, unità militari si recano regolarmente nei villaggi per intimidire gli abitanti e reprimere il dissenso legato allo sviluppo delle coltivazioni di canna da zucchero.

La diga è infatti destinata, oltre che alla produzione di energia elettrica, anche a fungere da riserva idrica per le future coltivazioni di canna da zucchero di grosse multinazionali. I soldati quotidianamente rubano e uccidono il bestiame e costringono la popolazione locale con intimidazioni e violenze ad abbandonare i villaggi per fare spazio alle ruspe del governo. Alle comunità è stato dato un anno di tempo per trasferirsi. La paura si sta diffondendo di pari passo con l'intensificarsi degli episodi di violenza, divenuti ormai un fenomeno quotidiano. Le notizie di pestaggi, stupri e arresti tra le tribù vicine al fiume Omo sono sempre più frequenti. Nel solo mese di gennaio 2012, Survival ha ricevuto la denuncia dell'assassinio di tre uomini Bodi picchiati a morte nelle prigioni etiopi.

Alla luce di tutto questo si chiede al Vice-presidente/Alto Rappresentante:

1. L'UE ha adottato misure per fare pressione sul governo etiope per cessare le violenze nei confronti delle popolazioni che vivono lungo le sponde del fiume Omo?

2. La delegazione dell'UE in Etiopia ha preso contatto con le ONG locali per comprendere meglio le difficoltà della popolazione locale legate alla costruzione della diga e del trasferimento forzato dalle proprie terre per la coltivazione della canna da zucchero?

3. Nel caso in cui le violenze non dovessero cessare, l'UE potrebbe imporre sanzioni a livello commerciale nei confronti dell'Etiopia?

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

L'UE sta coinvolgendo attivamente il governo etiope in un dialogo politico costante e concreto nello spirito del nostro partenariato con gli Stati ACP in conformità all'accordo di Cotonou. Ciò comprende la discussione di temi che destano preoccupazione nell'UE in fatto di diritti umani, situazione nelle regioni periferiche, sviluppo economico nonché rapporti regionali.

Stiamo seguendo con particolare attenzione la situazione nell'Etiopia meridionale, compresa la valle del fiume Omo, e si discutono con il governo i risultati delle visite sul campo e delle missioni di monitoraggio svolte dai donatori, al pari delle relazioni provenienti dalla società civile e dalle ONG in merito al programma di «villaggizzazione», all'agricoltura commerciale e alle tensioni che ne derivano.

L'UE non ha sollevato per ora con le autorità etiopi il tema specifico della diga idroelettrica Gibe 3. Tuttavia nel dialogo con il governo dell'Etiopia si presta la debita attenzione al rispetto dei diritti umani e all'ambiente nei piani, progetti e interventi mirati allo sviluppo.

Le assicuro che continueremo a seguire tali tematiche, anche mediante il nostro dialogo costante con le autorità etiopi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007138/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Infringements of the human rights of the peoples living along the River Omo in Ethiopia

The plan to build the Gibe 3 hydroelectric dam in Ethiopia, backed by the Ethiopian Government and 90% of which is to be financed by foreign investors, got under way in 2006 in the River Omo valley. The aim of the dam is to produce electricity that Ethiopia will export to Kenya, Sudan and other countries. In addition to not bringing energy to the local Ethiopian population, the dam will have a devastating impact on the delicate ecosystem of the indigenous communities living along the banks of the river. Furthermore, the Ethiopian Government is forcibly evicting thousands of indigenous people from their land in the Omo valley. According to Human Rights Watch, military units regularly go to the villages to intimidate the people and suppress any dissent relating to the development of sugar cane crops.

This is because the dam, as well as producing electricity, is also supposed to act as a reservoir for the future sugar cane crops of large multinationals. The soldiers steal and kill livestock on a daily basis, forcing the local population with intimidation and violence to leave their villages to make way for the government bulldozers. The communities have been given a year to move. Fear is growing as violence — which has now become a daily event — increases. There are increasingly frequent reports of beatings, rapes and arrests among the tribes near the River Omo. In the month of January 2012 alone, Survival received a report on the murder of three Bodi men who had been beaten to death in Ethiopian prisons.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative therefore answer the following questions:

1. Has the EU taken steps to put pressure on the Ethiopian Government to stop the violence against the people living along the banks of the River Omo?

2. Has the EU delegation in Ethiopia made contact with local NGOs in order better to understand the difficulties the local population are facing with regard to the construction of the dam and the forced displacement from their lands for the cultivation of sugar cane?

3. In the event that the violence should not cease, could the EU impose trade sanctions against Ethiopia?

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

The EU is actively engaging the Ethiopian Government in a regular and substantial political dialogue which is part of our partnership approach with ACP countries under the Cotonou Agreement. This includes raising matters of concern to the EUas regards human rights, the situation in peripheral regions, economic development as well as regional relations.

We are following particularly closely the situation in southern Ethiopia, including the River Omo valley, and results of donors' field visits and monitoring missions, as well as reports from Civil Society and NGOs concerning the villagisation programme, commercial farming and resulting tensions are discussed with the government.

The EU has thus far not raised the specific issue of the Gibe 3 hydroelectric dam with the Ethiopian authorities. However, in the dialogue with the Government of Ethiopia due attention is given to the respect for human rights and the environment in development plans, processes and interventions.

Let me assure you that we will continue to follow up these issues, including through our regular dialogue with the Ethiopian authorities.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007140/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(16 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Locuințe sociale

Studii recente arată ca înrăutățirea situației economice și sociale datorită crizei financiare actuale afectează majoritatea populației marginalizate din punct de vedere social, aceasta conducând la un acces dificil la o locuință adecvată și la condiții de viață normale.

În același timp, reducerile la bugetele autorităților locale împiedică construirea și sprijinirea construirii de spitale, cabinete medicale de consultații, cabinete stomatologice, case de tip familial pentru copiii în dificultate, cămine de bătrâni și ospicii, precum și alte construcții de interes public, inclusiv locuințe sociale pentru săraci, bătrâni, sau bolnavi.

În aceste condiții, ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia care să poată fi susținute din fonduri comunitare, cu scopul de a îmbunătăți condițiile de viață a persoanelor marginalizate social, inclusiv construirea de facilități sociale în zonele de locuințe sociale?

Răspuns dat de dl. Hahn în numele Comisiei
(5 septembrie 2012)

Politica de coeziune a reacționat la criza economică prin stimularea cererii și creșterea investițiilor publice. Împreună cu statele membre se depun eforturi cu scopul de a menține întreprinderile în funcțiune și a permite cetățenilor să-și păstreze locul de muncă, precum și de a stabili calea către redresarea pe termen lung prin intermediul strategiei Europa 2020 pentru o creștere inteligentă, durabilă și favorabilă incluziunii.

În 2010, regulamentul privind Fondul european de dezvoltare regională (FEDER) a fost modificat pentru a extinde eligibilitatea locuințelor sociale pentru comunitățile marginalizate (care vizează în mod explicit, dar nu exclusiv, comunitățile de romi marginalizate) situate în zonele urbane și rurale din toate statele membre. Extinderea eligibilității urmează să facă parte dintr-o abordare integrată, în care investițiile în locuințe sunt însoțite de intervenții în domenii precum ocuparea forței de muncă, învățământ și sistemul de sănătate. În prezent, statele membre modifică o serie de programe cu scopul de a profita de această schimbare.

Propunerea de cadru strategic comun pentru perioada 2014-2020 va oferi o direcție coordonată pentru investițiile în țintele stabilite de Strategia Europa 2020 în context național, regional și local. Propunerea de regulament FEDER post-2014 include „promovarea incluziunii sociale și combaterea sărăciei, sprijinirea redresării fizice și economice a comunităților urbane și rurale defavorizate” drept prioritate. Pentru un răspuns integrat și durabil care să abordeze nevoile multiple ale persoanelor marginalizate, sprijinul pentru infrastructura spațiilor de locuit poate fi cuplat cu investițiile efectuate de Fondul social european în domenii precum incluziunea activă, integrarea comunităților marginalizate și accesul la servicii de calitate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007140/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Social housing

Recent studies show that the deteriorating economic and social situation caused by the current financial crisis is affecting a large part of the socially marginalised population, leading to problems in accessing suitable housing and proper living conditions.

At the same time, cuts to local authority budgets are making it impossible to construct or support the construction of hospitals, doctors' surgeries, dental surgeries, family-type houses for children in need, old people's homes and hospices, along with other public-interest projects such as social housing for poor, elderly or sick people.

What measures would the Commission propose that could be supported from Community funds with the aim of improving living conditions for socially marginalised people, including the construction of social facilities in social housing areas?

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

Cohesion policy has responded to the economic crisis by stimulating demand and increasing public investment. Joint efforts with Member States are being made to keep businesses in operation and people in employment, and to set the course towards long term recovery via the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

In 2010, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) regulation was modified to extend eligibility of social housing to marginalised communities (explicitly, though not exclusively, targeting Roma marginalised communities) located in urban and rural areas of all Member States. This extended eligibility is to form part of an integrated approach, in which housing investments are accompanied by interventions in the fields such as employment, education and healthcare. Currently, a number of programmes are being modified by Member States to take advantage of this change.

The proposed Common Strategic Framework for 2014-2020 will provide a coordinated direction for investments in Europe 2020 targets in the national, regional and local context. The proposal for the post-2014 ERDF regulation includes 'promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities' as a priority. For an integrated and sustainable response addressing the multiple needs of marginalised people, support for housing infrastructure can be coupled with investment by the European Social Fund in areas such as active inclusion, the integration of marginalised communities and access to quality services.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007141/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(16 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Ecologizare — proiecte agromediu Pilonul 2

Viitoarea Politică Agricolă Comună nu se va mai axa doar pe o parte restrânsă, deși esențială, a economiei Uniunii, ci va deveni și o politică de importanță strategică pentru securitatea alimentară, pentru mediu și pentru echilibrul teritorial. În aceasta constă valoarea adăugată, specifică Uniunii Europene, a unei politici cu adevărat comune care utilizează în modul cel mai eficient resursele bugetare limitate cu scopul de a menține o agricultură sustenabilă pe întregul teritoriu al UE.

În condițiile în care ecologizarea este obligatorie și constituie bază pentru proiectele de agromediu din Pilonul 2, cum consideră Comisia că se poate stabili reutilizarea acestor fonduri?

Răspuns dat de dl. Cioloş în numele Comisiei
(17 august 2012)

Ecologizarea se referă la practici agricole care sunt benefice pentru climă și mediu și a fost inclusă în propunerea Comisiei ([1]) privind PAC după anul 2013, ca parte a schemei de plăți directe. Conform acestei propuneri, statele membre rezervă 30 % din plafonul național anual pentru plăți directe în vederea finanțării practicilor de ecologizare.

Cerințele de ecologizare au, într-o anumită măsură, aceleași caracteristici ca măsurile de agromediu actuale. Cu toate acestea, angajamentele sprijinite în temeiul noilor măsuri de agromediu și climatice vor trebui să meargă dincolo de obligațiile de ecologizare, aceasta din urmă făcând parte din scenariul de referință pentru aceste măsuri. Aceasta înseamnă că practicile definite ca făcând parte din cerințele de ecologizare nu vor fi eligibile pentru sprijin în temeiul măsurilor de agromediu și climatice.

Datorită includerii ecologizării în pilonul I al PAC, statele membre vor avea posibilitatea de a concepe, în cadrul pilonului II, măsuri de agromediu și climatice mai bine orientate, care să abordeze nevoile și obiectivele lor naționale, regionale și locale. În vreme ce practicile de ecologizare vor lua forma unor acțiuni simple, generalizate, necontractuale și anuale, operațiunile de agromediu și climatice vor fi mai bine orientate, adaptate la zonă, contractuale și multianuale.

Această structură dublă ar trebui să ducă la îmbunătățirea în continuare a performanței PAC în domeniul mediului.

([1]) COM(2011) 625 final/3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007141/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Greening — second pillar agri-environmental projects

The future common agricultural policy will not be a policy that caters only for a small, albeit essential, part of the EU economy, but also a policy of strategic importance for food security, the environment and territorial balance. Therein lies the EU added value of a truly common policy that makes the most efficient use of limited budgetary resources in maintaining sustainable agriculture throughout the EU.

Given that greening is obligatory and provides the basis for agri-environmental projects under the second pillar, how does the Commission believe that the re-utilisation of these funds can be regulated?

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

Greening refers to agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment and has been included in the Commission proposal ([1]) for the CAP post-2013 as part of direct payments scheme. According to this proposal Member States shall reserve 30% of the annual national ceiling for direct payments to finance greening practices.

The greening requirements have, to a certain extent, a similar nature as the current agri-environment measures. However, commitments supported under the new agri-environment-climate measures will have to go beyond the obligations of greening, which is part of the baseline for these measures. This means that the practices defined as being part of the greening requirements will not be eligible for the support under agri-environment-climate measures.

Due to greening in Pillar I of the CAP, Member States will have an opportunity to design, in Pillar II, more targeted agri-environment-climate measures addressing their national, regional and local needs and goals. While the greening practices will take the form of simple, generalised, non-contractual and annual actions, agri-environment-climate operations will be more targeted, area-specific, contractual and multiannual.

This dual structure should lead to the further enhancement of the environmental performance of the CAP.

([1]) COM(2011)625 final/3.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007142/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Laufzeit der finanziellen Hilfen für Griechenland und Spanien

Laut internen Berichten des Rettungsfonds soll die finanzielle Hilfe aus dem Rettungsfonds für Spanien bis 2028 und jene für Griechenland bis 2042 laufen.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Belastungen für die europäischen Steuerzahlerinnen und Steuerzahler in den kommenden Wochen?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Bereitschaft des griechischen Volkes, seinen Beitrag ganz aktiv zu leisten — also auch seinen Lebensstil den europäischen Gepflogenheiten anzupassen? Ohne die Bereitschaft, etwas zu ändern, wird es nicht gehen.

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(29. August 2012)

Was die finanzielle Unterstützung Spaniens angeht, besteht das Hauptziel des Programms für den Finanzsektor darin, die Widerstandsfähigkeit des gesamten Bankensektors zu erhöhen und den Marktzugang wiederherzustellen. Der finanzielle Beistand des EFSF/ESM wird daher in Form eines Kredits für die Rekapitalisierung einiger Finanzinstitute gewährt. Der Kreditbetrag deckt einen geschätzten Kapitalbedarf von insgesamt bis zu 100 Mrd. EUR ab. Der genaue Kapitalbedarf der spanischen Kreditinstitute wird derzeit von unabhängigen Wirtschaftsprüfern und Beratern ermittelt. Der finanzielle Beistand ist an die erforderlichen bankenspezifischen und systemweiten Konditionen gebunden. In dem von der Kommission (im Namen der Kreditgeber/des EFSF) und den spanischen Behörden am 23. Juli unterzeichneten Memorandum of Understanding ist zudem festgelegt, dass auf einen begründeten, bezifferten Antrag der Aufsichtsbehörde hin eine erste Tranche in Höhe von 30 Mrd. EUR zur Verfügung steht, die im Bedarfsfall vor den Umstrukturierungsentscheidungen verwendet werden kann.

Die zentralen Ziele der griechischen Regierung im Rahmen des zweiten wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms sind die Verringerung des Staatsdefizits, die Rückführung des öffentlichen Schuldenstands und der finanziellen Situation auf ein tragfähiges Niveau sowie die Wiederherstellung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit. Zur Bewältigung der Herausforderungen, denen Griechenland derzeit gegenübersteht, bedarf es schwieriger haushaltspolitischer und struktureller Reformen mit erheblichen wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Konsequenzen. Griechenland führt bereits seit Beginn der Krise umfangreiche Reformen durch, die in vielen Bereichen auch bereits greifbare Ergebnisse zeigen, doch angesichts der in der Vergangenheit aufgebauten enormen Ungleichgewichte müssen diese Anstrengungen weitergehen. Die neue griechische Regierung, die sich auf eine große Mehrheit im Parlament stützen kann, hat ihre feste Entschlossenheit bekräftigt, die Herausforderungen zu bewältigen und mit finanzieller Unterstützung der übrigen Mitgliedsländer des Euroraums im Rahmen des wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms die erforderlichen Maßnahmen umzusetzen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007142/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Duration of the financial assistance for Greece and Spain

According to internal EFSF reports the financial assistance for Spain will run until 2028 and that for Greece until 2042.

1. In the Commission's view, exactly how much money will European taxpayers be required to stump up in the coming weeks?

2. In the Commission's view, just how ready are the Greeks to play their part in this process, i.e. to bring their lifestyle into line with what is regarded as normal in Europe, given that without a willingness to change there is no way out of the crisis for their country?

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

As regards the financial support provided to Spain, the main objective of the financial sector programme is to increase the resilience of the entire banking sector and to restore its market access. For this, the financial assistance will be provided by the EFSF/ESM in the form of a loan for the recapitalisation of some financial institutions. The loan amount covers estimated capital requirements of up to EUR 100 billion in total. The ongoing work carried out by independent auditors and consultants will precise the amount needed by the Spanish credit institutions. The financial assistance is accompanied by the necessary bank-specific and system-wide conditionality. In addition, the MoU ([1]) signed by the Commission (on behalf of the Lenders/EFSF) and the Spanish authorities on 23 July sets out the availability of a first tranche of EUR 30 billion to be used ahead of restructuring decisions in cases of emergency and upon a reasoned and quantified request from the supervisory authority.

Key objectives of the Greek Government, within the second EAP ([2]), are reducing the government deficit, restoring public debt and financial sustainability and regaining competitiveness. Dealing with the challenges Greece is facing requires difficult fiscal and structural reforms with important economic and social consequences. Greece has already undertaken major reforms since the beginning of the crisis, many of which are already bringing tangible results, but the effort has to continue given the size of the imbalances previously accumulated. The new Greek Government, which enjoys a large majority in Parliament, has reiterated its strong determination to deal with the challenges and take the necessary action within the EAP supported through the financial assistance by the euro area MS.

([1]) Memorandum of Understanding.
([2]) Economic Adjustment Programme.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007144/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(16 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προστασία φορολογουμένων από ενδεχόμενες αυθαιρεσίες του δημοσίου

Με βάση «ερμηνευτική» εγκύκλιο του Ν.Δ. 356/74 του υπουργείου Οικονομικών, είναι δυνατή η «κατάσχεση κινητών, είτε στα χέρια του οφειλέτη, είτε κινητών και απαιτήσεων γενικώς κυριότητας του οφειλέτη που βρίσκονται στα χέρια τρίτου» για οφειλές 300€ και άνω. Δηλαδή, υπόκειται στην κρίση του προϊσταμένου της εφορίας να διατάξει την κατάσχεση μισθών, συντάξεων, ενοικίων, επιδομάτων, ακόμα και τραπεζικών καταθέσεων, για ενδεχόμενο χρέος του οφειλέτη στο δημόσιο, άνω των 300 ευρώ.

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω, και λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η ρύθμιση αυτή έχει πραγματοποιηθεί στο πλαίσιο του Μνημονίου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Δεδομένου ότι ο οφειλέτης πρέπει να έχει το δικαίωμα να αμφισβητεί μια διαταγή κατάσχεσης, μπορεί να διερευνήσει ότι στην ανωτέρω περίπτωση διαφυλάσσεται το δικαίωμα του οφειλέτη να ασκεί ένδικα μέσα και το δικαίωμά του να μπορεί να ακυρώνει την κατάσχεση;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Η επίμαχη νομοθετική πράξη, το ΝΔ 356/74, χρονολογείται από το 1974 και αφορά την είσπραξη οιωνδήποτε χρεών προς όφελος του κράτους. Τα μέτρα που έλαβε το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών για την είσπραξη φορολογικών οφειλών δεν μνημονεύονται στο Δεύτερο Πρόγραμμα Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για την Ελλάδα. Τα κράτη μέλη διαθέτουν μεγάλο βαθμό αυτονομίας όσον αφορά τον καθορισμό των διαδικαστικών κανόνων που αποσκοπούν στην εξασφάλιση της είσπραξης των χρεών προς όφελος του κράτους. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με το δικαίωμα προσφυγής των φορολογουμένων στο πλαίσιο αυτό. Σε κάθε περίπτωση, η προστασία των δικαιωμάτων υπεράσπισης στον τομέα των μέτρων είσπραξης εθνικών φόρων δεν εμπίπτει στις αρμοδιότητες της Επιτροπής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007144/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Protecting taxpayers from arbitrary State decisions

The Finance Ministry's 'explanatory' circular for the Presidential Decree 356/74 permits the 'seizure of movable property held by the debtor, or movable property and in general entitlements of the debtor held by third parties' to meet debts of EUR 300 and over. Under this provision, the head of tax office may order the seizure of wages, pensions, rents, allowances, and even bank deposits to expunge any debts a debtor may have to the public purse of over EUR 300.

In view of the above, and bearing in mind that this provision was introduced within the framework of the Memorandum, will the Commission say:

Given that the debtor must have the right to contest a confiscation order, will it examine whether in this case the debtor's right to appeal and to have a confiscation order rescinded is safeguarded?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2012)

The legislation at stake, Legislative Decree 356/74, dates from 1974 and concerns the recovery of any kind of debts to the benefit of the State. The provisions taken by the Ministry of Finance aiming at collecting tax debts are not mentioned as such in the European Commission's Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece. Member States enjoy a great degree of autonomy in designing the procedural rules aimed at guaranteeing the effective recovery of debts claimed by the state. The Commission is not aware of specific issues about the right of appeal of taxpayers in this context. In any event, the protection of the rights of defence in the area of national tax collection measures generally does not fall within the Commission's competence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007147/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Spanish appeal on Working Time Directive

The overall unemployment rate in Spain is already over 21%. How will this figure be affected by the ECJ's judgment on the Working Time Directive in Case C-78/11?

Question for written answer E-007151/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Spanish appeal on Working Time Directive

Does the Commission wholly support the principles put forward by the Spanish trade union regarding its appeal in relation to the Working Time Directive?

Question for written answer E-007153/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Spanish appeal on Working Time Directive

Youth unemployment is already above 54% in Spain. How will this figure be affected by the ECJ's judgment on the Working Time Directive in Case C-78/11?

Question for written answer E-007155/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Spanish appeal on Working Time Directive

Does the Commission support the application made by the Spanish trade union that appealed to the ECJ against the application and interpretation of the Working Time Directive, in Case C-78/11?

Question for written answer E-007157/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Spanish appeal on Working Time Directive

Some people are concerned that the ECJ's judgment on the Working Time Directive in Case C-78/11 will greatly affect employers' propensity to hire additional workers.

How does the Commission feel that the judgment will affect employers' propensity to hire workers?

Question for written answer E-007159/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Spanish appeal on Working Time Directive

Has the Commission evaluated the effect the ECJ judgment on the Working Time Directive in Case C-78/11 will have? If so, what are its conclusions?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2012)

The Commission would point out that the Court of Justice's ruling in Case C-78/11 ([1]) is consistent with several previous rulings, as mentioned in the text of the decision. The position taken by the Commission is already set out in detail in the ruling.

The Commission does not consider that this judgment will have the impact suggested by the Honourable Member, and recalls that the rules governing the payment or otherwise of sick leave, as well as proof of incapacity for work, are a matter for national law.

([1]) Case C-78/11 *ANGED*, judgment of the Court of Justice dated 21 June 2012, not yet published in the Official Journal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007149/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Working Time Directive — Spanish appeal

The judgment by the ECJ in Case C-78/11 on the Working Time Directive comes at a time of high unemployment, and growing unemployment in Spain and other countries.

In such an environment, will the effects of the ECJ's decision be positive on the labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2012)

The Commission would point out that this question is substantially identical to the Honourable Member's six previous written questions on this subject ([1]), and would refer the Honourable Member to the consolidated answer already given to him on those questions.

([1]) E-007147/2012, E-007151/2012, E-007153/2012, E-007155/2012, E-007157/2012, and E-007159/2012, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007163/12
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(16 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Ochrona turystów w przypadku bankructwa biura podróży

Zgodnie z art. 7 Dyrektywy Rady z dnia 13 czerwca 1990 r. w sprawie zorganizowanych podróży, wakacji i wycieczek (90/314/EWG): „Na wypadek swojej niewypłacalności organizator i/lub punkt sprzedaży detalicznej, będący stroną umowy, powinni zapewnić dostateczne zabezpieczenie umożliwiające zwrot nadpłaconych pieniędzy oraz powrót konsumenta z podróży".

Polska dokonała implementacji tej dyrektywy w ustawie o świadczeniu usług turystycznych. Ustawa ta nakłada obowiązek posiadania odpowiednich gwarancji bankowych lub ubezpieczeniowych. Ustawodawca określił minimalną wysokość sum gwarancyjnych.

Zgodnie z orzecznictwem Trybunału Sprawiedliwości dyrektywa nie pozwala na żadne ograniczenie zwrotu sum wpłaconych przez turystów.

4 lipca 2012 r. biuro podróży Sky Club zgłosiło wniosek o upadłość, pozostawiając blisko 5 000 klientów za granicą. 19 000 osób wykupiło wycieczki, które nie dojdą do skutku. Sky Club posiadał zgodnie z prawem gwarancje ubezpieczeniowe na sumę 25 mln zł. Suma ta nie wystarczy na zwrot należności wszystkim klientom.

1. Czy Komisja uważa, że dyrektywa w sprawie zorganizowanych podróży, wakacji i wycieczek zezwala na wprowadzenie takiego mechanizmu, który ogranicza możliwość zwrotu pieniędzy nadpłaconych przez klientów?

2. Czy Komisja uważa, że Polska dokonała prawidłowej implementacji art. 7 Dyrektywy?

3. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja dla zapewnienia lepszej ochrony klientów biur podróży w Polsce?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(14 września 2012 r.)

Przepisy dyrektywy 90/314/EWG chronią konsumentów nabywających zorganizowane wakacje i wycieczki. Trybunał Sprawiedliwości Unii Europejskiej wielokrotnie zinterpretował art. 7 dyrektywy ([1]) i wyjaśnił, że „[…] ustawodawstwo krajowe właściwie transponuje zobowiązania wynikające z art. 7 dyrektywy tylko wtedy […], gdy przynosi to skutek w postaci zapewnienia konsumentowi skutecznej gwarancji zwrotu wszystkich nadpłaconych pieniędzy i powrotu z podróży w przypadku niewypłacalności organizatora." ([2]) W tym kontekście Komisja uważa, że państwa członkowskie są zobowiązane wprowadzić system skutecznej gwarancji, który zapewnia konsumentowi zwrot wszystkich nadpłaconych pieniędzy i, w stosownych przypadkach, powrót z podróży w przypadku niewypłacalności organizatora.

W 2009 r. Komisja wszczęła postępowanie w sprawie uchybienia zobowiązaniom państwa członkowskiego ([3]) przeciwko Polsce, dotyczące stosowania art. 7 wymienionej dyrektywy. W konsekwencji Polska wprowadziła zmiany do ustawy o usługach turystycznych i przyjęła dwa nowe rozporządzenia, które znacznie wzmocniły w Polsce systemy ochrony w przypadku niewypłacalności. W świetle informacji przekazanych przez Pana Posła Komisja ponownie skontaktuje się z władzami Polski, aby dowiedzieć się, czy obecne systemy ochrony w przypadku niewypłacalności spełniają wymogi art. 7 dyrektywy.

([1]) Zob. np. C-140/97 oraz sprawy połączone C-178/94, C-179/94 i C-188/94 do C-190/94C.
([2]) C-140/97, pkt. 63-64.
([3]) 2007/4445.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007163/12
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Protection of tourists in case of travel agency bankruptcy

Article 7 of Council Directive 90/314/EEC of 13 June 1990 on package travel, package holidays and package tours states: 'The organiser and/or retailer party to the contract shall provide sufficient evidence of security for the refund of money paid over and for the repatriation of the consumer in the event of insolvency'.

Poland implemented this directive through its Tourist Services Act. This Act requires travel agencies to possess appropriate bank or insurance guarantees, with the minimum amount for such guarantees having been set by the legislator.

In line with the case law of the Court of Justice, the directive does not provide for the setting of any limit on the repayment of sums paid by tourists.

On 4 July 2012, the travel agency Sky Club filed for bankruptcy, leaving almost 5 000 customers stranded abroad. A further 19 000 people had purchased tours that would not take place. Sky Club, in line with legal requirements, held insurance guarantees to the value of PLN 25 million. However, this sum is insufficient to pay all of the customers' refund claims.

1. Does the Commission believe that the directive on package travel, package holidays and package tours authorises the introduction of a mechanism that limits customers' chances of obtaining a refund of unduly paid money?

2. Does it believe that Poland has correctly implemented Article 7 of the directive?

3. What steps does it intend to take to ensure that the customers of travel agencies in Poland are better protected?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 September 2012)

The directive 90/314/EEC protects consumers purchasing package holidays. The Court of Justice of the European Union has interpreted Article 7 of the directive on numerous occasions ([1]) and has clarified that '[…] national legislation properly transposes the obligations under Article 7 of the directive only if […] it achieves the result of providing the consumer with an effective guarantee of the refund of all money paid over and his repatriation in the event of the travel organiser's insolvency.' ([2]) Against this background, the Commission is of the opinion that the Member States are obliged to provide for an effective guarantee system which ensures that the consumer receives a full refund of all money paid over and, if relevant, his repatriation in the event of the organiser's insolvency.

In 2009, the Commission initiated an infringement case ([3]) against Poland concerning the implementation of Article 7 of the directive. As a result, Poland amended the Polish Tourism Act and adopted two new regulations which significantly strengthened the insolvency protection schemes in Poland. Against the background of the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission will again contact the Polish authorities in order to further investigate whether their current insolvency protection schemes fulfil the requirements of Article 7 of the directive.

([1]) See e.g. C-140/97 and joined cases C-178/94, C-179/94 and C-188/94 to C-190/94C.
([2]) C-140/97 paragraphs 63-64.
([3]) 2007/4445.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007164/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Segundo circuito de la interconexión eléctrica a 400 Kw España-Marruecos

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-000366/2011, la Comisión manifestó que se dirigiría a las autoridades españolas para recabar información. En la resolución de 20.12.2011 del Ministerio de Medio Ambiente se afirma que Red Eléctrica Española (REE) debe ejecutar una medida compensatoria, que es la adquisición de terrenos debido a la imposibilidad de compra de estos. La resolución aprueba la permuta de los terrenos por la construcción y dotación de equipamientos del Centro de Migración y Cambio Global en terrenos pertenecientes al Ministerio de Defensa, cedidas a la Fundación Migres, en las baterías de costas en desuso denominadas D-8 Punta Camorro.

El Colectivo Ornitológico Cigüeña Negra asegura que se falta a la verdad y al control de la DIA, ya que al 15.1.2012 no se habían eliminado las especies invasoras ni se habían restaurado los terrenos mediante siembra o plantación de especies autóctonas. Peor aún, la DIA cita la construcción de depuradoras (en plural) en las áreas de reserva y que REE solo ha financiado el 50 % de una depuradora. La permuta, construcción y dotación para el Centro de Migración y Cambio Global se efectuará en terrenos militares con una cesión «insegura», ya que en principio es por 15 años y el Ministerio de Defensa puede ocupar en cualquier momento estos terrenos si lo considera necesario.

La queja 2001/2156, carta de emplazamiento de la Comisión n° 2007/2432 sobre medidas compensatorias Barajas es un caso similar. La DIA se convierte en un mero formalismo.

¿Conoce la Comisión el estado de desarrollo de este proyecto?

¿Considera lícitas las medidas adoptadas por el Estado?

¿Está el Estado español violando las normativas de protección medioambiental de la Unión Europea?

¿Considera la Comisión que este tipo de acciones una y otra vez denunciadas ante la Unión Europea son beneficiosas tanto para la sociedad como para el medio ambiente?

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de agosto de 2012)

La Comisión puso en marcha una investigación sobre los asuntos planteados por Su Señoría en el marco de la pregunta escrita 366/2011 ([1]), y recabó información sobre la aplicación de las medidas compensatorias indicadas en la declaración de evaluación del impacto medioambiental (EIA).

Las autoridades españolas han informado acerca de la Resolución de 20 de diciembre de 2011 sobre la conformidad con las modificaciones solicitadas por el promotor del proyecto relativo a la ejecución de la medida compensatoria que implica la adquisición de terrenos y la gestión adecuada de los mismos. La Comisión ha recabado información adicional relativa a esta Resolución. Las autoridades españolas todavía tienen que responder a esa solicitud.

La Comisión recuerda que la responsabilidad de garantizar el cumplimiento de la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([2]), de hábitats, incumbe en primer lugar a los Estados miembros. No obstante, la Comisión ha tomado y seguirá tomando las medidas necesarias para garantizar el correcto cumplimiento de las disposiciones de la Directiva de hábitats en relación con este proyecto.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007164/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Second circuit of the 400 kw electricity link between Spain and Morocco

In its answer to Question E-000366/2011, the Commission said that it would contact the Spanish authorities for information on the issue in question. The Spanish Environment Ministry stated in its resolution of 20 December 2011 that the company Red Eléctrica de España (REE) should implement compensatory measures, including the purchase of the necessary land. Given that it proved impossible to purchase land, the resolution approved instead the transfer of land belonging to the Ministry of Defence, namely the D-8 Punta Camorro disused coastal battery, to the Centre for Migration and Global Change (or Migres Foundation) and the construction and funding of facilities on this land for use by the Centre.

The local bird conservation association, Colectivo Ornitológico Cigüeña Negra, claims that the environmental impact assessment (EIA) was not conducted properly, given that by 15 January 2012 the invasive species had still not been eliminated and native species had not been sowed or planted to restore the land. Worse still, REE has only funded 50% of the cost of a single treatment plant, even though the EIA called for a number of such plants to be built in the reserve areas. The facilities for the Centre for Migration and Global Change will be built on military land transferred to the Centre for an 'uncertain' period of time. In principle, the land will be transferred for 15 years, but the Ministry of Defence may requisition the land at any time if it believes it necessary.

A similar case of an EIA becoming a mere formality gave rise to letter of formal notice No 2007/2432 from the Commission, in response to complaint No 2001/2156, on compensatory measures in connection with Barajas airport.

Does the Commission know what stage of development the project has reached?

Does it think that the measures adopted by Spain are lawful?

Is Spain breaching the EU's environmental protection regulations?

Does the Commission think that such actions, which people have reported to the EU time and time again, are beneficial to society and the environment?

What measures does the Commission intend to adopt?

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

The Commission launched an investigation on the issues raised by the Honourable Member in the framework of the written question 366/2011 ([1]), requesting information on the implementation of the compensatory measures stated in the Enviromental Impact Assessment Statement (EIA).

The Spanish authorities have informed about the resolution of 20 December 2011, on the conformity with the modifications requested by the promoter of the project concerning the implementation of the compensatory measure that involves land acquisition and adequate management of it. The Commission has requested additional information concerning this resolution. The Spanish authorities have still to reply to this request.

The Commission would like to recall that the responsibility to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]) lies primarily with Member States. Nevertheless, the Commission has taken and will undertake the necessary actions to ensure that the provisions of the Habitats Directive are adequately respected in relation to this project.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-007167/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(16 juli 2012)

Angående: Åtgärder som kommissionen kan vidta mot de särskilda 301-rapporterna från kontoret för Förenta staternas representant i handelsfrågor

I den skriftliga frågan E-005395 bad jag och en annan ledamot kommissionen att klargöra huruvida den för närvarande planerar att vidta några särskilda åtgärder för att hantera effekterna på harmoniseringen av EU:s inre marknad av de särskilda 301-rapporterna som årligen utarbetas av kontoret för Förenta staternas representant i handelsfrågor. Under utfrågningen av kommissionsledamot Karel de Gucht i parlamentets utskott för internationell handel den 11 juli 2012 tog jag på nytt upp frågan direkt med kommissionsledamoten, som tydligt förklarade att han motsätter sig att enskilda medlemsstater listas i rapporterna. Han åtog sig vidare att ta upp frågan med sina amerikanska kollegor under de kommande samtalen i EU-USA-högnivågruppen ([1]).

— Vilka ytterligare särskilda åtgärder kan kommissionen vidta mot dessa rapporter?

— Vilka av dessa åtgärder kommer att vidtas?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(22 augusti 2012)

Kommissionen hänvisar till svaret på den skriftliga frågan E-005395/2012 ([2]) och erinrar om att de farhågor som Förenta staterna tar upp i 301-rapporten behandlas inom ramen för dialog och utbyte av information med medlemsstaterna i fråga eller via kommissionen.

Kommissionen har löpande kontakt med sina amerikanska motsvarigheter både på tjänstemannanivå och på politisk nivå inom de organ där frågor som rör immateriella rättigheter regelbundet diskuteras.

EU har möjlighet att ta upp frågan formellt via WTO:s tvistlösningsorgan, men såsom anges i svaret på den skriftliga frågan E-005395/2012, har Förenta staterna upprätthållit sitt åtagande att inte fatta beslut som är oförenliga med dess skyldigheter enligt WTO-avtalet.

([1]) Videoklipp: http://youtu.be/PcIHS0YlNm0.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/sv/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007167/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(16 July 2012)

Subject: Measures the Commission can take against USTR Special 301 Reports

In Written Question E-005395/2012 this Member, amongst others, asked the Commission to clarify whether it was currently planning to take any specific action to address the impact of the Special 301 Reports issued by the Office of the United States Trade Representative on an annual basis on the harmonisation of the European internal market. During the hearing of Commissioner Karel de Gucht by Parliament's International Trade Committee of 11 July 2012, this Member again raised the issue directly with the Commissioner, who clearly stated that he indeed disagrees with the listing of individual Member States in the reports. He further committed to raising the issue with his American counterparts during the EU-US High-Level Working Group's future talks ([1]).

— What other specific measures can the Commission take against these reports?

— Which of these measures will be used?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-005395/2012 ([2]), and would reiterate that the concerns raised by the US in the 301 Report are addressed in the context of dialogue and exchange of information with the Member States in question or via the Commission.

The Commission is in continued contact with its US counterparts at services and political level where issues relating to intellectual property are regularly raised.

The EU would have the possibility to raise the issue formally via the WTO Dispute Settlement Body, but as mentioned in the answer to Written Question E-005395/2012, the US has upheld its undertaking not to make determinations inconsistent with its obligations under the WTO Agreement.

([1]) Video extract: http://youtu.be/PcIHS0YlNm0.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007170/12
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(17. juli 2012)

Om: Pesticiders effekt på børns og babyers hjerner

Ifølge ny videnskabelig forskning har børn, der er pesticideksponerede, mindre hjernebark end børn, der ikke har været eksponeret for pesticider ([1]).

Disse fund stemmer overens med, at børn, der har været pesticideksponerede, også har lavere IQ end børn, der ikke har været pesticideksponerede.

I USA tog man allerede konsekvensen af dette i 1996, da Kongressen vedtog »the food quality protection act«, der kræver, at risici for babyer og børn bliver taget i betragtning i forbindelse med godkendelse af pesticidprodukter. For en række pesticider betyder det konkret, at man i USA anvender en ekstra sikkerhedsfaktor, der er ti gange højere end normalt, for at beskytte børn og gravide mod risici. Da man vedtog »the food quality protection act«, var man usikker på pesticidernes effekt. I dag kender man deres skadelige indvirkning på udviklingen af børns hjerner.

Påtænker Kommissionen at foreslå en stramning af de nuværende regler for godkendelse af pesticider i lyset af den nye videnskabelige viden, således at sikkerhedsniveauet for babyer og børn i EU kommer op på mindst samme standard som i USA?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli
(29. august 2012)

Kommissionen påpeger, at forordning (EF) nr. 1107/2009 ([2]) om markedsføring af plantebeskyttelsesmidler indfører strenge krav til godkendelse af aktivstoffer og beskyttelse af sårbare befolkningsgrupper, herunder gravide kvinder, spædbørn og børn.

I forbindelse med EU's risikovurdering finder yderligere sikkerhedsfaktorer desuden anvendelse under hensyntagen til virkningernes art og alvor samt sårbarheden hos bestemte befolkningsgrupper. Når den kritiske effekt anses for særlig betydningsfuld, såsom neurotoksiske udviklingsvirkninger, skal en øget sikkerhedsmargen om nødvendigt anvendes.

På grundlag af forsigtighedsprincippet er der desuden fastsat specifikke bestemmelser i Kommissionens direktiv 2006/125/EF ([3]) og 2006/141/EF ([4]), hvori maksimalgrænseværdier for pesticidrester i babymad til spædbørn og småbørn fastlægges til den fælles lavest påviselige grænseværdi på 0,01 mg/kg og lavere grænseværdier for et begrænset antal stoffer, som giver anledning til bekymring.

Kommissionen mener, at den gældende EU-lovgivning om pesticider sikrer et højt sundhedsbeskyttelsesniveau, således som det kræves i henhold til traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde.

([1]) Se undersøgelsen her: http://www.pnas.org/content/109/20/7871.
([2]) EUT L 309 af 24.11.2009, s. 1.
([3]) EUT L 339 af 6.12.2006, s. 16.
([4]) EUT L 401 af 30.12.2006, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007170/12
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Effect of pesticides on children's and babies' brains

According to recent scientific research, children who have been exposed to pesticides have less cerebral cortex than those who have not ([1]).

These findings agree that children who have been exposed to pesticides also have a lower IQ than those who have not.

In the USA action in this area was taken as early as 1996 when Congress adopted the Food Quality Protection Act, which requires risks for babies and children to be taken into account in the approval of pesticides. For a number of pesticides this means in practice that an extra safety factor is applied in the USA, ten times higher than normal, to protect children and expectant mothers against risks. When the Food Quality Protection Act was adopted, the effects of pesticides were uncertain. Now their harmful effect on the development of children's brains is known.

Does the Commission envisage proposing that the existing rules on the approval of pesticides should be tightened in the light of new scientific knowledge, so that the safety level for babies and children in the EU is brought at least up to the same standard in the USA?

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

The Commission would like to point out that regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]) concerning the placing on the market of plant protection products introduces strict criteria for approval of active substances and the protection of vulnerable groups of the population, including pregnant women, infants and children.

Extra safety factors are also applied within the EU risk assessment taking into account the type and severity of effects and the vulnerability of specific groups of the population. When the critical effect is judged of particular significance, such as developmental neurotoxic effects, an increased margin of safety shall be applied if necessary.

Moreover, on the basis of the precautionary principle, specific provisions are set under Commission Directives 2006/125/EC ([3]) and 2006/141/EC ([4]) which establish maximum levels for pesticides residues on infant and baby foods at the common minimum analytical detectable level of 0.01 mg/kg, with lower levels for a small number of substances of concern.

The Commission considers that current EU legislation on pesticides ensures a high level of human health protection as required by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

([1]) See study here: http://www.pnas.org/content/109/20/7871.
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 339, 6.12.2006, p. 16.
([4]) OJ L 401, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007171/12
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(17 juillet 2012)

Objet: Accord commercial entre l'Union européenne, la Colombie et le Pérou

Un accord commercial vient d'être signé entre l'Union européenne, la Colombie et le Pérou, le 26 juin 2012. Cet accord comprend des dispositions relatives tant aux questions tarifaires qu'aux règles commerciales. Selon la Commission européenne, l'accord, une fois appliqué en totalité, supprimera les tarifs de tous les produits industriels et de la pêche.

— La Commission peut-elle donner une liste complète des produits qui seront exemptés de tarifs à l'entrée dans l'Union européenne en dehors de ceux qui bénéficient en ce moment déjà du tarif zéro, grâce au régime SPG+?

— Pourquoi a-telle négocié un quota pour le lactosérum?

— L'établissement de disciplines communes en matière de droits de propriété intellectuelle, de transparence et de concurrence annoncé, consiste-t-il en une intégration de la législation européenne dans les législations colombiennes et péruviennes? La Colombie et le Pérou pourront-ils développer des disciplines à eux seuls, sans consulter l'UE, ou est-ce que la concertation avec l'UE sera obligatoire?

— L'Union européenne évoque dans son communiqué du 6 juin 2012 un système d'arbitrage quant aux dispositions relatives aux Droits de l'homme, au droit du travail et au droit environnemental. La Commission peut-elle expliquer ce système et la différence entre celui-ci et le mécanisme de règlement des différends, en ce qui concerne les mesures à mettre en œuvre et les sanctions applicables en cas de non-respect?

— Plus de 100 indications géographiques (IG) de l'UE seront protégées en Colombie et au Pérou, grâce à l'accord. Qui exercera le contrôle: les autorités douanières de ces deux pays, les propriétaires de supermarchés? Qui sera chargé de confisquer les produits frauduleux et d'imposer les sanctions? L'Union européenne payera-t-elle la Colombie et le Pérou pour ce service? Combien d'IG ont été inscrites par la Colombie et le Pérou, et lesquelles?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(24 août 2012)

Le 26 juin 2012, la Commission a signé un accord commercial ambitieux et complet avec la Colombie et le Pérou. Comme décrit dans les notes détaillées qu'elle a communiquées au Conseil et au Parlement en même temps que le texte complet de l'accord (y compris les calendriers de démantèlement tarifaire), le texte couvre à la fois les droits de douane et la réglementation et va plus loin que le régime préférentiel autonome (SPG+) actuellement appliqué par l'UE aux exportations en provenance de ces pays.

Lorsque l'accord sera appliqué en totalité, près de 500 lignes non libéralisées dans le cadre du SPG+ bénéficieront d'un traitement préférentiel, dont 300 seront entièrement libéralisées dès son entrée en vigueur. En échange de cette amélioration de l'accès au marché de l'UE, la Commission a bien entendu négocié pour ses exportateurs une amélioration des conditions d'accès à ces marchés andins, notamment dans le domaine de l'agriculture.

Les règles en matière de propriété intellectuelle, de transparence et de concurrence qui figurent dans l'accord sont compatibles avec la législation de l'UE. Le Pérou et la Colombie peuvent adopter leur propre législation respective, à condition qu'elle ne s'oppose pas aux règles énoncées dans l'accord.

Pour de plus amples informations sur la nature du système d'arbitrage intégré par les parties à l'accord commercial, la Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à la fiche d'informations communiquée au Parlement européen le 20 novembre 2011.

Les droits de propriété intellectuelle seront appliqués conformément aux dispositions du titre VII, chapitre 4, de l'accord commercial. L'annexe XIII présente une liste exhaustive des indications géographiques de l'UE, de la Colombie et du Pérou à protéger au titre de l'accord. Elle a été publiée sur le site web de la Commission ([1]) et a également été communiquée au Parlement européen.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=691.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007171/12
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Trade agreement between the EU and Colombia and Peru

A trade agreement was signed on 26 June 2012 between the European Union, Colombia and Peru. This agreement includes provisions on tariff issues as well as on trade rules. According to the Commission, the agreement — once fully implemented — will remove tariffs on all industrial and fishery products.

— Can the Commission provide a full list of products that will be exempt from entry tariffs into the European Union, besides those products already benefiting from zero tariff rates under the SPG+ scheme?

— Why did it negotiate a quota on whey?

— Does the announced establishment of common rules on intellectual property rights, transparency and competition mean the integration of European legislation into Colombian and Peruvian law? Will Colombia and Peru be able to develop rules of their own, without consulting the EU, or will they be obliged to work in consultation with the EU?

— A Commission press release of 26 June 2012 mentions an arbitration system for human rights law, labour law and environmental law. Can the Commission explain this system and the difference between it and the dispute settlement mechanism as regards the measures to be implemented and the penalties applicable in case of non-compliance?

— More than 100 EU geographical indications (GIs) will be protected in Colombia and Peru thanks to this agreement. Who will be responsible for carrying out checks: the customs authorities of the two countries, or perhaps supermarket owners? Who will be responsible for confiscating fraudulent products and imposing penalties? Will the EU pay Colombia and Peru for this service? How many GIs were created for Colombia and Peru, and what exactly were they?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

On 26 June 2012, the Commission signed an ambitious and comprehensive Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru. As described in the detailed notes it circulated to both the Council and the Parliament along with the full text of the Agreement (including tariff dismantling schedules), the text covers both tariffs and rules and goes further than the existing autonomous preferential scheme (GSP+) currently applied by the EU to exports from these countries.

When the Agreement is fully implemented, close to 500 non-liberalised lines under GSP+ will thenceforth benefit from preferential treatment, 300 of which will be fully liberalised as of the entry into force. In return for such improved access to the EU market, the Commission has evidently negotiated improved conditions for its exporters of access to these Andean markets — notably in agriculture.

As regards rules on intellectual property, transparency and competition contained in the Agreement, they are compatible with EC law. Peru and Colombia can develop their own legislation provided it does not conflict with the rules set out in the Agreement.

For details on the nature of the arbitration system included by the Parties in the Trade Agreement, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the information sheet circulated to the Parliament on 20 November 2011.

Intellectual property rights will be enforced according to the provisions of Chapter 4 of Title VII of the Trade Agreement. The full list of EU, Colombian and Peruvian GIs to be protected under the Agreement is included in Annex XIII and has been published on the Commission website ([1]) and also circulated to the Parliament.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=691.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007172/12
à la Commission
Robert Rochefort (ALDE)
(17 juillet 2012)

Objet: Résidus de pesticides ayant des effets perturbateurs sur le système endocrinien

Le rapport PAN (Pesticide Action Network Europe) publié le 5 juin 2012 est très alarmant. Ce rapport affirme que plus de la moitié de la nourriture consommée en Europe est contaminée par des perturbateurs endocriniens. Plus alarmant encore, il serait question d'«effets cocktail», c'est-à-dire des effets cumulatifs de plusieurs perturbateurs endocriniens qui, additionnés les uns aux autres, ont pour conséquences des effets perturbateurs beaucoup plus importants. Un quart de la nourriture consommée en Europe serait ainsi contaminée par des résidus de pesticides multiples, parfois plus de dix pesticides dans une même denrée alimentaire.

Un rapport similaire, piloté par neuf ONG d'envergure européenne et internationale, a établi une liste SIN (substitution immédiate nécessaire) afin d'encourager le législateur à accélérer le processus de substitution de certains perturbateurs endocriniens particulièrement dangereux.

Conformément à l'article 80, paragraphe 7, du règlement (CE) nº 1107/2009 concernant la mise sur le marché des produits phytopharmaceutiques, la Commission doit établir pour le 14 décembre 2013 une liste des substances ayant des effets perturbateurs sur le système endocrinien et pour lesquels une substitution s'impose.

1. La Commission peut-elle nous informer quant à ses intentions de substituer certains perturbateurs endocriniens dans le futur?

2. Peut-elle indiquer selon quels critères et quelle procédure elle dressera cette liste de perturbateurs appelant une substitution? Plus particulièrement, tiendra-t-elle compte des effets cumulatifs des perturbateurs endocriniens (effets cocktail) dans son évaluation des composés chimiques pour lesquels elle envisage une substitution?

3. Enfin, la Commission a-t-elle l'intention d'agir en faveur des consommateurs, afin de les informer et de les protéger contre ces composés chimiques, et plus précisément en faveur des consommateurs vulnérables, tels que les femmes enceintes ou les enfants, qui sont particulièrement sensibles aux perturbateurs endocriniens?

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

1-2. La Commission entend remplir ses obligations légales conformément au règlement (CE) nº 1107/2009 concernant la mise sur le marché des produits phytopharmaceutiques ([1]), c'est-à-dire qu'elle établira, en décembre 2013 au plus tard, une liste de substances «dont on envisage la substitution». Ces substances, dont de possibles perturbateurs endocriniens, devront répondre aux critères énumérés au point 4 de l'annexe II dudit règlement.

En outre, les critères scientifiques pour la détermination des propriétés de perturbation endocrinienne sont en cours d'élaboration. La Commission s'engage à présenter les propositions de mesures concernant ces critères au Comité permanent de la chaîne alimentaire et de la santé animale en décembre 2013 au plus tard.

Enfin, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments examine actuellement de nouvelles méthodologies d'évaluation des risques cumulés. Dès qu'une nouvelle méthodologie sera validée, la Commission et les États membres étudiera la possibilité de la mettre en œuvre.

3. Le règlement (CE) nº 1107/2009 et le règlement (CE) nº 396/2005 ([2]) concernant les limites maximales applicables aux résidus de pesticides présents dans ou sur les denrées alimentaires et les aliments pour animaux d'origine végétale et animale, tous deux en vigueur, prennent déjà en compte la question de la protection des groupes vulnérables.

([1]) JO L 309 du 24.11.2009, pp. 1-50.
([2]) JO L 70 du 16.03.2005, pp. 1-16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007172/12
to the Commission
Robert Rochefort (ALDE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Endocrine-disrupting pesticide residues

The PAN (Pesticide Action Network Europe) report published on 5 June 2012 makes very alarming reading. It states that more than half of the food consumed in Europe is contaminated with endocrine disruptors. Even more alarmingly, it mentions 'cocktail effects', i.e. the cumulative effects of a number of different endocrine disruptors which, added together, have much more serious disruptive effects. A quarter of the food consumed in Europe is thus apparently contaminated by multiple pesticide residues, sometimes with more than ten pesticides in the same food.

A similar report, published by nine European and international NGOs, has drawn up a SIN (Substitute It Now!) list to encourage legislators to accelerate the substitution of a number of particularly dangerous endocrine disruptors.

Under Article 80, paragraph 7, of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, the Commission is required to draw up by 14 December 2013 a list of substances with endocrine-disrupting properties which need to be replaced.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What are its intentions as regards the future replacement of certain endocrine disruptors?

2. According to which criteria and by what procedure will it draw up this list of endocrine disruptors which need to be replaced? In particular, will it take into account the cumulative (cocktail) effects of endocrine disruptors in its assessment of the chemicals which it is envisaging replacing?

3. Finally, does it intend to act in favour of consumers — in particular vulnerable consumers, such as pregnant women or children, who are particularly sensitive to endocrine disruptors — so as to inform them about and protect them against these chemicals?

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

1-2. The Commission has the intention to fulfil its legal obligations in compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 on placing of plant protection products on the market ([1]) as regards the establishment of a list of substances which satisfy the criteria for 'candidates for substitution' by December 2013. Criteria for the identification of candidates for substitution, among which are possible endocrine disrupters, are laid down in point 4 of Annex II of that regulation.

Moreover, the work on the development of scientific criteria for the determination of endocrine disrupting properties is ongoing and the Commission is committed to present a draft of the measures concerning those criteria to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health at latest by December 2013.

The European Food Safety Authority is currently working on new methodologies for cumulative risk assessment and as soon as a validated approach is available, the Commission and Member States will consider its implementation.

3. Currently both Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 and Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 ([2]) on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin already take into account the protection of vulnerable groups.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1-50.
([2]) OJ L 70, 16.3.2005, p. 1-16.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007174/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Investigación comunitaria en las licencias para prospecciones

El pasado 7 de julio, el ministro español de Industria, Comercio y Turismo declaró que no hay ningún tipo de investigación por parte de la Comisión Europea sobre la autorización del Gobierno de España a Repsol para que pueda realizar prospecciones petrolíferas en aguas próximas al archipiélago canario. El ministro argumentaba que no hay ninguna competencia europea en materia de prospecciones, pues ésta le corresponde al Estado español. Sin embargo, la propia Comisión, en su respuesta a la pregunta E-001568/2012, afirmó que «La concesión de autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos por los Estados miembros tiene que ajustarse a las disposiciones de la Directiva 94/22/CE».

¿Puede confirmar la Comisión que, al contrario de lo que afirma el ministro español de Industria, Comercio y Turismo, dispone de competencias tanto en materia ambiental como de normas comunes para garantizar un acceso no discriminatorio a las actividades de prospección?

¿Ha realizado la Comisión o piensa realizar alguna investigación sobre las diversas prospecciones petrolíferas que están proliferando en el Estado español?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de agosto de 2012)

La Directiva 94/22/CE ([1]) tiene por objeto garantizar un acceso no discriminatorio a la prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos en los distintos Estados miembros. Si bien que cada Estado miembro mantiene su plena independencia de decisión en cuanto a las zonas del territorio bajo su jurisdicción en que autoriza tales actividades, las autorizaciones deben expedirse de manera transparente y no discriminatoria, siguiendo en principio un procedimiento competitivo anunciado en el Diario Oficial de la UE y abierta a todos los candidatos idóneos de la UE.

A raíz de una denuncia sobre las operaciones relacionadas con la prospección de petróleo y gas marinos cerca de las Islas Canarias, la Comisión ha recabado de las autoridades españolas más información sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 94/22/CE en esta zona concreta. La información se evaluará una vez recibida y la Comisión actuará en consecuencia.

([1]) Directiva 94/22/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de mayo de 1994, sobre las condiciones para la concesión y el ejercicio de las autorizaciones de prospección, exploración y producción de hidrocarburos (DO L 164 de 30.6.1994).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007174/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: EU investigation into oil prospecting licences

On 7 July 2012, the Spanish Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism said that the Commission was not conducting an investigation of any kind into the Spanish Government decision to allow Repsol to explore possible oil deposits in waters close to the Canary Islands. The Minister claimed that the power to make decisions regarding oil prospecting activities lay solely with the Spanish State, not the European Union. However, in its answer to Question E-001568/2012, the Commission said that '[t]he granting by Member States of authorisations for prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbon resources has to comply with the provisions of Directive 94/22/EC'.

Can the Commission confirm whether, contrary to the claims of the Spanish Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism, it has the competence, on the basis of environmental rules and common standards, to ensure non-discriminatory access to prospecting activities?

Has the Commission investigated or does it intend to investigate the various and increasing number of oil prospecting activities being carried out in Spain?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

Directive 94/22/EC ([1]) aims at ensuring non-discriminatory access to prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons in individual Member States. While each Member State retains full independence of decision as to areas under its jurisdiction in which it allows such activities, the authorisations must be issued on a transparent and non-discriminatory basis, following, in principle, a competitive procedure announced in the Official Journal of the EU and open to all suitable applicants from across the EU.

On the basis of a complaint related to offshore oil and gas operations close to Canary Islands, the Commission has requested more information on the application of Directive 94/22/EC in this particular area from the Spanish authorities. The information will be assessed once received and the Commission will act accordingly.

([1]) Directive 94/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 1994 on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons, OJ L 164 , 30.6.1994.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007175/12
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17. juli 2012)

Om: Mål for reduktion af havaffald

EU-medlemsstaterne havde indtil den 15. juli 2012 til at opstille mål for reduktion af havaffald under havstrategi-rammedirektivet (herunder interne vurderinger af deres havområder og af menneskelige aktiviteters indvirkninger på miljøet samt en forpligtelse til at definere, hvad de mener, kan betegnes som »god miljøtilstand« …). På baggrund af medlemsstaternes indberetninger og indsatser kan der opnås meget i forhold til at håndtere det voksende problem med havaffald, men kun hvis der opstilles ambitiøse mål for reduktion af affaldet.

Forskellige undersøgelser peger på astronomisk store mængder havaffald i Middelhavet, men flere undersøgelser ser også på kilderne til dette havaffald, og det kommer ikke kun fra EU-medlemsstater. Investeringsprogrammet til fjernelse af de vigtigste forureningskilder i Middelhavsområdet — finansieringsmekanismen til udarbejdelse og gennemførelse af projekter (MeHSIP PPIF) har udpeget en række kystnære miljøbrændpunkter i Middelhavsområdet med en særlig høj koncentration i Libanon som kilder til havforurening. Dette skyldes hovedsageligt ukontrollerede lossepladser ved kysten, som er en primær forureningskilde for de marine økosystemer.

På baggrund af ovenstående bedes Kommissionen svare på følgende:

1. Kan Kommissionen redegøre for, hvilke yderligere tiltag den agter at træffe for at håndtere sådanne ikke-EU-kilder til havaffald i Middelhavet?

2. Kan den oplyse, præcis hvad den forventer af medlemsstaternes rapportering inden for fristen den 15. juli i henhold til havstrategi-rammedirektivet?

3. Kan den fremsætte en erklæring om mål for reduktion af havaffald i EU?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(4. september 2012)

Der gennemføres i øjeblikket en pilotundersøgelse, som er støttet med midler fra Europa-Parlamentet. Som led i denne undersøgelse analyseres smuthuller i strømmen af emballagemateriale i en række EU-lande, der har mindre udviklede affaldshåndteringssystemer, og i de tre sydlige middelhavslande (Egypten, Libanon og Marokko). Det forventes, at der fremlægges anbefalinger til praktisk gennemførlige og økonomisk overkommelige foranstaltninger, når kontrakten udløber i januar 2013. Inden for rammerne af Barcelona-konventionen vedtog partskonferencen for nylig (i februar 2012) en havaffaldsstrategi, der på nuværende tidspunkt er ved at blive omsat til en handlingsplan. Denne handlingsplan vil omfatte hele Middelhavsområdet.

I henhold til havstrategirammedirektivet ([1]) skal medlemsstaterne underrette Kommissionen om vurderingen, beskrivelsen og miljømålene, jf. artikel 8, 9 og 10, senest tre måneder efter færdiggørelsen heraf. Disse underretninger forventes således senest den 15. oktober 2012, hvorefter Kommissionen gennemgår dem.

Disse rapporter om den indledende vurdering og beskrivelse af god miljøtilstand i henhold til havstrategirammedirektivet, samt miljømål og igangværende projekter skulle gøre det muligt at opstille et udgangspunkt for EU i 2013. Dette kan anvendes til at opstille EU-mål for reduktion af havaffald, ikke mindst som opfølgning på de forpligtelser, der er indgået på Rio+20-topmødet, hvor alle parter enedes om »(…) at forpligte sig til, på baggrund af videnskabeligt indsamlede data, at arbejde for senest i 2025 at opnå betydelige reduktioner i mængden af havaffald med henblik på at forebygge skader på kystområder og havmiljø« (§ 163) ([2]).

([1]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2008/56/EF af 17. juni 2008 om fastlæggelse af en ramme for Fællesskabets havmiljøpolitiske foranstaltninger (EUT L 164 af 25.6.2008).
([2]) http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N12/436/88/PDF/N1243688.pdf?OpenElement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007175/12
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Marine litter reduction targets

EU Member States had until 15 July 2012 to set marine litter reduction targets under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (including initial assessments of their marine waters and the environmental impact of human activities thereon, and an obligation to define what they believe qualifies as 'good environmental status'). Based on reporting by Member States and their actions a great deal can be achieved in tackling the growing problem of marine litter, but only if ambitious targets are set for the reduction of marine litter.

Various studies point to astronomically high levels of marine litter in the Mediterranean Sea; however several studies also look at the sources of this marine litter and it does not come solely from EU Member States. The Mediterranean Hot Spots Investment Programme — Project Preparation and Implementation Facility (MeHSIP-PPIF) has identified several coastal environmental hot spots in the Mediterranean as sources of marine litter, with a particularly high density occurring in Lebanon. This is largely due to uncontrolled seafront dumping sites, which are a source of priority pollutants for marine ecosystems.

Given the above issues, can the Commission:

1. Outline what further measures it intends to take to tackle such non-EU sources of marine litter in the Mediterranean?

2. State exactly what it expects from reporting by Member States under the MSFD's 15 July deadline?

3. Make a statement on reduction targets for marine litter in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

At present, a pilot study supported by funds from the Parliament is being carried out. One part of this pilot project analyses loopholes in the flow of packaging material in a number of countries in the EU with less developed waste management systems and in three southern Mediterranean countries (Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco). Recommendations on feasible and affordable measures are expected at the end of the contract in January 2013. Under the Barcelona Convention, the Conference of Parties recently adopted (in February 2012) a strategy on marine litter which is currently being translated into an action plan. This will address the whole basin of the Mediterranean Sea.

According to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) ([1]), Member States are obliged to report within three months of completion of their reports on the articles 8, 9 and 10. These reports are therefore expected by 15 October 2012 after which they will be assessed by the Commission.

The upcoming reporting under the MSFD on the initial assessment and the determination of Good Environmental Status and environmental targets and the ongoing projects should allow developing a baseline for the EU in 2013 which could be used to set an EU-wide reduction target, also as a follow up of the commitment made at Rio+20 where all parties agreed to '(…) commit to take action to, by 2025, based on collected scientific data, achieve significant reductions in marine debris to prevent harm to the coastal and marine environment' (§163) ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([2]) http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N12/436/88/PDF/N1243688.pdf?OpenElement.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007176/12
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17. juli 2012)

Om: Tilstedeværelse af en dyrlæge under lastning og losning af transporterede dyr

Forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport kræver ikke tilstedeværelse af en dyrlæge under lastning eller losning — ikke engang hvis dyrene sendes på langdistancetransporter.

Forud for langdistancetransporter mellem medlemsstater eller til et tredjeland kræves det, at en dyrlæge kontrollerer, at lastbilen har et gyldigt certifikat til lange transporter. Dette betyder, at det er tilstrækkeligt, at dyrlægen kontrollerer dokumentets tilstedeværelse, mens det ikke kræves, at dyrlægen kontrollerer selve lastbilen eller dyrenes tilstand.

1. Hvordan mener Kommissionen, at medlemsstaterne kan garantere, at forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 håndhæves under langdistancetransporter af dyr i betragtning af, at forordningen ikke engang kræver tilstedeværelse af en offentlig myndighed under lastning og losning af dyrene til at kontrollere de forhold, dyrene lastes under, og selve transportmidlets stand?

2. Agter Kommissionen at ændre forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 og kræve tilstedeværelse af en dyrlæge under lastning og losning af dyr, der transporteres over lange afstande?

3. Mener Kommissionen i så fald, at medlemsstaterne har de finansielle og personalemæssige ressourcer til at foretage de kontroller, der vil være nødvendige blot for at opretholde muligheden af langdistancetransporter i stedet for at erstatte dem med transporter af kød og slagtekroppe?

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

1. Ved lange transporter mellem medlemsstaterne og tredjelande skal der foretages offentlig kontrol af dyrenes egnethed til transport på afgangsstedet inden pålæsningen som led i kontrol af dyresundheden. Dette finder normalt sted mindre end 24 timer inden afgang. Derudover kan der foretages offentlig kontrol af dyrene på slagterier, samlesteder og kontrolsteder, hvor de kompetente myndigheder udfører regelmæssige kontrolopgaver ([1]). De kompetente myndigheder skal også systematisk kontrollere transporten af dyr ved udgangssteder eller grænsekontrolsteder i EU ([2]).

Derudover kan de kompetente myndigheder underkaste transportvirksomhederne supplerende kontrol, navnlig gennem tilstedeværelse af en dyrlæge ved pålæsning af dyrene i tilfælde af tidligere overtrædelser af reglerne ([3]). De kan endvidere suspendere eller annullere transportvirksomhedens autorisation eller godkendelsescertifikatet for transportmidlet.

Medlemsstaterne har det primære ansvar for, at der sikres en tilfredsstillende beskyttelse af dyrene under transport. Til dette formål har medlemsstaterne indført regler vedrørende sanktioner, der skal anvendes i tilfælde af overtrædelser, og som har en afskrækkende virkning. Ved gentagne eller alvorlige overtrædelser af bestemmelserne i forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 kan en medlemsstat nedlægge midlertidigt forbud mod, at dyr transporteres af den pågældende transportvirksomhed eller med det pågældende transportmiddel på medlemsstatens område, selv hvis transportvirksomheden eller transportmidlet er autoriseret eller godkendt af en anden medlemsstat ([4]).

2. og 3. Kommissionen agter ikke på nuværende tidspunkt at fremsætte et forslag til ændring af forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 ([5]).

([1]) Se artikel 15 i forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport (EUT L 3 af 5.1.2005, s. 1).
([2]) Se artikel 21 i forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005.
([3]) Se artikel 24, stk. 4, litra b), i forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005.
([4]) Se artikel 26, stk. 6, i forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005.
([5]) Se Kommissionens beretning om virkningen af Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1/2005 om beskyttelse af dyr under transport (KOM(2011)0700 endelig).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007176/12
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Presence of veterinarian during loading and unloading of transported animals

Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport does not require the presence of a veterinarian during loading or unloading procedures — not even if the animals are sent on long-distance transports.

Before long-distance transport between Member States or to a third country, the veterinarian is required to verify that the truck has a valid certificate for long journeys. This means it is sufficient that the veterinarian checks the existence of the document; the veterinarian is, however, not required to check the truck itself nor the condition of the animals.

1. In the Commission's opinion, how can the Member States guarantee that regulation (EC) No 1/2005 is enforced during the long-distance transport of animals, given that the regulation does not even require an official authority to be present during loading and unloading of the animals to check the loading conditions and the condition of the means of transport itself?

2. Does the Commission intend to amend Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 to require the presence of a veterinarian during the loading and unloading of animals transported long distances?

3. If so, does it believe that the Member States have the financial and personnel resources to carry out the checks that would be necessary just to make long-distance transport possible, rather than transporting meat and carcasses instead?

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

1. In the case of long journeys between Member States and with third countries, official checks at the place of departure for fitness for transport have to be performed before the loading as part of the animal health checks. They usually take place within 24 hours before departure. In addition, animals may be checked by officials in slaughterhouses, assembly centres and control posts where competent authorities operate regularly ([1]). The competent authorities have also to systematically check the transport of animals going through exit points or border inspection posts of the Union ([2]).

Furthermore, the competent authorities may subject transporters to additional checks, in particular the presence of a veterinarian at loading of animals in case of previous non-compliance ([3]). In addition, they may suspend or withdraw the authorisation of the transporter or the certificate of approval of the means of transport.

Member States have the primary responsibility for ensuring a satisfactory level of protection for animals during transport. For this purpose, Member States have laid down rules on penalties applicable to infringements that are designed to be dissuasive. In the case of repeated or serious infringements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, a Member State may temporarily prohibit the transporter or means of transport concerned from transporting animals on its territory, even if the transporter or the means of transport is authorised by another Member State ([4]).

2 & 3. The Commission does not envisage at this stage to present a proposal for amending Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 ([5]).

([1]) See Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport (OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1).
([2]) See Article 21 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.
([3]) See Article 24(4) (b) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.
([4]) See Article 26(6) of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.
([5]) See the Commission's report on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, COM(2011) 700 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007177/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(17 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Obiettivi di sterilizzazione in India

Secondo una relazione pubblicata dall'Osservatorio per i diritti umani (Human Rights Watch) il 13 luglio 2012, l'India non ha attuato a livello pratico la sua dichiarazione in merito all'adozione di un approccio privo di obiettivi nella pianificazione familiare. Oltre 50 operatori sanitari in due differenti zone in India hanno ammesso di aver ricevuto obiettivi numerici di sterilizzazione femminile. Gli ordini in questione sono stati impartiti da direttori o altri dirigenti sanitari, che hanno minacciato i lavoratori con il taglio o il congelamento del salario o con un possibile licenziamento in caso di mancato conseguimento degli obiettivi loro imposti. Questi possono variare da 5 sterilizzazioni per persona per anno a una per mese. Per rispettarli, gli operatori sanitari sono obbligati a mettere in pratica una ricerca aggressiva di potenziali clienti che, spesso, sono conoscenti o vicini dell'operatore.

Secondo lo Human Rights Watch, suddetta prassi costituisce una duplice violazione dei diritti umani. In primo luogo, l'imposizione di una quota di sterilizzazioni femminili costituisce una violazione dei diritti degli operatori sanitari che li obbliga a modificare i fascicoli o a manipolare le donne per farle acconsentire alla procedura. In secondo luogo, si tratta di una violazione dei diritti delle donne. Queste non dovrebbero essere perseguitate con informazioni per decidere sulla propria salute riproduttiva e, indubbiamente, non dovrebbero essere sottoposte a pressioni volte a farle optare per una tale decisione da parte di operatori sanitari che cercano di rispettare gli obiettivi loro imposti e forniscono informazioni falsate circa i rischi per la sicurezza o le conseguenze di un tale intervento.

Sono sottoposte all'attenzione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante le seguenti domande:

1. È a conoscenza della prassi di imporre obiettivi di sterilizzazione in India?

2. Quali sono le alternative a disposizione del paese?

3. Quali sono le opzioni di cui dispone l'Europa per trattare questa violazione dei diritti umani?

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

L'AR/VP è al corrente del fatto che a volte in India vengono fissati obiettivi di sterilizzazione sia per gli uomini che per le donne, in particolare per coloro che appartengono a gruppi vulnerabili.

Tuttavia, secondo il ministero indiano della Sanità e del Benessere della famiglia, non vi sono programmi di pianificazione familiare coercitivi e non esistono più obiettivi di sterilizzazione. Ciononostante, in base ad alcuni piani del ministero si raccomandano e si effettuano sterilizzazioni dopo la nascita del terzo figlio sebbene, secondo il governo, ciò avvenga sempre su base volontaria, conformemente alla politica indiana per stabilizzare la popolazione.

L'UE sostiene il programma centralizzato «Missione sanitaria rurale nazionale (NRHM)/Salute riproduttiva e infantile II (RCH — II)», nell'ambito del quale rientrano le attività di pianificazione familiare. Da osservazioni fatte durante numerose missioni di verifica risulta che i metodi di pianificazione familiare — comprendenti il posticipo del primo parto, le nascite intervallate e la sterilizzazione — si basano su consulenze e decisioni volontarie e consapevoli da parte delle persone direttamente interessate.

Benché non si possa escludere che si verifichino alcune irregolarità come quelle riferite dall'Osservatorio per i diritti umani, il governo indiano non giustifica tali pratiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007177/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Target sterilisations in India

According to a report released on 13 July 2012 by Human Rights Watch, India's claim to take a 'target-free' approach to family planning has not been implemented on a practical level. Over 50 health workers in two different boroughs in India have admitted to being given target numbers for female sterilisations. These orders come from supervisors or other high-ranking health officials, and workers are threatened with salary cuts and freezes or with possible job loss if they fail to meet their targets. Targets can be anywhere from five sterilisations per person per year to one per month. To meet this quota, workers are forced to aggressively pursue potential clients, often those who come from among their personal acquaintances or neighbourhoods.

According to Human Rights Watch, such a practice is a twofold violation of human rights. First, it is a violation of the rights of the workers to give them a quota for female sterilisation — one that requires them to either manipulate records or manipulate women into agreeing to the procedure. Second, it is a violation of the rights of the women. Women ought not to be hounded for information regarding their decisions on their reproductive health, and they certainly ought not to be pressured into such decisions by health workers trying to meet a quota and giving them falsified information about the safety risks, consequences, etc.

The following questions are submitted for the consideration of the Vice-President/High Representative:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the practice of sterilisation targets in India?

2. What are the alternatives available to India?

3. What are Europe's options in addressing this human rights violation?

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

The HR/VP is aware that targets for sterilisations have at times been set in India, and that these have affected both men and women, particularly those belonging to vulnerable groups.

However, according to India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, they have no coercive family planning programmes, and there are no longer any targets for sterilisation. Some of the Ministry's schemes nevertheless recommend and carry out sterilisation after the birth of a third child, though according to the Government the basis for such sterilisation is always voluntary, in line with the country's policy on population stabilisation.

The EU is supporting the centrally-administered National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)/Reproductive and Child Health II (RCH — II) Programme under which family planning activities are carried out. According to observations made during many review missions, family planning methods — which include the delay of first birth, child-spacing, and sterilisation — are based on counselling and voluntary, informed decisions by those directly involved.

While it cannot be excluded that some irregularities such as those reported by Human Rights Watch may occur, the Government of India does not condone these practices.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-007178/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(17 juli 2012)

Angående: Granskning av i vilken grad varumärkeslicensiering används för skatteplanering på stora utländska företag

Under Sydkoreadelegationens möte den 9 juli 2012, när följderna av frihandelsavtalet mellan EU och Sydkorea för europeiska biltillverkare flyktigt berördes av kommissionens företrädare, tog denna ledamot upp frågan om utländska företag som till exempel använder varumärkeslicensiering för att flytta vinster som ansamlats på den europeiska marknaden till utländska ägare, oberoende av vilken tillverknings- eller försäljningsverksamhet dessa företag bedriver på den europeiska marknaden.

1. Tänker kommissionen kartlägga i vilken grad denna typ av varumärkeslicensiering används för närvarande och vad detta betyder för den europeiska ekonomin, särskilt skatteuppbörden?

2. Om kommissionen genomför en sådan granskning, skulle den kunna omfatta de särskilda följder som frihandelsavtalet mellan EU och Sydkorea i detta avseende har på bilbranschen?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(11 september 2012)

Kommissionen vill upplysa parlamentsledamoten om att den för närvarande inte planerar att genomföra någon kartläggning eller granskning av hur varumärkeslicensiering används av utländska företag på den europeiska marknaden. Kommissionen kan därför inte ange huruvida något specifikt land eller någon särskild sektor skulle kunna omfattas av en sådan granskning, om den skulle förverkligas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007178/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Investigating the extent to which trademark licensing is used for tax planning by major foreign companies

Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Korean Peninsula met on 9 July 2012, when the impact of the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement on the European automobile manufacturers was briefly addressed by the Commission representative. This Member also raised the issue of foreign companies using, for instance, trademark licensing regimes to move profits accumulated on the European market to owners abroad, irrespective of the activities undertaken by those foreign companies on the European market with respect to manufacturing or vending.

1. Is the Commission currently planning to map the extent to which this type of trademark licensing practise is currently in use and its implications for the European economy, and in particular the tax institutions?

2. Would the Commission, if it were to make such an investigation, also be able to include the specific impact of the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement on the automobile sector in this respect?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2012)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it is not currently planning to conduct any mapping or investigation of trade mark licensing practices by foreign companies on the European market. As a result, the Commission is not in a position to indicate whether any specific country or sector could be potentially covered if such an investigation were to materialise.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007179/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 juli 2012)

Betreft: Malmström wil nog veel meer immigratie naar Europa

Eurocommissaris Malmström heeft gezegd dat nog veel meer immigratie voor Europa een „kans" zou zijn. „Immigratie zal noodzakelijk zijn met het oog op de ontwikkeling van de demografie in het merendeel van onze landen," legt zij uit. Malmström nodigt die landen uit „om uit te stijgen boven toevallige nationale omstandigheden".

Malmström erkent het falen van de integratiepolitiek en de gettovorming in Europese steden, maar daarvoor houdt zij de nationale politici verantwoordelijk die volgens haar „niet voldoende krachtig" zouden zijn opgetreden.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Nog veel meer immigratie naar Europa" ([1])?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke EU-lidstaten volgens Malmström meer migranten zouden moeten toelaten, en waarom?

3. Kan de Commissie uitleggen waarom zij enerzijds wél zichzelf de macht heeft toegeëigend om lidstaten op Europees niveau een immigratiebeleid op te leggen, maar anderzijds níet de verantwoordelijkheid neemt voor bijvoorbeeld het falen van de integratie dat juist een gevolg is van haar eigen beleid? Waarom schuift de Commissie deze verantwoordelijkheid af op de nationale politici? Is de Commissie er dan ook toe bereid de nationale politici de ruimte te geven om zélf over het immigratiebeleid te kunnen beslissen?

4. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid de lidstaten hun macht terug te geven, zodat zij kunnen en mogen omgaan met massa-immigratie?

5. Hoe gaat de Commissie ervoor zorgen dat immigranten braaf in de lidstaten blijven die zich in de visie van de Commissie demografisch incorrect ontwikkelen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(29 augustus 2012)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van het debat dat is ontstaan naar aanleiding van het interview over migratie en integratie met mevrouw Malmström in Le Monde van 10 juli 2012.

Volgens het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de EU moet de Unie een gemeenschappelijk immigratiebeleid ontwikkelen dat moet leiden tot een efficiënt beheer van de migratiestromen en een billijke behandeling van onderdanen van derde landen die legaal in de lidstaten verblijven. De lidstaten blijven echter zelf bepalen hoeveel economische migranten zij willen toelaten.

De Unie mag de integratiemaatregelen van de lidstaten stimuleren en ondersteunen, maar het Verdrag sluit elke vorm van harmonisatie van de wet- en regelgeving van de lidstaten uit. Integratie is een plaatselijke aangelegenheid en het integratiebeleid moet zo dicht mogelijk bij die plaats worden ontwikkeld. Hoewel de lidstaten en de steden grote inspanningen hebben geleverd, doen zich nog veel problemen voor op het gebied van integratie. Goede integratie vergt inspanningen op alle niveaus.

In de EU wonen 20,5 miljoen migranten van buiten de EU ([2]). Zij kunnen tekorten aan arbeidskrachten opvullen die zich in de EU voordoen als gevolg van de vergrijzing en de krimpende beroepsbevolking. Migratie, gekoppeld aan effectieve integratie, kan de groei en welvaart van de EU helpen stimuleren en een aanvulling vormen op een optimale inzet van de beroepsbevolking en de deskundigheid die al voorhanden zijn in de EU.

([1]) http://www.katholieknieuwsblad.nl/nieuws/item/2282-nog-veel-meer-immigratie-naar-europa.html
([2]) Eurostat, Statistics in focus, 31/2012.

Zoals blijkt uit de International Migration Outlook 2012 van de OECD, is de vraag naar arbeidskrachten sterk van invloed op de keuze van het land van bestemming. Bovendien worden de geografische mobiliteit en de arbeidsmobiliteit van immigranten gedurende een bepaalde periode beperkt door de EU-wetgeving op het gebied van arbeidsmigratie, zoals de blauwekaartrichtlijn ([3]). De lidstaten kunnen nog steeds beperkingen stellen aan het aantal blauwekaarthouders dat zij toelaten vanuit een andere lidstaat.

([3]) Richtlijn 2009/50/EG van de Raad van 25 mei 2009 betreffende de voorwaarden voor toegang en verblijf van onderdanen van derde landen met het oog op een hooggekwalificeerde baan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007179/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Malmström's desire to further greatly increase immigration into Europe

Commissioner Malmström has said that a substantial increase in immigration presents Europe with an 'opportunity'. 'Immigration will be necessary on account of demographic trends in most of our countries,' she explains. Malmström invites those countries to 'rise above fortuitous national circumstances'.

Malmström acknowledges the failure of the policy of integration and the fact that ghettoes have formed in European cities, but she blames national politicians for this, saying that they have not acted with sufficient vigour.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Nog veel meer immigratie naar Europa' [A further big increase in immigration into Europe] ([1])?

2. Can the Commission indicate which EU Member States ought, in Malmström's opinion, to admit more migrants, and why?

3. Can the Commission explain why on the one hand it has arrogated to itself the power to impose an immigration policy on Member States at European level, but on the other hand it is not taking responsibility for the failure of integration, for example, which is caused by nothing else but its own policy? Why does the Commission pass the buck to national politicians in this regard? Will the Commission therefore give national politicians the chance to decide on immigration policy for themselves?

4. Will the Commission restore the Member States' powers to them, so that they can — and are permitted to — deal with mass immigration?

5. How will the Commission ensure that immigrants dutifully remain in the Member States which according to the Commission are developing in a demographically incorrect manner?

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

The Commission is aware of the debate following the interview with Commissioner Malmström on migration and integration in *Le Monde* on 10 July 2012.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the EU has conferred on the Union the task to develop a common immigration policy aimed at ensuring efficient management of migration flows and fair treatment of third-country nationals residing legally in Member States. However, Member States remain responsible for determining the number of economic migrants they admit.

The Union may also provide incentives and support to Member States' integration measures but the Treaty excludes any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States. Integration happens locally and integration policies should be developed as close as possible to the ground. Despite important efforts in the Member States and their cities, many integration challenges still remain. Successful integration requires efforts at all levels.

20.5 million non-EU migrants live in the EU ([2]). There are labour and skills shortages that these migrants help to fill, in view of the ageing EU population and declining working-age population. If the EU is to grow and thrive, migration, coupled with effective integration, can play a role, further to maximising the labour force and skills already available in the EU.

([1]) http://www.katholieknieuwsblad.nl/nieuws/item/2282-nog-veel-meer-immigratie-naar-europa.html
([2]) Eurostat, Statistics in focus 31/2012.

As shown by the OECD in its International Migration Outlook 2012, labour market demand strongly affects the choice of country for migration. Moreover, EU legislation in the field of labour migration, such as the Blue Card Directive, limits the geographic and occupational mobility of immigrants for a certain duration ([3]). Member States may continue to apply volumes of admission to Blue Card holders, who seek to relocate from one Member State to another.

([3]) Council Directive 2009/50/EC on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-007181/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Sylvie Guillaume (S&D)
(17 juillet 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Traitement des demandeurs d'asile syriens en Europe

La Syrie est en proie depuis mars 2011 à un mouvement de contestation du régime de Bachar al-Assad, qui aurait fait plus de 17 000 victimes, en majorité des civils, 65 000 personnes seraient portées disparues et plus de 200 000 manifestants seraient emprisonnés. Alors qu'à l'ONU la Russie bloque toutes les initiatives pour condamner Damas, la révolte continue d'être écrasée avec une brutalité rarement égalée. En juin dernier, plus de 78 000 personnes auraient fui ces violences dans les pays voisins (Jordanie, Turquie, Liban et IraQ) et ces chiffres ne sont pas prêts de diminuer, bien au contraire, alors même que les moyens sur place pour accueillir ces réfugiés restent souvent limités.

En Europe, on assiste à des pratiques très différenciées dans le traitement des demandes d'asile émanant de ressortissants syriens. Certains États membres ont, semble-t-il, décidé de geler l'examen de leur demande, certains au contraire optent pour une approche au cas par cas, alors que d'autres adoptent une politique commune pour l'ensemble des demandeurs syriens.

1. Compte tenu de la situation qui prévaut actuellement en Syrie, de nombreux États membres ont fermé leur ambassade ou représentation consulaire sur place. Quelles mesures l'Union européenne et ses États membres ont-ils prises — ou envisagent-ils de prendre — pour faciliter l'entrée sur le territoire européen de ceux qui fuient les violences en Syrie?

2. Étant données les sombres perspectives d'évolution de la situation dans le pays, l'Union européenne ne devrait-elle pas s'engager dans une approche commune de l'accueil et de l'examen des demandes d'asile des ressortissants syriens, basée sur les meilleures pratiques que le Bureau européen d'appui en matière d'asile a pu identifier?

3. Alors que le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge vient de statuer que la Syrie est en situation de guerre civile, la Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle s'assurer auprès des États membres de l'UE qu'il ne sera procédé à aucun refoulement en direction de la Syrie? Envisage-t-elle d'appeler les États membres à respecter un moratoire interdisant les retours de ressortissants d'États tiers vers la Syrie?

4. L'Union européenne peut-elle s'engager à réinstaller des réfugiés accueillis dans les pays voisins de la Syrie, qui sont confrontés à des conditions de vie particulièrement difficiles, en raison de l'incapacité des gouvernements sur place à faire face à l'afflux massif de réfugiés syriens à leurs frontières?

Réponse donnée par Mme Malmström au nom de la Commission
(13 septembre 2012)

La Commission œuvre à l'établissement d'un programme régional de protection en faveur des réfugiés fuyant la Syrie, afin de répondre à leurs besoins de protection internationale les plus urgents sans les obliger à quitter la région. Le 8 juin dernier, elle a approuvé, au moyen d'une mesure spéciale, l'octroi d'une enveloppe de 23 millions d'euros en faveur des acteurs de la société civile en Syrie et des réfugiés installés dans les pays limitrophes. L'UE a également accordé plus de 98 millions d'euros (40 millions d'euros financés sur son budget et plus de 58 millions provenant de contributions bilatérales des États membres) pour faire face aux besoins humanitaires en Syrie et dans les pays voisins.

La Commission encourage les États membres à faire usage de toutes les possibilités qu'offre l'acquis de l'UE et à tenir compte des meilleures pratiques lors de l'accueil et de l'examen de demandes d'asile des ressortissants syriens. Le BEA ([1]) s'emploie à l'heure actuelle à identifier lesdites pratiques. Une étude des voies légales prévues par l'acquis de l'UE pour traiter ces demandes devrait également être envisagée et en particulier l'application à la Syrie, compte tenu du contexte de violence aveugle, de l'article 15, point c), de la directive concernant les normes minimales relatives aux conditions à remplir pour pouvoir prétendre au statut de réfugié.

Les États membres doivent toujours respecter le principe de non-refoulement en vertu de leurs obligations internationales et conformément à la Charte des droits fondamentaux lorsqu'ils appliquent la législation européenne.

([1]) Bureau européen d'appui en matière d'asile.

La réinstallation est proposée aux réfugiés les plus vulnérables, principalement ceux qui ne peuvent pas bénéficier d'autres solutions durables. La réinstallation de réfugiés provenant de Syrie et de la région peut être financée par le projet pilote de réinstallation d'urgence pour l'année 2012. Par ailleurs, le FER ([2]) peut cofinancer la réinstallation de réfugiés syriens qui entrent dans l'une des catégories relevant de son champ d'action et dont la réinstallation était prévue au titre des quotas alloués pour 2012.

([2]) Fonds européen pour les réfugiés.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007181/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sylvie Guillaume (S&D)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Treatment of Syrian asylum-seekers in Europe

Since March 2011, Syria has been plagued by a conflict between Bashar al-Assad's regime and an anti-regime movement. The conflict has reportedly claimed more than 17 000 victims — mostly civilians — with a further 65 000 missing and 200 000 protesters imprisoned. While Russia is blocking all initiatives at the UN to denounce Syria, the revolt is being put down with a brutality that has rarely been matched. In June 2011, more than 78 000 people reportedly fled from violence in Syria to neighbouring countries (Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq). These figures are unlikely to decrease, quite the opposite in fact, while reception facilities for those refugees on the ground are limited in many instances.

In Europe, very different approaches are being taken to dealing with asylum requests from Syrian nationals. Certain Member States have, it seems, decided to impose a freeze on considering their asylum applications, others have opted to examine them on a case-by-case basis, while others are adopting a uniform policy for all Syrian asylum-seekers.

1. Given the current situation in Syria, many Member States have closed their embassies or consulates in Syria. What steps have the EU and its Member States taken — or what steps are they planning to take — to make it easier for those fleeing violence in Syria to reach Europe?

2. Given the dire scenarios that could unfold in Syria, should the EU not adopt a uniform approach to receiving and examining asylum requests from Syrian nationals based on the best practices identified by the European Asylum Support Office?

3. Following the decision of the International Committee of the Red Cross to classify the situation in Syria as a civil war, can the Vice-President/High Representative obtain assurances from the Member States that there will be no refoulement to Syria? Is she considering calling on the Member States to respect a moratorium that prohibits the return of nationals from third countries to Syria?

4. Can the EU make a commitment to resettling some of the refugees taken in by Syria's neighbours who are living in particularly difficult conditions as a result of the inability of their host countries' governments to deal with the massive influx of Syrian refugees across their borders?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2012)

The Commission is working towards the establishment of a Regional Protection Programme in support of refugees from Syria, to address their most pressing needs related to international protection without forcing them to leave the region. The Commission approved on 8 June a EUR 23 million special measure to support both civil society in Syria and refugees in neighbouring countries. The EU has also allocated over EUR 98 million (EUR 40 million from the EU budget and over EUR 58 million bi-laterally from Member States) to address humanitarian needs inside Syria and in the neighbouring countries.

The Commission encourages Member States to make use of all possibilities provided by the EU *acquis* and to take into account best practices when receiving and examining asylum requests from Syrian nationals. The EASO ([1]) is currently working on identifying such practices. An assessment of the legal avenues provided by the EU *acquis* to deal with these requests and, in particular, the application of Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive to Syria based on a situation of indiscriminate violence should also be considered.

Member States must always respect the principle of non-refoulement in accordance with their international obligations and, when applying EC law, in line with the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

([1]) European Asylum Support Office.

Resettlement is offered to those refugees considered most vulnerable, primarily to those that cannot access other durable solutions. The Pilot Project on Emergency Resettlement for 2012 may fund resettlement of refugees from Syria and from the region. The ERF ([2]) may also co-finance resettlement of Syrian refugees if they belong to one of the categories covered by the ERF and if they were to be resettled under previously pledged quotas for 2012.

([2]) European Refugee Fund.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007182/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Privatización Aigües Ter Llobregat

La Generalitat de Cataluña está impulsando un proyecto para conceder la gestión y explotación de la red de abastecimiento de agua potable en la alta región metropolitana de Barcelona a una empresa privada por un periodo de 50 años. Actualmente la titularidad es de la empresa pública Aigües Ter Llobregat.

Dicho proyecto de explotación privada incluye el derecho a retribución de la concesionaria por la gestión de infraestructuras de abastecimiento y de tratamiento-potabilización— de agua y desalinizadoras (ITAM) del río La Tordera y del Prat del Llobregat que han recibido fondos de cohesión de la UE. Las desalinizadoras estarán en funcionamiento solo para su mantenimiento y en caso de extrema sequía.

El proyecto no tiene en consideración ni respeta las condiciones del Plan de Gestión de las cuencas internas de Cataluña, ni del Plan de Caudales mínimos de los cursos fluviales ni el Plan Hidrológico Nacional para el cumplimiento con la Directiva marco del agua.

El proyecto contiene previsiones que inciden en captaciones de agua de ríos y de aguas subterráneas, así como en tratamiento y desalinización de aguas, consumos energéticos asociados y emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero, por lo que debería someterse al procedimiento de Evaluación ambiental estratégica

— ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de este proyecto?

— ¿Conoce detalles del plan (captaciones de agua de los sistemas fluviales del Ter y Llobregat por año y durante los 50 años)?

— ¿Considera apropiada la privatización de infraestructuras realizadas con fondos de cohesión de la UE?

— ¿Considera que la Generalitat está violando la Directiva marco del agua con este proyecto?

— ¿Exigirá una evaluación ambiental en cumplimiento con la Directiva de impacto ambiental?

— ¿Considera que el proyecto viola las condicionalidades inherentes al otorgamiento de fondos estructurales europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de septiembre de 2012)

La Comisión no está al corriente del proyecto a que se refiere su Señoría en la cuenca hidrográfica de Cataluña (España).

La Comisión confirma que tanto la planta de desalinización de Barcelona (Prat de Llobregat) como la de Tordera han recibido ayudas del Fondo de Cohesión. No existe ninguna norma europea que impida al beneficiario conferir la gestión y la explotación de una infraestructura cofinanciada por la UE a una empresa privada.

Las autoridades españolas deben garantizar el cumplimiento de las obligaciones previstas en la Directiva Marco del Agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE ([1])). La Directiva obliga a todos los Estados miembros a crear planes hidrológicos de cuenca (PHC) con medidas para alcanzar un buen estado del agua y evitar su deterioro.

El plan hidrológico de cuenca de Cataluña notificado por las autoridades españolas no proporciona información sobre un proyecto como el aludido en la pregunta. La Comisión pedirá a las autoridades españolas información sobre este proyecto y, en especial, sobre su cumplimiento de los objetivos de la DMA.

([1]) DO L 327 de 22.12.2000.

La Directiva 2011/92/UE ([2]) (conocida como la Directiva de evaluación del impacto ambiental o Directiva EIA) se aplica a determinados proyectos públicos y privados que puedan tener repercusiones importantes en el medio ambiente. Por otra parte, la Directiva 2001/42/CE ([3]) (conocida como la Directiva de evaluación ambiental estratégica o Directiva EAE) se aplica a determinados planes y programas del sector público. La Directiva EIA se aplica a los proyectos del sector del agua como el mencionado por Su Señoría, mientras que la Directiva EAE afecta a los planes de gestión hídrica. La pertinencia de las dos directivas a efectos de este proyecto también quedará aclarado tras recibirse la información recabada de las autoridades españolas.

([2]) DO L 26 de 28.1.2012.
([3]) DO L 197 de 21.7.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007182/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Privatisation of the Aigües Ter Llobregat water supply network

The Catalonian Government is promoting a project to hand over the management and running of the drinking water supply network in the upper Barcelona metropolitan region to a private company for 50 years. The network is currently operated by the public company Aigües Ter Llobregat.

The project will allow the private licence holder running the network to derive revenue from the management of water supply, treatment and purification facilities and of the Tordera river and El Prat del Llobregat desalination plants (ITAM) ([1]) which have received financial assistance from the EU Cohesion Fund. The desalination plants will be used only to the extent needed to ensure that they function properly and during periods of extreme drought.

However, the project does not take account of or comply with the terms of the management plan for Catalonia's internal river basins, the minimum river flow plan or the National Hydrological Plan for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

The project also includes plans that will involve abstractions of river water and groundwater and water treatment and desalination. This will lead to increased energy consumption and the emission of greenhouse gases. The project should therefore be subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure.

— Is the Commission aware of this project?

— Does it have details about the plan (such as the amount of water that will be extracted from the Ter and Llobregat river systems per year and during the 50-year period as a whole)?

— Does it think it right that facilities financed by the Cohesion Fund should be privatised?

— Does it think that this project by the Catalonian Government violates the Water Framework Directive?

— Will it call for an environmental impact assessment to be carried out in accordance with the EIA Directive?

— Does the Commission think that the project breaches the conditions governing the granting of Structural Fund resources?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the project to which the Honourable Member refers in the River Basin District of Catalonia (Spain).

The Commission confirms that both the desalinisation plant of Barcelona (Prat de Llobregat) and the desalinisation plant of Torderá have received support from the Cohesion Fund. There is no European rule to prevent the beneficiary to confer the management and the exploitation of an EU co-financed infrastructure to a private company.

The Spanish authorities should ensure compliance with the obligations of the Water Framework Directive (WFD 2000/60/EC ([2])). The directive requires all Member States to set up River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) including measures to achieve a good status of water and prevent its deterioration.

The RBMP of Catalonia, as reported by the Spanish authorities, does not provide information on a project such as the one referred to in the question. The Commission will ask the Spanish authorities for information on this project and, in particular, on its compliance with WFD objectives.

([1]) ITAM (Sea-water treatment facility).
([2]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

Directive 2011/92/EU (known as the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive) ([3]), applies to certain public and private projects likely to have significant effects on the environment. On the other hand, Directive 2001/42/EC (known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive) ([4]) applies to certain plans and programmes in the public sector. Projects in the water sector such as those mentioned by the Honourable Member are covered by the EIA Directive while plans for water management are covered by the SEA Directive. The relevance of the two directives for this project should also be clarified upon receipt of the requested information from the Spanish authorities.

([3]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([4]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007183/12
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(17. juli 2012)

Om: Opfiskning og genanvendelse/afbrænding af plasten fra forurenende plastøer

Forurenende plastøer, der med tiden er samlet med havstrømmene, og som er ved at blive opløst, er et stigende problem i de europæiske farevande.

I Danmark er kommunerne interesserede i at håndtere problemet, inden øerne opløses og forårsager forurening.

Eksempelvis har Lemvig Kommune i Vestjylland (DK) stort set alle kompetencerne til at håndtere problemet i form af produktion af flydetrawl, net, stor erfaring inden for fiskeri samt overskud af skibe i områdets fiskerflåde.

Da relevante instanser (f.eks. Midtjyllands EU-kontor), der arbejder med EU-støttemidler og strukturfondene i Danmark, ikke har kendskab til EU-midler til at gennemføre et udviklingsprojekt vedrørende opfiskning og genanvendelse/afbrænding af plasten fra forurenende plastøer, vil jeg gerne spørge Kommissionen:

1. om der findes EU-midler, der kunne støtte et sådant projekt?

2. om det i benægtende fald kunne være en prioritet?

3. om den er opmærksom på dette problem og allerede har planlagt eller planlægger tiltag inden for området?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(10. september 2012)

Kommissionen er opmærksom på problemet med affald i havet og har iværksat en række tiltag, som især fokuserer på at forhindre affald i havmiljøet. Derudover er der åbnet en udbudsprocedure om et pilotprojekt med støtte fra Europa-Parlamentet med henblik på at analysere og vurdere bedste praksis for opsamling af havaffald (de såkaldte »Fiskeri efter affald«-metoder, hvor der bl.a. indsamles efterladte fiskenet) og fremme indførsel af disse metoder i EU's fire regionale marine farvande ([1]). Formålet med pilotprojektet er at bistå EU's medlemsstater med at nå målsætningerne i havstrategirammedirektivet ([2]) (2008/56/EF), som sigter mod at nå en god miljøstatus for EU's farvande i 2020 med hensyn til affald i havet gennem miljømæssige tiltag, idet et innovativt system til indsamling og opsamling anvendes.

Der vil under den første akse under Den Europæiske Fiskerifond kunne ydes støtte til disse tiltag som et middel til at udvide fiskernes aktiviteter på. Det er helt op til den berørte medlemsstat at beslutte, hvorvidt det er noget, den ønsker at benytte sig af. Kommissionen foreslår, at dette fortsat vil være muligt under Den Europæiske Hav- og Fiskerifond, som bliver fuldt operationel i 2014.

Derudover kan der i øjeblikket hentes støtte fra Den Europæiske Fond for Regionaludvikling til innovative løsninger inden for miljøteknologi og miljøprocesser og -metoder, hvilket igen er helt op til den enkelte medlemsstat. I Kommissionens forslag vedrørende Den Europæiske Fond for Regionaludvikling for 2014-2020, der i øjeblikket forhandles med Rådet og Europa-Parlamentet, lægges der også vægt på investeringer i innovation.

([1]) https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-display.html?cftId=129.
([2]) EUT L 164 af 25.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007183/12
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Retrieval and recycling/incineration of plastic from islands of plastic pollution

Islands of plastic pollution, which have accumulated over time with sea currents and are in the process of disintegrating, are a growing problem in European waters.

In Denmark local authorities are interested in tackling the problem before the islands disintegrate and cause pollution.

For example the municipality of Lemvig in Western Jutland (Denmark) has broadly speaking all the skills that are needed to deal with the problem: production of floating (pelagic) trawl nets, a great deal of experience of fishing and a surplus of vessels in the region's fishing fleet.

Since the relevant bodies (e.g. the Central Jutland EU office), which deal with EU subsidies and structural funds in Denmark, are not aware of any EU funds to help carry out a development project on the retrieval and recycling/incineration of plastic from islands of plastic pollution, I should like to ask the Commission the following:

1. Are there any EU funds which might be used to support such a project?

2. If not, could this become a priority?

3. Is the Commission aware of this problem, and has it planned or is it planning any measures in this area?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2012)

The Commission is aware of the problem of marine litter and has initiated a number of activities. The main focus of the Commission's activities is to prevent litter entering the marine environment. In addition, a call for tender has been launched for a pilot project supported by the Parliament in order to analyse and assess best practices on marine litter recovery (so-called 'Fishing for litter' methods including collection of abandoned fishing nets) and to facilitate the implementation of these practices within the four EU regional marine waters ([1]). The pilot project aims at assisting EU Member States in reaching the objective laid out in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([2]) (2008/56/EC) (MSFD) of achieving 'good environmental status' for EU marine waters by 2020 with respect to marine litter through environmental action using an innovative collection/recovery system.

Axis 1 of the European Fisheries Fund could support such measures as a means to diversify the activity of fishermen. It is entirely up to the Member State concerned whether this option is taken up. The Commission proposes that such an opportunity be continued in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund which will come into operation in 2014.

Moreover, currently the European Regional Development Fund may offer support for innovative solutions in the areas of environmental technology, methods or processes; the Member State may opt for this as well. The Commission proposal on the European Regional Development Fund for the 2014-2020 period which is under negotiation with the Council and the Parliament, also emphasises investments in innovation.

([1]) https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-display.html?cftId=129.
([2]) OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007185/12
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Mercosur developments — the suspension of Paraguay

It will not have escaped the Commission's notice that there have been some dramatic developments within Mercosur. The suspension of Paraguay due to the impeachment of President Lugo has paved the way for Venezuela's membership, something that was previously blocked by Paraguay.

1. Taking into account the fact that Venezuela has in the past been deeply hostile to trade liberalisation, can the Commission state in what ways it believes these developments are likely to affect the ongoing EU-Mercosur negotiations?

2. Furthermore, has the Commission had any indication as to whether or not Venezuela intends to adhere to the Treaty of Asunción and its principle of the free movement of goods, services and factors of production between countries, as well as any other equivalent measures, given the traditional policies of President Chávez?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

1. The Commission takes note of the decision about the accession of Venezuela into Mercosur as a full member, adopted by the Mercosur Council on 30 July 2012. As a result of this decision, Venezuela is expected to participate in the negotiations between the EU and Mercosur, a process to which it was already associated as an observer since the relaunch of the negotiating process in 2010. Until now Venezuela has never taken any public position regarding the trade elements of the EU-Mercosur Association agreement and there are therefore no concrete elements indicating how the entry of Venezuela might affect the dynamics of the negotiation. It should also be recalled that the EU only negotiates with Mercosur as a region and not with individual member countries bilaterally.

2. Venezuela's 2006 accession treaty to Mercosur ([1]) foresees the adhesion of Venezuela to the Treaty of Asunción. It includes transition periods for the progressive integration of this country into the regional block. This notably applies to the trade dimension of Mercosur and in particular the adoption of the common external tariff and the free circulation of goods. It is now for Mercosur to decide how precisely these transition elements will apply and how the outdated elements of this accession treaty could be updated.

([1]) http://www.mercosur.int/innovaportal/file/2485/1/2006_PROTOCOLO_ES_AdhesionVenezuela.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007186/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Treatment of Rohingya Muslims in Burma (Myanmar)

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the treatment of Rohingya Muslims in Burma (Myanmar).

My constituent claims that there are reports which confirm that the Rohingya Muslims are the most oppressed minority in Asia. He claims that innocent Rohingya Muslims are being persecuted, lynched and mass murdered, with reports that thousands have been killed.

1. Is the Commission aware of the plight of the Burmese Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar?

2. What pressure is the Commission exerting on the Myanmar Government to stop the murder and lynching of Burmese Rohingya Muslims?

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

The European Commission is well aware of the situation of the Rohingya community in Burma/Myanmar and has followed with concern the outbreak of violence in Rakhine State in recent months, which has resulted in large loss of life and property in the communities concerned.

The need for the Burma/Myanmar authorities to address the status and improve the welfare of the Rohingyas was signalled in Council conclusions of 23 April 2012.

The EU has a long-term humanitarian commitment to help the Rohingyas in Northern Rakhine State in Burma/Myanmar with food and nutrition assistance, livelihood support, healthcare and protection. This amounts to EUR 24 million since 2007. ECHO funding for unregistered Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh for the same period is close to EUR 12 million.

Under development assistance, a project with a budget of EUR 8 million has just been signed with a consortium of NGOs under the Aid to Uprooted People Programme. This project aims at providing support and assistance to displaced population and returnees of the North Rakhine State and their hosting communities in the fields of livelihoods and water and sanitation.

The Commission continues to engage with the Burma/Myanmar authorities on: improving access for international humanitarian aid operators to help those in need and returning internally displaced people to their homes, the majority of these being Rohingya. The EU has consistently called upon the attention of Burma/Myanmar to take steps to end the violence in Rakhine State in an even-handed manner, avoiding the excessive use of force, and creating a perspective for durable peace and development for the population, including the Rohingya community.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007187/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(17 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρόνος και ποσά που έχουν δαπανηθεί για την κινητοποίηση του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ

Το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ έχει συσταθεί για την ταχεία, αποτελεσματική και ευέλικτη συνδρομή σε οποιοδήποτε κράτος μέλος σε περίπτωση μείζονος φυσικής καταστροφής. Διαθέτει ετήσιο προϋπολογισμό ύψους ενός δισεκατομμυρίου ευρώ. Αποτελεί ορατή εκδήλωση της αλληλεγγύης της Ένωσης και εργαλείο με αδιαμφισβήτητη προστιθέμενη αξία για την ΕΕ.

1. Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παραθέσει έναν αναλυτικό πίνακα των ποσών που έχουν δαπανηθεί σε κάθε κινητοποίηση του εργαλείου, καθώς και συνολικά από τη σύστασή του και στο εξής;

2. Επιπλέον, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τον μέσο χρόνο που μεσολαβεί μεταξύ της παραλαβής μιας αίτησης για κινητοποίηση του Ταμείου από τις αρχές ενός κράτους μέλους μέχρι την εκταμίευση της βοήθειας σε αυτό το κράτος μέλος;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Από τότε που συστάθηκε το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ το Νοέμβριο του 2002, η Επιτροπή έχει εγκρίνει 48 συνολικά αιτήσεις για οικονομική βοήθεια ύψους 2 490 δισεκ. ευρώ. Η περίοδος μεταξύ της ημερομηνίας αίτησης και της πληρωμής της επιχορήγησης κυμαίνεται μεταξύ 2 και 19 μηνών. Ο μέσος όρος της ενλόγω περιόδου είναι κατά ελάχιστο μικρότερος από 12 μήνες.

Αναλυτικές πληροφορίες για καθεμία από τις περιπτώσεις αυτές και συνοπτικές επισκοπήσεις περιέχονται στις ετήσιες εκθέσεις για το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης, οι οποίες υπάρχουν επίσης στην ιστοσελίδα του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_en.cfm#8.

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης δεν αντιδρά επαρκώς και ότι ο απαιτούμενος χρόνος για την πληρωμή είναι πολύ μεγάλος. Στην ανακοίνωσή της για το μέλλον του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης της 6ης Οκτωβρίου 2011, η Επιτροπή ανέλυσε λεπτομερώς τους λόγους για την κατάσταση αυτή και κατέθεσε προτάσεις για βελτίωση. Μία νομοθετική πρόταση είναι σήμερα υπό εξέταση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007187/12
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Amount of money and time spent on mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund

The European Union Solidarity Fund was set up in order to respond in a rapid, efficient and flexible manner to come to the aid of any Member State in the event of a major natural disaster. It has an annual budget of EUR 1 billion. It is a visible expression of the Union's solidarity and an instrument with undisputed EU added value.

1. Could the Commission provide a detailed table of the money spent each time the instrument has been mobilised, along with the total amount spent since it was established?

2. Moreover, could the Commission provide information on the average time taken from the receipt of an application for mobilisation of the Fund from the authorities of a Member State until the disbursement of the aid to that Member State?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2012)

Since the creation of the EU Solidarity Fund in November 2002, the Commission has approved a total of 48 applications for financial aid for an amount totalling EUR 2 490 billion. The time between the date of application and the payment of the grant varied between 2 and 19 months. On average the time between application and payment of the grant is just under 12 months.

Detailed information on each of these cases and summary overviews are contained in the annual reports on the Solidarity Fund which may also be found on the Solidarity Fund website at:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_en.cfm#8

The Commission considers that the Solidarity Fund is not sufficiently responsive and that the time needed to grant aid is too long. In its communication on the Future of the Solidarity Fund ([1]) of 6 October 2011, the Commission analysed reasons for this situation in detail and made a number of suggestions for improvement. A legislative proposal is currently under consideration.

([1]) COM(2011)613 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007188/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 juli 2012)

Betreft: Zonne-energie

Ik dank de heer Oettinger voor zijn antwoorden op mijn vragen over windenergie van juni 2012. Echter, de tweede alinea van zijn antwoord bevat onduidelijkheden over zonne-energie die verheldering behoeven.

In de tweede alinea stelt de heer Oettinger dat „de algemene kosten in verband met de ondersteuning van hernieuwbare energie zijn toegenomen omdat gebruik van zonne-energie (…) hoger uitviel dan verwacht. Dit heeft geleid tot lagere productiekosten".

Over het algemeen worden onder productiekosten verstaan de kosten van de productiemiddelen om tot een eindproduct te komen. Productiekosten kunnen worden ingedeeld naargelang hun afhankelijkheid van de productieomvang. Op die manier worden constante en variabele kosten onderscheiden. Constante kosten variëren niet als de productieomvang toe- of afneemt. Hierbij moet gedacht worden aan bijvoorbeeld afschrijvingskosten van gebouwen of machines. Variabele kosten zijn kosten die afhangen van de productieomvang. Hiertoe behoren bijvoorbeeld kosten voor grondstoffen of verpakking.

1. Doelt de heer Oettinger bij „algemene kosten in verband met de ondersteuning van hernieuwbare energie" op (energie)subsidies? Zo ja, welke productiekosten worden er verlaagd door het verlenen van subsidies?

2. Ik kan mij voorstellen dat door het verlenen van subsidies meer zonnecellen kunnen worden geproduceerd dan zonder subsidies. Daardoor worden de constante kosten verdeeld over een groter aantal cellen en worden de vaste kosten per cel verlaagd. Is dit de redeneertrant van de heer Oettinger?

3. Zo ja, dan leidt het verlenen van subsidies tot lagere kosten per cel. Conform het antwoord van de heer Oettinger volgt uit deze lagere kosten per cel dat de Commissie flexibele nationale ondersteunings-mechanismen aanbeveelt, zodat die zich kunnen aanpassen aan de hiervoor beschreven kostenontwikkeling. Ben ik nog steeds op het goede spoor?

4. Betekent dit dat door het verlenen van subsidies het systeem van subsidieverstrekking moet worden aangepast?

5. Kan de Commissie aangeven volgens welke bedrijfeconomische theorie subsidies leiden tot kostenverlaging?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(23 augustus 2012)

Aangezien de elektriciteitsproductie via fotovoltaïsche (PV) zonnepanelen in bepaalde lidstaten sneller is toegenomen dan oorspronkelijk verwacht, zijn de daarmee verband houdende totale ondersteuningskosten eveneens snel toegenomen.

De brede uitrol van PV-installaties in Europa heeft het ondertussen voor de desbetreffende producenten mogelijk gemaakt snel vooruit te gaan op de technologische leercurve en de sector als zodanig heeft veel baat gehad bij de algemene schaalvoordelen in het geheel van de waardeketen. De exponentiële groei van de Europese markt voor PV-installaties heeft dus geresulteerd in een aanzienlijke verlaging van de investeringskosten voor nieuwe installaties.

De in Europa ten uitvoer gelegde subsidieregelingen voor hernieuwbare energie kunnen precies de aanzet geven tot de benedenwaarts gerichte trend in de technologische kosten die vereist is om de technologieën voor hernieuwbare energie geleidelijk concurrerend te maken met conventionele elektriciteitsopwekking. Bedoelde subsidieregelingen moeten worden aangepast aan die benedenwaartse trend in de investeringskosten om in staat te zijn de technologische ontwikkeling verder aan te drijven zodat uiteindelijk wordt bereikt dat technologieën voor hernieuwbare energie kunnen concurreren op de markt. Rijpe technologieën, aangewend in concurrerende markten met een goed werkende koolstofmarkt, moeten uiteindelijk niet langer worden ondersteund. Wij zien nu dat de desbetreffende subsidieregelingen in elke lidstaat worden aangepast teneinde hun kosteneffectiviteit te garanderen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007188/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Solar energy

I should like to thank Mr Oettinger for his answer to my question of June 2012 concerning wind power. However, the second paragraph of his answer makes unclear statements about solar energy, which require elucidation.

In the second paragraph, Mr Oettinger states that 'Overall costs related to the support of renewable energy have increased due to the higher than expected uptake of solar energy (…). This, in turn, has led to lower production costs.'

In general, 'production costs' are defined as the costs of the means of production required to produce an end-product. Different production costs may be classified on the basis of their dependence on the volume of production. In this way, fixed and variable costs are distinguished. Fixed costs do not change as the volume of production rises or falls. They include, for example, costs of depreciation of buildings or machinery. Variable costs are costs which depend on the volume of production. They include costs of raw materials or packaging.

1. By 'overall costs related to the support of renewable energy', does Mr Oettinger mean energy subsidies? If so, what production costs are reduced by granting subsidies?

2. I can imagine that granting subsidies enables more photovoltaic cells to be produced than would be the case without them. It means that the fixed costs are spread over a larger number of cells, thus reducing the fixed costs per cell. Is this Mr Oettinger's reasoning?

3. If so, granting subsidies reduces the costs per cell. According to Mr Oettinger's answer, it follows from these lower costs per cell that the Commission recommends flexible national support mechanisms, so that these mechanisms can adapt to the changing costs described above. Am I still on the right lines here?

4. Does this mean that, because of the granting of subsidies, the subsidy system needs to be adjusted?

5. Can the Commission indicate which economic theory suggests that subsidies reduce costs?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

As the volume of power generating capacity in PV installations in some Member States has been growing faster than initially expected, the total related support costs have increased accordingly.

Meanwhile the substantial deployment of PV installations in Europe has enabled the manufacturing industry to rapidly advance along the technological learning curve and the overall sector to benefit from general economies of scale along the entire value chain. The exponential growth of the European market for PV installation has thus led to significant reductions in investment costs for new installations.

Support schemes for renewable energy as implemented in Europe can trigger precisely the described downward trend in technology costs necessary to gradually render renewable energy technologies competitive with conventional generation. Support schemes need to adapt to the downward trend of investment costs to be able to continue driving the technology development and to eventually enable renewable energy technologies to compete in the market. Mature technologies operating in competitive markets, with a well-functioning carbon market should ultimately no longer need support. On the way, in every Member State, support schemes are being adjusted, to ensure their cost effectiveness.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007189/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 juli 2012)

Betreft: Chinese microchips

Ik dank mevrouw Kroes voor haar antwoord op mijn vragen over verdachte Chinese microchips (E-005476/2012).

Ik ben verheugd dat de Commissie op de hoogte is van, ik citeer: „de mogelijke veiligheidsrisico's van het gebruik van hardware en softwarecomponenten van niet betrouwbare bronnen". In de context van de door mij gestelde vragen leid ik af dat Chinese computerchipproducenten vallen onder de door u genoemde „niet betrouwbare bronnen".

Het bevreemdt mij daarom dat mevrouw Kroes in haar antwoord niet is ingegaan op mijn vragen over de acties die de Commissie onderneemt in de richting van de Chinese autoriteiten. Evenmin is mevrouw Kroes ingegaan op mijn vraag welke gevolgen de levering van computerchips door niet betrouwbare bronnen heeft voor de handelsbetrekkingen van de EU met China.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke acties ze onderneemt om de Chinese autoriteiten te wijzen op hun verantwoordelijkheid bij de productie en distributie van de betreffende hardware- en softwarecomponenten?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven op welke wijze de gebruikers van de betreffende hardware- en softwarecomponenten worden gecompenseerd voor de schade die zij lijden door het gebruik van die componenten in de ICT bedrijfsketen?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven op welke wijze deze schadecompensatie zal worden verhaald op de door haar genoemde niet betrouwbare bronnen?

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

Als de kwesties die het geachte Parlementslid noemt een wezenlijk effect op de handelsbetrekkingen hebben, kunnen deze worden besproken in het kader van de handelsdialogen die de Commissie hoe dan ook met alle belangrijke handelspartners voert.

De aansprakelijkheid verschilt per geval. In Richtlijn 1999/44/EG betreffende bepaalde aspecten van de verkoop van en de garanties voor consumptiegoederen is wat betreft de aansprakelijkheid voor gebrekkige goederen ten opzichte van consumenten vastgelegd dat de verkoper tegenover de consument aansprakelijk is voor elk gebrek aan overeenstemming dat bestond ten tijde van de aflevering van de goederen aan de consument („wettelijke garantie"). Schadevergoeding voor schade die is veroorzaakt door gebrekkige goederen, valt onder het nationale recht.

Als het gebrek aan overeenstemming voortvloeit uit een handelen of nalaten van de producent of een tussenpersoon, kan de eindverkoper verhaal nemen op de aansprakelijke personen in de contractuele keten. Die personen alsmede de rechtsvorderingen en de wijze van procederen worden bepaald door het nationale recht.

In het algemeen is schadevergoeding afhankelijk van de soort schade. Vanzelfsprekend hoort de verantwoordelijkheid uiteindelijk te rusten op degene die het product heeft gemanipuleerd, maar meestal is het moeilijk om de oorsprong aan te tonen en schadevergoeding af te dwingen, met name als de veroorzaker niet in de EU is gevestigd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007189/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Chinese microchips

I should like to thank Ms Kroes for her answer to my question concerning suspect Chinese microchips (E-005476/2012).

I am glad that the Commission is aware of 'the potential security risks of deploying computer hardware and software components from non-trustworthy sources'. In the context of the questions which I had raised, I deduce that Chinese computer chip manufacturers are among the 'non-trustworthy sources' to which the Commission refers.

It surprises me, therefore, that, in her reply, Ms Kroes did not answer my questions about the representations which the Commission had made to the Chinese authorities. Nor did Ms Kroes respond to my question as to what implications the supply of such chips has for EU-China trade relations.

1. Can the Commission indicate what action it is taking to draw the attention of the Chinese authorities to their responsibility for the production and distribution of the hardware and software components concerned?

2. Can the Commission indicate how users of the hardware and software components concerned are compensated for the damage which they suffer as a result of using those components in the ICT supply chain?

3. Can the Commission indicate how this compensation will be recovered from the non-trustworthy sources to which it refers?

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

If the aspects mentioned by the Honourable Member have an important impact on trade relations, the issues can be addressed in the already existing trade dialogues that the Commission maintains with all major trade partners.

Liability issues depend on the concrete case. With regard to the liability towards consumers for faulty goods, Directive 1999/44/EC on certain aspects of consumer sales and associated guarantees provides that the seller is liable to the consumer for any lack of conformity which existed at the time the goods were delivered to the consumer ('legal guarantee'). Compensation for damages as a result of faulty goods is regulated by national law.

If the lack of conformity resulted from an act or omission by the producer or intermediary, the final seller is entitled to pursue remedies against persons liable in the contractual chain. Those persons, together with the relevant actions and conditions of exercise, are determined by national law.

In general, the compensation depends on the kind of damage. The responsibility should, of course, finally lie with the originator of a manipulation, but evidencing the origin and enforcing compensation may be difficult in most cases — especially if the originator is seated outside the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-007190/12
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 juillet 2012)

Objet: Certification des reproducteurs ruminants

Le code rural français, modifié par la loi n° 2006-11, dispose qu'«à compter du 1.1.2015, le matériel génétique support de la voie mâle acquis par les éleveurs de ruminants est soumis à une obligation de certification, qu'il s'agisse de la semence ou d'animaux reproducteurs». Autrement dit, à compter de cette date, la certification de tous les reproducteurs deviendra obligatoire, avec pour conséquence directe de restreindre le métier d'éleveur, en limitant la sélection des reproducteurs et en réduisant les possibilités d'échanges entre éleveurs, qui sont pourtant des caractéristiques des élevages de petite taille.

Si l'on peut comprendre les impératifs de traçabilité et de sécurité sanitaire qui ont guidé cette décision, il est évident qu'elle générera une érosion de la diversité génétique. La biodiversité des élevages est pourtant une richesse qu'il faut préserver, d'autant qu'elle est déjà menacée par les changements climatiques et par la disparition de certaines races.

Il est difficilement envisageable que l'Union européenne cautionne une consanguinité extrême dans les élevages de ruminants, comme on peut le regretter aujourd'hui pour les porcins et les volailles, d'autant plus qu'un des effets de cette limitation de la diversité génétique est la diminution du potentiel immunitaire des animaux, qui est une des causes des crises sanitaires récentes.

Cette mesure, qui risque de s'ajouter à la future identification électronique des cheptels, sous le couvert d'être un outil de gestion et de contrôle de la reproduction, est en réalité une abolition de la liberté des éleveurs de choisir leurs moyens de soigner et de sélectionner leurs cheptels.

Au regard de ces éléments:

1. la Commission est-elle d'avis que le système de certification obligatoire des reproducteurs ruminants est disproportionné, dans le sens où il pose davantage de problèmes qu'il n'apporte de solutions?

2. dans quelle mesure la Commission pourrait-elle rendre ce système facultatif, afin d'imposer une obligation de résultat et non une obligation de moyen, pour garantir la traçabilité et la sécurité alimentaire des élevages de ruminants?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(28 août 2012)

1. La semence de ruminants faisant l'objet d'échanges entre États membres ou importée dans l'Union européenne est soumise à la législation harmonisée de l'Union et elle peut être utilisée sans autorisation ou certification nationale supplémentaire. Les conditions zootechniques et généalogiques d'admission à la reproduction des ruminants domestiques de race pure sont aussi totalement harmonisées et s'appliquent quel que soit le lieu d'origine et d'utilisation des animaux ou de leur matériel génétique. Néanmoins, l'utilisation de mâles et de leur semence pour la reproduction à l'intérieur d'un État membre est régie par la législation nationale en matière de santé animale.

2. Les États membres peuvent encourager les éleveurs à utiliser des reproducteurs mâles ou leur semence de grande valeur génétique et cela se fait d'ordinaire dans le cadre des programmes d'élevage agréés mis en œuvre par les organisations d'éleveurs reconnues lorsque la progéniture de race pure est destinée à être inscrite dans un livre généalogique; néanmoins, le droit de l'Union ne rend pas obligatoire la participation à ces programmes.

La législation de l'Union sur l'identification et l'enregistrement individuels des bovins, des ovins et des caprins vise à protéger la santé animale et à assurer la sécurité alimentaire. Afin d'atteindre ses objectifs, elle impose certaines obligations aux éleveurs. Toutefois, l'identification des animaux reproducteurs est aussi une condition préalable à la mise en œuvre des programmes d'élevage, y compris des programmes de préservation des races rares et de la biodiversité génétique, et elle sert donc également les intérêts des éleveurs qui souhaitent participer à ces programmes.

La Commission estime que la législation de l'UE en la matière est conforme aux principes de proportionnalité et de subsidiarité.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007190/12
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Certification of ruminant breeding stock

The French Rural Code, as amended by law no 2006-11, provides that 'from 1.1.2015, male genetic material acquired by breeders of ruminants, whether in the form of semen or breeding animals, shall require certification'. In other words, from that date the certification of all breeding animals will be mandatory, which will have the direct consequence of restricting the occupation of breeder by limiting the selection of breeding animals and reducing the possibility of exchange between breeders, which is typical of small farms.

While the need for traceability and food safety which underpins this decision is understandable, it will obviously lead to an erosion of genetic diversity. Breeding biodiversity is an asset that must be preserved, especially since it is already threatened by climate change and the disappearance of certain breeds.

It is hard to imagine the EU endorsing extreme inbreeding of ruminants, which is something we are now regretting in the case of pigs and poultry, especially since one effect of this limitation of genetic diversity is to reduce the animals' potential immunity, which has been one of the causes of recent health scares.

This measure, added to the future electronic identification of livestock (ostensibly as a tool for managing and controlling reproduction), will in fact remove farmers' freedom to choose how they care for and select their livestock.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission believe that the obligatory certification system for ruminant breeding stock is disproportionate, in that it creates more problems than solutions?

2. How could the Commission make this system voluntary, so that the obligation on farmers would be to achieve a specific result, not to use specific means, in order to ensure traceability and food safety in the breeding of ruminants?

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

1. Semen of ruminants traded between Member States or imported in the EU is subjected to Union harmonised legislation and it is eligible for use without any additional national authorisation or certification. The zootechnical and genealogical conditions for the acceptance for breeding purposes of pure-bred domestic ruminants are also fully harmonised and apply irrespective of the place of origin and use of the animals or their genetic material. However, the use of males and their semen for reproduction within a Member State is subject to national animal health legislation.

2. Member States may encourage livestock keepers to use male breeding animals or their semen of high genetic value, and this is usually part of the approved breeding programmes implemented by recognised breeding organisations in case the purebred offspring is intended for entry in the respective herd book; however, the participation in such programmes is not obligatory under Union law.

Union legislation on the individual identification and registration of cattle, sheep and goats aims at protecting animal health and guarantying food safety. In order to achieve its objectives it imposes certain obligations on farmers. However, identification of breeding animals is also a precondition for the implementation of breeding programmes, including those for the preservation of rare breeds and genetic biodiversity, and it is thus also helpful to farmers wishing to join those programmes.

The Commission considers that the EU legislation on these matters is in conformity with the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007191/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: 70 muertos en accidentes viarios en la carretera N-II, a la altura de Maçanet de la Selva (Girona): España está cumpliendo la Directiva 2008/96/CE de 2008

El 16 de julio de 2012 una persona murió y otras tres resultaron heridas en un choque entre un camión y tres turismos en el kilómetro 689 de la carretera N-II, a la altura de Maçanet de la Selva (Girona) ([1]). Desde que en 2008 se inaugurara parcialmente un tramo desdoblado, ha habido 70 muertos en accidente. El nuevo accidente en la N-II a su paso por Maçanet de la Selva (Selva) ha sumado la víctima mortal número 13 en lo que va de año ([2]).

El accidente se produjo en la carretera N-II, en uno de los tramos pendientes de desdoblar del proyecto que el Ministerio de Fomento mantiene paralizado en las comarcas de Girona. El trágico accidente ha elevado el grado de crispación e indignación entre los alcaldes de los municipios afectados por la falta de actuaciones en la carretera N-II. De nada han servido las reivindicaciones, ni sus viajes a Madrid para reclamar el desbloqueo de las obras. El principal argumento de los ediles afectados son las víctimas mortales en accidente de tráfico en la zona, ya que desde que se iniciaron algunos tramos de las obras de desdoblamiento en la carretera estatal se han producido 70 víctimas mortales.

La Directiva 2008/96/CE de 19 de noviembre de 2008 quería introducir un sistema integral de gestión de la seguridad de las infraestructuras viarias. En particular, los Estados miembros tienen que hacer una *«clasificación de las secciones de alta concentración de accidentes: un método para identificar, analizar y clasificar los tramos de la red de carreteras que han estado en funcionamiento durante más de tres años y en el que un gran número de accidentes mortales en proporción con el flujo de tráfico se han producido…»*.

Esa Directiva impone a los Estados miembros que *«la seguridad debe integrarse en todas las fases de planificación, diseño y operación de la infraestructura vial. Debe considerarse por derecho…»*.

Los Estados miembros también tienen que *«aplicar las disposiciones de la Directiva a la infraestructura nacional de transporte por carretera que no se incluye en la red transeuropea de carreteras…»*.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Está la Comisión al corriente de la existencia de este tramo peligroso de carretera (70 muertos)? ¿Ha comunicado España estos datos a la UE?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión que España y el Ministerio de Fomento están cumpliendo con las disposiciones de la Directiva 2008/96/CE de 2008?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de septiembre de 2012)

Recordamos a Su Señoría que la Directiva sobre gestión de la seguridad de las infraestructuras viarias ([3]) obliga a los Estados miembros a poner en marcha y aplicar los procedimientos necesarios en relación con las evaluaciones de impacto de la seguridad vial, las auditorías de seguridad vial, la gestión de la seguridad de la red de carreteras y las inspecciones de seguridad en los tramos de la infraestructura de carreteras pertenecientes a la red transeuropea de transporte (RTE-T).

Los Estados miembros también pueden aplicar las disposiciones de esta Directiva, en su calidad de conjunto de buenas prácticas, a la red vial nacional no incluida en la red transeuropea de carreteras. La Comisión Europea anima a todos los Estados miembros a hacer uso de estas buenas prácticas de la forma más amplia posible para mejorar la seguridad vial, pero el legislador no ha impuesto a los Estados miembros la obligación jurídica de aplicar las disposiciones de esta Directiva a las carreteras situadas fuera de la RTE-T, como el tramo al que se refiere Su Señoría.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/local/girona/20120716/54325572013/n-ii-zona-sin-desdoblar-decimotercera-victima-mortal-macanet.html
([2]) http://www.autocasion.com/actualidad/noticias/109318/un-muerto-en-un-choque-entre-un-camion-y-tres-turismos-en-macanet-de-la-selva-girona/.
([3]) Directiva 2008/96/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 19 de noviembre de 2008, sobre gestión de la seguridad de las infraestructuras viarias (DO L 319 de 29.11.2008, pp. 59-67).

Por consiguiente, no existe ninguna obligación de los Estados miembros de informar a la Comisión de los tramos de carretera peligrosos. Sin embargo, el Programa de Evaluación de las Carreteras Europeas (EuroRAP), financiado por la UE, recopila información sobre los accidentes comunicados de los Estados miembros para determinar los tramos de carretera más peligrosos y esta información se puede consultar en su sitio de Internet ([4]).

La Comisión no tiene razón alguna para creer que España no esté cumpliendo la Directiva.

([4]) http://www.eurorap.org/risk_maps?search=true&parent=103310.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007191/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: 70 killed in road in accidents on the N-II highway near Maçanet de la Selva (Gerona): Spain's compliance with Directive 2008/96/EC

On 16 July 2012, one person died and three were injured in a road accident involving a truck and three cars at km 689 of the N-II highway near Maçanet de la Selva (Gerona) ([1]). Since the partial inauguration in 2008 of a widened section of this road, 70 people have died in traffic accidents. This latest accident on the N-II at Maçanet de la Selva brings the number of deaths this year to 13 ([2]).

The accident happened on the N-II, on one of the still unwidened sections of the now-halted Ministry of Public Works road-widening project covering several municipalities in the province of Gerona. This tragedy has increased the level of tension and indignation among mayors of the municipalities affected by the failure to improve this road. Their protests and journeys to Madrid to request the resumption of the project have been in vain. Local leaders are particularly concerned at the number of deaths caused by traffic accidents in this area, as 70 people have died since road-widening work started on some sections of this national road.

Directive 2008/96/EC of 19 November 2008 sought to introduce a comprehensive system for road infrastructure safety management. In particular, Member States are required to carry out a 'ranking of high accident concentration sectors: a method to identify, analyse and rank sections of the road network which have been in operation for more than three years and upon which a large number of fatal accidents in proportion to the traffic flow have occurred'.

This directive requires Member States to take safety into account at all stages of the planning, design and operation of road infrastructure.

Member States must also 'apply the provisions of this directive (…) to national road transport infrastructure, not included in the trans-European road network…'

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission know about this dangerous stretch of road, which has caused 70 deaths? Has Spain communicated this data to the Commission?

2. Does the Commission consider that Spain and the Spanish ministry of Public Works are complying with Directive 2008/96/EC of 19 November 2008?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 September 2012)

The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that the Road infrastructure Safety Management Directive ([3]) obliges Member States to put into place and implement the required procedures concerning road safety impact assessments, road safety audits, the management of road network safety and safety inspections on those parts of the road infrastructure that belong to the trans-European transport network (TEN-T).

The Member States may also apply the provisions of this directive, as a set of good practices, to national road transport infrastructure not included in the trans-European road network. The European Commission encourages all Member States to make use of these best practices as widely as possible to enhance road safety, but the legislator has not imposed a legal obligation for Member States to apply the provisions of this directive on roads outside the TEN-T, such as the stretch of road referred to by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/local/girona/20120716/54325572013/n-ii-zona-sin-desdoblar-decimotercera-victima-mortal-macanet.html
([2]) http://www.autocasion.com/actualidad/noticias/109318/un-muerto-en-un-choque-entre-un-camion-y-tres-turismos-en-macanet-de-la-selva-girona/.
([3]) Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on road infrastructure safety management, OJ L 319, 29.11.2008, pp. 0059 — 0067.

Therefore there is no obligation of Member States to inform the Commission of dangerous road stretches. However, the EU-funded EuroRAP (European Road Assessment Programme) compiles Member States' reported accident information to map most dangerous road stretches, this information is available via their website ([4]).

The Commission has no reason to believe that Spain is not complying with the directive.

([4]) http://www.eurorap.org/risk_maps?search=true&parent=103310.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007192/12
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 juillet 2012)

Objet: Filière stratégique du recyclage du matériel informatique en Europe

L'avenir d'une économie dépend de sa capacité à se positionner dans des domaines qui se révèleront porteurs à l'avenir.

Le rythme incessant des innovations technologiques accélère l'obsolescence d'un nombre croissant d'appareils informatiques. Ces appareils mis au rebut alors qu'ils sont encore utilisables peuvent apparaître comme une gêne. Pourtant, ils sont en train de devenir une ressource stratégique. Le recyclage de ces appareils est de plus en plus systématique, le traitement de certains matériaux et composants devient de plus en plus technique, ce qui induit la création d'un nombre croissant d'emplois.

Les secteurs aussi porteurs se font rares, et il semble important de s'assurer que les futures entreprises à la pointe dans ce domaine s'implantent sur notre continent. Alors qu'aujourd'hui, seuls 14 % du matériel informatique sont recyclés, ce chiffre est appelé à augmenter. L'Europe doit être prête à capter les profits que va dégager cette future industrie.

En plus d'être créateur d'emplois, ce recyclage permet de baisser de 97 % les déchets qui viendront envahir nos décharges, qui ont déjà atteint leur seuil critique, et qui, s'ils ne sont pas traités, deviendront une menace pour l'environnement.

Dans ce contexte:

1. Quelles mesures la Commission entend-elle prendre afin de positionner l'Union sur ce secteur stratégique?

2. Est-il envisagé de mettre en place un programme afin de pérenniser et d'adapter ce secteur aux futures évolutions qu'il devra affronter?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(31 août 2012)

La promotion de l'utilisation efficace des ressources et le recyclage sont deux objectifs majeurs auxquels la Commission souscrit ([1]): l'un des piliers de la stratégie renforcée sur les matières premières mise en place par la Commission vise à accroître significativement l'efficacité dans l'utilisation des ressources et à promouvoir le recyclage des déchets en vue de la production de matières premières secondaires.

Afin de favoriser le recyclage des DEEE ([2]) riches en métaux, la Commission a proposé en 2008 de nouveaux objectifs de collecte, plus ambitieux, qui permettraient de valoriser 85 % du flux de DEEE pour en récupérer les matières premières de valeur. Elle a également proposé des règles plus rigoureuses afin d'empêcher l'exportation illégale de ces déchets vers les pays en développement ([3]).

Le renforcement de l'application effective du règlement concernant les transferts de déchets devrait enrayer le dumping environnemental. En effet, une large proportion de nos déchets est exportée illégalement vers des pays n'appartenant pas à l'OCDE, où leur traitement entraîne souvent des dommages à l'environnement ainsi que des pertes de matériaux. Pour empêcher de tels dégâts, la Commission a proposé des conditions strictes pour l'exportation de ces déchets, mais il est nécessaire d'engager de nouvelles actions afin d'assurer le respect de la législation existante.

L'innovation peut constituer un autre facteur de progrès dans ce domaine. Le 29 février 2012, la Commission a adopté une communication proposant un partenariat d'innovation européen ([4]) concernant les matières premières et portant sur l'ensemble de leur chaîne de valeur, y compris le recyclage, l'utilisation efficace des ressources et la substitution des matières premières.

([1]) Cf. l'initiative «matières premières» et la feuille de route pour une Europe efficace dans l'utilisation des ressources, présentées en 2011.
([2]) Les déchets d'équipements électriques et électroniques.
([3]) La directive 2012/19/UE relative aux DEEE (refonte) est désormais adoptée (JO L 197 du 24.7.2012, p. 38). Cette nouvelle directive permettra également de renforcer les normes qualitatives pour le traitement des DEEE, cf. l'article 8, paragraphe 5.
([4]) PIE.

Enfin, la directive sur l'écoconception fixe un cadre juridique approprié permettant de définir des exigences en matière de recyclage et de durabilité pour les produits liés à l'énergie, lorsqu'il a été établi que ceux-ci ont un impact significatif sur l'environnement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007192/12
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Computer hardware recycling, a strategic industry for Europe

An economy's future depends on its ability to position itself in growth sectors.

Because technological innovations are proceeding at an unceasing pace, more and more computing devices are being consigned to obsolescence more rapidly. Although these discarded, but still usable, devices might appear to be a nuisance, they are in fact turning into a strategic resource. Recycling is being carried out increasingly systematically, and the treatment of certain materials and components is becoming technically more and more sophisticated, thus creating a growing number of jobs.

There are few sectors so full of promise, and companies that will lead this field in the future therefore need to be attracted to Europe. At present, only 14% of computer hardware is recycled, but that figure seems likely to rise. Europe has to be ready to reap the profits to be gained from this future industry.

In addition to creating jobs, recycling will enable the volume of waste flooding our landfills, which have already reached saturation point, to be reduced by 97%; if left untreated, waste of this kind will turn into an environmental hazard.

1. What measures will the Commission take to enable the EU to position itself in this strategic sector?

2. Will a programme be laid down with a view to establishing this sector on a lasting footing enabling it to adapt to the developments with which it will have to contend in the future?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(31 August 2012)

Promoting resource efficiency and recycling are important aims endorsed by the Commission ([1]). One of the pillars of the Commission's reinforced raw materials strategy aims at boosting resource efficiency and promoting recycling of secondary raw materials from waste.

In order to promote recycling from metal-rich WEEE ([2]), the Commission proposed in 2008 ambitious new collection targets which would ensure that 85% of the WEEE stream would be available for recovery of valuable raw materials and suggested stricter rules to prevent the illegal export of this waste to developing countries ([3]).

Strengthening the enforcement of the Waste Shipment Regulation should address the problem of environmental dumping of waste products because a large proportion of our waste is illegally exported to non-OECD countries where treatment often results in damage to the environment and loss of material. To tackle this, the Commission has proposed tough criteria for export of this waste but further action is required to enforce existing rules.

Innovation could be another driver for progress in this area. On 29 February 2012 the Commission adopted a communication which proposed a European Innovation Partnership ([4]) on raw materials covering the entire raw materials value chain including recycling, resource efficiency and substitution of raw materials.

Finally, the Ecodesign Directive offers an adequate legal framework to establish requirements for the recyclability and durability of energy-related products, whenever the associated environmental impacts are found to be significant.

([1]) The Raw Materials Initiative and in the Resource Efficiency Roadmap presented in 2011.
([2]) Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment.
([3]) The amended WEEE Directive 2012/19/EU has now been adopted (OJ L 197, 24.07.2012, p. 38). The new WEEE Directive will also help improve the quality standards for the treatment of WEEE; cf. Art. 8(5).
([4]) EIP.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007193/12
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 juillet 2012)

Objet: Obligation d'identification électronique des animaux dans les élevages bovins, ovins ou caprins

L'obligation pour les éleveurs français de bovins, d'ovins ou de caprins d'assurer l'identification électronique de leurs cheptels d'ici à 2013 a suscité l'indignation de la part des acteurs du secteur, particulièrement des agriculteurs possédant des exploitations de petite taille.

Cette décision est susceptible d'entraîner la disparition de nombreux élevages, surtout ceux de petite taille, qui ne pourront respecter cette obligation, en raison du surcoût et de la surcharge administrative induits par cette technique.

Si le renforcement de l'arsenal juridique peut se comprendre au regard des impératifs de traçabilité et de sécurité alimentaire, il ne peut se faire au détriment de la liberté inhérente au métier d'éleveur, d'autant que les techniques traditionnelles (tatouages et boucles en plastique) ont démontré leur fiabilité et leur pérennité.

Il apparaît ainsi que la valeur ajoutée de cette nouvelle obligation n'est pas prouvée, alors que les conséquences économiques négatives sont d'ores et déjà connues.

Il y a lieu de considérer qu'il s'agit d'une menace pesant sur les élevages de petite taille, particulièrement nombreux dans les zones de montagne, qui sont pourtant une part essentielle du patrimoine, du tissu rural et de la biodiversité.

1. Dans quelle mesure la Commission considère-t-elle que cette obligation d'identification électronique des cheptels bovin, ovin et caprin français apporte une valeur ajoutée démontrable et significative?

2. La Commission entend-elle rendre ce système facultatif, sachant qu'en la matière, une obligation de résultat est préférable à une obligation de moyen, pour autant que la méthode d'identification des animaux soit pérenne et fiable?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(31 août 2012)

En ce qui concerne les raisons qui sous-tendent la législation de l'Union en matière d'identification électronique des cheptels ovin et caprin, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions écrites jointes E-8752/10 à E-8764/10, ainsi qu'à la question écrite E-9769/10, sur le même sujet ([1]).

La Commission n'envisage pas de modifier le système en vigueur en le rendant facultatif. En revanche, elle est toujours disposée à ajuster certains aspects techniques pour améliorer, autant que possible, l'efficacité et la fiabilité d'ensemble du système, tout en réduisant ses coûts de mise en œuvre.

En ce qui concerne l'identification et l'enregistrement du cheptel bovin, le règlement actuel ([2]) ne couvre pas l'identification électronique, bien qu'il garantisse déjà la traçabilité individuelle des animaux. L'identification électronique des bovins est déjà utilisée dans plusieurs États membres par des opérateurs privés, essentiellement pour la gestion de leur exploitation. Appliqué à plus grande échelle, ce système permettra de renforcer le régime de traçabilité actuel. Par ailleurs, il devrait bénéficier aux exploitants et autres parties prenantes en simplifiant les procédures en vigueur, d'où un allégement de la charge administrative ([3]).

Pour toutes les raisons qui précèdent, la Commission a adopté en août 2011 deux propositions visant à modifier le règlement et à introduire l'identification électronique sur une base volontaire. Malgré le caractère facultatif du système, les propositions de la Commission donnent la possibilité aux États membres de le rendre obligatoire sur leur territoire.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 1760/2000 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 17 juillet 2000 (JO L 204 du 11.8.2000, p. 1).
([3]) Analyse d'impact accompagnant la proposition de la Commission, SEC(2011) 1008 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007193/12
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 July 2012)

Subject: Electronic identification requirement for farmed cattle, sheep and goats

The requirement for cattle, sheep and goat farmers in France to ensure that their flocks and herds can be identified electronically by 2013 has provoked outrage from stakeholders, particularly from small-scale farmers.

This decision is likely to result in the disappearance of numerous livestock holdings — especially small-scale holdings — which will be unable to comply with this requirement on account of the additional costs and administrative burden arising from this measure.

While increasing the legal tools available is understandable in view of the need to ensure traceability and food security, it cannot be done at the expense of the freedom inherent to the occupation of livestock farmer, especially since traditional methods such as tattoos and plastic earrings have proved to be reliable and tried and tested.

It therefore seems to be the case that the added value of this new requirement has not been demonstrated, while its negative economic impact is already known.

The requirement should be viewed as a threat to small-scale livestock farmers, who are particularly numerous in mountain areas and who are essential to local heritage, the social fabric of rural areas and biodiversity.

1. To what extent does the Commission believe that the requirement that herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats in France be electronically identifiable brings significant and demonstrable added value?

2. Given that it would be preferable to make a requirement applicable to the results achieved rather than the means used — provided that a reliable, tried and tested method of animal identification is used — does the Commission intend to make this system optional?

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

As regards the reasons behind the EU legislation on electronic identification (EID) of sheep and goats, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answers to joined written questions E-8752/10, E-8753/10, E-8754/10, E-8755/10, E-8756/10, E-8757/10, E-8758/10, E-8759/10, E-8760/10, E-8761/10, E-8762/10, E-8763/10, E-8764/10 and to Written Question E-9769/10 ([1]).

The Commission does not envisage changing the current system making it optional. However, the Commission has been and remains open to fine-tune technical aspects to improve the overall solidity and reliability of the system and at the same time reduce its implementation costs, whenever possible.

As regards the electronic identification and registration of bovine animals, current legislation ([2]) does not regulate EID. However, it already ensures individual traceability of bovine animals. Bovine EID is used in several Member States on a private basis mainly for farm management purposes. Its' implementation on a wider scale will strengthen the current traceability system. Finally, it may bring benefits to farmers and other stakeholders as it will reduce the administrative burden through the simplification of the current administrative procedures ([3]).

Taking all this into account, the Commission adopted in August 2011 two proposals to modify these rules and to introduce electronic identification on a voluntary basis. Despite its voluntary character, the Commission proposals foresee that Member States may introduce a mandatory regime at national level.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 OJ L 204, 11.8.2000, p. 1-10.
([3]) Impact Assessment accompanying the Commission proposal, SEC(2011) 1008 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007196/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ραγδαία αύξηση των εξώσεων και του φαινομένου των (νεο)αστέγων στην Ελλάδα

Η ολοένα και εντεινόμενη αδυναμία καταβολής του ενοικίου για την εξασφάλιση στέγης αποτελεί μια ακόμη ζοφερή συνέπεια της σφοδρής οικονομικής και κοινωνικής κρίσης που πλήττει την Ελλάδα δοκιμάζοντας τόσο τη συνοχή όσο και τις αντοχές της ελληνικής κοινωνίας. Κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο, οι εξώσεις πολλαπλασιάζονται καθημερινά και χιλιάδες είναι οι Έλληνες, οι οποίοι αναγκάζονται να βρεθούν χωρίς σπίτι, πράγμα που οξύνει το τραγικό φαινόμενο των νεοαστέγων. Το «δικαίωμα στη στέγη» αμφισβητείται ευθέως για μια μεγάλη μερίδα του ελληνικού αλλά και του ευρωπαϊκού πληθυσμού, καθώς το ζήτημα των εξώσεων και των νεοαστέγων απασχολεί ιδιαίτερα τις κοινωνίες των χωρών που μαστίζονται από την ανθρωπιστική, πλέον, κρίση με χαρακτηριστικότερο παράδειγμα το Κίνημα «Stop Deshaucios» (Σταματήστε τις εξώσεις) στην Ισπανία. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για την ποσοστιαία διακύμανση των εξώσεων στα κράτη μέλη από την αρχή της κρίσης έως σήμερα; Αν ναι, πόσοι άνθρωποι συνολικά στην ευρωπαϊκή επικράτεια έχουν αναγκαστεί να εγκαταλείψουν τη στέγη τους λόγω αδυναμίας καταβολής του μισθίου;

2. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια για την κοινωνική προστασία και φροντίδα των λεγόμενων νεοαστέγων και ποια είναι τα ποσοστά απορροφητικότητας των κρατών μελών;

3. Η έξωση καθεαυτή ή η απειλή για έξωση προκαλούν σημαντικές επιπτώσεις στην ψυχική υγεία των ατόμων που υφίστανται αυτή τη δύσκολη κατάσταση. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση, υπάρχουν επιστημονικές μελέτες που να αποδεικνύουν μια στατιστική σχέση ανάμεσα στις εξώσεις και τις απόπειρες αυτοκτονιών;

4. Με δεδομένο ότι το φαινόμενο των νεοαστέγων έχει ήδη αποκτήσει πανευρωπαϊκό χαρακτήρα, επεξεργάζεται ή σκοπεύει να επεξεργαστεί ένα συνολικό ευρωπαϊκό σχέδιο δράσης για την αντιμετώπισή του;

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

Δεν υπάρχουν ακόμη πλήρεις στατιστικές σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, αλλά από τα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία φαίνεται ότι οι εξώσεις αυξήθηκαν σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη μετά την εκδήλωση της κρίσης. Σε μια πρόσφατη επισκόπηση της ([1]), η Επιτροπή ανέφερε ότι, στην Ισπανία, περίπου 200 000 οικογένειες βρίσκονταν υπό την απειλή της έξωσης το φθινόπωρο του 2010 και ότι, στην Ιταλία, μία στις τέσσερις οικογένειες δεν ήταν σε θέση να εξοφλήσει τις δόσεις του στεγαστικού δανείου έως το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2011.

Οι δράσεις για την οικονομική επανένταξη των «νεοαστέγων» μπορούν να χρηματοδοτούνται από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ της περιόδου 2007-2013, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου. Στην Ελλάδα, ο άξονας προτεραιότητας «Πλήρης ενσωμάτωση του συνόλου του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού σε μια κοινωνία ίσων ευκαιριών» του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» αποσκοπεί στην κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση των ευπαθών ομάδων, μεταξύ άλλων και των αστέγων, και έχει ως στόχο τη συμμετοχή 53 500 ατόμων ([2]).

Ενώ έχουν πραγματοποιηθεί πολλές επιστημονικές έρευνες για τον αντίκτυπο της οικονομικής κρίσης στα ποσοστά αυτοκτονιών και τη δημόσια υγεία γενικότερα ([3]), η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει σ' αυτό το στάδιο μελέτη με την οποία να αποδεικνύεται άμεση και ειδική σχέση ανάμεσα στις εξώσεις και τις απόπειρες αυτοκτονίας.

Η Επιτροπή εμμένει στη δέσμευσή της για υποστήριξη των κρατών μελών που καταπολεμούν το πρόβλημα των αστέγων και, συγκεκριμένα, τα βοηθά να αξιοποιούν όσο το δυνατόν καλύτερα τα εργαλεία πολιτικής της ΕΕ και τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία.

([1]) Βλέπε την Τριμηνιαία επισκόπηση της εργασιακής και κοινωνικής κατάστασης στην ΕΕ, Ιούνιος 2012.
([2]) Βλέπε http://ec.europa.eu/social/esf_projects_117/project.cfm?id=209&project_lang=en.
([3]) Βλέπε π.χ. http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/134999/e94837.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007196/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Sharp increase in the number of evictions and of the 'new homeless' in Greece

The ever increasing inability of the population to pay rent to secure housing is yet another grim consequence of the severe economic and social crisis in Greece which is putting a strain on the cohesion and fabric of Greek society. Thus, evictions are multiplying daily and thousands of Greeks are finding themselves homeless, thereby exacerbating the tragic phenomenon of the 'new homeless'. The 'right to housing' is being flagrantly violated for a large portion of the population of Greece and the EU, and the issue of evictions and the 'new homeless' particularly affects the societies of countries plagued by what is now a humanitarian crisis — a typical example is the 'Stop Deshaucios' (Stop the Evictions!) Movement in Spain.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have at its disposal any statistics on the percentage variation of evictions in Member States since the beginning of the crisis? If so, how many people in total throughout the EU have been forced to abandon their homes due to their inability to pay the rent?

2. Are there any funds available for the social protection and care of the 'new homeless'? If so, what are the take-up rates of Member States?

3. Eviction proper or the threat of eviction has a significant impact on the mental health of people in this difficult situation. In this context, do any scientific studies exist showing a statistical link between evictions and suicide attempts?

4. Given that the phenomenon of the 'new homeless' has already spread throughout Europe, is it drawing up — or does it intend to draw up — a comprehensive European action plan to address this problem?

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

Comprehensive EU-level statistics are lacking yet but available data indicates that evictions have been on the rise in a number of Member States since the beginning of the crisis. In a recent review ([1]), the Commission mentioned that some 200 000 families were under threat of eviction in Spain in the autumn of 2010 and that one in four families was unable to make mortgage payments in Italy by the first quarter of 2011.

Actions for the economic reintegration of the 'new homeless' can be financed under the 2007-13 EU Structural Funds including the European Social Fund. In Greece, the priority axis 'Full integration of the entire labour force into an equal opportunities society' of the Human Resource Development Operational Programme aims at the social integration of vulnerable groups, including the homeless and targets the involvement of 53 500 persons ([2]).

While a lot of scientific research has been undertaken on the impact of the economic crisis on suicide rates and public heath more broadly ([3]), the Commission is at this stage not aware of a study establishing a direct and specific link between evictions and suicide attempts.

The Commission remains committed to support Member States in combatting all forms of homelessness, including by helping them make the best use of EU policy tools and Structural Funds.

([1]) See the EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, June 2012 issue.
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/esf_projects_117/project.cfm?id=209&project_lang=en.
([3]) See e.g. http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/134999/e94837.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007197/12
to the Commission
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Air passenger rights in the event of diverted flights

Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 established important minimum rights for air passengers in the event of denied boarding, cancellation or long delays of flights. However, this regulation does not explicitly extend protection to passengers who are affected by flight diversions, and airlines are required only to transport passengers to the airport specified on the ticket at no extra cost. Nonetheless, a diversion can significantly extend travel time and cause serious inconvenience, discomfort and expense.

The Commission's recent public consultation on the possible revision of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 considered the possibility of extending the current legislation to additional cases of journey disruption, including flights diverted to an airport other than the destination airport. It was indicated that the Commission intended to introduce proposals for making the current regulations more effective before the end of the year.

Will the Commission ensure that these proposals provide for the extension of the current legislation on air passenger rights in order explicitly to ensure protection, including compensation, for passengers who are severely inconvenienced by diverted flights?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

The Commission included certain issues not covered by the existing legislation in its public consultation on the revision of Regulation 261/2004 on air passenger rights, among others the issue of flights diverted to another airport than the destination airport ([1]).

The Commission is currently analysing the outcome of the public consultation and the impacts of different policy options with a view to submit a legislative proposal by the end of 2012.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passengers/consultations/doc/2012-03-11-apr-public-consultation-results.pdf

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-007198/12
до Комисията
Владко Тодоров Панайотов (ALDE)
(18 юли 2012 г.)

Относно: Инфраструктурни проекти в областта на околната среда и финансиране

1. Тъй като по-голямата част от инфраструктурата в областта на околната среда трябва да бъде построена на общинско равнище, по какъв начин може да гарантира Комисията, че местните органи разполагат с необходимото ноу-хау за разработване и управление на проекти в областта на околната среда, които ще бъдат представени за съфинансиране от страна на ЕС?

2. Би ли помислила Комисията за съфинансиращ национален орган, който би подкрепял общините в подготовката на планирането на проекти, провеждането на търгове и управлението на проекти в областта на околната среда?

3. Може ли Комисията да осигури техническа помощ за България за разработване на ПЧП, които ще привлекат частни инвестиции в екологични и в други видове проекти?

4. Защо в България не е разработен инструментът за финансиране „Джесика“ (Jessica) и по какъв начин би съдействала Комисията за насърчаване на неговия потенциал и използването му в страната?

Отговор, даден от г-н Хаан от името на Комисията
(28 септември 2012 г.)

1. В съответствие с принципа на споделено управление българските органи са тези, които трябва да оказват подкрепа на местните органи, участващи в подготовката и изпълнението на проекти в областта на околната среда. В програма „Околна среда“ (2007-2013 г.) се предвижда оказването на такава техническа помощ. Освен това за големите инфраструктурни проекти в областта на водоснабдяването и канализацията българските органи са предвидили средства за оказване на техническа помощ на участващите общини.

Наред с това в сътрудничество с ЕИБ ([1]) Комисията създаде инструмент за оказване на техническа помощ, JASPERS, с който се подпомага техническата подготовка на значими проекти. Наскоро Комисията насърчи техническото сътрудничество между българските органи, Световната банка, ЕБВР ([2]) и ЕИБ при подготовката на проекти.

2. Досега съответните български органи са изпълнявали ролята, посочена от уважаемия член на ЕП. Комисията насърчава националните органи да увеличат административния си капацитет и в периода 2014-2020 г. се очаква да бъдат изготвени предложения в тази насока.

3. В по-голямата част от програмите за България в периода 2007-2013 г. се предвижда оказването на техническа помощ за подготовката на проекти. Проектите в рамките на публично-частни партньорства отговарят на условията за участие, но решението относно съфинансирането на тяхната подготовка принадлежи на българските органи.

4. Инструментите за финансов инженеринг като JESSICA се базират на предоставянето на подлежаща на възстановяване помощ от страна на структурните фондове за инвестиции, които се очаква да генерират приходи и да позволят връщане на парите на инвеститорите. Инструментът „JESSICA“ действително е предвиден в българската програма за регионално развитие за периода 2007-2013 г. Поради това на 29 юли 2010 г. ЕИБ и българското правителство подписаха споразумение за финансиране, с което се създаде фонд с участия по JESSICA за България (JESSICA Holding Fund) в рамките на ЕИБ.

([1]) Европейска инвестиционна банка.
([2]) Европейска банка за възстановяване и развитие.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007198/12
to the Commission
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Environmental infrastructure projects and financing

1. As most environmental infrastructure has to be built at municipal level, how can the Commission ensure that local authorities have the necessary know-how to develop and manage environmental projects that will be presented for EU co-financing?

2. Would the Commission consider a co-financing national authority that would support municipalities in preparing project pipelines for tendering and managing environmental projects?

3. Can the Commission provide Bulgaria with technical assistance for the development of the public private partnerships (PPPs) that will attract private investment in environmental and other types of project?

4. Why has the Jessica financing instrument not been developed in Bulgaria, and how would the Commission help in promoting its potential and use in the country?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 September 2012)

1. In accordance with the shared management principle, the Bulgarian authorities are responsible to provide support to the local authorities involved in the preparation and implementation of environmental projects. The 2007-13 'Environment' programme provides this technical assistance. Also, for major water infrastructure projects, the Bulgarian authorities budgeted for technical assistance aimed at the municipalities involved.

In addition, the Commission, in cooperation with the EIB ([1]), created an instrument for technical assistance, JASPERS, helping the technical preparation of important projects. Recently, the Commission promoted the technical cooperation for the preparation of projects between the Bulgarian authorities, the World Bank the EBRD ([2]) and the EIB.

2. Up to now, the relevant Bulgarian authorities have taken on the role suggested by the Honourable Member. The Commission encourages the national authorities to increase their administrative capacity and relevant proposals are to be expected for the 2014-20 period.

3. Most of the 2007-13 programmes for Bulgaria provide technical assistance for the preparation of projects. PPP projects are eligible but the decision to co-finance their preparation remains with the Bulgarian authorities.

4. Financial engineering instruments such as JESSICA are based on the provision of repayable assistance from the Structural Funds to investments expected to generate returns and in this way pay back investors. JESSICA is indeed foreseen in the Bulgarian 2007-13 programme for regional development. In this context, a Funding Agreement, establishing the JESSICA Holding Fund for Bulgaria within the EIB, was signed between the EIB and the Bulgarian Government (*29 July 2010*).

([1]) European Investment Bank.
([2]) European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-007199/12
до Комисията
Владко Тодоров Панайотов (ALDE)
(18 юли 2012 г.)

Относно: Проекти на ЕС за инфраструктура за газ

1. Понастоящем съществуват няколко потенциални проекта за инфраструктура за газ, които в Южния коридор се конкурират да доставят газ от Централна Азия към Европа. Тъй като проектът НАБУКО поради трансадриатическия тръбопровод (ТАП) вече не изглежда много реалистичен, може ли Комисията да изясни каква ще бъде нейната позиция по отношение на двата конкуриращи се проекта и дали Комисията ще продължи да изразходва средства на ЕС за НАБУКО от фонда ERP?

2. Каква е позицията на Комисията по отношение на проекта „Южен поток“, който ще стъпи на територията на ЕС в България и който би могъл да предоставя надеждна и сигурна пряка доставка на газ?

Отговор, даден от г-н Йотингер от името на Комисията
(4 септември 2012 г.)

В процеса на избор на газопровод за газовото находище „Шах Дениз II“ ([1]), през 2012 г. партньорите направиха предварителен подбор и избраха Трансадриатическия газопровод (ТАП) до Италия и „Набуко Запад“ до Австрия като двата транспортни варианта в рамките на ЕС. Окончателното решение за избор между тези два проекта се очаква през 2013 г. Преминаването през Турция може да бъде осигурено от Трансанадолския газопровод (TANAP), подкрепян от SOCAR ([2]) и турски дружества. Комисията не желае да се намесва в процеса за идентифициране на най-добрия търговски вариант между конкуриращи се газопроводи в ЕС.

Що се отнася до финансирането на „Набуко“ от ЕЕПВ ([3]), 200 млн. EUR са предназначени за изграждането на газопровода в ЕС и за тях са поети задължения, но към днешна дата няма извършено плащане. Тъй като обсъждането на „Nabucco International Company“ с партньорите от „Шах Дениз“ продължава, средствата са все още налични.

Проектът „Южен поток“ не е приоритетен проект за ЕС. Неговата главна цел е да създаде нов маршрут за доставка на руски газ до Европа, заобикаляйки Украйна, но той не диверсифицира източниците на газ.

Въпреки това Комисията е готова да съдейства на организаторите на проекта и на участващите държави членки, за да се гарантира неговото разработване по недискриминационен начин в съответствие със законодателството на ЕС.

([1]) Газовото находище „Шах Дениз“ се намира в Азербайджан и е собственост на консорциум, в който участват SOCAR, BP, Statoil, Total, LUKoil, NIOC и TPAO. Доставката на 10 млрд. кубични метра годишно за ЕС от това находище до 2017 или 2018 г. ще доведе до откриването на „Южния газов коридор“, чиято цел е пренос на газ от Каспийския басейн, Централна Азия, Близкия изток и Източния Средиземноморски басейн до Съюза, за да се повиши диверсификацията на доставките на газ.

([2]) SOCAR е Националната компания за нефт и газ на Азербайджан.

([3]) Европейската енергийна програма за възстановяване, която е на стойност 4 млрд. EUR, е създадена през 2009 г. за съфинансирането на проекти (досега 59 на брой), предназначени да направят енергийните доставки по-сигурни и да спомогнат за намаляване на емисиите на парникови газове, като същевременно насърчават икономическото възстановяване в Европа. „Набуко“ е част от тези проекти.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007199/12
to the Commission
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: EU gas infrastructure projects

1. There are currently several potential gas infrastructure projects competing in the Southern Corridor to supply gas to Europe from Central Asia. As the Nabucco project no longer seems very realistic in the light of the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP), can the Commission clarify what its position will be in relation to the two competing projects and whether it will continue to use EU resources from the ERP Fund for Nabucco?

2. What is the Commission's position on the South Stream project, which will enter EU territory in Bulgaria and could provide a reliable and secure direct gas supply?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

In the pipeline selection process for Shah Deniz II gas ([1]), the partners have preselected in 2012 both the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) to Italy and Nabucco-West to Austria as the two transport options within the EU. The final decision between these two projects is expected in 2013. The crossing of Turkey may now be assured by the Trans Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP), promoted by SOCAR ([2]) and Turkish companies. The Commission does not want to interfere in the process to identify the best commercial option between competing pipelines in the EU.

When it comes to the EEPR ([3]) funding for Nabucco, EUR 200 million have been earmarked and committed for the pipeline construction in the EU but no payment has been made to date. Since Nabucco International Company is still in discussion with the Shah Deniz partners, the funding is still available.

The South Stream project is not a priority project for the EU. Its main aim is to create a new route for Russian gas to Europe, bypassing Ukraine, but it does not diversify sources of gas.

However, the Commission is ready to assist the project developers and the Member States involved, to ensure that it is developed in a non-discriminatory way in line with EU legislation.

([1]) The Shah Deniz gas field is located in Azerbaijan and owned by a consortium composed of SOCAR, BP, Statoil, Total, LUKoil, NIOC and TPAO. The delivery of 10 billion cubic meters per year from this field by 2017 or 2018 to the EU will entail the opening of the Southern Gas Corridor aiming at the transmission of gas from the Caspian Basin, Central Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean Basin to the Union to enhance diversification of gas supply.

([2]) SOCAR is the National oil & gas companies of Azerbaijan.

([3]) The European Energy Program for Recovery is a EUR 4bn programme was set up in 2009 to co-finance projects (59 so far), designed to make energy supplies more reliable and help reduce greenhouse emissions, while simultaneously boosting Europe's economic recovery. Nabucco is part of these projects.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-007201/12
до Комисията
Владко Тодоров Панайотов (ALDE)
(18 юли 2012 г.)

Относно: Свлачища и ерозия в крайбрежни зони

Свлачищата и ерозията се наблюдават все по-често в крайбрежните зони, по-специално по бреговете на Черно море и Средиземно море. Те водят до високи разходи за местното население както във връзка с околната среда, така и до последици по отношение на приспособяването към изменението на климата.

1. Как смята Комисията да се заеме с решаването на този проблем?

2. Свързаните със свлачищата и ерозията въпроси ще бъдат ли обхванати от предложението за директива относно морското пространствено планиране и интегрираното управление на крайбрежните зони, което в момента се изготвя от Комисията?

3. Инвестициите за борба с ерозията и свлачищата ще бъдат ли обхванати, що се отнася до допустимите разходи, в рамките на регламентите относно ЕФРР, Кохезионния фонд и/или Фонда за морско дело и рибарство през следващия програмен период?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Даманаки от името на Комисията
(27 септември 2012 г.)

1. Комисията е наясно с множеството проблеми, засягащи крайбрежните зони и морските и крайбрежните екосистеми, включително загубата на местообитания и влошаването на състоянието им, бреговата ерозия, замърсяването, прекомерната експлоатация на рибните запаси и изменението на климата.

Предвид значението на крайбрежните зони като екологични, икономически и социални ресурси и за постигане на комплексен отговор, през 2002 г. ЕС прие Препоръката относно комплексното управление на крайбрежните зони ([1]) (КУКЗ) и през 2010 г. ратифицира Протокола за КУКЗ ([2]) към Конвенцията от Барселона за опазване на Средиземно море. И двата инструмента посочват бреговата ерозия като сериозна заплаха за крайбрежните зони.

Комисията финансира проучване на устойчивото управление на крайбрежната ерозия в Европа, наречено „EUrosion". Резултатите са публикувани на адрес: http://www.eurosion.org/

Комисията също така работи със съответните експерти от различни държави и сектори, за да развие цялостна стратегия за адаптиране към изменението на климата, чието приемане е планирано за 2013 г. и в която ще бъде отчетена също така уязвимостта на бреговете и моретата под въздействието на променящите се климатични условия. В процес на изготвяне е и Зелена книга на тема предотвратяване на бедствия и застраховане срещу тях.

2. Комисията извърши оценка на въздействието, за да проучи редица варианти на политика за насърчаване и развитие на КУКЗ във връзка с вариантите на политика за развитие на морското пространствено планиране (МПП). В разгледаните варианти се вземат предвид различните проблеми на крайбрежните зони, включително мерките срещу на ерозията и свлачищата.

3. Предложението на Комисията за регламент за общоприложимите разпоредби, което обхваща основните финансови инструменти със споделено управление за периода 2014-2020 г., включва адаптиране към изменението на климата и предотвратяването и управлението на риска като тематични цели в съответствие със стратегията „Европа 2020".

([1]) Препоръка 2002/413/ЕО.
([2]) Решение 2009/89/ЕО на Съвета.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007201/12
to the Commission
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Landslides and erosion in coastal areas

Landslides and erosion are becoming more and more frequent in coastal areas, in particular around the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. They impose high costs on the local populations and on the environment, and they also have implications for climate adaptation.

1. How is the Commission considering addressing this problem?

2. Will landslide and erosion issues be covered by the proposal for a directive on maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management that the Commission is currently preparing?

3. Will investments to combat erosion and landslides be covered in terms of eligible costs under the ERDF, the Cohesion Fund and/or the Fisheries and Maritime Fund Regulations in the next programming period?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the multiple pressures affecting coastal zones and marine and coastal ecosystems, including habitat loss and degradation, coastal erosion, pollution, overexploitation of fish stocks and climate change.

Given the importance of coastal zones as ecological, economic and social resources, and in order to support an integrated response, the EU adopted the recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management ([1]) (ICZM) in 2002, and ratified the ICZM Protocol ([2]) to the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean in 2010. Both instruments refer to coastal erosion as an important threat for coastal areas.

The Commission funded a study on sustainable coastal erosion management in Europe called 'Eurosion'. The results are published on http://www.eurosion.org/

The Commission is also working with relevant experts from different countries and sectors to develop a comprehensive climate change adaptation strategy, for adoption in 2013, which will also consider the vulnerability of the coast and seas to changing climatic conditions. A Green Paper on the Prevention and Insurance of Disasters is also being prepared.

2. The Commission has conducted an impact assessment to explore a range of policy options to promote and develop ICZM, in conjunction with policy options to develop Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP). The considered options take account of the various pressures in coastal areas, including management of erosion and landslides.

3. The Commission's proposal for the Common Provisions Regulation which encapsulates the main shared management funding instruments for the period 2014-2020 includes climate change adaptation and risk prevention and management as thematic objectives, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy.

([1]) Recommendation 2002/413/EC.
([2]) Council 2009/89/EC.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007202/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(18 juli 2012)

Betreft: Dierentuinrichtlijn

De heer Potocnik heeft mij een antwoord gestuurd op mijn vraag over de betrokkenheid van de Commissie bij opleidingen van ambtenaren en dierenartsen die werkzaamheden verrichten die betrekking hebben op dierentuinen en bij de opleiding van bestuurders van dierentuinen (E-005707/2012).

Tot mijn spijt moet ik constateren dat de antwoorden van de heer Potocnik totaal geen betrekking hebben op de door mij gestelde vragen.

Zoals blijkt uit de antwoorden van de heer Potocnik heeft de Commissie deelgenomen aan workshops over dierenwelzijn in het algemeen en die van boerderijdieren in het bijzonder. Hoewel hij hiermee de betrokkenheid van de Commissie aantoont met dierenwelzijn, gaat hij voorbij aan mijn drie vragen over de opleiding van ambtenaren en professionals bij dierentuinen.

De heer Potocnik heeft in zijn antwoorden op mijn vragen van 25 mei jl. aangegeven dat de Commissie zich bezig houdt met de opleiding van tallozen die betrokken zijn bij dierentuinen. Mijn vragen waren en zijn:

1. Op welke wijze houdt de Commissie zich bezig met de opleiding van mensen die werken voor of bij dierentuinen?

2. Op welke grond bemoeit de Commissie zich met de opleiding van deze mensen?

3. Hoe financiert de Commissie zijn betrokkenheid met bovengenoemde opleidingen?

Antwoord van de heer Dalli namens de Commissie
(3 september 2012)

1. De Commissie is enkel betrokken bij de opleiding van dierenartsen die in verschillende soorten inrichtingen actief zijn (onder meer in dierentuinen).

2. De Commissie heeft een project gestart om dierenartsen op te leiden op het gebied van de specifieke EU-wetgeving inzake dierenwelzijn op basis van artikel 22 van Beschikking 2009/470/EG van de Raad (PB L 155, blz. 30).

3. De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-005707/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-005707&language=NL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007202/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Zoos Directive

Mr Potočnik has sent me an answer to my question concerning the Commission's involvement in training of government officials and veterinarians operating in the field of zoos and in the training of zoo managers (E-005707/2012).

Regrettably, I find that the answers given by Mr Potočnik are completely irrelevant to the questions I put.

Mr Potočnik's answers indicate that the Commission has participated in workshops on animal welfare in general and the welfare of farm animals in particular. Although this demonstrates the Commission's involvement in animal welfare, he ignores my three questions about the training of officials and professionals working in connection with zoos.

In his answer to my questions of 25 May 2012, Mr Potočnik indicated that the Commission was involved in the training of innumerable practitioners working with zoos. My questions — which still require answers — were as follows:

1. How is the Commission engaged in the training of people working for or at zoos?

2. What is the reason for the Commission's involvement in this training?

3. What is the source of the funding for the Commission's involvement in this training?

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

1. The Commission is only engaged in the training of veterinarians working in different types of facitilies (including zoos).

2. The Commission has initiatied the project of training veterinary practitioners on EU specific animal welfare legislation on the basis of Council Decision 2009/470/EC, art.22 (OJ L 155/30).

3. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-005707/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-005707&language=EN.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007203/12
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)
(18 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Raport privind progresele înregistrate de statele membre în ceea ce privește creșterea numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero

În conformitate cu articolul 9 alineatul (5) din Directiva 2010/31/UE privind performanța energetică a clădirilor, până la 31 decembrie 2012 și ulterior o dată la trei ani, Comisia publică un raport privind progresele înregistrate de statele membre în ceea ce privește creșterea numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero. Pe baza acestui raport, Comisia elaborează un plan de acțiune și, dacă este cazul, propune măsuri de creștere a numărului de clădiri de acest tip și încurajează utilizarea celor mai bune practici referitoare la transformarea eficientă — din punctul de vedere al costurilor — a clădirilor existente în clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia când va publica raportul mai sus menționat și care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia intenționează să le propună pentru creșterea numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(22 august 2012)

În conformitate cu articolul 9 alineatul (1) din Directiva 2010/31/UE ([1]) privind performanța energetică a clădirilor, statele membre elaborează planuri naționale în vederea creșterii numărului de clădiri al căror consum de energie este aproape egal cu zero. Conținutul acestor planuri constituie principala sursă de informații pentru Comisie cu privire la progresele înregistrate de statele membre în vederea atingerii acestui obiectiv. Până în prezent, Comisia nu a primit niciun plan național.

Comisia intenționează să publice raportul privind progresele statelor membre în ceea ce privește creșterea numărului de clădiri cu un consum de energie aproape egal cu zero până la 31 decembrie 2012. Este prea devreme pentru a spune dacă vor exista propuneri de măsuri.

([1]) Directiva 2010/31/UE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 19 mai 2010 privind performanța energetică a clădirilor (reformare), JO L 153, 18.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007203/12
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Report on Member States' progress in increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings

Under Article 9(5) of Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings, by 31 December 2012 and every three years thereafter the Commission is to publish a report on the progress of Member States in increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings. On the basis of that report the Commission will develop an action plan and, if necessary, propose measures to increase the number of those buildings and encourage best practices as regards the cost-effective transformation of existing buildings into nearly zero-energy buildings.

When will the Commission publish this report, and what measures will it propose to increase the number of nearly zero-energy buildings?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

As per Article 9(1) of Directive 2010/31/EU ([1]) on the energy performance of buildings, Member States shall establish national plans for increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings. The content of these plans constitutes the main source of information for the Commission on the progress Member States are making towards this objective. So far the Commission has not received any national plans.

The Commission intends to publish the report on the Member States' progress in increasing the number of nearly zero-energy buildings by 31 December 2012. It is too early to say if any measures will be proposed.

([1]) Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the energy performance of buildings (recast), OJ L 153, 18.6.2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007204/12
a la Comisión
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(18 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Normativa vigente en los aeropuertos europeos

¿Podría aclarar la Comisión si, en los aeropuertos, los pasajeros están obligados por alguna normativa específica a quitarse el calzado preventivamente antes de pasar por el control de seguridad? En caso afirmativo, ¿podría especificar la Comisión qué tipo de calzado está sujeto a esta obligación?

¿Existe alguna prohibición de transportar en el equipaje de mano alimentos sólidos? Si es así, ¿podría especificarnos las clases de alimentos no permitidos?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de agosto de 2012)

La legislación europea sobre seguridad aérea no exige que los pasajeros se descalcen para pasar el control de seguridad. Sin embargo, los requisitos adicionales de la Administración de Seguridad en los Transportes de los Estados Unidos exigen un procedimiento de control obligatorio del calzado en los vuelos con destino a los Estados Unidos. Como consecuencia de ello, la obligación de descalzarse en los controles de seguridad se aplica a todos los pasajeros si se mezclan con personas que viajen a los Estados Unidos.

La legislación europea sobre seguridad aérea no prohíbe el transporte de alimentos sólidos en el equipaje de mano. En el apéndice 4-C del Reglamento (UE) n° 185/2012 ([1]) figura la lista de los artículos que no se pueden transportar en el equipaje de mano con arreglo al Derecho de la UE.

([1]) DO L 55 de 5.3.2010, p. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007204/12
to the Commission
Esther Herranz García (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Current rules in European airports

Could the Commission clarify whether, in airports, passengers are required by any specific rules or regulations to remove their shoes before passing through security checkpoints? If they are, could the Commission specify what type of footwear is subject to this requirement?

Is there a ban on carrying solid foods in hand luggage? If so, could the Commission specify what kinds of foods are not permitted?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

European aviation security legislation does not require passengers to remove their shoes for screening. However, the additional requirements by the Transportation Security Administration of the US require a compulsory screening of shoes for the flights bound for the US. As a result, the obligation to remove shoes at security checkpoints is applied to all passengers if they are mixed with those travelling to the US.

European aviation security legislation does not impose a ban on solid food that can be carried in hand luggage. Attachment 4-C of Commission Regulation (EU) No 185/2012 ([1]) lists those items that are prohibited by EC law from the hand luggage of passengers.

([1]) OJ L 55, 5.3.2010, p. 16.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007205/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: FIFA — Korruptions- und Schmiergeldskandal

Laut aktuellen Medienberichten soll der Weltfußballverband FIFA in einem umfangreichen Korruptions- und Schmiergeldskandal befangen sein, in dem es laut Medienbehauptung um Schmiergeldzahlungen des Sportvermarkters ISL an hochrangige FIFA-Funktionäre geht.

1. Erhalten oder erhielten die FIFA oder ihre aktuellen oder ehemaligen Funktionäre direkt oder indirekt EU-Mittel?

2. Hatten jemals oder haben aktuell FIFA-Personal oder FIFA-Funktionäre irgendeine Funktion (auch ehrenhalber) innerhalb der EU-Institutionen, ihrer Agenturen oder offiziellen Vertretungen innerhalb des Gebietes der 27 Mitgliedstaaten inne?

3. Bei positiver Beantwortung von Frage 2: Welche Personen (bitte um namentliche Auflistung) aus dem Personal der Kommission zählen hierzu?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(26. September 2012)

Die Kommission gewährt der FIFA keine direkten Finanzhilfen. Ihr ist darüber hinaus nicht bekannt, dass der FIFA oder deren Funktionären indirekt EU-Finanzhilfen zugutekommen. Die Kommission hat ferner keine Kenntnis davon, dass FIFA-Funktionäre oder FIFA-Personal eine Funktion innerhalb der Kommission innehaben.

Die Kommission kann nicht für andere EU-Organe oder EU-Einrichtungen sprechen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007205/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: FIFA — Corruption and kickback scandal

According to current press reports, the international football federation FIFA is mired in a wide-ranging corruption and kickback scandal, which allegedly involved the payment of kickbacks by the sports marketing company ISL to high-ranking FIFA officials.

1. Does FIFA or any of its current or former officials receive, or has it or they ever received, direct or indirect EU funding?

2. Do any current or former FIFA staff members or officials hold, or have any such persons ever held, any position (including honorary positions) within an EU institution, body or official representation in any of the 27 Member States? If so, which members of the Commission's staff (please give names) fall into these categories?

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

The Commission does not provide any direct funding to FIFA. It is, further, not aware of FIFA or any of its officials indirectly benefiting from EU funding. The Commission is, finally, not aware of any of FIFA's officials, or staff members holding a position within the Commission.

The Commission cannot respond in the name of other EU institutions or bodies.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007206/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Visumspflicht der Türkei für die EU

Wenn auch der EU-Beitritt der Türkei im Land selbst an Attraktivität verloren zu haben scheint, sollen nun doch die Reisebestimmungen zwischen der Türkei und der EU gelockert werden.

Bestehen zum gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkt schon konkrete Pläne, wie der Reiseverkehr zwischen der Türkei und der EU vereinfacht werden soll?

Gibt es bereits Kriterien für eine mögliche Abschaffung der Visumspflicht für die Türkei bzw. einen zeitlichen Rahmen, der dies vorsieht? Wenn ja, wird eine genaue Auflistung erbeten.

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(4. September 2012)

Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf die Antwort der Kommission auf die Anfrage E-005756/2012 verwiesen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007206/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Visa requirement for Turkish citizens to visit the EU

Even though Turks appear to view EU accession as a less attractive proposition, rules for travel between Turkey and the EU nevertheless need to be relaxed.

Are plans already in place to simplify travel between Turkey and the EU?

Are there criteria which Turkey has to meet in order for the visa requirement to be abolished, and has a timeframe for abolition been set? If so, please provide a precise schedule.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

The Honourable Member is kindly requested to refer to the Commission's answer to Question E-005756/2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007208/12
an die Kommission
Ulrike Rodust (S&D)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Europäische Maßnahmen gegen den illegalen Pestizidhandel

Aktuellen Schätzungen zufolge haben illegale und gefälschte Pflanzenschutzmittel in der EU einen Marktanteil von 20 %. Laut Europol kommt hinzu, dass die Gesetzgebung und die Kontrollen in diesem Bereich kaum harmonisiert sind und sich daher der Handel mit illegalen Pflanzenschutzmitteln zu einem schnell wachsenden Feld der organisierten Kriminalität in Europa entwickelt.

Dieser Zustand kann so nicht hingenommen werden. Besonders bei Pestiziden kann Produktfälschung unabsehbare Folgen für die menschliche Gesundheit und die Umwelt haben. Die Landwirtschaft und die Arbeitnehmer sind unmittelbar betroffen, und über die Lebensmittel können diese Produkte auch die Gesundheit der europäischen Konsumenten gefährden.

1. Plant die Kommission in diesem Bereich tätig zu werden und dem Handel mit illegalen Pflanzenschutzmitteln mit neuen Legislativvorschlägen einen Riegel vorzuschieben?

2. Sind konkrete Maßnahmen vorgesehen, um hierfür die behördliche Zusammenarbeit zwischen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten zu vertiefen und verbindlich zu regeln?

3. Beabsichtigt die Kommission die Indizien, die in der Regel den Verdacht einer beabsichtigten „Umleitung" der illegalen Pflanzenschutzmittel aus dem Transitverkehr in die Europäische Gemeinschaft belegen, für die Mitgliedstaaten einheitlich zu definieren?

4. Wann wird die Kommission die nach Artikel 68 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 vorgesehene und für das einheitliche Kontrollregime in der Gemeinschaft erforderliche „Kontrollverordnung" erlassen?

5. Plant die Kommission ebenfalls eine Annäherung der Strafverfolgungsinstrumente, um die Bestrafung bei Verstößen gegen das europäische Pflanzenschutzrecht zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten anzugleichen?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(29. August 2012)

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-00554/2012 und E-6848/2012 ([1]).

Gemäß Artikel 68 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 über das Inverkehrbringen von Pflanzenschutzmitteln ([2]) führen die Mitgliedstaaten amtliche Kontrollen durch, um die Einhaltung der Bestimmungen dieser Verordnung durchzusetzen. Außerdem ist dort geregelt, dass Experten der Kommission allgemeine und gezielte Prüfungen der amtlichen Kontrollen in den Mitgliedstaaten durchführen. Das laufende Auditprogramm des Lebensmittel- und Veterinäramtes deckt die in den Mitgliedstaaten eingerichteten Systeme zur Kontrolle der Verwendung und des Inverkehrbringens von Pestiziden ab. Die Audits tragen auch zur Harmonisierung der Kontrollen auf EU-Ebene bei.

Hinsichtlich der Annahme einer Kontrollverordnung gemäß Artikel 68 ist noch kein genauer Zeitplan festgelegt. Die Kommission arbeitet derzeit mehrere in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 vorgesehene Durchführungsmaßnahmen aus, um sicherzustellen, dass der neue Rechtsrahmen für Pflanzenschutzmittel in vollem Umfang wirksam wird.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) ABl. L 309 vom 24.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007208/12
to the Commission
Ulrike Rodust (S&D)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: European measures against illegal trading in pesticides

Current estimates indicate that illegal and counterfeit plant protection products have a market share of 20% in the EU. According to Europol, moreover, legislation and supervision in this field are hardly harmonised at all and trade in illegal plant protection products is therefore becoming a rapidly growing field of organised crime in Europe.

This situation cannot simply be accepted. In the case of pesticides, counterfeiting can have particularly incalculable consequences for human health and the environment. Agriculture and workers are directly affected, and these products can also endanger the health of European consumers via food.

1. Will the Commission take action in this field and combat trade in illegal plant protection products by means of new legislative proposals?

2. Are any specific measures planned in order to increase cooperation between authorities in the Member States to this end and to introduce binding regulations concerning it?

3. Will the Commission establish for the benefit of the Member States uniform definitions of the indications which generally provide grounds for suspecting that there is an intention to divert illegal plant protection products from transit into the European Community?

4. When will the Commission adopt the control regulation provided for by Article 68 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, which is required for a uniform control system in the Community?

5. Is the Commission also planning approximation of the criminal law in order to provide for uniform penalties for breaches of European law on plant health in the Member States?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its responses to Questions E-00554/2012 and E-6848/2012 ([1]).

Article 68 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]) on placing of plant protection on the market provides that Member States have to carry out official controls in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of the regulation; It is furthermore foreseen that Commission experts carry out general and specific audits in the Member States for purposes of verifying the official controls carried out by the Member States. The current programme of audits of the Food and Veterinary Office includes the systems of control put in place in the Member States on use and marketing of pesticides. These audits contribute also to the harmonisation of the controls at EU level.

With respect to the adoption of a control regulation as provided for in Article 68, no precise timeline is yet defined. The Commission is now working on the development and adoption of several implementing measures foreseen by Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 in order to ensure that the new legal framework for plant protection products becomes fully operational.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007209/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) και Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εξαιρετικά ανησυχητικά τα ποσοστά ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα

Το κορυφαίο από τα μεγάλα προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα — με οδυνηρές συνέπειες στην κοινωνία — είναι η καλπάζουσα ανεργία που αγγίζει πλέον το 23 %, με το αντίστοιχο ποσοστό για τους νέους να ξεπερνά το 51 %. Τα πρόσφατα στοιχεία του Οργανισμού Απασχολήσεως Εργατικού Δυναμικού της Ελλάδας (ΟΑΕΔ) όχι μόνον επιβεβαιώνουν αλλά και ενισχύουν τις ανησυχίες που προκαλούν τα στοιχεία της Ελληνικής Στατιστικής Αρχής (ΕΛ.ΣΤΑΤ.).

Η συρρίκνωση της απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα έχει προκαλέσει σημαντικές επιπτώσεις τόσο στην πραγματική οικονομία και τα δημόσια οικονομικά όσο και στην κοινωνική συνοχή προσδίδοντας στην βαθιά οικονομική κρίση μια όλο και εντονότερη ανθρωπιστική διάσταση. Η δυσχερής μακροοικονομική κατάσταση στην οποία έχει περιέλθει η χώρα καθιστά αναγκαία την αποτελεσματική αξιοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών πόρων προς την κατεύθυνση της προστασίας της εργασίας και την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας κυρίως, μέσα από ενεργητικές πολιτικές απασχόλησης. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, με δεδομένη αφενός τη συμμετοχή της στην Τρόικα και αφετέρου τη σύσταση «Ειδικής Ομάδας» αναφορικά με την αξιοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών κονδυλίων:

1. Με ποιο τρόπο θα συνδράμει τις ελληνικές αρχές στη μέγιστη δυνατή αξιοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών κονδυλίων; Με βάση το έντονο ζήτημα ρευστότητας, σκοπεύει να προτείνει τη μείωση του ποσοστού συγχρηματοδότησης σε αντίστοιχου περιεχόμενου δράσεις για χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα;

2. Δεδομένης της ανάγκης εξορθολογισμού των δημόσιων δαπανών, πώς θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστούν οι δαπάνες που έχουν να κάνουν με την ανεργία, καθώς τα υψηλά ποσοστά ανεργίας και τα ανησυχητικά ποσοστά φτώχειας διαμορφώνουν μια ιδιαίτερα κρίσιμη κοινωνική κατάσταση;

3. Επεξεργάζεται με τις ελληνικές αρχές κάποιο συγκεκριμένο σχέδιο, με συνδυασμό ενεργητικών και παθητικών πολιτικών απασχόλησης, έτσι ώστε να αντιμετωπιστεί το σοβαρό φαινόμενο της μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας και των συνεπειών της προς την κατεύθυνση της προστασίας των ανέργων από τη φτώχεια και τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό, καθώς και την ενίσχυση της απασχολησιμότητάς τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να συνεργάζεται στενά με τις ελληνικές αρχές μέσω της «Ειδικής Ομάδας» για την απλούστευση των διαδικασιών, ώστε τα έργα να επιλέγονται γρηγορότερα να γίνεται η βέλτιστη χρήση των πόρων της Ένωσης. Για την Ελλάδα και για άλλες χώρες σε παρόμοια κατάσταση το ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης έχει ήδη μειωθεί στο 5 % και συνιστά σημαντικό βήμα για την επίλυση του προβλήματος της ρευστότητας.

2. Ακόμη και αν η ανάγκη για τον εξορθολογισμό των δημοσίων δαπανών στην Ελλάδα είναι πράγματι μεγάλη, τα μέτρα δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης που ελήφθησαν τα τελευταία χρόνια είχαν ως στόχο να αφήσουν ανέπαφα τα επιδόματα ανεργίας και τα κοινωνικά επιδόματα προς τα νοικοκυριά χαμηλού εισοδήματος. Αυτό δείχνει τη σημασία που αποδίδεται στη διατήρηση των συστημάτων κοινωνικής ασφάλειας στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής (ΠΔΠ).

3. Η ανεργία είναι πολύ υψηλή και απαιτείται συντονισμένη προσπάθεια για τον περιορισμό των προβλημάτων που αντμετωπίζουν οι άνεργοι και για να αποτραπεί ο κίνδυνος να καταστούν διαρθρωτικά. Απαιτείται επίσης η καταβολή προσπαθειών για να διευκολυνθεί η δημιουργία νέων ευκαιριών απασχόλησης μεσοπρόθεσμα και μακροπρόθεσμα.

Οι πολιτικές απασχόλησης είναι ένα θέμα που εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών (ΚΜ). Στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, στο πλαίσιο του ΠΔΠ, καταβάλλονται προσπάθειες για βελτίωση της στόχευσης των δαπανών, ώστε να εξασφαλίζεται ότι θα υπάρχουν αρκετά κεφάλαια για τον παροχή βοήθειας στους πλέον ενδεείς και σε όσους έχουν πληγεί περισσότερο από την κρίση και την προσαρμογή. Επιπλέον, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) παρέχει σημαντική βοήθεια με στόχο να διευκολύνεται η πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση μέσω της εφαρμογής πολιτικών τόνωσης της απασχόλησης. Παράλληλα γίνονται προσπάθειες πλήρους αξιοποίησης των πόρων του Ταμείου με κύριο στόχο την επανένταξη των ανέργων, ιδιαίτερα των κατηγοριών που έχουν πληγεί περισσότερο από την κρίση, όπως είναι οι μακροχρόνια άνεργοι και οι νέοι, μέσω της επιδότησης της βραχυπρόθεσμης απασχόλησης ανέργων από επιχειρήσεις του ιδιωτικού τομέα ή από την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση, κ.λπ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007209/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) and Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Extremely alarming unemployment figures in Greece

The most significant of the major problems facing Greece — with dire consequences for Greek society — is the soaring unemployment rate which now stands at 23%, with the figure for young people standing at over 51%. Recent data issued by the Manpower Employment Organisation of Greece paint the same picture as the Greek Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) data, and make the situation appear even more alarming.

The contraction of employment in Greece has had a significant impact both on the real economy and public finances and on social cohesion, adding an increasingly serious humanitarian dimension to the deep economic crisis. The difficult macroeconomic situation facing Greece necessitates the effective use of EU funds to protect employment and combat unemployment mainly through active employment policies. In this context, and given both its membership of the Troika and the establishment of the 'Task Force' regarding the use of EU funds, will the Commission say:

1. How will it assist the Greek authorities in maximising the use of EU funds? In view of the important issue of liquidity, does it intend to propose reducing the rate of co-funding for co-funded actions for countries like Greece?

2. Given the need to streamline public spending, how should costs relating to unemployment be addressed, since the high unemployment rates and the alarming poverty rates are creating a very critical social situation?

3. Is it drawing up some specific project with the Greek authorities, involving a combination of active and passive labour market policies, to address the serious problem of long-term unemployment and its consequences so as to protect the unemployed from poverty and social exclusion and boost their employment prospects?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2012)

1. The Commission through the Task Force continues to work closely with the Greek authorities to simplify procedures so that projects can be established more quickly on the ground in order to make best use of EU funds. For Greece and other countries in a similar situation, the co-financing rate has already been reduced to 5% as an important step in minimising the issue of liquidity.

2. Even if the need to streamline Greece's public spending is indeed large, the fiscal consolidation measures taken in recent years have aimed at leaving unemployment benefits and social transfers to low income households untouched. That shows the importance attached to the preservation of social safety nets under the Economic Adjustment Programme (EAP).

3. Unemployment is very high, and consolidated effort is needed to contain the hardship of the jobless and to prevent it from becoming structural. Efforts are also needed to help create new employment opportunities in the medium and longer-term.

Passive labour market policies are a matter of competence of the Member States (MS). In the case of Greece, within the EAP, efforts are being made to better target spending to ensure there are enough funds to help the neediest and those hardest hit by the crisis and the adjustment. In addition, the European Social Fund (ESF) provides important assistance to facilitate the access to employment, through active labour market policies, and efforts are underway to maximise the use made of the Fund, with focus on the integration of the unemployed, in particular those groups hit the hardest by the crisis, such as the long-term unemployed and the youth including by subsidising short-term job placements in the private sector or in local communities etc.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007211/12
adresată Comisiei
Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE)
(18 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Abordarea uniformă a normelor privind guvernanța corporativă

Comisia pentru afaceri economice și monetare din cadrul PE discută în prezent propunerile Comisiei referitoare la o nouă directivă privind cerințele de capital (CRD IV). În cadrul discuțiilor s-a subliniat posibilitatea impunerii anumitor limite asupra primelor bancare, ca măsură legislativă de limitare a remunerației plătite personalului cu funcții de conducere (nivelul primelor ar trebui să fie egal cu nivelul salariului fix).

După cum a anunțat comisarul Michel Barnier, Comisia intenționează să prezinte o propunere privind guvernanța corporativă până la sfârșitul anului.

Ar trebui avut în vedere că remunerarea personalului cu funcții de conducere este o chestiune exclusiv de guvernanță corporativă și că, anul acesta, Parlamentul a adoptat un raport fără caracter legislativ bazat pe Cartea verde a Comisiei privind guvernanța corporativă premergătoare viitoarei propuneri legislative pe aceeași temă.

Ar trebui avut în vedere, de asemenea, că remunerarea personalului cu funcții de conducere din instituțiile financiare este o chestiune exclusiv de guvernanță corporativă și că, anul trecut, Parlamentul a adoptat un raport fără caracter legislativ bazat pe Cartea verde a Comisiei privind guvernanța corporativă în instituțiile financiare premergătoare viitoarei propuneri legislative privind guvernanța corporativă în sectorul bancar.

Având în vedere că ambele rapoarte adoptate au subliniat importanța consolidării rolului acționarilor în aprobarea politicilor de remunerare,

— consideră Comisia că este de preferat o abordare generală și uniformă pentru toate companiile (cotate la bursă) (atât financiare, cât și nefinanciare) atunci când se iau decizii privind guvernanța corporativă în general și privind remunerarea în particular?

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(4 octombrie 2012)

Comisia consideră că apar probleme comune în ceea ce privește guvernanța corporativă și remunerarea personalului cu funcții de conducere din toate societățile cotate la bursă, inclusiv cele din sectorul financiar. Totuși, anumite aspecte referitoare la remunerare și la guvernanța corporativă în sectorul financiar necesită o abordare specifică.

Criza financiară actuală a demonstrat că în instituțiile financiare gestionarea necorespunzătoare a riscurilor și gândirea pe termen scurt pot avea efecte sistemice cu implicații nu numai pentru instituțiile în cauză, ci și pentru întreaga economie. Prin urmare, s-a acordat o atenție specială problemei remunerării în instituțiile financiare, atât la nivel european, cât și la nivel internațional.

La nivel european, au fost deja puse în aplicare norme privind remunerarea în instituțiile financiare, în contextul pachetului legislativ „CRD III". Aceste norme, în vigoare din ianuarie 2011, au drept obiectiv alinierea remunerării cu buna administrare a riscului și cu performanța pe termen lung a instituțiilor financiare. Ele introduc în legislația UE principiile internaționale aplicabile remunerării în sectorul financiar stabilite de Consiliul pentru Stabilitate Financiară (*Financial Stability Board*, FSB). Propunerea CRD IV, dezbătută în prezent, va aduce mai multe schimbări în acest domeniu. Ca urmare a consultărilor publice privind cele două Cărți verzi din 2010 și 2011, Comisia analizează în prezent posibilitatea de a propune noi norme privind guvernanța corporativă, care să aibă o aplicare mai generală.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007211/12
to the Commission
Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Uniform approach to corporate governance rules

Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs is currently discussing the Commission's proposals for a new Capital Requirements Directive (CRD IV). These discussions have highlighted the probability of a certain cap being imposed on banking bonuses, as a legislative measure to limit the remuneration paid to managerial staff (the level of bonuses to equal the level of fixed salary).

As has been announced by Commissioner Michel Barnier, the Commission intends to come up with a proposal on corporate governance by the end of the year.

It should be borne in mind that the remuneration of managers is a purely corporate governance issue and that this year Parliament adopted a non-legislative report based on the Commission's Green Paper on corporate governance with a view to the future corporate governance legislative proposal.

It should also be borne in mind that the remuneration of managers in financial institutions is a purely corporate governance issue and that last year Parliament adopted a non-legislative report based on the Commission's Green Paper on corporate governance in financial institutions with a view to the future banking corporate governance legislative proposal,

Given that both of these adopted reports stressed the importance of enhancing the role of shareholders in approving remuneration policies,

— does the Commission take the view that a general and uniform approach for all (listed) companies (both financial and non-financial) is preferable when deciding about corporate governance in general and remuneration, in particular?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 October 2012)

The Commission considers that common issues arise in relation to corporate governance and remuneration of managers in all listed companies, including those in the financial sector. However, there are aspects of remuneration and corporate governance in the financial sector which justify a specific approach.

The current financial crisis has demonstrated that poor risk management and short termism in financial institutions can have systemic effects with implications not only for the institutions concerned but for the entire economy. As a result the question of remuneration in financial institutions has been given special attention both at European and international levels.

At European level rules applying to remuneration in financial institutions have already been put in place in the context of the 'CRD III' legislative package. These rules, in force since January 2011, aim at aligning remuneration with sound risk management and long-term performance in financial institutions. They integrate into EC law the international principles on remuneration in the financial sector established by the FSB (Financial Stability Board). The currently debated CRD IV proposal will bring more changes in this field. Following the public consultations on its two Green Papers in 2010 and 2011, the Commission is currently considering whether to propose new rules on corporate governance with a more general application.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007212/12
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Supermarkets and competition issues

Supermarkets in the European Union have progressively taken larger and larger shares of the food market in Member States, and the food retail sector is becoming concentrated to the degree that there is now a serious risk to competition in the sector. This is a state of affairs which could threaten the future food security of the EU and lead to a diminution or even the practical elimination of competition among primary producers of foodstuffs across the Union.

1. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that the food sector remains competitive to the benefit of EU citizens?

2. Further, what steps are being taken to protect food security in the future for EU citizens?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2012)

The concentration of retail chains differs significantly between Member States. For instance, the top 3 retailers in Finland have a market share at national level of around 75%, whereas in Greece the top 9 retailers only account for about 28% ([1]).

In addition, markets can be fiercely competitive, even if they are concentrated. The margins of most retailers in Europe appear rather modest, if compared to the margins of other operators in the chain, like major producers of branded food products. This suggests that retailers face significant competitive pressure in many markets within the EU, which forces them to pass on low prices to consumers.

In the EU the relevant authorities (i.e. the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition and the National Competition Authorities) ensure that competition is present throughout the food supply chain, as seen in the recent report from the European Competition Network ([2]). The report shows that the active enforcement of competition law in the food sector across Europe, in particular at processing and manufacturing levels, has benefitted farmers, suppliers and consumers.

The Commission's proposal for the CAP reform includes various elements that will foster the viability of food production, thereby addressing future challenges regarding food security. The proposal maintains the important role of direct payments, but aims to improve the targeting of support to farmers. Production capacity is also assured by limiting income variability and compensating for production difficulties in areas with specific constraints, mitigating the pressure on resources and the effects of climate change on production. Fostering the production of high quality and wide choice of products also helps to address food demand.

([1]) See ECB, 'Structural Features of Distributive Trade and their Impact on Prices in the Euro Area,' September 2011, pages 47-50, http://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/other/structuralfeaturesdistributivetrades201109en.pdf.

([2]) "Activities in the Food Sector" (May 2012), paras 194-196 (merger control), 185-193 (antitrust), 248-262 (monitoring actions), available at http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/documents.html#reports.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007215/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Immunmedikament für die bessere Behandlung von Alzheimer künftig auch in Europa erhältlich?

Einer in den Vereinigten Staaten durchgeführten Studie zufolge gibt es eine Immuntherapie mit dem Namen „IVIG", die bei Alzheimer-Patienten sehr gut anschlägt. In den USA wurde dieses Medikament für zahlreiche Krankheiten zugelassen.

— Beabsichtigt die Kommission, auf den Erkenntnissen aus den USA aufzubauen, und wird sie das Medikament zur Verwendung in der EU zulassen?

— Kann die Kommission, falls dies der Fall ist, bereits eine Einschätzung zu der positiven Wirkung des Medikaments sowohl auf die einzelnen Patienten als auch auf die Kosten für Sozialleistungen innerhalb der EU abgeben?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(6. September 2012)

Die Abkürzung IVIg steht für intravenös verabreichte Arzneimittel, die den Wirkstoff Immunglobulin enthalten. Sowohl die Europäische Kommission als auch die Mitgliedstaaten haben Zulassungen für IVIg-Arzneimittel in der EU erteilt.

Vor der Erteilung einer Zulassung werden auf der Grundlage der vom Antragsteller, d. h. einem Pharmaunternehmen, vorgelegten Daten Qualität, Sicherheit und Wirksamkeit eines Arzneimittels bewertet. Im Rahmen des derzeit zugelassenen therapeutischen Zwecks werden IVIg typischerweise zur Behandlung von Erkrankungen des Immunsystems eingesetzt, je nach Produkt sind aber auch andere Anwendungsbereiche möglich.

Der derzeitige therapeutische Zweck eines zugelassenen Arzneimittels kann um eine neue Indikation ergänzt werden, wenn der vom Zulassungsinhaber eingereichte Änderungsantrag von den Behörden, die die ursprüngliche Zulassung erteilt haben, positiv beschieden wird. Die zusammen mit dem Antrag einzureichenden Unterlagen umfassen ggf. nichtklinische und klinische Daten.

Die Verwendung von IVIg bei Alzheimer-Erkrankungen befindet sich noch im Forschungsstadium. Eine Bewertung des Kosten-Nutzen-Verhältnisses eines Arzneimittels wird in der Regel bei der Entscheidung über Preisgestaltung und Erstattungsfähigkeit durchgeführt, die in den Zuständigkeitsbereich der Mitgliedstaaten fällt. Der Kommission liegen daher keine Daten darüber vor, wie sich diese potenzielle Behandlung auf die Kosten für die Behandlung von Alzheimer-Patienten auswirken würde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007215/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Immune drug to improve treatment of Alzheimer's disease also to be made available in Europe?

According to a study carried out in the United States, there is an immune drug therapy known as IVIG to which people with Alzheimer's disease have responded very well. The US has approved this drug for numerous conditions.

— Does the Commission intend to build on the US findings, and will it approve the drug for use in the EU?

— If so, can the Commission already estimate the drug's positive impact on both individual patients and social welfare costs within the EU?

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

IVIG is the abbreviation used for medicinal products for intravenous use containing an immunoglobulin as an active substance. Marketing authorisations for IVIG medicinal products in the EU have been granted both by the European Commission and by the Member States.

A marketing authorisation is granted after an evaluation of the quality, safety and efficacy of the medicinal product, based on the data submitted by the applicant, i.e. a pharmaceutical company. Currently approved therapeutic use of IVIG typically includes immune system disorders and may differ per product.

A new indication for an authorised medicinal product may be added to the existing therapeutic use of the medicinal product based on a positive evaluation of the variation application submitted by the marketing authorisation holder to the authorities who have granted the initial marketing authorisation. A dossier submitted with the application contains non- clinical and clinical data as appropriate.

The use of IVIG in the Alzheimer's disease is in the stage of research. An assessment of the cost-effectiveness of a medicinal product is usually performed in the framework of the pricing and reimbursement decision-making, which is the competence of the Member States. Therefore the Commission does not have data on the impact of this potential treatment on the costs related to the Alzheimer's disease.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007216/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Allegations that the Russian Government intends to impose an immediate and indefinite ban within its borders on the publication, sale and possession of the Falun Gong textbook

Could the European External Action Service (EEAS) please look into allegations that the Russian Government intends to impose an immediate and indefinite ban within its borders on the publication, sale and possession of the Falun Gong textbook entitled 'Zhuan Falun', in response to Chinese Government pressure?

In its reply, the EEAS is asked to take account of the following points.

— Falun Gong practitioners in Russia have now reached the final legal avenue that would allow them to protect their right to practise their beliefs freely: the Supreme Court.

— If the ban remains in place indefinitely, Falun Gong practitioners who possess such material could be arrested and be sentenced to up to three years in prison.

— This is a dangerous development for the safety of Falun Gong practitioners in Russia, given the severe levels of abuse that have occurred, and continue to occur, in China since the practice was banned by the Chinese Government in 1999.

— Freedom of religion is an integral part of EU-Russia human rights consultations.

On a separate but closely related issue, could the EEAS please also comment on what help it has provided to Wang Xiaodong and Wang Junling, who have both been detained in China and are at risk of torture for their Falun Gong religious beliefs?

Question for written answer E-007326/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(20 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Russian ban on Falun Gong book

A London constituent has expressed concerns about the alleged continued persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in Russia. In 2008 the Russian Government banned the book *Zhuan Falun*, which contains the main teaching of the spiritual practice of Falun Gong, having listed it as an 'extremist publication' following the promulgation of the Russian federal law on combating extremist activities in 2002. Possession of these printed materials can lead to arrest and imprisonment for up to three years.

It has also been alleged that Russian authorities are assisting the Chinese Communist Party's campaign against Falun Gong by sending Chinese Falun Gong practitioners who live in Russia back to China to face persecution.

The Supreme Court is currently deciding whether to allow an appeal to have the ban on the book revoked. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the situation, and can she comment?

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

The EEAS has been following the case of Falun Gong in China and Russia very closely. It has firsthand information about restrictive actions taken against Russian Falun Gong practitioners, including banned texts, prosecutions, searches, fines and confiscations.

Issues relating to the freedom of expression, the application of Russia's anti-extremism legislation, the freedom of religion or belief and the due process of law in Russian courts are sources of concern and are discussed with the Russian authorities on a regular basis, most recently at the human rights consultations with Russia on 20 July 2012. The issue of the Ministry of Justice's list of extremist publications and more generally the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners have been part of those discussions.

The EU is aware that the extensive restrictions imposed by the Chinese authorities upon members of the Falun Gong movement are considered as one of the reasons explaining their current situation in Russia. The EU believes that the current treatment of Falun Gong practitioners is incompatible with freedom of conscience recognised under Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The EU will raise the situation of Mr Wang Xiaodong and his sister Ms Wang Junling with the Chinese authorities in an appropriate manner.

The EU will continue to express its concerns to the Russian and to the Chinese authorities concerning the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007219/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Controlli doganali nel settore «importazione giocattoli» in Europa

L'articolo 6 della direttiva 2009/48/CE sulla sicurezza dei giocattoli, recepita dal decreto legislativo del 54, dell'11 aprile 2011, pone in capo agli importatori di giocattoli l'obbligo di produrre la certificazione degli stessi prima che vengano immessi sul mercato. La certificazione di conformità implica che l'importatore si assicuri che il fabbricante abbia rispettato, in fase di produzione, i requisiti di sicurezza prescritti dalla normativa comunitaria vigente.

Fra le autorità nazionali deputate al controllo di sicurezza sui giocattoli, in Italia opera l'Agenzia delle Dogane, preposta al controllo delle frontiere esterne.

Recentemente alcune aziende venete riferiscono di pratiche contrarie al principio di libera circolazione delle merci e potenzialmente pericolose per il corretto funzionamento del mercato interno ex articolo 32 TFUE. Infatti, a causa di poche scatole di prodotti senza completa certificazione, interi container, contenenti invece prodotti correttamente certificati, vengono posti preventivamente sotto sequestro dalle autorità italiane, a differenza di quanto avviene in altri paesi europei quali l'Olanda, creando ingenti danni alle società importatrici.

— La Commissione è a conoscenza di ciò?

— Reputa la Commissione che vi sia un'effettiva disparità nell'applicazione dei controlli doganali e delle normative vigenti?

— Reputa essa che il principio della cooperazione doganale sancito dall'articolo 33 TFUE sia rispettato?

— Ritiene essa che le obiezioni sollevate siano fondate e, in caso affermativo, quali soluzioni propone?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(13 settembre 2012)

La responsabilità di verificare che siano commercializzati nell'UE solo giocattoli a norma fa capo principalmente agli Stati membri. Nello svolgere tali attività di sorveglianza del mercato essi devono agire in autonomia, con imparzialità e senza prevenzioni. I provvedimenti presi nei confronti dei giocattoli fuori norma devono inoltre essere commisurati alla situazione. La Commissione intende assicurare il coordinamento delle impostazioni seguite dalle ASM ([1]) mediante il gruppo di esperti nel campo della cooperazione amministrativa sulla sicurezza dei giocattoli. Le linee guida circa i controlli all'importazione in merito alla sicurezza dei prodotti e al rispetto della normativa adottate nel 2011 descrivono la cooperazione tra le autorità competenti (ossia ASM e dogane) durante il processo di controllo delle importazioni e vengono seguite dagli Stati membri.

La Commissione ha avviato a gennaio 2012 una campagna informativa indirizzata agli operatori economici attivi nella produzione e commercializzazione di giocattoli al fine di sensibilizzarli sulle norme di sicurezza applicabili per mezzo di sessioni di formazione dedicate. La Commissione ha altresì avviato una campagna informativa per sensibilizzare i consumatori sul tema della sicurezza dei giocattoli e per fornire consigli ai genitori sull'acquisto e l'uso dei giocattoli in sicurezza ([2]).

In merito ai fatti menzionati dall'onorevole parlamentare la Commissione non è a conoscenza di tale caso specifico e non dispone di tutti i particolari necessari per giungere ad una conclusione definitiva.

([1]) Autorità di sorveglianza del mercato.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/toys/tst-campaign/index_en.htm

La Commissione ha in programma altresì di proporre entro la fine del 2012 un pacchetto dedicato a sicurezza dei prodotti e vigilanza sui mercati che includa in particolare un regolamento autonomo sulla sorveglianza dei mercati e una comunicazione relativa ad un piano pluriennale di sorveglianza dei mercati. In tal modo riceveranno impulso la vigilanza sui mercati, nonché la cooperazione e l'assistenza reciproca a livello dell'intera UE. Ciò renderà inoltre molto più ardua l'attività dei commercianti senza scrupoli e contribuirà all'attuazione del Mercato unico per i prodotti sicuri e a norma.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007219/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Customs checks in the toy import sector in Europe

Article 6 of Directive 2009/48/EC on the safety of toys, implemented by Legislative Decree No 54 of 11 April 2011, requires toy importers to produce certification for toys before they are placed on the market. The conformity certification means that the importer must ensure that the manufacturer has, during the production process, complied with the safety requirements set out in existing EU legislation.

One of the national authorities responsible for checking the safety of toys in Italy is the Customs Agency, which is responsible for controlling external borders.

Recently, some companies in the Veneto region have reported practices that run counter to the principle of the free movement of goods and potentially jeopardise the proper functioning of the internal market under Article 32 TFEU. Indeed, just because of a few boxes of products without full certification, entire containers containing properly certified products are being preventively seized by the Italian authorities, causing huge damage to importing companies. This does not happen in other European countries, such as the Netherlands.

— Is the Commission aware of this?

— Does the Commission agree that there is effectively some disparity in the implementation of customs checks and of existing legislation?

— Does it believe that the principle of customs cooperation enshrined in Article 33 TFEU is being complied with?

— Does it consider that the objections raised are justified and, if so, what solutions does it propose?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2012)

It is, primarily, the responsibility of Member States to check that only compliant toys are placed on the EU market. When carrying out such market surveillance activities, they must act independently, impartially and without bias. Additionally, measures taken against non-compliant toys must be proportionate. The Commission aims to ensure a coordinated approach amongst MSA's ([1]) via the Toy Safety Administrative Cooperation Expert group. Guidelines for import controls in the area of product safety and compliance adopted in 2011 describe cooperation between competent authorities (i.e. MSA's and customs) during the import control process and are being implemented in MSS.

The Commission started in January 2012 an information campaign for economic operators involved in toy manufacturing and marketing, to raise economic operator's awareness on the applicable safety rules via dedicated training sessions. Also, the Commission launched an information campaign to raise consumer's awareness on the safety of toys, to provide parents with tips on how to safely buy and use toys ([2]).

As for the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission is not aware of this particular case, and doesn't have all the details necessary to come to a definitive conclusion.

The Commission is also planning to propose, by the end of 2012, a Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package including, in particular, a stand-alone Regulation on Market Surveillance and a communication on a multi-annual market surveillance plan. This will boost pan-European market surveillance, cooperation and mutual assistance. It will make life much harder for rogue traders and help to further implement the Single Market for compliant and safe products.

([1]) Market surveillance authorities.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/toys/tst-campaign/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007220/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Il monastero di Mor Gabriel, la sentenza della Suprema Corte Turca

Sull'altopiano del Tur Abdin nell'Anatolia orientale sorge uno dei più antichi monasteri siro-cristiano-ortodossi, il Mor Gabriel, fondato nel 397d.C. Il monastero è ancora in attività e accoglie 3 monaci, 11 suore e 35 ragazzi che ivi ricevono istruzione. Ogni anno viene visitato da circa 20 000 fedeli ed è considerato dalla comunità siro-ortodossa sparsa per il mondo come la «Seconda Gerusalemme». Alcuni anni fa tre villaggi musulmani curdi confinanti sono ricorsi in giudizio per contestare la proprietà dei terreni sui quali sorge Mor Gabriel, sollevando l'accusa che vi si svolgono attività anti-turche in quanto al suo interno si educano anche ragazzi di professione non cristiana. In ultima istanza la Corte Suprema di appello di Ankara si è espressa a favore dei ricorrenti e ora il monastero rischia l'esproprio e con esso la conclusione di una storia che dura da 1600 anni. Gli organi di stampa denunciano un comportamento fazioso della Corte che avrebbe, per esempio, smarrito la documentazione attestante la proprietà in capo al monastero dei terreni contesi.

— In risposta all'interrogazione E-0102/09 la Commissione affermò di aver preso contatti con le autorità, di conoscere il caso e che avrebbe seguito l'evolversi della vicenda; in che modo essa ha seguito le cause in questione?

— Considerando la volontà della Turchia di entrare a far parte dell'Unione europea e considerando che fra i capisaldi dell'UE vi sono il rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo e la tutela delle minoranze, come valuta la Commissione la presa di posizione della Suprema Corte?

— Come intende muoversi per tutelare la comunità cristiano-ortodossa e in particolare questo monastero figlio e padre di 1600 anni di storia?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007315/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(19 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Tutela del monastero di Mor Gabriel

Fonti di stampa turche dichiarano che il Mor Gabriel, il più antico monastero cristiano del mondo ancora in attività, nell'altopiano del Tur Abdin (La montagna dei servi di Dio) nell'Anatolia orientale vicino al confine siriano e da secoli il cuore spirituale della comunità ortodossa siriaca, potrebbe essere messo in pericolo da una sentenza della Corte suprema d'appello di Ankara.

I capi dei tre villaggi musulmani vicini, curdi della tribù Celebi, hanno sporto denuncia anni fa contro il monastero con l'appoggio del partito islamico Akp del premier Recip Tayyip Erdogan. I religiosi siriaci sono stati accusati di «attività antiturche» perché educano anche giovani non cristiani e di occupare abusivamente terre che apparterrebbero ai villaggi vicini.

Dopo diverse decisioni giudiziarie contrastanti la Corte suprema d'appello, riferisce Zaman, vicino al governo di Ankara, ora ha dato ragione ai capitribù e deciso che le terre su cui sorge da 1 600 anni il monastero in realtà non sono di sua proprietà.

Al momento, con il Metropolita Mor Timotheus Samuel Aktash, rimangono 3 monaci, 11 suore e 35 ragazzi cui vengono trasmessi i tesori intangibili del monastero, l'antica lingua aramaica e la tradizione ortodossa siriaca.

Può la Commissione indicare come intende tutelare questo importante monastero e la minoranza siriaca?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2012)

La Commissione ha continuato a monitorare la situazione relativa al monastero Mor Gabriel e ne ha dato conto nelle proprie relazioni sui progressi realizzati. Essa ha inoltre sollevato l'argomento con le autorità turche, anche in occasione del Consiglio di Associazione UE-Turchia del 22 giugno 2012.

A seguito degli ultimi sviluppi avvenuti nel giugno 2012, la Commissione ha espresso grave preoccupazione allorché per la seconda volta la Corte di Cassazione turca ha ribaltato la sentenza del tribunale locale che aveva emesso sentenza favorevole al monastero. In questo caso specifico la Commissione è preoccupata anche per il fatto che la causa giudiziaria sia stata avviata da istituzioni statali.

In quanto Paese candidato che sta negoziando l'accessione all'UE, la Turchia deve assicurare il rispetto dei diritti fondamentali di tutti i suoi cittadini. La Commissione continuerà a monitorare attentamente ogni vertenza relativa ai diritti di proprietà della comunità siriaca e del monastero Mor Gabriel in particolare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007220/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: The Mor Gabriel monastery and judgment of the Turkish Supreme Court

On the Tur Abdin plateau in eastern Anatolia stands one of the oldest Syriac Orthodox Christian monasteries in the world, the Mor Gabriel, founded in 397 A.D. The monastery is still operational and accommodates three monks, 11 nuns and 35 children who are educated there. Every year it is visited by around 20 000 worshippers and is considered by the Syriac Orthodox community all over the world to be the 'second Jerusalem'. Some years ago, three neighbouring Kurdish Muslim villages went to court to dispute the ownership of the land on which Mor Gabriel stands, accusing the monastery of carrying out anti-Turkish activities given that children who were not even Christians were being educated there. Ultimately the Supreme Court of Appeal in Ankara ruled in favour of the appellants and now the monastery is at risk of expropriation, which will mean the end of a story that has lasted for 1600 years. The press has reported that the court's behaviour has been extremely biased, since, for example, it mislaid documentation certifying that the monastery did actually own the disputed land.

— In reply to Written Question E-0102/09, the Commission said it had contacted the authorities, knew about the case and intended to monitor the situation. How has it actually been monitoring the cases in question?

— Considering Turkey's wish to join the EU, and given that one of the cornerstones of the EU is respect for human rights and the protection of minorities, what is the Commission's view of the Supreme Court's stance?

— How will it move to protect the Orthodox Christian community and in particular this monastery that has 1600 years of history behind it?

Question for written answer E-007315/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(19 July 2012)

Subject: Protection of the Mor Gabriel monastery

Turkish media sources claim that Mor Gabriel, the oldest functioning Christian monastery in the world, on the Tur Abdin (Mountain of the Servants of God) plateau in eastern Anatolia, near the Syrian border, which has for centuries been the spiritual heart of the Syriac Orthodox community, could be threatened by a ruling of the Supreme Court of Appeal in Ankara.

Years ago, the leaders of three neighbouring Muslim villages, Kurds from the Celebi tribe, filed a complaint against the monastery with the support of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Islamic AKP party. The Syriac monks and nuns have been accused of 'anti-Turkish' activities because they educate young people who are not Christian, amongst others, and because they are allegedly illegally occupying lands that belong to the nearby villages.

After several conflicting court decisions, the Supreme Court of Appeal, according to the newspaper *Zaman*, which is close to the Turkish Government, has now ruled in favour of the village chiefs and decided that the land on which the monastery has been standing for 1 600 years is not really its property.

At present, in addition to the Metropolitan Mor Timotheus Samuel Aktash, there are still three monks, 11 nuns and 35 children to whom the monastery's intangible treasures are being passed on — the ancient Aramaic language and the Orthodox Syriac tradition.

Can the Commission say how it intends to protect this important monastery and the Syriac minority?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2012)

The Commission has continued monitoring the situation of the Mor Gabriel monastery and reported on it in its annual Progress Reports. Moreover, it has brought up the issue with the Turkish authorities including at the EU-Turkey Association Council on 22 June 2012.

Following the latest development in June 2012, the Commission declared that it is seriously concerned about the second reversal by the Turkish Court of Cassation of a local court's decision in favour of the Monastery. In this particular case, the Commission is also concerned that litigation on such issues is launched by state institutions.

Turkey, as a country negotiating its accession to the EU, needs to guarantee respect for fundamental rights of all its citizens. The Commission will continue to follow closely all cases regarding property rights of the Syriac community and, in particular, of the Mor Gabriel monastery.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-007221/12
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(18 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Problematiche relative alla caccia in deroga in Italia

Lo scorso maggio si è tenuto un incontro tra il commissario UE all'Ambiente ed alcune associazioni ambientaliste italiane per quanto concerne la questione della caccia in deroga in Italia, in particolar modo l'applicazione della direttiva Uccelli in Italia, il cui presunto mancato rispetto può comportare eventuali sanzioni.

Alla luce della posizione della Commissione palesata in una lettera di messa in mora in cui si chiede a Roma di conformarsi alle sentenze della Corte di giustizia UE e secondo la quale, in caso di inadempienza, si avrà un nuovo ricorso alla Corte insieme ad ulteriori sanzioni pecuniarie, può la Commissione far sapere:

— come sono stati raccolti i dati e le informazioni utili per poter stabilire le presunte irregolarità;

— quali sono le fonti di tali informazioni e se possono ritenersi esaurienti;

— se sono state coinvolte tutte quante le associazioni che operano nel campo della caccia?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2012)

La Corte di giustizia ha ripetutamente condannato l'Italia per l'incompatibilità delle deroghe per la caccia nel suo territorio con la direttiva 79/409/CEE ([1]) e sono attualmente aperti quattro procedimenti di infrazione contro l'Italia in quanto la Commissione ritiene che essa non si sia conformata alle relative sentenze della Corte nelle cause C-508/09, C-164/09, C-573/08 e C-503/06.

Nel corso di tali procedimenti di infrazione la Commissione ha esaminato tutte le informazioni che le erano state comunicate da parte delle associazioni ambientaliste o da altre parti, oltre che dalle autorità nazionali. Nel corso degli anni si sono svolte riunioni con le autorità italiane per discutere le questioni di base, e si sono avuti numerosi scambi di corrispondenza. Occasionalmente, le questioni sono state inoltre discusse con terzi, come nel corso della riunione cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare.

Va osservato che se esistono procedimenti di infrazione correlati la Commissione non ha alcun obbligo di organizzare riunioni con terzi (sia con associazioni ambientaliste che venatorie) o altre forme di consultazione al fine di raccogliere informazioni relative alla legislazione e alle prassi venatorie.

Qualora la Commissione ritenga che le informazioni disponibili siano sufficienti a dimostrare una violazione della legislazione dell'UE, ha il potere di adire la Corte di giustizia nei confronti dello Stato membro interessato.

Nell'ambito dei suddetti procedimenti di infrazione relativi alle deroghe per la caccia in Italia, la Commissione sta esaminando attualmente tutte le informazioni disponibili riguardanti i provvedimenti adottati dall'Italia per conformarsi alle sentenze della Corte di giustizia. Una volta conclusa tale valutazione, la Commissione deciderà riguardo ad opportune azioni ulteriori.

([1]) GU L 103 del 25.4.1979.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007221/12
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Problems relating to exceptional hunting

In May 2012 a meeting was held between the EU Environment Commissioner and some Italian environmental associations with regard to the issue of exceptional hunting in Italy (notwithstanding the legal provisions in force), in particular the implementation of the Birds Directive in Italy, the presumed non-compliance with which may result in penalties.

In the light of the Commission's position, as set out in a letter of formal notice asking Italy to comply with the rulings of the EU Court of Justice and according to which, should Italy fail to meet its obligations, proceedings will once again be brought before the court and further financial penalties applied, can the Commission say:

— How did it collect the data and information necessary in order to establish the alleged irregularities?

— What are the sources of that information and can they be considered exhaustive?

— Were all hunting associations involved?

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

The Court of Justice has repeatedly condemned Italy for the incompatibility of hunting derogations in its territory with Directive 79/409/EEC ([1]) and four infringement procedures are currently open against Italy as the Commission considers that the related Court rulings in Cases C-508/09, C-164/09, C-573/08 and C-503/06, have not yet been complied with.

In the course of these infringement procedures the Commission has assessed all the information brought to its attention, be it by environmental associations or other parties, as well as by the national authorities. Meetings with the Italian authorities have taken place over the years to discuss the underlying issues, as well as numerous exchanges of correspondence. On occasion, the issues have also been discussed with third parties, such as in the course of the meeting referred to by the Honourable Member.

It should be noted that the Commission is under no obligation to organise meetings with third parties (be it hunting or environmental associations) or other forms of consultation, in order to gather information relating to hunting legislation and practices, where related infringement procedures exist.

Where the Commission considers that the available information is sufficient to prove a breach of EU legislation, it has the power to seize the Court of Justice against the Member State concerned.

In the context of the abovementioned infringement procedures relating to hunting derogations in Italy, the Commission is currently assessing all the available information concerning the steps taken by Italy to comply with the rulings by the Court of Justice. Once this assessment is concluded, the Commission will decide on the appropriate further actions.

([1]) OJ L 103, 25.4.1979.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007222/12
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Vergabe im Elektronetz Nord, Sachsen-Anhalt, auf der Grundlage der Richtlinie 2004/18/EG als freihändige Vergabe

Das Land Sachsen-Anhalt hat im Jahre 2011 den Auftrag für den Schienenverkehr im Elektronetz Nord direkt an die DB Regio AG vergeben. Nach Ansicht der Landesregierung erfolgt diese Vergabe auf der Grundlage der Richtlinie 2004/18/EG als freihändige Vergabe. Die Landesregierung weigert sich, dem Landtagsabgeordneten Erdmenger Auskunft zur Höhe der Ausgleichsleistungen gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007 zu erteilen, und beruft sich dabei auf die Notwendigkeit der Wahrung von Geschäftsgeheimnissen.

Kann die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Fällt ein Vertrag über die Erbringung öffentlicher Schienennahverkehrsdienstleistungen, der ein ausschließliches Recht für die DB Regio AG vorsieht, diese Leistungen zu erbringen, und der der DB Regio AG eine Ausgleichszahlung für die Erbringung dieser Dienstleistung gewährt, in den Anwendungsbereich der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007? Gilt dies auch dann, wenn auf die Vergabe dieses Vertrages zugleich die Richtlinie 2004/18/EG anwendbar ist?

2. Falls die Antwort auf die erste Frage „Ja" lautet: Verpflichtet Artikel 7 Absatz 1 Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007 das Land Sachsen-Anhalt, die auf der Grundlage des Vertrages an die DB Regio AG geleisteten Ausgleichszahlungen zu veröffentlichen?

3. Falls die Antwort auf die erste Frage „Ja" lautet: Hat der Verstoß gegen Artikel 7 Absatz 1 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007 zur Folge, dass die Ausgleichszahlungen nicht mehr gemäß Artikel 9 Absatz 1 Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007 von der vorherigen Anmeldung gemäß Artikel 108 Absatz 3 AEUV ausgenommen sind, da sie nicht „gemäß dieser Verordnung" gewährt werden und somit die Tatbestandsvoraussetzungen für eine Freistellung nicht gegeben sind?

4. Falls die Antwort auf die zweite Frage „Ja" lautet: Folgt aus dem Verstoß gegen Artikel 108 Absatz 3 AEUV, dass das Land Sachsen-Anhalt verpflichtet ist, die Zahlungen an die DB Regio AG einzustellen, bis die Ausgleichsleistungen veröffentlicht werden?

5. Verstößt die Ansicht der Landesregierung, die Höhe der Ausgleichszahlungen (und somit die Höhe der Beihilfen) sei ein Geschäftsgeheimnis, auch gegen die Mitteilung der Kommission C(2003)4582 vom 1. Dezember 2003 zum Berufsgeheimnis in Beihilfeentscheidungen, insbesondere deren Ziffer 14?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(6. September 2012)

Wenn ein Vertrag über die Erbringung öffentlicher Schienenpersonenverkehrsdienste einem Betreiber gemeinwirtschaftliche Verpflichtungen auferlegt und zugleich ein ausschließliches Recht und/oder eine Ausgleichsleistung für die gemeinwirtschaftlichen Verpflichtungen gewährt, fällt er in den Anwendungsbereich der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007. Die Vergabe solcher Verträge wird durch diese Verordnung sowie die Richtlinien über das öffentliche Auftragswesen geregelt.

Wenn der öffentliche Dienstleistungsauftrag der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1370/2007 unterliegt, muss die zuständige Behörde nach Artikel 7 Absatz 1 dieser Verordnung einmal jährlich einen Gesamtbericht u. a. über die den Betreibern gewährten Ausgleichsleistungen und ausschließlichen Rechte veröffentlichen.

Nach Artikel 9 Absatz 1 der Verordnung muss eine gemäß dieser Verordnung gewährte Ausgleichsleistung für gemeinwirtschaftliche Verpflichtungen mit dem Gemeinsamen Markt vereinbar sein. Bei Artikel 7 Absatz 1 handelt es sich um eine Transparenzvorschrift für die Berichterstattung. Die Nichteinhaltung dieser Vorschrift bedeutet nicht, dass der Betrag und die Methode der Berechnung der gewährten Ausgleichsleistung nicht mit den Vorschriften für Ausgleichsleistungen im Einklang stehen.

Nach Artikel 7 Absatz 1 der Verordnung veröffentlichte Informationen über eine von einer zuständigen Behörde gewährte Ausgleichsleistung würden unter Punkt 14 der Mitteilung der Kommission C(2003) 4582 vom 1. Dezember 2003 fallen. Folglich wären diese Informationen nach Auffassung der Kommission kein Geschäftsgeheimnis. Nach Artikel 9 Absatz 1 der Verordnung sind jedoch gemäß dieser Verordnung gewährte Ausgleichsleistungen von der Pflicht zur vorherigen Unterrichtung gemäß Artikel 108 Absatz 3 des Vertrags befreit. In diesem Fall ist die Mitteilung der Kommission C(2003) 4582 nicht anwendbar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007222/12
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Award, on the basis of Directive 2004/18/EC and by means of a private treaty, of a contract for the provision of rail services in the 'Elektronetz Nord' northern electric rail network in Saxony-Anhalt

In 2011 the regional government of Saxony-Anhalt awarded the contract for the provision of rail services on the 'Elektronetz Nord' northern electric rail network to DB Regio AG. In the regional government's view, that contract could be awarded by means of a private treaty, in accordance with Directive 2004/18/EC. The regional government is refusing to disclose to a member of the regional assembly, Christoph Erdmenger, details of the level of the compensation to be paid pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007, invoking the need to protect trade secrets.

We should like to put the following questions concerning this contract award procedure to the Commission:

1. Does a contract for the provision of public local rail passenger transport services which grants DB Regio AG an exclusive right to provide those services and compensation in respect of their provision fall within the scope of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007? Is this still the case if the contract award procedure is also covered by Directive 2004/18/EC?

2. If the answer to the first question is 'yes', does Article 7(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 require the regional government of Saxony-Anhalt to publish details of the compensation paid to DB Regio AG under the contract?

3. If the answer to the first question is 'yes', does the fact that Article 7(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 has been breached mean that the compensation is no longer covered by the exemption from the prior notification requirement laid down in Article 108(3) TFEU, as provided for in Article 9(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007, on the grounds that it is not being paid 'in accordance with this regulation' and is therefore not eligible for exemption?

4. If the answer to the second question is 'yes', does the breach of Article 108(3) TFEU mean that the regional government of Saxony-Anhalt is required to suspend payments to DB Regio AG until details of the compensation have been published?

5. Is the regional government's view that the level of compensation (and thus of the state aid) is a trade secret also at odds with Commission Communication C(2003)4582 of 1 December 2003 on professional secrecy in state aid decisions, and with point 14 of that communication in particular?

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

If a contract for the provision of public passenger transport by rail imposes public service obligations (PSO) on an operator and at the same time grants an exclusive right and/or a compensation for the PSO, that contract falls within the scope of Regulation 1370/2007. The award of such contracts is governed both by the regulation and the public procurement directives.

If the public service contract (PSC) is subject to the provisions of Regulation 1370/2007, the competent authority must publish on a yearly basis pursuant to Article 7(1) of this regulation an aggregated report on, among other things, the compensation payments and exclusive rights granted to the operators.

Article 9(1) of the regulation stipulates that public service compensation paid in accordance with the regulation shall be compatible with the common market. Article 7(1) concerns a transparency requirement on reporting andnon-compliance does not mean that the amount and method of calculation of the compensation paid was not in accordance with the compensation rules of the regulation.

Information about compensation paid by a competent authority as published pursuant to Article 7(1) of the regulation would fall under point 14 of the Commission Communication C(2003)4582 of 1 December 2003 referred to. Hence, the Commisison would not consider this information to constitute a trade secret. However, according to Article 9(1) of the regulation, public service obligation paid in accordance with this regulation shall be exempt from prior notification requirement laid down in Article 108(3) of the Treaty. In such a case, Commission Communication C(2003)4582 is therefore not applicable.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007223/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Afghanistan-Hilfe

Anfang Juli 2012 bekam Afghanistan von der internationalen Gemeinschaft zivile Hilfe in Milliardenhöhe zugesprochen. Im Gegenzug sagte das Land erneut einen verstärkten Kampf gegen Korruption und Drogen, bessere Regierungsführung, freie Wahlen sowie Finanzreformen zu.

Wenige Tage vor dem Auftakt der Afghanistan-Konferenz wurde unter dem Jubel von gut 150 Männern eine am Boden kniende Frau auf offener Straße von ihrem Mann erschossen. Angeblich hatte die 22-Jährige ein Verhältnis zu einem Kommandanten der Taliban unterhalten. Ein Video dieser Tat ist kürzlich im Internet aufgetaucht.

Nach dem Sturz der Taliban 2001 hat man sich darauf konzentriert, die Taliban militärisch zu besiegen, und dabei anscheinend auf den Aufbau der Zivilgesellschaft und auf die Stärkung von Frauenrechten vergessen. Die Gleichbehandlung ist quasi nur in der Verfassung verankert, um dem Westen zu gefallen. De facto kommt es immer wieder zu öffentlichen Übergriffen.

1. Wie steht die Hohe Vertreterin zu diesem Vorfall?

2. Was wird auf EU-Ebene unternommen, damit in Afghanistan Menschenrechte, vor allem auch Religionsfreiheit und Frauenrechte, nicht nur auf dem Papier bestehen?

3. Wie hoch ist der Anteil der EU(-Staaten) an den zugesagten Hilfsgeldern für Afghanistan in Höhe von 16 Milliarden Dollar?

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

Die hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin (HV/VP) hat die fortdauernde entsetzliche Gewalt gegen Frauen in Afghanistan wiederholt und insbesondere den von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angeführten Mord in einer Erklärung am 10. Juli 2012 verurteilt. Dieser Vorfall ist leider nicht ungewöhnlich. Präsident Karzai hat eine Untersuchung und die Verhaftung der mutmaßlich daran beteiligten Personen angeordnet.

Die EU tritt auch weiterhin für mehr Achtung der Menschenrechte und insbesondere der Rechte von Frauen und Minderheiten ein. Der Standpunkt der EU wurde des Öfteren, beispielsweise in den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom 14. Mai 2012, bekräftigt. Gegenüber der afghanischen Regierung mahnt die HV/VP regelmäßig die stärkere Achtung der Menschenrechte in Afghanistan an, so zuletzt im April 2012 bei einem Treffen mit dem afghanischen Außenminister. Die EU unterstützt die afghanische Regierung und die Zivilgesellschaft bei der Bekämpfung von Gewalt gegen Frauen und bei der Reform des Justizwesens und dessen Einrichtungen, die für die Durchsetzung der Rechte von Randgruppen unabdingbar sind.

Auf der Konferenz in Tokyo am 8. Juli 2012 hat die Regierung Afghanistans nochmals ihr Engagement für die Achtung der Menschenrechte und Grundfreiheiten ihrer Bürger und insbesondere ihrer Bürgerinnen bekräftigt. Dieses Engagement ist Teil der Rahmenvereinbarung über gegenseitige Rechenschaftspflicht (Mutual Accountability Framework), die sowohl von der internationalen Gemeinschaft als auch von der afghanischen Regierung dazu verwendet wird, sich gegenseitig Rechenschaft über die Erfüllung der eingegangenen Verpflichtungen abzulegen. Die EU und die Mitgliedstaaten haben Afghanistan für die zehnjährige Übergangsphase mindestens die Beibehaltung der gegenwärtigen Hilfe in Höhe von mehr als 1 Mrd. EUR jährlich zugesagt. Für den fraglichen Vierjahreszeitraum entspricht dies einer Unterstützung in Höhe von rund 5 Mrd. USD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007223/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Aid to Afghanistan

At the beginning of July 2012 the international community vowed to provide Afghanistan with non-military assistance worth billions of dollars. Afghanistan promised in return, once again, to step up the fight against corruption and drugs, improve governance, hold free elections, and implement financial reforms.

A few days before the start of the donor conference, a woman kneeling on the ground was shot in the street by her husband in front of a crowd of more than 150 cheering men. The 22-year-old woman had allegedly been having an affair with a Taliban commander. A video of the killing has recently emerged on the Internet.

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 efforts have been concentrated on winning a military victory, and in that process the need to build civil society and strengthen women's rights has apparently been overlooked. Equal treatment exists only under the Constitution, written into it, as it were, to please the West. In reality, blatant violations are perpetrated repeatedly.

1. How does the High Representative view the incident described above?

2. What steps are being taken at EU level to ensure that human rights in Afghanistan, especially freedom of religion and women's rights, amount to more than words on paper?

3. What proportion of the promised aid funding for Afghanistan, USD 16 billion, is being contributed by the EU and the Member States?

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

The HR/VP has frequently condemned the deplorable and continued violence against women in Afghanistan. The EU Special Representative specifically condemned this murder in a statement issued on 10 July 2012. The incident is, regrettably, not unusual. President Karzai has ordered an investigation and the arrest of those believed to be involved.

The EU will continue to champion greater respect for human rights, in particular those of women and minorities. The EU's position has been restated on a number of occasions, for instance in Council conclusions of 14 May 2012. The HR/VP raises the need for greater respect for human rights in Afghanistan with the Afghan Government on a regular basis, most recently in a meeting with the Afghan Foreign Minister in April 2012. The EU provides assistance to the Afghan Government and civil society to combat violence against women and supports reform of the justice sector and its institutions, which are indispensable for the rights of marginalised groups.

The Government of Afghanistan has, at the Tokyo Conference of 8 July 2012, reaffirmed its commitment to uphold the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens, in particular women. This is one component of the Mutual Accountability Framework which will be used by both the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to hold each other accountable for the fulfilment of commitments made. The EU and Member States have pledged to continue to support Afghanistan in the decade of transformation at least at current levels of assistance, which totals more than EUR 1 billion a year. This would approximate to USD 5 billion over the four year period in question.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007224/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Auswirkungen des LIBOR-Skandals

Durch die Bindung vieler Kredite an die London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) sorgt ein niedriger Zinssatz für geringe Kreditraten. Mehreren Bankinstituten wird vorgeworfen, von 2005 bis 2009 den LIBOR mit falschen Angaben manipuliert zu haben. Dadurch sollen die wahren Refinanzierungskosten verschleiert und Handelsgewinne eingestrichen worden sein. Die LIBOR-Konditionen, die auf Angaben der Großbanken basieren, dienen aber auch als Referenz für Kredite an Unternehmen und Privatpersonen. Geschädigt werden durch eine solche Manipulation alle, die Geld verleihen — im Wesentlichen also Banken. In den USA stehen Klagen von kleineren regionalen Banken an. Der Referenzzinssatz spielt zudem vor allem im Bereich börsengehandelter und nicht börsengehandelter Derivate (Optionen und Futures) weltweit eine wichtige Rolle.

Der damalige Chef der Notenbank von New York, US-Finanzminister Timothy Geithner, soll bereits vor vier Jahren die Bank of England zu Änderungen bei der LIBOR-Festsetzung gedrängt haben. Dass die Angelegenheit erst Jahre später große Wellen schlägt, könnte wohl auch damit zu tun haben, dass die Behörden in der Finanzkrise vor allem damit beschäftigt waren, Banken am Leben zu erhalten, anstatt ihnen Milliardenstrafen aufzuerlegen.

1. Welche Auswirkungen hat der LIBOR-Schwindel nach Ansicht der Kommission auf die Basel- und Solvency-Bestimmungen?

2. Inwieweit wird in der EU untersucht, ob es auch Manipulationen beim Euro InterBank Offered Rate (EURIBOR) — also beim Zinssatz für Termingelder in Euro im Interbankengeschäft — gegeben hat?

3. Welche Rolle könnten nach Ansicht der Kommission etwaige EURIBOR-Manipulationen im Zusammenhang mit der Euro-Krise gespielt haben?

4. Welche Banken in der EU profitieren nun von der Kronzeugenregelung?

5. Erfolgte beim sogenannten Bankenstresstest innerhalb der EU keine Kontrolle hinsichtlich LIBOR- bzw. EURIBOR-Sätzen?

6. Ist diesbezüglich eine Anpassung hinsichtlich künftiger Bankenstresstests geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(4. September 2012)

Das Verfahren zur Festsetzung der LIBOR-Zinssätze wird derzeit von den Kommissionsdienststellen geprüft.

Die Kommission untersucht bereits seit 2011 nach dem EU-Wettbewerbsrecht, ob auf den Märkten für Zinsderivate Kartelle existieren. Die Preise dieser Produkte werden unmittelbar auf der Grundlage von Referenzzinssätzen wie dem EURIBOR festgelegt. Die Prüfung ist noch nicht abgeschlossen.

Auch die Untersuchungen zu den Einzelheiten der jüngsten Enthüllungen sind noch im Gange. Es wäre verfrüht, zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt direkte Parallelen zwischen LIBOR und EURIBOR zu ziehen, da diese Referenzzinssätze nicht nach denselben Methoden berechnet werden.

Im Interesse der Wirksamkeit der Kronzeugenregelung darf nicht bekanntgegeben werden, ob ein Antrag auf Anwendung der Kronzeugenregelung gestellt wurde und um wen es sich dabei gegebenenfalls handelt, bevor die Beschwerdepunkte mitgeteilt wurden. Dies ist bisher noch nicht geschehen.

Anhand der Bankenstresstests soll die Widerstandsfähigkeit der Finanzinstitute bei ungünstigen Entwicklungen der Finanzmärkte beurteilt werden. Die Festlegung von Referenzzinssätzen ist ein ganz anderes Thema. Die Methoden zur Berechnung dieser Zinssätze sollten in einem breiteren Zusammenhang geprüft werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007224/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Repercussions of the LIBOR scandal

Since many loans are tied to the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR), a low rate of interest ensures that loan payments are kept down. Several bank institutions now stand accused of having manipulated LIBOR between 2005 and 2009 by submitting false data, thereby, it is alleged, disguising their true borrowing costs and boosting trading profits. However, the LIBOR terms, which are based on data from the major banks, also serve as a benchmark for loans to businesses and private individuals. Such manipulation is damaging to everyone in the business of making loans — essentially banks, therefore. In the USA, lawsuits by smaller, regional banks are pending. The reference interest rate also plays an important role worldwide above all in the area of exchanged-traded and OTC derivatives (options and futures).

Four years ago, US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, who was then head of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, is reported to have urged the Bank of England to reform the process by which the LIBOR rate is set. The fact that this affair is only now sending shockwaves, years later, may well be because during the financial crisis the authorities have been more concerned with keeping banks afloat than with slapping fines running into billions on them.

1. What effects does the Commission think the rigging of LIBOR has had on the Basel and solvency rules?

2. To what extent is the possibility being investigated in the EU that the Euro InterBank Offered Rate (Euribor) — i.e. the interest rate for euro time deposits — was also subject to manipulation?

3. What role does the Commission think that any such Euribor manipulations might have played in connection with the euro crisis?

4. Which banks in the EU are now benefiting from the leniency applications?

5. Were no checks made of LIBOR and Euribor rate-setting in the context of the bank stress test in the EU?

6. Are changes to future bank stress tests planned in order to take account of this factor?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

The Commission services are currently looking into the process in which LIBOR rates are established.

Since 2011, the Commission is investigating under EU competition rules the existence of possible cartels on markets for interest-rate derivatives. These products are directly priced by reference to benchmark interest rates including EURIBOR. This investigation is ongoing.

As far as the details around the recent revelations are concerned, investigations are still ongoing. At this stage, it appears premature to draw direct parallels between LIBOR and EURIBOR, as the methodologies used to establish these rates are not identical.

To ensure the effectiveness of the Leniency Programme, the identity of leniency applicants or even the fact that a leniency application has been submitted cannot be disclosed until a statement of objections has been issued. This is not yet the case.

The purpose of 'stress-testing' is to assess the resilience of financial institutions to adverse developments in financial markets. The establishment of benchmarks rates is an entirely different subject. The method with which benchmark rates are established should be investigated in a wider context.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007225/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Daseinsvorsorge — negative Auswirkungen von Privatisierungen

Mit dem Inkrafttreten des Binnenmarkts verschrieb sich die EU in den 1990er Jahren der Liberalisierung und Deregulierung der Wirtschaft. Das sollte den Wettbewerb fördern und mehr Gewinn versprechen. Quer durch Europa wurde daraufhin Infrastruktur, beispielsweise die Wasser- und Energieversorgung, Bahn- und U-Bahn-Betrieb oder — wie im Falle Großbritanniens — gar das Gesundheitssystem privatisiert. Die Unzufriedenheit der Bevölkerung wegen verschmutzten Wassers (z. B. wurden Rohre nicht erneuert) hat in vielen Städten mittlerweile zu einem Umdenken geführt, das teuer erkauft werden muss.

Medienberichten zufolge kommen Studien zu dem Schluss, dass die Gewinne kommunaler Unternehmen im Vergleich zu privaten Anbietern geringer sind; dafür soll die Investitionsquote höher sein und die langfristige Planung und Nachhaltigkeit eine bedeutende Rolle spielen ([1]).

1. Welchen Einfluss haben diese Negativbeispiele auf die EU-Strategie im Bereich der Daseinsvorsorge?

2. Spricht sich die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang weiter explizit für Privatisierungen etwa der Wasserversorgung aus?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(23. August 2012)

Der AEUV ist in Bezug auf die Eigentumsordnung neutral (Artikel 345 AEUV). Daher kann sich die Kommission nicht zur Regelung der Eigentumsverhältnisse bei Unternehmen äußern, die Leistungen der Daseinsvorsorge erbringen. Die Entscheidung, ob solche Unternehmen *in öffentlichem oder privatem Eigentum sein sollten, wird nach wie vor je nach der Struktur des betreffenden Mitgliedstaats auf nationaler, regionaler beziehungsweise lokaler Ebene getroffen*. Erhalten Unternehmen für Leistungen der Daseinsvorsorge Ausgleichszahlungen — was in den erwähnten Bereichen durchaus der Fall sein kann —, sind gemäß Artikel 106 Absatz 2 AEUV die EU-Regeln über staatliche Beihilfen zu beachten. Die EU-Beihilfevorschriften gelten für Beihilfen der öffentlichen Hand an Unternehmen (also eine wirtschaftliche Tätigkeit ausübende Einheiten) unabhängig davon, ob sie privat oder öffentlich sind. Eine Liberalisierung von Sektoren, für die dies weder im EU-Recht noch im innerstaatlichen Recht vorgesehen ist, ist auch nach den Wettbewerbsregeln der EU nicht erforderlich.

Wo sich die Liberalisierung der Netzbranchen auf Dienste der Daseinsvorsorge auswirkt, hat die Kommission stets Universaldienstverpflichtungen für private Unternehmen festgelegt, um den Zugang der Bevölkerung zu grundlegenden Diensten sicherzustellen.

([1]) http://kurier.at/wirtschaft/4502890-der-mythos-von-billigeren-privaten.php.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007225/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Negative Impact of Privatisation on Services of General Interest

With the advent of the single market in the 1990s, the EU committed itself to the liberalisation and deregulation of the economy. This move was intended to promote competition, and promised bigger profits. All over Europe, infrastructures, such as water and energy supplies and railway and subway services, were then privatised; in the United Kingdom, even the health system was privatised. Popular discontent due to contaminated water (e.g. pipes were not replaced) has now led to a rethinking in many cities that will prove very costly.

According to media reports, studies have concluded that the profits of municipal enterprises are lower than those of private providers; on the other hand, the investment rate is reportedly higher and long-term planning and sustainability are said to play an important role.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What impact do these negative examples have on EU strategy concerning services of general interest?

2. Will it continue in this context specifically to advocate privatisation, such as the privatisation of the water supply?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

The *TFEU is neutral regarding ownership of companies (Article 345 TFEU) and therefore, the Commission does not have a position on the ownership of companies providing services of general economic interest. The choice as to whether these are publicly or privately owned remains a national, regional or local decision, depending on the structure of the Member State in question.* Where companies receive compensation for services of general economic interest, as might be the case for the areas mentioned, the EU State aid rules have to be respected, in line with Article 106(2) TFEU. EU State aid rules apply to aid granted by the public authorities to undertakings (*i.e. entities engaged in economic activity), irrespective of whether the undertakings are private or public.* Where a sector is not liberalised by EC law or national law, the EU competition rules do not impose such liberalisation.

There where the liberalisation of network industries has affected services of general economic interest, the Commission has always taken care of defining universal service obligations to be imposed on the private operators in order to ensure that the population as a whole has a guaranteed access to basic services.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007226/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παράνομη αλιεία στις Νότιες Κυκλάδες

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα, η κατάσταση με την παράνομη αλιεία σε πολλές θαλάσσιες της Ελλάδας έχει γίνει αφόρητη. Ακόμα και η αλιεία με δυναμίτη συνεχίζεται σε σχεδόν καθημερινή βάση. Η επιβάρυνση για τα ιχθυοαποθέματα είναι τεράστια, πλήττεται ο τουρισμός, ενώ το εισόδημα των μικρών παράκτιων αλιέων που επιλέγουν να ψαρεύουν με νόμιμες μεθόδους συνεχώς μειώνεται.

Δεδομένου ότι παραβιάζεται η ελληνική και ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και ιδιαίτερα ο Κανονισμός 1967/2006 σχετικά με μέτρα διαχείρισης για τη βιώσιμη εκμετάλλευση των αλιευτικών πόρων στη Μεσόγειο Θάλασσα,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή σε τί ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί ώστε να απαγορευθούν εκείνα τα αλιευτικά εργαλεία που είναι υπερβολικά επιβλαβή για το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον και προκαλούν την εξάντληση των ιχθυοαποθεμάτων, και να ευνοήσει τρόπους αλιείας που είναι συμβατοί με την ορθολογική διαχείριση των θαλάσσιων πόρων;

Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι υπάρχει ορθή εφαρμογή του προαναφερθέντος Κανονισμού στην Ελλάδα; Σε περίπτωση που επιβεβαιώσει την παραβίαση της σχετικής ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας, σε τί μέτρα θα προβεί ώστε να επιτύχει τη συμμόρφωση της Ελλάδας προς αυτήν;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Το άρθρο 8 του κανονισμού 1967/2006 απαγορεύει ορισμένα αλιευτικά εργαλεία και πρακτικές που θεωρούνται ιδιαίτερα επιβλαβείς για τα αποθέματα ιχθύων και το περιβάλλον τους. Επιπλέον, καθορίζει τεχνικές προδιαγραφές για τα επιτρεπόμενα εργαλεία και το ελάχιστο βάθος και απόσταση από την ακτή για ορισμένες αλιευτικές δραστηριότητες, ώστε να προστατευθούν τα ιχθύδια και τα ευαίσθητα ενδιαιτήματα.

Βάσει της Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής, υπεύθυνες για τον έλεγχο και την εφαρμογή των κανόνων αυτών είναι κατά κύριο λόγο οι αρχές των κρατών μελών. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί και αξιολογεί τον τρόπο με τον οποίο τα κράτη μέλη εκπληρώνουν τις υποχρεώσεις τους όσον αφορά τον έλεγχο και διεξάγει, σε τακτική βάση, διάλογο με τις εθνικές αρχές για τα θέματα αυτά. Επιπλέον, η ΕΕ παρέχει δυνατότητες επιμόρφωσης των εθνικών επιθεωρητών στα γραφεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Υπηρεσίας Ελέγχου της Αλιείας (Βίγκο, Ισπανία), με σκοπό τη βελτίωση των προτύπων ελέγχου και επιθεώρησης στα κράτη μέλη.

Η Επιτροπή είναι ήδη ενήμερη για την εικαζόμενη χρήση δυναμίτη στην περιοχή των Κυκλάδων και έχει ειδοποιήσει τις ελληνικές αρχές για το θέμα αυτό. Από τα στοιχεία που διαβίβασαν οι ελληνικές αρχές συνάγεται ότι το ελληνικό νομοθετικό πλαίσιο είναι ικανό να αποτρέψει την αλιεία με δυναμίτη, υπό την προϋπόθεση της αποτελεσματικής επιβολής του και της διενέργειας των απαιτούμενων ελέγχων. Τόσο βάσει του ελληνικού αλιευτικού κώδικα όσο και βάσει του ποινικού κώδικα είναι δυνατόν να ληφθούν αποτρεπτικά μέτρα για την καταπολέμηση δραστηριοτήτων του είδους αυτού, με αυστηρές κυρώσεις σε περίπτωση παραβάσεων. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να εξετάζει μαζί με τις ελληνικές αρχές τις συστημικές αδυναμίες σχετικά με τον έλεγχο των εν λόγω πρακτικών, καθώς και οποιεσδήποτε άλλες πτυχές του κανονισμού 1967/2006, έως ότου τεθούν σε εφαρμογή όλα τα απαιτούμενα μέτρα για τη διευθέτηση των θεμάτων αυτών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007226/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Illegal fishing in the Southern Cyclades

It is reported that illegal fishing in many sea areas in Greece has become untenable. Even dynamite fishing continues on an almost daily basis. Fish stocks are coming under enormous pressure, tourism is suffering and the income of small coastal fishermen who choose to fish using legal methods is steadily decreasing.

Since Greek and European legislation, in particular Regulation 1967/2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea, is being violated, will the Commission say:

— What action will it take to prohibit fishing gear that is excessively harmful to the marine environment and causes the depletion of fish stocks and to promote fishing methods that are compatible with the rational management of marine resources?

— Does it consider that the aforementioned Regulation is being properly implemented in Greece? If it confirms that the relevant EU legislation is being violated, what measures will it take to ensure that Greece complies with this regulation?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(14 September 2012)

Article 8 of Council Regulation 1967/2006 prohibits certain fishing gears and practices that are considered to be particularly harmful for fish stocks and their surrounding environment. In addition, it sets technical specifications for authorised gears and minimum depths and distance from the coast for certain fishing activities, so as to protect juveniles and sensitive habitats.

Under the common fisheries policy, the primary responsibility for control and enforcement of these rules lies with the Member State authorities. The Commission monitors and evaluates Member States' fulfilment of their control obligations and has developed a regular dialogue with the national authorities on these matters. In addition, the EU provides training facilities for national inspectors in the premises of the European Fisheries Control Agency (Vigo, Spain), with a view to to improving the standards of control and inspection in Member States.

The Commission has been already made aware of alleged use of dynamite in the area of the Cyclades and has alerted the Greek authorities to this issue. Information received from Greece shows that, provided it is properly controlled and enforced the Greek legislation framework could be sufficient to deter dynamite fishing. Dissuasive measures can be applied both under the Greek fisheries code and criminal code to combat such activities, with strong penalties in case of infringements. The Commission will keep raising with the Greek authorities systemic weaknesses regarding the control of such practices, as well as any other aspects of Regulation 1967/2006, until all the necessary means are activated to resolve these issues.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007227/12
à la Commission
Robert Rochefort (ALDE)
(18 juillet 2012)

Objet: Campagnes d'information sur les risques encourus par les consommateurs de cigarettes contrefaites et de contrebande

En raison de la hausse constante du prix des cigarettes, leur consommation globale a diminué progressivement en Europe ces dernières années. En revanche, celle de cigarettes contrefaites et de contrebande a augmenté. Celles-ci représenteraient aujourd'hui autour de 10 % de la consommation totale en Europe, soit plus de 64,2 milliards de cigarettes consommées chaque année. Ainsi, d'après une étude du département «Menaces criminelles contemporaines», de l'université de Paris II-Panthéon-Assas, entre 600 et 675 millions de paquets de cigarettes seraient importés illégalement en France chaque année, dont 20 % seraient totalement impropres à la consommation.

Les cigarettes contrefaites ne sont pas soumises à des contrôles qui garantissent leur qualité de fabrication et peuvent contenir des substances hautement nocives pour ceux qui les consomment. Les experts de plusieurs États membres tels que l'Espagne, l'Irlande, la Grande-Bretagne et la France ont étudié la composition de ces cigarettes et découvert du ciment, de la sciure, du plomb, des insectes, du plastique, ou encore des poils et des excréments d'animaux. Autant de substances inhalées qui se retrouvent ensuite dans le sang des fumeurs, et qui rendent ces cigarettes encore plus cancérigènes que les autres.

La Commission ne juge-t-elle pas crucial d'informer les consommateurs européens sur les risques accrus liés à la consommation de cigarettes contrefaites et de contrebande?

Les jeunes et les personnes vulnérables semblent davantage sensibles au prix de la cigarette que les autres franges de la population, et donc plus susceptibles de consommer des cigarettes illégales, dont le prix est inférieur à celui des autres cigarettes. Ce sont donc des catégories de citoyens particulièrement exposées aux risques liés à la consommation de cigarettes contrefaites et de contrebande.

Par ailleurs, les touristes européens se rendant dans des pays au niveau de vie plus bas que celui de l'UE sont aussi particulièrement exposés à ces risques. Mal informés, ils croient acheter des cigarettes contrôlées pour un prix très inférieur à ceux pratiqués dans l'UE, alors qu'il s'agit souvent de cigarettes illégales n'ayant pas fait l'objet de contrôles sanitaires.

La Commission ne considère-t-elle pas que des campagnes d'informations ciblées sur les jeunes, les citoyens vulnérables et les touristes européens se rendant à l'étranger seraient particulièrement utiles?

La Commission peut-elle indiquer quels États membres ont déjà mené des campagnes d'information afin d'informer leurs citoyens de ces risques?

Le cas échéant, la Commission peut-elle indiquer quelles mesures elle compte prendre en la matière?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(5 septembre 2012)

Concernant les risques sanitaires liés à la consommation de cigarettes contrefaites et de contrebande et les mesures prises pour lutter contre le commerce illégal des produits du tabac, la Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question à la réponse donnée à la question écrite E-02356/2011 ([1]).

La Commission examine actuellement les mesures pouvant être prises pour lutter contre toutes les formes de commerce illégal des produits du tabac. Cependant, elle n'a pas connaissance d'éventuelles campagnes d'information en cours dans les États membres. La révision de la directive 2001/37/CE ([2]) relative aux produits du tabac, qui fera prochainement l'objet d'une proposition, devrait améliorer la protection des consommateurs face aux risques sanitaires liés aux produits contrefaits ou vendus illégalement.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-002356&language=FR.
([2]) Directive 2001/37/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 5 juin 2001 relative au rapprochement des dispositions législatives, réglementaires et administratives des États membres en matière de fabrication, de présentation et de vente des produits du tabac — Déclaration de la Commission (JO L 194 du 18.7.2001, p. 26).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007227/12
to the Commission
Robert Rochefort (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Information campaigns concerning the dangers posed by counterfeit and contraband cigarettes to consumers

Owing to the constant increases in cigarette prices, the overall consumption of cigarettes has fallen steadily in Europe in the past few years. However, the consumption of counterfeit and contraband cigarettes has risen. Today these represent some 10% of total consumption in Europe, equivalent to more than 64.2 billion cigarettes smoked per year. According to a study carried out by the Department for the Study of Contemporary Criminal Threats at the University of Paris II-Panthéon-Assas, between 600 and 675 million packets of cigarettes are apparently imported into France every year, of which 20% are reportedly completely unfit for consumption.

Counterfeit cigarettes are not subject to quality control checks and may contain extremely harmful substances. Experts from many Member States, including Spain, Ireland, Great Britain and France, have studied the composition of such cigarettes and found cement, sawdust, lead, insects, plastic, hair and even animal excrement. These substances are inhaled and end up in the blood of smokers, making counterfeit cigarettes even more carcinogenic than other cigarettes.

Does the Commission not feel that it is vital to inform European consumers of the increased risks associated with the consumption of counterfeit or contraband cigarettes?

Young people and vulnerable persons are more sensitive to cigarette prices than other population groups, and they are therefore more likely to consume cheaper illegal cigarettes. These groups are therefore particularly exposed to the risks associated with the consumption of counterfeit and contraband cigarettes.

Moreover, European tourists visiting countries with lower standards of living than the EU are also at significant risk. They erroneously believe that they are buying legitimate cigarettes at much lower prices than in the EU, but in fact they are often buying illegal cigarettes that have not gone through health controls.

Does the Commission not think that information campaigns targeted at young people, vulnerable persons and European tourists going abroad would be particularly beneficial?

Can the Commission state which Member States have already conducted campaigns to inform the public of the aforementioned risks?

Can the Commission say what measures it intends to take, if necessary, in this area?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2012)

Concerning the health risks associated with the consumption of counterfeit or contraband cigarettes and measures to tackle illicit trade in tobacco products, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-002356/2011 ([1]).

Concerning illicit trade in tobacco products in general, the Commission is considering measures to fight such illicit trade. The Commission is not aware of awareness raising campaigns in the Member States. The forthcoming proposal for a revision of the Tobacco Products Directive 2001/37/EC ([2]) may improve the protection of consumers against the risks of counterfeits and other illicit products.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-002356&language=EN.
([2]) Directive 2001/37/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2001 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products — Commission statement, OJ L 194, 18.7.2001.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007228/12
à la Commission
Robert Rochefort (ALDE)
(18 juillet 2012)

Objet: Outils à mettre en œuvre pour accroître les investissements au profit des PME

Les petites et moyennes entreprises (PME) forment l'armature de l'économie européenne. Selon la Commission, entre 2002 et 2010, les PME ont assuré 85 % des créations nettes d'emplois dans l'Union. Or, les PME ont des difficultés à avoir accès aux financements dont elles ont besoin lors des différentes phases de leur développement. Afin de faire face à la crise économique que nous traversons et de relancer la croissance, il est donc primordial de stimuler les investissements à leur intention.

— À cette fin, la Commission ne juge-t-elle pas que le volume des investissements au profit des PME doit être accru?

En ce sens, la mobilisation de l'épargne des Européens paraît être un instrument crucial. Or, comme l'a souligné le commissaire en charge du marché intérieur et des services ([1]), c'est un domaine dans lequel nous réussissons moins bien que nos partenaires, alors même que nous avons de vrais atouts: plusieurs États membres disposent en effet d'un excédent d'épargne.

— Dès lors, la Commission ne pense-t-elle pas qu'il serait opportun de créer un livret d'épargne européen à taux garanti pour les particuliers, qui servirait à financer des prêts aux PME?

— Le cas échéant, peut-elle préciser quelles sont les initiatives qu'elle compte prendre dans ce sens?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(22 août 2012)

La Commission estime elle aussi que les PME ont parfois des difficultés à obtenir un financement. D'après les résultats d'une enquête récente, l'accès au crédit bancaire a continué de se dégrader et les banques ont revu leurs conditions de crédit ([2]). La situation semble toutefois s'améliorer: l'enquête indique en effet que, durant le premier trimestre de 2012, le durcissement des conditions d'octroi de prêts aux PME a été très limité. L'Union européenne dispose de toute une série de programmes pour aider ce type d'entreprise à accéder au financement ([3]).

En décembre 2011, la Commission a adopté un plan d'action pour faciliter l'accès des PME au financement ([4]). Elle entend à cette fin améliorer leur environnement réglementaire. Ainsi, sa proposition législative de juillet 2011 sur les nouvelles exigences de fonds propres pour les banques contient une clause de réexamen permettant, le cas échéant, de modifier les pondérations du risque du crédit aux PME en tenant compte, pour l'ensemble d'un cycle économique, des données réelles concernant les pertes sur ce type de créance ([5]). Cette proposition est actuellement examinée par les colégislateurs. La Commission a également proposé des règles instaurant un «passeport» pour les fonds de capital-risque ([6]) et les fonds d'entrepreneuriat social ([7]) qui offrirait aux PME de nouvelles possibilités d'accéder à des sources de financement autres que les banques. Le budget de l'Union ([8]) continuera également à faciliter l'accès des PME au financement et à combler les lacunes en matière d'information dans ce domaine.

([1]) Discours de Michel Barnier en date du 16 mai 2012 à l'occasion de la remise du prix Charlemagne.

([2]) Enquête sur l'accès au financement des PME dans la zone euro (SAFE), préparée par la Banque centrale européenne et la Commission européenne, avril 2012, disponible aux adresses suivantes:
http://www.ecb.int/stats/money/surveys/sme/html/index.en.html et http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/data/.
Cette enquête a montré que, dans l'ensemble, les PME ont constaté une réduction de l'offre de prêts bancaires (20 %, contre 14 % dans l'enquête précédente). De plus, le taux de refus des demandes de crédit a augmenté (13 %, contre 10 % précédemment).

([3]) Voir les réponses aux questions écrites E-003663/2012, E-007217/2011 et E-010328/2011.

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0870:FIN:FR:PDF.

([5]) Article 485 de la proposition de règlement de la Commission concernant les exigences prudentielles applicables aux établissements de crédit et aux entreprises d'investissement.

([6]) Proposition de règlement de la Commission sur les fonds de capital-risque européen, de décembre 2011 (actuellement au dernier stade de la procédure de codécision): http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/investment/venture_capital_fr.htm

([7]) Proposition de règlement de la Commission relatif aux fonds d'entrepreneuriat social européens, de décembre 2011 (actuellement au dernier stade de la procédure de codécision): http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/investment/social_investment_funds_fr.htm

([8]) Sur la base de l'expérience acquise avec les instruments financiers mis en place pour les PME au titre du programme-cadre actuel pour l'innovation et la compétitivité (PIC, 2007-2013), la Commission a proposé en décembre 2011 de mettre en place, pour la période 2014-2020, des instruments financiers au titre d'un nouveau programme pour la compétitivité des entreprises et des PME (COSME) et du programme Horizon 2020: http://ec.europa.eu/cip/cosme et http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020.

Par ailleurs, la Commission mène actuellement une réflexion plus large sur l'environnement des investissements à long terme dans l'UE, notamment en ce qui concerne les PME. Elle examine actuellement un large éventail de mesures potentielles, parmi lesquelles des mesures qui permettraient de mobiliser l'épargne des particuliers pour financer certains projets. De plus, les conclusions de la consultation publique sur la politique industrielle ([9]), qui se déroule actuellement, serviront de base à une communication prévue pour l'automne 2012 qui traitera également des questions concernant l'accès au financement.

([9]) Ouverte jusqu'au 10 août: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007228/12
to the Commission
Robert Rochefort (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Instruments for increasing investment in SMEs

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) form the backbone of the European economy. According to the Commission, between 2002 and 2010 SMEs accounted for 85% of net job creation in the EU. However, SMEs have difficulty accessing the financing they need in the various stages of their development. In order to tackle the current economic crisis and relaunch growth, it is therefore essential to stimulate investment in SMEs.

— To that end, does the Commission not agree that the volume of investment in SMEs must be increased?

Mobilising the savings of European citizens for that purpose could be a vital instrument. As the Commissioner responsible for the internal market and services has pointed out ([1]), this is an area in which we have been less successful than our partners, despite the fact that we have genuine assets: the savings surplus in several Member States.

— Would the Commission agree that it would be appropriate to establish a European savings account for individuals, with a guaranteed rate of interest, to be used to finance loans for SMEs?

— Could it specify what initiatives it intends to take in this direction, if any?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

The Commission agrees that SMEs sometimes face difficulties in obtaining finance. Recent survey data show that access to bank loans has continued to deteriorate and that banks have been reviewing their lending standards ([2]). However, it also appears that the situation is improving; the last survey shows that standards for SME loans in the first quarter of 2012 tightened only marginally. The EU has a range of programmes in place to help SMEs access finance ([3]).

In December 2011, the Commission adopted an action plan on improvements to SMEs' access to finance ([4]). To this end, the Commission intends to improve the regulatory environment for SMEs — for example, the Commission's legislative proposal on new bank capital requirements in July 2011 contained a review clause to assess whether the risk weights for loans to SMEs could be changed on the basis of actual loss data for such loans over a full economic cycle ([5]). This matter is now being discussed by the co-legislators. The Commission has also proposed rules introducing a passport for venture capital ([6]) and social entrepreneurship funds ([7]), increasing the possibilities for SMEs to access non-bank financing. The EU budget ([8]) will also continue to facilitate access to SME finance and reduce related information gaps.

([1]) Speech by Michel Barnier on 16 May 2012 at the awarding of the Charlemagne Prize.

([2]) Survey on the access to finance of SMEs in the euro area (SAFE), prepared by the European Central Bank and the European Commission, April 2012, available at http://www.ecb.int/stats/money/surveys/sme/html/index.en.html and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/data April 2012. This survey showed that, on balance, SMEs reported a worsening in the availability of bank loans (20%, up from 14% in the previous survey round). Moreover, the survey results point to a higher rejection rates when applying for a loan (13%, up from 10%).

([3]) See E-003663/2012, E-007217/2011and E-010328/2011.

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0870:FIN:EN:PDF.

([5]) Article 485 of the Commission proposal for a regulation on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms.

([6]) Commission proposal from December 2011 for a regulation on European venture capital funds (this legislative proposal is currently in the final stage of the co-decision process): http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/investment/venture_capital_en.htm

([7]) Commission proposal from December 2011 for a regulation on European social entrepreneurship funds (this legislative proposal is currently in the final stage of the co-decision process): http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/investment/social_investment_funds_en.htm

([8]) Based on experience with financial instruments for SMEs under the current Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP, 2007-2013), the Commission proposed in December 2011 financial instruments for the period 2014-2020 in a new Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (COSME) and Horizon 2020 programme: http://ec.europa.eu/cip/cosme and http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020.

In addition, the Commission is reflecting more broadly on the EU environment for long-term investment, including from the perspective of SMEs. A wide range of potential measures are being considered. These could include measures that would mobilise citizens' savings for certain projects. Moreover, the ongoing public consultation on the industrial policy ([9]) will provide input for a communication planned for autumn 2012, which will also address issues regarding access to finance.

([9]) Public consultation is open until 10 August: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007231/12
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(18 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni utili ai cittadini che si trasferiscono in un altro Stato membro

Un cittadino italiano residente da quattro anni a Linz, in Austria, è stato fermato ad un posto di blocco per un normale alcool test e controllo dei documenti. Gli è stata elevata una multa per infrazione al codice della strada (guida senza targa), evasione fiscale, recupero di tasse automobilistiche non pagate in Austria per quattro anni e conseguente divieto di circolazione del veicolo in territorio austriaco.

Il cittadino italiano non era a conoscenza delle norme previste in Austria secondo le quali avrebbe dovuto cambiare la targa nell'arco di un mese dalla residenza indipendentemente dal fatto che la vettura fosse intestata a lui o ad altri.

Inoltre, non era la prima volta che veniva controllato, ma mai nessuno gli aveva contestato quanto sopra perché secondo i poliziotti «i colleghi non conoscevano la norma».

Può la Commissione far sapere:

— se sia dovere di ogni Stato membro fornire tempestivamente tutte le informazioni utili ai cittadini che si spostano, seppur temporaneamente, da uno Stato membro a un altro;

— se ci siano Stati membri che rilasciano informazioni ai cittadini nuovi residenti;

— se intende prevedere linee guida per gli Stati membri affinché forniscano ai loro cittadini che si trasferiscono in un altro Stato membro tutte le informazioni relative alle norme applicate nel nuovo Stato di residenza?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2012)

Secondo l'articolo 34 della direttiva 2004/38/CE ([1]) spetta agli Stati membri il compito di diffondere informazioni relative ai diritti e agli obblighi dei cittadini dell'Unione e dei loro familiari che esercitano il diritto di libera circolazione e di libero soggiorno, nel settore disciplinato dalla direttiva. Dalla formulazione di questa disposizione si evince che la portata di tale obbligo è limitata al contenuto della direttiva. La legislazione dell'UE non impone allo Stato membro ospite l'obbligo di trasmettere ai nuovi residenti, al momento del loro arrivo, informazioni generali sulla legislazione nazionale.

Pertanto, se da un lato la Commissione accoglie senza dubbio con favore ogni eventuale iniziativa degli Stati membri volta a trasmettere ai nuovi residenti informazioni utili sulla legislazione nazionale, dall'altro spetta ad ogni singolo cittadino che si trasferisce in un altro Stato membro raccogliere, presso le competenti autorità nazionali, le informazioni pertinenti, quali le norme in materia di immatricolazione dei veicoli e di imposizione fiscale. La Commissione non è quindi in grado di informare l'onorevole parlamentare sulle pratiche adottate dagli Stati membri al riguardo.

La Commissione esorta gli Stati membri a fornire informazioni sui diritti e sugli obblighi dei cittadini e delle imprese, in particolare in caso di trasferimento in un altro Stato membro. Per quanto la riguarda, quest'anno la Commissione intende adottare una comunicazione per fornire informazioni dettagliate sulle norme in materia di tassazione delle autovetture. Inoltre, il portale «La tua Europa» (http://europa.eu/youreurope) offre ai cittadini e alle imprese un'ampia gamma di informazioni relative ai loro diritti in caso di trasferimento all'estero.

([1]) Direttiva 2004/38/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativa al diritto dei cittadini dell'Unione e dei loro familiari di circolare e di soggiornare liberamente nel territorio degli Stati membri (GU L 158 del 30.4.2004, pag. 77).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007231/12
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Information useful to members of the public who move to another Member State

An Italian citizen who had been living in Linz, Austria, for four years was stopped at a roadblock for a standard breathalyser test and document check. He was fined for a traffic offence (driving without a licence plate), tax evasion and the recovery of four years' unpaid Austrian road tax and banned from driving his vehicle within Austria.

The Italian citizen concerned did not know that, under Austrian law, he should have changed his licence plate within one month of taking up residence in the country, irrespective of whether the vehicle was registered in his name or that of another person.

Nor was this the first time he had been stopped and checked, but no one had ever told him this before because, in the words of the police officers, 'our colleagues do not know the law'.

— In the Commission's opinion, should all the Member States furnish members of the public who move from one Member State to another, even if only temporarily, with appropriate information in good time?

— Do some Member States issue this information to newly resident members of the public?

— Does the Commission intend to provide guidelines for Member States so that they furnish their citizens who move to another Member State with all the information they will need on laws in their new country of residence?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2012)

Article 34 of Directive 2004/38/EC ([1]) imposes on Member States the obligation to disseminate information concerning the rights and obligations of Union citizens and their family members exercising their right to free movement and residence on the subjects covered by the directive. It follows from the wording of this provision that the scope of this obligation is limited to the content of the directive. EC law does not provide for an obligation of the host Member State to issue information generally on its national laws to new residents upon their arrival.

Therefore, while the Commission would certainly welcome any initiative of Member States to provide new residents with what they consider as useful information on their legislation, it is incumbent on each individual citizen who takes up residence in another Member State to gather any relevant information, such as rules on car registration and taxation, from the competent national authorities. The Commission is thus not in a position to inform the Honourable Member of the practice of Member States in this respect.

The Commission encourages Member States to provide information on the rights and obligations of citizens and businesses, in particular when moving to another Member State. The Commission itself intends to provide detailed information on EU rules on passenger car taxation in a communication planned for this year. Also the Your Europe portal (http://europa.eu/youreurope) offers a wide range of information for citizens and businesses regarding their rights when moving abroad.

([1]) Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-007232/12
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2012 m. liepos 18 d.)

Tema: Dėl mirusių asmenų informacijos reglamentavimo internete

Kol kas Europos Sąjungoje nėra vieningos nuomonės dėl to, kaip turėtų būti tvarkomi profiliai, paskyros, elektroninio pašto dėžutės ir kita internete paskelbta informacija mirus jos savininkui. Dauguma specialistų sutinka, kad turi būti sukurtos taisyklės, skirtos šiai sričiai reguliuoti, ir visi vartotojai, skelbiantys turinį internete, turėtų būti įpareigoti vienodai atsižvelgti į tokius profilius, kad jokios automatinės sistemos nesiūlytų „susidraugauti“ su žmonėmis, kurių nebėra tarp gyvųjų, o jų artimiesiems nereikėtų teisybės ieškoti teismuose, kaip nutinka kai kuriais atvejais. Klausimas, kas po mirties nutinka su asmens ar jo artimųjų tapatybe internete, tampa aktualus. Statistika rodo, kad kas minutę pasaulyje miršta vidutiniškai trys socialinio tinklo „Facebook“ vartotojai.

1. Ar Komisija domisi šia problema?

2. Ar ketinama imtis iniciatyvos ir pasiūlyti mirusių asmenų informacijos internete reglamentavimo sistemą?

V. Reding atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. rugsėjo 14 d.)

Mirusių asmenų asmens duomenys iš esmės nėra minimi ES asmens duomenų apsaugos taisyklėse (galiojančiose ar siūlomose), kuriose apibrėžiama, kad asmens duomenys yra susiję su fiziniais asmenimis ([1]), kurie, remiantis apibrėžtimi, yra gyvi asmenys. Tačiau valstybės narės gali išplėsti nacionalinės teisės aktuose nustatytą apibrėžtį, į ją įtraukdamos mirusių asmenų duomenis. Pavyzdžiui, tai jau padarė Estija, tokia nuostata įtvirtinta ir kai kuriuose Portugalijos bei Liuksemburgo įstatymuose.

Prieiga prie informacijos, susijusios su mirusio giminaičio turtu, įskaitant elektronines sąskaitas, reglamentuojama nacionaliniais įstatymais dėl paveldėjimo ir testamentų. ES nėra priėmusi jokio teisės akto, kuriuo būtų reglamentuojamas būtent šis aspektas.

([1]) Žr. 1995 m. spalio 24 d. Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos direktyvos 95/46/EB dėl asmenų apsaugos tvarkant asmens duomenis ir dėl laisvo tokių duomenų judėjimo 2 straipsnio a punktą, OL L 281, 1995 11 23, p. 31-50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007232/12
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Regulations for computerised data on people who have died

There are currently differing views in the European Union about what to do with an individual's profiles, accounts, electronic mailboxes and other online data after his or her death. Most experts are agreed that this is an area that ought to be regulated and that all content holders ought to be required to handle such profiles in the same way so that no automated systems can ask persons who are deceased to become 'friends' and so that families are not required to take such matters to the courts, as some have had to do. The question of what happens to our digital identities, or those of our friends, after death is not yet resolved, and statistics indicate that, globally, three people who are Facebook users die every minute.

1. Is the Commission considering this specific problem?

2. Does it intend to take the initiative and suggest a system of rules for dealing with digital data on people who have died?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 September 2012)

Personal data of the deceased is in principle not covered by EU rules on personal data protection (existing or being proposed), which define personal data as belonging to 'natural persons' ([1]), who are by definition alive. However, nothing currently prevents Member States from extending the definition under their national rules to include data of the deceased. This is for example the case in Estonia, and some laws in Portugal and Luxembourg.

Access to information on deceased relatives' assets, including accounts online, is regulated by national laws on successions and wills. There is no EC law on this specific aspect.

([1]) See Article 2(a) of Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data; OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007234/12
à Comissão
Regina Bastos (PPE) e Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(18 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Não cumprimento pela Apple da legislação europeia no que se refere aos prazos de garantia dos seus produtos

Não obstante a resposta dada pela Comissão Europeia, em 16 de maio de 2012, à pergunta sobre a violação dos direitos dos consumidores europeus por parte da Apple, verificámos, infelizmente, que a empresa continua a prestar aos consumidores europeus informação que viola a legislação europeia, nomeadamente a Diretiva 1999/44/CE, de 25 de maio de 1999, relativa a certos aspetos da venda de bens de consumo e das garantias a ela relativas, induzindo os consumidores em erro no tocante aos prazos de garantia dos seus produtos e acarretando, desse modo, prejuízos económicos, dado que os consumidores são obrigados a pagar por uma garantia a que têm direito gratuitamente.

Dois exemplos ilustram esta realidade:

Recentemente, um consumidor na Bélgica dirigiu-se à CAMI S.A, Chausée de Charleroi, onde adquiriu um IPAD3, tendo sido informado de que o prazo de garantia era de 1 ano e que, caso pretendesse uma garantia de 2 anos, teria de subscrever o «Apple Care, Protection Plan» e pagar 79 euros, o que é contrário ao disposto na Diretiva 1999/44/CE, que impõe o mínimo de 2 anos de garantia gratuita.

Em Itália, após a multa de 900 mil euros aplicada pelas autoridades italianas em dezembro de 2011, a empresa continua a não cumprir a legislação europeia que exige 2 anos de garantia, ameaçando as autoridades italianas aplicar mais uma multa de 300 mil euros e proceder ao encerramento temporário de todas as operações da empresa em Itália, durante 30 dias. Tal como em Itália, também noutros países da União Europeia a Apple induz que os seus produtos gozam de uma garantia de apenas um ano, quando a lei exige um mínimo de dois anos, ou seja, a informação fornecida pela Apple sobre o esquema de garantia extra induz os consumidores a adquirirem o serviço, sem deixar claro que a empresa é obrigada a oferecer garantia gratuita por dois anos.

Sem prejuízo das competências dos Estados-Membros no que se refere à aplicação e ao controlo da legislação da União Europeia, a Comissão Europeia desempenha o papel de «Guardiã dos Tratados» e, no exercício das suas competências, a Comissão Europeia pode e deve impor sanções aos cidadãos e às empresas por violação do Direito da União.

Pelo exposto, solicitamos à Comissão os seguintes esclarecimentos:

— Perante as práticas reiteradas da Apple em não cumprir o estipulado na Diretiva 1999/44/CE, pretende, finalmente, a Comissão, no âmbito das suas competências, desencadear um processo de investigação, ao nível europeu, às práticas da Apple no que se refere às garantias oferecidas aos seus produtos?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007365/12
à Comissão
Regina Bastos (PPE) e Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(23 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Correto funcionamento do Mercado Interno

A legislação europeia, através da Diretiva 2005/29/CE relativa às práticas comerciais desleais das empresas face aos consumidores no mercado interno, protege diretamente os interesses económicos dos consumidores das práticas comerciais desleais das empresas face aos consumidores. Consequentemente, protege também, indiretamente, os interesses legítimos das empresas face aos concorrentes que não respeitam as regras da presente diretiva, e garante assim a concorrência leal no domínio por ela coordenado. Pretende-se deste modo contribuir para o funcionamento correto do mercado interno e alcançar elevado nível de defesa dos consumidores europeus. Em dezembro de 2011, a autoridade da Concorrência e Mercado, de Itália, condenou a Apple ao pagamento de uma multa de 900 mil euros em consequência do incumprimento da aplicação da garantia legal de dois anos a cargo do vendedor.

Mais recentemente, em Espanha, a Organización de Consumidores e Usuarios (OCU) apresentou queixa contra a Apple junto da Direção Geral de Consumo da Comunidade de Madrid por violação dos direitos dos consumidores, visto oferecer apenas uma garantia de um ano, quando, na verdade, a lei impõe uma garantia de dois anos. A OCU e o resto das organizações congéneres europeias, designadamente as de Itália, Bélgica, Portugal, Luxemburgo, Alemanha, Holanda, Polónia, Eslovénia, Dinamarca e Grécia, membros da Organização Europeia de Consumidores (BEUC), denunciaram que existe uma intencional e clara política comercial da Apple e dos seus vendedores, ao informarem que os respetivos produtos só têm garantia de 1 ano e que qualquer extensão de garantia deverá ser adquirida separadamente.

Com esta prática a Apple oferece um esquema de garantia gratuita por um ano, que pode ser ampliado para dois anos mediante o pagamento de uma taxa, (na Bélgica 79 euros), o que viola a legislação europeia. Assim, omite ao consumidor que o mesmo beneficia de uma garantia gratuita de 2 anos, distorcendo deste modo o comportamento económico dos consumidores, uma vez que tal prática comercial induz em erro os consumidores que acabam por adotar uma decisão errada.

Sem prejuízo das competências dos Estados-Membros no que se refere à aplicação e controlo da Legislação da União Europeia, a Comissão desempenha o papel de «Guardiã dos Tratados» e, no exercício das suas competências, a Comissão, pode e deve, impor sanções aos cidadãos e às empresas por violação do Direito da União.

Tendo em conta que a Diretiva 2005/29/CE visa contribuir para o funcionamento correto do Mercado Interno, solicitamos ao Senhor Comissário responsável pelo Mercado Interno, Michel Barnier, os seguintes esclarecimentos:

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento destas práticas comerciais desleais praticadas pela Apple?

2. Pretende a Comissão desencadear um processo de averiguação relativo às práticas comercias da Apple na Europa?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007372/12
à Comissão
Regina Bastos (PPE) e Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(23 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Respeito pela concorrência

A legislação europeia, através da Diretiva 2005/29/CE relativa às práticas comerciais desleais das empresas face aos consumidores no mercado interno, protege diretamente os interesses económicos dos consumidores das práticas comerciais desleais das empresas face aos consumidores. Consequentemente, protege também, indiretamente, os interesses legítimos das empresas face aos concorrentes que não respeitam as regras da presente diretiva, e garante assim a concorrência leal no domínio por ela coordenado. Pretende-se deste modo contribuir para o funcionamento correto do mercado interno e alcançar elevado nível de defesa dos consumidores europeus.

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Sem prejuízo das competências dos Estados-Membros no que se refere à aplicação e controlo da Legislação da União Europeia, a Comissão desempenha o papel de «Guardiã dos Tratados» e, no exercício das suas competências, a Comissão pode e deve impor sanções aos cidadãos e às empresas por violação do Direito da União.

Tendo em conta que a Diretiva 2005/29/CE visa também proteger, ainda que indiretamente, os interesses legítimos das empresas face aos concorrentes que não respeitam as regras nela estabelecidas, solicitamos ao Senhor Comissário responsável pela concorrência, Joaquín Almunia, os seguintes esclarecimentos:

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento destas práticas comerciais desleais praticadas pela Apple?

2. Pretende a Comissão desencadear um processo de averiguação relativo às práticas comerciais da Apple na Europa?

Resposta conjunta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(2 de outubro de 2012)

A Comissão tem conhecimento dos procedimentos e alegações contra a Apple e gostaria de remeter os Senhores Deputados para a sua resposta à pergunta E-003171/2012 ([1]).

Se uma empresa, apesar das sanções aplicadas nos Estados-Membros, continua a promover políticas comerciais que violam a legislação em matéria de defesa do consumidor, as associações de consumidores e os cidadãos devem continuar a dar conhecimento de tais práticas às autoridades nacionais, as principais autoridades competentes em matéria de aplicação da Diretiva 2005/29/CE relativa às práticas comerciais desleais ([2]) e da Diretiva 1999/44/CE sobre a venda de bens de consumo e garantias ([3]).

Conforme explicado na sua resposta à pergunta E-003171/2012, a Comissão apoia as iniciativas dos organismos nacionais responsáveis de várias formas. Neste contexto, a Comissão discutiu este caso em 22 de maio de 2012 com a rede de cooperação no domínio da defesa do consumidor e teve uma troca de correspondência com a Apple sobre as medidas que a empresa tenciona adotar para harmonizar as suas políticas com a legislação da UE. A Apple reconheceu as observações da Comissão e explicou que, embora os consumidores já estejam informados dos direitos jurídicos da UE no que respeita aos prazos de garantia, as informações continuam a ser apresentadas de forma enganosa. A Apple prometeu rever as informações constantes da página em causa.

O Vice-Presidente e Membro da Comissão responsável pela Justiça, Direitos Fundamentais e Cidadania escreveu aos 27 ministros competentes nesta área chamando a sua atenção para este caso e para que garantam a aplicação efetiva da legislação da UE em matéria de defesa do consumidor.

([1]) (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html).
([2]) Diretiva 2005/29/CE relativa às práticas comerciais desleais, JO L 149 de 11.6.2005.
([3]) Diretiva 1999/44/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de maio de 1999, relativa a certos aspetos da venda de bens de consumo e das garantias a ela relativas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007234/12
to the Commission
Regina Bastos (PPE) and Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Apple's failure to comply with European legislation as regards warranty periods for its products

In spite of the answer given by the Commission on 16 May 2012 to the question on Apple's violation of European consumers' rights, the company is, regrettably, continuing to provide European consumers with information contrary to European legislation, in particular Directive 1999/44/EC of 25 May 1999 on certain aspects of the sale of consumer goods and associated guarantees, and to mislead them about the warranty periods for its products, thus causing them to incur economic losses, given that they are being made to pay for a guarantee to which they are entitled free of charge.

This situation can be illustrated by two examples:

When, not long ago, a consumer in Belgium bought an iPad 3 from CAMI S.A., Chaussée de Charleroi, he was told that the warranty period was one year and that if he wished to be covered for two years, he would have to pay EUR 79 for the 'Apple Care Protection Plan'. This is contrary to Directive 1999/44/EC, which requires guarantees free of charge to run for at least two years.

In Italy, Apple, having been fined EUR 900 000 by the authorities in December 2011, is still failing to comply with European legislation, which lays down a two-year warranty period. The Italian authorities are threatening to impose a further fine of EUR 300 000 and temporarily close down all Apple operations in Italy for 30 days. Apple gives to understand in other Member States, as well as in Italy, that its products are guaranteed for just one year, whereas the law requires at least two years; in other words, the information which Apple provides about the terms of its warranty leads consumers to purchase the corresponding service, instead of making it clear that the company has to offer a guarantee at no charge for two years.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Member States to enforce and oversee EU legislation, the Commission acts as 'guardian of the Treaties' and in that capacity can and must impose penalties on citizens and companies for breaking the law.

— Given Apple's repeated failure to comply with Directive 1999/44/EC, will the Commission finally exercise its responsibilities by opening a Europe-wide investigation into Apple's practices regarding the guarantees applying to its products?

Question for written answer E-007365/12
to the Commission
Regina Bastos (PPE) and Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(23 July 2012)

Subject: Proper functioning of the internal market

European legislation, in the shape of Directive 2005/29/EC concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, directly protects the economic interests of consumers against unfair commercial practices of businesses. It follows that it also protects, indirectly, the legitimate interests of businesses against rivals which fail to observe the rules of the directive, thus making for fair competition in the area that it coordinates. The object is to help the internal market to function properly and ensure that European consumers are protected to a high degree. In December 2011 the Italian competition and market authority fined Apple EUR 900 000 for failing to apply the statutory two-year warranty to be offered by the seller.

More recently, in Spain, the Organisation of Consumers and Users (OCU) has lodged a complaint against apple with the Madrid Community Consumer Affairs Office; Apple is accused of infringing consumers' rights by offering a warranty lasting only one year, whereas the law requires a two-year warranty. The OCU and its European sister organisations in the European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC), specifically those in Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Luxembourg, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Denmark, and Greece, maintain that Apple and its retailers are following a clear and deliberate commercial policy in which they give to understand that products are guaranteed for just one year and any extension in the warranty has to be purchased separately.

Apple's practice is to offer a free one-year warranty that can be extended to two years on payment of a charge (EUR 79 in Belgium): this is contrary to European legislation. Apple does not tell consumers that they are covered, free of charge, by a two-year warranty and to that extent alters their economic behaviour, since its commercial practice misleads them into taking a wrong decision.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Member States to enforce and oversee EU legislation, the Commission acts as 'guardian of the Treaties' and in that capacity can and must impose penalties on citizens and companies for breaking the law.

Bearing in mind that directive 2005/29/EC is intended to help the internal market to function properly, we call on the internal market Commissioner, Michel Barnier, to answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the unfair commercial practices to which Apple is resorting?

2. Will it open an investigation into Apple's commercial practices in Europe?

Question for written answer E-007372/12
to the Commission
Regina Bastos (PPE) and Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(23 July 2012)

Subject: Respect for competition

European legislation, in the shape of Directive 2005/29/EC concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, directly protects the economic interests of consumers against unfair commercial practices of businesses. It follows that it also protects, indirectly, the legitimate interests of businesses against rivals which fail to observe the rules of the directive, thus making for fair competition in the area that it coordinates. The object is to help the internal market to function properly and ensure that European consumers are protected to a high degree.

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Apple's practice is to offer a free one-year warranty that can be extended to two years on payment of a charge (EUR 79 in Belgium): this is contrary to European legislation. Apple does not tell consumers that they are covered, free of charge, by a two-year warranty and to that extent alters their economic behaviour, since its commercial practice misleads them into taking a wrong decision.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Member States to enforce and oversee EU legislation, the Commission acts as 'guardian of the Treaties' and in that capacity can and must impose penalties on citizens and companies for breaking the law.

Bearing in mind that directive 2005/29/EC is also intended to protect, albeit indirectly, the legitimate interests of businesses against rivals which fail to observe its rules, we call on the Competition Commissioner, Joaquín Almunia, to answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the unfair commercial practices to which Apple is resorting?

2. Will it open an investigation into Apple's commercial practices in Europe?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 October 2012)

The Commission is aware of the proceedings and the allegations against Apple and would like to refer the Honourable Members to its response to Question E-003171/2012 ([1]).

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

If a company, despite the ongoing enforcement actions which are being carried out in the Member States, continues to promote business policies which contravene consumer legislation, consumer associtations and citizens should keep reporting such practices to national authorities, which are primarily competent for the enforcement of Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([2]) and Directive 1999/44/EC on Consumer Sales and Guarantees ([3]).

As explained in its response to Question E-003171/2012, the Commission supports the enforcement action of national bodies in various ways. In this context, the Commission has discussed this case on 22 May 2012 with the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network and it has exchanged correspondence with Apple concerning the measures that the company intended to undertake to bring its policies in compliance with EU legislation. Apple acknowledged the Commission's comments and explained that, even though consumers are now informed of EU legal rights regarding the time frame for warranties, information is still presented in a misleading way. A revision of the information on this page was promised.

The Vice-President and Member of the Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship wrote to the 27 Ministers responsible to bring this case to their attention to ensure effective enforcement of EU consumer law.

([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.

([3]) Directive 1999/44/EC Consumer Sales and Guarantees of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 on certain aspects of the sale of consumer goods and associated guarantees.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007235/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(18 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Cuotas de pesca de anchoa para la próxima campaña

La Comisión Europea acaba de presentar la propuesta de posibilidades de captura de anchoa en el golfo de Vizcaya para la próxima temporada de pesca. De acuerdo con la información conocida al respecto, la Comisión va a plantear una reducción del 30 % en la cuota de pesca frente a la autorizada en la campaña anterior. En concreto, la flota podrá capturar hasta 20 700 toneladas.

A la vista de los problemas surgidos durante la tramitación del plan de gestión a largo plazo de esta pesquería que tienen su origen en la resistencia de algunos Estados miembros a aceptar las nuevas competencias parlamentarias en la materia, nos encontramos de nuevo con que la falta de transparencia caracteriza la puesta en marcha del proceso que conducirá a la aprobación definitiva de la cuota de pesca para la próxima campaña.

Por lo tanto, queremos formular las siguientes preguntas a la Comisión:

1. ¿Cuáles han sido los análisis científicos sobre la biomasa de la especie ponderados por la Comisión para hacer su propuesta?

2. ¿Se han aplicado para prepararla los principios y las fórmulas de cálculo aprobados por el Parlamento Europeo y que siguen bloqueados por culpa de la actitud obstruccionista del Consejo Europeo?

3. ¿Qué grado de conocimiento tienen el sector y el consejo regulador correspondientes del proceso que ha conducido a la aprobación de esta propuesta de la Comisión?

4. ¿Cuándo se espera que la nueva propuesta sea definitivamente aprobada por el Consejo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de septiembre de 2012)

La propuesta de la Comisión relativa a las posibilidades de captura de anchoa en el golfo de Vizcaya para la temporada de pesca 2012/13 ([1]) se basa en el dictamen del Consejo Internacional para la Exploración del Mar (CIEM) ([2]). Para calcular la biomasa de la anchoa en 2012 se han aplicado dos métodos diferentes a los datos recogidos en primavera: a) el método de producción diaria de huevos (MPDH), y b) el método de campaña acústica «Pelgas».

El total admisible de capturas para la temporada pesquera 2012/13 se ha calculado aplicando el método establecido en la propuesta de la Comisión que establece un plan a largo plazo para la población de anchoa del Golfo de Vizcaya y las pesquerías de esta población ([3]), sobre la que el Parlamento Europeo ya adoptó su posición en primera lectura.

En julio de 2012, los servicios de la Comisión consultaron de manera informal a los representantes españoles y franceses del sector y a sus administraciones respectivas con el fin de solicitar su opinión sobre la propuesta en curso.

La propuesta fue adoptada por el Consejo el 27 de julio de 2012.

([1]) COM(2012) 402 final.
([2]) Dictamen del CIEM 2012, libro 7.
([3]) COM(2009) 399 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007235/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Fishing quota for anchovy for the next fishing season

The Commission has recently put forward a proposal on establishing fishing opportunities for anchovy in the Bay of Biscay for the 2012/2013 season. According to available information, it plans to reduce the fishing quota by 30% in relation to the 2011/2012 season. Specifically, this would set the total allowable catch for anchovy at 20 700 tons.

The reluctance of some Member States to accept Parliament's new powers in this field led to problems during the drafting of the long-term management plan for the anchovy fishery. As a result, the process leading to the definitive approval of the fishing quota for the next season has again been characterised by a lack of transparency.

1. What scientific analyses of anchovy biomass did the Commission use in order to inform its proposal?

2. When drafting it, did the Commission apply the principles and calculation formulas that have been approved by Parliament but whose introduction are being held up because of the obstructionist approach taken by the Council?

3. To what extent are the sector and regulatory authority in question aware of the process which led to the Commission adopting this proposal?

4. When is the new proposal expected to be definitively approved by the Council?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(26 September 2012)

The Commission's proposal ([1]) for the fishing opportunities for anchovy in the Bay of Biscay for the 2012/13 fishing season is based on the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice ([2]). Two spring surveys were used to calculate the anchovy biomass in 2012: (i) the daily egg production method (DEPM) and (ii) acoustics (PELGAS).

The total allowable catch for the fishing season 2012/13 has been calculated by using the calculation method set out in the Commission's proposal ([3]) establishing a long-term plan for anchovy in the Bay of Biscay and the fisheries exploiting that stock, on which indeed the European Parliament has already adopted its position at first reading.

In July 2012 the Commission services consulted informally Spanish and French representatives from the sector as well as the respective national administrations in order to ask their opinion on the expected proposal.

The proposal was adopted by the Council on 27 July 2012.

([1]) COM(2012) 402 final.
([2]) ICES Advice 2012, Book 7.
([3]) COM(2009) 399 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007236/12
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(18 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Restricciones a la libre circulación y movilidad

El Boletín Oficial del Estado de 14 de julio publica un Decreto Ley que contiene medidas para garantizar la estabilidad presupuestaria y el fomento de la competitividad. En la exposición de motivos se indica que las medidas dan cumplimiento en buena parte a las Recomendaciones Específicas formuladas por en Consejo Europeo a España.

Entre las diversas medidas adoptadas, el texto aprobado por el Gobierno de España contiene en su artículo 21 una modificación del Real Decreto 1396/2006 que regula el programa de renta activa de inserción para desempleados con especiales necesidades económicas y dificultad para encontrar empleo. Uno de los requisitos para el acceso a esta prestación es la «inscripción como demandante de empleo» y el nuevo precepto establece que «la salida al extranjero, por cualquier motivo o duración, interrumpe la inscripción como demandante de empleo a estos efectos».

La exposición de motivos no establece ninguna referencia ni justifica esta norma. Esta medida supondrá *de facto* que los trabajadores en paro elegibles, por el sólo hecho de salir de España, sea para buscar trabajo, para recibir atención médica, por razones familiares o por cualquier otro motivo, dejarán de computar como demandantes de empleo con el requisito de que la nueva demanda «exigirá un período de 12 meses interrumpido desde la nueva inscripción».

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que esta medida es acorde con las Recomendaciones Específicas para España aprobadas en el ámbito del Semestre Europeo?

2. ¿Considera que es compatible con el derecho comunitario y en particular con la libertad fundamental de circulación y movimiento en el ámbito de la Unión Europea?

3. ¿Comparte el criterio de que el ejercicio de las libertades comunitarias pueda comportar la pérdida de ventajas sociales y un trato discriminatorio con relación a otros demandantes de empleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de septiembre de 2012)

Las recomendaciones específicas ([1]) formuladas a España abogan por una mejor orientación de las políticas activas del mercado de trabajo y una intensificación de los vínculos entre las medidas activas y pasivas del mercado de trabajo. Como tal, la disposición no va en contra de las recomendaciones, ya que prevé que, para seguir estando registrado en el paro y poder optar a una «renta activa de inserción» (subsidio de integración en el mercado de trabajo), los desempleados deben buscar activamente empleo (sin rechazar las ofertas de trabajo o de participación en acciones de formación sin justificación adecuada) y estar registrados ininterrumpidamente como desempleados durante como mínimo doce meses.

Sin embargo, a la luz de la legislación de la UE, se pedirá al Gobierno español que facilite aclaraciones a la Comisión. A menos que estén objetivamente justificadas y sean proporcionales al objetivo que se persigue, las nuevas normas sobre el registro de los demandantes de empleo y la obligación de permanecer en territorio español durante un período de 12 meses para poder optar a prestaciones sociales parecen infringir la legislación de la UE sobre la libre circulación de los trabajadores (artículo 45 del TFUE y Reglamento 492/2011), ya que pueden penalizar a los demandantes de empleo de otros Estados miembros, así como a los solicitantes de empleo residentes en España que deseen buscar trabajo en otro Estado miembro o desplazarse a él por otras razones.

Además, la disposición puede obstaculizar la asignación óptima de la mano de obra en el mercado de trabajo europeo. Puede conducir a que los interesados opten por no desplazarse y descarten encontrar un empleo en otro país, perdiendo la oportunidad de paliar carencias específicas de mano de obra y/o desajustes fuera del país de residencia y no aprovechando, por lo tanto, las posibles alternativas al mantenimiento del desempleo de larga duración en España.

Remitimos también a Su Señoría a la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta E-7184/12 ([2]).

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/es/12/st11/st11273.es12.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007236/12
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Restrictions to free movement and mobility

The Spanish Official Journal (*Boletín Oficial del Estado*) of 14 July published a Decree-Law providing for measures to ensure budgetary stability and improve competitiveness. The explanatory statement stipulated that these measures implemented a large part of the European Council's country-specific recommendations for Spain.

One of the various measures included in the decree was an amendment, in Article 21, to Royal Decree 1396/2006 governing the programme of active income on entering the job market for unemployed persons with special economic needs and difficulties finding work. A prerequisite for beneficiaries of this programme is to be 'registered as a jobseeker' and a new provision states that 'jobseekers going abroad for any reason or for any length of time shall cease to be registered for these purposes'.

The explanatory statement includes no reference to or justification for this rule, which lays down the *de facto* condition that, to remain eligible, jobseekers may not leave Spain, whether to look for work, receive medical treatment, for family reasons or on any other grounds. Jobseekers excluded in this manner are required to remain in Spain 'for a period of 12 months without interruption from the new application for registration'.

1. Does the Commission consider this measure to be in accordance with the country-specific recommendations for Spain approved as part of the European Semester?

2. Does the Commission consider it to be compatible with EC law and, in particular, with the fundamental right to freedom of movement within the European Union?

3. What view does the Commission take of this situation, whereby the exercise of Community freedoms is liable to lead to the loss of social benefits and discriminatory treatment in relation to other jobseekers?

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

The country specific recommendations ([1]) addressed to Spain advocate increased targeting of active labour market policies and stronger links between active and passive labour market measures. As such the provision does not go against the recommendations, as it foresees that — in order to remain registered as unemployed and being eligible to 'renta activa de inserción' (integration in the labour market subsidy) — the unemployed must actively seek employment (without rejecting job offers with no appropriate justification or training) and be registered uninterruptedly as unemployed for at least 12 months.

However, in light of EC law, the Spanish Government will be requested to provide the Commission with clarifications. Unless objectively justified and proportionate to the aim pursued, the new rules on registration of jobseekers and the obligation to remain in the Spanish territory for a period of 12 months in order to be eligible to social benefits seem to contravene EC law on free movement of workers (Article 45 TFEU and Regulation 492/2011), as they risk penalising jobseekers from other Member States, as well as jobseekers in Spain who would wish to look for a job in other Member State or move for other reasons.

Moreover, the provision may hamper the optimal allocation of the work force on the European labour market. It may result in people not opting for moving and trying to find a job in another country, foregoing the opportunity to alleviate specific labour shortages and/or mismatches outside the country of residence and thereby not taking up alternatives to continued long-term unemployment in Spain.

The Honourable Member is invited to refer also to the Commission's reply to Question E-7184/12 ([2]).

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11273.en12.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007237/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Commissioner Barnier and the French fishing lobby

The *Sunday Times* newspaper has reported that on 13 July 2012 Commissioner Barnier's intervention 'blocked' proposals from DG MARE to phase out deep-sea bottom-trawling and bottom-set gill-net fishing in European waters, activities that do great damage to the sea bed and threaten the future of fish stocks.

Will the Commission provide details of all the communication that has taken place between Commissioner Barnier and representatives of the French Government or the French fishing industry, and of representations made by Commissioner Barnier, in meetings or by telephone, post or e-mail, in the month preceding his intervention?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 October 2012)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to a reply to Written Question P-001530/07 on a similar issue ([1]), and would like to clarify that in line with the Treaties, in particular Article 11 TUE, contacts with outside parties are in the general interest of the Union. The Commission and its Members may receive (and even request) information from stakeholders regarding the possible impact of a Commission policy proposal in a Member State and/or the economic or social sector concerned. The information received can often enlighten the Commission in its decision making, but may under no circumstance prejudge either the position of the Commissioner concerned or the future decision of the College.

The Commission acts as a College when taking decisions. The proposal referred to by the Honourable Member, adopted on 20 July, aims to amend the specific access regime in force for deep-sea fisheries in the North-East Atlantic ([2]). It lays down a series of measures to ensure that such fisheries are effectively sustainable and includes the phasing out of the authorisation to use bottom trawls and bottom gillnets to target deep sea species ([3]).

The Commission is not in a position to treat the request for information because of its very large scope.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002.
([3]) MEMO/12/586.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007238/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Cost of implementing Priority Substances Directive

1. Is the Commission aware that Thames Water, on behalf of UK Water, has estimated that the cost of constructing the additional sewage treatment infrastructure necessary to comply with the limits set out in the Commission's proposals will be EUR 27 billion, from which can be extrapolated a cost across the EU of hundreds of billions of euros? Does the Commission challenge these estimates, and, if so, what calculations has it made of the estimated cost in 'worst-case' and 'best-case' scenarios?

2. The Commission is proposing treatment for E2 (a naturally occurring steroidal oestrogen produced by humans and animals), which it suggests — using UK data — will cost about EUR 18 per head of population in a 'worst-case scenario', or more than EUR 1 billion in total. In order to reduce such expenditure it will be necessary to prevent the substance from entering wastewater. Given that E2 is a naturally occurring substance within urine, will the Commission explain what measures can be taken by Member States to prevent it entering the waste stream?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

1. The Commission's proposal was accompanied by an impact assessment which considered the possible costs of 'end-of-pipe' measures to reduce the concentrations of certain substances in waste water. The assessment was based partly on a study from UKWIR which may be the same as that referred to by the Honourable Member. That study estimated a cost of about EUR 26.5 billion for capital expenditure to meet a standard for alpha-ethinylestradiol (EE2) significantly stricter than the standard finally proposed (0.016 cf 0.035 ng/l). The less strict standard would require fewer treatment plants to be upgraded. The Commission considers that the costs, assuming no source-control measures, would be in the range referred to for E2, and that source control measures could be applied to reduce them. It should be noted that the estimates are 20-year lifetime costs and that the directive would not require the standards for these substances to be met until at least 2021.

2. In its impact assessment report, the Commission has indicated that approximately half of E2 emissions to water come from livestock, and that fencing could help to keep livestock away from watercourses and thus reduce the 'end-of-pipe' costs. This measure is likely to be applied anyway under other legislation (e.g. Nitrates Directive or implementation of Rural development Programmes). Research and development activities promise to lead to cheaper waste water treatment technologies in the coming years.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007244/12
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Review of the cinema communication and state aid criteria

A draft review of the communication on certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audiovisual works (in particular concerning the criteria and framework for how state aid is assessed and awarded), which went out to public consultation, contains proposals that are causing concern about the future competitiveness and economic strength of the European film production sector.

In the draft communication the Commission asserts that there is a 'subsidy race' between Member States with regard to state aid for film productions. The leading film bodies and the governments of the large majority of Member States do not believe that such a subsidy race exists and have made repeated requests to the Commission to produce evidence backing up its claim, but no such evidence has been forthcoming. There are fears the proposals to address the alleged issue would significantly damage the European film industry and European film culture.

Does the Commission have any robust evidence that proves the existence of a subsidy race between Member States, and if so, will it now share that evidence?

Can the Commission provide more clarity on the proposals and the effect they may have on the ability of Member States to offer incentives to the film industry? Does it not fear that their implementation as currently proposed would seriously damage valuable inward investment from outside the EEA and quickly lead to the decline of an industry that is currently growing, resulting in the loss of jobs and skills and a reduction in the production of films that reflect European culture?

What hard evidence does the Commission have that territorial obligations currently have a negative impact on film in Europe, and how will its proposals remedy the situation?

Has the Commission conducted an assessment of the economic impact of the draft new state aid criteria for film productions? If so, will it now share its results with Parliament in response to this question, and if not, why not? Has any assessment proven that the draft new rules will not lead to a loss of economic output in the film industry in the short or medium term, as is feared by the industry, and if not, how does the Commission justify such proposals to change the regulations, when they will lead to a loss of economic output and employment?

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

In the draft Communication on state aid to audiovisual production, the Commission suggested that, in view of its experience in assessing state aid to film production, there may be a so-called subsidy race between Member States to attract foreign film productions to their territory via subsidies.

The Commission is currently assessing the comments it received from Member States and all other stakeholders and interested parties following the public consultation in March 2012. These comments address the extent of the phenomenon, as well as the possible effects of aid schemes which are designed to attract foreign productions. The assessment is still ongoing.

The Commission has not proposed to abolish the link between the aid and the area of the Member State. However, as regards territorial spending conditions linked to state aid, any limitation which restricts the freedom of aid beneficiaries to obtain goods or services from anywhere in the internal market is by its nature also a limitation of the fundamental freedoms under the Treaty. Such limitations may be justified only under certain conditions and it is up to Member States to provide evidence to establish their necessity and proportionality.

The Commission is currently discussing its proposal with Member States and the audiovisual sector, providing explanations and clarifications, and is considering the arguments put forward to properly assess the impact of future rules on the sector. This review is still ongoing.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007245/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Glühlampenverordnung

Mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 244/2009 der Kommission vom 18. März 2009 zur Durchführung der Richtlinie 2005/32/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates im Hinblick auf die Festlegung von Anforderungen an die umweltgerechte Gestaltung von Haushaltslampen mit ungebündeltem Licht wurden Mindestanforderungen in Bezug auf die Energieeffizienz und die Qualität verschiedener in Haushalten verwendeter Leuchtmittel festgelegt. Durch diese Verordnung kam es zu einem Verbot der vielleicht ineffizienten, aber doch ungefährlichen Glühlampe. Experten warnen davor, dass die auch als Kompaktleuchtstofflampen geläufigen Lichtspender selbst im sachgemäß erfolgenden Normalbetrieb äußerst gefährliche Stoffe wie z. B. Quecksilber, Phenol und andere an die Umgebung abgeben. Daraus ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Auf welche Studien stützt sich die oben genannte Verordnung für Haushaltslampen?

2. Wie steht die Kommission zu der drohenden Gesundheitsgefährdung durch Energiesparlampen, vor der Experten warnen?

3. Welche Möglichkeiten sieht die Kommission, das akute Umweltproblem, das durch nicht ordnungsgemäße Entsorgung entsteht, in den Griff zu bekommen, da ca. 4/5 aller Energiesparlampen auf herkömmlichen Mülldeponien landen, wodurch es sehr wahrscheinlich ist, dass eine bedeutende Menge toxischen Quecksilbers freigesetzt wird?

4. Was hält die Kommission von einem Produkt, das es ermöglichen würde, T5-Leuchtstofflampen in bestehende T8-Leuchtstoffröhren einzusetzen? Wäre das nicht eine gesündere Alternative zu den gefährlichen quecksilberhaltigen T8-Leuchtstoffröhren, von denen es in der EU noch ca. 800 Millionen gibt?

5. Viele Menschen in der EU sind der Meinung, dass die sogenannte „Glühlampenverordnung“ — siehe oben — eine Entmündigung des freien europäischen Bürgers ist. Welche Meinung vertritt die Kommission?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(10. September 2012)

1. Die Kommission verweist auf eine frühere Antwort zu diesem Thema ([1]).

2. Der unabhängige Wissenschaftliche Ausschuss „Gesundheits- und Umweltrisiken“ (Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks — SCHER ([2])) hat die Kommission zweimal bezüglich des Risikos des in Kompaktleuchtstofflampen (CFL) enthaltenen Quecksilbers beraten. Im Hinblick auf die erste Stellungnahme des Ausschusses verweist die Kommission auf eine frühere Antwort ([3]). Nach der zweiten Stellungnahme des Ausschusses dürfte der Bruch einer Kompaktleuchtstofflampe selbst im ungünstigsten Fall für keine Bevölkerungskategorie ein Gesundheitsrisiko darstellen, auch nicht für schwangere Frauen und Kinder. SCHER merkte zudem an, dass die Quecksilber-Exposition bei versehentlichem Bruch einer Kompaktleuchtstofflampe durch eine ordentliche Reinigung und Belüftung der betroffenen Räumlichkeiten verringert wird. Das deutsche Umweltbundesamt kam 2011 zu dem Schluss, dass Phenolemissionen aus Kompaktleuchtstofflampen aufgrund ihrer sehr geringen Konzentrationen kein Gesundheitsrisiko darstellen ([4]).

3. Die Kommission verweist auf eine frühere Antwort zu diesem Thema ([5]).

4. Die Kommission weist darauf hin, dass T5-Leuchtstoffröhren ebenfalls Quecksilber enthalten.

([1]) schriftliche Anfrage E-6358/12 von Herrn Obermayr: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html.
([2]) SCHER hat seine Tätigkeit im März 2009 aufgenommen. Informationen über das Mandat, die Arbeit und die Mitglieder des Ausschusses sind zu finden unter: http://www.ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/index_en.htm .
([3]) schriftliche Anfrage E-11180/10 von Herrn Reul: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html.
([4]) http://www.umweltdaten.de/gesundheit/stellungnahme_uba_phenoldaempfe_energiesparlampen.pdf
([5]) schriftliche Anfrage E-6340/12 von Frau Werthmann: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html.

5. Die Entscheidung, herkömmliche Glühlampen mit geringer Effizienz schrittweise abzuschaffen, wurde von den Staats- und Regierungschefs 2007 auf dem europäischen Gipfel unter deutscher Präsidentschaft getroffen. Das Europäische Parlament hob es als wichtig hervor, dass die Kommission den vorgesehenen Zeitplan für die Rücknahme der Glühlampen mit der geringsten Effizienz vom Markt einhält ([6]). Die Durchführungsverordnung der Kommission für Haushaltslampen mit ungebündeltem Licht wurde in einem umfassenden Prozess unter Konsultation aller relevanten Interessenträger ausgearbeitet, in dem der Regelungsausschuss eine förmliche befürwortende Stellungnahme abgab, während das Europäische Parlament und der Rat die uneingeschränkte Kontrolle ausübten. Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 244/2009 der Kommission ist Teil der Rahmenregelung für das Ökodesign ([7]), innerhalb deren 14 Maßnahmen eingeführt wurden. Nach Schätzungen können damit bis 2020 rund 400 TWh jährlich eingespart werden ([8]).

([6]) In seiner Entschließung vom 31.1.2008 zum Aktionsplan für Energieeffizienz.

([7]) Richtlinie 2009/125/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. Oktober 2009 zur Schaffung eines Rahmens für die Festlegung von Anforderungen an die umweltgerechte Gestaltung energiebetriebener Produkte, ABl. L 285 vom 31.10.2009.

([8]) Dies entspricht rund 12 % des jährlichen Stromverbrauchs in der EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007245/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Regulation on light bulbs

Commission Regulation (EC) No 244/2009 of 18 March 2009 implementing Directive 2005/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2005 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-using products, including non-directional household lamps, lays down minimum standards for the energy efficiency and quality of various types of household lamps. This regulation led to the imposition of a ban on the use of standard light bulbs, which, although inefficient, are entirely safe. Experts are warning that even when used normally and correctly lamps fitted with compact fluorescent light bulbs release hazardous substances, such as mercury and phenol, into the environment.

1. On what studies was the regulation governing household lamps, as referred to above, based?

2. What view does the Commission take of the warnings from experts concerning the threat to public health posed by energy-saving light bulbs?

3. In the Commission's view, what action can be taken to address the acute environmental problems stemming from the fact that four-fifths of all energy-saving light bulbs are not disposed of properly and end up on normal tips, making it extremely likely that a significant amount of toxic mercury has been released into the environment?

4. What does the Commission think about a product which would make it possible to use T5 fluorescent light bulbs in existing T8 tubes? Would this not be a healthier alternative to the continued use of the dangerous T8 fluorescent light bulbs, which contain mercury and of which there are still roughly 800 million in use in the EU?

5. Many people in the EU regard the so-called 'light bulb regulation' — as referred to above — as an example of the nanny state gone mad. What is the Commission's view?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2012)

1. The Commission refers to a previous answer on this issue ([1]).

2. On two occasions SCHER ([2]) advised the Commission on the risk of mercury contained in compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). Regarding its first opinion, the Commission refers to a previous answer ([3]). According to SCHER's second opinion, the breaking of a CFL is unlikely to pose a health risk for any category of population including pregnant women or children even in the worst case scenario. SCHER also noted that proper clean-up and ventilation of the room after accidental breakage of a CFL reduced the exposure to mercury. UBA ([4]) concluded in 2011 that phenol evaporating from CFLs did not represent a health risk as the concentrations would remain very small.

3. The Commission refers to a previous answer on this issue ([5]).

4. The Commission would like to indicate that T5 fluorescent tubes also contain mercury.

([1]) Written Question E-6358/12 by Mr Obermayr, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) The independent Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) started its work in March 2009. Information on SCHER's mandate, work and members can be found at http://www.ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/index_en.htm.
([3]) Written Question E-11180/10 by Mr Reul, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) The German Federal Agency for Environment http://www.umweltdaten.de/gesundheit/stellungnahme_uba_phenoldaempfe_energiesparlampen.pdf.
([5]) Written Question E-6340/12 by Ms Werthmann, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

5. The decision to phase out conventional inefficient light bulbs was taken by the Heads of State and Government at the European Summit under the German presidency in 2007. The European Parliament stressed the importance of the Commission keeping to the proposed timetable for the withdrawal of the most inefficient light bulbs from the market ([6]). The implementing Commission regulation on non-directional lamps in households had been developed in a comprehensive process involving consultation of all relevant stakeholders and with formal positive opinion adopted by the regulatory Committee, with the European Parliament and the Council exercising full scrutiny. The Commission Regulation (EC) No 244/2009 is part of the Ecodesign Framework ([7]) under which 14 measures have been put in place. They are estimated to save by 2020 around 400 TWh annually ([8]).

([6]) In its resolution of 31.1.2008 on the action plan for Energy Efficiency.

([7]) Directive 2009/125/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products, OJ L 285, 31.10.2009.

([8]) Representing about 12% of the EU annual electricity consumption.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007247/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μη απόδοση παρανόμως της παρακρατούμενης για κοινωνικούς σκοπούς εισφοράς των εργαζομένων

Στο πλαίσιο των μέτρων λιτότητας που προβλέπονται στο «Μνημόνιο ΙΙ» αποφασίστηκε άδικα και αναίτια η κατάργηση δύο κρίσιμων Οργανισμών ειδικού σκοπού (Οργανισμός Εργατικής Εστίας και Οργανισμός Εργατικής Κατοικίας). Οι δύο αυτοί Οργανισμοί, που είχαν σημαντικότατη προστιθέμενη αξία για την οικονομία και την κοινωνική συνοχή, χρηματοδοτούνταν αποκλειστικά από εισφορές εργαζομένων και εργοδοτών, το ύψος των οποίων έχει καθορισθεί από την Εθνική Γενική ΣΣΕ ύστερα από ελεύθερες συλλογικές διαπραγματεύσεις, χωρίς να επιβαρύνουν ούτε στο ελάχιστο τον Κρατικό Προϋπολογισμό. Σε συνέχεια της συγκεκριμένης απόφασης -που συνιστά μια ακόμη ωμή παρέμβαση στον κοινωνικό διάλογο και τις ελεύθερες συλλογικές διαπραγματεύσεις, και η οποία θα πρέπει να αποτελέσει αντικείμενο επαναδιαπραγμάτευσης- καταργήθηκαν οι δύο αυτοί Οργανισμοί, ενώ προβλέπεται νέα πρόσθετη παρέμβαση με την κατάργηση της αντίστοιχης εισφοράς των εργοδοτών.

Η εισφορά των εργαζομένων που εξακολουθεί να παρακρατείται, οφείλει να συνεχίζει την υποστήριξη ζωτικών δραστηριοτήτων για τον κόσμο της εργασίας και την πραγματική οικονομία. Ενώ, όμως, οι αρμόδιες κρατικές αρχές παρακρατούν την εισφορά των εργαζομένων δεν την (αντα)αποδίδουν ως οφείλουν για τη χρηματοδότηση δράσεων κοινωνικού σκοπού (στέγαση, οικογενειακή μέριμνα, πολιτισμός), την κάλυψη των λειτουργικών δαπανών των κοινωνικών και συνδικαλιστικών φορέων, καθώς και τη μισθοδοσία των εργαζομένων τους, που παραμένουν απλήρωτοι από τον Ιανουάριο μέχρι σήμερα, κηρύσσοντας έτσι μια άτυπη «στάση πληρωμών». Ήδη το εν λόγω ζήτημα αποτελεί αντικείμενο παρέμβασης της Συνομοσπονδίας των Ευρωπαϊκών Συνδικάτων προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Αποδέχεται το γεγονός ότι ενώ παρακρατείται η εισφορά από τους εργαζόμενους δεν ανταποδίδεται σε αυτούς σύμφωνα με τα συμφωνηθέντα, με αποτέλεσμα την μη πραγματοποίηση αναγκαίων κοινωνικών δράσεων και την οικονομική εξάντληση των εργαζομένων σε κοινωνικούς και συνδικαλιστικούς φορείς;

2. Προτίθεται να παρέμβει με συστάσεις προς την Ελλάδα προκειμένου αφενός οι ελληνικές αρχές να εκπληρώσουν ως οφείλουν τις υποχρεώσεις τους απέναντι στους κοινωνικούς και συνδικαλιστικούς φορείς και αφετέρου να απέχουν από πράξεις που αντίκεινται στην ελεύθερη λειτουργία και δράση των συνδικαλιστικών οργανώσεων κατά προφανή παραβίαση του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

1. Στο πλαίσιο του νέου προγράμματος προσαρμογής, οι ελληνικές αρχές δεσμεύθηκαν να λάβουν ουδέτερα δημοσιονομικά μέτρα για τη μείωση του εργατικού κόστους χωρίς να θίγονται οι μισθοί των εργαζομένων προκειμένου να στηρίξουν την απολύτως αναγκαία δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας και τη μείωση του κόστους παραγωγής. Συνεπώς, οι ελληνικές αρχές κατήργησαν τα προγράμματα του Οργανισμού Εργατικής Εστίας (ΟΕΕ) και του Οργανισμού Εργατικής Κατοικίας (ΟΕΚ) ως πρώτο βήμα προκειμένου να μειώσουν τις δαπάνες και κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο να αντισταθμίσουν την επιβάρυνση του προϋπολογισμού που προκαλείται από την συνακόλουθη μείωση των αντίστοιχων εισφορών. Οι υφιστάμενες συμβατικές υποχρεώσεις θα εξακολουθήσουν να τηρούνται στο βαθμό που το επιτρέπουν οι διαθέσιμοιπόροι.

2. Σύμφωνα με τις Συνθήκες, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων, η Επιτροπή σέβεται πλήρως τα δικαιώματα των εργαζομένων και την αυτονομία των κοινωνικών εταίρων. Εναπόκειται στα κράτη μέλη και στους κοινωνικούς εταίρους να καθιερώσουν ρυθμίσεις κοινωνικού διαλόγου και πιθανή χρηματοδοτική στήριξη σύμφωνα με τις παραδόσεις, τις πρακτικές και τις ανάγκες τους, καθώς και σύμφωνα με τις σχετικές συμβάσεις της Διεθνούς Οργάνωσης Εργασίας (ΔΟΕ).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007247/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Illegal failure to use workers' contributions withheld for social purposes

As part of the austerity measures in the second Memorandum, it has been decided — unfairly and without good reason — to disband two critical special-purpose bodies (the Working People's Welfare Association and the Workers' Housing Organisation). These two institutions that have generated enormous added value for the economy and social cohesion, have been financed exclusively by employee and employer contributions, the amount of which was determined by national general collective agreement following free collective bargaining; the State budget was not burdened in any way. Following this decision, which is yet another case of blatant intervention in the social dialogue and free collective bargaining, and which should be renegotiated, these two organisations were abolished, and a further intervention is planned involving the abolition of the corresponding employers' contribution.

The workers' contributions which are still being withheld should continue to support activities vital to the world of labour and the real economy. But while the public authorities continue to withhold workers' contributions, they do not use them, as they should, to finance social purpose activities (housing, family care, culture), to cover the running costs of social and labour unions and the wages of their officials who have not been paid since January; they have thus declared an unofficial 'suspension of payments'. The European Trade Union Confederation has already intervened with the Commission over this issue.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it accept the fact that while workers' contributions are being deducted they are not being spent on workers, as agreed, which means that necessary social actions are not being carried out and workers in social and trade unions are being financially squeezed?

2. Will it make recommendations to Greece so that the Greek authorities fully meet their obligations vis-à-vis the social and trade union bodies and refrain from acts contrary to the free operation and activities of trade unions which blatantly violate the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 September 2012)

1. Under the new adjustment programme, the Greek authorities committed to adopt budgetary-neutral measures to reduce labour costs without affecting workers' wages in order to support the much needed employment creation and lowering of production costs. Accordingly, the Greek authorities closed the programmes under OEE and OEK as a first step to reduce expenditure and thereby to offset the budgetary drag caused by the forthcoming lowering of corresponding contributions. Existing contractual obligations will still be respected with the available funds.

2. In line with the Treaties, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Commission fully respects the workers' rights and the autonomy of social partners. It is up to the Member States and social partners to set up social dialogue arrangements and possible financial support in line with their traditions, practices and needs as well as with relevant ILO conventions.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007248/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ψηφιακές δεξιότητες του ελληνικού πληθυσμού

Από τα στοιχεία που συλλέγει, είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή αναφορικά με τις ψηφιακές δεξιότητες του ελληνικού πληθυσμού σε σχέση με τον μέσο όρο των πολιτών των υπολοίπων κρατών μελών; Ποια είναι η εικόνα της ευρυζωνικής αγοράς στην Ελλάδα σε σύγκριση με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη; Παρατηρείται να είναι το ίδιο αυξητική; Η Ελλάδα ανταποκρίνεται, σύμφωνα με τα πιο πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Επιτροπής, στους στόχους του «Ψηφιακού Θεματολογίου», για την εξασφάλιση βασικής ευρυζωνικής σύνδεσης των 2 Mbps για όλα τα νοικοκυριά μέχρι το 2013;

Απάντηση της κας Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Αυγούστου 2012)

Η Ελλάδα είναι μία από τις χώρες που κινδυνεύει να μείνει πίσω όσον αφορά τις υψηλές ψηφιακές δεξιότητες των πολιτών της, δεδομένου ότι τα σχετικά ποσοστά που παρατηρούνται τοποθετούνται γενικά κάτω από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ. Το 49 % των Ελλήνων πολιτών διαθέτει δεξιότητες κάποιου επιπέδου σε ηλεκτρονικούς υπολογιστές και το 54 % διαθέτει δεξιότητες σχετικά με το Διαδίκτυο (ο μέσος όρος για την ΕΕ είναι 67 % και 73 % αντίστοιχα). Το 24 % των πολιτών διαθέτει μεγάλες δεξιότητες στους ηλεκτρονικούς υπολογιστές (ΕΕ 27 %) και το 9 % διαθέτει περιορισμένες δεξιότητες στους ηλεκτρονικούς υπολογιστές (ΕΕ 14 %). Τα άτομα που διαθέτουν δεξιότητες μέσου επιπέδου στους ηλεκτρονικούς υπολογιστές αντιπροσωπεύουν το 16 % του πληθυσμού (ΕΕ 25 %).

Τον Ιανουάριο του 2012, η αύξηση της διείσδυσης της σταθερής ευρυζωνικότητας ανήλθε σε 1,84, (πάνω από το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ της τάξης του 1,25). Με την αύξηση της διείσδυσης της ευρυζωνικότητας κατά 21,8 % στην Ελλάδα μειώνεται το χάσμα που την χωρίζει από τις άλλες χώρες, ωστόσο το επίπεδο της χώρας εξακολουθεί να είναι σημαντικά χαμηλότερο σε σχέση με το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ, που τοποθετείται στο 27,7 %.

Στο τέλος του 2011, η Ελλάδα στράφηκε προς την επίτευξη του στόχου του ΨΘΕ που αφορά την εξασφάλιση βασικής ευρυζωνικής σύνδεσης (της τάξης των 2 Mbps) για όλα τα νοικοκυριά της ΕΕ μέχρι το 2013. Η σταθερή ευρυζωνική κάλυψη ανέρχεται στο 91,2 % του πληθυσμού (μέσος όρος ΕΕ 95,3 %), ενώ η χρησιμοποίηση 3G ανέρχεται στο 90 %, που ισοδυναμεί με το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ.

Η πρόοδος όσον αφορά τη χρήση υψηλών ταχυτήτων (30 Mbps) και την ευρυζωνική σύνδεση πολύ υψηλής ταχύτητας (100 Mbps) ήταν μέχρι στιγμής αμελητέα όσον αφορά την κάλυψη καθώς και τη χρησιμοποίηση. Οι Έλληνες τελικοί χρήστες εξακολουθούν να δίδουν ιδιαίτερη προτίμηση στις γραμμές των 10 Mbps (56,2 % του συνόλου των ευρυζωνικών γραμμών), ωστόσο είναι σημαντικός ο αριθμός των γραμμών μεταξύ 2 και 10 Mbps (43,8 %).

Πρόσθετα στοιχεία διατίθενται στον πίνακα του Ψηφιακού Θεματολογίου:
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/countries/el/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007248/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Digital skills of the population of Greece

From the data it has collected, can the Commission provide information on the digital skills of the population of Greece compared to the average skills of citizens of other Member States? What is the state of the broadband market in Greece compared with that of other Member States? Is there the same growth? According to the latest Commission figures, is Greece meeting the targets of the 'Digital Agenda' about providing basic broadband connections of 2 Mbps for all households by 2013?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2012)

Greece is one of the countries that risks lagging behind in terms of people with high digital skills, since it exhibits rates that are generally below the EU average. 49% of citizens in Greece have some level of computer skills and 54% have Internet skills (EU average is 67% and 73% respectively). 24% of citizens have high computer skills (EU 27%) and 9% have low computer skills (EU 14%). Medium computer skilled people represent 16% of the population (EU 25%).

In January 2012, fixed broadband penetration growth stood at 1.84, (above the EU average of 1.25). With 21.8% broadband penetration Greece was closing the gap but remained still considerably below the EU average of 27.7%.

At the end of 2011, Greece was moving towards achieving the DAE target aiming at securing a basic broadband connection (in the order of 2 Mbps) for all EU households by 2013. Fixed broadband coverage amounted to 91.2% of population (EU average 95.3%), while 3G deployment stood at 90%, equalling the EU average.

Progress in 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. 10 Mbps lines continue to be the most popular amongst Greek end-users (56.2% of the total broadband lines), while a considerable number of lines is between 2 and 10 Mbps (43.8%).

Additional data can be found in the Digital Agenda Scoreboard: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/countries/el/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007249/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ειδικό τέλος ηλεκτροδοτούμενων επιφανειών στην Ελλάδα και θέση της Επιτροπής

Παρά το γεγονός ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ζήτησε από την τρόικα την αποσύνδεση του ειδικού τέλους που έχει επιβληθεί στα ακίνητα προκειμένου να αυξηθούν τα δημόσια έσοδα από τον λογαριασμό της ΔΕΗ, προκύπτει ότι η Επιτροπή δεν συνηγόρησε σε αυτή την θέση. Υπενθυμίζεται ότι σε πρόσφατη γραπτή απάντηση που δόθηκε από τον Επίτροπο κ. Ο. Ρεν έπειτα από ερώτηση μου (E-004475/2012), αναφέρεται επακριβώς ότι «η Ελλάδα έχει αντιμετωπίσει δυσκολίες σχετικά με την είσπραξη των φόρων ακίνητης περιουσίας και από το τέλος του 2011 αναγκάσθηκε να χρησιμοποιήσει ασυνήθεις τρόπους είσπραξης, συμπεριλαμβάνοντας π.χ. τον φόρο ακίνητης περιουσίας στους λογαριασμούς ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Καθώς από την απάντηση προκύπτει ότι δεν θεωρεί ορθόδοξο τον συγκεκριμένο τρόπο είσπραξης του τέλους, για ποιο λόγο δεν συναίνεσε στον διαχωρισμό του τέλους από τον λογαριασμό του ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος;

2. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι την επόμενη χρονιά (2013) θα πρέπει εκ νέου να επιβληθεί το συγκεκριμένο τέλος;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Το 2012 η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση αποφάσισε να εισπράξει το ειδικό τέλος ακινήτων μέσω των λογαριασμών της ΔΕΗ. Το ειδικό τέλος ακινήτων, εντούτοις, θα εμφανίζεται ξεχωριστά από το ηλεκτρικό ρεύμα στο λογαριασμό, ώστε να φαίνεται ότι πρόκειται για φορολογική υποχρέωση.

2. Η κυβέρνηση χρειάζεται να εξασφαλίσει επαρκή έσοδα κατά το 2013, ώστε να πετύχει την δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση σύμφωνα με το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής. Το ακριβές μείγμα εσόδων και φόρων που απαιτούνται για την επίτευξη αυτού του στόχου θα καθορισθεί από την κυβέρνηση στο πλαίσιο του προϋπολογισμού του 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007249/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Special tax for properties supplied with electricity in Greece and the Commission's position

Despite the fact that the Greek Government has asked the Troika to remove the special tax imposed on properties in order to increase public revenue from Greek Electricity Board (DEI) bills, the Commission has not advocated this position. It should be noted that in his recent written answer to my question (E-004475/2012) Commissioner Rehn states clearly that 'Greece has encountered difficulties in collecting property taxes and since the end of 2011 has to resort to non-standard collection techniques, like including the property tax in the electricity bills.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Since the above answer shows that it does not consider the particular technique of collecting the tax to be a standard technique, why has it not consented to the removal of the tax from electricity bills?

2. Does it consider that this tax should be re-imposed next year (2013)?

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

1. In 2012 the Greek Government has decided to confirm the collection of the special property tax through DEI. However, the property tax will be shown separately by the cost of the electricity in order to distinguish the fulfilment of tax obligations.

2. The government has to ensure sufficient revenues in 2013 to deliver a budgetary consolidation in line with the Economic adjustment programme. The precise composition of revenues and taxes necessary to achieve this outcome will be established by the government in the context of the 2013 budget.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007250/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Niedrige Milchpreise

Die Milchproduktion in der EU ist im Jahr 2012 bislang um 3 % gestiegen, wodurch es zu einem Überangebot auf dem Markt kommt. Dieser Anstieg der Milchproduktion in der EU ist Teil einer weltweiten Entwicklung.

1. Warum hat die Kommission den Aufruf einer Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten — angeführt von Estland und Polen — abgelehnt, Milchbauern zu unterstützen, die von den sinkenden Milchpreisen betroffen sind?

2. Worin bestehen nach Ansicht der Kommission die Probleme im Milchsektor, und wie beabsichtigt sie, darauf zu reagieren?

3. Wie kann die Kommission die Bauern schützen, insbesondere da die europäischen Exporteure von der derzeitigen Schwäche des Euros gegenüber dem Dollar profitieren?

4. Wird die Kommission die Preisbewegungen auf dem Milchmarkt in den kommenden Wochen oder Monaten verfolgen?

Antwort von Herrn Çioloş im Namen der Kommission
(28. August 2012)

Die Marktpreise sind nach einem Höchststand Mitte 2011 wieder gefallen, liegen aber noch immer über den Interventionsschwellen. Der durchschnittliche Milchpreis ab Hof in der EU wird für Mai 2012 auf 31,3 c/kg geschätzt, das ist 28,4 % über dem Tiefstand während der Krise im Mai 2009. Die Milchmargen in der EU sind im ersten Quartal 2012 zwar gesunken, liegen aber noch immer über denen des ersten Quartals 2011.

Der Grund für diese Entwicklung ist die Saisonabhängigkeit der Milcherzeugung, aber auch die Zunahme der Milcherzeugung weltweit. Die EU bietet Sicherheitsnetzmechanismen an, insbesondere in Form des Ankaufs von Butter und Magermilchpulver durch die öffentliche Lagerhaltung. Bislang haben die Marktteilnehmer dieses Instrument noch nicht in Anspruch genommen. In den Mitgliedstaaten, die Preise unter dem EU-Durchschnitt melden, ist der Milchsektor mit besonderen Umständen konfrontiert, die von Erzeugnissen mit geringem Mehrwert bis hin zu einer schwachen Verhandlungsposition der Milcherzeuger reichen. Gerade letzterem Problem wird mit den Maßnahmen des Milchpakets ([1]), die ab dem 3. Oktober voll zur Anwendung kommen, entgegengewirkt.

Seit Mai sind die Preise für Butter und Magermilchpulver leicht gestiegen und haben sich stabilisiert. Die Milchpreise auf den Spotmärkten weisen einen ähnlichen Trend auf, aber es wird eine Weile dauern, bevor sich dies auch in den Milchpreisen ab Hof widerspiegelt.

Die Schwäche des Euro gegenüber dem Dollar verbessert die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit von EU-Milcherzeugnissen auf dem Weltmarkt und trägt zu einem besseren Gleichgewicht auf dem Binnenmarkt bei, was sich ebenfalls positiv für die EU-Milcherzeuger auswirkt.

Die Europäische Kommission wird den Milchmarkt in den kommenden Wochen und Monaten weiterhin aufmerksam verfolgen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 261/2012 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 14. März 2012 zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1234/2007 des Rates im Hinblick auf Vertragsbeziehungen im Sektor Milch und Milcherzeugnisse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007250/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 July 2012)

Subject: Low milk prices

EU milk production has risen by 3% so far in 2012, leading to an oversupply in the marketplace. This increase in milk production in the EU forms part of a global trend.

1. Why has the Commission rejected a call from a number of Member States — led by Estonia and Poland — to help dairy farmers hit by the falling price of milk?

2. In the view of the Commission, what are the problems in the milk sector, and how does it intend to react?

3. How can the Commission protect the farmers, especially as European exporters are benefiting from the current weakness of the euro against the dollar?

4. Does the Commission intend to keep track of price movements within the milk market over the next weeks and months?

Answer given by Mr Çioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2012)

Market prices have fallen since peaking in mid-2011, but remain above intervention levels. The EU average farm gate milk price is estimated at 31.3 c/kg for May 2012, which is 28.4% above the lowest level reached during the crisis in May 2009. EU milk margins decreased in the 1st quarter of 2012 but remained above those of the 1st quarter of 2011.

Seasonality of milk production is responsible for this development, but also the increase in milk production around the world. The EU safety net mechanisms are available, particularly purchases of butter and powder in public stocks. To date this instrument has not been used by market players. In Member States notifying prices below the EU average, the dairy sector is confronted with particular circumstances ranging from a focus on low value added products to a lack of negotiating power for milk producers. The Milk Package ([1]) that will fully apply from 3 October precisely addresses this latter point.

Since May, prices for butter and skimmed milk powder have been slightly upward and stabilising. Milk prices on spot markets show a similar trend, but it will take time before this is fully reflected in farm gate milk prices.

The weakness of the Euro against the Dollar improves the competitiveness of EU milk products on the world market and contributes to a better balance on the internal market, which is also favourable to EU milk producers.

The European Commission will continue to closely follow the milk market in the coming weeks and months.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 261/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards contractual relations in the milk and milk products sector.