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 263 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006410/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Collective Redundancies Directive (98/59/EC)

In its answer of 24 September 2010 to Written Question E-6500/2010 on the Collective Redundancies Directive (98/59/EC), the Commission stated that it would, later in 2010, launch an evaluation of EU legislation on collective dismissals, including the problems linked to implementation. What was the outcome of that evaluation, and what action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, as regards this legislation and its implementation at national level?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2012)

The Commission is currently carrying out a fitness check to assess whether three directives on worker information and consultation at national level, including Directive 98/59/EC, are 'fit for purpose' ([1]), and will publish the results as soon as they are available.

More specifically, the Commission would add, with regard to its answer to Written Question E-6500/2010, that the Irish Protection of Employment Act 1977, as amended in 2007, seems to be compatible with Directive 98/59/EC ([2]), and in particular Article 2(1) thereof.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=707&langId=en
([2]) Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998, p. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006411/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Commission cooperation with associations representing deaf children

Further to its answer of 19 January 2012 to Written Question E-010193/2011, what was the outcome of and follow-up to the meeting with representative associations working on behalf of deaf and hard-of-hearing children the Commission said would take place in early 2012 'to explore how to cooperate more closely in the future'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

Further to the referred parliamentary question, a meeting was indeed organised at the end of January between the European Commission services and representatives of associations working on behalf of the deaf and hard of hearing to discuss the difficulties they encounter when taking part in European projects and the options for granting additional support.

Following the meeting, the Commission provided full information on funding granted in recent years to organisations and projects in the field of education, training, culture and youth concerning the deaf and hard of hearing community.

In 2012, the Lifelong Learning Programme will fund, among others, the project 'Signs2Cross: Linguistic mobility for Deaf people in Europe,' presented by Hochschule Magdeburg-Stendal, for an amount of approximately EUR 325 000.

The Multilateral network 'Spread the sign,' for the dissemination in Europe of vocational sign language, was also selected for funding in June. The contract has not yet been signed, but the grant requested is close to EUR 600 000.

Finally, the European Forum of Sign Languages Interpreters (EFSLI) will receive the second annual operating grant for approximately EUR 122 000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006412/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Data protection and smart metering

Further to the opinion adopted by the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) on 11 June 2012 (EDPS/12/10) on the Commission Recommendation of 9 March 2012 on preparations for the roll-out of smart metering systems, will the Commission be assessing, as suggested by the EDPS, the need for additional legislative proposals to better protect personal data in the roll-out of smart metering systems?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

The Commission welcomed the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) opinion on the Commission Recommendation on preparations for the roll-out of smart metering systems of 9 March 2012 and shares the interest of EDPS in providing further guidance to the energy sector in order to guarantee the protection of personal data for individuals throughout the EU.

Accordingly, the Commission has reactivated the Smart Grids Task Force, which now includes an expert group working specifically on developing a proposal for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) template for Smart Grids by the end of 2012. EDPS is actively participating in this Expert Group. The Commission acts as a facilitator in this process and gives stakeholders the opportunity to develop their own recommendations, guidance and obligations. The Commission cannot prejudge the final outcome of the group's work. In any event the current data protection legislation and the recently adopted proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([1]) will be of relevance to the abovementioned proposal.

Once the deliverables of the Expert Group have been issued and submitted to the article 29 Working Party ([2]), the Commission will consider if there is a need for additional measures to ensure the compliance with data protection rules in the context of the roll-out of smart meters.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, COM(2012) 0011.

([2]) The article 29 Data Protection Working Party was set up under 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. It has advisory status and acts independently. It is composed of a representative of the supervisory authority designated by each EU country, a representative of the authority established for the EU institutions and bodies and a representative of the European Commission. The recommendation on preparations for the roll-out of smart metering systems foresees formal consultation of WP29 on the DPIA template.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006413/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Deforestation

What is the current situation with regard to the Commission's long-standing infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to deforestation (Commission infringement procedure 2000/5196)?

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

On 20 November 2008, infringement 2000/5196 resulted in a judgment of the Court of Justice against Ireland in Case C-66/06. The Court found that Ireland had failed to correctly transpose Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([1]), as amended by Council Directive 97/11/EC ([2]). On 16 February 2011, the Commission decided to refer Ireland back to the Court because of its failure to comply with the judgment. It also decided to propose a lump sum and daily penalty. Subsequent Irish legislation led to a Commission decision on 21 June 2012 to withdraw the proposed daily penalty. Proceedings continue under case reference C-279/11 in relation to the proposed lump sum.

([1]) OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.
([2]) OJ L 73, 14.3.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006414/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Depression and the European strategy on health and safety

In its resolution of 24 February 2005 on health and safety at the workplace ([1]), Parliament called on the Commission to pay particular attention to work-related risks and long-term psychological illnesses such as depression.

In its answer of 19 September 2011 to Written Question E-007727/2011, the Commission referred to the Council conclusions on mental health adopted in June 2011 which highlighted the need for further action on depression under the Mental Health Pact, stating that in cooperation with the Member States it was reflecting on how best to take this work forward.

What is the current situation with regard to this Commission/Member State reflection on depression under the Mental Health Pact? Is the Commission considering making depression a priority under the draft European strategy on health and safety at work (2013-2020) it is scheduled to launch by the end of 2012?

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

Addressing depression remains a key priority under the European Pact on Mental Health and Wellbeing, and is a recurrent subject in meetings with Member State experts on mental health. Under the 2012 work plan of the Health Programme, a Joint Action on mental health is being launched which will also take forward work on depression in one of its work packages.

The EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work 2007-12 addresses, among other issues, the promotion of mental health at the workplace. In particular, the Commission encourages Member States to incorporate into their national strategies specific initiatives aimed at preventing mental health problems and promoting mental health more effectively, in combination with Union initiatives on the subject.

The strategy is currently being evaluated; this should help identify the priorities for future policy action in this field.

The Commission intends to present the results of the final evaluation by the end of 2012. On the basis of those results and after a wide consultation of the stakeholders, it will put forward priorities for health and safety at work for the forthcoming period. In this process, the Commission intends to pay particular attention to mental health and the prevention of psycho-social risks at the workplace.

([1]) OJ C 304E, 1.12.2005, p. 400.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006415/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Directive 2009/38/EC on European Works Councils

What is the nature of, and the current situation with regard to, the Commission's infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to Directive 2009/38/EC concerning the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees (Commission infringement procedure 2011/0835)?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2012)

The Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Ireland on 18 July 2011 for the non-communication of national measures transposing Directive 2009/38/EC within the transposition deadline (5 June 2011). On 19 July 2011 Ireland responded by notifying Statutory Instrument No 380.

In the light of this information, the Commission decided on 27 October 2011 to close the infringement procedure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006416/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Directive 2009/31/EC on the geological storage of carbon dioxide

What is the current state of play with regard to the Commission's infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to Directive 2009/31/EC on the geological storage of carbon dioxide (Commission infringement procedure 2011/0834)?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

Under infringement procedure 2011/0834 in relation to Directive 2009/31/EC on the geological storage of carbon dioxide, the Commission services are currently assessing Ireland's reply to the letter of formal notice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006417/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Directive 2009/30/EC on reducing greenhouse gas emissions

What is the current state of play with regard to the Commission's infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to Directive 2009/30/EC on the specification of petrol, diesel and gas oil and introducing a mechanism to monitor to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Commission infringement procedure 2011/0471)?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2012)

The Commission is currently assessing the transposing measures notified by Ireland in relation to Directive 2009/30/EC on the specification of petrol, diesel and gas oil and introducing a mechanism to monitor to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Commission will take its decision once the assessment is complete.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006418/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Energy taxation

What is the current situation with regard to the Commission's long-standing infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to energy taxation and the expiry of derogations for road passenger services, motor services for disabled people and private pleasure craft and private pleasure flying (Commission infringement procedure 2008/2023)?

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

On 27 November 2011, the Commission has decided to refer the infringement procedure 2008/2023 to the Court of Justice, since Ireland has not adopted all the necessary measures to end the infringement in question. The procedure is currently following its course before the Court of Justice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006419/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Exit taxation for companies

What is the nature of and the current situation with regard to the Commission's infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to exit taxation for companies (Commission infringement procedure 2009/2117)?

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

The infringement procedure 2009/2117 against Ireland concerns discriminatory exit tax provisions for companies. For a more detailed explanation the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its press release IP/11/78 available on the Europa website: http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/78.

The Commission took its last procedural step on 27 January 2011 when it issued a reasoned opinion, which is the second stage of the infringement procedure. The Irish authorities replied on 5 April 2011. The Commission will decide in the coming months whether to refer Ireland to the Court of Justice of the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006420/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Ireland and Directive 2010/78/EU

What is the nature of and the current situation with regard to the Commission's infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to Directive 2010/78/EU regarding the powers of the European Supervisory Authority (European Banking Authority), the European Supervisory Authority (European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority) and the European Supervisory Authority (European Securities and Markets Authority) (Commission infringement procedure 2012/0075)?

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

On the 25 of January 2012 the Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Ireland for failure to communicate complete national measures transposing Directive 2010/78/EU within the transposition deadline (31/12/2011). Ireland has subsequently submitted its observations and communicated some additional transposition measures. Further national measures are necessary to fully transpose Directive 2010/78/EU. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation and take further action, as appropriate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006421/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Junior doctors' working time

What is the current situation with regard to the Commission's long-standing infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to the working time of junior doctors (Commission infringement procedure 2009/2039)?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2012)

With regard to the infringement procedure to which the Honourable Member refers, the Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Ireland on 23 November 2009, and a reasoned opinion on 30 November 2011, to which the national authorities have replied within the deadline agreed.

The Commission continues to scrutinise the situation carefully and will take whatever action it considers necessary.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006422/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Mandatory retirement age and Directive 2000/78/EC

What was the justification for the Commission's decision to close its infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to Directive 2000/78/EC and the mandatory retirement age of 60 imposed on chief superintendents of the Garda Siochana (Irish police force) (Commission infringement 2008/4555)?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2012)

The Commission's decision to close infringement proceedings against a Member State is based on its assessment of the national legislation, further to the clarifications brought about by the Member State concerned in the course of the procedure. The Commission's assessment takes account of the relevant case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union which in the procedure referred to by the Honourable Member concerned age discrimination in the field of employment and the setting of age limits for certain professions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006423/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Marine Strategy Framework Directive

What is the current situation with regard to the Commission's infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC) (Commission infringement 2010/0672)?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

This infringement procedure was opened because Ireland did not notify national transposing measures for Directive 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy ([1]) by the required deadline of 15 July 2010. Ireland transposed this directive through 'S.I. No 249/2011 — European Communities (Marine Strategy Framework) Regulations' and provided the necessary notification to the Commission in June 2011 ([2]). The Commission therefore decided to close the procedure in September 2011.

([1]) OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([2]) Statutory Instrument No 249 of 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006424/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions in Dublin

According to the European Environment Agency, emissions of nitrogen oxide (NO_x) air pollutants in 2010 in Dublin were above the binding targets set by Directive 2001/81/EC on national emissions ceilings.

What action has the Commission taken, or is it taking, to ensure that the existing emission ceilings for nitrogen oxides are respected in Dublin?

Is the Commission considering a revision of Directive 2001/81/EC?

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

The National Emission Ceilings Directive (2001/81/EC) ([1]) sets the maximum amount of certain atmospheric pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NO_x), that Member States are allowed to emit from 2010 onwards. It must be noted that the national emission ceilings do not apply at the level of a region or a city, but rather at the scale of each Member State taken as a whole. At this stage, the emission data for 2010 is still preliminary.

If final emission data confirms that Ireland, as a whole, has not fulfilled its obligation to comply from 2010 onwards with its NO_x national emission ceiling, the Commission will investigate what measures could be undertaken vis-à-vis Ireland as well as other non-compliant Member States, to ensure that applicable national emissions ceilings are met with the shortest delays.

The Commission is currently reviewing the National Emission Ceilings Directive as part of the overall review of the Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution, scheduled for 2013. The review will consider any updates needed, including any updates needed to comply with the recent revision of the Gothenburg Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution.

([1]) OJ L 309, 2.11.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006425/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Pension funds and Directive 2003/41/EC

What was the justification for the Commission's decision to close its infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to Directive 2003/41/EC on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision (Commission infringement procedure 2010/2153)?

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

The Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Ireland in May 2011. The Irish authorities replied on 27 July and 13 September 2011. The Commission examined the replies and concluded that Ireland had correctly implemented in its national legislation Articles 17(1) and (2) and 18(1)(f) of Directive 2003/41/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 June 2003 on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision, as requested by the Commission. Therefore, the Commission closed the infringement proceedings 2010/2153 in November 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006426/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Permits under the IPPC Directive

What is the nature of, and the current situation with regard to, the Commission's long-standing infringement proceedings against Ireland in relation to air permits under the IPPC Directive (Commission infringement procedure 2008/0137)?

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

The Commission has referred Ireland to the Court of Justice under Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU for failure to comply with the IPPC Directive ([1]) (infringement 2008/2070 rather than 2008/0137 as cited by the Honourable Member). Ireland has failed to ensure that all installations in Ireland covered by the IPPC Directive are the subject of a valid permit. The reference of the case is C-158/12.

([1]) Directive 2008/1/EC, OJ L 24, 29.1.2008, p. 8.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-006441/12
Komisijai
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(2012. gada 27. jūnijs)

Temats: ES lauksaimniecības politikas uzlabošana

ES lauksaimniecības politikas mērķis ir nodrošināt uzticamu apgādi ar augstas kvalitātes pārtikas produktiem, saglabāt vides drošību un veicināt atjaunojamo resursu izmantošanu.

Kad Komisija nāks klajā ar tiesību akta priekšlikumu par ES lauksaimniecības politikas uzlabošanu un jo īpaši godīgāku finansējuma sadali?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Dačans Čološs
(2012. gada 7. augusts)

Komisija vēlētos godājamajam Parlamenta deputātam norādīt uz tiesību aktu priekšlikumiem saistībā ar KLP laika posmam pēc 2013. gada, ar kuriem tā nāca klajā 2011. gada 12. oktobrī. Priekšlikumu mērķis ir palielināt nozares konkurētspēju, vienlaikus uzlabojot dabas resursu ilgtspējīgu apsaimniekošanu. Turklāt 2014.–2020. gada finanšu periodā atbalstam vajadzētu būt mērķtiecīgākam, efektīvākam un taisnīgāk sadalītam.

Tas nozīmētu arī labāk līdzsvarotu līdzekļu pārdali. Tāpēc Komisija ierosina ar tiešajiem maksājumiem garantēt maksājumu mērenu palielinājumu tām dalībvalstīm, kuru tiešo maksājumu par atbalsttiesīgas platības hektāru vidējais rādītājs pašlaik ir zem 90 % no ES vidējā rādītāja. To hektārmaksājumi palielināsies par vienu trešdaļu no starpības starp pašreizējo maksājumu un 90 % slieksni. Vajadzīgās summas tiek ņemtas no dalībvalstīm, kuru rādītājs pārsniedz vidējo ES rādītāju, proporcionāli to daļai no kopējās summas, kas pārsniedz vidējo rādītāju. Ir paredzēts veikt iekšējo pārdali, reģionāli saskaņojot platībatkarīgos maksājumus un degresīvi samazinot maksimumu lieliem maksājumiem, kas veikti individuāliem saņēmējiem.

Attiecībā uz lauku attīstību Komisija ierosina pārdalīt līdzekļus starp dalībvalstīm nākamajā finanšu shēmā atbilstīgi virknei ekonomisko un teritoriālo kritēriju, vienlaikus ņemot vērā arī iepriekšējos rezultātus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006441/12
to the Commission
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Enhancement of EU agricultural policy

The aims of the EU's agricultural policy are to ensure a reliable supply of high-quality products, maintain environmental safety and promote the use of renewable resources.

When will the Commission introduce a legislative proposal for the enhancement of EU agricultural policy and, in particular, the fairer allocation of funding?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its legal proposals on the CAP after 2013, which were presented on 12 October 2011. The proposals aim at increasing the competitiveness of the sector, whilst improving the sustainable management of natural resources. Additionally, in the financial period 2014-2020, the support should be more targeted, effective and fairer distributed.

This entails a more balanced redistribution of funds. Therefore, the Commission proposes for direct payments to grant a moderate increase of payments to the Member States currently below 90 % of the EU average direct payment per hectare of eligible area. They will see their payments per hectare increased by one third of the difference between their current payment and the 90 %-threshold. The required amounts are taken from the Member States above the EU average, proportionally to their share in the total amount above the average. An internal redistribution is foreseen through regionally harmonised area payments and through a degressive capping of large payments to individual beneficiaries.

As for rural development, the Commission suggests to redistribute funds between Member States in the coming financial framework according to a range of economic and territorial criteria, whilst taking into account past performance, too.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-006442/12
Komisijai
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(2012. gada 27. jūnijs)

Temats: Nepilsoņu balsstiesības ES

Komisija 2011. gada jūlijā pieņēma Eiropas programmu trešo valstu pilsoņu integrācijai, kura paredz paplašināt jaunpienācēju politiskās tiesības. Šī programma jo īpaši paredz – lai stiprinātu migrantu demokrātisko līdzdalību, viņiem būtu jāpiešķir balsstiesības pašvaldību vēlēšanās.

Kā Komisija plāno īstenot šo programmu, ja katra dalībvalsts pieņem savus lēmumus par balsstiesību pašvaldību vēlēšanās piešķiršanu vai nepiešķiršanu nepilsoņiem?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Sesīlija Malmstrēma
(2012. gada 14. septembris)

Eiropas programma trešo valstu pilsoņu integrācijai ir Komisijas ieguldījums debatēs par integrāciju. Tā sniedz ieteikumus dalībvalstīm, kuras ir pirmām kārtām atbildīgas par integrācijas politiku.

Komisija apzinās, ka balsstiesību piešķiršana ES nepilsoņiem ir dalībvalstu kompetencē. Vēlēšanu jautājumos Eiropas Savienības Pamattiesību hartas 40. punkts un LESD 22. panta 1. punkts piešķir ES pilsoņiem balsstiesības un tiesības kandidēt pašvaldību vēlēšanās tajā dalībvalstī, kurā viņi dzīvo, arī tad, ja viņi nav attiecīgās valsts pilsoņi. Direktīvā 94/80/EK noteikti sīki izstrādāti noteikumi minēto tiesību īstenošanai. 2012. gada ziņojumā par pašvaldību vēlēšanām Komisija uzsvēra, cik svarīgi ir iedrošināt līdzdalību politiskajā dzīvē vietējā līmenī ([1]).

Dalībvalstis var dalīties pieredzē par balsstiesībām, un Komisija var atbalstīt šādu pieredzes apmaiņu un analizēt sekas, ko rada balsstiesību piešķiršana. Dalībvalstis vienojās Kopējos integrācijas pamatprincipos ([2]) ietvert politisko līdzdalību, apgalvojot, ka imigrantu līdzdalība demokrātijas procesā un integrācijas politikas un pasākumu formulēšanā veicina to integrāciju, īpaši vietējā līmenī.

To arī uzsvēra pilsoniskās sabiedrības organizācijas Eiropas Integrācijas forumā, kurā balsstiesību piešķiršanu vietējā līmenī uzskatīja par svarīgu instrumentu, lai uzlabotu trešo valstu pilsoņu sabiedrisko līdzdalību. Eiropas moduļu projekti migrantu integrācijai ([3]) sniedz dalībvalstīm idejas par iespējamajiem veidiem, kā paplašināt to migrantu loku, kuriem piešķir balsstiesības, un kā stiprināt padomdevēju struktūru nozīmi politiskajā procesā, ja tās to vēlas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com_2012_99_municipal_elections_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/82745.pdf
([3]) Eiropas moduļu projekti migrantu integrācijai, 66. lpp. http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/docl_25494_793453556.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006442/12
to the Commission
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Voting rights in the EU for non-citizens

In July 2011 the Commission approved the European programme for the integration of third-country citizens, which envisages widening the political rights of newcomers. This programme stipulates in particular that in order to widen the democratic participation of migrants they should be granted the right to vote in local elections.

How is the Commission planning to implement this programme if each Member State makes its own decision regarding whether or not to grant non-citizens the right to vote in local elections?

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

The European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals is the Commission's contribution to the debate on integration. It provides recommendations to Member States, primarily responsible for integration policies.

The Commission is aware that granting voting rights to a non-EU citizen is a national competence. On electoral matter, Article 40 of the Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union and Article 22(1) of the TFEU grant the right to EU citizens to vote and to stand as a candidate in local elections in whichever Member State they reside, even without holding the nationality of that State. Directive 94/80/EC lays down the detailed arrangements for the exercise of these rights. In 2012 Report on local elections, the Commission stressed the importance of encouraging the participation in political life at local level ([1]).

Member States can exchange experiences of voting rights and the Commission can support the exchange and analyse the effect of granting voting rights. The Member States agreed to include political participation in the Common Basic Principles on Integration ([2]), stating that the participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports integration.

This has also been reinforced by civil society organisations in the European Integration Forum, where granting voting rights at local level was considered an important tool to enhance civic participation of third-country nationals. The Draft European Modules on Migrant Integration ([3]) provide Member States with ideas on possible ways to extend voting rights to migrants and how to strengthen the role of consultative bodies in the political processes if they wish to do so.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/com_2012_99_municipal_elections_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/82745.pdf
([3]) Draft European Modules on Migrant Integration, pg. 66 http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/docl_25494_793453556.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006451/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(27 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Casi di pubblicità ingannevole ai danni di alcune aziende europee

Considerando che, nonostante si tratti di un fenomeno ampiamente denunciato, numerose aziende europee subiscono tuttora pratiche commerciali sleali, poste in essere da società che realizzano annuari e riviste commerciali. La condotta fraudolenta consiste nell'inviare a diverse aziende europee una comunicazione pubblicitaria per proporre l'inserimento di un'inserzione apparentemente gratuita in cataloghi e riviste in vista della partecipazione ad eventi fieristici. In allegato viene inoltre inviato un formulario, dove si invitano le aziende a correggere i propri dati societari eventualmente riportati in modo errato. Il contenuto di tale modulo ed il testo della comunicazione non lasciano presumere alcun dubbio circa la totale gratuità del servizio offerto. Tuttavia il formulario allegato contiene una clausola scritta con caratteri minuti, di difficile lettura, dove si prevedono l'onerosità del servizio e la sua durata triennale. I firmatari concludono pertanto inconsapevolmente un contratto in base al quale verranno inseriti in un annuario commerciale al costo di circa 1 200 EUR l'anno. Dopo pochi mesi, le vittime di tali pratiche vengono sollecitate a saldare i loro debiti dalle stesse società che le hanno ingannate oppure da agenzie di recupero crediti;

Considerando che le direttive 2006/114/CE e 84/450/CEE definiscono pubblicità ingannevole «qualsiasi pubblicità che in qualsiasi modo, compresa la sua presentazione, induca in errore o possa indurre in errore le persone alle quali è rivolta […] e possa pregiudicare il comportamento economico di dette persone […]»;

Considerando che in data 16.12.2008 il Parlamento europeo ha adottato una risoluzione sulle «Pratiche sleali delle società di compilazione degli annuari», nella quale si denunciavano gli eventi summenzionati e si invitava la Commissione ad intervenire per garantire la piena ed efficace attuazione da parte degli Stati membri delle direttive 2006/114/CE e 2005/29/CE;

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. quali misure ha adottato o intende adottare nel prossimo futuro al fine di contrastare in modo concreto le pratiche sleali più sopra riportate e garantire una maggior tutela ad imprese e professionisti?

2. in che modo ha garantito o intende garantire la corretta ed efficace attuazione da parte degli Stati membri della direttiva 2006/114/CE e dell'articolo 14 della direttiva 2005/29/CE?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(1º agosto 2012)

La Commissione è al corrente del problema riferito dall'onorevole parlamentare delle pratiche ingannevoli delle società di compilazione degli annuari nelle relazioni tra imprese. I sistemi utilizzati fanno parte di una più ampia serie di pratiche commerciali ingannevoli che colpiscono diverse imprese in Europa.

Tali pratiche sono già vietate dalla direttiva 2006/114/CE, tuttavia, i risultati della consultazione pubblica e le informazioni fornite dagli Stati membri sottolineano diverse mancanze per quanto riguarda l'osservanza dell'attuale quadro legislativo dell'Unione europea e alcune sue norme sostanziali.

La Commissione sta preparando una comunicazione, da adottarsi dopo l'estate del 2012, che si concentrerà sui problemi incontrati dalle imprese quando subiscono pratiche commerciali ingannevoli e che presenterà proposte concrete per farvi fronte a livello nazionale e transfrontaliero.

Al contempo la Commissione aumenterà il controllo dell'osservanza dell'acquis esistente coordinando le azioni degli Stati membri nei casi di pratiche ingannevoli nelle relazioni tra imprese a livello transfrontaliero e promuovendo uno scambio d'informazioni più efficace.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006451/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Misleading advertising detrimental to some European companies

Despite widespread reports of the problem, many European companies still suffer unfair trade practices perpetrated by companies producing business directories and trade magazines. This fraudulent conduct involves sending various European companies letters proposing the inclusion of an apparently free advert in directories and magazines with a view to participating in exhibitions. A form is also attached which invites companies to correct any corporate details that may be wrong. The contents of this form and the text of the communication leave no doubt as to the fact that the service offered is completely free. However, the attached form contains a clause written in lettering that is hard to read. This clause outlines the cost of the service and its duration over three years. Signatories therefore unwittingly sign a contract on the basis of which they will be included in a trade directory at the cost of around EUR 1 200 per year. After a few months, the victims of these practices are requested to settle their debts by the same companies that misled them or by credit recovery agencies.

Directives 2006/114/EC and 84/450/EEC define misleading advertising as 'any advertising which in any way, including its presentation, deceives or is likely to deceive the persons to whom it is addressed […] and which […] is likely to affect their economic behaviour […]'.

On 16 December 2008, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 'Misleading business directories', in which the aforementioned facts were denounced and the Commission was invited to intervene to guarantee full and effective implementation by the Member States of Directives 2006/114/EC and 2005/29/EC.

1. What measures has the Commission adopted or does it intend to adopt in the near future to combat the aforementioned unfair practices in concrete terms and to guarantee greater protection of companies and professionals?

2. In what way has it guaranteed or has it intended to guarantee the correct and effective implementation by Member States of Directive 2006/114/EC and Article 14 of Directive 2005/29/EC?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2012)

The Commission is aware of the problem of misleading directory companies in business-to-business relations as referred by the Honourable Member. These schemes constitute part of a wider issue of misleading marketing practices affecting several businesses in Europe.

Directive 2006/114/EC already prohibits these kinds of practices. However, the results of the public consultation and information from the Member States point to several deficiencies both as regards the enforcement and some of the substantive rules of the current EU legislative framework.

The Commission is preparing a communication, scheduled to be adopted after summer 2012. It will focus on the problems which European businesses face when confronted with such misleading marketing practices and present concrete proposals to address them, both at national and cross-border level.

At the same time, the Commission will step up the enforcement of the existing *acquis* by coordinating Member States' actions in cross-border cases of business-to-business misleading schemes and by promoting a more effective exchange of information.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006452/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI)
(27 juni 2012)

Betreft: Witboek pensioenen

1. Is de Commissie bekend met „Witboek — Een agenda voor adequate, veilige en duurzame pensioenen" ([1]) en het standpunt van de Nederlandse Tweede Kamer in dezen ([2])?

2. Uit genoemd standpunt blijkt dat de Tweede Kamer van mening is dat het Witboek van de Commissie in strijd is met het subsidiariteits- en proportionaliteitsprincipe (art. 5 VEU); de Tweede Kamer vindt dat de Commissie niet bevoegd is om zich met pensioenen te bemoeien. Deelt de Commissie deze opvattingen? Zo neen, waarom niet? Kan de Commissie haar bevoegdheid in dezen (juridisch) onderbouwen?

3. Het Nederlandse parlement stelt zich de vraag of er in dezen sprake is van een Europees belang en een Europese bevoegdheid. Is de Commissie van mening dat er een Europees belang en een Europese bevoegdheid is? Zo ja, welk(e)? Kan de Commissie dit toelichten?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke mogelijkheden Nederland, naast de gele- en oranjekaartprocedure, heeft om zich tegen het Witboek te verzetten?

5. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid het Witboek in te trekken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(14 augustus 2012)

1. Ja.

2 en 3. De lidstaten dragen de hoofdverantwoordelijkheid voor het opzetten van hun pensioenstelsels naargelang hun omstandigheden, zoals de Commissie zowel in haar groenboek ([3]) als in haar witboek ([4]) over dit onderwerp duidelijk heeft gesteld. In het werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie ([5]) wordt uitvoerig ingegaan op de EU-wetgeving, de dekking en aanverwante initiatieven die samen het pensioenkader van de EU vormen.

4. De Commissie heeft nota genomen van de bedenkingen van de Nederlandse Tweede Kamer ten aanzien van de subsidiariteit en evenredigheid van sommige van de in het witboek aangekondigde initiatieven. Bij de uitwerking van de in het witboek vermelde wetgevingsinitiatieven zal een effectbeoordeling worden opgesteld en zullen de gebruikelijke wetgevingsprocedures worden gevolgd ([6]). Dat betekent dat deze initiatieven ook onder de subsidiariteits- en evenredigheidscontrole van de nationale parlementen zullen vallen. De Raad en het Parlement zullen als medewetgevers bij de vaststelling het laatste woord hebben.

Andere maatregelen in het witboek zijn niet-bindend. In die gevallen zal Nederland uiteindelijk moeten beslissen of en in welke mate het wil samenwerken en beste praktijken wil uitwisselen om zijn eigen pensioenstelsel en dat van andere lidstaten te verbeteren.

5. Nee. Pensioenen zijn van cruciaal belang voor het bestrijden van armoede onder ouderen en voor de houdbaarheid van de overheidsfinanciën en maken deel uit van de Europa 2020-strategie. Daarom moet de Commissie steun blijven geven aan de lidstaten, die ervoor verantwoordelijk zijn hun burgers een adequaat, veilig en duurzaam pensioen te garanderen. De antwoorden op het groenboek geven duidelijk aan dat hiervoor brede steun bestaat en het witboek, dat hierop voortbouwt, heeft over het geheel genomen een gunstig onthaal gevonden.

([1]) COM(2012)0055.
([2]) http://www.tweedekamer.nl/images/Standpuntnotitie_pensioenen_118-228196.pdf
([3]) „Groenboek: naar adequate, houdbare en zekere Europese pensioenstelsels", Brussel, 7.7.2010, COM(2010)365 definitief.
([4]) Witboek „Een agenda voor adequate, veilige en duurzame pensioenen", Brussel, 16.2.2012, COM(2012)55 final.
([5]) Werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie „EU legislation, coverage and related initiatives — Accompanying document to the Green Paper towards adequate, sustainable and safe European pension systems (COM(2010)365 final", Brussel, 7.7.2010, SEC(2010)830 final.
([6]) Afhankelijk van de rechtsgrondslag.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006452/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: White paper on pensions

1. Is the Commission familiar with the White Paper 'An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions' ([1]) and the position of the Netherlands House of Representatives concerning it ([2])?

2. That position indicates that the House of Representatives considers the Commission's White Paper to be contrary to the subsidiarity and proportionality principles (Article 5 TEU); the House of Representatives does not consider that the Commission has the power to concern itself with pensions. Does the Commission agree? If not, why not? Can the Commission adduce legal arguments to show that it does have the power?

3. The Netherlands Parliament wonders whether there is any European interest at stake and whether powers relating to the matter are vested in the EU. Does the Commission consider there to be a European interest at stake and believe that powers relating to the matter are vested in the EU? If so, what? Can the Commission explain its position?

4. Can the Commission indicate how the Netherlands can oppose the White Paper, other than by means of the yellow and orange card procedures?

5. Will the Commission withdraw the White Paper? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2012)

1. Yes.

2 and 3. Member States have the primary responsibility for designing their pension systems according to their circumstances, as the Commission made clear, both in the Green Paper ([3]) consultation and in the White Paper ([4]). The Commission Staff Working Document ([5]) sets out in detail the European Union legislation, coverage and related initiatives that make up the pensions framework at Union level.

4. The Commission has taken note of the concerns expressed by the Dutch House of representatives with regard to the subsidiarity and proportionality of some of the initiatives announced in the White Paper. Legislative initiatives foreseen in the White Paper will be prepared by means of an impact assessment and are subject to the usual legislative procedures ([6]). This means that they will also be subject to the subsidiarity and proportionality control of national parliaments. Council and Parliament as co-legislators will have the last word for their adoption.

Other measures foreseen by the White paper have a non-binding character and it will therefore ultimately be for the Netherlands to decide if and to what extent it wants to cooperate and share best practice in order to improve its own and other Member States' pension systems.

5. No. Given the vital importance of pensions both for avoiding poverty in old age and for the sustainability of public finances recognised as part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission must continue to support Member States in meeting their responsibility to provide adequate, sustainable and safe pensions for their citizens. The responses to the Green Paper consultation show there is broad support for this and the White Paper, which takes this forward, has, in general, been welcomed.

([1]) COM(2012)0055.
([2]) http://www.tweedekamer.nl/images/Standpuntnotitie_pensioenen_118-228196.pdf
([3]) 'Green Paper: towards adequate, sustainable and safe European pension systems' Brussels, 7.7.2010 COM(2010)365 final.
([4]) White Paper 'An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions' Brussels, 16.2.2012 COM(2012) 55 final.
([5]) SEC(2010) 830 final Commission staff working document 'EU legislation, coverage and related initiatives' Accompanying document to the Green Paper towards adequate, sustainable and safe European pension systems {COM(2010)365 final} Brussels, 7.7.2010.
([6]) Depending on their legal base.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-006466/12
a Bizottság számára
Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D)
(2012. június 27.)

Tárgy: A víz-keretirányelv előírásainak betartása Magyarországon

A magyar Vidékfejlesztési Minisztérium 2012 júniusától felfüggesztette a VITUKI Környezetvédelmi és Vízgazdálkodási Kutató Intézet költségvetési támogatását. A döntés következményeként a 120 éves múlttal rendelkező intézet kénytelen volt felfüggeszteni az általa végzett közérdekű tevékenységeket. Az intézet kezelte az országos vízállási jelentéseket, szolgáltatta a hajózási adatokat a Duna magyarországi szakaszára vonatkozóan, és vízminőségi vizsgálatokat végzett: többek között olyan anyagok koncentrációját mérte, amelyek elsőbbségi anyagnak, vagy elsőbbségi veszélyes anyagnak minősülnek a vízpolitika területén a környezetminőségi előírásokról szóló 2008/105/EK irányelv, illetve a víz-keretirányelv szerint.

A VITUKI hatáskörét részben átvállaló, a közelmúltban felállított Nemzeti Környezetügyi Intézet nem lesz képes ellátni elődje feladatait. Költségvetési támogatása, infrastrukturális és humán kapacitása ugyanis nem éri el a szükséges színvonalat.

1. Megvizsgálja-e az Európai Bizottság, hogy az új magyar intézményrendszer megfelel-e a víz-keretirányelv előírásainak?

2. Figyelemmel követi-e a Bizottság, hogy Magyarország teljesíti-e a víz-keretirányelv által előírt jelentéstételi kötelezettségeit?

3. A Bizottság értékelése szerint a közelmúltban történt intézményi változások hogyan befolyásolják Magyarország lehetőségeit a Duna régióra vonatkozó uniós stratégia megvalósításában való részvételre?

Janez Potočnik válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2012. augusztus 16.)

A Bizottság jelenleg azt vizsgálja, hogyan teljesítik a tagállamok a 2000/60/EK irányelv (a víz-keretirányelv) ([1]) előírásait, és értékeli vízgyűjtő-gazdálkodási terveiket. A Bizottság e vizsgálat eredményeit az európai vízkincs megőrzésére irányuló, várhatóan 2012 novemberére elkészülő tervben fogja közzétenni.

A Bizottság reményei szerint a magyar hatóságok biztosítani fogják a megkezdett és a tervezett munkák folytatását.

A Duna régióra vonatkozó uniós stratégiát a magyarországi intézményi változások csak közvetetten érintik. A belvízi hajóutakért és a három környezetvédelmi prioritásért felelős intézetek megfelelő intézményi támogatásának hiánya hátrányosan érintheti Magyarország abbéli kapacitását, hogy aktív szerepet töltsön be ezen prioritások megvalósításában, következésképpen hátrányosan befolyásolhatja a Duna régióra vonatkozó közös fellépések és projektek megvalósítását.

([1]) HL L 327., 2000.12.22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006466/12
to the Commission
Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Compliance with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive in Hungary

Starting from June 2012, Hungary's Ministry of Regional Development suspended budget support to the Environmental Protection and Water Management Research Institute (VITUKI). As a result, the 120-year-old institute was forced to suspend its public interest activities. The institute dealt with the country's water status reports, provided information on navigation for the Hungarian stretch of the Danube and carried out water quality tests, measuring, among other things, the concentration of substances categorised in water policy terms as priority substances or priority hazardous substances, in accordance with Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards and the Water Framework Directive.

Although the institute's tasks are to some extent transferable, the recently-established National Environment Institute will not be able to undertake them all owing to insufficient budget support, infrastructure and human resources.

1. Is the Commission investigating whether the new Hungarian institutional system complies with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive?

2. Is the Commission keeping track of whether Hungary is fulfilling its reporting obligations set out in the Water Framework Directive?

3. How, in the Commission's assessment, will the recent institutional changes influence Hungary's potential for implementing the EU strategy on the Danube region?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

The Commission is currently investigating how Member States fulfil the requirements of Directive 2000/60/EC on the Water Framework Directive ([1]) while conducting an assesment of their River Basin Management Plans. The Commission will publish its findings in the framework of the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources planned for November 2012.

The Commission expects the Hungarian authorities to ensure the continuation of ongoing and planned work.

The implementation of the the EU strategy on the Danube region itself is only indirectly affected by the institutional changes in Hungary. The lack of appropriate institutional support in the institutions covering the inland waterways and the 3 environmental priorities may affect the capacity of Hungary to play an active role in the implementation of those priorities and, subsequently affect the successful implementation of joint actions and projects in the Danube Region.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006467/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(27 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Corruzione: maglia nera per l'Italia. Il futuro della Convezione di Strasburgo del 1999

Il fenomeno della corruzione in Italia non è qualcosa di nuovo, circoscritto agli ultimi scandali concernenti il finanziamento dei partiti politici. Questi rappresentano solo la punta dell'iceberg di un fenomeno sociale che opprime la parte «sana» della società e grava sulle casse dello Stato. La Corte dei Conti ha stimato in 60 miliardi all'anno il costo della corruzione in Italia. Ovvero mediamente 1 000 euro a cittadino. Secondo il recente rapporto sulla corruzione internazionale stilato da Transparency International, l'Italia è scesa dal 29°posto nel 2001, al 67°posto nel 2010, insieme a Georgia, Brasile, Guatemala ed Egitto. A ciò, va aggiunto il costo dei mancati investimenti esteri, proprio a causa degli elevati indici di corruzione.

Uno studio del 2007 sul fenomeno della corruzione in Italia, compiuto dall'Alto commissario anticorruzione, evidenzia che fra i diversi settori usati per valutare l'integrità italiana — il parlamento, l'esecutivo, il sistema giudiziario, il settore pubblico, le forze dell'ordine, la direzione centrale dei servizi elettorali, il difensore civico, la Corte dei conti, l'autorità anticorruzione, i partiti, i media, la società civile e il settore privato — la maglia nera spetta proprio a questi ultimi. I dati e le risultanze che emergono dall'ultimo rapporto del Gruppo degli Stati del Consiglio d'Europa contro la corruzione (GRECO) non sono migliori.

L'Italia è stata valutata alla plenaria del GRECO in Strasburgo il 20-23 marzo 2012 e, nella politica di lotta alla corruzione del paese, sono emerse lacune profonde nel sistema legislativo nazionale, a cominciare dal fatto che ad oggi non ha ancora ratificato la Convenzione penale sulla corruzione del 27 gennaio 1999, né il Protocollo aggiuntivo del 15 maggio 2003, pur aderendovi e avendo partecipato alla sua elaborazione (sono trascorsi oltre 13 anni). Nelle raccomandazioni finali del GRECO le autorità italiane sono invitate ad autorizzare il più presto possibile la pubblicazione del Report, possibilmente tradotto in lingua italiana. Nel sito internet del GRECO tutti i Report della terza valutazione sono pubblici, con l'eccezione di quelli relativi a Italia e Russia. La via d'uscita da corruzione, evasione fiscale e riciclaggio di denaro, potrebbe essere quella di ascoltare la voce degli imprenditori che lamentano la concorrenza fatta da chi può disporre di soldi provenienti dalla criminalità organizzata, introducendo fattispecie penali ad hoc e riformando quelle attuali previste dal Codice Rocco. Inoltre, si dovrebbe valutare la reintroduzione del reato di «falso in bilancio», che anche l'OCSE considera strumento efficace di contrasto all'evasione fiscale. Infine, si dovrebbe riesaminare la fattispecie penale di concussione.

Può la Commissione riferire su come intende intervenire per combattere il fenomeno della corruzione in Italia e garantire la ratifica della summenzionata Convenzione?

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

La Commissione segue con attenzione le politiche di lotta alla corruzione attuate dagli Stati membri, Italia inclusa, e si avvale per questo del meccanismo di relazione dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione («relazione dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione») istituito nell'ambito del pacchetto anticorruzione nel giugno del 2011. La relazione dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione è uno strumento in grado di stimolare la volontà politica laddove la lotta alla corruzione langue, promuovere le buone pratiche e incoraggiare gli Stati membri a rispettare gli standard concordati a livello internazionale. La relazione è gestita dalla Commissione e sarà pubblicata ogni due anni a partire dalla seconda metà del 2013.

La Commissione conosce bene le particolari difficoltà che pone la corruzione in Italia e proprio per questo la incoraggia a adottare una nuova legislazione anticorruzione, ad accelerare il processo di riforma generale delle sue politiche in materia, a eliminare gli eventuali ostacoli che favoriscono un regime di impunità e a dar seguito alle più recenti raccomandazioni del GRECO in tema di finanziamento dei partiti e di incriminazione dei reati di corruzione. Si fa notare che i rapporti sull'Italia per il terzo ciclo di valutazione del GRECO sono disponibili sul sito web del gruppo dall'aprile di quest'anno.

Per quanto concerne la Convenzione penale del Consiglio d'Europa sulla corruzione e il suo Protocollo, la Commissione ha segnalato già nella comunicazione sulla lotta contro la corruzione nell'UE, del 6 giugno 2011, gli Stati membri che non hanno ancora ratificato questi strumenti, sollecitandoli a compiere i passi necessari per portare a termine l'iter di ratifica. La relazione dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione includerà anche analisi per paese e terrà conto delle raccomandazioni in attesa di attuazione di altri meccanismi di monitoraggio, come il GRECO e l'OCSE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006467/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Corruption: booby prize for Italy. The future for the 1999 Strasbourg Convention

Corruption in Italy is not something new, limited to the latest scandals concerning the financing of political parties. These represent just the tip of the iceberg of a social phenomenon which afflicts the 'healthy' part of society and weighs upon the coffers of the state. The Corte dei Conti [state audit court] has estimated the cost of corruption in Italy at 60 billion euros per year. That is an average of 1 000 euros per citizen. According to the recent report on international corruption drawn up by Transparency International, Italy fell from 29th position in 2001 to 67th position in 2010, together with Georgia, Brazil, Guatemala and Egypt. To this must be added the cost of missed foreign investments, precisely because of the high level of corruption.

A 2007 study into corruption in Italy, carried out by the Anti-corruption High Commissioner, shows that among the various sectors used to evaluate Italian integrity — i.e. Parliament, the executive, the judicial system, the public sector, the security forces, the central directorate of electoral services, the ombudsman, the state audit court, the anti-corruption body, the parties, the media, civil society and the private sector — the booby prize goes to the latter ones. The data and the results which emerge from the latest report of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) are not any better.

Italy was evaluated at the plenary session of GRECO in Strasbourg from 20 to 23 March 2012 and some serious defects in the legislative system emerged in the country's fight against corruption, starting with the fact that up to now it has not ratified the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption of 27 January 1999 or the additional Protocol of 15 May 2003, despite having signed it and previously taken part in its preparation (which took over 13 years). In GRECO's final recommendations the Italian authorities were called upon to authorise the publication of the report as soon as possible, possibly translated into Italian. On GRECO's Internet site all the reports of the third evaluation are published, with the exception of those for Italy and Russia. The way out of the corruption, tax evasion and money laundering could be to listen to the voices of the businessmen who complain of the competition from those who have access to money coming from organised crime, to lay down additional definitions of criminal offences on an ad hoc basis and to reform those embodied in the Rocco Code. In addition, one should consider the reintroduction of the offence of 'false accounting', which the OECD also considers an effective instrument for fighting tax evasion. Finally the definition of extortion under the criminal law should be re-examined.

In this regard, can the Commission state how it intends to intervene to combat the phenomenon of corruption in Italy and ensure ratification of the abovementioned Convention?

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

The Commission is closely following the implementation of the anti-corruption policies in all Member States, including Italy, in the framework of the EU anti-corruption reporting mechanism ('EU Anti-Corruption Report') set up through the anti-corruption package adopted in June 2011. The EU Anti-Corruption Report is an instrument which can boost political will where the fight against corruption is lagging behind, promote good practices and encourage Member States to maintain the internationally-agreed standards. The report is managed by the Commission and will be published every two years, beginning the second half of 2013.

The Commission is fully aware of the particular challenges that the fight against corruption raises in Italy. In this context, the Commission encourages the adoption of new anti-corruption legislation, the speeding up of the overall anti-corruption reform process, the removal of any obstacles that favour an impunity regime for corruption and the follow-up of the most recent GRECO recommendations on party funding and incrimination of corruption offences. It must be noted that the reports on Italy for the third round of the GRECO evaluation have been available on GRECO's website since April this year.

As regards the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption and its Protocol, in the communication on Fighting Corruption in the EU of 6 June 2011 the Commission already pointed to the Member States that have not ratified these instruments and called for immediate steps towards ratification. The EU Anti-Corruption Report will also comprise individual country assessments and will take account of the outstanding recommendations issued by other relevant monitoring mechanisms, such as GRECO and OECD.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-006479/12
Komisijai
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(2012. gada 27. jūnijs)

Temats: Gaisa kvalitātes novērtēšana Latvijā

Komisija 2010. gada 30. septembrī atgādināja Latvijai, ka tā nav izpildījusi savas saistības, un aicināja Latviju izstrādāt programmu gaisa kvalitātes uzlabošanai, kura bija jāīsteno līdz 2011. gada 11. jūnijam.

1. Vai Latvija ir izstrādājusi šādu programmu, un, ja tā ir izstrādāta, vai to ir izdevies īstenot?

2. Cik bieži Komisija novērtē gaisa kvalitāti Latvijā?

3. Kādus kritērijus un normatīvus piemēro, vērtējot gaisa kvalitāti Latvijā?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Janess Potočniks
(2012. gada 16. augusts)

1. Komisijai šāda sarakste ar Latviju par to, kā ir izpildītas saistības attiecībā uz gaisa kvalitāti, 2010. gada 30. septembrī nav reģistrēta. Latvija ir izpildījusi Direktīvas 2008/50/EK ([1]) 27. panta 2. punktā noteikto pienākumu darīt pieejamu informāciju par gaisa kvalitāti, to par 2009. gadu iesniedzot noteiktajā termiņā – pirms 2010. gada 30. septembra. Latvija ir ievērojusi termiņu arī 2011. gadā, iesniedzot informāciju par gaisa kvalitāti attiecībā uz 2010. gadu.

Tāpat Komisija nav arī aicinājusi Latviju izstrādāt programmu gaisa kvalitātes uzlabošanai, kuru būtu bijis jāīsteno līdz 2011. gada 11. jūnijam. Šis datums – 2011. gada 11. jūnijs – ir minēts Direktīvas 2008/50/EK 22. panta 2. punktā kā termiņš, līdz kuram tiek pagarināts atbrīvojums no PM_{10} robežlielumu piemērošanas. Latvija iesniedza paziņojumu par šādu termiņa pagarinājumu 2009. gadā, pret kuru Komisija cēla iebildumus savā 2009. gada 28. septembra lēmumā. Kopš tā laika norit pārkāpuma procedūra pret Latviju par PM_{10} robežlielumu neievērošanu.

Tomēr saistībā ar paziņojumu par termiņa pagarinājumu attiecībā uz slāpekļa dioksīda (NO_2) robežlielumiem Latvija 2012. gada 12. oktobrī iesniedza rīcības programmu gaisa kvalitātes uzlabošanai Rīgas pilsētā. Šajā programmā izvirzīts mērķis samazināt PM_{10} un NO_2 piesārņojumu.

2. un 3. Komisija novērtē rezultātus, kas sasniegti dalībvalstīs, īstenojot rīcības plānus un programmas gaisa kvalitātes uzlabošanai, izmantodama ikgadējos datus, kas atspoguļoti dalībvalstu iesniegtajos gada ziņojumos par gaisa kvalitāti. Komisija analizē, vai gaisa kvalitātes zonās ir konstatēta robežlielumu pārsniegšana, un apzina vispārējās gaisa kvalitātes tendences. Kritēriji, ko izmanto šajā novērtējumā, ir noteikti Direktīvā 2008/50/EK un jo īpaši tās XI pielikuma B daļā.

([1]) Eiropas Parlamenta un Padomes 2008. gada 21. maija Direktīva 2008/50/EK par gaisa kvalitāti un tīrāku gaisu Eiropai (OV L 152, 11.6.2008., 1. lpp.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006479/12
to the Commission
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(27 June 2012)

Subject: Air quality assessment in Latvia

On 30 September 2010 the Commission reminded Latvia that it had not fulfilled its commitments and called upon Latvia to draft an air quality improvement programme which had to be implemented by 11 June 2011.

1. Has Latvia drafted such a programme, and, if so, has it managed to implement it?

2. How often the does Commission assess air quality in Latvia?

3. What criteria and regulations are applied in the assessment of air quality in Latvia?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

1. The Commission had no correspondence with Latvia on 30 September 2010 regarding the fulfilment of its air quality commitments. Latvia fulfilled its obligation to submit the information on ambient air quality required by Article 27(2) of Directive 2008/50/EC ([1]) for 2009 before the deadline of 30 September 2010. Latvia also met the deadline in 2011 for provision of air quality information for 2010.

Nor has the Commission called on Latvia to draft an air quality improvement programme by 11 June 2011. That date is mentioned in Article 22 (2) of Directive 2008/50/EC as the deadline for a Time Extension Notification for PM_{10}. Latvia submitted a notification of such a time extension in 2009 but the Commission raised objections against it in Commission decision of 28 September 2009. Since then an infringement procedure is ongoing against Latvia for breach of the PM_{10} limit value.

However, in the context of the notification for time extension for NO_2, Latvia submitted an air quality improvement action programme for Riga City on 12 October 2011. This programme aims to reduce pollution of PM_{10} and NO_2.

2 and 3. The Commission assesses the effects of air quality action plans and programmes in Member States by using the annual data from the annual report on ambient air quality provided by the Member States. The Commission analyses if there are any exceedances in the air quality zones and looks for trends in ambient air quality. Directive 2008/50/EC, in particular its Annex XI.B provides the criteria for this assessment.

([1]) Directive 2008/50/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006489/12
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Freshwater objectives

The Commission claims that a 'substantial proportion of Europe's freshwaters are at risk of not achieving the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive by 2015' ([1]). The most up-to-date figures are from 2009 ([2]) and set out those freshwaters most at risk. Does the Commission have a more up-to-date assessment of which freshwaters, in each Member State, will not achieve the objectives of the framework directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2012)

The Commission has so far published two reports to the Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([3]), in 2007 and 2009. They cover important preparatory steps for the adoption of the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs), themselves key to the directive's implementation ([4]).

In accordance with Article 18 of the WFD, the Commission is currently preparing a third report based on the assessment of the RBMPs reported by Member States. The Commission intends to publish this report in November 2012, as part of the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources. The report should highlight the main achievements, but also the gaps and deficiencies in the implementation of the directive. It should also contain suggestions for a better implementation of the directive in the WFD's second planning cycle.

The report will be accompanied by individual Member States assessments presenting an up-to-date picture of the status of EU waters with regard to the WFD's objective of achieving good ecological status.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/innovationpartnership/pdf/com_2012_216.pdf
([2]) Note for Water Directors, 'Preliminary analysis of the River Basin Management Plans in 2009'. Water; Directors meeting, Warsaw, 8-9 December 2011.
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([4]) The implementation reports are available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/implrep2007/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006493/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(28 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ανησυχητικές δηλώσεις του πρώην πρωθυπουργού της ΠΓΔΜ, Λιούπτσο Γκεοργκιέφσκι

Ο πρώην πρωθυπουργός της Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβικής Δημοκρατίας της Μακεδονίας, Λιούπτσο Γκεοργκιέφσκι, σε δηλώσεις του ανέφερε χαρακτηριστικά ότι «στην κομμουνιστική Γιουγκοσλαβία είχε περισσότερη δημοκρατία από αυτήν που υπάρχει σήμερα στα Σκόπια με επικεφαλής τον Νικόλα Γκρούεφσκι». Επιπρόσθετα είπε, «είναι ντροπή να διαπιστώνει κανείς ότι τα τελευταία τέσσερα χρόνια στη χώρα αυτή υπάρχει λιγότερος χώρος για τη δημοκρατία, για την ελεύθερη συζήτηση και την ελεύθερη ενημέρωση απ' ό,τι στην πρώην κομμουνιστική Γιουγκοσλαβία». Οι δηλώσεις αυτές επίσημου πολιτικού είναι ιδιαίτερα ανησυχητικές και πρέπει να εξεταστούν σε βάθος.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η ΠΓΔΜ οραματίζεται να γίνει δημοκρατικό μέλος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει σοβαρά αυτές τις δηλώσεις ενός πρώην πρωθυπουργού της ΠΓΔΜ για έλλειψη δημοκρατίας, έλλειψη ελευθερίας λογού και ενημέρωση;

2. Με ποιο τρόπο σκοπεύει να εξασφαλίσει τον εκδημοκρατισμό της ΠΓΔΜ σε μια πορεία προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006494/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(28 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προκλητικές δηλώσεις Γκρούεφσκι περί πολιτικής γενοκτονίας από την Ελλάδα κατά της ΠΓΔΜ

Προκλητικές δηλώσεις έκανε χτες ο Πρωθυπουργός της ΠΓΔΜ κ. Γκρούεφσκι, ισχυριζόμενος ότι «η Ελλάδα ασκεί πολιτική γενοκτονία κατά της ΠΓΔΜ».

Ο κ. Γκρούεφσκι ανέφερε πως «η Ελλάδα ασκεί πολιτική γενοκτονία εναντίον μας. Αυτό που κάνει η Ελλάδα αφορά τη μοίρα των ανθρώπων, παρεμποδίζει την ένταξή μας σε ΝΑΤΟ και ΕΕ και όλα τα οφέλη που μπορούμε να έχουμε».

Είναι φανερό πως γι' ακόμα μια φορά η ΠΓΔΜ προκαλεί ανενόχλητη κράτος-μέλος της ΕΕ, με στόχο να υπονομεύσει τις διμερείς σχέσεις και να τροφοδοτήσει την συστηματική αρνητική προπαγάνδα της κυβέρνησης των Σκοπίων σε βάρος της Ελλάδας.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να αντιμετωπιστεί δραστικά η προκλητική πολιτική των Σκοπίων απέναντι σε χώρα-μέλος της ΕΕ, την ίδια στιγμή που η ΠΔΓΜ δηλώνει ότι επιθυμεί να ενταχθεί στην ευρωπαϊκή οικογένεια;

2. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να καταστήσει σαφές ότι τέτοιου είδους πολιτικές τακτικές δεν είναι αποδεκτές από τα κράτη-μέλη της ΕΕ;

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

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις δηλώσεις στις οποίες αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος και παρακολουθεί στενά τις εξελίξεις. Η δημοκρατία και ελευθερία της έκφρασης αποτελούν ουσιώδες στοιχείο της διαδικασίας με την οποία η πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας κινείται προς την κατεύθυνση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Η Επιτροπή εγκαινίασε τον ενταξιακό διάλογο υψηλού επιπέδου με την πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας με σκοπό να διατηρηθεί η δυναμική των μεταρρυθμίσεων. Ο διάλογος εστιάζεται σε πέντε βασικούς τομείς: προστασία της ελευθερίας της έκφρασης στα μέσα ενημέρωσης, ενίσχυση του κράτους δικαίου, μεταρρύθμιση της δημόσιας διοίκησης, βελτίωση της εκλογικής διαδικασίας και ανάπτυξη της οικονομίας της αγοράς. Πρόσφατα, η κυβέρνηση ενέκρινε χάρτη πορείας ο οποίος περιλαμβάνει χρονοδιάγραμμα για κάθε μέτρο. Η αξιολόγηση της εκπλήρωσης των πολιτικών κριτηρίων από την χώρα θα παρουσιαστεί στην επικείμενη έκθεση προόδου του Οκτωβρίου 2012.

Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει συνεχώς σε όλες τις υποψήφιες για προσχώρηση στην ΕΕ χώρες τη σημασία των σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας και της διατήρησης εποικοδομητικού διαλόγου με τα γειτονικά κράτη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006493/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Worrying statements by former FYROM Prime Minister, Ljupco Georgievski

The former Prime Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Ljupco Georgievski, has made a statement claiming that 'there was more democracy in Communist Yugoslavia than today in Skopje under Nikola Gruevski'. He added 'it is a disgrace to see that, over the last four years in this country, there has been less room for democracy, freedom of discussion and freedom of information than there was in the former Communist Yugoslavia'. These statements made by a leading politician are particularly worrying and must be investigated in depth.

Given that FYROM aspires to become a democratic member of the European Union:

1. Has the Commission taken these statements made by the former Prime Minister of the FYROM on the lack of democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of information seriously?

2. In what way does it intend to ensure the democratisation of FYROM in its course towards EU membership?

Question for written answer E-006494/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Provocative statements by Prime Minister Gruevski referring to Greece's 'political genocide' against FYROM

Yesterday, the Prime Minister of FYROM made a number of provocative statements claiming that 'Greece is committing political genocide against FYROM'.

Mr Gruevski said that 'Greece is committing political genocide against us. Its actions are affecting people's destinies, impeding our entry into NATO and the EU and depriving us of all the benefits we could have'.

It is evident that, once again, FYROM is unjustifiably provoking an EU Member State in a bid to undermine bilateral relations and fuel the systematic hostile propaganda being directed against Greece by the Skopje Government.

In view of this:

1. What measures does the Commission propose to take to deal effectively with the systematic provocation of an EU Member State by Skopje, in view of FYROM's avowed desire to be accepted as part of the European family?

2. What measures does it intend to take to make it clear that such political tactics are unacceptable to EU Member States?

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

The Commission is aware of the statements to which the Honourable Member refers and has been following developments closely. Democracy and freedom of expression form an essential part of the process of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in moving towards the European Union.

The Commission launched the High Level Accession Dialogue with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to maintain the momentum of the reform process. The Dialogue focuses on five key areas: protecting freedom of expression in the media, strengthening the rule of law, reforming public administration, improving the election process and developing the market economy. A roadmap, including the definition of the timeframe for each measure, was recently adopted by the government. The assessment of the country's fulfilment of the political criteria will be delivered in the upcoming Progress Report in October in 2012.

The Commission continuously reminds all EU candidate countries of the importance of good neighbourly relations and of maintaining a constructive dialogue with neighbouring states.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-006495/12
Komisijai
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(2012. gada 28. jūnijs)

Temats: Vienotā maksājuma shēma

Lai atvieglotu Eiropas Savienības iedzīvotājiem starptautisko bankas pārskaitījumu veikšanu, Komisija 2010. gadā ierosināja, sākot ar 2012. gadu, Eiropas Savienībā ieviest vienotā maksājuma shēmu. Tika plānots, ka starptautiskie pārskaitījumi būs bez maksas un ka adresāts pārskaitījumu saņems ne vēlāk kā dienu pēc tā veikšanas.

Kas ir izdarīts un kas vēl tiks darīts, lai šo priekšlikumu īstenotu?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Mišels Barnjē
(2012. gada 14. augusts)

Komisija 2010. gada decembrī iesniedza priekšlikumu jaunam tiesību aktam, ar kuru izveido ES mēroga noteikumus kredīta pārvedumiem un tiešā debeta maksājumiem euro valūtā, – Eiropas vienoto maksājumu shēmu. Šis priekšlikums tika pieņemts 2012. gada martā kā Regula (ES) Nr. 260/2012, ar ko nosaka tehniskās un darbības prasības kredīta pārvedumiem un tiešā debeta maksājumiem euro un groza Regulu (EK) Nr. 924/2009. Ar regulu dalībvalstīm ir uzlikts pienākums pārcelt visus euro valūtā veiktos maksājumus uz jauno sistēmu līdz 2014. gada 1. februārim (līdz 2016. gada 31. oktobrim tām valstīm, kas nav eurozonas valstis).

Tomēr Regulā Nr. 260/2012 nav reglamentēti Eiropas Savienībā veikto pārrobežu maksājumu izpildes termiņi un maksas. Šie jautājumi jau ir aptverti ES tiesību aktos, attiecīgi Direktīvā 2007/64/EK par maksājumu pakalpojumiem iekšējā tirgū un Regulā (EK) Nr. 924/2009 par pārrobežu maksājumiem euro valūtā.

Maksājumu pakalpojumu direktīvas 68. pantā norādīts, ka maksājumiem, kuriem nav nepieciešama valūtas konversija, vai maksājumu darījumiem, kuros notiek tikai viena konversija no euro tādas valsts valūtā, kura nav eurozonā, līdzekļu ieskaitīšana saņēmējam parasti notiek ne vēlāk kā līdz nākamās darbdienas beigām. Regulas Nr. 924/2009 3. pantā noteikts, ka maksa par pārrobežu maksājumiem euro valūtā ir tāda pati kā maksa, ko iekasē par tādas pašas vērtības iekšzemes maksājumiem euro valūtā.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006495/12
to the Commission
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Single payment system

In 2010, the Commission proposed introducing a single payment system in the EU from 2012 to make it easier for citizens and companies to carry out international bank transfers. The plan was that international payments should be free of charge and that amounts should reach their recipients no later than the day after the transfers are made.

What has been and will be done to implement this proposal?

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

In December 2010 the Commission presented a proposal for the law that sets up EU-wide rules for execution of credit transfers and direct debits in euro through a new, common European payment system. This proposal has been adopted in March 2012 as Regulation (EU) No 260/2012 establishing technical and business requirements for credit transfers and direct debits in euro and amending Regulation (EC) No 924/2009. The regulation obliges Member States to migrate their euro payments to the new system by 1 February 2014 (31 October 2016 for non-euro area countries).

Regulation (EC) No 260/2012 does not, however, address execution times and charges for cross-border payments within the EU. These issues are already covered in the EC law, respectively by Directive 2007/64/EC on payment services in the internal market (PSD) and by Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 on cross-border payments in euro.

Article 68 (and following) of the PSD indicates that, in general, for payments that do not require currency conversion or for payment transactions involving only one currency conversion between the euro and the currency of a Member State outside the euro area the funds should be credited to the recipient no later than by the end of the next business day. Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 stipulates that charges for cross-border payments in euro should be the same as charges for corresponding national payments in euro of the same value.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006504/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(28 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Is-Serbja

Ftit wara li s-Serbja ngħatat l-istatus ta' kandidat nhar l-1 ta' Marzu 2012, in-nazzjonalist Tomislav Nikolic dan l-aħħar rebaħ kontra l-liberali Boris Tadic (li kien fis-setgħa) fl-elezzjoni presidenzjali tas-Serbja. Minkejja li wiegħed li s-Serbja se tibqa' impenjata favur l-ambizzjonijiet tagħha għal sħubija fl-UE, tqanqal xi thassib dwar l-imgħoddi ta' Nikolic u l-pożizzjoni tiegħu dwar il-Kosovo.

B'liema mod tistenna l-Kummissjoni li dan l-eżitu elettorali se jolqot il-proċess ta' tisħib tas-Serbja?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Füle f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(7 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Tomislav Nikolić kien elett bħala l-President il-ġdid fl-20 ta' Mejju 2012 u gvern ġdid li joħroġ mill-elezzjonijiet ġenerali f'Mejju li għadda għandu jidħol fil-kariga fl-aħħar ta' Lulju 2012.

L-intenzjonijiet tal-President u tal-gvern futur huma ċari. Dawn ġew irreġistrati fil-ftehim ta' koalizzjoni fl-10 ta' Lulju 2012, li jinkludi l-impenn qawwi li jissaħħaħ il-proċess tal-integrazzjoni Ewropea u biex jissaħħaħ l-istat tad-dritt u l-ġlieda kontra l-korruzzjoni u l-kriminalità organizzata. Hemm impenn sabiex tkun imfittxija il-kooperazzjoni tajba u r-rikonċiljazzjoni fir-reġjun. Fir-rigward tal-Kosovo ([1]), hemm aċċettazzjoni tar-riżultati miksuba sa issa mid-djalogu bejn Belgrad u Pristina u impenn għall-kontinwazzjoni ta' dak id-djalogu, li jibda bl-implimentazzjoni tal-ftehim milħuq sal-lum. Dawn l-impenji huma wkoll konformi mal-fatt li s-Serbja issa hi pajjiż kandidat.

Minn issa 'l quddiem dak li se jkun tal-akbar importanza huwa sa liema punt dawn l-intenzjonijiet tajba jkunu tradotti f'azzjoni konsistenti. Il-Kummissjoni se tivvaluta l-progress tas-Serbja skont dan. Billi s-Serbja għandha l-ambizzjoni li timxi għall-pass li jmiss — li jinfetħu n-negozjati dwar l-adeżjoni — hemm xogħol xi jsir għall-gvern il-ġdid.

([1]) Din id-deżinjazzjoni hija mingħajr preġudizzju għall-pożizzjonijiet dwar l-istatus, u hija konformi mal-UNSCR 1244/99 u l— Opinjoni tal-QIĠ dwar id-dikjarazzjoni ta' Indipendenza tal-Kosovo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006504/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Serbia

Shortly after Serbia was granted candidate status on 1 March 2012, nationalist Tomislav Nikolic defeated liberal incumbent Boris Tadic in Serbia's presidential election. Despite promising that Serbia will remain committed to its ambitions for EU membership, concerns have been raised over Nikolic's past and over his stance on Kosovo.

In what way does the Commission expect this electoral outcome to affect the accession process with Serbia?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

Tomislav Nikolić was elected as new President on 20 May 2012 and a new government stemming from the general elections last May should take up office end of July 2012.

The intentions of the president and of the future government are clear. They have been recorded in the coalition agreement sealed on 10 July 2012, which includes a strong pledge to step up the process of European integration and to strengthen the rule of law and fight against corruption and organised crime. There is commitment to pursue the good cooperation and reconciliation in the region. Regarding Kosovo ([1]), there is acceptance of the results of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue reached so far and commitment to the continuation of that dialogue starting with the implementation of the agreements reached to date. These commitments are well in line with the fact that Serbia is now a candidate country.

What will from now on matter most is to what extent these good intentions are translated into consistent action. The Commission will be assessing Serbia's progress accordingly. As Serbia has the ambition to move to the next step — opening of accession negotiations — there is work ahead for the incoming government.

([1]) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006506/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(28 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Is-Saħħa u s-Sigurtà fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol

Fil-Komunikazzjoni tagħha "Intejbu l-kwalità u l-produttività fuq ix-xogħol: Intejbu l-kwalità u l-produttività fuq ix-xogħol: strateġija Komunitarja 2007-2012 għas-saħħa u s-siġurtà fuq il-post tax-xogħol" (COM(2007)0062), il-Kummissjoni Ewropea għandha l-mira li tnaqqas l-inċidenza totali ta' inċidenti fuq il-post tax-xogħol b'25% sal-2012.

Meta wieħed iqis li t-terminu għal din l-istrateġija qed joqrob, tista' l-Kummissjoni tirrapporta fuq il-progress li sar f'dan is-sens u jekk din l-istrateġija hix miexja mal-pjan għall-ksib tal-objettiv prefissi tagħha?

Meta titqies l-importanza tal-garanzija tal-kwalità u l-produttività fuq il-post tax-xogħol għat-tkabbir ekonomiku u l-impjiegi, il-Kummissjoni qiegħda timmira li tniedi strateġiji ta' segwitu għal din li qed titħaddem bħalissa?

Tweġiba mogħtija f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Sa fejn l-Istrateġija tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa u s-Sigurtà fuq ix-Xogħol 2007-2012 laħqet l-għan tagħha tat-tnaqqis tal-inċidenza totali tal-aċċidenti fuq ix-xogħol b'25% tista' tiġi vvalutata biss ladarba d-dejta tal-Eurostat għall-2012 miġbura skont ir-Regolament (KE) Nru 1338/2008 ([1]) tkun disponibbli. Iċ-ċifri disponibbli għall-2007, l-2008 u l-2009 jindikaw li r-rata tal-aċċidenti qiegħda tkompli tonqos.

Il-Kummissjoni beħsiebha tippreżenta r-riżultati tal-evalwazzjoni finali tal-Istrateġija sa tmiem l-2012, billi tqis il-progress fl-oqsma li jiffokaw fuqhom l-istrateġiji nazzjonali. Fuq il-bażi ta' dawk ir-riżultati u wara konsultazzjoni estensiva tal-partijiet interessati, hija ser tressaq prijoritajiet strateġiċi għas-saħħa u s-sigurtà fuq il-post tax-xogħol għall-perjodu li jmiss.

([1]) Ir-Regolament (KE) Nru 1338/2008 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tas-16 ta' Diċembru 2008 dwar l-istatistika Komunitarja dwar is-saħħa pubblika u s-saħħa u s-sigurtà fuq ix-xogħol (ĠU L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 70).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006506/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Health and safety at work

In its communication 'Improving quality and productivity at work: Community strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work' (COM(2007)0062), the Commission aims to reduce the total incidence rate of accidents at work by 25 % by 2012.

Given that the deadline for this strategy is approaching, can the Commission report on any progress made in this regard, and confirm whether this strategy is on track to achieve its set objectives?

Given the importance for economic growth and employment of guaranteeing quality and productivity at work, is it the Commission's aim to launch any follow-up strategies to the one currently in place?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2012)

The extent to which the EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work 2007-2012 has achieved its objective of reducing the total incidence of accidents at work by 25 % can only be assessed once Eurostat data for 2012 collected pursuant to Regulation (EC) 1338/2008 ([1]) are available. The figures available for 2007, 2008 and 2009 suggest that the accident rate continues to decline.

The Commission intends to present the results of the final evaluation of the strategy by the end of 2012, taking account of progress in the areas on which national strategies focus. On the basis of those results and following a wide consultation of the stakeholders, it will put forward strategic priorities for health and safety at work for the forthcoming period.

([1]) Regulation (EC) 1338/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on Community statistics on public health and health and safety at work, OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 70.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006513/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(28 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Il-ħżin tal-merkurju

Fi sforz ħalli titnaqqas l-espożizzjoni għall-periklu potenzjali tal-merkurju, l-UE ħadet għadd ta' miżuri, inkluż ir-Regolament Nru 1102/2008 li jipprojbixxi l-esportazzjoni tal-merkurju metalliku u varji komposti tal-merkurju u jirrikjedi li l-Istati Membri jiżguraw rimi "sigur" tal-merkurju utilizzat minn ċerti attivitajiet industrijali jew prodott minnhom. Dan ifisser il-ħżin temporanju fuq l-art, jew taħtha, ta' dan il-materjal. Id-Direttia 2011/97/UE tippreskrivi li dan ir-Regolament sar obsolet, u li jeħtieġ li ssir valutazzjoni addizjonali tal-ħtiġiet ta' ħżin fit-tul. B'dana kollu, id-Direttiva nnifisha taċċentwa regolazzjoni ġdida għall-ħżin temporanju biss.

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma li kien hemm studji li jaċċertaw li ma hemm l-ebda impatt ambjentali serju ta' dawn il-faċilitajiet ta' ħżin "temporanju"? Liema riċerka għaddejja bħalissa ħalli jinstabu mezzi aktar sostenibbli ta' rimi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(1 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Skont l-Artikolu 4 tar-Regolament (KE) 1102/2008 ([1]), ir-rimi aħħari tal-merkurju metalliku huwa tabilħaqq mhux permess qabel ma l-kriterji speċifiċi ta' aċċettazzjoni għall-merkurju metalliku fil-miżbliet jkunu definiti billi jiġu emendati l-Annessi I, II u III tad-Direttiva 1999/31/KE (id-Direttiva dwar il-Miżbliet).

Id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 2011/97/UE ddefinixxiet tali rekwiżiti għall-ħżin temporanju tal-merkurju metalliku fuq il-bażi ta' studju ([2]) kkummissjonat mill-Kummissjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni tkompli timmonitorja l-iżviluppi rilevanti u l-attivitajiet ta' riċerka f'dan il-qasam, b'attenzjoni partikolari lill-alternattivi għal rimi aħħari aktar sostenibbli tal-merkurju metalliku.

([1]) Ir-Regolament (KE)1102/2008, ĠU L 304, 14.11.2008.
([2]) Direttiva tal-Kunsill 2011/97/UE, ĠU L 328, 10.12.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006513/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Mercury storage

In an effort to lessen exposure to the potential dangers of mercury, the EU has taken a number of measures, including the adoption of Regulation No 1102/2008, which bans the export of metallic mercury and various mercury compounds and requires Member States to ensure the 'safe' disposal of mercury used in or produced by certain industrial activities. This involves the temporary above— and under-ground storage of the material. Directive 2011/97/EU decrees that this regulation has become obsolete and that additional assessments of long-term storage are needed. However, the directive itself lays down new provisions for temporary storage only.

Can the Commission confirm that studies have been made to ascertain that such 'temporary' storage facilities have no serious environmental impact? What research is currently being conducted to find more sustainable means of disposal?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2012)

According to Article 4 of Regulation (EC)1102/2008 ([1]), final disposal of metallic mercury is indeed not permitted before specific requirements for the acceptance of metallic mercury in landfills are defined by amending Annexes I, II, III of Directive 1999/31/EC (Landfill Directive) ([2]).

Council Directive 2011/97/EU ([3]) defined such requirements for the temporary storage of metallic mercury on the basis of a study ([4]) contracted by the Commission.

The Commission continues monitoring relevant developments and research activities in this field, giving particular attention to options for a more sustainable final disposal of metallic mercury.

([1]) Regulation (EC)1102/2008, OJ L 304, 14.11.2008.
([2]) Directive 1999/31/EC, OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([3]) Council Directive 2011/97/EU, OJ L 328, 10.12.2011.
([4]) Requirements for facilities and acceptance criteria for the disposal of metallic mercury, prepared for DG ENV by BiPRO GmbH, April 2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-006514/12
an die Kommission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(28. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: Zahlung der Umweltabgabe in der Region Brüssel-Hauptstadt durch die EU-Organe — Rechtsstreit zwischen der Kommission und Belgien

Seit der Liberalisierung des Gas- und Elektrizitätsmarktes in Belgien wird in der Region Brüssel-Hauptstadt bei den Gas- und Elektrizitätsversorgern eine Umweltabgabe erhoben. Die Mittel fließen in einen Fonds, mit dem Maßnahmen zur CO_2-Einsparung finanziert werden, z. B. Maßnahmen zur Energieeinsparung bei Gebäuden, bei der Straßenbeleuchtung (auch im „EU-Viertel“) usw.

Die Elektrizitäts- und Gasversorger stellen den EU-Organen diese Abgaben für den Elektrizitäts- und Gasverbrauch der von ihnen belegten Gebäude in der Region Brüssel-Hauptstadt in Rechnung. Die Kommission hat unter Verweis auf Artikel 3 des Protokolls Nr. 7 (Befreiung der EU-Organe von indirekten Steuern und Verkaufsabgaben) ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren nach Artikel 258 AEUV gegen Belgien eingeleitet und parallel Klage nach belgischem Recht eingereicht. Ziel ist es, eine Befreiung von den Abgaben durchzusetzen und die bisher gezahlten Abgaben erstattet zu bekommen.

1. Die Abgabe wird bei den Elektrizitäts- und Gasversorgern erhoben, nicht bei den Endverbrauchern (den EU-Organen). Warum ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die Abgabe eine Angelegenheit im Sinne des Artikels 3 des Protokolls Nr. 7 darstellt?

2. In der Pressemitteilung IP/12/183 ist von einem Betrag in Höhe von vier Millionen Euro die Rede, der im Zeitraum 2004-2008 von den EU-Organen gezahlt wurde. Zahlen die EU-Organe die Abgabe weiterhin oder wurde die Zahlung nach der Neuverhandlung der Verträge mit den Gas- und Elektrizitätsversorgern eingestellt?

3. Zum Erreichen der 20/20/20-Ziele fordert die EU von den Mitgliedstaaten konkrete Maßnahmen, um die CO_2-Emmissionen zu verringern und die Energieeffizienz zu erhöhen. Selbst wenn keine rechtliche Pflicht zur Zahlung der Abgabe bestünde — wäre es nicht angebracht, diese zweckgebundene Abgabe zu zahlen, um einen Beitrag zum Erreichen der EU-Ziele zu leisten und der Vorbildfunktion der EU gerecht zu werden?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(23. August 2012)

1. Nach Artikel 3 Absatz 2 des Protokolls über die Vorrechte und Befreiungen der Europäischen Union (PVB) ist die EU in den Mitgliedstaaten von indirekten Steuern und Verkaufsabgaben, die in den Preisen für bewegliche oder unbewegliche Güter inbegriffen sind, befreit, wenn sie für ihren Dienstbedarf größere Einkäufe tätigt, bei denen derartige Steuern und Abgaben im Preis enthalten sind. Nach Auffassung der Kommission ist die mit den Rechtsverordnungen zur Organisation des Marktes für Elektrizität und Erdgas in der Region Brüssel-Hauptstadt eingeführte Abgabe als eine indirekte Steuer im Sinne dieser Bestimmung anzusehen. Es trifft zu, dass indirekte Steuern in der Regel bei den Unternehmen erhoben werden, die sie dann bei der Abrechnung der Güter und Dienstleistungen auf den Endkunden abwälzen. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass diese Abgabe gemäß der Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs (Rs. C-191/94 und C-199/05) nicht als Vergütung für Leistungen gemeinnütziger Versorgungsbetriebe im Sinne von Artikel 3 Absatz 3 des genannten Protokolls betrachtet werden kann und dass sie demzufolge unter die Steuerbefreiung gemäß Absatz 2 fällt.

2. Die Organe der Union zahlen die Abgabe weiterhin, soweit deren Abwälzung auf den Kunden in den Lieferverträgen vorgesehen ist.

3. Die im Primärrecht vorgesehene Befreiung findet Anwendung, wenn die Bedingungen des Artikels 3 des Protokolls erfüllt sind, unabhängig davon, in welchem Bereich und zu welchem Zweck die Abgaben erhoben werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006514/12
to the Commission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Payment of the environmental levy in the Brussels Capital Region by the EU institutions — legal proceedings between the Commission and Belgium

Since the liberalisation of the gas and electricity market in Belgium, gas and electricity suppliers in the Brussels Capital Region have been required to pay an environmental levy. The revenue is transferred to a fund which is used to finance measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, for example energy-saving measures in buildings and street lighting (including in the 'European Quarter'), etc.

The gas and electricity suppliers pass these levies on to the EU institutions as part of their charges for the electricity and gas consumed in their buildings in the Brussels Capital Region. The Commission, invoking Article 3 of Protocol No 7 (exemption of the EU institutions from indirect taxes and sales taxes), has brought infringement proceedings against Belgium under Article 258 TFEU and, in parallel, brought an action under Belgian law. The aim is to obtain an exemption from the levies and a refund of the levies paid to date.

1. The levy is charged to electricity and gas suppliers, not final consumers (the European institutions). Why does the Commission consider the levy to be a matter to which Article 3 of Protocol No 7 applies?

2. Press Release IP/12/183 refers to a sum of EUR 4 million which is said to have been paid by the European institutions between 2004 and 2008. Are the European institutions continuing to pay the levy, or has payment ceased, following the renegotiation of the contracts with the gas and electricity suppliers?

3. In order to attain the 20/20/20 targets, the EU is demanding that Member States take practical measures to reduce CO_2 emissions and increase energy efficiency. Even if no legal obligation to pay the levy existed, would it not be appropriate to pay this assigned-revenue levy in order to help attain the EU's targets and to enable the EU to set an example?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(23 août 2012)

1. L'article 3, deuxième alinéa, du Protocole sur les privilèges et immunités de l'Union européenne (PPI) dispose que les États membres exonèrent l'Union du montant des droits indirects et de taxes à la vente entrant dans le prix de biens immobiliers ou mobiliers lorsque l'Union effectue pour son usage officiel des achats importants dont le prix comprend des droits et taxes de cette nature. La Commission estime que les droits établis par les ordonnances relatives à l'organisation du marché de l'électricité et du gaz en Région de Bruxelles-Capitale sont à qualifier d'impôts indirects au sens de cette disposition. En effet, dans le cadre des impôts indirects, le redevable est normalement l'opérateur économique qui, par la suite, répercute le montant des impôts au client final lors de la facturation de la fourniture des biens et services concernés. La Commission est d'avis qu'en application de la jurisprudence de la Cour de Justice (affaires C-191/94 et C-199/05) ces droits ne remplissent pas les critères pour qualifier de simple rémunération de services d'utilité générale au sens de l'article 3, troisième alinéa, du PPI et que, dès lors, ils tombent sous l'immunité fiscale prévue par le deuxième alinéa de cet article.

2. Les institutions de l'Union continuent à payer ces droits lorsque les contrats avec leurs fournisseurs prévoient la répercussion précitée.

3. Les exonérations établies par le droit primaire s'appliquent lorsque les conditions prévues à l'article 3 du PPI sont remplies, indépendamment du domaine couvert par les impôts en question et des actions que ceux-ci financent.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006516/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(28 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας της ΠΓΔΜ απέναντι στη Βουλγαρία

Ο βουλευτής της Βουλγαρίας Ντιμπάρ Στογιάνοφ απαίτησε να χαρακτηριστεί ο Σκοπιανός πρέσβης στη Σόφια ως «persona non grata» στη Βουλγαρία.

Η απαίτηση αυτή του βουλευτή του βουλγαρικού κοινοβουλίου ήρθε μετά την απόφαση του Ανώτατου Δικαστηρίου των Σκοπίων, το οποίο αποφάνθηκε για την στέρηση των γονικών δικαιωμάτων της Σπάρσκα Μίτροβα, η οποία δήλωσε ότι έχει την λεγόμενη «μακεδονική» υπηκοότητα, αλλά, εθνικά, δήλωσε ότι ήταν Βουλγάρα και για το θέμα αυτό δέχτηκε πολιτικές και διάφορες κοινωνικές πιέσεις από τις θεσμικές δομές των Σκοπίων.

«Το βουλγαρικό κράτος οφείλει να παρέμβει επειγόντως, όχι μόνο στην περίπτωση της Σπάρσκα Μίτροβα αλλά και σε άλλες παρόμοιες, οφείλει να αντιδράσει ακόμη και ο πρόεδρος της χώρας προκειμένου να δοθεί άσυλο στη Μίτροβα», δήλωσε ο βουλευτής της Βουλγαρίας.

Εάν αληθεύουν οι καταγγελίες του βουλευτή για παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει προκειμένου να καταστήσει σαφή στην ΠΓΔΜ την υποχρέωσή της να σέβεται και να τηρεί τις καλές σχέσεις γειτονίας και κατ' επέκταση να μην υπονομεύει τις διμερείς σχέσεις της με τα γειτονικά της κράτη όπως, είναι η Ελλάδα και, εν προκειμένω, η Βουλγαρία;

2. Τι μέτρα πρέπει να λάβει η Επιτροπή ώστε να ενημερωθεί και να υιοθετήσει τις συστάσεις της η ΠΓΔΜ, η οποία είναι χώρα υπό ένταξη στην ΕΕ, για τον σεβασμό των γονικών δικαιωμάτων, ιδιαίτερα μέσα στο πλαίσιο των σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Η πολιτική της Επιτροπής είναι να μην διατυπώνει σχόλια για ατομικές υποθέσεις. Δεδομένου ότι η πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας αποτελεί μέλος του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης, τα διάδικα μέρη θα μπορούσαν να εξετάσουν το ενδεχόμενο παραπομπής της υπόθεσής τους στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων, στο Στρασβούργο, αφού εξαντλήσουν όλα τα εγχώρια ένδικα μέσα.

Στο πλαίσιο του ενταξιακού διαλόγου υψηλού επιπέδου, η Επιτροπή επέλεξε την ενίσχυση του κράτους δικαίου ως έναν από τους βασικούς μεταρρυθμιστικούς στόχους της χώρας. Προς την κατεύθυνση αυτή, η χώρα έχει υιοθετήσει χάρτη πορείας που προσδιορίζει συγκεκριμένα μέτρα για τη μεταρρύθμιση του δικαστικού συστήματος, ιδίως τη βελτίωση της αποτελεσματικότητας, της ανεξαρτησίας και του επαγγελματισμού των δικαστικών λειτουργών. Η ΕΕ εμμένει επίσης στον σεβασμό και την προστασία των μειονοτικών και πολιτισμικών δικαιωμάτων, στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας προσχώρησης στην ΕΕ. Η προσεχής έκθεση προόδου, που πρόκειται να δημοσιευθεί τον Οκτώβριο, θα αξιολογήσει αυτούς και άλλους συναφείς τομείς.

Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει συστηματικά σε όλες τις υποψήφιες χώρες ότι η διατήρηση σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας είναι θεμελιώδους σημασίας. Όλα τα εκκρεμή ζητήματα θα πρέπει να εξετάζονται σε διμερές επίπεδο μεταξύ των οικείων χωρών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006516/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Violation of good neighbourly relations with Bulgaria by FYROM

The Bulgarian politician Dimitar Stoyanov has called for the Skopje Ambassador in Sofia, Blagoj Handziski, to be declared persona non-grata in Bulgaria.

This request by a member of the Bulgarian Parliament came after the Skopje High Court's decision to withdraw the parental rights of Spaska Mitrova, who stated that she has Macedonian nationality but is ethnically Bulgarian and was therefore subjected to political and various social pressures by the Skopje institutions.

The politician stated that Bulgaria must intervene as a matter of urgency, not only in the case of Spaska Mitrova but in other similar cases. He also called for the Bulgarian President to act so that Mitrova can be given asylum.

If these allegations of human rights violations prove to be true, will the Commission state:

1. What measures will it take to make it clear to FYROM that it must respect and uphold good neighbourly relations and that it must not undermine bilateral relations with its neighbours such as Greece and, in this case, Bulgaria?

2. What measures will it take to ensure FYROM, as an accession country, is made aware of and adopts its recommendations on respecting parental rights, particularly in the context of good neighbourly relations?

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

The Commission has a policy not to comment on individual cases. Given that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a member of Council of Europe, parties in court proceedings might consider referring their case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg once all domestic legal remedies have been exhausted.

As part of the High Level Accession Dialogue, the Commission chose the strengthening of the rule of law as one of the key reform targets for the country. In this context the country has adopted a Roadmap which identifies concrete measures for the reform of the judiciary, in particular to improve the effectiveness, independence and professionalism of the judiciary. The EU also insists on the respect for and protection of minorities and cultural rights, as a part of the EU accession process. The forthcoming Progress report, to be published in October, will assess these and other related areas.

The Commission has been consistently reminding all candidate countries that maintaining good neighbourly relations is essential. All outstanding issues should be discussed at a bilateral level between the countries.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006913/12
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(11. juli 2012)

Om: Dyrevelfærd ved slagtning i Tyrkiet og Egypten

En ny film fra Compassion in World Farming afslører, at dyr udsættes for yderst svære lidelser under slagtning i Tyrkiet og Egypten. Endvidere beretter en detaljeret uafhængig undersøgelse om alvorlige dyrevelfærdsproblemer i mange tyrkiske slagterier.

— Har Kommissionen i forbindelse med forhandlinger om Tyrkiets ansøgning om tiltrædelse af EU foretaget en vurdering af Tyrkiets fremskridt mod overholdelse af EU's lovgivning om dyrevelfærd ved slagtning?

— Har Kommissionen drøftet med Tyrkiet, hvilke skridt landet skal tage for at overholde denne lovgivning?

— Er Kommissionen parat til at hjælpe Tyrkiet som kandidatland med udviklingen af kompetencer for forvaltning af slagterier, uddannelsen af de ansatte på slagterierne og forbedring af slagteriernes infrastruktur?

— Er Kommissionen parat til at drøfte med Egypten, som er omfattet af den europæiske naboskabspolitik, hvilke skridt landet skal tage for at gennemføre anbefalingerne fra Verdensorganisationen for Dyresundhed (OIE) om dyrevelfærd ved slagtning?

— Er Kommissionen parat til at hjælpe Egypten med at træffe foranstaltninger til at forbedre slagtemetoderne?

Samlet svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Štefan Füle
(4. september 2012)

Dyrevelfærd indgår som et vigtigt led i de forhandlinger om fødevaresikkerhed og dyre- og plantepolitik, der finder sted i forbindelse med tiltrædelsesforhandlingerne med Tyrkiet. Kommissionen følger dette aspekt nøje, især efter åbningen af forhandlingerne på dette område i juni 2010. Under alle relevante møder med Tyrkiet understreger Kommissionen, at det er nødvendigt at tilpasse lovgivningen, og den gør opmærksom på, at det er vigtigt, at der sker strukturændringer på slagterierne. Det er af afgørende betydning for en fuld gennemførelse af lovgivningen, at der gennemføres oplysningskampagner blandt aktørerne.

Tyrkiet har på det seneste gjort en række fremskridt i arbejdet med at tilpasse sin lovgivning til EU-retten om dyrevelfærd, herunder dyrevelfærd under transport og på landbrugsbedrifterne. Tyrkiet har desuden meddelt Kommissionen, at landet for øjeblikket arbejder med lovgivningen om dyrevelfærd på slagterier.

Kommissionen har modtaget en film fra en dyrevelfærdsorganisation om slagtning ([1]), som øjensynligt skulle være optaget i Egypten og andre tredjelande.

I filmen vises handlinger, som er forbudt i henhold til EU-retten. Vilkårene for dyrenes håndtering og slagtning opfylder ikke de dyrevelfærdsstandarder for slagtning ([2]), der er fastsat af Verdensorganisationen for Dyresundhed (OIE).

Kommissionen arbejder løbende på at fremme dyrevelfærden på verdensplan. I sin meddelelse om EU-strategien for dyrebeskyttelse og dyrevelfærd 2012-2015 ([3]) understreger Kommissionen, at det stadig er nødvendigt at medtage dyrevelfærd i bilaterale handelsaftaler og løbende at gøre en indsats for at fremme dyrevelfærd på et multilateralt niveau, især inden for rammerne af OIE og FN's Fødevare- og Landbrugsorganisation (FAO).

([1]) https://www.filesanywhere.com/fs/v.aspx?v=8a70638f616574bcaa69.
([2]) http://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_1.7.5.htm
([3]) KOM(2012)0006 endelig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006519/12
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(28 June 2012)

Subject: Animal welfare in Turkish slaughterhouses

A comprehensive survey of Turkish slaughterhouses has revealed serious animal welfare problems. Some 99 slaughterhouses were assessed during the survey; if a slaughterhouse slaughtered cattle and sheep it was counted twice and assessed twice. The survey was carried out in 2006 but has only been published in 2012 as part of a Ph.D. thesis. New film evidence submitted to the Commission suggests that there continue to be serious animal welfare problems during slaughter in Turkey.

The problems revealed by the survey include lack of competence and training in slaughterhouse workers and animals that are unable to walk being dragged to the slaughter room rather than being slaughtered where they lie. In some cases a chain is placed round a rear leg of conscious sheep and cattle and they are hoisted — hanging upside down — to the killing rail. Many of the slaughterhouses visited failed to achieve swift, effective bleeding, leading to animals remaining conscious for a considerable time after their throats had been cut.

As Turkey is a candidate country for EU membership, what steps is the Commission taking to press and assist Turkey to ensure that its slaughter practices respect the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) recommendations on the welfare of animals at slaughter and EU legislation in this field?

Question for written answer E-006913/12
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(11 July 2012)

Subject: Welfare of animals at slaughter in Turkey and Egypt

A new film by Compassion in World Farming reveals that animals undergo extreme suffering during slaughter in Turkey and Egypt. In addition, a detailed independent survey reports serious animal welfare problems in many Turkish slaughterhouses.

— Has the Commission, in the context of negotiations regarding Turkey's application to join the EU, made an assessment of Turkey's progress in moving towards compliance with EU legislation on the welfare of animals at slaughter?

— Has the Commission discussed with Turkey what steps it needs to take to comply with that legislation?

— Is the Commission prepared to help Turkey, as a candidate country, with the development of slaughterhouse management skills, the training of slaughterhouse workers and the improvement of slaughterhouse infrastructure?

— Is the Commission prepared to discuss with Egypt, as a country covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy, what steps it needs to take to implement the recommendations of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on the welfare of animals at slaughter?

— Is the Commission prepared to help Egypt in taking steps to substantially improve slaughter practices?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 September 2012)

Animal welfare is an important element of the accession negotiations with Turkey in the area of food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy. The Commission is following the issue closely, in particular since the opening of the negotiations in this field in June 2010. In all relevant meetings with Turkey the Commission stresses the need of legislative alignment and underlines the importance of structural changes at slaughterhouses. Awareness raising campaigns are of paramount importance for the full implementation of the legislation on the ground.

Recently Turkey has made some progress on the legislative alignment with the animal welfare acquis, relating to animal welfare during transport and welfare of animals on farms. Turkey has also informed the Commission that it is currently working on legislation relating to animal welfare at slaughter.

The Commission received from an animal welfare organisation a film ([1]) on the slaughter of animals allegedly taken in Egypt and other third countries.

The film shows acts prohibited under EC law. The conditions of handling and slaughter of animals are also contrary to the animal welfare standards on the slaughter of animals ([2]) of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

The Commission is constantly working to promote animal welfare internationally. In its communication on the EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([3]), the Commission emphasises the needs to continue to include animal welfare in bilateral trade agreements as well as to remain active in promoting animal welfare at a multilateral level, most particularly within the OIE and the Food Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

([1]) https://www.filesanywhere.com/fs/v.aspx?v=8a70638f616574bcaa69
([2]) http://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_1.7.5.htm
([3]) COM(2012)6 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-006522/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 Ιουνίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση στον τομέα της υγείας

Η κατάσταση με την προμήθεια φαρμάκων στην Ελλάδα είναι τραγική. Το σύστημα υγείας βρίσκεται υπό κατάρρευση καθώς το κράτος χρωστάει 1,5 δισ. ευρώ στον Εθνικό Οργανισμό Παροχής Υπηρεσιών Υγείας (ΕΟΠΥΥ).

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

— Θα μπορούσε να καλυφθεί αυτό το ποσό έκτακτα και άμεσα από κονδύλια του μηχανισμού στήριξης προς την Ελλάδα ή από την ίδια την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή;

— Σκοπεύει να αναλάβει κάποια πρωτοβουλία και δράση έτσι ώστε να βοηθήσει την ελληνική κυβέρνηση να λύσει οριστικά το θέμα αυτό — τη στιγμή που ζωές ασθενών βρίσκονται σε κίνδυνο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Ιουλίου 2012)

1. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 168 της Συνθήκης για τη Λειτουργία της Ένωσης η δράση της Ένωσης πρέπει να σέβεται τις αρμοδιότητες των κρατών μελών σε ό,τι αφορά την οργάνωση και την παροχή των υγειονομικών υπηρεσιών και της ιατρικής περίθαλψης. Υπάρχουν περιορισμοί όσον αφορά την δυνατότητα άμεσων δράσεων της ΕΕ ή/και χορήγησης ενίσχυσης για την χρηματοδότηση του τομέα της υγειονομικής περίθαλψης στα κράτη μέλη. Όσον αφορά την οικονομική ενίσχυση που χορηγούν τα άλλα κράτη μέλη της ευρωζώνης για την κάλυψη, έστω και κατ' εξαίρεση, των.οφειλών του ελληνικού κράτους προς τον ΕΟΠΥΥ ([1]) είναι σαφές ότι δεν προβλέπεται από το Πρόγραμμα Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής. Το πρόγραμμα αφορά την εξόφληση των χρεών των δημόσιων φορέων και την αποφυγή δημιουργίας νέων χρεών.

2. Ο υπουργός υγείας της Ελλάδας ζήτησε τεχνική βοήθεια από την Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα και συγκεκριμένα για τον ΕΟΠΥΥ. Τον Απρίλιο του 2012 υπεγράφη μνημόνιο για την παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας σε θέματα υγείας μεταξύ της Γερμανίας και της Ελλάδας σε συνεργασία με την εν λόγω Ομάδα Δράσης. Προς το παρόν προετοιμάζεται ένα χρονοδιάγραμμα με βάση τις εκτιμήσεις που έκαναν οι ελληνικές αρχές σε συνεργασία με εμπειρογνώμονες από την Γερμανία, τη Σουηδία, το Βέλγιο και την Ομάδα Δράσης για την Ελλάδα. Ο ΕΟΠΥΥ είναι ένας θεσμός που δημιουργήθηκε πρόσφατα στην Ελλάδα αλλά σε άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ παρόμοιοι θεσμοί υφίστανται από παλιά.

([1]) Εθνικός Οργανισμός Παροχής Υπηρεσιών Υγείας.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006522/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Funding in the health sector

The supply of medicines in Greece is in a tragic state. The health system is failing because the state owes EUR 1.5 billion to the National Health Services Organisation (EOPYY).

Will the Commission answer the following:

— Could this amount be covered exceptionally and directly by the support mechanism provided to Greece or by the Commission itself?

— Does it intend to take any action to help the Greek Government solve this problem definitively at a time when patients' lives are at risk?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 July 2012)

1. As stipulated in Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, EU action must respect the responsibilities of the Member States (MS) for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. There are limitations to possible direct EU actions and/or financial support as regards to healthcare delivery in MS. Concerning the financial assistance provided by the other euro area MS, covering, even exceptionally, sums that the Greek state owns to the EOPYY ([1]) is clearly out of the scope of the Economic Adjustment Programme. The Programme includes only provisions for the payment of arrears by public bodies and to avoid the build-up of new arrears.

2. The Greek Ministry of Health requested the Task Force for Greece (TFGR) for technical assistance and in particular for EOPYY. In April 2012, a memorandum of understanding on technical assistance for health has been signed between Germany and Greece and in cooperation with the TFGR. A roadmap is currently under preparation on the basis of assessments conducted by the Greek authorities together with experts from Germany, Sweden, Belgium and the TFGR. While EOPYY is a very recent institution in Greece, similar and long established institutions exist in many other EU MS.

([1]) National Organisation for Healthcare Provision.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006532/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: CAP Reform and the Basic Payment Scheme

With regard to CAP reform, and in particular the move to the new Basic Payment Scheme, could the Commission please advise me as to what consultation has taken place with British farmers?

Answer given by M. Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

British farmers were and are consulted at several stages. Before elaborating the reform proposals, stakeholders, including British farmers voiced theirs views on the future architecture of the common agricultural policy. In July 2010 a meeting was held in Brussels gathering all stakeholders and giving them the opportunity to present their opinions.

During the elaboration of the impact assessment accompanying the proposals, stakeholders had also the possibility to intervene.

After the publication of the proposal (October 2011), consultations continued with a series of discussions at technical level also with various groups of British farmers including those of devolved regions, for example most recently in June 2012 with Scottish new entrants to the farming business. In various meetings of the advisory groups of different sectors — where farmers are also represented — the proposals were thoroughly discussed.

Finally the Member of the Commission responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development participated to this February's annual meeting of the NFU and in July to a conference held with the civil society which discussed the reform proposals and the future CAP.

(Latviešu valodas versija)

Jautājums, uz kuru jāatbild rakstiski, E-006534/12
Komisijai
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(2012. gada 29. jūnijs)

Temats: Datu nesēju nodeva

Iepriekšējos piecos gados Latvijā ir strauji cēlusies informācijas nesēju nodeva, kas jāmaksā, iegādājoties ierakstāmus CD un DVD diskus un citus datu saglabāšanas līdzekļus.

Latvijas Kultūras ministrijas sniegtā informācija liecina, ka Latvijā iepriekšējā gadā samaksātās datu nesēju nodevas bija EUR 231 033, salīdzinot ar EUR 46 000 Igaunijā un EUR 36 186 Lietuvā.

Vai Komisija var paskaidrot, kāpēc dažādās ES dalībvalstīs ir jāmaksā atšķirīgas datu nesēju nodevas, un vai Komisija var norādīt tiesību aktu, ar ko šīs nodevas regulē?

Atbildi Komisijas vārdā sniedza Mišels Barnjē
(2012. gada 14. augusts)

Komisija uz saņemtās informācijas pamata pieņem, ka šāds maksājums par informācijas nesējiem rodas saistībā ar Autortiesību direktīvas ([1]) piemērošanu, kurā teikts, ka attiecībā uz kopēšanu personiskai lietošanai dalībvalstis var paredzēt izņēmumus ar nosacījumu, ka tiesību subjekti saņem taisnīgu atlīdzību. Dalībvalstīm, kuras izvēlas piemērot izņēmumu attiecībā uz kopēšanu personiskai lietošanai, ES tiesību aktu paredzētajās robežās ir zināma rīcības brīvība, nosakot attiecīgās taisnīgās atlīdzības veidu, sīku procedūru tās finansēšanai un iekasēšanai, kā arī tās iespējamo apjomu.

Tomēr Lietā C-467/08 ([2]) Eiropas Savienības Tiesa nosprieda, ka "taisnīgas atlīdzības" jēdziens Autortiesību direktīvas kontekstā ir jāinterpretē vienādi visās dalībvalstīs neatkarīgi no tām piešķirtās iespējas nosacīt zināmas lietas.

Vairumā dalībvalstu, kuras ieviesušas šo izņēmumu, taisnīga atlīdzība izpaužas kā nodeva, ar ko apliek preces, kuras parasti izmanto kopēšanai personiskos nolūkos ([3]). Tiesa ir norādījusi, ka šāds taisnīgās atlīdzības veids atbilst "taisnīgam līdzsvaram", kāds jārod starp autoru un minēto aizsargāto darbu izmantotāju interesēm, jo tas ļauj personām, kam atlīdzība jāmaksā, pārnest nodevas izmaksas uz privātiem izmantotājiem. Par finansēšanas un iekasēšanas kārtību Tiesa ir norādījusi, ka ir jāiedibina saikne starp tādas nodevas piemērošanu, kas paredzēta taisnīgas konkurences finansēšanai attiecībā uz digitālās reproducēšanas iekārtām, ierīcēm un datu nesējiem, un to paredzēto izmantojumu kopēšanai personiskām vajadzībām.

Tomēr, visus šos faktorus summējot, var būt, ka nodevu līmeņi dalībvalstīs atšķiras.

([1]) 2001/29/EK.
([2]) *Padawan* pret SGAE.
([3]) Tukši datu nesēji, ierakstīšanas ierīces, mobilās klausīšanās ierīces, datori, printeri, skeneri u. c.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006534/12
to the Commission
Alexander Mirsky (S&D)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Duty on information carriers

In the past five years, the duty on information carriers payable on purchase of recordable CD and DVD discs and other data-recording media, has risen sharply in Latvia.

According to the Latvian Ministry of Culture, duties paid on information carriers last year amounted to EUR 231 033 in Latvia, as compared with EUR 46 000 in Estonia and EUR 36 186 in Lithuania.

Can the Commission explain the unequal duty on information carriers payable in the different EU countries, and can it indicate which legislation regulates such duties?

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

From the information provided, the Commission assumes that this type of payment on information carriers arises in the context of the Copyright Directive ([1]), which provides that Member States may allow an exception for private copying on condition that rightholders receive fair compensation. Member States which have decided to implement the private copying exception have a certain freedom to determine, within the limits imposed by EC law, the form, detailed arrangements for financing and collection and the level of fair compensation.

Nevertheless, in Case C-467/08 ([2]), the Court of Justice of the EU held that 'fair compensation', within the meaning of the Copyright Directive must be interpreted uniformly in all Member States irrespective of the power conferred on them to determine certain matters.

For the majority Member States that have introduced this exception, fair compensation takes the form of levies imposed on goods that are typically used for private copying ([3]). The Court has stated that since this form of fair compensation enables the persons liable to pay compensation to pass on the cost of the levy to private users, it is consistent with a 'fair balance' between the interests of authors and those of users of the protected subject-matter. In relation to the arrangements for financing and collection the Court has stated that a link is necessary between the application of the levy intended to finance fair compensation with respect to digital reproduction equipment, devices and media and the deemed use of them for the purposes of private copying.

However, taken together these factors imply that the level of levies may vary between Member States.

([1]) 2001/29/EC.
([2]) Padawan v SGAE.
([3]) blank media, recording equipment, mobile listening devices, computers, printers, scanners, etc.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006541/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Għalliema ta' kwalità għolja

Fl-2007, il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat serje ta' komunikazzjonijiet relatati mat-titjib tat-taħriġ tal-għalliema fl-UE. Dawn il-komunikazzjonijiet kienu proposti minħabba li r-rwol tal-għalliema qed isir dejjem iktar kumpless f'dinja li qed timmodernizza u li l-kwalità tal-għalliem tikkorrelata sew maż-żamma u l-prestazzjoni ta' student.

Dawn l-isforzi jenfasizza in-neċessità ta' riforma fl-isfera tal-edukazzjoni. Filwaqt li l-Istati Membri filfatt qed jimplementaw il-programmi u l-proċeduri rakkomandati fis-sistemi nazzjonali tagħhom, wieħed irid jirrikonoxxi li hemm ħafna problemi globali, fosthom il-varjazzjoni għolja fil-kwalità tal-għalliema fil-pajjiżi individwali. Sfortunatament hemm tendenza li l-għalliema ta' kwalità ogħla u b'iktar esperjenza jerħulha lejn żoni iktar sinjuri jew "iktar imfittxija", u dan ipoġġi lil ċerti studenti fi żvantaġġ. Il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li tindirizza din il-kwistjoni speċifika f'inizjattivi futuri? X'inhuma r-rakkomandazzjonijiet tagħha biex l-Istati Membri jitħeġġu jaġġustaw il-politiki tagħhom sabiex jiżguraw distribuzzjoni iktar ġusta tal-għalliema?

Tweġiba mogħtija f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Lulju 2012)

Skont l-Artikolu 165 tat-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea, ir-responsabbiltà mill-kontenut u l-organizzazzjoni tas-sistemi tal-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ hija għalkollox f'idejn l-Istati Membri. Dan jinkludi r-responsabbiltà mill-mod kif l-għalliema huma allokati fl-iskejjel.

Ir-riċerka tissuġġerixxi li hemm differenzi sinifikanti fil-kwalità tal-għalliema, mhux biss bejn l-iskejjel, iżda wkoll fi ħdan l-istess skola ([1]). It-titjib tal-kwalità ġenerali tal-għalliema u t-tagħlim huwa prijorità fi ħdan il-programm ta' kooperazzjoni politika 2020 dwar l-Edukazzjoni u t-Taħriġ, u dan kien is-suġġett ta' Konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill fl-2007 ([2]), l-2008 ([3]) u l-2009 ([4]). Fi ħdan dan il-qafas, il-Kummissjoni tiffaċilita t-tagħlim bejn il-pari fost l-Istati Membri biex jiġu identifikati l-fatturi ewlenin biex il-politiki li jtejbu l-kwalità tat-tagħlim jirnexxu.

([1]) Pereżempju, Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain (2005) "Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement." Econometrica, 73 (2):417-58.
([2]) Konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill u tar-Rappreżentanti tal-Gvernijiet tal-Istati Membri, li ltaqgħu fi ħdan il-Kunsill tal-15 ta' Novembru 2007 rigward it-titjib tal-kwalità tal-edukazzjoni tal-għalliema (ĠU 2007/C 300/07).
([3]) Konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill u tar-Rappreżentanti tal-Gvernijiet tal-Istati Membri, li ltaqgħu fi ħdan il-Kunsill tal-21 ta' Novembru 2008 rigward it-thejjija taż-żgħażagħ għas-seklu 21: aġenda għall-kooperazzjoni Ewropea dwar l-iskejjel (ĠU 2008/C 319/08).
([4]) Konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill u tar-Rappreżentanti tal-Gvernijiet tal-Istati Membri, li ltaqgħu fi ħdan il-Kunsill tas-26 ta' Novembru 2009 rigward l-iżvilupp professjonali tal-għalliema u dawk li jmexxu l-iskejjel (ĠU 2009/C 302/04).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006541/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: High-quality teachers

In 2007, the Commission published a series of communications relating to the improvement of teacher training in the EU. These communications were proposed on the grounds that the role of teachers is becoming more and more complex in a modernising world and that teacher quality correlates highly with student performance and retention.

These efforts highlight the necessity of reform in the sphere of education. While Member States are in fact implementing recommended procedures and programmes in their national systems, it must be recognised that there are many overarching problems, including the high variance in the quality of teachers within individual countries. There is an unfortunate trend for higher-quality and more experienced teachers to flock to wealthier or 'more desirable' areas, putting certain students at a disadvantage. Does the Commission plan to address this specific issue in future initiatives? What are its recommendations when it comes to encouraging the Member States to adjust their policies in order to ensure a fairer distribution of teachers?

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

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 responsibility for the ways in which teachers are allocated to schools.

Research suggests that there are significant differences in teacher quality, not only between schools but also within the same school ([1]). Improving the overall quality of teachers and teaching is a priority within the Education and Training 2020 programme of policy cooperation, and has been the subject of Council Conclusions in 2007 ([2]), 2008 ([3]) and 2009 ([4]). Within this framework, the Commission facilitates peer learning amongst Member States to identify the key factors for success in policies to improve the quality of teaching.

([1]) For example, Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain (2005) 'Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement.' Econometrica, 73 (2):417-58.
([2]) Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 15 November 2007 on improving the quality of teacher education (OJ 2007/C 300/07).
([3]) Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools (OJ 2008/C 319/08).
([4]) Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders (OJ 2009/C 302/04).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006546/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Id-Direttiva dwar is-Swieq fl-Istrumenti Finanzjarji (MiFID)

Il-moviment liberu tal-kapital ilu mira ewlenija tal-Unjoni Ewropea. Parti kbira minn dan hija l-liberalizzazzjoni tat-transazzjonijiet tal-investimenti, li l-UE ppromwoviet permezz tad-Direttiva dwar is-Swieq fl-Istrumenti Finanzjarji (MiFID), bħala parti mill-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tas-Servizzi Finanzjarji Il-MiFID hija prinċipalment kkreditata bl-iżvilupp ta' pjattaformi kummerċjali transkonfinali u bl-integrazzjoni tas-swieq tal-kapital, imma hemm xi elementi ta' xkiel li jeħtieġu attenzjoni partikolari, u jeħtieġ li jsiru xi tibdliet sabiex jingħata rispons għall-iżviluppi fl-ambjent kummerċjali. Il-MiFID II hija prevista attwalment u se tindirizza n-nuqqasijiet tal-MiFID, pereżempju billi żżid it-trasparenza fuq firxa aktar wiesgħa ta' strumenti u swieq.

Filwaqt li t-trasparenza hija bla dubju qasam sostanzjali li teħtieġ attenzjoni partikolari, hemm kwistjonijiet pendenti oħra li jappartjenu għall-MiFID. Sa liema punt l-Kummissjoni taqbel mal-allegazzjonijiet li l-MiFID kellha effetti strutturali negattivi fuq is-swieq, u x'assigurazzjonijiet tista' tipprovdi bħala rispons għal tħassib dwar tnaqqis potenzjali fil-kompetizzjoni bejn id-ditti (il-forniturituri tal-likwidità) u dwar il-frammentazzjoni fil-qasam? Barra minn hekk, il-MiFID II kif se tittratta speċifikament l-avvanzi fit-teknoloġija, u liema mill-miżuri fid-direttiva preċedenti qiegħin jiġu aġġustati bħala rispons għall-kriżi finanzjarja?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(14 ta' Awwissu 2012)

L-għan tal-proposti tal-Kummissjoni li jemendaw il-MiFID (ir-reviżjoni tal-MiFID) ([1]) huwa li jiġi żgurat li l-qafas legali għal titoli is-swieq huwa kompletament aġġornati u jirrifletti l-iżviluppi matul il-kriżi finanzjarja.

Fost l-oħrajn ir-reviżjoni tal-MiFID tindirizza l-istruttura tas-suq madwar in-negozjar. L-għodda ewlenija biex jintlaħaq dan l-għan hija l-introduzzjoni ta' tielet tip ta' ċentru tan-negozjar flimkien mas-swieq regolati u ċ-ċentri tan-negozjar multilaterali eżistenti: il-faċilità organizzata tan-negozjar (organised trading facility — OTF). Din il-kategorija ġdida se tkopri n-negozjar multilaterali kollu u tiżgura li attivitajiet ta' negozjar kollha jiġu rregolati b'mod xieraq.

Ir-reviżjoni tal-MiFID se tindirizza wkoll il-frammentazzjoni tas-suq billi tarmonizza bis-sħiħ l-istandards tad-dejta madwar l-UE. Bħala riżultat, l-investituri se jkunu jistgħu jaċċessaw il-prezzijiet kollha irrispettivament miċ-ċentru tal-eżekuzzjoni. L-approċċ magħżul huwa li tintuża soluzzjoni gwidata mis-suq sabiex tikseb l-aggregazzjoni meħtieġa tad-dejta. Jekk din is-soluzzjoni gwidata mis-suq ma twassalx għar-riżultati mistennija, tista' tiġi kkunsidrata soluzzjoni regolatorja. Il-proposti tal-Kummissjoni fihom klawżola ta' reviżjoni għal dan il-għan.

Wieħed mill-aktar żviluppi sinifikanti fis-suq matul l-aħħar ftit deċennji kien iż-żieda fix-xejra tal-użu ta' negozjar elettroniku awtomatizzat magħruf bħala negozjar algoritmiku li jinkludi negozjar bi frekwenza għolja (high frequency trading — HFT). Ir-reviżjoni tal-MiFID se tiżgura li l-atturi kollha fl-HFT ikunu awtorizzati u taħt superviżjoni kif dovut, issaħħaħ ir-rekwiżiti organizzazzjonali f'kull ħolqa tal-katina tan-negozjar (jiġifieri kemm għaċ-ċentri tan-negozjar u għad-ditti tal-investiment), u ttejjeb id-detezzjoni u s-sanzjonar ta' prassi manipulattivi permezz tan-negozjar bi frekwenza għolja.

([1]) Proposta għal Regolament tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill dwar is-Swieq tal-istrumenti finanzjarji u li jemenda r-Regolament [EMIR] dwar id-derivati OTC, il-kontropartijiet ċentrali u r-repożitorji tan-negozju(COM(2011)652) u Proposta għal Direttiva tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill dwar is-swieq fl-istrumenti finanzjarji li tirrevoka d-Direttiva 2004/39/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill (COM(2011)656). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0656:FIN:MT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006546/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID)

The free movement of capital has long been a primary focus of the European Union. A large part of this is the liberalisation of investment transactions, which the EU has promoted via its Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID), as part of the Financial Service Action Plan. MiFID is largely credited for developing cross-border trading platforms and integrating capital markets, but there are a few hitches that require attention, as well as changes that are necessary in order to respond to developments in the trading environment. MiFID II is currently in the pipeline and will address the shortcomings of MiFID, for example by increasing transparency across a wider range of instruments and markets.

While transparency is undoubtedly a substantial area that requires attention, there are other outstanding issues pertaining to MiFID. To what extent does the Commission agree with allegations that MiFID has had negative structural effects on markets, and what assurances can it provide in response to concerns over a potential decline in competition between firms (the liquidity providers) and over field fragmentation? Furthermore, how is MiFID II going to deal specifically with advances in technology, and which of the measures in the old directive are being adjusted in response to the financial crisis?

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

The objective of the Commission proposals amending MiFID (the MiFID review) ([1]) is to make sure that the legal framework for securities' markets is fully up to date and reflects the developments during the financial crisis.

The MiFID review *inter alia* deals with market structure around trading. The main tool for achieving this aim is the introduction of a third type of trading venue alongside the existing regulated markets and multilateral trading venues: the organised trading facility (OTF). This new category will capture all multilateral trading and ensure that all trading activities are regulated in an appropriate way.

The MiFID review will also address market fragmentation by fully harmonising data standards across the EU. As a result, investors will be able to access all prices regardless of execution venue. The approach chosen is to use a market led solution in order to obtain the necessary aggregation of data.. If such a market-led solution does not bring the expected results, a regulatory solution may be considered. The Commission's proposals contain a review clause to this end.

One of the most significant market developments over the past few decades has been the increasing trend towards the use of automated electronic trading known as algorithmic trading which includes high frequency trading (HFT). The MiFID review will ensure that all HFT players are duly authorised and supervised, reinforce the organisational requirements at every step of the trading chain (i.e. both for trading venues and investment firms), and improve detection and sanctioning of manipulative practices through high frequency trading.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Markets in financial instruments and amending Regulation [EMIR] on OTC derivatives, central counterparties and trade repositories (COM(2011)652) and Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on markets in financial instruments repealing Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2011)656). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0656:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006549/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: REACH

Is-sistema REACH (ir-Reġistrazzjoni, il-Valutazzjoni, l-Awtorizzazzjoni u r-Restrizzjoni ta' Sustanzi Kimiċi) kienet implimentata fl-2007 sabiex tippromwovi użu tal-kimiċi aktar responsabbli. Hija tiġbor flimkien għadd ta' direttivi u regolamenti oħra dwar is-sustanzi kimiċi, u hija rikonoxxuta b'mod wiesa' bħala l-aktar sett komprensiv ta' regoli dwar sustanzi bħal dawn. L-għan aħħari, għas-sena 2018, huwa li l-kumpaniji kollha tal-UE li jimmanifatturaw jew jimportaw sustanzi kimiċi li jammontaw għal volum ta' tunnellata jew iktar fis-sena jirreġistraw dawn is-sustanzi kollha mal-Aġenzija Ewropea għas-Sustanzi Kimiċi. Madankollu, kien hemm ilmenti dwar il-piżijiet tqal li r-REACH tqiegħed fuq in-negozji, inklużi spejjeż għoljin u inċertezza legali.

X'inhi l-evalwazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni tas-suċċess tar-REACH minn mindu r-regolament daħal fis-seħħ fl-2007? Filwaqt li jitqiesu t-twissijiet mill-industrija li sistema tant estensiva tostakola l-kummerċ globali u tnaqqas l-investiment u l-innovazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tippjana li timmodifika jew taġġusta l-għanijiet tar-REACH għall-2018?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Fid-dawl tar-rappurtar u r-reviżjoni tal-obbligi mressqa mill-koleġiżlaturi fl-Artikoli 117 u 138 tar-REACH ([1]), il-Kummissjoni ilha mill-2010 involuta f'eżerċizzju komprensiv ta' reviżjoni. Biex jinfurmaw il-proċess, twettqu studji tematiċi. Ir-rapporti tal-konsulenti minn żewġ studji partikulari li ffukaw fuq l-impatt fuq il-kompetittività u l-innovazzjoni huma diġà ppubblikati fil-websajt tal-Kummissjoni ([2]). Abbażi tal-informazzjoni miġbura matul ir-reviżjoni u b'kunsiderazzjoni tal-informazzjoni pprovduta mill-Istati Membri u mill-Aġenzija Ewropea għas-Sustanzi Kimiċi fir-rapporti rispettivi tagħhom, il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qed tanalizza u tikkonsolida dawn l-inputs kollha. Minħabba l-ammont estensiv ta' dejta miġbura, il-proċess qed jieħu ftit taż-żmien mhux ħażin. Ir-rapport ġenerali mill-Kummissjoni dwar l-operat tar-REACH hu fil-proċess li jiġi adottat wara s-sajf.

([1]) Ir-Regolament (KE) Nru 1907/2006 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tat-18 ta' Diċembru 2006 dwar ir-Reġistrazzjoni, il-Valutazzjoni, l-Awtorizzazzjoni u r-Restrizzjoni ta' Sustanzi Kimiċi (REACH), li jistabbilixxi Aġenzija Ewropea għas-Sustanzi Kimiċi, li jemenda d-Direttiva 1999/45/KE u li jħassar ir-Regolament tal-Kunsill (KE) Nru 793/93 u r-Regolament tal-Kummissjoni (KE) Nru 1488/94 kif ukoll id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 76/769/KEE u d-Direttivi tal-Kummissjoni 91/155/KEE, 93/67/KEE, 93/105/KE u 2000/21/KE, ĠU L 396, 30.06.2006, p. l.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/chemicals/documents/reach/review2012/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006549/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: REACH

The REACH system (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) was implemented in 2007 to promote more responsible use of chemicals. It groups together a number of other directives and regulations on chemical substances, and is widely acknowledged as the most comprehensive set of rules on such substances. The ultimate goal, for the year 2018, is that all EU companies that manufacture or import chemical substances amounting to a volume of one tonne or more a year will register all such substances with the European Chemicals Agency. There have, however, been complaints about the heavy burdens that REACH places on businesses, including high costs and legal uncertainty.

What is the Commission's evaluation of REACH's success since it came into force in 2007? Taking into account the warnings from industry that such an extensive system hampers global trade and reduces investment and innovation, does the Commission plan to modify or adjust the REACH goals for 2018?

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

In light of the reporting and review obligations put forward by the co-legislators in Articles 117 and 138 of REACH ([1]), the Commission has been engaged since 2010 in a comprehensive review exercise. To inform the process, a number of thematic studies have been carried out. The consultants' reports from two particular studies which focused on impact on competitiveness and innovation are already published on the Commission's website ([2]). Based on the information gathered in the course of the review and taking into account information provided by the Member States and the European Chemicals Agency in their respective reports, the Commission is currently analysing and consolidating all these inputs. Given the extensive amount of collected data the process is taking considerable time. The general report from the Commission on the operation of REACH is on the course to be adopted after the summer.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC, OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/chemicals/documents/reach/review2012/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006550/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Ekodisinn

L-Unjoni Ewropea impenjat ruħha tnaqqas il-konsum ta' enerġija primarja b'20 % meta mqabbel mal-projjezzjonijiet għall-2020. Fil-komunikazzjoni reċenti tagħha bit-titolu "L-effiċjenza fl-enerġija: il-kisba tal-mira ta' 20%" (COM(2008)0772), il-Kummissjoni ddeskriviet l-effiċjenza enerġetika bħala "l-iktar mod effettiv f'termini ta' spiża sabiex jitnaqqas il-konsum tal-enerġija waqt li jinżamm livell ekwivalenti ta' attività ekonomika". F'dan il-kuntest, tindika l-bżonn li l-prodotti jkunu effiċjenti mil-lat enerġetiku sabiex jinkisbu r-riżultati mixtieqa. Id-Direttiva dwar l-Ekodisinn (2009/125/KE) tirrappreżenta strument kruċjali li jagħti regoli fuq skala tal-UE intiżi li jtejbu l-prestazzjoni ambjentali tal-prodotti relatati mal-enerġija u b'potenzjal biex jinkiseb tnaqqis sinifikanti fil-konsum enerġetiku. Madankollu, tqajmu dubji dwar l-effikaċja tad-direttiva, fosthom allegazzjonijiet li attwalment mhijiex qed jirnexxilha tilħaq il-potenzjal totali tagħha li għalih ġiet stabbilita u li ħafna aktar iffrankar konsiderevoli seta' jinkiseb permezz ta' implimentazzjoni aktar effikaċi. Fid-dawl ta' dan it-tħassib, il-Kummissjoni identifikat nuqqasijiet konkreti eventwali fl-implimentazzjoni tad-direttiva, u b'liema mezzi biħsiebha l-Kummissjoni timmassimizza l-benefiċċji tad-direttiva fil-ġejjieni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(30 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Studju reċenti ta' reviżjoni dwar id-Direttiva tal-Ekodisinn kkonkluda li d-Direttiva kienet qiegħda tilħaq l-għanijiet politiċi tagħha b'mod sodisfaċenti, u li l-ebda r-reviżjoni imminenti ma kienet meħtieġa ([1]). Fil-futur tista' titqies kwalunkwe reviżjoni flimkien ma' politiki ta' prodotti oħra (eż. id-Direttiva dwar l-Ittikkettjar tal-Enerġija, l-Ekotikketta).

Madankollu, l-istudju msemmi hawn fuq identifika diversi sfidi, fosthom: li jkunu żgurati proċeduri regolatorji effiċjenti, aċċess għal dejta affidabbli għal analiżijiet tekniċi, il-prontezza ta' standards armonizzati, u sorveljanza ta' suq adegwat. L-istudju jirrakkomanda wkoll aktar koordinazzjoni ma' leġiżlazzjoni u politiki tal-UE oħrajn, bħalma huma WEEE ([2]), RoHs ([3]) jew EPBD ([4]), l-Ittikkettjar tal-Enerġija, l-Ekotikketta, u l-GPP ([5]).

Ir-reazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni kienet li diġà adottat sensiela ta' miżuri ġodda, fosthom:

— L-esternalizzazzjoni tax-xogħol mhux leġiżlattiv, eż., Europe Direct se jintuża biex iwieġeb mistoqsijiet pubbliċi dwar l-ekodisinn.

— Bl-użu tal-għarfien espert tekniku taċ-Ċentru Konġunt tar-Riċerka (JRC) tal-Kummissjoni u l-Aġenzija Ewropea għall-Kompetittività u l-Innovazzjoni (EACI) biex tkun żgurata leġiżlazzjoni aktar integrata relatata mal-prodott.

— Billi jkun hemm esperti esterni biex isegwu aħjar xogħol ta' standardizzazzjoni relatat ma' ekodisinn u wkoll biex jgħinu aktar lill-NGOs f'dan il-proċess.

— It-tnedija tal-eżerċizzju annwali ta' ġbir tad-dejta ta' sorveljanza tas-suq mal-Istati Membri, biex jissaħħaħ l-infurzar tal-leġiżlazzjoni dwar l-ekodisinn u t-tikkettjar tal-enerġija.

Il-Kummissjoni se tagħti attenzjoni akbar lill-effiċjenza tar-riżorsi tal-materjal, u aspetti oħra ambjentali, jekk u meta dawn l-aspetti jinstabu li jkunu sinifikattivi.

Id-Direttiva dwar l-Ekodisinn tal-2009 estendiet l-ambitu tagħha għall-prodotti marbutin mal-enerġija. Il-Kummissjoni għandha l-għan li tadotta xi 30 miżuri ġodda sal-2015, li se jirriżultaw fi ffrankar annwali tal-enerġija stmat għal madwar 1000 TWh sal-2020.

([1]) Evaluation of the Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC) Final Report, Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services LLP (CSES), March 2012, http://www.cses.co.uk/ecodesign_evaluation/documents/.
([2]) Tagħmir Elettriku u Elettroniku Skartat.
([3]) Restrizzjoni tal-użu ta' Sustanzi Perikolużi.
([4]) Id-Direttiva dwar il-Prestazzjoni tal-Enerġija tal-Bini.
([5]) Akkwist Pubbliku Ekoloġiku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006550/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Ecodesign

The European Union has committed itself to reducing primary energy consumption by 20 % compared to projections for 2020. In its 2008 communication entitled 'Energy efficiency: delivering the 20 % target' (COM(2008)0772), the Commission describes energy efficiency as the 'most cost-effective way of reducing energy consumption while maintaining an equivalent level of economic activity.' In this context, it points to the need for products to be energy efficient in order to reach the desired results. The Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC) is a crucial tool that provides EU-wide rules to improve the environmental performance of energy-related products and has the potential to achieve significant reductions in energy consumption. However, doubts have been cast over the effectiveness of the directive, including allegations that it is currently failing to live up to its full potential and that far more significant savings could be achieved through more effective implementation. In the light of these concerns, has the Commission identified any concrete shortcomings in the implementation of the directive, and by what means does the Commission intend to maximise the benefits of the directive in the future?

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

A recent review study on the Ecodesign Directive concluded that the directive was satisfactorily achieving its policy objectives, and that no imminent revision was necessary ([1]). Any future revision may be considered together with other product policies (e.g. Energy Labelling Directive, Ecolabel).

However, the above study identified several challenges, including: ensuring efficient regulatory procedures, access to reliable data for technical analyses, timeliness of harmonised standards, and adequate market surveillance. The study also recommended increased coordination with other EU legislation and policies, such as WEEE ([2]), RoHS ([3]) or EPBD ([4]), Energy Labelling, Ecolabel and GPP ([5]).

The Commission's response has been to already adopt a set of new measures, including:

— outsourcing non-legislative work, e.g. Europe Direct will be used to answer public queries on ecodesign;

— using technical expertise from the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the European Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) to ensure more integrated product-related legislation;

— using external experts to better follow ecodesign-related standardisation work, and also to further assist NGOs in this process;

— launch of an annual market surveillance data collection exercise with Member States, to enhance the enforcement of ecodesign and energy labelling legislation.

The Commission will pay increased attention to material resource efficiency, and other environmental aspects, if and when these aspects are found to be significant.

The 2009 Ecodesign Directive extended its remit to energy-related products. The Commission aims to adopt some 30 new measures by 2015, resulting in estimated annual energy savings of around 1 000 TWh by 2020.

([1]) Evaluation of the Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC), Final Report, Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services LLP (CSES), March 2012, http://www.cses.co.uk/ecodesign_evaluation/documents/.
([2]) Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment.
([3]) Restriction of use of Hazardous Substances.
([4]) Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.
([5]) Green Public Procurement.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006552/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Kummerċ elettroniku

Fid-dinja globalizzata l-kummerċ elettroniku huwa tendenza li qiegħda tikber u għandu l-potenzjal li jagħti kontribut enormi lill-ekonomija Ewropea. Iżda l-qafas regolatorju uniku tal-Ewropa għamilha diffiċli li l-kummerċ elettroniku jikber u li ċ-ċittadini tal-UE jipparteċipaw bis-sħiħ fil-valur tiegħu. Id-diversità tas-swieq nazzjonali, bir-regoli u regolamenti differenti tagħhom dwar il-kummerċ elettroniku, tostakola l-iżvilupp. Il-qafas propost mill-UE, kif definit fil-komunikazzjoni mill-Kummissjoni COM(2011)0942, jittratta diversi kwistjonijiet li għandhom x'jaqsmu mal-kummerċ elettroniku, bħall-protezzjoni tal-konsumatur, is-sistemi ta' pagament u ta' kunsinna u l-provvista ta' servizzi online. Dawn il-miżuri se jippruvaw jeliminaw l-ostakli bejn l-Istati Membri u jżidu l-fiduċja tal-konsumatur fis-suq diġitali.

Madankollu, jista' jkun hemm fatturi oħrajn involuti li jaqtgħu qalb il-kumpaniji milli jipparteċipaw bis-sħiħ fis-suq Ewropew. Fl-2009, 21 % biss tal-bejjiegħa bl-imnut transkonfinali għamlu reklami f'aktar minn pajjiż ieħor. Dan jista' jkun ir-riżultat ta' ostakli li ġejjin mid-differenzi kulturali. Il-bejjiegħa bl-imnut iħabbtu wiċċhom ma' diffikultajiet lingwistiċi u l-bżonn li jmexxu kampaniji ta' kummerċjalizzazzjoni multipli għal prodott wieħed bil-għan li jiġbdu n-nies minn pajjiżi differenti u dan ifisser li għandhom inqas inċentiv biex jagħmlu reklami fuq bażi transkonfinali. Dan jissarraf fil-fatt li l-konsumaturi Ewropej ma jkunux jafu b'dan u b'ħekk jiskoraġġixxu ruħhom milli jirrikorru għas-suq diġitali.

Is-sensibilizzazzjoni tal-konsumatur hija kruċjali biex ċ-ċittadini tal-UE jkunu jistgħu jisiltu vantaġġ sħiħ mill-iżvilupp tal-kummerċ elettroniku. Fir-rigward tal-pjanijiet tagħha biex tiżviluppa suq diġitali uniku tal-UE, il-Kummissjoni għandha xi suġġerimenti biex tħeġġeġ lill-bejjiegħa bl-imnut jagħmlu reklami jew ibigħu f'livell aktar multinazzjonali?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(17 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni taqbel kompletament mal-opinjonijiet tal-Onorevoli MEP dwar ir-rwol kruċjali li għandha s-sensibilizzazzjoni għall-iżvilupp tas-Suq Uniku Diġitali. L-istħarriġiet juru li negozjanti onlajn (potenzjali) ma għandhomx għarfien biżżejjed tar-regoli li jirregolaw il-kummerċ elettroniku, u lanqas il-konsumaturi mhuma infurmati biżżejjed. Dan huwa partikolarment reali f'kuntest transfruntier, fejn l-ostakli tal-lingwa u differenzi kulturali oħra jiġġeneraw kumplessitajiet addizzjonali għan-negozjanti u l-konsumaturi li jixtru jew ibigħu onlajn.

Il-Kummissjoni kontinwament qed ittejjeb il-Portal multilingwi Ċittadini ta' L-Ewropa Tiegħek ([1]) sabiex toffri servizz b'aċċess faċli u f'punt uniku li jinforma u jassisti liċ–ċittadini u n-negozji meta jagħmlu tranżazzjonijiet transfruntieri. Barra minn hekk, iċ-ċentru ta' kuntatt Europe Direct u ċ-Ċentri ta' Informazzjoni Europe Direct fl-Istati Membri ([2]) huma disponibbli biex iwieġbu l-mistoqsijiet tan-negozji. Il-Kummissjoni qed tipprepara wkoll għodda għal informazzjoni onlajn għall-utenti tal-internet li tispjega d-drittijiet u l-obbligi diġitali previsti fid-dritt tal-Unjoni.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni qed tiżviluppa politika aktar proattiva billi tuża netwerks eżistenti, b'mod partikolari n-Netwerk Ewropa għall-Intrapriża u ċ-Ċentri Ewropej għall-Konsumaturi, li jipprovdu lin-negozji onlajn b'informazzjoni dwar l-obbligi tagħhom meta jagħmlu bejgħ transfruntier, u biex ikun hemm iktar sensibilizzazzjoni dwar l-opportunitajiet offruti meta jbigħu f'pajjiżi oħra tal-UE.

([1]) http://europa.eu/youreurope/index.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/europedirect/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006552/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: E-commerce

E-commerce is a growing trend in the globalising world, and has the potential of making an enormous contribution to the European economy. Yet Europe's unique regulatory framework has made it difficult for e-commerce to grow and for EU citizens to fully partake in its value. The variety of national markets, with their different rules and regulations concerning e-commerce, thwarts development. The EU's proposed framework, as set out in the Commission communication COM(2011)0942, addresses various issues surrounding e-commerce, such as consumer protection, payment/delivery systems and the supply of online services. These measures will attempt to break down barriers between Member States and increase consumer trust in the digital market.

However, there may be other factors in play that discourage companies from participating fully in the European market. In 2009, only 21 % of crossborder retailers advertised in more than one other country. This may be attributed to barriers arising from differences of culture. Retailers are faced with language difficulties and the necessity of running multiple marketing campaigns for a single product in order to appeal to people from different countries, which means they have less incentive to advertise across borders. The lack of awareness resulting from this discourages European consumers from using the digital market.

Consumer awareness is crucial for allowing EU citizens to fully benefit from the development of e-commerce. In regard to its plans for developing a single EU digital market, does the Commission have any suggestions for encouraging retailers to advertise and sell on a more multinational level?

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

The Commission fully shares the views of the Honourable MEP on the crucial role that awareness plays for the development of the Digital Single Market. Surveys show that (potential) online traders do not have sufficient knowledge of the rules governing e-commerce, nor are consumers adequately informed. This is particularly true in a cross-border context, where language barriers and other cultural differences generate additional complexities for traders and consumers to sell or buy online.

The Commission is continuously improving the multilingual Your Europe Citizen's Portal ([1]), to offer an easily accessible, 'one-stop service' informing and assisting citizens and businesses when engaging into cross-border transactions. In addition, the Europe Direct Contact Centre and the Europe Direct Information Centres in the Member States ([2]) are available to answer businesses' questions. The Commission is also preparing an online information tool for Internet users explaining the digital rights and obligations provided for by EC law.

In addition, the Commission is developing a more pro-active policy by using existing networks, in particular the Enterprise Europe Network and the European Consumer Centres, to provide online businesses with information about their obligations when selling cross-border, and to create more awareness about the opportunities offered by selling in other EU countries.

([1]) http://europa.eu/youreurope/index.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/europedirect/.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-006554/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(29 ta' Ġunju 2012)

Suġġett: Raggruppamenti tal-kompetittività

L-Unjoni Ewropea qiegħda tirrikorri għal "raggruppamenti tal-kompetittività", konċentrazzjonijiet ta' kumpaniji interkonnessi, riċerkaturi u oħrajn involuti fin-negozju, biex tgħin fit-trawwim tal-innovazzjoni u tat-tkabbir ekonomiku. Dawn ir-raggruppamenti huma strumentali biex iżidu l-kompetittività u l-produttività, kif ukoll biex jinkoraġġixxu l-iżvilupp ta' impriżi ġodda f'diversi oqsma. L-UE ttrattat il-kunċett tar-raggruppamenti tal-kompetittività f'diversi politiki, bħas-"Small Business Act" u s-Seba' Programm Kwadru.

L-impriżi żgħar u ta' daqs medju (SMEs) jiżvolġu rwol sinifikanti fir-raggruppamenti tal-kompetittività u jirrappreżentaw ukoll għajn potenzjali kbir ta' ħolqien ta' impjiegi fi ħdan l-UE. Madankollu jħabbtu wiċċhom ma' firxa ta' sfidi; spiss jgħaddu minn esperjenzi ta' diffikultà fl-aċċess għall-programmi ta' finanzjament mill-UE, li jitlob ħafna żmien u riżorsi, u mbagħad hemm livell ogħla ta' inċertezza dwar is-suċċess, ossija li l-ideat imprenditorjali jissarrfu b'suċċess fi prodotti kummerċjabbli. Il-Kummissjoni x'tirrakkomanda f'termini tal-iżvilupp u tal-ġestjoni tar-raggruppamenti tal-kompetittività biex tingħata għajnuna lill-SMEs? Kif tivvaluta l-Kummissjoni l-flessibilità tar-raggruppamenti tal-kompetittività tal-kapaċità tagħhom li jadegwaw ruħhom għall-bidliet tad-domanda tas-suq u li jespandu fuq livell transkonfinali?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Awwissu 2012)

Ir-raggruppamenti huma approċċ promettenti għall-promozzjoni tal-kompetittività, l-innovazzjoni, il-bidla industrijali u l-internazzjonalizzazzjoni tal-SMEs. L-Ewropa teħtieġ iktar raggruppamenti rikonoxxuti internazzjonalment biex jgħinu lill-SMEs biex ikollhom aċċess għal swieq u għerf internazzjonali. Sa issa tnedew ħafna inizjattivi tal-UE biex jintlaħaq dan l-għan. Skont is-CIP ([1]), dawn għandhom l-għan ewlieni li jippromwovu l-eċċellenza tar-raggruppamenti permezz tal-Inizjattiva Ewropea għall-Eċċellenza tar-Raggruppamenti, jiffaċilitaw il-kooperazzjoni internazzjonali permezz tal-Pjattaforma Ewropea għall-Kollaborazzjoni bejn ir-Raggruppamenti, u janalizzaw ir-rwol tar-raggruppamenti fl-appoġġ għall-industriji emerġenti permezz tal-Osservatorju Ewropew tar-Raggruppamenti. L-attivitajiet tas-CIP-2013 se jkunu qed irawmu b'mod partikolari l-internazzjonalizzazzjoni tal-SMEs u jgħinu r-raggruppamenti jiżviluppaw strateġiji internazzjonali konġunti. Skont l-FP7 l-programm Reġjuni tal-Għarfien jappoġġa l-kooperazzjoni transnazzjonali ta' raggruppamenti reġjonali mmexxija mir-riċerka fl-Ewropa u fis-swieq globali. Il-Programmi Operattivi Reġjonali għall-innovazzjoni jinkludu wkoll azzjonijiet relatati mat-trawwim tar-raggruppamenti.

Fil-ġejjieni huwa mistenni li l-COSME ([2]) jkollu rwol importanti biex jikkapitalizza mir-raggruppamenti biex jappoġġa l-SMEs. Azzjonijiet speċifiċi se jgħinu l-iżvilupp ta' iktar servizzi ta' appoġġ personalizzati, isaħħu l-ġestjoni tar-raggruppamenti u jintensifikaw l-attivitajiet internazzjonali. Madankollu, l-għaqdiet intermedjarji bħall-għaqdiet għall-ġestjoni tar-raggruppamenti, permezz ta' Orizzont 2020, ikunu jistgħu jiffaċilitaw attivitajiet transsettorjali u transreġjonali bbażati fuq l-innovazzjoni mal-SMEs biex isaħħu b'mod reċiproku l-kompetenzi għall-iżvilupp ta' ktajjen ġodda ta' valur industrijali fl-UE. Finalment, l-istrumenti politiċi reġjonali tal-UE huma previsti li jintużaw estensivament biex jimplimentaw strateġiji ta' speċjalizzazzjoni intelliġenti permezz tar-raggruppamenti ([3]).

([1]) Il-Programm Kwadru għall-Kompetittività u l-Innovazzjoni.
([2]) Il-Programm għall-Kompetittività tal-Intrapriżi u l-SMEs.
([3]) Jekk joghġbok ara t-tweġiba mogħtija mill-Kummissjoni għall-mistoqsija E-12620/2011 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/mt/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=FEFF801973E519F132BFE3BE6D26E92C.node1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006554/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Competitiveness clusters

The European Union has been turning to 'competitiveness clusters,' concentrations of interconnected companies, researchers and others involved in business, to help foster innovation and economic growth. These clusters are instrumental in increasing competition and productivity, as well as encouraging the development of new businesses in various fields. The EU has addressed the concept of competitiveness clusters in multiple policies, such as the Small Business Act and FP7.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in competitiveness clusters and are also a large potential source of job creation within the EU. Yet they face an array of challenges; they often experience difficulties in accessing EU funding programmes, which requires a lot of time and resources, and then there is the higher level of uncertainty surrounding success, i.e. successfully turning entrepreneurial ideas into marketable products. What does the Commission recommend in terms of the development and management of competitiveness clusters in order to aid SMEs? How does the Commission rate the flexibility of competitiveness clusters in their ability to adjust to changes in market demand and to expand across borders?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

Clusters are a promising approach to promote competitiveness, innovation, industrial change and SME internationalisation. Europe needs more globally recognised clusters to help SMEs finding access to international markets and knowledge. Many EU initiatives have been launched to meet this objective so far. Under the CIP ([1]), they mainly aim at promoting cluster excellence through the European Cluster Excellence Initiative, facilitating international cooperation through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform, and analysing the role of clusters in supporting emerging industries through the European Cluster Observatory. CIP-2013 activities will be particularly fostering SME internationalisation and helping clusters developing joint international strategies. Under FP7 the Regions of Knowledge programme supports transnational cooperation of regional research driven clusters in Europe and on global markets. The Regional Operational Programmes for innovation also include actions related to the nurturing of clusters.

In the future, it is expected that the COSME ([2]) will play a key role in capitalising on clusters to support SMEs. Specific actions will help develop more customised support services to SMEs, strengthen cluster management and intensify international activities. Furthermore, intermediary organisations such as cluster management organisations would be able under Horizon 2020 to facilitate cross-sectoral and trans-regional innovation-based activities with SMEs to mutually reinforce competences for developing new industrial value chains in the EU. Finally, the next EU regional policy instruments are foreseen to be extensively used to implement smart specialisation strategies through clusters ([3]).

([1]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.
([2]) Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs.
([3]) Please refer to the answer given by the Commission to Question E-12620/2011: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006569/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(29 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Scoperto il DNA del genoma mitocondriale, causa di malattie ereditarie infantili

È recentissima la scoperta di un ricercatore e di docenti di un'università di Bari relativa al genoma mitocondriale: da frammenti di sequenze genomiche, hanno recuperato le informazioni necessarie a ricostruire in maniera pressoché completa il genoma mitocondriale, ovvero il Dna di quegli organelli che rappresentano la cosiddetta «centrale energetica» delle cellule e che hanno un patrimonio genetico indipendente da quello nucleare racchiuso nei cromosomi.

La presenza dei mitocondri costituisce circa il 2 % del DNA cellulare e assolve funzioni vitali. Le mutazioni del genoma mitocondriale sono responsabili di malattie gravissime che compromettono la funzionalità del sistema muscolare e nervoso e che sono associate a processi di invecchiamento e di oncogenesi.

Le sindromi di Leigh, di Kearns-Sayre e di Pearson sono alcune delle malattie mitocondriali che hanno un'incidenza media di 1/4000 persone, e colpiscono soprattutto bambini tramite l'eredità dal DNA materno.

La scoperta di cui sopra permetterà ora di studiare il coinvolgimento del genoma mitocondriale in centinaia di malattie di cui sono ignoti il gene o i geni responsabili.

Noto è l'impegno dell'UE nel realizzare, entro il 2014, un unico Spazio europeo della ricerca, nel quale i ricercatori potranno lavorare in qualsiasi paese dell'UE e beneficiare di un'accresciuta cooperazione internazionale.

Alla luce di quanto precede, potrebbe la Commissione precisare:

1. Se è a conoscenza della scoperta relativa al genoma mitocondriale e

2. se intende destinare parte dei fondi del Settimo programma quadro all'approfondimento di tale scoperta e al proseguimento della ricerca?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(22 agosto 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'importanza di sostenere la ricerca nelle malattie mitocondriali ed è a conoscenza delle scoperte nella ricerca di base e della loro traduzione in pratica clinica a beneficio dei pazienti.

Il contributo delle mutazioni mitocondriali alle malattie umane è oggetto di intensi studi dalla fine degli anni '80. È stato scoperto che queste mutazioni sono all'origine di un numero significativo di disturbi rari o poco comuni, complessi o eterogenei (malattie neurologiche, diabete, sordità neurosensoriale, cardiopatie).

La ricerca sulle malattie mitocondriali viene sostenuta nell'ambito dei programmi quadro dell'UE per la ricerca (PQ) dall'inizio degli anni '90. Nell'ambito del PQ6 (2002-2006) sono stati destinati a quest'area di ricerca circa 8,2 milioni di euro ([1]). Con i primi 6 inviti a presentare proposte nell'ambito del PQ7 (2007-2013) sono stati investiti circa 30,5 milioni di euro per le malattie mitocondriali mediante il *programma Idee* ([2]) (17,5 milioni di euro) e con il tema specifico «Salute» del *programma Cooperazione* ([3]) (13 milioni di euro).

Ulteriori possibilità di sostegno a quest'area di ricerca provengono dagli inviti a presentare proposte del PQ7 (programma di lavoro 2013 ([4])) pubblicati nel luglio 2012, in particolare con le tematiche generali previste nel tema specifico «Salute» del *programma Cooperazione* e nel *programma Idee* ([5]).

([1]) http://www.eumitocombat.org
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.search&TXT=&FRM=1&STP=10&SIC=SICMED&PGA=FP7-IDEAS-ERC&CCY=&PCY=&SRC=&LNG=en&REF=.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/index_en.html
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/ideas

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006569/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Discovery of the mitochondrial genome DNA, a cause of hereditary diseases in children

A discovery has been made very recently by researchers at a University in Bari regarding the mitochondrial genome. Using fragments of genome sequences, they recovered the information needed for a virtually complete reconstruction of the mitochondrial genome, namely the DNA of the organelles that represent the so-called 'powerhouse' of the cells and have a genetic make-up independent of the nuclear load contained in the chromosomes.

Mitochondria account for around 2 % of cellular DNA, and perform vital functions. Mutations in the mitochondrial genome are responsible for extremely serious diseases that compromise muscle and nerve function and are linked to processes of ageing and carcinogenesis.

Kearns-Sayre syndrome, Leigh's disease and Pearson syndrome are some of the mitochondrial diseases suffered by one in every 4 000 people, with babies particularly affected by inheritance from their mothers' DNA.

This discovery will allow the involvement of the mitochondrial DNA to be studied in hundreds of diseases where the gene or genes responsible are unknown.

As we know, the EU is committed to creating, by 2014, a single European Research Area that will allow researchers to work in any EU country and benefit from greater international cooperation.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. If it is aware of the discovery concerning the mitochondrial genome?

2. If it intends to devote some of the funds of the Seventh Framework Programme to further investigation of this discovery and continuation of the research?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

The Commission is aware of the importance of supporting research of mitochondrial diseases, comprising basic research discoveries and their translation into clinical practice for the benefit of patients.

The contribution of mitochondrial (mtDNA) mutations to human diseases has been intensively studied since the late 1980s. These mutations have been found to be a significant contributor to a range of rare or relatively common, complex or heterogeneous disorders (neurological diseases, diabetes, sensorineural hearing loss and cardiomyopathy).

The research on mitochondrial diseases has been supported under the EU Framework Programmes for Research (FPs) since early 1990s. Some EUR 8.2 million ([1]) were devoted to this area under FP6 (2002-2006). Under the first six calls of the FP7 (2007-2013) around EUR 30.5 million have been invested to mitochondrial diseases research in the Ideas Programme ([2]) (EUR 17.5 million) and Cooperation — Health Theme ([3]) (EUR 13 million).

Further opportunities for supporting this research area are available in FP7 calls (Work Programme 2013) ([4]) published on 10 July 2012 in particular in the broadly-defined topics of the Cooperation-Health Theme and the Ideas Programme ([5]).

([1]) http://www.eumitocombat.org.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.search&TXT=&FRM=1&STP=10&SIC=SICMED&PGA=FP7-IDEAS-ERC&CCY=&PCY=&SRC=&LNG=en&REF=.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/index_en.html
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/ideas.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006576/12
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(29. kesäkuuta 2012)

Aihe: Sudet ihmisten ja kotieläinten uhkana

Susikannan suojelun kielteisenä seurauksena susien määrä on Suomessa kasvanut tasolle, jossa se muodostaa uhan ihmisten ja kotieläinten turvallisuudelle. Kansalliset viranomaiset vastaavat petokannan määrän arvioimisesta ja kaatolupien myöntämisestä. Näillä toimilla pyritään suojaamaan elinkykyisen susikannan säilyminen Suomen luonnossa.

Kansalaisten kannalta kysymys on vakavasta turvallisuutta uhkaavasta ja normaalia elämää rajoittavasta asiasta. Tietyillä alueilla ympäristö on susien läsnäolon myötä muuttunut niin vaaralliseksi, että varsinkin lasten ja koirien liikkuminen kodin ulkopuolella ei ole mahdollista. Tilanne voidaan korjata susikantaa vähentämällä. Paikalliset ja kansalliset toimenpiteet ovat kuitenkin sidoksissa Euroopan unionin yleisiin linjauksiin, joissa ensisijaisena lähtökohtana on ihmisten tuvallisuuden sijasta luonnonsuojelu ja susien hyvinvointi. Tästä johtuen suojattomiksi ja uhatuiksi joutuvat ihmiset kokevat vallitsevan tilanteen vääristyneenä ja jopa absurdina: sudet ovat ihmisiä tärkeämpiä.

Aikooko komissio tarkistaa susia koskevaa linjaustaan niin, että susien reviirien sisällä asuvat ihmiset voivat kokea elämisen ja liikkumisen kotiseudullaan turvalliseksi? Mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä susia koskevan linjauksen suhteen niin, että lasten ja kotieläinten turvallisuus voidaan taata myös niillä alueilla, joilla susitiheys on kasvanut erityisen suureksi?

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(22. elokuuta 2012)

Komissio ei ole parlamentin jäsenen kanssa samaa mieltä siitä, että EU:n politiikassa sudet ovat tärkeämpiä kuin ihmiset.

Susia suojellaan tehokkaasti, koska niiden suojelun tila on EU:ssa epäsuotuisa. Suojelu perustuu neuvoston direktiiviin 92/43/ETY luontotyyppien sekä luonnonvaraisen eläimistön ja kasviston suojelusta ([1]).

Suomen poronhoitoalueilla susikannat eivät ole niin tiukkaan suojeltuja, mutta viranomaisten on toteutettava tarvittavat toimenpiteet sen varmistamiseksi, että kaikkien lajien hyödyntäminen on sopusoinnussa kunkin lajin suotuisan suojelun tason säilyttämisen kanssa. Poronhoitoalueen ulkopuolella susien kaataminen voidaan poikkeuksellisesti sallia, jos direktiivin 16 artiklan 1 kohdassa säädetyt edellytykset täyttyvät. Tällöin ei saisi olla olemassa tyydyttäviä vaihtoehtoja, eikä poikkeusluvasta saisi olla haittaa kyseisten lajien kantojen suotuisan suojelun tason säilyttämiselle niiden luontaisella levinneisyysalueella. Direktiivin 16 artiklan 1 kohdan c alakohdassa mainitaan nimenomaisesti yleinen turvallisuus yhdeksi edellytykseksi, jonka on täytyttävä, jotta jäsenvaltiot voivat myöntää lupia pyytää susia, jotka ovat uhka ihmisille.

Komissio on täysin tietoinen vaikeuksista, joita liittyy susien kaltaisten suurpetojen käsittelyyn EU:ssa. Komissio on jo laatinut ohjeet ([2]) suurpetopopulaatioiden käsittelemiseksi auttamaan direktiivin täytäntöönpanossa. Komissio on myös hiljattain aloittanut eri sidosryhmien kanssa vuoropuhelun, jotta voidaan löytää ratkaisuja ongelmiin, jotka johtuvat ihmisten ja suurpetojen rinnakkaiselosta.

([1]) EYVL L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/docs/guidelines_final2008.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006576/12
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Wolves as a threat to humans and domestic animals

One negative effect of measures to protect the wolf population is that the number of wolves in Finland has risen to a level whereas they pose a threat to the safety of humans and domestic animals. National authorities are responsible for assessing the levels of carnivore populations and issuing hunting licences. These measures are aimed at safeguarding the preservation of a viable wolf population in the Finnish natural environment.

For citizens, this represents a serious threat to safety and restricts normal life. In some areas, the presence of wolves has made the surroundings so dangerous that, particularly for children and dogs, it is impossible to walk around outside the house. This situation could be remedied by reducing the wolf population. Local and national measures are, however, associated with the general orientation of the European Union, which is primarily based on the conservation and well-being of wolves rather than on human safety. As a result, those who are vulnerable and threatened feel that the current situation is distorted and even absurd: wolves are more important than humans.

Does the Commission intend to review the guidelines on wolves so that people who live in the vicinity of wolves can feel safe living in and moving around their neighbourhoods? What measures does the Commission intend to take concerning the guidelines on wolves so that the safety of humans and domestic animals can be guaranteed in areas where the density of wolves has become particularly high?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

The Commission does not share the view of the Honourable Member that in EU policy wolves are more important than humans.

Due to its unfavourable conservation status in the EU the species is strictly protected under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ([1]).

Wolf populations in the reindeer herding area in Finland are exempted from this strict protection regime but the authorities must take the necessary measures to ensure that any exploitation of the species is compatible with it being maintained at a favourable conservation status. Outside of the reindeer herding area the killing of the species may be permissible if the derogation conditions set out in Article 16(1) of the directive are met. There should be no satisfactory alternative and the derogation should not be detrimental to the maintenance of populations of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. Public safety is explicitly mentioned in Article 16(1) (c) as one of the conditions under which Member States may grant permits to take wolves that pose a threat to humans.

The Commission is fully aware of the difficulties involved in the management of large carnivores, such as the wolf, in the EU. A Commission guidance document on population-level management of large carnivores ([2]) has already been prepared to help assist in the implementation of the directive. The Commission has also recently initiated dialogue with various relevant stakeholders in order to find solutions to the problems caused by the co-existence of humans with large carnivores.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/docs/guidelines_final2008.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006577/12
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(29. kesäkuuta 2012)

Aihe: Taide-esineiden arvonlisävero

On perusteltua huolehtia, että EU:n jäsenvaltioissa luovilla aloilla toimivilla olisi riittävät ja turvatut mahdollisuudet taiteelliseen ja luovaan toimintaansa mutta myös kohtuulliset lähtökohdat uran luomiselle ja toimeentulolle. Koska nuorten ja erityisesti uraansa aloittavien kuvataiteilijoiden tulotaso on alhainen ja siten taloudelliset edellytykset erityisen haasteelliset, muodostaa arvonlisävero näissä olosuhteissa heille kohtuuttoman lisärasitteen. Kuitenkin taiteilijauran alun turvaaminen on kaikkien edun mukaista. Aloittelevien taiteilijoiden kannalta tilanne on epäoikeudenmukainen, mikäli taloudelliset edellytykset vaihtelevat EU:n jäsenvaltioiden kesken.

Onko komissiolla mahdollisuutta selvittää, noudatetaanko kaikissa EU:n jäsenvaltioissa taiteilijoiden itse myymien taide-esineiden kohdalla yhtenäistä arvonlisäverokantaa? Mikäli jäsenvaltioiden välillä on verokannan suhteen eroja, onko komissiolla mahdollisuutta vaikuttaa tilanteeseen niin, että kaikki EU:n jäsenvaltiot pyrkisivät samansuuruiseen verokantaan taide-esineiden ALV:n suhteen?

Onko komissiolla käytössään keinoja, joiden tuloksena kuvataiteilijat voitaisiin vapauttaa arvonlisäverosta koko EU:n alueella, jolloin EU ja sen jäsenvaltiot tukisivat merkittävällä tavalla taiteilijoita ja edistäisivät kunkin jäsenvaltion ja koko EU:n kulttuurielämää? Mikäli jäsenvaltioiden valmiudet eivät riitä vapauttamaan kuvataiteilijoita ALV:sta, voiko komissio pyrkiä toimimaan aloittelevien taiteilijoiden tilanteen helpottamiseksi siten, että heidän ensimyyntinsä kohdalla siirryttäisiin kaikissa EU:n jäsenvaltioissa ALV:n osalta nollaverokantaan?

Algirdas Šemetan komission puolesta antama vastaus
(31. heinäkuuta 2012)

Arvonlisävero (alv) on yleinen kulutusvero, jossa vero määräytyy tavaroihin ja palveluihin lisätyn arvon perusteella. Sen pääasiallisena tarkoituksena on synnyttää lisätuloja jäsenvaltioille ja sen maksaa lopullinen kuluttaja. Alv-direktiivin ([1]) mukaan alv:a on kannettava kaikista verollisista liiketoimista eli tavaraluovutuksista ja palvelusuorituksista, jotka verovelvollinen toteuttaa vastikkeellisesti tässä ominaisuudessaan. Tämä koskee myös taiteilijoita.

Yhteistä alv-järjestelmää on lähennetty jossakin määrin Euroopan unionissa. Alv-sääntöjä ei ole kuitenkaan yhdenmukaistettu kokonaan. Niissä annetaan vaihtoehtoja ja vahvistetaan tiettyjä poikkeuksia, minkä vuoksi jäsenvaltioiden välillä on edelleen eroja. Alv-sääntöihin liittyen komissio haluaisi viitata vastaukseensa ([2]), jonka se antoi parlamentin jäsen Pilar del Castillo Veran esittämiin kirjallisiin kysymyksiin E-2029/07 ja E-2030/07. Nollaverokannat muodostavat poikkeuksen alv-kantoja koskevista yleisistä säännöistä. Tällaisia poikkeuksia on myönnetty väliaikaisesti eräille jäsenvaltioille sillä perusteella, että kyseisissä valtioissa oli käytössä nollaverokannat ennen 1. tammikuuta 1991. Poikkeukset koskevat vain tuotteita, joihin sovellettiin nollaverokantaa jo ennen mainittua päivää.

Lisäksi jäsenvaltiot voivat tietyin edellytyksin ottaa käyttöön pienyrityksiin (myös nuoriin taiteilijoihin) sovellettavan erityisjärjestelmän ([3]), jossa ne voivat myöntää esim. verovapautuksia ja asteittaisia verohelpotuksia.

([1]) Neuvoston direktiivi 2006/112/EY, annettu 28 päivänä marraskuuta 2006, yhteisestä arvonlisäverojärjestelmästä (EUVL L 347, 1.12.2006, s. 1).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2007-2030&language=EN.
([3]) Pienyritysten erityisjärjestelmästä säädetään alv-direktiivin 281-292 artiklassa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006577/12
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Value added tax on works of art

There is good reason to ensure that those working in creative industries in EU Member States have sufficient and secure opportunities for artistic and creative activity, as well as reasonable starting points for a career and making a livelihood. Since young people, and particularly those embarking on a career in the visual arts, are on low incomes and hence are faced with particularly challenging economic conditions, a value added tax represents an unreasonable burden on them. It benefits all of us to ensure that artists can embark on a career. The situation for those beginning a career in the arts is unfair if economic conditions vary among the EU Member States.

Can the Commission clarify whether a single VAT rate holds in all EU Member States with respect to works of art sold by artists? If there is a difference in tax rates among the Member States, is the Commission able to influence the situation so that all EU Member States have an equal VAT rate for works of art?

Does the Commission have the means to allow visual artists to be made exempt from VAT throughout the EU, allowing the EU and its Member States to give significant support to artists and contribute to the cultural life of Member States and the EU as a whole? If Member States' capacities are not sufficient to make visual artists exempt from VAT, can the Commission try to take action to alleviate the situation of those starting a career in the arts so that, with respect to initial sales, all EU Member States move towards a 0 % VAT rate?

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

Value added tax (VAT) is a general consumption tax assessed on the value added to goods and services. It was primarily meant for raising revenue for the Member States and is borne by the final consumer. According to the VAT Directive ([1]), VAT should be applied to any taxable transaction, namely goods or services supplied for consideration by a taxable person acting as such. This also applies to artists.

The common system of VAT has reached a certain degree of approximation in the European Union. However, VAT rules are not completely harmonised, some options and specific derogations still exist, hence the current differences between the Member States. For the VAT rate rules, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-2029/07 and E-2030/07 by Pilar del Castillo Vera ([2]). Zero rates constitute exceptions to the general rules on VAT rates. They form part of temporary derogations granted to certain Member States on the basis that such rates were in force before 1 January 1991 and continue to be limited to the goods to which they were applied at that time.

Finally, Member States may, under certain conditions, introduce a special scheme for small enterprises ([3]), including young artists, which enable them to apply simplified procedures, such as exemptions and graduated tax relief.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax (OJ L 347, 1.12.2006, p. 1).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2007-2030&language=EN.
([3]) Special scheme for small enterprises, Articles 281 to 292 of the VAT Directive.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006593/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(29 giugno 2012)

Oggetto: Tratta degli esseri umani in Europa, un fenomeno in aumento

L'Organizzazione Internazionale del Lavoro stima che nel mondo siano quasi 21 milioni le vittime della tratta del lavoro forzato (compreso per sfruttamento sessuale); 5,5 milioni di esse sono minori. L'Europol precisa che i minori costretti a compiere attività criminali sono venduti a un prezzo di circa 20 000 euro. Questo fenomeno di tratta di esseri umani evidenzia una situazione assai grave, che si credeva debellata con la sottoscrizione di diversi trattati e convenzioni, basate sull'art. 4 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo del 1948.

Inoltre, in materia di tutela dei minori, esiste la Convenzione sui diritti del fanciullo del 1989, che vigila sui diritti dei più deboli e indifesi. Tuttavia, pare che questo nuovo tipo di schiavitù sia in aumento all'interno dell'Unione europea: i dati forniti dagli Stati membri indicano che nell'eurozona ai primi posti figura lo sfruttamento della prostituzione, seguito da quello lavorativo. Tale attività interessa la criminalità organizzata, che può lucrare ingenti somme, probabilmente favorita da un sistema sanzionatorio non efficace.

1. Può la Commissione esporre lo stato di avanzamento della ratifica da parte degli Stati membri della Convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sull'azione contro la tratta degli esseri umani?

2. Intende proporre agli Stati membri un inasprimento delle sanzioni contro il traffico di essere umani e lo sfruttamento di minori?

3. Considera sufficiente l'attuale sistema di recupero e reintegro nella società delle vittime del lavoro forzato, soprattutto di quello minorile?

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

La convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sulla lotta contro la tratta degli esseri umani è stata finora ratificata da Austria, Belgio, Bulgaria, Cipro, Danimarca, Finlandia, Francia, Irlanda, Italia, Lettonia, Lussemburgo, Malta, Paesi Bassi, Polonia, Portogallo, Regno Unito, Romania, Slovacchia, Slovenia, Spagna e Svezia, ed è stata firmata da Estonia, Germania, Grecia, Lituania e Ungheria ([1]).

Oltre ad essere un grave reato, la tratta di esseri umani costituisce una seria violazione dei diritti umani. Ciò è ribadito nella direttiva 2011/36/UE ([2]), che individua nei minori la categoria più vulnerabile e chiede di intensificare gli sforzi a favore della prevenzione e della tutela. La direttiva adotta un approccio di «tolleranza zero» nei confronti dei trafficanti, tra l'altro rendendo più severe le pene massime previste ([3]). Gli Stati membri sono tenuti a recepire la direttiva entro il 6 aprile 2013, data entro la quale sarà realizzato il ravvicinamento del diritto penale sostanziale relativo alla tratta degli esseri umani tra gli Stati membri. Inoltre, una delle priorità della comunicazione della Commissione dal titolo «La strategia dell'UE per l'eradicazione della tratta degli esseri umani (2012-2016)», recentemente adottata (COM(2012)0286), è il potenziamento dell'azione penale nei confronti dei trafficanti.

Detta strategia, che si incentra sulle vittime e attribuisce particolare importanza alla protezione dei minori, incoraggia gli Stati membri a stabilire meccanismi nazionali di riferimento per agevolare il recupero delle vittime e il loro reintegro nella società. A tale scopo, la strategia prevede lo sviluppo di orientamenti su sistemi per la protezione dei minori e il rafforzamento di tali sistemi da parte degli Stati membri.

([1]) http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/Flags-sos_en.asp.
([2]) Direttiva 2011/36/UE concernente la prevenzione e la repressione della tratta di esseri umani e la protezione delle vittime, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:101:0001:0011:IT:PDF.
([3]) Articolo 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006593/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: Increased human trafficking in Europe

The International Labour Organisation estimates that there are almost 21 million victims of forced labour trafficking worldwide (including sexual exploitation) and 5.5 million of them are children. Europol reports that children forced to undertake criminal activities are being sold for around EUR 20 000. Human trafficking highlights a serious situation, which was thought to have been defeated by the various treaties and conventions signed under Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

Children are also protected by the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, which oversees the rights of the weakest and most vulnerable children. This new type of slavery nevertheless seems to be on the rise in the European Union: data supplied by Member States indicate that in the euro area the most widespread forms are the exploitation of prostitution, followed by that of labour. This kind of activity is attractive to organised crime, which can make huge profits, probably aided by an ineffective system of penalties.

1. Can the Commission provide an update on the ratification by Member States of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings?

2. Does it intend to propose to Member States that they harden sanctions against human trafficking and child exploitation?

3. Does it consider the current system for the recovery and social reintegration of the victims of forced labour, especially children, to be sufficient?

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

To date, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings has been ratified by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom and has been signed by: Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, and Lithuania ([1]).

Trafficking in human beings is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. This is reflected in Directive 2011/36/EU ([2]). The directive recognises children as the most vulnerable and calls for increased prevention and protection efforts. This directive takes a zero-tolerance approach towards the traffickers by, *inter alia*, increasing the level of maximum penalties ([3]). The Member States have to transpose it by 6 April 2013 — and by then substantive criminal law related to trafficking in human beings will be approximated among the Member States. Moreover, increased prosecution of traffickers is one of the priorities of the recently adopted EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 (COM(2012)0286).

The strategy is victim centred and attaches special importance to the protection of children. It encourages Member States to establish formal and functional national referral mechanisms, to help victims recover and reintegrate in society. In this respect, the strategy foresees the development of guidelines on child protection systems and the strengthening by Member States of child protection systems.

([1]) http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/Flags-sos_en.asp
([2]) Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:101:0001:0011:EN:PDF
([3]) Article 4.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006596/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) y Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(29 de junio de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Golpe de Estado en Paraguay

El pasado viernes el Presidente de Paraguay, Fernando Lugo, fue destituido por el Senado de su país después de un juicio político impuesto por la oposición, a pesar de la presencia de una gran manifestación campesina que respaldaba al Gobierno. Inmediatamente asumió el poder el vicepresidente del Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA), Federico Franco. Los líderes políticos de América Latina salieron a respaldar al Gobierno de Lugo y a demostrar su solidaridad con el pueblo paraguayo.

La Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante, emitió un comunicado donde muestra su preocupación por el tema, pero no condena el golpe de Estado ([1]).

— ¿Piensa la Unión Europea calificar de golpe de Estado el juicio político a Fernando Lugo? ¿Considera que el argumento alegado para la destitución es válido? ¿Cómo ejercerá la necesaria presión diplomática para retomar la democracia? ¿Retirará la representación de la UE en Paraguay, como lo han hecho los países del Mercosur?

— ¿Qué mecanismos de comunicación utiliza la Comisión con Unasur y Mercosur? ¿Cuándo lo ha hecho? ¿Apoyará al Mercosur, Unasur y la OEA en las medidas que tomen a fin de garantizar la democracia en la región? ¿Cómo garantiza la Comisión que la UE hable con una sola voz y que no haya algunos países que reconozcan al nuevo Gobierno?

— ¿Enviará un delegado/a especial de la UE para monitorear in situ la situación de posible violación de derechos humanos y libertad de expresión, colaborando con el grupo de expertos enviados por la OEA, Unasur? ¿Ofrecerá apoyo para una comisión de investigación de la masacre?

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

La UE ha expresado su gran preocupación sobre la rapidez del proceso por el que se destituyó a Fernando Lago, aunque se siguiera el procedimiento establecido en la Constitución paraguaya. La UE ha destacado también que es fundamental respetar la voluntad democrática de los paraguayos.

Los países de Mercosur han retirado sus embajadores en Paraguay o les han llamado a consultas. El Embajador de la UE ante Paraguay reside en Uruguay y la UE está representada en Paraguay por un encargado de negocios.

La UE ha estado en contacto con Unasur a través de su Delegación en Quito y con Mercosur a través de la Presidencia *pro tempore* de Brasil. Las delegaciones de la UE en Brasil y Uruguay también han estado siguiendo de cerca la situación, en particular a través de contactos con los Ministerios de Asuntos Exteriores. Los Jefes de Misión de la UE en Asunción han estado en contacto con el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores. La Delegación de la UE en Asunción, junto con los principales representantes de la sociedad civil y otras partes interesadas, sigue de cerca la situación de los Derechos humanos en el país.

La Delegación de la UE en Washington participa en las reuniones de la OEA y sigue de cerca su trabajo y sus reacciones. La cuestión se trató con la CELAC en la última reunión de altos funcionarios UE-CELAC, que tuvo lugar en Chile el 29 de junio de 2012.

El SEAE, como presidente del Grupo de trabajo del Consejo sobre América Latina, dirige el debate en la UE sobre la situación en Paraguay y trabaja estrechamente con las misiones de la UE para garantizar un enfoque coordinado de la UE.

Por lo que respecta a los sucesos de Curuguaty, la Delegación de la UE en Asunción sigue la situación e informa con regularidad a los servicios centrales.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131143.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006596/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) y Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(29. Juni 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Staatsstreich in Paraguay

Am vergangenen Freitag wurde der Präsident von Paraguay, Fernando Lugo, durch den Senat seines Landes nach einem von der Opposition angestifteten politischen Prozess abgesetzt, obwohl die Landbevölkerung zur Unterstützung der Regierung eine Großkundgebung abgehalten hatte. Unmittelbar im Anschluss übernahm der stellvertretende Vorsitzende der Liberal-radikalen Authentischen Partei (PLRA), Federico Franco, die Macht. Die politischen Führer in Lateinamerika bekundeten ihre Unterstützung für die Regierung Lugo sowie ihre Solidarität mit dem Volk von Paraguay.

Die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin veröffentlichte eine Pressemitteilung, in der sie ihrer Besorgnis angesichts der Sachlage Ausdruck verleiht, den Staatsstreich jedoch nicht verurteilt ([1]).

— Gedenkt die Europäische Union den politischen Prozess gegen Fernando Lugo als Staatsstreich zu bewerten? Hält sie das für die Absetzung geltend gemachte Argument für stichhaltig? Auf welche Weise wird sie den notwendigen diplomatischen Druck zur Wiederherstellung der Demokratie ausüben? Wird sie die Vertretung der EU aus Paraguay abziehen, wie es die Staaten des Mercosur getan haben?

— Welche Kommunikationsmechanismen setzt die Kommission gegenüber UNASUR und Mercosur ein? Wann hat sie diese eingesetzt? Wird sie Mercosur, UNASUR und die OAS bei ihren Maßnahmen zum Schutz der Demokratie in der Region unterstützen? Wie gewährleistet die Kommission, dass die EU mit einer Stimme spricht beziehungsweise dass keine Staaten die neue Regierung anerkennen?

— Wird die EU eine Sondergesandte/einen Sondergesandten entsenden, der in Zusammenarbeit mit der von der OAS und UNASUR entsandten Expertengruppe die Lage vor Ort auf mögliche Verletzungen der Menschenrechte und der freien Meinungsäußerung überwacht? Wird sie einen Ausschuss zur Untersuchung des Massakers unterstützen?

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

Die EU hat ihre tiefe Besorgnis über die handstreichartige Absetzung von Fernando Lugo geäußert, wenngleich sie im Einklang mit den Verfahren der paraguayischen Verfassung ablief. Ferner hat die EU betont, dass die Achtung des demokratischen Willens des paraguayischen Volkes vorrangig ist.

Die Mercosur-Mitgliedstaaten haben ihre Botschafter in Paraguay abgezogen bzw. zu Beratungen einberufen. Der für Paraguay zuständige Botschafter der EU sitzt in Uruguay — in Paraguay ist die EU durch einen Geschäftsträger vertreten.

Die EU hatte über ihre Delegation in Quito Kontakt mit UNASUR und mit Mercosur über die brasilianische Pro-tempore-Präsidentschaft. Auch die EU-Delegationen in Brasilien und Uruguay haben die Entwicklungen aufmerksam verfolgt, vor allem über ihre Kontakte zu den Außenministerien. Die EU-Missionsleiter in Asunción standen in Kontakt mit dem Außenminister. Die EU-Delegation in Asunción beobachtet gemeinsam mit den wichtigsten zivilgesellschaftlichen Akteuren und weiteren beteiligten Akteuren die Menschenrechtslage im Land.

Die EU-Delegation in Washington nimmt an den OAS-Sitzungen teil und verfolgt aufmerksam ihre Arbeit und Reaktionen. Ferner wurde die Angelegenheit mit der CELAC im Rahmen des letzten Treffens Hoher Beamter von EU und CELAC erörtert, das am 29. Juni 2012 in Chile stattfand.

Im Rahmen des Vorsitzes der Arbeitsgruppe „Lateinamerika“ des Rates leitet der EAD die Diskussion der EU über die Lage in Paraguay und arbeitet eng mit den EU-Botschaften zusammen, um einen abgestimmten EU-Ansatz sicherzustellen.

In Bezug auf die Vorfälle in Curuguaty, hat die EU-Delegation in Asunción die Lage beobachtet und der Zentrale regelmäßig Bericht erstattet.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131143.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006596/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) and Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(29 June 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Coup in Paraguay

On Friday 22 June 2012, the President of Paraguay, Fernando Lugo, was dismissed from office by his country's Senate following a political trial instigated by the opposition, and in spite of a large peasant demonstration in support of the government. The Vice-President, Federico Franco, from the Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA), immediately assumed the presidency. Political leaders from around Latin America responded by expressing their support for the Lugo government and their solidarity with the Paraguayan people.

The Vice-President/High Representative issued a communiqué in which she expressed her concern over the matter, but did not condemn the coup ([1]).

— Does the EU intend to categorise the impeachment of Fernando Lugo as a coup d'état? Does it consider valid the arguments used to remove him? How will it exert the necessary diplomatic pressure to ensure that democracy is restored? Will it withdraw the EU's representation from Paraguay, as other Mercosur countries have done?

— How and when has the Commission been in communication with UNASUR and Mercosur? Will it support Mercosur, UNASUR and the OAS in any measures they take to safeguard democracy in Paraguay? How can the Commission ensure that the EU speaks with one voice and that some countries do not recognise the new government?

— Will it send a special EU delegate to monitor the situation on the ground for any possible violations of human rights and freedom of expression, in collaboration with the group of experts sent by the OAS and UNASUR? Will it support a committee to investigate the massacre?

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

The EU has strongly expressed concern about the speed of the process by which Fernando Lugo was impeached even if it did follow the procedures set by the Paraguayan Constitution. The EU has also underlined that respecting the democratic will of the Paraguayan people is paramount.

Mercosur countries have withdrawn, or called for consultations, their Ambassadors in Paraguay. The EU Ambassador to Paraguay is based in Uruguay and the EU is represented in Paraguay by a chargé d'affaires.

The EU has been in contact with UNASUR through its Delegation in Quito and with Mercosur via the Brazilian protempore Presidency. The EU Delegations in Brazil and Uruguay have also been following the situation closely, notably through contacts with the Ministries for Foreign Affairs. EU Heads of Mission in Asuncion have been in contact with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The EU Delegation in Asuncion together with the main actors of civil society and other stakeholders is following closely the human rights situation in the country.

The EU Delegation in Washington participates in the OAS meetings and follows closely its work and reactions; and the issue was discussed with CELAC during the last meeting of EU-CELAC Senior Officials, which took place in Chile on 29 June 2012.

The EEAS, as Chair of the Council working group on Latin America, is leading the EU discussion on the situation in Paraguay and is working closely with the EU Missions to ensure a coordinated EU approach.

As regards to the Curuguaty events, the EU Delegation in Asuncion followed the situation and reported regularly to HQ.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131143.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006601/12
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Legal norms in court proceedings

Could the Commission clarify the nature of the legal norms in force in the Member States in relation to the transcribing of court proceedings during criminal trials? Do defendants have a right under the EU Treaties and the Convention on Human Rights to have a full transcript of the proceedings made available to them and their defence team?

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

Subject to the Member States' obligation under the European Convention of Human Rights to respect the right to a fair trial, the recording of criminal court proceedings, and whether they are transcribed or not, is a matter for the law of the Member States. There is currently no right for defendants to have court proceedings transcribed under the EU Treaties or secondary law. If court proceedings are transcribed, access to such transcriptions is governed by national law subject to compliance with the ECHR.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006610/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(2 juli 2012)

Betreft: (Im)migrant (vervolgvraag II)

Op 29 juni 2012 heeft commissaris Malmström namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-004189/2012. Daarin schrijft zij onder andere het volgende: „De Commissie heeft aanzienlijke steun verleend om illegale migratie uit Noord-Afrika en Turkije aan te pakken (bijvoorbeeld via het sluiten van overnameovereenkomsten, het opbouwen van capaciteit voor geïntegreerd grensbeheer en het verlenen van steun in het kader van gezamenlijke Frontex-operaties)."

1. Kan de Commissie nader toelichten wat de „overnameovereenkomsten", het „opbouwen van capaciteit voor geïntegreerd grensbeheer" en het „verlenen van steun in het kader van gezamenlijke Frontex-operaties" concreet inhouden? Kan de Commissie documenten resp. achtergrondinformatie m.b.t. deze onderwerpen en haar werkwijze in dezen verstrekken?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke resultaten haar acties (reeds) hebben gehad? Zijn deze positief of negatief? Is de Commissie er (on)tevreden mee?

Voorts schrijft commissaris Malmström: „In mei 2011 is gestart met een dialoog over migratie, mobiliteit en veiligheid met Tunesië en Marokko met het oog op het sluiten van mobiliteitspartnerschappen."

3. Kan de Commissie nader toelichten wat de door haar genoemde dialoog met Tunesië en Marokko concreet inhoudt? Hoe vindt een dergelijke dialoog plaats? Met welke vertegenwoordigers van Tunesië en Marokko is de Commissie in gesprek?

4. Hoe kan de Commissie verzekeren dat in een dergelijke dialoog de belangen van de EU en haar burgers worden behartigd? In hoeverre gaat de Commissie mee in de belangen van Tunesië en Marokko? Hoe kan dat?

5. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke resultaten de dialoog (reeds) heeft gehad? Zijn deze positief of negatief? Is de Commissie er (on)tevreden mee? Wat heeft de EU enerzijds en wat hebben Tunesië en Marokko anderzijds met de dialoog bereikt?

Voorts schrijft commissaris Malmström: „In 2011 werden 140 980 onderdanen van derde landen aangehouden die illegaal de grens overstaken, en werden 148 853 illegale migranten naar hun land van herkomst teruggestuurd."

6. Hoe zijn de genoemde aantallen tot stand gekomen resp. welke personen betreft het hier?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(17 augustus 2012)

De Commissie heeft de onderhandelingen over de overnameovereenkomst met Turkije, waarvan de tekst uiteindelijk op 21 juni 2012 werd geparafeerd, met succes afgesloten. FRONTEX biedt via de gezamenlijke operatie Poseidon Land, die in maart 2011 van start is gegaan, nog steeds ondersteuning bij het toezicht op de Grieks/Turkse grens.

De Commissie heeft in oktober 2011 met Tunesië en Marokko een dialoog over migratie, mobiliteit en veiligheid op gang gebracht. De motivering van deze dialogen en hun mogelijke toegevoegde waarde, beperkingen, inhoud, uitvoeringsbepalingen en resultaat werden door de Commissie in haar mededeling COM(2011)292 van 24 mei 2011 uitvoerig uiteengezet. Met name de JBZ-Raad van 9 juni 2011 steunde de door de Commissie voorgestelde aanpak.

De Commissie voert deze dialogen gezamenlijk met de EDEO, alle betrokken EU-organen en belangstellende lidstaten, en heeft als gesprekspartners alle betrokken overheidsinstanties van de twee landen in kwestie, die door hun respectieve ministeries van Buitenlandse Zaken worden gecoördineerd.

Deze dialogen bieden elke partij de gelegenheid aan te geven welke de specifieke problemen zijn die moeten worden aangepakt op het gebied van migratie, mobiliteit en veiligheid; terzelfder tijd helpt een dialoog gezamenlijk oplossingen te vinden die voordelen opleveren voor beide partijen en gebieden aan te wijzen waar verdere samenwerking nuttig zou zijn.

Met de dialoog met Tunesië en Marokko over migratie, mobiliteit en veiligheid wordt veelbelovende vooruitgang geboekt. De Commissie hoopt dat de dialoog met succes zal worden afgesloten en zo spoedig mogelijk in mobiliteitspartnerschappen wordt omgezet.

De cijfers waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst zijn door de risicoanalyse-eenheid van FRONTEX bijeengebracht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006610/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: (Im)migrant (follow-up question II)

On 29 June 2012, Commissioner Malmström answered Written Question E-004189/2012 on behalf of the Commission, writing, *inter alia*: 'The Commission provided considerable support to tackle irregular migration from North Africa and Turkey (e.g. conclusion of readmission agreements, capacity building for integrated border management and support via Frontex Joint Operations).'

1. Can the Commission provide details of what is actually involved in the 'readmission agreements', 'capacity building for integrated border management' and 'support via Frontex Joint Operations'? Can the Commission supply documents or background information concerning these subjects and its approach to them?

2. Can the Commission indicate what results its action has already had? Are they positive or negative? Is the Commission satisfied with them or not?

Commissioner Malmström also writes, 'A Dialogue on migration, mobility and security with Tunisia and Morocco launched in May 2011 aims to concluding Mobility Partnerships.'

3. Can the Commission provide details of what is actually involved in the dialogue with Tunisia and Morocco? How is such a dialogue pursued? With which representatives of Tunisia and Morocco is the Commission holding these discussions?

4. How can the Commission ensure that the interests of the EU and its citizens are upheld in such a dialogue? To what extent does the Commission acquiesce in the interests of Tunisia and Morocco? How can it do so?

5. Can the Commission indicate what results the dialogue has already had? Are they positive or negative? Is the Commission satisfied with them or not? What has the dialogue achieved for (a) the EU; (b) Tunisia and Morocco?

Commissioner Malmström also writes, 'In 2011 140 980 third-country nationals were apprehended crossing the border irregularly and 148 853 irregular migrants were returned to their countries of origin.'

6. How were these figures compiled? Who are the people to whom they refer?

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

The Commission has successfully concluded the negotiation of the readmission agreement with Turkey, whose text was eventually initialled on 21 June 2012. Frontex continues to provide support in controlling the Greek/Turkish border via the Joint Operation Poseidon Land, which started in March 2011.

The Commission has launched Dialogues on migration, mobility and security with Tunisia and Morocco in October 2011. The rationale behind such Dialogues and their possible added value, limits, contents, implementation modalities and outcome were proposed in detail by the Commission in its communication COM(2011) 292 of 24 May 2011. The JHA Council of 9 June 2011, in particular, endorsed the approach proposed by the Commission.

The Commission carries out these Dialogues jointly with the EEAS, all relevant EU agencies as well as interested Member States, and has as interlocutors all relevant State bodies of the two countries concerned, coordinated by their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

Dialogues allow each side to indicate the specific challenges to be addressed in the area of migration, mobility and security while at the same time, dialogues assist in jointly identifying solutions beneficial to both sides and areas were further cooperation would be useful.

The Dialogues on migration, mobility and security with Tunisia and Morocco are progressing in a promising manner. The Commission hopes they will be successfully concluded and translated into Mobility Partnerships, as soon as possible.

The figures to which the Member of Parliament refers to were compiled by the Frontex Risk Analysis unit.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006611/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Apoios à renovação e modernização da frota pesqueira na ilha da Madeira

Numa visita recente à ilha da Madeira fui alertado pelas autoridades regionais para os graves prejuízos que decorrem da ausência de apoios à renovação e à modernização da frota pesqueira local, com fortíssima prevalência da pesca de pequena escala. Com efeito, esta ausência de apoios ignora a diversidade de situações que caracteriza as pescas na UE, ignora as diferenças significativas existentes ao nível da idade média da frota de diferentes países e beneficia indiretamente a grande pesca industrial em detrimento da pesca de pequena escala, cujo tempo de vida médio das embarcações é menor.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual a idade média da frota em cada um dos Estados-Membros da UE?

2. Qual a idade média dos diferentes segmentos da frota em cada um desses países, designadamente da pesca industrial e da pesca de pequena escala?

3. Como tenciona ter em conta as diferenças existentes, de forma a não prejudicar uns países e/ou segmentos de frota, cuja idade média da frota é mais avançada?

4. De que forma são tidos em conta aspetos como o da segurança, em face desta ausência cega de apoios à renovação e modernização da frota?

5. Como vai a Comissão encarar esta situação no futuro?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(29 de agosto de 2012)

A Comissão envia diretamente ao Senhor Deputado e ao Secretariado do Parlamento um quadro com as informações solicitadas nos pontos 1 e 2.

O artigo 25.° do Fundo Europeu das Pescas (FEP) prevê uma ampla gama de medidas de modernização a bordo dos navios de pesca. Está, porém, excluído o apoio à construção de embarcações. A seleção de medidas e projetos no âmbito do FEP é da responsabilidade da autoridade de gestão em cada Estado-Membro.

A Comissão não partilha a opinião de que a idade dos navios de pesca coloca os proprietários, as frotas ou os Estados-Membros em desvantagem. O que importa não é tanto a idade, mas uma manutenção adequada das embarcações.

A segurança deve ser uma preocupação prioritária de todos os envolvidos na pesca, sem depender da disponibilidade de apoio público. Tanto o FEP como o Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e da Pesca (FEAMP) oferecem apoio em matéria de saúde e segurança a bordo. As medidas abrangidas aplicam-se, não só aos navios, mas também aos equipamentos individuais.

À luz das respostas às duas perguntas anteriores, a Comissão não prevê ter em conta a idade dos navios de pesca no FEAMP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006611/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Support for the renewal and modernisation of the fishing fleet on the island of Madeira

On a recent visit to the island of Madeira the regional authorities drew my attention to the serious harm caused by the lack of support for the renewal and modernisation of the local fishing fleet, which is dominated by small-scale fishing. This lack of support shows a disregard for the diversity that characterises fisheries in the EU and the significant differences as regards the average age of the fleet in the various countries, and indirectly benefits large-scale industrial fishing to the detriment of small-scale fishing, where vessels have a shorter average lifespan.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is the average age of the fleet in each of the EU Member States?

2. What is the average age of the different segments of the fleet in each of these countries, in particular the industrial fishing and the small-scale fishing fleet?

3. How will the Commission take account of the differences that exist and ensure that countries and/or segments where the average age of the fleet is higher are not placed at a disadvantage?

4. How are aspects such as safety taken into account, given this short-sighted lack of support for fleet renewal and modernisation?

5. How will the Commission tackle this situation in the future?

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

The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat a table containing the information requested in point 1 and 2.

Article 25 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) provides for a wide array of modernisation measures on board fishing vessels. Support for vessel construction is nevertheless excluded. The selection of measures and projects under the EFF is the responsibility of the managing authority in the Member State.

The Commission does not support the view that the age of vessels places vessel owners, fleets or Member States at a disadvantage. What matters is not so much the age of vessels, but adequate maintenance.

Safety must be a primary consideration for all those involved in fishing and should not depend on the availability of public support. Both the EFF and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) provide support for health and safety on board. Measures covered apply not only to vessels but also to individual equipments.

In view of the replies to the two previous questions, the Commission does not plan to take into account the age of vessels in the EMFF.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006612/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Constituição de uma rede de microrreservas na ilha da Madeira

A ilha da Madeira dispõe de notáveis valores ecológicos, importantes do ponto de vista da conservação. Sendo a floresta da Laurissilva um exemplo maior dessa importância, está longe de ser o único. A orografia da ilha e o tipo de ocupação do território que determinou, com elevada concentração da ocupação humana nalgumas zonas, colocam desafios do ponto de vista da conservação de habitats e espécies com estatuto de conservação, protegidos pela legislação nacional e comunitária. Em concreto, importa preservar pequenas manchas de habitats relevantes, onde ocorrem espécies como a Figueira-do inferno (Euphorbia piscatoria), o Jasmim-da-Madeira (Jasminum azoricum) e outras, algumas delas constituindo endemismos da ilha. Importa também preservar a conectividade entre essas manchas de habitats. O modelo das microrreservas, experimentado já nalguns países, e em especial na proximidade de áreas urbanas ou periurbanas, tem revelado algum sucesso na resposta a desafios deste tipo. Segundo este modelo, alguns proprietários de terrenos podem receber apoios para gerir os seus terrenos de forma a conservar os habitats e as espécies a proteger ou então alugá-los a longo prazo.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre os apoios comunitários que poderão ser mobilizados para apoiar a constituição de uma rede de microrreservas na ilha da Madeira, com a finalidade supramencionada.

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(20 de agosto de 2012)

No atual período de programação, o estabelecimento de uma rede de microrreservas na Madeira seria potencialmente elegível para apoio por duas das principais fontes de financiamento da União: o Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional e o Programa LIFE+.

No primeiro caso, os candidatos deveriam examinar juntamente com a autoridade administrativa responsável se o seu projeto é elegível para financiamento pelo programa operacional «Intervir+» no âmbito do atual período de programação (2007/2013) ([1]). No caso do programa LIFE+, o promotor do projeto interessado poderia apresentar a candidatura a um projeto à autoridade nacional responsável pelo programa LIFE (a Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente) que, após um controlo interno, transmitiria o pedido à Comissão Europeia.

Contudo, para ser elegível para cofinanciamento ao abrigo do atual Regulamento LIFE, o projeto deve ser executado num sítio Natura 2000 ou numa zona que, em resultado do projeto, seja designada sítio Natura 2000 ao abrigo da Diretiva Habitats (92/43/CEE ([2])) ou da Diretiva Aves (2009/147/CE ([3])). Os projetos devem ser enviados às autoridades portuguesas até 26 de setembro de 2012 no âmbito do convite à apresentação de propostas de 2012 ([4]). Em fevereiro de 2013, será lançado um novo convite à apresentação de propostas. Na sequência das propostas apresentadas pela Comissão, este tipo de projeto será igualmente elegível para cofinanciamento a partir de 2014.

No que respeita à política de desenvolvimento rural, não se prevê no atual período de programação a concessão de auxílio às zonas que ligam as zonas Natura 2000. No entanto, a proposta da Comissão relativa ao desenvolvimento rural para o próximo período de programação prevê a possibilidade de financiamento dessas zonas desde que não excedam, para cada programa de desenvolvimento rural, 5 % das zonas designadas como sítios Natura 2000 abrangidas pelo seu âmbito territorial.

([1]) «Programa Operacional de Valorização do Potencial Económico e Coesão Territorial da RAM, 2007/2013», «Intervir+», (http://www.idr.gov-madeira.pt/portal/Conteudo.aspx?IDMenu=2&IDSubMenu=74&Path=74&jmenu=2).
([2]) JO L 206 de 22.7.1992.
([3]) JO L 20 de 26.1.2010.
([4]) (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006612/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Building a network of micro-reserves on the island of Madeira

The island of Madeira has a number of ecologically valuable characteristics that are important from the point of view of conservation. The forest of Laurisilva is one outstanding example, but it is far from the only one. The geography of the island and the type of land use that has resulted from it, with a high concentration of human occupation in certain areas, pose challenges from the point of view of conserving designated habitats and species that are protected under national and Community legislation. More specifically, it is important to preserve small patches of habitat that host species such as Madeira spurge (Euphorbia piscatoria), Madeira jasmine (Jasminum azoricum) and others, some of which are endemic to the island. It is also important to preserve the links between these patches of habitat. The micro-reserve model that has already been tried out in some countries, particularly in the vicinity of urban or periurban areas, has achieved some success in responding to challenges of this kind. Under this model, some landowners may receive support for managing their land in a way that makes it possible to conserve habitats and species that require protection, or for signing a long-term lease on the land.

Can the Commission provide information on the Community support that could be mobilised to support the building of a network of micro-reserves on the island of Madeira, for the above purpose?

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

In the current programming period, the establishment of a network of micro-reserves in Madeira could potentially be supported by two main Community sources of funding, the European Regional Development Fund and LIFE+.

For the first one, the candidates should examine with the relevant management authority whether their project could apply for funding from the Operational Programme 'Intervir+' under the current programing period (2007-2013) ([1]). As regards the LIFE+ Programme, the interested project promoter can submit an application for a project to the national authority responsible for LIFE (Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente) who, after an internal check, should forward the application to the European Commission.

However to be eligible for co-financing under current LIFE Regulation, the project has to be implemented on a Natura 2000 site or on an area which, as a result of the project, will be designated as a Natura 2000 site under the Habitats (92/43/EEC ([2])) or the Birds Directives (2009/147/EC ([3])). Projects have to be sent to the Portuguese authorities by 26 September 2012 for the 2012 call for proposals ([4]). A new call for proposals will be launched in February 2013. Pursuant to the Commission proposals, this kind of projects will also be eligible for co-financing after 2014.

Regarding rural development policy, in the current period the aid for zones connecting Natura 2000 areas is not foreseen; nevertheless the Commission proposal on rural development for next period includes the possibility to finance these areas which shall, per rural development programme, not exceed 5% of the designated N 2000 areas covered by its territorial scope.

([1]) 'Programa Operacional de Valorização do Potencial Económico e Coesão Territorial da RAM, 2007-2013', 'Intervir+', http://www.idr.gov-madeira.pt/portal/Conteudo.aspx?IDMenu=2&IDSubMenu=74&Path=74&jmenu=2.
([2]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006613/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Fundos comunitários destinados à reestruturação, remodelação e construção de estabelecimentos de educação e de ensino na Região Autónoma da Madeira

Solicito à Comissão que me comunique se dispõe de informação relativa aos fundos comunitários atribuídos ao Governo Regional da Madeira tendo em vista a reestruturação, a remodelação e a construção de estabelecimentos de educação e de ensino na Região Autónoma da Madeira, entre 2010 e 2012. Mais concretamente:

1. Quais os montantes em questão?

2. Dispõe de informação relativa aos estabelecimentos que beneficiaram desses apoios e quais os trabalhos concretizados?

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

De acordo com as informações prestadas pela autoridade de gestão do programa operacional do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional 2007/2013 (FEDER) para a Madeira, o montante total de fundos afetados até ao final de 2012 para remodelação e construção de estabelecimentos de ensino, formação e desportivos, todos ligados a infraestruturas educacionais, é discriminado da seguinte maneira:

Descrição	Montante em euros
Autorizados/Aprovados desde 2008	
Investimento total	54 856 544,07
Montante eligível total	48 542 189,49
Contribuição FEDER	41 033 600,35
Contribuição nacional	7 508 589,14
Executados até 31.12.2011	
Custos elegíveis totais	29 117 364,95
Contribuição FEDER	25 049 176,01
Contribuição nacional	4 086 188,94
Pagamentos aos beneficiários	25 219 051,48

Podem ser solicitadas informações detalhadas relativas a cada projeto à autoridade de gestão do «Programa Operacional de Valorização do Potencial Económico e Coesão Territorial da Região Autónoma da Madeira, Intervir+ — 2007/2013», no seguinte endereço:

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Regional, IDR-RAM
Travessa do Cabido, 16
9000-715 Funchal
Idr.srpf@gov-madeira.pt
silvio.costa@idr.gov-madeira.pt
Tel: +351.291 214 000

ou através do sítio Web www.idr.gov-madeira.pt, que faculta uma lista dos projetos financiados ao abrigo do programa «Intervir+».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006613/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Community funds for restructuring, remodelling and building educational and teaching centres in the Autonomous Region of Madeira

Can the Commission say whether it has any information concerning Community funds allocated to the regional government of Madeira for restructuring, remodelling and building educational and teaching centres in the Autonomous Region of Madeira between 2010 and 2012?

In particular:

1. What were the amounts involved?

2. Does the Commission have any information concerning the establishments which received this aid and the work which was carried out?

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

According to the information provided by the managing authority of the 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) operational programme for Madeira, the total amount of funds allocated until the end year 2012 for remodelling and building of educational, training and sportive facilities, all linked to educational infrastructures, is as follows:

Description	Amount in EUR
Committed/Approved since 2008	
Total investment	54 856 544.07
Total eligible	48 542 189.49
ERDF contribution	41 033 600.35
National contribution	7 508 589.14
Executed until 31.12.2011	
Total eligible costs	29 117 364.95
ERDF contribution	25 049 176.01
National contribution	4 086 188.94
Payments to beneficiaries	25 219 051.48

Detailed information relating to each individual project can be requested from the managing authority of the 'Programa Operacional de Valorização do Potencial Económico e Coesão Territorial da Região Autónoma da Madeira, Intervir+ — 2007-2013' at the following address:

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Regional, IDR-RAM
Travessa do Cabido, 16
9000-715 Funchal
Idr.srpf@gov-madeira.pt
silvio.costa@idr.gov-madeira.pt
Tel: +351.291 214 000

or via the website: www.idr.gov-madeira.pt which provides the list of projects funded under the programme 'Intervir+'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006614/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Futuro aquário da Estação de Biologia Marinha do Funchal

A Estação de Biologia Marinha do Funchal é uma unidade vocacionada para a investigação científica e, conjuntamente com o Museu de História Natural do Funchal, para a promoção da cultura científica nas áreas das ciências do mar. A Estação tem vindo a desempenhar um importante papel no desenvolvimento das ciências e tecnologias do mar na Região Autónoma da Madeira, em especial nas áreas da biologia e da ecologia do litoral e de águas profundas.

Inicialmente, o projeto da Estação — cuja construção contou com financiamento comunitário — previa igualmente a construção de um aquário, que apoiasse a prossecução das diversas missões da Estação. Porém, esta infraestrutura não chegou a ser concluída por razões de natureza orçamental, que limitaram a concretização plena do projeto inicial. Este aquário, se construído, poderia ajudar a promover a Estação como um importante polo de dinamização científica, cultural e turística.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas comunitários poderão apoiar a construção do referido aquário e quais as taxas de cofinanciamento previstas?

2. Foram, até à data, destinadas algumas verbas comunitárias à construção desta infraestrutura?

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

De acordo com as informações prestadas pelas autoridades regionais, a Estação de Biologia Marinha do Funchal representa um investmento total de 2,2 milhões de euros cofinanciados pelos Fundos Estruturais no quadro do programa operacional nacional «Ciência», com uma taxa de cofinanciamento de 75 %. O promotor do projeto, o Município do Funchal, e o Governo Regional, suportaram os restantes custos de investimento ligados ao projeto. O projeto inicial incluía, entre outras componentes, um aquário. Devido à complexidade do projeto e à disponibilidade limitada dos recursos financeiros da UE, o promotor do projeto decidiu dar prioridade à principal componente da Estação de Biologia Marinha, que se tornou operacional em 1999. Esta abordagem faseada implicou que ainda que tivesse sido preparada a componente aquário do projeto, já não poderia ter sido posta em prática. Devido aos atrasos verificados, os recursos financeiros previstos já não se encontravam disponíveis, uma vez que o programa havia terminado. Como tal, a pretendida implementação da componente aquário do projeto não pôde ser levada avante.

Embora o projeto pudesse vir a a ser considerado elegível no âmbito do período de 2007/2013, a autoridade de gestão do programa do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional não recebeu qualquer pedido relativo ao aquário.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006614/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Future aquarium at the Funchal Marine Biology Station

The Funchal Marine Biology Station is a scientific research institute and, together with the Funchal Natural History Museum, seeks to foster scientific culture in marine science fields. The station has been doing a great deal to develop marine sciences and technologies in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, especially where the biology and ecology of the coast and deep waters are concerned.

The station project — supported by EU funding to finance the building of the station proper — initially included an aquarium, which was intended to help the station perform its various tasks, but, for budgetary reasons, has never been completed: that is why the initial project has not been fully realised. If, however, the aquarium were to be built, it could help to make the station a scientific, cultural, and touristic powerhouse.

1. Under what EU programmes could support be provided for the aquarium, and what would be the co-financing rates?

2. Has any EU funding been allocated to date to enable the aquarium to be built?

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

According to the information provided by the regional authorities, the Funchal Marine Biology Station represents a total investment of EUR 2.2 million co-financed by Structural Funds in the framework of the national Operational Programme Science with a 75% co-financing rate. The project promoter, the Municipality of Funchal, and the Regional Government supported the rest of the project investment costs. The initial project included, among other components, an aquarium. Due to the complexity of the project and limited availability of EU financial resources, the project promoter decided to give priority to the main component of the Marine Biology Station, which became operational in 1999. This phased approach implied that even if the aquarium part of the project would have been prepared, it could not have been implemented anymore. Because of the incurred delays, the foreseen financial resources were no longer available since the programme had ended. Therefore, the intended implementation of the aquarium part of the project could not be carried out.

Even if the project could be considered as eligible in the framework of the 2007-2013 period the managing authority of the European Regional Development Fund programme has not received any application relating to the aquarium.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006615/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Parceria universitária inter-ilhas — Madeira, Açores e Canárias

As Universidades da Madeira e dos Açores, em Portugal, e uma Universidade das Ilhas Canárias, em Espanha, têm vindo a desenvolver esforços no sentido de alcançar uma parceria inter-ilhas, envolvendo os três arquipélagos, que permita a criação de um plano de estudos ao nível pós-graduado nas áreas da biodiversidade e da conservação. O conhecimento ímpar que estas três instituições detêm sobre a região da Macaronésia e a experiência dos respetivos corpos docentes nas referidas áreas permitiriam oferecer uma formação única, de grande qualidade e relevância, suscetível de atrair profissionais, não apenas de Portugal e de Espanha, mas também de outros países europeus — e não só. Além disso, esta parceria constituir-se-ia inequivocamente como um instrumento de apoio à dinamização do desenvolvimento destas regiões, tanto mais importante quanto elas são hoje profundamente afetadas pela crise económica e social e pelas medidas implementadas ao abrigo dos programas FMI-UE. Estas medidas, no caso das Universidades portuguesas, levaram a cortes drásticos no financiamento das instituições, que praticamente bloquearam as atividades de investigação e afetaram a qualidade do ensino.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que instrumentos — existentes ou a criar — poderão, ao nível comunitário, apoiar o funcionamento desta parceria?

2. Que instrumentos poderão financiar bolsas de estudo que permitam a frequência desta formação pós-graduada por estudantes que não tenham possibilidades financeiras para custear as respetivas propinas?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2012)

1. A fim de melhorar a qualidade e a importância do ensino superior através da cooperação em matéria de mobilidade entre instituições de ensino superior — e, se for caso disso, com o mercado de trabalho —, poderá ser prestado apoio às parcerias através dos Projetos Multilaterais Erasmus (ao abrigo do Programa Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida). Tal inclui a conceção de programas integrados, que podem constituir um ponto de entrada adequado para o programa proposto pela parceria universitária inter-ilhas. Além disso, a proposta da Comissão relativa ao programa Erasmus para Todos (2014/2020) prevê o financiamento de programas conjuntos entre consórcios de universidades europeias a nível de mestrado, com base no modelo desenvolvido ao abrigo do atual programa Erasmus Mundus. As Ações Marie Curie (ao abrigo do programa Pessoas) também proporcionam apoio aos doutorandos em programas de formação interdisciplinares, internacionais e intersetoriais. Para serem elegíveis para os programas, as parcerias devem envolver, pelo menos, três parceiros de três países diferentes que sejam elegíveis para estes programas.

2. Estão atualmente disponíveis bolsas de estudo completas a nível de mestrado e doutoramento ao abrigo dos programas conjuntos Erasmus Mundus, mas não haverá outros convites à apresentação de candidaturas para estes programas conjuntos em 2013. Serão disponibilizadas bolsas a nível de mestrado no âmbito do proposto programa Erasmus para Todos e a nível de doutoramento e superior no âmbito do proposto programa Marie Skłodowska-Curie, a partir de 2014. A proposta do programa Erasmus para Todos prevê igualmente um mecanismo de garantia de empréstimos destinado a ajudar os estudantes de mestrado a financiarem os seus estudos no estrangeiro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006615/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Inter-island university partnership — Madeira, Azores, and the Canaries

The universities of Madeira and the Azores, in Portugal, and a Canarian university, in Spain, have been endeavouring to create an inter-island partnership encompassing the three archipelagos with a view to establishing a postgraduate Biodiversity and Conservation Studies programme. The unrivalled knowledge which the three institutions have of the Macaronesia region and the experience of their teaching staff in the above fields would make it possible to offer unique training, of high quality and great relevance, that could attract professionals not just from Portugal and Spain, but also from other countries — in Europe and beyond. Furthermore, such a partnership would undoubtedly help to boost the development of the regions concerned, as it is now vital to do, given that they are being hard hit by the economic and social crisis and the measures being implemented under the IMF-EU programmes. As far as Portuguese universities are concerned, these measures have led to swingeing cuts in funding, which have practically brought research to a standstill, and adversely affected teaching standards.

1. Under what existing or future EU instruments could support be provided to enable the partnership to function?

2. Which instruments could be used to finance study grants to enable students to attend the abovementioned postgraduate course even when they cannot afford to pay the tuition fees?

Answer given by Mme Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

1. Support might be provided through Erasmus Multilateral Projects (under the Lifelong Learning Programme) for partnerships to improve the quality and relevance of higher education through mobility cooperation between higher education institutions and, where appropriate, with the labour market. This includes the design of integrated programmes, which might be an appropriate entry point for the programme proposed by the inter-island university partnership. In addition, the Commission's proposal for the Erasmus for All programme (2014-2020) envisages funding for joint programmes between consortia of European universities at master level, based on the model developed under the current Erasmus Mundus programme. The Marie Curie Actions (under the People programme) also provide support for doctoral candidates in interdisciplinary, international and inter-sectoral training programmes. To be eligible for these programmes, partnerships must involve at least three partners from three different countries that are eligible for these programmes.

2. Full study scholarships at master and doctoral level are currently available in Erasmus Mundus joint programmes, but there will be no further calls for proposals for these joint programmes in 2013. Grants will be available at master level under the proposed Erasmus for All programme and at doctoral level and above under the proposed Marie Skłodowska-Curie programme from 2014. The Erasmus for All proposal also envisages a loan guarantee scheme to help students at master level to finance their studies abroad.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006616/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Peixe-espada-preto nas águas do Atlântico

A comunidade científica e as autoridades regionais têm vindo a referir a possível existência de uma relação entre as capturas de peixe-espada-preto ao largo da Escócia e da Irlanda, onde operam, por exemplo, navios franceses, e as capturas desta mesma espécie mais a Sul, junto ao arquipélago da Madeira, onde opera frota local de pequena escala.

Solicito à Comissão que me transmita as informações disponíveis relativamente ao(s) *stock(s)* de peixe-espada preto que evolui (evoluem) nas águas do Atlântico. Concretamente:

1. De que forma as capturas ao largo da Escócia e da Irlanda afetam as capturas mais a Sul, junto ao arquipélago da Madeira?

2. Dispõe de informações relativas ao tamanho médio e à idade média das capturas em cada uma destas zonas de pesca?

3. De que forma são estes dados tidos em conta na repartição das quotas desta espécie?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(7 de agosto de 2012)

As informações científicas sobre o peixe-espada preto provêm principalmente do Conselho Internacional para a Exploração do Mar (CIEM), que as disponibiliza publicamente no seu sítio Web. Não se incluem neste âmbito as águas em torno do arquipélago da Madeira, que são da competência do Comité das Pescas do Atlântico Centro-Este (Copace). Todavia, o Copace não fez qualquer avaliação deste recurso.

O parecer do CIEM([1]) indica que a estrutura das unidades populacionais (*stocks*) de peixe-espada preto no Atlântico Nordeste é incerta, podendo existir diversas populações nesta vasta zona. No entanto, os estudos realizados até à data apontam para uma relação entre as componentes norte (a norte do paralelo 48 ºN) e sul (baía de Biscaia e península Ibérica). No sul ocorre apenas uma parte do ciclo de vida da espécie. Os espécimes são de maior tamanho do que os da zona norte, mas em nenhuma das zonas atingem a maturidade. Os arquipélagos da Madeira e das Canárias são as únicas zonas conhecidas de desova desta espécie no Atlântico Nordeste.

O parecer é omisso quanto ao modo como as capturas no norte poderão afetar as capturas no sul. O CIEM formula pareceres separados em relação a cada uma destas componentes, com um quadro comparativo do historial de recomendações para ambas desde 2003.

Quanto ao estabelecimento de possibilidades de pesca em cada uma das zonas, a Comissão formula as suas propostas com base em recomendações específicas decorrentes de pareceres científicos. No caso das águas madeirenses, a Comissão segue a mesma abordagem que para as outras unidades populacionais em relação às quais não existem dados científicos. Esta abordagem é caracterizada na Comunicação da Comissão ao Conselho COM(2012)278 final, relativa a uma consulta sobre as possibilidades de pesca para 2013.

([1]) http://www.ices.dk/committe/acom/comwork/report/2012/2012/Black%20scabbardfish.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006616/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Black scabbardfish in Atlantic waters

Regional authorities and the scientific community have noted the possible existence of a connection between black scabbardfish catches in waters around Scotland and Ireland fished by, for example, French vessels, and catches of the same species further south, off the Madeira archipelago, where the local small-scale fishing fleet operates.

Could the Commission provide whatever information is available on black scabbardfish stocks originating in Atlantic waters? In particular:

1. How do catches around Scotland and Ireland affect catches further south, near the Madeira archipelago?

2. Does the Commission have any information concerning the average size and age of catches in each of these fishing zones?

3. How are these data taken into consideration when allocating quotas for this species?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

The scientific advice for black scabbardfish is mostly provided by the International Council of the exploration of the sea (ICES) and is publicly available in their website. This does not include the area of the waters around Madeira which falls under the competence of the Central and Eastern Atlantic Fisheries Commission (CECAF). However, CECAF has not assessed this resource.

ICES advice ([1]) indicates that the structure of the black scabbardfish stock in the Northeast Atlantic is uncertain and there may be several populations in this wide area. However, studies made so far suggest that there is a linkage between the Northern (North of 48°N) and the Southern components of the stock (Bay of Biscay and Iberian Peninsula). Only part of the life cycle of the species occurs in the south. Specimens are larger than those occurring in the northern one, but there are no mature fish in either area. Madeira and Canary Islands are the only known spawning areas of this species in the Northeast Atlantic.

The advice does not provide an account on how catches in the north may affect catches in the south. ICES formulates advice separately for these components. ICES provides a table comparing the history of the recommendations made for the two components since 2003.

As for the setting of fishing opportunities in each of the areas, the Commission makes its proposals based on the specific recommendations arising from scientific advice. In the case of the waters around Madeira, the Commission follows the same approach as for the other stocks for which scientific data are missing. This approach is described in the communication from the Commission to the Council COM(2012)278 final, concerning a consultation on Fishing Opportunities for 2013.

([1]) http://www.ices.dk/committe/acom/comwork/report/2012/2012/Black%20scabbardfish.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006617/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Seguros destinados à atividade aquícola

Numa reunião recente com a Associação Portuguesa de Aquacultores fui alertado para as dificuldades que decorrem da inexistência, em Portugal, de um seguro específico para a aquacultura, ao contrário do que já sucede noutros países europeus. A inexistência destes seguros constitui uma barreira aos investimentos no setor e deixa os produtores nacionais numa posição de desvantagem relativa face a outros produtores europeus. Apesar de ter já sido aprovada legislação nacional neste domínio, a mesma tarda em produzir efeitos por ausência de regulamentação específica. De acordo com as informações do setor, a Comissão Europeia tem vindo a solicitar vários esclarecimentos ao governo português sobre esta medida, o que tem vindo a atrasar todo o processo de implementação destes seguros.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Em que países da UE existe já um seguro específico destinado à atividade aquícola?

2. Tem conhecimento do atraso na implementação desta legislação em países como Portugal? Pode este atraso ser atribuído a exigências da Comissão? Em caso afirmativo, quais são estas exigências e quando prevê a Comissão desbloquear finalmente este processo?

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

A Comissão toma nota das importantes questões evocadas pelo Senhor Deputado. Dada a complexidade das mesmas, a Comissão necessita de reunir mais informações sobre o assunto para poder dar uma resposta completa. O Senhor Deputado será mantido informado das conclusões da Comissão.

Resposta complementar dada por Michel Barnier em nome da Comissão
(30 de outubro de 2012)

1. A Comissão não conhece a situação exata em todos os Estados-Membros no que toca à existência de regimes de seguros específicos para as atividades de aquicultura. Existem produtos desse tipo na Dinamarca, na Grécia, no Reino Unido, em Itália, em França e em Espanha.

Há diferenças entre os tipos de seguros disponíveis nos diversos mercados europeus. Pelo menos um dos regimes de seguro acima mencionados ([1]) é estatal, criado com o objetivo de facilitar o acesso a seguros de aquicultura comportáveis, a despeito das suas características especializadas e de alto risco.

Regimes de seguros adequados podem desempenhar um papel significativo no apoio ao desenvolvimento do setor da aquicultura, em especial para pequenas e médias empresas com dificuldades de acesso a financiamento e a seguros. Por essa razão, na sua proposta relativa a um novo fundo (FEAMP) para as políticas marítima e da pesca da UE para o período 2014-2020 ([2]), a Comissão propôs o apoio à criação de um seguro das populações aquícolas ([3]). A fim de proteger os rendimentos dos produtores aquícolas, o FEAMP pode apoiar a contribuição para um seguro das populações aquícolas que cubra as perdas resultantes de catástrofes naturais, fenómenos climáticos adversos, alterações súbitas da qualidade da água, doenças na aquicultura ou destruição de instalações de produção.

2. O Governo Português emitiu um Decreto-Lei ([4]) com o objetivo de instituir um seguro bonificado (Aquiseguro) para espécies piscícolas, moluscos e algas produzidos em estabelecimentos aquícolas.

O Aquiseguro tem estado suspenso desde então porque não foi ainda publicada a portaria que definirá as suas especificidades técnicas.

Por conseguinte, o atraso em questão não pode ser atribuído a quaisquer exigências da Comissão.

([1]) Por exemplo, Agroseguro, em Espanha.
([2]) Proposta de regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo ao Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e da Pesca (COM(2011)804).
([3]) Artigo 57.° da proposta de regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo ao Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e da Pesca (COM(2011)804).
([4]) Decreto-Lei n.° 21/2011 de 9 de fevereiro de 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006617/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Insurance for aquaculture activities

At a recent meeting with the Portuguese Fish Farmers' Association (*Associação Portuguesa de Aquacultores*), I was informed of the difficulties caused by the fact that in Portugal, unlike in other European countries, it is impossible to obtain insurance specifically designed for aquaculture activities. The lack of appropriate insurance is an obstacle to investment in the sector and leaves national producers at a disadvantage compared with their counterparts in other European countries. Although a national law addressing the issue has already been approved, it has had little effect owing to the lack of specific rules. According to information provided by the fish-farming sector, the Commission has asked the Portuguese Government for a series of clarifications concerning the measure, which has delayed the whole process of introducing this form of insurance.

1. In which EU countries is it already possible to obtain specific insurance for aquaculture activities?

2. Is the Commission aware of the delay in implementing this legislation in countries such as Portugal? Can this delay be attributed to the Commission's requirements? If so, what are these requirements and when does the Commission intend to unblock the process?

Preliminary answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2012)

The Commission takes note of the important questions raised by the Honourable Member. Given the complexity of the subject, the Commission needs to gather more information about the issue in order to give a complete reply. The Honourable Member will be kept informed about the Commission's findings.

Supplementary answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2012)

1. The Commission is not aware of the exact situation in all Member States as regards the existence of specific insurance scheme for aquaculture activities. Specific aquaculture insurance products are available in Denmark, Greece, the United Kingdom, Italy, France and Spain.

There are differences between the types of insurance available in different European markets. At least one of the aquaculture insurance systems mentioned above ([1]) is a state or governmental system set up with the objective of increasing access to affordable aquaculture insurance despite its specialist and high-risk features.

Adequate insurance can play a significant role in supporting the development of the aquaculture industry, especially for small and medium size companies for whom it is difficult to access to finance and insurance. This is why in its proposal for a new fund (EMFF) ([2]) for the EU's maritime and fisheries policies for the period 2014-2020 the Commission has proposed to support the setting up of aquaculture stock insurance ([3]). In order to safeguard the income of aquaculture producers the EMFF may support the contribution to an aquaculture stock insurance which shall cover the losses due to natural disasters; adverse climatic events; sudden water quality changes; diseases in aquaculture or destruction of production facilities.

2. The Portuguese Government issued a Decree-Law ([4]) with the objective of setting up a subsidised insurance system (Aquiseguro) for fish and seafood farms.

The Aquiseguro has been in standby since then because the implementing order that would define the technical specifications of the insurance is yet to be published.

The delays in question are therefore not the result of any requirements from the Commission.

([1]) e.g. Agroseguro in Spain.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (COM(2011) 804).
([3]) Art. 57 of the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (COM(2011)804).
([4]) Decree-Law No 21/2011, 9 February 2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006618/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Apoios aos pequenos produtores do Vale do Mondego — certificação biológica e funcionamento de mercados de proximidade

Numa visita recente ao distrito da Guarda, tivemos oportunidade de contactar com produtores de azeite e outros agricultores do Vale do Mondego. Numa região em que a pequena agricultura e a agricultura familiar têm uma forte prevalência, os agricultores enfrentam grandes dificuldades em virtude da liberalização e da desregulação dos mercados agrícolas, que permitem a entrada no mercado nacional de azeite e outros produtos oriundos de produções intensivas e super-intensivas, a preços muitas vezes abaixo dos custos de produção a que os produtores locais têm de fazer face. Este fator tem intensificado a pressão para o abandono rural, numa zona onde o tecido rural se encontra envelhecido, carecendo da entrada de jovens na atividade. Os produtores locais tentam a todo o custo resistir, organizando-se e procurando formas de colocar os seus produtos no mercado. Uma dessas formas passa pela aposta nos mercados de proximidade. Outra, pela aposta no modo de produção biológica. Mas se, no primeiro caso, o domínio das grandes superfícies comerciais dificulta o funcionamento destes mercados — caso não sejam devidamente apoiados —, no segundo caso, o procedimento associado à certificação envolve excessiva burocracia e custos demasiado elevados para os pequenos produtores locais.

Assim, em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Como pode o recurso ao modo de produção biológica e os procedimentos inerentes à respetiva certificação serem simplificados e os seus custos diminuídos, de modo a facilitar a vida aos pequenos produtores?

2. Que ajudas comunitárias poderão ser mobilizadas para apoiar o funcionamento de mercados de proximidade, nos quais os pequenos produtores da região do Vale do Mondego possam vender os seus produtos?

3. Que outros apoios comunitários poderão ser dirigidos ao apoio à pequena agricultura e à agricultura familiar da região, mitigando as consequências negativas da fortíssima e desleal concorrência que se vêm obrigados a enfrentar?

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

1. A atual legislação europeia sobre agricultura biológica ([1]) não permite a simplificação dos processos de certificação dos pequenos produtores. As suas disposições são consideradas necessárias para garantir ao consumidor final a integridade dos produtos biológicos. No entanto, as possibilidades de simplificação a médio prazo estão a ser analisadas no âmbito do processo de reexame do enquadramento jurídico da agricultura biológica, que acaba de arrancar.

2 e 3. No domínio do desenvolvimento rural, estão já previstas várias medidas que podem promover o apoio estrutural a produtos regionais, nomeadamente a modernização das explorações agrícolas, aumentando o valor acrescentado dos produtos agrícolas e florestais, assim como atividades de formação e de informação.

As futuras prioridades de desenvolvimento rural têm já em conta esta realidade. A prioridade 2 (melhorar a competitividade de todos os tipos de agricultura e reforçar a viabilidade das explorações agrícolas) tem por objetivo facilitar a reestruturação das explorações agrícolas que registam problemas estruturais graves, nomeadamente explorações com reduzida participação no mercado, explorações orientadas para setores específicos do mercado e explorações que necessitam de diversificar a produção agrícola; A prioridade 3 (promover a organização de cadeias alimentares e a gestão de riscos na agricultura) visa melhorar a integração dos produtores primários na cadeia alimentar através de sistemas de qualidade, promoção em mercados locais e circuitos de abastecimento curtos, agrupamentos de produtores e organizações interprofissionais. Neste contexto, está previsto um apoio específico ao desenvolvimento das pequenas explorações, com o limite máximo de 15 000 euros/exploração, bem como opções de investimento em ativos corpóreos, atividades de cooperação, diversificação das explorações agrícolas, etc.

([1]) A legislação agrícola vigente tem por base o Regulamento (CE) n.º 834/2007, relativo à produção biológica e à rotulagem dos produtos biológicos. A legislação completa em matéria de produtos biológicos e outras informações relativas à agricultura biológica encontra-se disponível em (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/home_pt).

Por último, nos termos da proposta atual, os Estados-Membros serão igualmente autorizados a incluir nos programas de desenvolvimento rural os subprogramas temáticos destinados a suprir as necessidades específicas identificadas, nomeadamente as referentes às pequenas explorações e às cadeias de abastecimento curtas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006618/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: support for small-scale farmers in the Mondego valley — organic certification and functioning of the local market

On a recent visit to the district of Guarda, we had the opportunity to speak with oil producers and other farmers in the Mondego valley. In this region, where small-scale and family-based agriculture predominates, farmers face severe difficulties due to the liberalisation and deregulation of agricultural markets, which allows free entry into the national market by oil and other products produced in an intensive or highly intensive manner, often at prices well below the production costs faced by local producers. This situation has exacerbated the tendency towards rural decline in an area where the rural fabric is already elderly, with few young people entering rural employment. Local producers are doing their best to survive by becoming more organised and looking for new ways of marketing their products. One of these is to place their products on local markets. Another is to opt for organic production. However, in the first case, the dominance of large supermarket chains makes it difficult for local markets to function unless they receive adequate support, while in the second case the procedure leading to certification is excessively bureaucratic and unaffordably expensive for small local producers.

In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following:

1. How can the adoption of organic farming methods and the procedures leading to organic certification be simplified and made less expensive, to make life easier for small-scale farmers?

2. What forms of Community aid could be used to support the functioning of local markets where small-scale farmers from the Mondego valley could sell their products?

3. What other forms of Community assistance could be used to support this region's small-scale and family-based agriculture, to offset the negative impact of the intense and unfair competition it has to face?

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

1. The current European legislation on organic farming ([1]) does not allow simplification of certification procedures for small scale producers. Its provisions are considered necessary in order to guarantee the integrity of the organic products to the final consumer. However, possibilities for simplification in the medium term are being examined in the process of reconsidering the legal framework for organic farming, which has just started.

2/3. Currently several measures are already foreseen in rural development that can promote structural support for the region products, including the modernisation of agricultural holdings, increasing the added value of agricultural and forestry products, as well as training and information activities.

Future rural development priorities already take into account this reality. Priority 2 (Enhancing competitiveness of all types of agriculture and enhancing farm viability) aims at facilitating the restructuring of farms facing major structural problems, notably farms with a low degree of market participation, market-oriented farms in particular sectors and farms in need of agricultural diversification; Priority 3 (Promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture) aims at better integrating primary producers into the food chain through quality schemes, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations. Within this context, specific support for the development of small farms of up to 15 000 euro/farm is foreseen as well as options for investments in physical assets, cooperational activities, farm diversification, etc.

Finally, under the current proposal Member States will also be allowed to include within their rural development programmes thematic sub-programmes aimed to address specific needs identified, among others in relation to small farms and short supply chains.

([1]) Based on Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products. The complete legislation on organic products and further information on organic farming can be found on: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/home_en.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006619/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Apoios ao desenvolvimento do projeto do Banco de Sementes — CISE, Seia

O CISE — Centro de Interpretação da Serra da Estrela, em Seia, no distrito da Guarda, constitui um importante polo científico-pedagógico, com diversas valências, que se articulam com os objetivos de valorizar e divulgar o património natural da Serra da Estrela, apoiar a investigação científica sobre esse património, promover a cultura científica e dinamizar o turismo de Natureza na Serra, assim contribuindo para o desenvolvimento sustentável de toda a região em que se insere.

Uma das valências do CISE é a existência de um Banco de Sementes, onde se pretende reunir o património biogenético da Serra da Estrela. O desenvolvimento deste projeto encontra-se todavia suspenso, por ausência de financiamento.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que programas comunitários poderão apoiar o desenvolvimento do projeto do Banco de Sementes do CISE?

2. Que outros apoios comunitários poderão ser mobilizados para apoiar o desenvolvimento dos supramencionados objetivos do CISE?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(23 de agosto de 2012)

Para apoiar o sítio Natura 2000 «Serra da Estrela» e, em particular, o seu Centro de Interpretação (CISE), poderão ser utilizadas diversas fontes de cofinanciamento da União Europeia.

O Programa LIFE, com destaque para a vertente LIFE Natureza e Biodiversidade, poderá apoiar o estabelecimento de um banco para a preservação a longo prazo de sementes da flora vascular selvagem. Normalmente, este tipo de projeto presta assistência a atividades de conservação de espécies *in-situ* e complementa-as. As potenciais aplicações terão de cumprir as regras e objetivos do Programa LIFE e, mais especificamente, a condição de se reservarem 25 % do orçamento do projeto para ações de conservação concretas.

Para mais informações, recomenda-se a consulta do sítio Web relativo aos convites à apresentação de propostas LIFE: (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus2012/call/index.htm).

Quanto à política de desenvolvimento rural, trata-se de um tipo de despesa que poderá beneficiar da assistência do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER). Conforme é do conhecimento dos Senhores Deputados, o princípio da administração partilhada do FEDER impõe que as autoridades nacionais são responsáveis pela execução dos programas operacionais, incluindo o estabelecimento dos critérios de seleção dos projetos. A Comissão sugeriria, pois, que os Senhores Deputados contactassem diretamente as competentes autoridades portuguesas de gestão, designadamente a Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento da Região Centro.

As ações deste tipo podem também ser apoiadas no âmbito do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Rural (Feader), por meio do Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural do Continente (Proder) e, concretamente, da sua medida 214 (pagamentos agroambientais).

O sítio Web da autoridade portuguesa de gestão contém informações circunstanciadas acerca destas medidas e das respetivas condições de aplicação em Portugal: http://www.proder.pt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006619/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Support for the development of the CISE seed bank project (Seia, Portugal)

The Serra da Estrela Information Centre (*Centro de Interpretação da Serra da Estrela* — CISE) in Seia (Guarda district) is an important multifunctional scientific and educational centre, the main aims of which are to promote and publicise the natural heritage of the Serra da Estrela, support scientific research into it, encourage scientific awareness and revitalise nature tourism in this mountain area, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of the region as a whole.

One of the CISE's aims is to create a seed bank to preserve the Serra da Estrela's biogenetic heritage. Development of this project is still on hold due to lack of funding.

In light of the above, could the Commission provide the following information:

1. Which Community programmes could support the development of the CISE seed bank?

2. What other forms of Community assistance could be used to support CISE's abovementioned objectives?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

Different sources of EU co-financing could be used to support the Natura 2000 site 'Serra da Estrela' in Portugal, and in particular its information centre (CISE).

The LIFE Programme, and more particularly the LIFE Nature and Biodiversity strand, could support the establishment of a seed bank for the long-term preservation of seeds of wild vascular flora. Normally, this type of project assists and complements in-situ species conservation activities. Potential applications would have to comply with the rules and objectives of the LIFE Programme, and more specifically with the condition that 25% of the project's budget is earmarked for concrete conservation actions.

For more information please visit the LIFE calls for proposal website: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus2012/call/index.htm

Concerning rural development policy, this kind of expense could be eligible to receive assistance from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). As the Honourable Member is aware, due to the shared management principle of administering the ERDF, national authorities are responsible for the implementation of the operational programmes, including establishing project selection criteria. The Commission would therefore suggest the Honourable Member contacts directly the competent Portuguese managing authorities, namely the Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Centro.

This type of action can be also supported under European Rural Development Fund (EAFRD) through Mainland Rural Development Programme (Proder) via measure 214 (agro environmental payments).

Detailed information about these measures and their conditions of implementation in Portugal is available at the Portuguese managing authority website: http://www.proder.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006620/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Persistência do bloqueio à Faixa de Gaza

Numa declaração recente, quarenta e três organizações não-governamentais humanitárias e sete agências das Nações Unidas exigem que Israel ponha fim ao bloqueio da Faixa de Gaza (existente desde 2007), o qual consideram ser «uma clara violação do Direito internacional». Os signatários da declaração, entre os quais se destaca a Unicef, a Organização Mundial de Saúde, o Alto Comissariado para os Direitos Humanos, a Unesco e a Agência das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados Palestinianos, sublinham que, nos últimos cinco anos, mais de um milhão e 600 mil seres humanos, metade dos quais menores de idade, têm sido privados de alimentos, medicamentos, combustíveis e serviços básicos, como Saúde ou Educação. A semana passada, a mais alta responsável da ONU pelos Assuntos Humanitários e pela Coordenação do Socorro de Emergência, Valerie Amos, solicitou às autoridades israelitas que levantem imediatamente o estado de sítio, frisando que «80 por cento das famílias de Gaza dependem da ajuda humanitária», o que, disse ainda, «representa um castigo coletivo para todos os que vivem na Faixa e, simultaneamente, uma violação dos seus direitos fundamentais».

Israel, no entanto, prossegue uma política de extermínio lento da população da Faixa de Gaza. Nos últimos dias, mais dez palestinianos morreram e cinco foram feridos em ataques do exército e em confrontos com colonos na região.

Em face da persistência deste desumano bloqueio; em face do reiterado desrespeito, por parte de Israel, do Direito internacional; e em face da ausência de resultados práticos da postura e da política da UE até à data; solicitamos à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente da Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual a posição assumida pela Alta Representante face à exigência de todas estas organizações em acabar com o criminoso bloqueio de Gaza por Israel?

2. Pondera a Alta Representante introduzir alguma mudança no que tem sido a postura da UE em todo este processo? Considera, designadamente, a possibilidade de condicionar a continuidade dos acordos existentes entre a UE e Israel ao cumprimento, por parte deste país, do Direito internacional e ao respeito pelos mais elementares Direitos Humanos?

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

A UE tem apelado reiteradamente à abertura imediata, sustentada e incondicional de passagens para os fluxos de ajuda humanitária, mercadorias e pessoas de e para a Faixa de Gaza cuja situação é insustentável enquanto se mantiver politicamente separada da Cisjordânia. Apesar dos progressos limitados, a UE exorta o governo de Israel a tomar mais medidas significativas e de vasto alcance destinadas à reconstrução e recuperação económica da Faixa de Gaza, inclusivamente mediante a autorização do comércio com a Cisjordânia e Israel. Esta posição foi confirmada nas conclusões do Conselho de 14 de maio de 2012.

A UE continua a considerar que o envolvimento com Israel constitui a melhor forma de ajudar a atenuar o sofrimento do povo palestiniano, incluindo em Gaza. A UE suscita regularmente a situação humanitária crítica em Gaza junto de representantes do governo de Israel no quadro das relações bilaterais UE-Israel.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006620/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — continuing blockade of the Gaza Strip

In a recent statement, 43 non-governmental humanitarian organisations and seven United Nations agencies called on Israel to end the blockade of the Gaza Strip, which has been in place since 2007 and which they consider to be a 'violation of international law'. The signatories, who include Unicef, the World Health Organisation, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Unesco and the United Nations Agency for Palestine Refugees, point out that, over the past five years, more than 1.6 million people, half of them children, have been deprived of food, medicines, fuel and basic services such as health and education. Last week, the UN's humanitarian affairs chief and emergency relief coordinator, Valerie Amos, called on the Israeli authorities to lift the blockade immediately, stressing that 'more than 80% of families in Gaza are dependent on humanitarian aid', which 'amounts to a collective punishment of all those living in Gaza and is a denial of basic human rights'.

Israel, meanwhile, is pursuing a policy of slow extermination against the population of the Gaza Strip. In the past few days, another 10 Palestinians have died and five more have been injured in attacks by the army and confrontations with settlers in the region.

In the face of the continuing existence of this inhuman blockade, Israel's repeated violations of international law and the fact that the stance taken and the policy pursued by the EU to date have not achieved any practical results, can the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission provide the following information:

1. What is the High Representative's position on the calls made by all the above organisations to end the criminal Israeli blockade of Gaza?

2. Is the High Representative considering any changes in the stance taken by the EU throughout this process? More specifically, is she considering the possibility of making the continued application of the current agreements between EU and Israel conditional on Israel's complying with international law and respecting the most basic human rights?

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

The EU has repeatedly called for the immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from the Gaza Strip, the situation of which is unsustainable as long as it remains politically separated from the West Bank. Despite limited progress, the EU urges the government of Israel to take further meaningful and far-reaching steps allowing for the reconstruction and economic recovery of the Gaza Strip, including by allowing trade with the West Bank and Israel. This position was reiterated in the Council conclusions of 14 May 2012.

The EU continues to believe that engagement with Israel is the best way to make progress on alleviating the humanitarian plight of the Palestinian people, including in Gaza. The EU regularly raises the critical humanitarian situation in Gaza with representatives of the Government of Israel in the framework of EU-Israel bilateral relations.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006621/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Situação na Líbia

A vaga de confrontos na Líbia acentua-se, confirmando que o país permanece mergulhado no caos após o derrube do regime e a execução de Kahdafi. Os últimos episódios violentos ocorreram em Kufra, no Sul, vitimando cerca de 30 pessoas. Em Benghazi, um grupo de 300 homens armados ocupou a chamada Praça da Liberdade para exigir a aplicação da lei islâmica e rejeitar a aprovação de qualquer outro texto fundamental. Em Trípoli, ocorreram confrontos quando a brigada Al-Awfya, da cidade de Tarhuna, ocupou o aeroporto internacional da capital líbia em busca do seu chefe, detido e levado para parte incerta no dia anterior. Os milicianos acabaram rechaçados, sem resistência, do aeroporto e de posições em Trípoli pela brigada de Zintan e não pelas forças de segurança do CNT. Esta é a segunda vez em seis semanas que os milicianos de Zintan se deslocam ao aeroporto de Trípoli para o resgatar a grupos rivais no controlo do território.

A instabilidade no país é, aliás, o principal argumento do Conselho Nacional de Transição para adiar as «eleições», inicialmente previstas para o dia 19 de junho mas agora proteladas, e condicionadas, para 7 de julho.

Paralelamente às incertezas sobre a «consulta popular aos líbios», permanece a arbitrariedade judicial. Melinda Taylor, advogada de Saif Al-Islam, filho de Muammar Kahdafi, foi presa pelas autoridades por entregar ao detido documentos que pretensamente «representavam um perigo para a segurança da Líbia».

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente:

1. Que avaliação faz desta situação?

2. Que lições retira do processo de agressão e de ingerência externa levado a cabo pela NATO e pelos seus aliados (incluindo a UE) na Líbia e pelo caos deixado neste país?

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

No que diz respeito à atual situação na Líbia são inúmeras as questões que preocupam a UE. Os maus-tratos infligidos às pessoas detidas, a necessidade de proteção dos grupos vulneráveis, as medidas para acelerar o desarmamento, o processo de desmobilização e reintegração, a criação de uma administração eficaz e a consolidação do Estado de direito constituem algumas das questões mais prementes.

No entanto, a evolução dos acontecimentos é encorajadora, como demonstrado pela realização na Líbia de eleições pluralistas e globalmente pacíficas para o Congresso Geral Nacional em 7 de julho de 2012, as primeiras em quase 50 anos, e pela forma como o povo e as autoridades líbias estão a conduzir o processo eleitoral. A sociedade civil não existiu durante quatro décadas e está agora a multiplicar-se. A produção de energia está a recuperar e os investidores estrangeiros estão a voltar gradualmente ao país.

As transições são por definição processos difíceis; no entanto, há mais de um ano que o povo líbio demonstrou ao mundo a sua incansável determinação em avançar na via da democracia. A UE reitera a sua determinação em continuar a reforçar o seu compromisso com a Líbia, um país fundamental para a Europa com o qual a UE pretende estabelecer relações reciprocamente benéficas e de longo prazo, nomeadamente no quadro da Política Europeia de Vizinhança e de iniciativas regionais como a União para o Mediterrâneo. A UE continuará a dar um forte apoio à Líbia numa grande variedade de setores, com o objetivo de garantir um futuro pacífico, democrático e próspero para o seu povo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006621/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Libya

The ever increasing wave of fighting in Libya is underlining the fact that the country has been mired in chaos since the overthrow of the Gadaffi regime and Gadaffi's execution. The latest violent incidents to have occurred were in Kufra, in the South, and claimed somewhere in the region of thirty victims. In Benghazi, a group of 300 armed men occupied 'Freedom Square' to demand that Libya apply Islamic law and to express their opposition to a constitution of any other kind. There were clashes in Tripoli when the Tarhuna-based Al-Awfya brigade occupied the international airport in an attempt to find their leader, who had been arrested and taken to an unknown location a day earlier. The militiamen, who put up no resistance, were eventually driven out of the airport and other positions in Tripoli by the Zintan brigade and NTC security forces. This was the second time in six weeks that the Zintan militiamen had been called upon to recapture Tripoli Airport from groups fighting for control of the country.

The prevailing instability is, moreover, the main reason being put forward by the National Transitional Council for postponing the 'election', which was originally due to be held on 19 June and may now take place on 7 July.

In addition to the uncertainty about the election, the courts are continuing to behave arbitrarily. Melinda Taylor, a lawyer representing Saif al-Islam Gadaffi, son of Muammar Gadaffi, was jailed for passing on documents to her imprisoned client which allegedly constituted a threat to Libyan security.

1. How does the High Representative/Vice-President view the present situation?

2. What lessons does she think can be learned from the aggression and outside interference in Libya, an operation mounted by NATO and its allies (including the EU), and from the resulting chaos?

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

Regarding the current situation in Libya numerous are the issues of concern to the EU. Ill treatment of detainees, the need for protection of vulnerable groups, how to accelerate disarmament, the demobilisation and reintegration process, establishing a functioning administration and the consolidation of rule of law are some of the more pressing ones.

However, there are encouraging developments such as the pluralistic and overall peaceful conduct of Libyan elections for the National General Congress on 7 July 2012, the first ones in almost 50 years, and the manner in which the Libyan people and the authorities are conducting the electoral process. Civil society was non-existing during four decades and is now mushrooming. Energy production is resuming and foreign investors are gradually coming back to the country.

Transitions are difficult processes by definition, however, for more than a year now the Libyan people have shown to the World their tireless determination to move forward on the road to democracy. The EU reiterates its determination to further strengthen its engagement with Libya, a key neighbour for Europe with whom the EU wishes to establish long-term and mutually beneficial relations, including in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and regional initiatives such as the Union for the Mediterranean. The EU will continue to provide strong support for Libya across a wide range of sectors in the interests of securing a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future for its people.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006622/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Vítimas civis de raide aéreo no Afeganistão

O raide aéreo que matou 18 civis no Afeganistão, realizado na província de Logar, terá sido ordenado unilateralmente pelos ocupantes, durante uma operação conjunta com as forças afegãs, cujo objetivo era a captura de um alegado comandante talibã. Assim o sustentam as autoridades de Cabul, para quem o acontecimento é «injustificável» e «inaceitável» e viola, pela quinta vez desde a sua assinatura, os termos do chamado pacto de segurança estratégica subscrito na passada primavera entre a NATO e o «governo» do Afeganistão.

O comandante das tropas da Aliança Atlântica no Afeganistão, John Allen, pediu desculpa pela morte de civis, mas a declaração só surgiu depois de mais uma tentativa de encobrimento do massacre.

Inicialmente, as forças da NATO afirmavam que o ataque havia vitimado «muitos insurgentes» e que só duas civis haviam sido feridas no bombardeamento, mas as imagens recolhidas pelo correspondente da AFP no local deitaram por terra esta argumentação e desvendaram que entre os mortos estavam cinco mulheres e sete crianças, a mais nova das quais com cerca de um ano.

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente:

1. Qual a posição da UE face a mais este bombardeamento e à continuação da chacina de civis pela NATO no Afeganistão?

2. Que medidas tomou ou vão ser tomadas para impedir a continuação desta chacina?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente acompanha cuidadosamente a situação no Afeganistão. A UE lamenta todas as mortes de civis, continuando as vítimas inocentes, como neste caso, a ser uma preocupação grave. A responsabilidade pela conduta das operações militares no Afeganistão é da exclusiva competência da NATO e dos respetivos países membros.

A UE apoia vivamente os esforços que estão a ser envidados para negociar uma cessação pacífica do conflito no Afeganistão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006622/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Civilian air strike victims in Afghanistan

The air strike on Logar province in Afghanistan, in which 18 civilians were killed, was apparently ordered unilaterally by the occupying forces during a joint operation with Afghan forces to capture an alleged Taliban commander. That is the version being put about by the Kabul authorities, who consider the incident an 'unjustifiable' and 'unacceptable' breach of the terms of the strategic security pact concluded between NATO and the Afghan 'Government' in the spring of this year; this is the fifth violation to have occurred since the pact was signed.

The commander of the Coalition Forces in Afghanistan, John Allen, has apologised for the civilian deaths, but his statement came to the fore only after an attempt had been made to cover up the massacre.

Initially, NATO forces claimed that there had been many insurgent casualties and only two civilians had been injured in the strike. However, the images gathered at the scene by the AFP correspondent destroyed the credibility of that account, as they revealed that the dead included five women and seven children, the youngest of whom was about 1 year old.

1. How does the EU view this latest strike and NATO's continuing slaughter of civilians in Afghanistan?

2. What measures have been or will be taken to prevent further slaughter?

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

The HR/VP follows the current situation in Afghanistan carefully and the EU regrets all and any civilian deaths. Innocent casualties, as in this case, remain a serious concern. The responsibility for the conduct of military operations in Afghanistan is the exclusive competence of NATO and its Member States.

The EU strongly supports efforts which are being made to negotiate a peaceful end to the conflict in Afghanistan.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006623/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(2 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Acvacultura

Schimbările climatice și efectele poluării asupra apelor și mărilor determină mutații semnificative în viața persoanelor care depind de activități din domeniul pescuitului, activități care încep, din ce în ce mai mult, să devină imprevizibile.

Lansarea de proiecte, inclusiv prin cooperare transfrontalieră, între comunități de mai mici dimensiuni, care să permită acestor persoane dirijarea către alte activități din domeniu, precum cel al acvaculturii, ar fi benefică, mai ales atunci când asemenea activități pot contribui la stabilizarea unui segment de forță de muncă important în zonele costiere sau rurale.

În ce măsură poate Comisia să sprijine dezvoltarea unor mecanisme pentru schimburi de informații și bune practici între diferite autorități locale și regionale sau la nivel național, între statele membre, privind securitatea activităților de acest gen și o protecție adecvată a consumatorilor produselor obișnuite, precum și accesul la finanțarea necesară pentru antreprenorii tineri dornici să dezvolte activități în domeniu?

Răspuns dat de dna Damanaki în numele Comisiei
(7 august 2012)

Comisia împărtășește opinia distinsului membru cu privire la valoarea adăugată a schimbului de bune practici între autoritățile locale și regionale sau la nivel național între statele membre.

Prin Fondul european pentru pescuit și afaceri maritime, Comisia propune continuarea sprijinirii dezvoltării durabile a comunităților dependente de pescuit. Sprijinul va fi disponibil pentru strategiile de dezvoltare locală implementate printr-un parteneriat între actorii locali, compus din reprezentanți ai sectorului public, ai sectorului privat și ai societății civile [grupuri de acțiune locală în sectorul pescuitului (FLAG — Fisheries Local Action Groups)]. Crearea de locuri de muncă în cadrul comunităților de pescari va fi sprijinită prin diversificarea economiilor locale (diversificare în cadrul și în afara sectorului pescuitului, în special prin reorientare către alte sectoare maritime) și prin adăugarea de valoare la produsele pescărești.

De asemenea, grupurile de acțiune locală în sectorul pescuitului care doresc să desfășoare proiecte de cooperare transnațională sau interregională pot avea acces la sprijin. O rețea la nivelul UE pentru zonele de pescuit va continua să faciliteze crearea de rețele și schimbul de experiență și de bune practici.

În cadrul reformei politicii comune în domeniul pescuitului, Comisia propune promovarea acvaculturii printr-o metodă deschisă de coordonare bazată pe orientări strategice, planuri naționale multianuale și convenirea unor obiective comune. Acest proces voluntar de cooperare politică vizează de asemenea încurajarea unui efort de învățare reciprocă prin intermediul schimburilor de bune practici. Unul dintre principalele instrumente în această privință sunt seminariile de proceduri de evaluare reciprocă, care încurajează diseminarea bunelor practici între statele membre prin evaluarea eficacității principalelor politici sau prin acorduri instituționale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006623/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Aquaculture

The effects of climate change and pollution on the aquatic and marine environment are bringing about significant changes for those whose livelihood depends on the fisheries sector, where the situation is starting to become increasingly unpredictable.

The launching of projects, for example by means of cross-border cooperation, between relatively small communities, facilitating a move towards other activities in this sector, for example aquaculture, would be of benefit, particularly where such activities could help provide stable employment for a substantial workforce in rural or coastal areas.

To what extent can the Commission promote exchanges of information and good practice between local and regional authorities or at national level between Member States, regarding safety standards in respect of such activities and adequate protection for consumers of staple products, as well as access to the necessary funding for young people seeking to launch business activities in this sector?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member on the added value of exchange of best practices between local and regional authorities or at national level between Member States.

The Commission proposes in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund to continue to support the sustainable development of fisheries dependent communities. Support will be available for local development strategies implemented by a partnership of local actors composed of representatives from the public and private sectors and civil society (Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs). Job creation in fishing communities will be supported through the diversification of local economies (diversification within and outside the fisheries sector, in particular towards other maritime sectors) and through adding value to local fisheries products.

Support is also available for FLAGs which want to carry out inter-regional or transnational cooperation projects. An EU-level network for fisheries areas will continue to facilitate networking and exchange of experience and good practice.

In the framework of the reform of the common fisheries policy, the Commission proposes to promote aquaculture through an open method of coordination based on strategic guidelines, multiannual national plans and agreeing on common objectives. This voluntary process for political cooperation aims also to develop a mutual learning process through exchange of best practices. One of the main tools in this respect are peer review seminars which encourage the dissemination of good practices across Member States by assessing the effectiveness of key policies or institutional arrangements.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006624/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(2 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Educație consumatori

Accelerarea procesului de globalizare impune o mai bună cooperare între autorități — naționale, locale și regionale, cu scopul evitării apariției, pe piața internă a Uniunii Europene, a unor produse periculoase pentru consumatori.

Programele de protecție a consumatorilor sunt relativ recente și este necesară continuarea lor, iar, în acest proces, un rol de seamă revine educației consumatorilor, încă din primii ani de școală, dar și pe parcursul vieții, indiferent de pregătirea profesională și categoria socială căreia îi aparține consumatorul în cauză.

Ce are în vedere Comisia pentru elaborarea și utilizarea de materiale didactice armonizate în domeniul protecției consumatorilor dedicate sensibilizării consumatorilor, care să țină cont totodată de repartizarea competențelor și să permită o implicare mai mare a organizațiilor neguvernamentale din domeniu?

În ce măsură dorește Comisia să sprijine dezvoltarea unei rețele dedicate schimburilor de experiență între organizații locale și regionale din domeniu, pentru punerea în aplicare ulterior a proiectelor de succes?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(14 august 2012)

Siguranța produselor de pe piață este monitorizată de autoritățile naționale din România și schimbul de informații cu privire la produsele periculoase detectate pe piața internă a UE se realizează prin intermediul sistemului RAPEX, aceste informații fiind puse la dispoziția consumatorilor ([1]).

Educația consumatorilor în școli este în esență o responsabilitate națională. Comisia facilitează educația consumatorilor în școli prin publicarea de materiale pe internet ([2]).

Comisia completează activitatea autorităților naționale de sensibilizare cu privire la drepturile consumatorilor prin intermediul unor campanii de informare în țări care aderă la UE. Aceste campanii promovează autoritățile naționale și asociațiile naționale de consumatori ca surse de informații suplimentare și consiliere, care sunt prezente, de asemenea, la nivel local și regional în întreaga țară.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm.
([2]) A se vedea, de exemplu, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/europadiary/docs/europa_diary_ro.pdf și http://www.dolceta.ro/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006624/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Consumer awareness

In response to more rapid globalisation, it is necessary to ensure closer cooperation between national, local and regional authorities so as to avoid penetration of the EU internal market by products dangerous to consumers.

Consumer protection programmes are relatively recent and must be continued. In this context, it is extremely important to ensure lifelong consumer awareness from early school years onwards, independently of professional status and the social categories to which individual consumers belong.

What measures are being envisaged by the Commission for the formulation and utilisation of information for the protection of consumers designed to raise their awareness, while taking account of responsibility at various levels and facilitating greater involvement of non-governmental organisations in this area?

To what extent does the Commission intend to promote the development of information exchange networks encompassing local and regional organisations in this field for the future implementation of successful projects?

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

The safety of products on the market is monitored by national Romanian authorities and information about dangerous products found on the EU internal market is exchanged via the RAPEX system and made available to consumers ([1]).

Consumer education in schools is essentially a national responsibility. The Commission facilitates consumer education in schools via the publication of materials on the Internet ([2])

The Commission complements the work of national authorities in awareness-raising of consumer rights through information campaigns in countries that join the EU. These campaigns promote national authorities and national consumer associations as sources for further information and advice, who also have a local and regional presence throughout the country.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm.
([2]) See for example: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/europadiary/docs/europa_diary_ro.pdf and http://www.dolceta.ro/.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-006625/12
a Bizottság számára
Deutsch Tamás (PPE)
(2012. július 2.)

Tárgy: A „súlyosítási tilalom” rendelkezéseinek derogációs időszakot követő joghatása

Magyarország esetében a csatlakozási okmány azt is kiköti, hogy „valamely tagállam állampolgára, illetve egy másik tagállam jogszabályai szerint létrehozott jogi személy a mezőgazdasági földterület megszerzése vonatkozásában nem részesíthető kedvezőtlenebb bánásmódban, mint amilyenben a csatlakozási szerződés napján részesült”.

Számos szakember számára bizonytalanságot okoz annak megítélése, hogy a fentiek (amit súlyosítási tilalomnak neveznek) értelmében az uniós jogrend lehetővé teszi-e Magyarország számára olyan – az uniós joggal egyébként összeegyeztethető ([1]) – birtokpolitikai intézkedések/eszközök – derogációs időszak lejártát követő – alkalmazását, amelyeket a magyar szabályozás a csatlakozási szerződés aláírása napján nem tartalmazott.

Álláspontunk szerint e rendelkezés (súlyosítási tilalom) célja kizárólag a derogációs időszakokra vonatkozik, fő célkitűzése pedig az, hogy – ha a csatlakozási szerződés lehetővé tette egy uniós jogrend által garantált alapszabadság korlátozását – ezen időszak alatt ne kerülhessen sor – az uniós jogrend által garantált – alapszabadságok további korlátozására. Így a derogációs időszak lejártát követően az Európai Unió Bíróságának gyakorlata alapján kell megítélni a bevezetésre kerülő – a termőföldek tulajdonának megszerzésével kapcsolatos – rendelkezések uniós joggal való összeegyeztethetőségét.

Ennek értelmében semmi esetre sem tartunk elfogadhatónak egy olyan értelmezést, amely végeredményben – hasonló súlyosítási tilalommal – a derogációs időszakban részesült tagállamokat különböztetné meg hátrányosan olyan – érzékeny – területeken, amelyekkel kapcsolatban – a csatlakozási szerződések megalkotói szerint – adaptációs időszak beiktatására volt szükség.

Értelmezésünket az is alátámasztja, hogy Magyarország esetében más tagállamok polgárai, illetve jogi személyek a csatlakozási szerződés aláírásakor hatályban lévő szabályozás értelmében nem szerezhették meg a mezőgazdasági termőföldek tulajdonát.

Egyetért-e a Bizottság a „súlyosítási tilalomra” vonatkozó álláspontunkkal?

Michel Barnier válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2012. augusztus 13.)

Az ingatlanszerzés jogi definíció szerint tőkemozgást valósít meg. Az Európai Unió Bírósága megállapította, hogy a tőke szabad mozgását csak az EUMSZ 65. cikkének (1) bekezdésében említett indokokkal alátámasztott, vagy közérdeken alapuló kényszerítő okból szükséges nemzeti jogszabály korlátozhatja, feltéve, hogy a nemzeti szabályozás alkalmas a kitűzött cél elérésére, és nem lépi túl a cél eléréséhez szükséges mértéket (az arányosság elve). Ezenfelül a 65. cikk (3) bekezdése értelmében ezek a kivételek nem szolgálhatnak a szabad tőkemozgásra vonatkozó önkényes megkülönböztetés vagy rejtett korlátozás eszközéül.

A 2003-as csatlakozási okmány úgy rendelkezik, hogy Magyarország a csatlakozást követő hétéves időszakban hatályban tarthatja a mezőgazdasági földterület nem magyarországi lakóhelyű vagy nem magyar állampolgárságú természetes személyek, illetve jogi személyek általi megszerzésére vonatkozó, meglévő korlátozásokat. Ez az átmeneti időszak elvben 2011. április 30-án járt volna le, de Magyarország kérésére az Európai Bizottság további három évvel meghosszabbította az átmeneti időszakot. Ennek lejártát követően nem lesz lehetőség a magyarországi mezőgazdasági földterületek uniós polgárok általi megszerzésének korlátozására. Az átmeneti időszak alatt nem megengedett a más tagállamok Magyarországon lakóhellyel nem rendelkező állampolgárainak hátrányos megkülönböztetése a magyarországi mezőgazdasági földterületek megszerzése tekintetében, a korlátozások hatálya pedig nem terjeszthető ki a csatlakozás időpontjában érvényben lévőn túlra. A Bizottságnak nincs tudomása olyan esetről, amikor jogellenes korlátozást alkalmaztak volna.

([1]) Az Európai Unió Bíróságának ítélkezési gyakorlata alapján: C-452/01; C-370/05.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006625/12
to the Commission
Tamás Deutsch (PPE)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Legal effect of 'prohibition of aggravation' provisions following a derogation period

Hungary's Act of Accession specifies that 'In no instance may nationals of the Member States or legal persons formed in accordance with the laws of another Member State be treated less favourably in respect of the acquisition of agricultural land than at the date of signature of the Accession Treaty'.

Assessing whether European Union law allows Hungary to apply land ownership policy provisions/instruments — following the expiry of a derogation period — pursuant to the above (known as the 'prohibition of aggravation') which are compatible with EC law ([1]) and which were not included in Hungarian legislation at the time when the Accession Treaty was signed is proving problematic for a number of experts.

We are of the opinion that the subject of this provision (the prohibition of aggravation) applies only to derogation periods and that its principle objective — in the event, according to the Accession Treaty, of it being possible to restrict a fundamental freedom guaranteed by EC law — is to ensure that there should be no further restrictions on fundamental freedoms during such a period. Therefore, following the expiry of a derogation period, the compatibility of provisions introduced in connection with the acquisition of ownership of agricultural land with EC law must be evaluated on the basis of the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

We cannot therefore accept any interpretation which — as with the prohibition on aggravation — would result in the Member States concerned being discriminated against during a derogation period in sensitive areas regarding which — according to the authors of the Accession Treaties — the inclusion of an adaptation period was necessary.

Our interpretation is supported by the fact that in the case of Hungary, citizens of other Member States and legal persons as defined by the legislation in force at the time the Accession Treaty was signed were not able to acquire ownership of agricultural land.

Does the Commission agree with our view on the 'prohibition of aggravation'?

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

The acquisition of real estate represents a capital movement in a legal definition. The Court of Justice of the EU has stated that the free movement of capital may be restricted only by national rules which are justified by reasons referred to in Art. 65(1) TFEU or by overriding reasons in the general interest provided that the national legislation is suitable for securing the objective which it pursues and does not go beyond what is necessary in order to attain that objective (principle of proportionality). Moreover, Article 65(3) affirms that all these exceptions shall not constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination or a disguised restriction on the free movement of capital.

The 2003 Act of Accession provides that Hungary may maintain in force, for a 7-year period following the accession, existing restrictions on the acquisition of agricultural land by natural persons who are non-residents or non-nationals of Hungary and by legal persons. This transitional period would in principle have expired on 30 April 2011, but upon Hungary's request the European Commission granted Hungary an extension of the transitional period for a further 3 years. After this period, restrictions on the acquisition by EU citizens of agricultural land in Hungary will no longer be possible. During this transitional period it is not permissible to discriminate between non-resident nationals of other Member States as regards the acquisition of agricultural land in Hungary, nor may the scope of the restrictions go beyond what already existed at the time of accession. The Commission is not aware of any instances where unlawful restrictions have been applied.

([1]) Based on the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union: C-452/01; C-370/05.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006626/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: European Globalisation Adjustment Fund

Conservation skills, acquired via and used on the historic building resource, have two critically important economic advantages:

— they are relatively strongly fixed within the local or national economy and can provide upstream and downstream benefits, and

— they contribute to the historic environment, which is a significant attraction for the tourism industry, whether considered generally in terms of ambience, or specifically in terms of heritage tourism attractions. A recent study has indicated that a key characteristic of investing in heritage is that there are no, or fewer, displacement effects.

An initiative in this area would be supported by several government policy initiatives in Ireland, including the National Recovery Plan 2011-2014, the Heritage Council's recently launched strategic plan and the Government Policy on Architecture.

With regard to the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, what provisions within it may be applied to the Irish construction industry, with specific emphasis on conservation training?

Is there any provision within it to support the upskilling of craftspeople in a specialist area rather than supporting their exit from the construction sector?

Could the Commission identify appropriate mechanisms within the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund which could be utilised to upskill/retrain Irish construction workers?

Could the Commission detail successful Irish applications to this fund?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that conservation skills can usefully contribute to the local economy and the historic environment.

As regards the European Social Fund, the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (OP) 2007-13 is the current programme for Ireland.

Within the OP, Priority 1 — Increasing Activation of the Labour Force — has a number of training courses in the Heritage and Historic sphere and is operated by FÁS under the Skills Training for the Unemployed Activity. These courses are all Local Training Initiatives, an entire list of which may be obtained from FÁS.

Another activity within Priority 1 — The Back to Education Initiative — which is operated by the Department of Education and Skills through the VECs, also provides some training courses in the Heritage sphere.

As regards the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), Ireland sent three applications for funding in 2010, targeting almost 6 000 workers made redundant in the construction industry. The Commission has been informed that the full range of FÁS training and apprenticeship courses were made available to these redundant workers, but that none of them availed of support for conservation type interventions.

The Commission confirms that the EGF Regulation enables workers to be upskilled in specialist areas, including conservation training. The methods and implementing bodies chosen for such training are determined by the Member State.

Finally, the Honourable Member is encouraged to consult the table containing all applications to the EGF, which is published on the EGF website and regularly updated ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006627/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Equal treatment within France

1. Could the Commission outline whether or not it is concerned that drivers travelling through France, whose cars are registered in EU countries other than France, could be fined for not carrying alcohol testers from 1 July 2012?

2. Is it permissible under EC law to impose such restrictions? Is the Commission concerned that this might amount to a restriction on the freedom of movement of persons within the EU? Is the Commission concerned that drivers from other Member States who do not ordinarily travel in France could be targeted, since the requirement for alcohol testers to be carried in cars is not widespread? Is this measure, including the issuing of fines, proportionate to achieving the aims of road safety, while showing due regard for the requirements of the TFEU and its four freedoms?

3. Is it permissible for a Member State to fine drivers ordinarily resident in other countries if they do not carry a fire extinguisher, warning triangle and reflective vest while visiting a neighbouring country to the one in which their car's registration and licence were issued?

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

In relation to the first 2 questions, adressed by the Honourable Member, the Commission would refer to its reply to Question E-6721/2012 ([1]).

Concerning the obligation to carry fire extinguishers, warning triangles or a reflective vest, the Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question 4284/2012 ([2]).

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006628/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Österreichs Schulden sind im Steigen

Jüngsten Meldungen zufolge steigen Österreichs Schulden weiter an — laut der Statistik Austria sind es mit Ende März 2012 mehr als 222 Mrd. EUR, was einem BIP von 73,5 % entspricht und einen Zuwachs von 2,4 % gegenüber dem Vorjahr bedeutet. Dies entspricht keineswegs der auf EU-Ebene vorgesehenen maximalen 60 % Schuldenobergrenze.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission bei einer Entwicklung des Schuldenstandes von 60,2 % des BIP in 2007 auf 72,2 % in 2011 und im ersten Quartal dieses Jahres auf 73,5 % die kurz- als auch die langfristige Entwicklung Österreichs?

2. Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission zu ergreifen, um Österreich vor einer Entwicklung ähnlich der anderen schon in starke Schräglage geratenen Länder zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(23. August 2012)

Der Schuldenstand Österreichs ist infolge höherer staatlicher Defizite und der Unterstützung für den Bankensektor seit 2008 gestiegen. Laut der Prognose der Kommission weitet sich das staatliche Defizit 2012 aufgrund einer Abschwächung des BIP-Wachstums und unter anderem der Kapitalübertragungen an die ÖVAG und die KA Finanz ([1]) auf 3 % des BIP aus, ehe es 2013 auf unter 2 % des BIP fällt. Nach dem österreichischen Stabilitätsprogramm soll der Schuldenstand 2013 mit 75,3 % seinen Höhepunkt erreichen und dann allmählich bis 2016 auf 70,6 % sinken. Nach Einschätzung der Kommission gewährleisten die im Programm vorgelegten Pläne ausreichende Fortschritte mit Blick auf die Einhaltung des im Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakt festgelegten Richtwerts für den Schuldenabbau. Diese Prognose ist jedoch mit Risiken behaftet, die sich aus der wachsenden Verschuldung staatlicher Unternehmen und möglichen weiteren staatlichen Verbindlichkeiten im Zusammenhang mit der Unterstützung des Bankensektors ergeben.

Hinsichtlich der langfristigen Tragfähigkeit der öffentlichen Finanzen ist festzustellen, dass die altersbezogenen Ausgaben auf längere Sicht stärker als im EU-Durchschnitt steigen werden. Die budgetäre Ausgangsposition erschwert die Bewältigung der langfristigen Kosten zusätzlich. Bei unveränderter Politik würde sich der Schuldenstand bis 2020 bei 72 % stabilisieren. Auf längere Sicht wären zur Einhaltung des Referenzwerts für die Staatsverschuldung zusätzliche Konsolidierungsanstrengungen erforderlich. Bei vollständiger Umsetzung des Stabilitätsprogramms würde der Schuldenstand bis 2020 auf einen Abwärtspfad gebracht, jedoch bliebe er immer noch über dem Referenzwert von 60 % des BIP. Die jüngsten Maßnahmen zur Rentenreform verringern die Risiken für die Tragfähigkeit der öffentlichen Finanzen. Die mittelfristige Erzielung ausreichender Primärüberschüsse gemäß dem Programm würde die Tragfähigkeit der öffentlichen Finanzen erhöhen.

Der geänderte Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakt bringt das Schuldenstandskriterium in vollem Umfang zum Tragen: Wird der Referenzwert von 60 % nicht eingehalten, kann gegen den betreffenden Mitgliedstaat ein Defizitverfahren eingeleitet werden, selbst wenn sein Haushaltsdefizit unter 3 % liegt, sofern sich der Abstand zwischen Schuldenstand und Referenzwert im Dreijahresdurchschnitt nicht jährlich um ein Zwanzigstel verringert.

([1]) 0,6 % des BIP.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006628/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Austria's rising government debt

The latest reports are that Austria's debt is continuing to rise. According to Statistik Austria, government debt amounted to over EUR 222 billion at the end of March 2012, which corresponds to 73.5% of GDP and is 2.4% higher than in the previous year. This is well in excess of the 60% maximum debt ceiling set at EU level.

1. In the light of the growth in debt from 60.2% of GDP in 2007 to 72.2% in 2011, and to 73.5% in the first quarter of 2012, how does the Commission assess both the short- and the long-term prospects for Austria?

2. What action does the Commission intend to take in order to prevent Austria sliding down the slope of a huge excess debt-to-GDP ratio that other countries now find themselves in?

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

Austria's debt ratio has grown since 2008 on the back of increased government deficits and support for the banking sector. The Commission forecasts the government deficit to widen to 3% of GDP in 2012 due to a slowdown in GDP growth and, *inter alia*, capital transfers to ÖVAG and KA Finanz ([1]), before dropping to below 2% of GDP in 2013. The Austrian Stability Programme stipulates the debt ratio to peak at 75.3% in 2013 before gradually falling to 70.6% in 2016. According to Commission assessment, the programme plans would ensure sufficient progress towards compliance with the debt reduction benchmark of the SGP. However, there are risks to this projection deriving from the growing debt of state-owned companies and potential further government liabilities in support of the banking sector.

Regarding long-term sustainability, the long-term change in age-related expenditure is above EU average. The initial budgetary position compounds the long-term costs. Assuming no policy change, debt would stabilise at 72% of GDP by 2020. Additional consolidation beyond the short-term would be needed to meet the debt reference value. The full implementation of the stability programme would put debt on a downward path by 2020, although still above the reference value of 60% of GDP. Recent pension reform measures would reduce sustainability risks. Ensuring sufficient primary surpluses over the medium-term, as planned in the programme, would improve the sustainability of public finances.

The amended Stability and Growth Pact makes the debt criterion fully operational: if the 60% reference is not respected, the MS concerned can be put in EDP even if its deficit is below 3%, if the gap between its debt ratio and the reference is not reduced by 1/20th annually on average over 3 years.

([1]) 0.6% of GDP.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006629/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: „Orientierungskurs“ zum Pensionsantritt

In Österreich gibt es nun den Vorschlag, das Angebot eines sogenannten „Orientierungskurses“ zum Pensionsantritt einzurichten — dies angesichts der steigenden Lebenserwartung von Männern und Frauen und der steigenden Gesundheitskosten für die Senioren. Über die Schiene der Prävention will man hier auf lange Sicht Kosten sparen.

1. Ist seitens der Kommission angedacht, so eine Initiative europaweit zu ergreifen, um die steigenden Gesundheitsprobleme und -kosten der Senioren zu reduzieren?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, eine Studie dieser Art zu erstellen, um allenfalls verpflichtende Maßnahmen im Sektor „Senioren“ ergreifen zu können und damit europaweit Kosten im Gesundheitssektor einzusparen?

(Bitte um ausführliche Erläuterung)

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(28. August 2012)

Die Kommission hat keine Pläne für eine solche Initiative. Nach dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip muss die EU die Zuständigkeiten der Mitgliedstaaten in den Bereichen Gesundheitsversorgung und Pflege wahren. Verpflichtende Maßnahmen sind mit dem derzeitigen EU-Rechtsrahmen ([1]) nicht vereinbar. Gleichwohl ist der Kommission die Notwendigkeit bewusst, einem Anstieg der Gesundheitsprobleme bei älteren Menschen vorzubeugen. Sie hat deshalb verschiedene Initiativen zur Unterstützung der Mitgliedstaaten ergriffen, um diesen zu verhindern.

Die möglichen finanziellen Auwirkungen der gesundheitlichen Entwicklungen einer alternden europäischen Bevölkerung wird im Bericht über die demografische Alterung ([2]) dargestellt, den die Kommission alle drei Jahre zusammen mit den Mitgliedstaaten im Rahmen der Arbeitsgruppe „Auswirkungen der Bevölkerungsalterung“ des Ausschusses für Wirtschaftspolitik vorlegt.

Durch die offene Koordinierungsmethode fördert die Kommission die Zusammenarbeit in Fragen des Sozialschutzes, einschließlich der Bereiche Gesundheit und Pflege. Für den entsprechenden Zugang, die Qualität und die Nachhaltigkeit der Gesundheits- und Pflegepolitik wurden bestimmte Ziele festgelegt ([3]). Der Ausschuss für Sozialschutz überwacht ihre Umsetzung.

Das Europäische Jahr für aktives Altern und Solidarität zwischen den Generationen ([4]) 2012 ist eine groß angelegte Kampagne in Zusammenarbeit mit nationalen politischen Entscheidungsträgern, die das Bewusstsein für den Nutzen von Aktivität und Gesundheit im Alter schärfen soll.

Das Pilotprojekt der Europäischen Innovationspartnerschaft „Aktivität und Gesundheit im Alter“ soll innovative und kostengünstige Lösungen fördern, die die Lebensqualität älterer Menschen verbessern. Eine der drei Säulen der Partnerschaft ist die Prävention, die sich auf die Einhaltung der Therapie und die Vorbeugung vor Stürzen, funktionalen Defiziten und Gebrechlichkeit konzentriert. Die Stakeholder, die ihr Engagement für diese Prioritäten erklärt haben, arbeiten nun an Aktionsplänen, die im November vorgelegt werden sollen.

([1]) Insbesondere Artikel 168 Absatz 7 AEUV.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/pdf/ee-2012-2_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=753&langId=en
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=754&langId=en
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=792&langId=en.
([4]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006629/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Retirement 'orientation course'

In Austria the idea of setting up an 'orientation course' on retirement is currently being mooted in response to rising male and female life expectancy and the rising cost of healthcare for the elderly. The long-term objective is a preventive approach to cost reduction.

1. Has the Commission considered implementing such an initiative on a Europe-wide with a view to stemming the increase in health problems among the elderly and cutting their healthcare costs?

2. Does the Commission intend to conduct a study of this kind with a view to taking compulsory measures concerning healthcare for the elderly, if necessary, and thereby making healthcare savings Europe wide?

(Please provide a comprehensive explanation)

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

The Commission has no plans to launch such an initiative. Under the subsidiarity principle, the EU must respect the responsibilities of Member States in the field of healthcare and long-term care. Compulsory measures are not compatible with the current EU legal framework ([1]). Yet, the Commission is aware of the need to prevent an increase in the health problems of the elderly and has taken various initiatives to support Member States avoid it.

The possible cost implications of developments in the health of ageing Europeans is modelled in the Ageing Report ([2]) which the Commission produces with Member States every three years in the context of the Ageing Working Group under the Economic Policy Committee.

Through the Open Method of Coordination the Commission promotes cooperation on social protection issues, including health and long-term care. Specific objectives have been agreed on access, quality and the sustainability of health and long-term care policies ([3]). The implementation is monitored by the Social Protection Committee.

The 2012 European Year ([4]) for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations is a large scale effort with national policy-makers of raising awareness about the benefits of active and healthy ageing.

The pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing aims to facilitate the deployment of innovative and cost efficient solutions that improve the quality of life of older people. One of the three pillars of the Partnership is prevention, which focuses on adherence to treatment and the prevention of falls and functional decline and frailty. Stakeholders having stated their commitments targeting these priorities are now working on Action Plans to be presented in November.

([1]) Notably Article 168(7) TFEU.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/pdf/ee-2012-2_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=753&langId=en, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=754&langId=en and http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=792&langId=en.
([4]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006630/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Europäische Union als Vorbild für Asien

Europa war bisher in den Augen Asiens immer in gewisser Weise Vorbild — die Einführung des Euros als auch Schengen, um nur zwei Beispiele zu nennen.

Seit der grassierenden Strukturkrise ist dies offenbar nicht mehr der Fall. Denn auf der anderen Seite steht die wirtschaftliche Situation — man ist der Überzeugung, gerade in China, dass die Lösung der Schuldenkrise aus Europa kommen sollte — dies, obwohl wie allseits bekannt und jüngst von Kommissionspräsident Barroso nochmals verdeutlicht, die Krise ihren Ausgang nicht in Europa genommen hat.

1. Inwiefern denkt die Kommission, dass die kulturellen Differenzen einen Einfluss auf die wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen haben?

2. Was könnte hier im Speziellen getan werden, um das Vertrauen in Europa wieder zu stärken?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(22. August 2012)

Historisch gesehen hat es den Anschein, als hätten kulturelle Differenzen dazu beigetragen, die wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen im Wege des Außenhandels und erheblicher Technologietransfers anzuregen und zu intensivieren. Auch viele asiatische Länder blicken auf schwere Krisenerfahrungen in jüngerer Zeit zurück, vor allem Japan, das in den 90er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts eine Bilanzrezession erlebte, in deren Folge das Land über lange Zeit ein langsames Wachstums verzeichnete. Bei ihrer eigenen Reaktion auf die Krise war die Europäische Union bestrebt, die aus diesen Krisen gezogenen Lehren zu befolgen.

Die EU hat zur Bekämpfung der Krise und Wiederherstellung des Vertrauens ein breites Spektrum von Maßnahmen getroffen. Der Fahrplan der Europäischen Kommission für Stabilität und Wachstum vom Oktober 2011 bildet weiterhin das umfassende Konzept für den Umgang mit den negativen Rückkopplungen zwischen Staatsschulden, Bankbilanzen und niedrigen Wachstumsaussichten. Bei allen Bestandteilen des Fahrplans wurden bereits Fortschritte erzielt. Gleichzeitig wird auch die Fähigkeit des Euroraums, vereint zu handeln und mit einer Stimme zu sprechen, von entscheidender Bedeutung für die Wiederherstellung des Vertrauens sein. Beim jüngsten Euro-Gipfel wurden einige wichtige Beschlüsse gefasst, um Staatsschulden und Bankbilanzen zu entkoppeln. Ferner wurde der vom Präsidenten des Europäischen Rats in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Präsidenten der Europäischen Kommission, dem Vorsitzenden der Euro-Gruppe und dem Präsidenten der Europäischen Zentralbank erarbeitete Bericht „Auf dem Weg zu einer echten Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion“ gebilligt. Die Arbeit an einem auf den vier Bausteinen (integrierter Rahmen für den Finanzsektor, integrierter Rahmen für Haushaltsfragen, integrierter Rahmen für die Wirtschaftspolitik sowie demokratische Legitimität und Rechenschaftspflicht der Entscheidungsfindung in der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion) beruhenden spezifischen zeitgebundenen Fahrplan, der in den Abschlussbericht Ende 2012 aufgenommen werden soll, wird fortgesetzt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006630/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: The European Union: a role model for Asia

Until recently, Europe had always been a role model for Asia in some respects — the introduction of the euro and Schengen being but two examples of why.

Since the advent of the crisis which is now spreading to all parts of the world economy, this is clearly no longer the case. The economic situation is now casting Europe in an unfavourable light, and China in particular takes the view that the solution to the debt crisis should come from Europe, even though it is common knowledge that the crisis did not have its origins here. The President of the Commission, Mr Barroso, made this very point again recently.

1. To what extent does the Commission think that cultural differences influence economic relations?

2. Is there anything in particular that could be done to strengthen confidence in Europe once again?

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

Historically, cultural differences appear to have inspired and intensified economic relations through foreign trade and through significant technology transfer. Many countries of Asia also have important recent crisis experiences, in particular Japan which faced a balance sheet recession in the 1990s and subsequently entered into a long period of slow growth. The European Union has aimed to heed the lessons learned in the context of these crises when formulating its own crisis response.

The EU has taken a wide array of measures to tackle the crisis and restore confidence. The European Commission's Roadmap towards Stability and Growth of October 2011 continues to represents the comprehensive blueprint for tackling the negative feedback loops between public debt, banks' balance sheets, and a week growth outlook. Progress has been made on all of the elements of the roadmap. At the same time, the ability of the Euro Area to act and speak with one voice will also be central to restoring confidence. The recent Euro Area Summit took some important decisions in order to break the link between sovereign debt and banks' balance sheets and endorsed the report 'Towards a genuine economic and monetary union' presented by the President of the European Council in collaboration with the Presidents of the European Commission, of the Euro Group and of the European Central Bank. Work will continue to develop a specific and time-bound road map around its four building blocks (an integrated financial framework, an integrated budgetary framework, an integrated economic policy framework and democratic legitimacy and accountability of decision-making within the EMU) to be included in the final report by the end of 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006631/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Politikverdrossenheit

Die Politikverdrossenheit unserer Bürger und Bürgerinnen nimmt europaweit zu — in Österreich liegt sie zuletzt bei 40 %.

Ist sich die Kommission dieser Tatsache bewusst, und welche Schritte gedenkt die Kommission zu tun, um eine völlige Teilnahmslosigkeit unserer Bürger und Bürgerinnen zu verhindern und eine verstärkte Bürgerbeteiligung zu erreichen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(23. August 2012)

Die Kommission führt alljährlich eine Reihe von Eurobarometer-Umfragen ([1]) durch, um die öffentliche Meinung in der EU zu einer Vielfalt von Themen zu erfassen.

Sie organisiert außerdem verschiedene Maßnahmen, die den Belangen der Bürgerinnen und Bürger Rechnung tragen sollen: Das Europäische Jahr der Bürgerinnen und Bürger 2013 ([2]) ist Ausdruck des Bemühens der Kommission, die Bürgerinnen und Bürger ins Zentrum der EU-Agenda zu rücken. Durch das Europäische Jahr soll das Bewusstsein der Menschen für die Rechte und Möglichkeiten, die sie als EU-Bürger haben, verbessert und eine Diskussion über Unionsbürgerschaft und die EU allgemein angestoßen werden.

Der Bericht der Kommission über die Unionsbürgerschaft 2013 ([3]), der auf einer umfangreichen, am 9. Mai 2012 eingeleiteten Konsultation der Bürgerinnen und Bürger basiert, wird Vorschläge für neue Maßnahmen enthalten, um Hindernisse aus dem Weg zu räumen, die die Bürgerinnen und Bürger daran hindern, ihrer Rechte in der EU wahrzunehmen.

Das Programm „Europa für Bürgerinnen und Bürger“ ([4]) zielt darauf ab, die Unionsbürgerschaft zu stärken, indem den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern die Möglichkeit zur Interaktion eingeräumt wird, die Grundwerte herausgestellt werden, auf denen die EU aufbaut, und die kulturellen Hindernisse zwischen den Europäern durch den Austausch von Meinungen, Werten und Erfahrungen überbrückt werden.

Die EU-Institutionen sowie die nationalen, regionalen und lokalen Politiker sind dafür verantwortlich, die Bürgerinnen und Bürger über die europäische Politik zu informieren. Das Europäische Parlament, die Kommission, der Rat und die Mitgliedstaaten haben sich verpflichtet, im Rahmen verschiedener Partnerschaften über EU-Angelegenheiten zu berichten und die politische Erklärung „Europa partnerschaftlich kommunizieren“ ([5]) umzusetzen.

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-002685/2015 von Herrn Proust ([6]), E-002674/12 von Herrn Teixeira ([7]) und E-007816/2011 von Herrn Tarabella ([8]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-citizens-2013/index_de.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/opinion/your-rights-your-future/index_de.htm
Öffentliche Online-Konsultation bis zum 9. September 2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/index_de.htm
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:013:0003:0004:dE:PDF.
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-002685&language=EN.
([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-002674&language=EN.
([8]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-007816&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006631/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Disillusionment with politics

People throughout Europe are increasingly fed up with politics — in Austria, 40% describe themselves as disillusioned.

Is the Commission aware of this state of affairs, and what steps does it intend to take to prevent complete political apathy, and achieve a higher level of public participation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

Each year, the Commission carries out a series of Eurobarometer polls ([1]) to capture the state of public opinion in the European Union on a wide range of subjects.

The Commission implements different actions to address citizens' concerns: The European Year of Citizens 2013 ([2]) is the expression of the Commission's commitment to put citizens in the centre of the EU's agenda. The Year will aim at raising peoples' awareness of their rights and opportunities as EU citizens and at engaging in a discussion with them about EU citizenship and the EU in general.

The Commission's 2013 Citizenship Report — based on a wide reaching consultation with citizens ([3]) launched on 9 May 2012 — will put forward new actions to remove obstacles standing in the way of citizens' enjoyment of their EU rights.

The 'Europe for Citizens' programme ([4]) aims at fostering European citizenship by giving citizens the opportunity to interact, by highlighting the basic values on which the EU is built, and by bridging the cultural barriers between Europeans through the exchange of opinions, values and experiences.

EU institutions, national, regional and local politicians, carry the responsibility to inform citizens about European policies. The Parliament, the Commission, the Council and Member States committed themselves to communicating about EU issues through different partnerships and by implementing the political declaration on 'Communicating Europe in Partnership' ([5]).

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-002685/2012 by Mr Proust ([6]), E-002674/12 by Mr Teixeira ([7]) and E-007816/2011 by Mr Tarabella ([8]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-citizens-2013/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/opinion/your-rights-your-future/index_en.htm; public online consultation until 9 September 2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/index_en.htm
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:013:0003:0004:EN:PDF.
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-002685&language=EN.
([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-002674&language=EN.
([8]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-007816&language=EN.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006632/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Rauchpause

Während es in Schweden in vielen Betrieben schon lange eine „rauchfreie Arbeitszeit" gibt und man in Deutschland jetzt einen ebensolchen Vorstoß setzt, indem man das Rauchen auf die Mittagspause und nach Dienstschluss legt, ist in vielen Ländern der EU gar keine Regelung oder Empfehlung vorhanden. Auch in Österreich ist dieses Thema nicht gesetzlich geregelt und den betrieblichen Regelungen vorbehalten.

Jeder Raucher kostet seinen Arbeitgeber im Jahr zusätzlich immerhin die stattliche Summe von 3 500 EUR.

1. Abgesehen von den Kosten, die ein Raucher im staatlichen Gesundheitssystem verursacht, ist der Kommission diese Situation der Betriebe und der Folgekosten für die Betriebe bekannt?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission hier tätig zu werden, um einerseits die Kosten für die Betriebe und andererseits die hohen Kosten für die Volksgesundheit zu reduzieren?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(13. August 2012)

Die Kommission teilt voll und ganz die Bedenken des Herrn Abgeordneten hinsichtlich der Kosten, die das Rauchen dem Gesundheitssystem und den Unternehmen verursacht.

Das übergeordnete Ziel der Kommission besteht darin, die Gesundheit sowohl der Arbeitnehmer als auch der gesamten Bevölkerung zu schützen und dazu beizutragen, die Kosten für die Unternehmen und die Sozialversicherungssysteme zu verringern. Die Kommission prüft derzeit, wie der Schutz der Arbeitnehmer vor Gefährdungen durch die Exposition gegenüber Tabakrauch am Arbeitsplatz am besten verbessert werden kann. In diesem Zusammenhang hat sie gemäß Artikel 154 AEUV eine erste Stufe der Konsultation der Sozialpartner auf EU-Ebene eingeleitet. Nach Auswertung der Stellungnahmen der Sozialpartner sollen sie in einer zweiten Stufe erneut konsultiert werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006632/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Smoking break

While many firms in Sweden have for a long time been a 'smoke-free workplace' and there are now moves to introduce a similar initiative in Germany whereby smoking is restricted to lunch breaks and after work, in many EU countries scarcely any rules or recommendations exist. Even in Austria there are no laws on smoking in the workplace and it is left to the company to establish its own rules.

However, each smoker costs his or her employer the not inconsiderable sum of EUR 3 500 per year in additional costs.

1. Aside from the cost to the public health system of smoking, is the Commission aware of the situation and subsequent costs companies face?

2. Will the Commission take action in this matter, to reduce first, the cost to companies and second, the high public health costs?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

The Commission fully shares the concerns of the Honourable Member regarding the cost that tobacco smoking has on the public health system and enterprises.

The overarching objective of the Commission is to protect the health of both workers and the public in general contributing, at the same time, to the reduction of costs for companies and social security systems. The Commission is currently examining the options on how best to improve the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to environmental tobacco smoke at the workplace. In this context, the Commission launched a first stage consultation of the social partners at EU level in application of Article 154 TFEU. Following an analysis of the responses received from the social partner organisations, the second stage consultation of the social partners is under preparation.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006633/12
aan de Commissie
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(2 juli 2012)

Betreft: Transparantieregister

Uit de studie „Dodgy data: Time to fix the EU's Transparency Register" ([1]) blijkt dat een groot aantal lobbyisten in Brussel niet is geregistreerd. Daarnaast is een groot deel van de informatie in het register overduidelijk onbetrouwbaar.

Voor volgend jaar staat een herziening van het register op het programma, maar nu reeds kunnen enkele eenvoudige maatregelen worden getroffen om de hierboven vermelde onvolkomenheden te corrigeren.

Is de Commissie bereid heldere richtsnoeren te geven over de gegevens die in het register moeten worden opgenomen? Er zou bijvoorbeeld aangegeven kunnen worden op welke wijze de lobbyingkosten moeten worden berekend, wat wel en niet onder de definitie van lobbyingactiviteiten valt en welke de gebieden zijn waarop geregistreerde lobbyingorganisaties actief zijn.

Eén van de grote problemen, zo blijkt uit de studie, is dat in de regel nauwelijks lobbyinguitgaven worden opgegeven. Zo geven meer dan 50 (juridische) adviesbureaus en consultants in het register aan dat ze niets of slechts één euro voor lobbyingactiviteiten uitgeven. De huidige steekproefsgewijze controles zijn duidelijk onvoldoende. Welke maatregelen gaat de Commissie nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat alle gegevens in het register daadwerkelijk worden gecontroleerd?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(26 juli 2012)

De Commissie wijst er nogmaals op dat het transparantieregister door het Parlement en de Commissie tezamen wordt beheerd op grond van hun interinstitutionele akkoord ([2]).

Dit akkoord voorziet erin dat het gemeenschappelijke register uiterlijk twee jaar na zijn inwerkingtreding wordt herbezien. Mochten maatregelen ter verbetering van de werking van het register aan de orde zijn, dan zullen beide instellingen dit bespreken en beslissen in het kader van dit proces dat in 2013 moet plaatshebben.

([1]) „Dodgy data: Time to fix the EU's Transparency Register", Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation, juni 2012.
([2]) PB L 191 van 22.7.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006633/12
to the Commission
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: Transparency Register

The study 'Dodgy data: Time to fix the EU's Transparency Register' ([1]) shows that many lobbyists active in Brussels are not registered. Furthermore, much of the information in the register is clearly unreliable.

A review of the register will take place next year, but easily achievable measures could be taken before the results are ready in order to rectify the abovementioned shortcomings.

Is the Commission willing to provide clearer guidelines on the data to be declared in the Transparency Register? Examples might include guidelines on how to calculate lobbying costs, a clearer description of what constitutes lobbying activities, and the fields in which registered lobby organisations are active.

The study shows that under-reporting is a serious problem. For example, more than 50 consultancies, consultants and law firms in the register declare that they spend nothing or one euro on lobbying. As the current random checks are clearly insufficient, what measures will the Commission take to ensure that all data entered in the register is actively checked?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2012)

The Commission wishes to recall that the Transparency Register is operated jointly by the Parliament and the Commission on the basis of their Interinstitutional Agreement ([2]).

This agreement foresees that the common register shall be subject to review no later than two years following its entry into operation. Should any measure be envisaged to improve the functioning of this register, these will have to be considered and decided by both institutions within this process due to take place in 2013.

([1]) 'Dodgy data: Time to fix the EU's Transparency Register', Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation, June 2012.
([2]) OJ L 191, 22.7.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006634/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(2 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Massacro di cristiani nell'attacco contro due chiese del nord-est del Kenya durante la messa

La scorsa domenica 1º luglio, due commando di uomini armati hanno attaccato con granate e armi da fuoco due chiese nel nord-est del Kenia: la Cattedrale cattolica centrale di Garissa e una chiesa dell'Africa Inland Church.

Il bilancio delle vittime è reso noto dalla Croce Rossa: sono morte ben 17 persone e 45 sono rimaste ferite, di cui 10 versano in condizioni molto gravi.

L'area è teatro di tensioni dallo scorso anno, ovvero, da quando il governo keniota ha inviato truppe nel paese confinante per contrastare le milizie islamiste Al-Shabaab. Questo tentativo di imporre una religione con la forza rappresenta, al tempo stesso, la testimonianza emblematica delle persecuzioni contro la religione cristiana nel mondo.

Preso atto di questa gravissima situazione, che si configura come una palese violazione di uno dei diritti dell'uomo sancito nella Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea al capo II «Libertà di pensiero, di coscienza e di religione», si interroga il Vicepresidente/l'Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

— Se è consapevole dei seri rischi che le comunità cristiane corrono quotidianamente in Kenia?

— Condivide le preoccupazioni del sottoscritto circa il rischio di diffusione dell'odio etnico che questi gravissimi casi di violenza potrebbero rappresentare?

— La situazione descritta richiede un intervento immediato: quali provvedimenti e azioni il Vicepresidente/l'Alto Rappresentante ha già intrapreso o intende intraprendere per assumere una posizione forte e decisa di condanna di questi episodi e, dunque, fermare le stragi contro i cristiani?

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

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza di quanto recentemente avvenuto a Garissa e segue da vicino l'evolversi della situazione riguardo a potenziali attacchi terroristici in Kenya. Dopo l'incursione keniota in territorio somalo nell'ottobre 2011, vi è un rischio permanente di azioni di rappresaglia da parte di gruppi militanti. Da ottobre si sono verificati vari incidenti, la maggior parte nell'instabile nordest, ma anche nella capitale Nairobi e nella città di Mombasa.

Gran parte degli attacchi colpiscono indiscriminatamente normali cittadini, mentre altri sono mirati in particolare contro istituzioni e funzionari governativi. Dato che Garissa è un grande avamposto di ufficiali dell'esercito e della polizia kenioti che pattugliano la zona e la vicina regione di frontiera, vi è ragion di credere che anche questo attacco intendesse principalmente destare paura e rabbia tra di essi e le loro famiglie piuttosto che colpire specificamente i cristiani.

Nel dialogo con le autorità keniote, l'UE solleva regolarmente la questione della sicurezza per garantire l'incolumità di tutti i kenioti e degli stranieri presenti nel paese. Per promuovere attivamente la pace e l'armonia in Kenya, l'UE finanzia inoltre, attraverso lo Strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR), progetti volti a ridurre le tensioni in noti focolai di violenza.

Nonostante l'aumento di attacchi deplorevoli da parte di gruppi estremisti, non bisogna dimenticare che in Kenya gran parte dei fedeli delle varie religioni convivono pacificamente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006634/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(2 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Massacre of Christian worshippers in attacks on two churches in north-eastern Kenya

On Sunday, 1 July two groups of armed men mounted simultaneous grenade and gun attacks on two churches in north-eastern Kenya, namely the Catholic Cathedral in Garissa and a church belonging to the African Island Church.

The Red Cross has spelled out the toll of victims: 17 dead and 45 injured, 10 of whom are in a critical condition.

There has been tension in the area for the past year, that is to say, since the Kenyan Government sent troops to neighbouring Somalia to fight the Islamist al-Shabab militia. The attacks on the two churches, an attempt to impose a religion by force, symbolise the persecution to which the Christian faith is being subjected throughout the world.

Given that this extremely disturbing situation is blatantly contrary to 'Freedom of thought, conscience and religion', a human right enshrined in Chapter II of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights:

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the serious risks to which Christian communities are exposed in Kenya every day?

— Does it agree that the danger of such brutal acts of violence lies in the spread of religious hatred?

— The situation described above demands immediate action. What has the Vice-President/High Representative done or what will it do in order to take a firm and resolute stand against incidents of this kind and hence stop the massacres of Christians?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the recent incident in Garissa and follows closely the evolving situation of potential terrorist attacks in Kenya. Ever since Kenya's incursion into Somali terrority in October 2011, there is a permanent risk of retaliatory action by militant groups. Several incidents have occurred since October, most of them in the volatile North-East, but also in the capital Nairobi and the city of Mombasa.

Most of the attacks are aimed indiscriminately at ordinary Kenyans, while others particularly target Government institutions and officials. With Garissa being a major outpost of Kenyan army and police officers patrolling the area and nearby border region, there is reason to believe that also this attack was mostly aimed at instilling fear and anger among this group of Kenyans and their families rather than specifically targetting Christians.

The EU regularly raises security concerns in its dialogue with Kenyan authorities to ensure the safety of all Kenyans and foreigners staying in the country. To actively foster a peaceful and harmonious society in Kenya, the EU also funds, through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), projects aimed at defusing tensions in known hotspots of violence.

Despite a growing number of very regrettable attacks committed by extremist groups, one must not lose out of sight that, the huge majority of religious communities in Kenya live peacefully together.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-006635/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σύνοδος Κορυφής και αρχή της ίσης μεταχείρισης

Στη Σύνοδο Κορυφής της 28ης-29ης Ιουνίου 2012 αποφασίστηκε ότι, στο εξής, τα κράτη μέλη που ζητούν βοήθεια για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση του τραπεζικού τους τομέα, θα χρηματοδοτούνται απευθείας από τους ευρωπαϊκούς μηχανισμούς στήριξης. Στην ίδια απόφαση το Συμβούλιο Κορυφής ανακοινώνει ότι το Eurogroup θα εξετάσει την κατάσταση του ιρλανδικού χρηματοοικονομικού τομέα υπό το πρίσμα της ανωτέρω απόφασης, και κάνει λόγο για «παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις που θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστούν κατά όμοιο τρόπο», αναφερόμενο προφανώς σε Ελλάδα και Πορτογαλία. Όμως η αναφορά αυτή μοιάζει περισσότερο με προτροπή για αυστηρή τήρηση του μνημονίου παρά με υπόσχεση ίσης μεταχείρισης και ελάφρυνσης των δανειακών βαρών που έχουν επωμισθεί οι δύο χώρες.

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς σχολιάζει την απόφαση του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου Κορυφής; Τι ακριβώς ισχύει για τις περιπτώσεις Ιταλίας, Ισπανίας αλλά και Κύπρου; Τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε να υπάρξει ίση μεταχείριση των κρατών-μελών της ευρωζώνης;

2. Με δεδομένο ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση προτίθεται να θέσει θέμα επιμήκυνσης του χρονοδιαγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής κατά δύο τουλάχιστον χρόνια, μπορεί να βεβαιώσει η Επιτροπή ότι η συζήτηση αυτή θα συνδεθεί με την ανωτέρω απόφαση του Συμβουλίου Κορυφής για τον τρόπο ανακεφαλαιοποίησης των τραπεζών, αφού αυτή θα άλλαζε ριζικά τα χρηματοοικονομικά δεδομένα της δανειακής σύμβασης της Ελλάδας με τους δανειστές της;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Ιουλίου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή έχει δεσμευτεί πλήρως να συμβάλει στη γρήγορη εφαρμογή των δεσμεύσεων της συνόδου κορυφής των χωρών της Ευρωζώνης της 29ης Ιουνίου, τα οποία προβλέπουν μεταξύ άλλων τη δυνατότητα να επιτρέπεται στον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας να προβαίνει σε άμεσες ανακεφαλοποιήσεις, μόλις επιτευχθεί συμφωνία για ενιαίο μηχανισμό εποπτείας.

Οι ακριβείς τρόποι πραγματοποίησης άμεσων ανακεφαλοποιήσεων θα συζητηθούν με τα κράτη μέλη το φθινόπωρο και ενδέχεται να εξετασθεί η δυνατότητα χρησιμοποίησης αυτού του νέου μέσου και για δράσεις χρηματοδοτικής συνδρομής που έχουν ήδη ξεκινήσει..

2. Οι ελληνικές αρχές πρέπει να τηρήσουν τις δεσμεύσεις τους και να εφαρμόσουν σωστά το πρόγραμμα, ώστε να μπορέσουν να λάβουν και τις άλλες δόσεις βάσει της δανειακής σύμβασης. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι πρέπει να εφαρμόσουν με απόλυτη συνέπεια και σοβαρότητα τα βασικά μέτρα που είναι αναγκαία για να επανέλθει η χώρα στο δρόμο της ανάπτυξης και της βιωσιμότητας.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006635/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: European Council Summit and principle of equal treatment

At the Summit Meeting of 28 to 29 June 2012 it was decided that, henceforth, Member States requesting assistance to recapitalize their banking sector would be funded directly by the European support mechanisms. In the same decision, the Council announced that the Eurogroup would examine the state of the Irish financial sector in the light of the above decision, stating that 'similar cases will be treated equally', apparently in reference to Greece and Portugal. But this reference is more akin to an exhortation to strictly observe the Memorandum than a promise of equal treatment and an easing of debt burden borne by the two countries in question.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How does it interpret the European Council's decision? Precisely which conditions apply to the cases of Italy, Spain and Cyprus? What will it do to ensure equal treatment of Eurozone Member States?

2. Given that the Greek Government intends to raise the issue of extending the budgetary adjustment schedule by at least two years, can it confirm that this discussion will be linked to the above European Council decision on how to recapitalise banks, as this would fundamentally change the financial basis of the loan agreement between Greece and its creditors?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2012)

1. The Commission is fully committed to contributing to implement swiftly the conclusions of the 29 June euro area summit, which foresees *inter alia* the possibility to allow the European Stability Mechanism to conduct direct recapitalizations, once an agreement over a single supervisory mechanism is reached.

The concrete modalities for implementing direct recapitalisations will be discussed with Member States during the autumn, including the possible use of this new instrument for existing financial assistance operations.

2. The Greek authorities have to deliver on their commitments and bring the programme fully back on track in order to be able to receive further disbursements under the loan agreement. This means carrying out in earnest the key measures which are necessary for the country to come back to a path of growth and sustainability.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-006636/12
do Komisji
Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD)
(3 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wykluczające się wzajemnie kryteria naboru pracowników do instytucji UE

W odpowiedzi na moje wcześniejsze pytanie w tej sprawie (E-002292/2012) Komisja nie odniosła się do meritum i udzieliła zbędnych informacji, o które nie prosiłem. Uważam to za przejaw braku szacunku dla wielu wyborców, którzy kontaktowali się ze mną w tej kwestii. Dlatego też powtórzę moje pytanie.

Zgodnie z regulaminem pracowniczym instytucje UE, dokonując naboru pracowników, muszą kierować się dwoma kryteriami: przyszli urzędnicy muszą „spełniać najwyższe wymogi w zakresie kwalifikacji, wydajności i uczciwości" i muszą być rekrutowani „z uwzględnieniem możliwie szerokiego zasięgu geograficznego". Te dwa kryteria mogą się często wzajemnie wykluczać.

Wyobraźmy sobie sytuację, w której dziesięciu kandydatów bierze udział w konkursie o pięć miejsc na liście rezerwowej na potrzeby zatrudnienia w instytucjach UE. Spośród tych dziesięciu kandydatów pięciu pochodzi z Polski a pięciu z różnych innych państw członkowskich. Wyobraźmy sobie, że tych pięcioro Polaków jest najodpowiedniejszymi i najlepiej wykwalifikowanymi kandydatami i uzyskuje w konkursie najwyższe oceny.

1. Czy Europejski Urząd Doboru Kadr (EPSO) umieściłby na liście rezerwowej nazwiska wszystkich pięciorga Polaków, gdyż to oni wypadli lepiej w konkursie?

— Jeżeli tak, to jak EPSO i rekrutujące instytucje wytłumaczyłyby to, że nie zdołały dokonać naboru z uwzględnieniem możliwie szerokiego zasięgu geograficznego?

— Jeżeli nie, to jak by uzasadniono odmowę umieszczenia na liście nazwisk Polaków, którzy zajęli niższe miejsca (a i tak osiągnęli lepszy wynik niż pozostałych pięciu kandydatów)?

2. Jakiego wyjaśnienia udzielono by tym kandydatom, którzy osiągnęli dobre wyniki a zostali wyeliminowani wyłącznie ze względu na ich narodowość?

Opisałem bardzo konkretną sytuację. Oczekuję równie konkretnej odpowiedzi. Mogą być one dwie – albo pierwszy tryb postępowania, albo drugi. Oczekuję, że Komisja powie mi i moim wyborcom, który spośród dwóch przedstawionych trybów postępowania by zastosowała, oraz że uzasadni swoją decyzję.

Muszę podkreślić, że nie chcę uzyskać odpowiedzi, która w rzeczywistości nie jest odpowiedzią, jak miało to miejsce poprzednio. Proszę tym razem odpowiedzieć na moje pytanie.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Maroša Šefčoviča w imieniu Komisji
(30 lipca 2012 r.)

Z wyjątkiem konkursów organizowanych w związku z rozszerzeniem na każdym etapie procedury naboru do kolejnego etapu przechodzą kandydaci spełniający kryteria kwalifikacyjne, którzy uzyskali najlepsze wyniki, bez względu na obywatelstwo, przy czym uwzględnia się warunki określone w ogłoszeniu o konkursie, w którym podana jest liczba laureatów w danym konkursie/danej dziedzinie ustalona wcześniej przez instytucje. Chociaż może zdarzyć się, że poszczególne listy same w sobie nie odzwierciedlają idealnej równowagi geograficznej, z przyczyn, na które instytucje nie mają wpływu, to zasadniczo liczba laureatów ogółem na różnych listach rezerwowych jest wystarczająca, by umożliwić rekrutację w sposób zrównoważony. Nabór w oparciu o kryteria merytoryczne nie stoi zatem w sprzeczności ze spoczywającym na instytucjach obowiązkiem rekrutacji z uwzględnieniem możliwie najszerszego zasięgu geograficznego.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006636/12
to the Commission
Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Mutually exclusive criteria for recruitment of staff to the EU institutions

The Commission's answer to my earlier question on this subject (E-002292/2012) avoided the issue and gave superfluous information which I had not requested. I consider this a sign of disrespect to the many constituents who have contacted me concerning this issue. I will therefore ask the question once again.

The Staff Regulations require the EU institutions to recruit staff according to two criteria: prospective officials must be 'of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity'; and they must be 'recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis'. These two criteria are likely to be frequently mutually exclusive.

Let us imagine a situation in which ten candidates enter a competition for five places on a reserve list for recruitment to the EU institutions. Of these ten candidates, five are Polish and five come from various other Member States. Let us imagine that the five Poles are the most capable and qualified candidates and achieve the highest marks in the competition.

1. Would the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) put all five Polish candidates on the reserve list, as their superior performance in the competition would merit?

— If so, how would EPSO and the recruiting institutions explain the failure to recruit on the broadest possible geographical basis?

— If not, how would the refusal of a place on the list for the lower-placed Poles (who had still performed better than the five other candidates) be justified?

2. What explanation would be given to these high-performing candidates, excluded merely because of their nationality?

I have described a very clear situation. I expect an equally clear response. There are only two possible answers — either the first course of action, or the second. I expect the Commission to tell me and my constituents which of the two courses of action described it would follow, and to explain its choice.

I must underline that I do not expect such a non-answer as that previously provided: please answer the question this time.

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2012)

Except for competitions organised in the context of enlargement, at each stage of the selection procedure the highest scoring eligible candidates are taken forward to the next stage regardless of nationality, but taking account of the terms of the competition notice which defines the number of successful candidates per competition/field decided in advance by the institutions. Even though it may happen that an individual list does not itself demonstrate perfect geographical balance, for reasons outside the control of the institutions, in principle there are sufficient laureates overall on the various reserve lists to allow recruitment to reach a balanced level. Selection on the basis of merit is therefore not in contradiction with the institutions' obligation to recruit on the broadest possible geographical basis.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006637/12
to the Commission
Mairead McGuinness (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Turf extraction on raised bog sites in Ireland

1. Can the Commission confirm if it has received a submission from the Turf Cutters and Contractors Association (TCCA) in Ireland proposing continued turf extraction on the 53 raised bog Sites of Community Importance while a national management plan for these sites is being prepared?

2. Can the Commission outline its views on these proposals?

3. Did the Commission give the TCCA any reason to believe that turf cutting could continue on any of Ireland's 53 raised bog Sites of Community Importance while a national management plan was being prepared?

4. Does the Commission believe that there is any possibility of following the approach proposed by the TCCA?

5. Does the Commission believe that the Irish authorities have the legal discretion to agree to a continuation of turf cutting on Ireland's raised bog Special Areas of Conservation while it prepares a national raised bog management plan?

6. Can the Commission outline the circumstances under which further turf cutting could legally take place on any of Ireland's 53 raised bog Special Areas of Conservation?

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

The Commission can confirm that it received a submission from the Turf Cutters and Contractors Association (TCCA) in early 2012. Continued peat extraction on Ireland's 53 raised bog Sites of Community Importance, while a national management plan is being prepared, would be contrary to the provisions of the applicable EU legislation ([1]).

The Commission did not give TCCA, or any other party, reason to believe that such continued extraction was possible. Moreover, the Commission does not believe that the Irish authorities have the legal discretion to agree to it either. A Commission press release of 16 June 2011, coinciding with the issue of a Reasoned Opinion on this matter, makes clear the Commission's concerns about the damaging effects of turf cutting on these peatlands ([2]). Further turf cutting can only legally take place if the requirements of Articles 6(3) and (4) of Directive 92/43/EEC are fully satisfied.

([1]) Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) IP/11/730.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006638/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(3 juli 2012)

Betreft: Aanbeveling over het nationale hervormingsprogramma van België

Tijdens de EPSCO-Raad van 21 juni wezen meerdere EU-lidstaten erop dat de EPSCO-Raad volledig in de beraadslagingen over de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen van de Europese Commissie over thema's als loonbeleid en pensioenhervorming zou moeten worden betrokken.

Hoewel de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen gebaseerd zijn op artikel 121, lid 2, VWEU (titel VIII „Economisch en monetair beleid") en artikel 148, lid 4, VWEU (titel IX „Werkgelegenheid"), is de aanbeveling betreffende het Belgische loonindexeringsmechanisme niet enkel economisch van aard, maar raakt ze ook aan fundamentele aspecten van het sociaal beleid (titel X VWEU).

Dit werpt dan ook de vraag op hoe titels VIII en IX VWEU zich in deze context verhouden tot titel X VWEU.

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat de voornoemde rechtsgrondslag voor de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen voldoende is voor een aanbeveling over een dergelijke materie?

2. Oordeelt de Commissie dat de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen de bepalingen uit titel X „Sociale politiek" van het VWEU en artikel 28 van het Handvest van de Grondrechten dienen te respecteren, zoals het geval is bij Verordening (EU) nr. 1176/2011, die gebaseerd is op artikel 121, lid 6, en een uitdrukkelijke verplichting tot de eerbiediging van nationale praktijken en instellingen van loonvorming bevat?

3. Wat betekent dit voor de afdwingbaarheid van de aanbeveling betreffende het Belgische loonindexeringsmechanisme?

4. Wat is de stand van zaken in verband met de creatie van een EU tripartiete overleg voor monitoring en gedachte-uitwisseling over loonontwikkelingen, zoals onlangs aangekondigd in het werkprogramma van de Commissie?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(16 augustus 2012)

1. De Commissie vindt dat de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen over thema's als loonbeleid en pensioenhervormingen correct op artikel 121, lid 2, VWEU en artikel 148, lid 4, VWEU zijn gebaseerd en dat ze verenigbaar zijn met titel X VWEU („Sociaal beleid") en artikel 28 van het Handvaest van de grondrechten.

2. Ja. De door de Commissie voorgestelde tekst inzake de landenspecifieke aanbeveling over lonen vermeldt uitdrukkelijk dat hervormingen moet worden doorgevoerd in overleg met de sociale partners en in overeenstemming met nationale praktijken.

3. Als een lidstaat nalaat de richtsnoeren van de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen op te volgen, kan dit — overeenkomstig artikel 2 bis, lid 3, van Verordening (EG) nr. 1466/97 ([1]) — leiden tot: a) verdere aanbevelingen om specifieke maatregelen te nemen; b) een waarschuwing van de Commissie op grond van artikel 121, lid 4, VWEU; c) maatregelen op grond van Verordening (EG) nr. 1466/97, Verordening (EG) nr. 1467/97 of Verordening (EU) nr. 1176/2011.

4. Met het oog op het volgende Europees Semester onderzoekt de Commissie momenteel in nauw contact met de sociale partners de mogelijke opties voor de ontwikkeling van een tripartiete Europese structuur voor toezicht op en de uitwisseling van standpunten over loonsontwikkelingen.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1466/97 van de Raad van 7 juli 1997 over versterking van het toezicht op begrotingssituaties en het toezicht op en de coördinatie van het economisch beleid, PB L 209 van 2.8.1997, blz. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006638/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Recommendation on Belgium's national reform programme

During the EPSCO Council on 21 June, various Member States observed that the EPSCO Council should be fully involved in deliberations on the Commission's country-specific recommendations on such subjects as wage policy and pension reform.

Although the country-specific recommendations are based on Article 121(2) TFEU (Title VIII, 'Economic and monetary policy') and Article 148(4) TFEU (Title IX, 'Employment'), the recommendation concerning Belgium's wage indexation system is not of a purely economic nature but also concerns fundamental aspects of social policy (Title X TFEU).

This therefore raises the question of how Titles VIII and IX TFEU relate to Title X TFEU in this context.

1. Does the Commission consider the aforementioned legal basis for the country-specific recommendations to be sufficient for a recommendation on such a matter?

2. Does the Commission consider that the country-specific recommendations should respect the provisions of Title X TFEU ('Social policy') and Article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, as is the case with Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011, which is based on Article 121(6) and contains an explicit obligation to respect national practices and institutions in the field of wage formation?

3. What implications does this have for the enforceability of the recommendation on Belgium's wage indexation system?

4. What progress has been made with the creation of an EU tripartite consultation system for monitoring and exchanges of views on wage trends, which was recently announced in the Commission's work programme?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

1. The Commission considers that the country-specific recommendations on subjects such as wage policy and pension reforms are correctly based on Articles 121(2) and 148(4) TFEU and that they are compatible with both the provisions of Title X TFEU ('Social policy') and Article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

2. Yes. The text proposed by the Commission on the country-specific recommendation on wages explicitly states that steps to reform should be taken in consultation with the social partners and in accordance with national practice.

3. In accordance with Article 2-a(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 ([1]), failure by a Member State to act upon the guidance received in the Council country-specific recommendations may result in: (a) further recommendations to take specific measures; (b) a warning by the Commission under Article 121(4) TFEU; (c) measures under Regulations (EC) No 1466/97, (EC) No 1467/97 or (EU) No 1176/2011.

4. The Commission is currently examining, in close contact with the social partners, the options available for setting up EU tripartite arrangements for monitoring and exchanging views on wage developments for the next European Semester.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 of 7 July 1997 on the strengthening of the surveillance of budgetary positions and the surveillance and coordination of economic policies, OJ L 209, 2.8.1997, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006639/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αξιοποίηση προγράμματος «Φρούτα στα σχολεία»

Η υλοποίηση του Ευρωπαϊκού σχεδίου προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία με συγχρηματοδότηση από ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους, που ξεκίνησε το σχολικό έτος 2009/2010, θα μπορούσε να βοηθήσει στη μείωση της επισιτιστικής ανασφάλειας για τα παιδιά, στην εξοικείωσή τους με την κατανάλωση φρούτων και στην στήριξη της αγροτικής παραγωγής, ιδιαίτερα στη σημερινή περίοδο οξείας πολύπλευρης κρίσης.

Κατά την πρώτη περίοδο εφαρμογής του, το σχολικό έτος 2009-2010, το σχέδιο δεν υλοποιήθηκε στην Ελλάδα ([1]), ενώ κατά το προηγούμενο σχολικό έτος 2010-2011 η Ελλάδα χρησιμοποίησε μόλις το 56,6 % των διαθέσιμων σε αυτήν ευρωπαϊκών πόρων ([2]). Επιπλέον, διαπιστώθηκαν προβλήματα με υπολλειματικότητα φυτοφαρμάκων ([3]) και υπήρξαν αναφορές σε δυσκολίες προσαρμογής των παραγωγών στις ποιοτικές απαιτήσεις του προγράμματος.

Με απόφαση του έλληνα Υπουργού Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων ([4]) ματαιώθηκε ο διαγωνισμός για την ανάδειξη φορέα εκτέλεσης του σχεδίου προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία με συγχρηματοδότηση από ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους για το σχολικό έτος 2011-2012 που μόλις τελείωσε.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η πορεία υλοποίησης του προγράμματος και τι κονδύλια απορροφήθηκαν στα κράτη μέλη κατά το σχολικό έτος 2011-2012;

2. Έχει ενημερωθεί για τους λόγους ματαίωσης του διαγωνισμού για αγορά και προώθηση της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα ελληνικά σχολεία κατά το σχολικό έτος που μόλις τελείωσε;

3. Τι ποσοστό από τα φρούτα και λαχανικά που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν στα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της Ελλάδας, ήταν βιολογικά;

4. Προτίθεται να θέσει ποσοτικούς στόχους για την προώθηση βιολογικών φρούτων και λαχανικών στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος;

5. Είναι διατεθειμένη να συμφωνήσει σε μείωση του ποσοστού εθνικής συγχρηματοδότησης της δράσης στα σχολεία για κράτη μέλη όπως η Ελλάδα και η Πορτογαλία, που αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρά δημοσιονομικά προβλήματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Κατά το σχολικό έτος 2009/2010, το συνολικό ποσοστό απορρόφησης της ενωσιακής χρηματοδότησης που ήταν διαθέσιμη για το πρόγραμμα προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία έφτασε σε 37 %, αγγίζοντας περίπου πέντε εκατομμύρια παιδιά. Για το σχολικό έτος 2010/2011, με την απορρόφηση πόρων να ανέρχεται σε 90 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, το ποσοστό έφτασε στο 65 %, αγγίζοντας πάνω από οκτώ εκατομμύρια παιδιά. Για το σχολικό έτος 2011/2012, οι πληρωμές που είχαν γίνει στις 31 Μαΐου του 2012 αντιπροσώπευαν το 20 % του διαθέσιμου προϋπολογισμού. Ωστόσο, εάν λάβουμε υπόψη τις σημερινές οικονομικές δυσχέρειες και τις προβλεπόμενες πληρωμές από τα κράτη μέλη έως τις 15 Οκτωβρίου 2012, η τελική εκτέλεση για το σχολικό έτος 2011/2012 μπορεί να φθάσει σε ελαφρά χαμηλότερο επίπεδο από το σχολικό έτος 2010/2011.

2. Λόγω της δύσκολης κατάστασης που επικρατεί, η Ελλάδα έχει ζητήσει με αίτησή της την μεταφορά των κονδυλίων που δεν χρησιμοποιήθηκαν κατά το σχολικό έτος 2011/2012 στο επόμενο σχολικό έτος. Δεδομένου ότι τα ανώτατα δημοσιονομικά όρια για το σχέδιο προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία ελέγχονται ανά σχολικό έτος και όχι ανά οικονομικό έτος, οι κανόνες της ΕΕ δεν επιτρέπουν μεταφορές αυτού του είδους.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-007706&language=EL.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/documents/el_evaluation_report_-_2010-2011_el.pdf
([3]) http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_ell_1_05/06/2011_444788.
([4]) http://static.diavgeia.gov.gr/doc/%CE%924%CE%9B0%CE%92-%CE%9D%CE%91%CE%A7.

3. Στις εκθέσεις παρακολούθησης που υποβλήθηκαν από τα κράτη μέλη στην Επιτροπή δεν περιλαμβάνονται οι ποσότητες βιολογικών προϊόντων που έχουν διανεμηθεί. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία με αυτό το επίπεδο λεπτομέρειας.

4. Η προώθηση των βιολογικών φρούτων και λαχανικών δεν αποτελεί αυτή καθεαυτή σκοπό που επιδιώκεται από το σχέδιο προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία. Ωστόσο, το άρθρο 103ζα του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1234/2007 επιτρέπει στα κράτη μέλη, κατά την εκπόνηση των στρατηγικών τους, να επιλέγουν τα προϊόντα τους βάσει αντικειμενικών κριτηρίων, στα οποία μπορεί να συγκαταλέγονται ο εποχιακός χαρακτήρας ή η διαθεσιμότητα των προϊόντων, ή λόγοι που αφορούν το περιβάλλον ([5]).

5. Οι κανόνες του σχεδίου της ΕΕ για την προώθηση της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία είναι οι ίδιοι για όλα τα κράτη μέλη και το ποσοστό εθνικής συγχρηματοδότησης δεν μπορεί να προσαρμόζεται με βάση την οικονομική κατάσταση. Ωστόσο, το άρθρο 21 των προτάσεων για τη θέσπιση κοινής οργάνωσης των αγορών γεωργικών προϊόντων (Κανονισμός ενιαίας ΚΟΑ) ([6]) με χρονικό ορίζοντα το 2020 προβλέπει την αύξηση του ποσοστού συγχρηματοδότησης από 50/75 % σε 75/90 %.

([5]) ΕΕ L 299 της 16.11.2007.
([6]) COM(2011)626 τελικό/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006639/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Development of 'fruit at school' programme

Development of the EU-funded programme to encourage the consumption of fruit in schools from the school year 2009/2010 could help reduce uncertainty regarding children's nourishment, accustom them to eating more fruit and, at the same time, support agricultural production, particularly in the current acute and multifaceted crisis.

During its initial phase of implementation in the academic year 2009-2010 the programme was not implemented in Greece ([1]), while in the following school year 2010-2011 Greece utilised only 56.6% of available EU funding ([2]). Furthermore, problems arose with pesticide residues ([3]) and difficulties in bringing product quality into line with the programme requirements.

The Greek Ministry for Rural Development and Food ([4]) has decided to discontinue a competition for the designation of a body responsible for implementing the EU-funded programme to encourage the consumption of fruit at school for the academic year 2011-2012 which has just ended.

In view of this:

1. What progress has been made in implementing the programme and what has been the take-up of funding in Member States for the academic year 2011-2012?

2. Has the Commission been informed as to the reasons for discontinuing the competition for the designation of an organisation to purchase and encourage the consumption of fruit in Greek schools for the academic year which has just ended?

3. What percentage of fruit and vegetables consumed in the Member States, including Greece, were organic?

4. Will the quantitative objectives be set for the promotion of organic fruit and vegetables under the programme?

5. Is the Commission prepared to accept a reduction in national co-funding for this initiative in Member States such as Greece and Portugal encountering serious economic difficulties?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2012)

1. In 2009/2010, the overall uptake of EU funding available for the School Fruit Scheme reached 37% with around five million children concerned. For the year 2010/2011, the uptake of EUR 90 million stands at 65% with over eight million children reached. For 2011/2012, payments made at the 31 May 2012 represent 20% of the budget available. However, taking account of the current economic difficulties and of the forecasted payments by Member States up to the 15 October 2012, the final execution 2011/2012 may reach a slightly lower level than in 2010/2011.

2. Because of the prevailing difficult situation, Greece has applied for a transfer of the unused funds 2011/2012 to the following school year. Since the financial ceilings relating to the School Fruit Scheme are controlled by school year and not by budgetary year, EU rules do not allow such a transfer.

3. The monitoring reports submitted by Member States to the Commission do not contain the quantities of organic products distributed. The Commission does not have statistics at this level of detail.

4. The promotion of organic fruit and vegetables is not intended as such in the School Fruit Scheme. However, Article 103ga of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 allows Member States, when drawing up their strategies, to choose their products on the basis of objective criteria which may include seasonality, availability of produce or environmental concerns ([5]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-007706&language=EL.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/documents/el_evaluation_report_-_2010-2011_el.pdf
([3]) http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_ell_1_05/06/2011_444788.
([4]) http://static.diavgeia.gov.gr/doc/%CE%924%CE%9B0%CE%92-%CE%9D%CE%91%CE%A7.
([5]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.

5. The rules of the EU School Fruit Scheme are the same for all Member States and the national co-financing rate cannot be adapted on the basis of the economic situation. However, Article 21 of the CAP 2020 proposals on the single CMO ([6]) foresees an increase in the co-financing rate from 50/75% to 75/90%.

([6]) COM(2011) 626 final/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006640/12
to the Commission
Mairead McGuinness (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Clarification of Directive 2004/18/EC

Can the Commission confirm the rules surrounding Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts? Can it also confirm whether a non-EU multinational can secure the tender for a government procurement contract in a Member State?

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

The rules of Directive 2004/18/EC do not prevent foreign bidders to bid for public contracts in the EU. When evaluating the bids, the contracting authority is obliged to respect the EU's international commitments in the domain of procurement, namely the WTO Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) and the relevant bilateral agreements with a procurement chapter. The bidders originating from countries that are signatories of the said international agreements enjoy access to the EU procurement market for the procurement covered by these agreements.

The above rules apply to all potential bidders, including those who maintain a multinational structure, as referred to in the question of the Honourable Member.

In this respect, one should point out also that directive 2004/17/EC (Utilities Directive) that contains specific provisions for tenders comprising products originating in third countries with which the EU has not concluded an international agreement (Article 58). The directive foresees a possibility to reject a bid composed of more than 50% of foreign goods that are not covered by the EU international commitments. Article 58 also stipulates that in cases of equivalent bids, the bids composed of mostly EU goods (and goods covered by EU international obligations) shall be preferred.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006641/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(3 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Urbanización de la zona de contacto entre Sant Feliú de Llobregat y el Parque de Collserola

El 23 de febrero de 2010, reunido en sesión plenaria, el Ayuntamiento de Sant Feliú de Llobregat (Barcelona) aprobó provisionalmente la Modificación puntual del Plan General Metropolitano en el área de contacto entre el Parque de Collserola y el núcleo de Sant Feliú de Llobregat, así como el convenio urbanístico con los propietarios.

Posteriormente, el 26 de abril de 2012, por medio de la aprobación del Plan de Actuación Municipal, el Ayuntamiento de Sant Feliú de Llobregat ratificó su voluntad de continuar impulsando el citado plan.

Este plan urbanístico supone una agresión al Parque de Collserola, una zona que está considerada un gran pulmón para el área metropolitana de Barcelona e incluida en la Red Natura 2000 como Lugar de Importancia Comunitaria (LIC) ES5110024 de Serra de Collserola.

La urbanización de ese espacio provocará graves impactos ambientales puesto que promueve la construcción de un nuevo acceso para vehículos a través del Parque de Collserola. Además, se prevé la recalificación de zonas verdes y de equipamientos para zonas residenciales en la zona de contacto, incrementando de esta manera la presión urbanística sobre el Parque de Collserola.

¿Cree la Comisión que el plan urbanístico mencionado vulnera la normativa europea de protección de las zonas Red Natura 2000, dado que se encuentra en su área de afectación?

¿Qué actuaciones llevará a cabo la Comisión para evitar que finalmente se produzca este daño ambiental sobre el Parque de Collserola?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de agosto de 2012)

La Comisión no posee información sobre los proyectos mencionados por Su Señoría que podrían afectar negativamente al lugar ES5110024 «Serra de Collserola». El lugar de importancia comunitaria (LIC) ES5110024 «Serra de Collserola» se creó de conformidad con la Directiva 92/43/CE ([1]) de hábitats. La Comisión desea hacer hincapié en que, antes de autorizar cualquier plan o proyecto, las autoridades competentes deben cerciorarse del cumplimiento de los requisitos del artículo 6 (y en particular de sus apartados 3 y 4) de la Directiva de hábitats. Sobre la base de la evaluación prevista, las autoridades competentes decidirán si el plan o proyecto sigue adelante o no y, en caso afirmativo, de acuerdo con qué condiciones y salvaguardas.

Según la información facilitada por Su Señoría, parece que las autoridades regionales competentes todavía no han adoptado una decisión final acerca de la modificación de la planificación urbana de Barcelona. Dado que los trámites siguen al parecer en curso, no hay motivos suficientes para determinar actualmente un incumplimiento del Derecho medioambiental de la UE.

([1]) DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006641/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Urban development of the buffer zone between Sant Feliú de Llobregat and Collserola Park

On 23 February 2010, a plenary meeting of the town council of Sant Feliú de Llobregat (Barcelona) provisionally approved the partial modification of the general metropolitan plan in relation to the buffer zone between Collserola Park and the town of Sant Feliú de Llobregat. The planning agreement with the owners of the land was also modified.

The town council of Sant Feliú de Llobregat subsequently approved the municipal action plan on 26 April 2012, ratifying its decision to go ahead with this project.

This urban development plan will seriously affect Collserola Park, which is considered to be a major green lung for Barcelona's metropolitan area and is listed as a site of Community importance (SCI) under the Natura 2000 network (ES5110024 — Serra de Collserola).

The urban development of this area will have severe environmental consequences, as it will involve building a new access road across Collserola Park, as well as the reclassification of green zones and provisions for residential areas within the buffer zone, all of which will increase urban pressure on Collserola Park.

Does the Commission consider that the abovementioned urban development plan infringes European rules on the protection of Natura 2000 sites, given that it is within an area that directly affects such a site?

What action will the Commission take to prevent this environmental damage from being inflicted on Collserola Park?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The Commission does not possess information on the projects mentioned by the Honourable Member which might negatively affect the site ES5110024 'Serra de Collserola'. The site of Community importance (SCI) ES5110024 'Serra de Collserola' has been established in accordance with the Habitats Directive 92/43/EC ([1]). The Commission would like to stress that before authorising any development plan or project, the competent authorities will need to ensure that the requirements of Article 6 (and in particular paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4) of the Habitats Directive are fulfilled. On the basis of the required assessment, the competent authorities will decide if the plan or project goes ahead and if so, under which conditions and safeguards.

According to the information provided by the Honourable Member it seems that the competent regional authorities have not yet taken a final decision regarding the modification of the urban development planning of Barcelona. Since the procedures still seem to be on going there are insufficient grounds to identify, at present, a breach of the EU environmental legislation.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006642/12
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 juillet 2012)

Objet: Convention de Berne et droit européen

La convention de Berne a été conclue au nom de la Communauté européenne et approuvée par la décision 82/72/CEE du Conseil, le 3 décembre 1981. Cette convention est moins restrictive que la directive 79/409/CEE du Conseil du 2 avril 1979 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages, codifiée par la directive 2009/147/CE du 30 novembre 2009.

La Commission pourrait-elle indiquer, d'un point de vue juridique, quel texte a la prévalence sur l'autre?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(1er août 2012)

La directive 2009/147/CE du Conseil [1] du 30 novembre 2009 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages prévaut sur la convention de Berne. En l'absence de dispositions contraires, les dispositions de la convention de Berne, comme d'autres accords environnementaux multilatéraux, se bornent à fixer les normes minimales que les parties doivent respecter. La législation de l'UE peut imposer des exigences plus strictes. L'article 12 de la convention de Berne le confirme en disposant que «les parties contractantes peuvent adopter pour la conservation de la flore et de la faune sauvages et de leurs habitats naturels des mesures plus rigoureuses que celles prévues dans la présente Convention».

[1] Directive 2009/147/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 30 novembre 2009 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages (JO L 20 du 26.1.2010, p. 7), qui codifie la directive 79/409/CEE du Conseil du 2 avril 1979 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages (JO L 103 du 25.4.1979).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006642/12
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: The Berne Convention and EC law

The Berne Convention was signed on behalf on the European Community and approved by Council Decision 82/72/EEC of 3 December 1981. This convention is less restrictive than Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, which was codified by Directive 2009/147/EC of 30 November 2009.

Could the Commission say which text takes legal precedence?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2012)

Council Directive 2009/147/EC ([1]) of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds takes precedent over the Bern Convention. In the absence of any provision to the contrary the provisions of the Bern Convention, like other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, only set out the minimum standards that Parties must adhere to. EU legislation may impose more stringent requirements. This is confirmed by Article 12 of the Bern Convention which states that: 'The Contracting Parties may adopt stricter measures for the conservation of wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats than those provided under this Convention'.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010, that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 103, 25.4.1979.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006643/12
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 juillet 2012)

Objet: Financement de la coopération Commission européenne — Organisations non gouvernementales

Dans le cadre de la coopération entre la Commission et les organisations non gouvernementales, la recherche documentaire, mettant l'accent sur les principaux services de la Commission impliqués dans le financement des ONG, estime un financement total de près de 1,4 milliard d'euros en 2009. Au vu de l'importance du volume financier, sur quels critères la Commission accorde-t-elle un financement à des ONG indépendantes d'un gouvernement?

Réponse donnée par M. Lewandowski au nom de la Commission
(22 août 2012)

La Commission prie l'Honorable Parlementaire de se référer à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question écrite E-001332/2012 posée par M. Campbell Bannerman ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-001332 %2b0 %2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006643/12
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Financing cooperation between the Commission and NGOs

Within the cooperation between the Commission and NGOs, the cost of documentary research undertaken in particular by the Commission's main services involved in financing NGOs was estimated at nearly EUR 1.4 billion in 2009. Given the size of this amount, will the Commission state what criteria it uses when allocating financing to NGOs?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001332/2012 by Mr Campbell Bannerman ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-001332%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006644/12
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 juillet 2012)

Objet: Gestion des reports de crédits au sein des agences décentralisées de l'UE

Comment la Commission gère-t-elle les reports de crédits des agences décentralisées de l'UE? Les montants reportés sont-ils automatiquement déduits du budget alloué par les institutions européennes l'année suivante? Quel mécanisme existe-il et des lacunes sont-elles observables? Si oui, comment pourrait-on y remédier?

Réponse donnée par M. Lewandowski au nom de la Commission
(20 août 2012)

Les agences décentralisées, en tant qu'entités distinctes de l'UE dotées de la personnalité juridique, sont autorisées à reporter des crédits conformément à l'article 10 du règlement financier-cadre ([1]).

À la fin de l'exercice n, l'ordonnateur compétent de l'agence doit déterminer, en ce qui concerne les crédits non dissociés, si un engagement budgétaire donné est couvert par un engagement juridique (un contrat). Si ce n'est pas le cas, les crédits devront faire partie de l'excédent budgétaire annuel de l'agence au lieu d'être reportés. S'il existe un engagement juridique qui nécessite des paiements au cours de l'année suivante, la partie correspondante de l'engagement budgétaire (et les crédits y afférents) est reportée à l'exercice n + 1.

Les crédits reportés mais non utilisés à la fin de l'exercice n + 1 feront partie de l'excédent de l'agence et devront être recouvrés par la Commission en tant que recettes affectées.

La Commission tient compte de ces reports et excédents lors de l'évaluation des besoins des agences dans le cadre du projet de budget de l'exercice n + 2. Ainsi, la Commission déduit les recettes affectées provenant du recouvrement des excédents de l'agence pour l'exercice budgétaire *n* des nouveaux crédits proposés dans le projet de budget pour l'exercice *n + 2*, afin de réduire le niveau de nouveaux crédits nécessaires à l'équilibre du budget de l'agence. En outre, la Commission diminue la contribution de l'UE aux agences dont les excédents sont relativement importants car ils sont généralement révélateurs d'une surbudgétisation.

([1]) Règlement (CE, Euratom) n° 2343/2002 de la Commission du 23.12.2002, tel que modifié en dernier lieu par le règlement (CE, Euratom) n° 652/2008 de la Commission du 9.7.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006644/12
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Arrangements for carrying over appropriations in EU decentralised agencies

How does the Commission deal with carry-overs of appropriations for the EU decentralised agencies? Are amounts carried over automatically deducted from the budgets allocated for the following year? What is the procedure, and have any shortcoming been identified? If so, how might they be addressed?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2012)

Decentralised agencies, as separate EU bodies with legal personality, are allowed to carry over appropriations in accordance with Article 10 of the framework Financial Regulation ([1]).

At the end of the year n, the relevant Authorising Officer in the agency should assess for non-differentiated appropriations whether a given budgetary commitment is covered by a legal commitment (a contract). If it is not, the appropriations should become part of the annual surplus of the agency, instead of being carried over. If a legal commitment exists and requires payments in the following year, the corresponding part of the budgetary commitment (and the related appropriations) is carried over to year n+1.

Appropriations which were carried over but remain unused at the end of year n+1 become part of the agency surplus, to be recovered by the Commission as assigned revenues.

The Commission takes account of these carry-overs and surpluses when assessing the needs of agencies for the Draft Budget of year n+2. The Commission thus deducts the assigned revenues stemming from the recovery of agency surpluses for the financial year *n* from the fresh appropriations proposed in the Draft Budget for year *n+2*, so as to reduce the level of fresh appropriations required to balance the agency's budget. Furthermore, the Commission reduces the EU contribution to agencies with relatively large surpluses as these usually are an indication of over-budgeting.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2343/2002 of 23.12.2002, as last amended by Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 652/2008 of 9.7.2008.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006645/12
au Conseil
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 juillet 2012)

Objet: La culture du maïs dans l'Union européenne

Le Conseil pourrait-il indiquer quelle a été la progression de la part des surfaces agricoles occupées par la culture du maïs depuis 20 ans dans les États membres de l'UE?

Réponse
(22 octobre 2012)

Le Conseil informe l'Honorable Parlementaire que seule la Commission dispose de toutes les informations nécessaires pour répondre à sa question. L'Honorable Parlementaire est invitée à se reporter à la réponse déjà apportée par la Commission à la question écrite n° E-006646/2012 qui est identique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006645/12
to the Council
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Maize cultivation in the European Union

Can the Council say by what extent the proportion of agricultural land under maize has increased in Member States over the last 20 years?

Reply
(22 October 2012)

The Council informs the Honourable Member that only the Commission disposes of all necessary information to answer her question. The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answer already given by the Commission to the identical Written Question No E-006646/2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006646/12
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 juillet 2012)

Objet: La culture du maïs dans l'Union européenne

La Commission pourrait-elle indiquer quelle a été la progression de la part des surfaces agricoles occupées par la culture du maïs depuis 20 ans dans les États membres de l'UE?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(3 août 2012)

Le tableau figurant à l'annexe, qui a été envoyé directement à l'Honorable Parlementaire et au secrétariat du Parlement, montre l'évolution de la part des surfaces agricoles occupées par la culture du maïs depuis 20 ans.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006646/12
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Maize cultivation in the European Union

Can the Commission say by what extent the proportion of agricultural land under maize has increased in Member States over the last 20 years?

Answer given by M. Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 August 2012)

The table in the annex, sent directly to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat of Parliament, shows the evolution of the proportion of agricultural land under maize over the 20 last years.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006647/12
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(3 juillet 2012)

Objet: Risques des boissons énergisantes et pouvoir d'appréciation des États membres

Alors que la consommation de boissons énergisantes s'est fortement développée ces dernières années, notamment chez les jeunes, des incertitudes continuent de peser sur les risques de ces produits sur la santé de nos concitoyens.

En France, l'Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire (Anses) a relevé en mai 2012 deux nouveaux cas de décès potentiellement liés à la consommation de ces boissons. Ses précédentes études avaient déjà conclu que «certains modes de consommation courants de ces boissons (activité sportive, consommation en mélange avec de l'alcool) pourraient être associés à des risques cardio-vasculaires lors d'exercices physiques intenses et de perception amoindrie des effets liés à l'alcool».

Les multiples questions écrites sur ce sujet démontrent par ailleurs que les boissons énergisantes sont devenues un véritable enjeu de santé publique, qui mérite toute l'attention des institutions européennes comme nationales. Pourtant, la règlementation européenne a parfois pu jouer en défaveur de la prudence qui devrait être de mise sur cette question.

Longtemps opposée à la commercialisation d'une marque de boisson énergétique, compte tenu des réticences de l'Anses, la France avait ainsi dû accorder son autorisation en 2008, sous la pression de la marque qui invoquait les dispositions communautaires. L'arrêt de la CJUE du 5 février 2004 dans l'affaire C-24/00 rappelle en effet que toute entrave établie à la libre circulation des marchandises au sein de l'Union est interdite, tant que la réalité des risques pour la santé publique n'est pas prouvée.

1. Compte tenu de la persistance des interrogations et des préoccupations exprimées tant par les autorités nationales que par les citoyens et le Parlement européen, quelles initiatives la Commission compte-t-elle prendre à l'avenir au niveau de la production et de la commercialisation de ces boissons?

2. La Commission ne pourrait-elle pas envisager de laisser à la discrétion des États membres la possibilité d'interdire la commercialisation de produits alimentaires dont la nocivité pour la santé publique, bien qu'elle n'ait pas été formellement démontrée, fait régulièrement débat?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(22 août 2012)

En réponse à la première question, la Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question écrite E-005939/2012 de M. Tarabella ([1]).

Quant à la seconde question, conformément aux articles 34 et 36 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (TFUE), les États membres ne peuvent interdire la mise sur le marché d'un produit qui est commercialisé légalement dans un autre État membre que si cette interdiction est justifiée par des raisons de protection de la santé et de la vie des personnes.

En outre, l'article 53 du règlement (CE) nº 178/2002 ([2]) prévoit une procédure par laquelle certaines mesures peuvent être prises à l'échelle de l'Union pour interdire ou restreindre la mise sur le marché ou l'utilisation d'une denrée alimentaire lorsqu'il est évident que celle-ci est susceptible de constituer un risque sérieux pour la santé humaine et que des mesures nationales ne suffiraient pas pour maîtriser ce risque.

La Commission ne prévoit pas, à l'heure actuelle, de campagnes d'information ni d'autres actions concernant les boissons énergisantes, mais rien n'empêche les États membres de mener des campagnes auprès des citoyens pour les sensibiliser à une consommation avisée de ce type de produits.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 28 janvier 2002 établissant les principes généraux et les prescriptions générales de la législation alimentaire, instituant l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments et fixant des procédures relatives à la sécurité des denrées alimentaires (JO L 31 du 1.2.2002, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006647/12
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Dangers of energy drinks and Member States' powers of discretion

While consumption of energy drinks has increased markedly in recent years, particularly among young people, concerns remain as to the risks that these products pose to public health in Europe.

In May 2012, the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES) identified two new cases in which the consumption of such drinks could have been a contributory factor in deaths. Previous studies had already caused it to conclude that certain common consumption patterns (sporting activities, mixing with alcohol) could be linked to increased cardiovascular risk during intense bouts of physical exercise and to a lowered awareness of alcoholic intoxication.

The many written questions tabled on this subject demonstrate that energy drinks have become an important public health issue, and one which deserves the full attention of the European and national institutions. It should be pointed out in this connection that European rules have in some cases prevented the caution that is necessary in this area from being exercised. France, which long opposed the sale of a particular brand of energy drink in view of the misgivings expressed by the ANSES, was forced to authorise the marketing of that product in 2008 under pressure from the brand, which had invoked the provisions of EC law, basing its argument on the ECJ judgment of 5 February 2004 in Case C-24/00, which confirmed that measures that hinder the free movement of goods within the Union are prohibited unless it has been proven that such goods pose a real risk to public health.

1. In view of the questions and concerns that continue to be raised by national authorities, members of the public and the European Parliament, what initiatives is the Commission planning to take in the future with regard to the production and sale of energy drinks?

2. Could the Commission not consider leaving it to the Member States to decide on whetherto ban the sale of food products when their harmfulness to public health, although notformally proven, is a matter of much debate?

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

In reply to the first question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-005939/2012 by Mr Tarabella ([1]).

With regard to the second question, according to Articles 34 and 36 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), a Member State may prohibit the marketing of a product that is lawfully marketed in another Member State only if this prohibition is justified on grounds of the protection of health and life of humans.

Furthermore, Article 53 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([2]) provides for a procedure whereby certain measures may be taken at Union level to prohibit or restrict the marketing or use of a food where it is evident that is likely to constitute a serious risk to human health and if national measures would not be sufficient to control such a risk.

Although the Commission does not at present envisage information activities or other action regarding energy drinks, Member States may carry out activities to inform citizens about the appropriate use of such products.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006648/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Kenya, bombe contro i cristiani

Attacchi simultanei a Garissa, nel nord-est. Nel mirino una cattedrale cattolica e la chiesa cristiana indipendente (Africa Inland Indipendent Church). Sono state 17 le vittime provocate da questi due attacchi simultanei e almeno 40 i feriti. Gli attacchi sono avvenuti simultaneamente mentre i fedeli erano riuniti per la celebrazione. L'attacco più grave è stato quello alla chiesa African Inland, contro cui i militanti hanno lanciato due granate durante la funzione domenicale e di cui soltanto una è esplosa. Mentre i fedeli in preda al panico si ammassavano all'uscita e tentavano di scappare, i militanti all'esterno hanno aperto il fuoco, causando la maggior parte delle vittime. Nessun gruppo ha finora rivendicato la responsabilità dell'attentato, ma le autorità puntano ancora una volta il dito contro i miliziani somali di Al Shabaab.

Si interroga pertanto il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per sapere se:

1. È al corrente di questa situazione i cui sviluppi si stanno rivelando sempre più drammatici?

2. Quali misure intende adottare al fine di evitare che altri episodi come questo possano nuovamente accadere?

3. Pensa che sia possibile moderare la rivalità religiosa esistente nei paesi Africani?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton è a conoscenza dell'attentato recentemente avvenuto a Garissa e segue da vicino l'evolversi della situazione per quanto concerne i potenziali attacchi terroristici in Kenya.

Dal momento dell'incursione keniota in territorio somalo dell'ottobre 2011 è cresciuto il rischio di rappresaglie da parte di gruppi militanti. È probabile che almeno alcuni di questi attacchi siano commessi dai sostenitori di al-Shabab o da gruppi estremisti analoghi, ma non è dimostrato che sia così per tutti gli attacchi.

Nell'ambito del suo dialogo con le autorità keniote, l'UE solleva periodicamente la questione della sicurezza di tutti i kenioti e di tutti gli stranieri che si trovano nel paese. Per promuovere attivamente la pace e l'armonia in Kenya, l'UE finanzia inoltre, attraverso lo Strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR), progetti volti a ridurre le tensioni in noti focolai di violenza.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente attribuisce la massima importanza alla libertà di religione o di credo e si adopera con impegno per assicurare la coesistenza pacifica di tutte le comunità in Africa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006648/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Bomb attacks against Christian worshippers in Kenya

Seventeen people were killed and at least 40 wounded in simultaneous attacks on the congregations of the Catholic Church and Africa Inland Independent Church of Garissa in north-east Kenya. The most serious attack was sustained by the African Inland Church with grenades being thrown inside during the Sunday service, one of which failed to go off. As the panicked congregation rushed to the exit seeking escape, gunmen opened fire on them from outside, claiming the largest number of victims. No group has yet claimed responsibility for these latest attacks but the authorities are once more pointing the finger of blame at the Al Shabab Somali militia.

In view of this:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this ever-worsening situation?

2. What measures will she adopt in order to prevent further such occurrences?

3. Does she consider it possible to alleviate the existing enmity between religious groups in Africa?

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

The HR/VP Ashton is fully aware of the recent incident in Garissa and follows closely the evolving situation of potential terrorist attacks in Kenya.

Since Kenya's incursion into Somali terrority in October 2011 there is a risk of retaliatory action by militant groups. It is likely that at least some of these attacks are perpetrated by affiliates of al-Shabab or similar extremist groups, but this is not proven in the case of all such attacks.

The EU regularly raises security concerns in its dialogue with Kenyan authorities to ensure the safety of all Kenyans and foreigners staying in the country. To actively foster a peaceful and harmonious society in Kenya, the EU also funds, through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), projects aimed at defusing tensions in known hotspots of violence.

The HR/VP attaches utmost importance to freedom of religion or belief and is fully committed to ensuring peaceful co-existence of all communities in Africa.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006649/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: In calo gli aiuti dell'Europa all'Africa e ai paesi poveri

Per la prima volta in dieci anni il flusso di aiuti dall'Europa ai paesi poveri è in calo. È colpa della crisi, come emerge dall'ultimo rapporto della campagna internazionale dell'organizzazione One, che esorta i governi europei a tenere fede alle promesse fatte, in particolare verso l'Africa. Nell'ultimo anno gli aiuti totali dell'Europa a 27 sono calati dell'1,5 % passando a 50,86 miliardi di EUR. I due paesi in cui i tagli sono risultati più pesanti sono stati Spagna e Grecia. Tra il 2010 e il 2011, Madrid, che è il sesto più grande donatore europeo, ha tagliato gli aiuti del 30 %, mentre Atene è andata ancora più in profondità con un meno 40 %. Tra chi denuncia gli effetti della crisi economica c'è una fetta della popolazione più povera. A risentire dei tagli sarà soprattutto l'Africa, che però deve contare prima di tutto sulle proprie forze, sulla raccolta delle tasse e su una maggiore efficienza del governo nel combattere l'evasione e la corruzione e per cercare di attrarre investimenti.

Tuttavia, fino a quando queste condizioni a lungo termine non saranno raggiunte, gli aiuti internazionali continueranno ad avere un ruolo. L'obiettivo dei governi europei era quello di stanziare entro il 2015 lo 0,7 % del PIL in aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo, ma i governi europei risultano lontani da questo obiettivo. Nell'Unione europea, infatti, sono quattro i paesi che hanno mantenuto fede alla promessa di raggiungere l'obiettivo dello 0,7 % del PIL, vale a dire Lussemburgo, Danimarca, Svezia e Paesi Bassi.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere alle seguenti domande:

1. È al corrente di questa situazione i cui sviluppi si stanno rivelando sempre più drammatici?

2. Quali misure intende adottare al fine di rispettare l'obiettivo iniziale prefissato per i governi europei?

3. Pensa che sia possibile confermare i 51 miliardi di EUR previsti per i prossimi sette anni per combattere la povertà, nonostante la crisi?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(13 agosto 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta fornita alla precedente interrogazione scritta E-003807/2012 ([1]), che affronta la stessa questione. Inoltre, segnala che gli Stati membri hanno confermato l'impegno a raggiungere gli obiettivi in materia di aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo (APS) al Consiglio degli Affari esteri del maggio 2012 e al Consiglio europeo del giugno 2012. La Commissione desidera inoltre attirare l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sulla relazione del 2012 sulla responsabilità dell'UE ([2]), adottata dalla Commissione il 9 luglio 2012, che presenta nei dettagli gli sforzi compiuti dall'UE e dagli Stati membri a favore dei vari aspetti dei finanziamenti per lo sviluppo, e sulla comunicazione «Potenziare l'impatto della politica di sviluppo dell'UE: un programma di cambiamento» ([3]) ([4]), che definisce un approccio più strategico ed efficace per ridurre la povertà concentrando gli aiuti dell'UE sui paesi più poveri e sugli Stati più fragili e bisognosi.

1 & 2. La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione riguardante i livelli di aiuti dell'UE e invita puntualmente gli Stati membri a rispettare gli obiettivi concordati in materia di APS, come previsto dagli impegni collettivi e individuali dell'UE.

3. La Commissione conferma la proposta per il prossimo quadro finanziario pluriennale e invita l'autorità di bilancio ad approvarlo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=all#sidesForm. .
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/accountability_report_2012_en.htm .
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0637:FIN:EN:PDF, .
([4]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006649/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Drop in EU aid to Africa and poor countries

For the first time in 10 years aid flowing from the European Union to poor countries is falling. This is the fault of the crisis, according to the latest report from the campaigning organisation One International, which is urging EU governments to hold firm to promises they have made, especially in regard to Africa. Total aid from the EU-27 fell last year by 1.5% to EUR 50.86 billion. The two countries that cut aid the most were Spain and Greece. Between 2010 and 2011 Spain, the sixth largest EU donor, cut aid by 30% while the Greek Government went even further, cutting aid by 40%. The people complaining about the effects of the economic crisis include a section of the very poor. Africa in particular is suffering from the cuts; nevertheless Africa must first of all look to its own strengths: governments should collect taxes and be more effective in fighting evasion and corruption and in attracting investment.

However international aid will continue to play a role until these conditions are reached in the long term. EU governments set themselves the goal of 0.7% of GDP in public aid for development until 2015, but they are far from achieving this. In the European Union only four countries — Luxembourg, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands — have held firm to the promised goal of 0.7% of GDP.

1. Is the Commission aware of the increasing seriousness of developments in this situation?

2. What measures will the Commission take to ensure that the goal initially set by EU governments is met?

3. Does the Commission believe that the planned sum of EUR 51 billion for the fight against poverty during the next seven years can be confirmed, notwithstanding the crisis?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

The Commission kindly refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Written Questions E-003807/2012 ([1]), which adresses the same issues. Furthermore, the Commission points out that the Member States have confirmed their commitment to reach the Official Development Assistance (ODA) targets at the Foreign Affairs Council of May 2012 and the European Council of June 2012. Also, the Commission would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the EU Accountability Report 2012 ([2]) adopted by the Commission on 9 July 2012, which presents a detailed overview of the efforts of the EU and its Member States to support the various aspects of financing for development and to the EU policy on 'Increasing the impact of EU development policy: An Agenda for Change' ([3]) ([4]) which set out a more strategic and effective approach to poverty reduction by focusing EU aid on the poorest countries and fragile states which most need it.

1 and 2. The Commission is aware of the situation with regard to the EU aid levels and continues to call on Member States to deliver on the agreed ODA targets, in line with the EU's collective and individual commitments.

3. The Commission stands by its proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework and calls on the Budgetary Authority to approve it.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=all#sidesForm .
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/accountability_report_2012_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0637:FIN:EN:PDF.
([4]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006650/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Electrical and electronic equipment and designation as waste

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive (Directive 2002/96/EC seeks to prevent WEEE and encourage the reuse, recycling and recovery of other forms of waste to reduce its disposal. It is noted that waste is defined under the Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2008/98/EC) as any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard.

When customers return electrical and electronic equipment to retailers and distributors, these consumers are discarding this equipment.

1. What guidance does the Commission provide on when such items should be considered waste?

2. Is the Commission aware of the UK Government's Environment Agency guidance on when to designate such returns as waste?

3. Is the Commission satisfied that UK guidance on this is clear and unambiguous and in line with EU rules?

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

The Commission refers the honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006651/2012, as submitted by the honourable Member on the same day as this Written Question E-006650/2012.

The Commission has recently issued a (non legally binding) guidance document ([1]) on the interpretation of key requirements of key provisions of Directive 2008/98/EC ([2]) on waste, such as the definition of waste. Member States may adopt national guidance on the directive. The Commission has so far not been aware of specific UK guidance on this issue.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/pdf/guidance_doc.pdf
([2]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006651/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Inspection of electrical and electronic equipment

The Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2008/98/EC) defines waste as any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard (under Article 3(1)). Nonetheless, Article 6 of the directive recognises that certain waste can cease to be designated as waste when it has undergone recovery such as recycling, including recovery as set out under Directive 2002/96/EC (the WEEE Directive).

In the UK, in the court case *Environment Agency v Thorn International UK Ltd [2008]* which involved electrical and electronic equipment, the court rejected the approach that waste remains waste until it has undergone a process of repair and refurbishment. The court's ruling suggests that items can have their designation of waste altered following a simple inspection of the goods which establishes that the goods are either functioning correctly or capable of repair (and thus onward resale).

1. Is the Commission aware of the judgment in the case involving Thorn International?

2. Does the Commission agree with this approach to the redesignation of electrical waste?

3. What guidance does the Commission provide on the necessary approach to inspecting waste, or possible waste, so that it can be correctly designated? Is there any guidance on whether simple inspection is sufficient?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the specific court case mentioned by the honourable MEP. EU Directives, including Directives 2008/98/EC ([1]) on waste and repealing certain Directives and 2002/96/EC ([2]) on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), are implemented by the Member States through national legislation. The Commission is not informed by the Member States on each individual court case on that legislation.

The Commission can comment on the further questions posed by the honourable MEP only in general terms and based on EU legislation.

Reuse of waste electrical and electronic equipment after becoming waste is part of the objectives of Directive 2002/96/EC. The directive does not lay down specific inspection requirements regarding such reuse, and it is up to the Member States to provide such guidance on their national legislation, as appropriate.

Directive 2008/98/EC incorporates the concept of end-of-waste (EoW) by setting out conditions whereby substances or objects which meet the waste definition can achieve, after undergoing a recovery operation (including recycling), a non-waste status and thus fall outside the scope of waste legislation. Recital 22 of that directive states that a recovery operation for the purpose of reaching EoW status may be as simple as just checking the waste to verify that it fulfils the EoW criteria. It should be noted however that EoW criteria for WEEE have not been set at EU level, thus leaving it to the discretion of Member States to decide on and apply such criteria at national level, subject to Article 6.4 of Directive 2008/98/EC.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 37, 13.2.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006654/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition

On the eve of the 2012 G8 Summit at Camp David (USA), President Obama launched the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, which aims to boost productivity, domestic and international private sector investments and innovation in Africa with the admirable aim of bringing 50 million people out of poverty in the next 10 years.

The initiative appears to be focused on mobilising private capital, including a EUR 2.4 billion reform of local and multinational companies, with the scheme initially being launched in just three African countries: Tanzania, Ethiopia and Ghana.

I understand that the Commission has welcomed this initiative. Can it therefore clarify the following points:

1. What financial and other technical support, if any, has it provided up to now for the initiative? What support is it planning to provide in the future?

2. What oversight mechanisms will be in place for expenditure on this new private-sector-led initiative?

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

Food security was the focus of the Development segment at the G8 summit in Camp David. The G8 adopted a 'New Alliance for food security and nutrition' and agreed on Country Cooperation Frameworks for Tanzania, Ghana and Ethiopia. The Country Cooperation Frameworks outline the commitments that African partner countries will take at policy level to stimulate investment in agriculture by the private sector and include a commitment by G8 members to align funding with country investment plans.

The EU has so far committed USD 125 million in support of the New Alliance Enabling actions from the current financial perspectives. These funds will be used to support implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure and the principles on Responsible Agricultural Investment, establishment of a Secretariat for the SUN (Scaling up Nutrition) movement and to contribute to a range of initiatives in the area of technology, innovation and risk management. No commitments have yet been taken for the period beyond 2013.

Country Cooperation Frameworks are to be agreed for a further three countries — Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast and Mozambique during the UN General Assembly in September of this year. In addition to the support for the New Alliance Enabling actions, EU support to the Country Cooperation Frameworks for these first 6 countries, amounts to over USD 500 million since June 2012. It is also proposed that Country Cooperation Frameworks be agreed for a 3^{d} set of counties by the end of the year. The G8 will use existing coordination structures and avoid as much as possible duplication of efforts. Recently the US proposed setting up the 'Grow Africa Leadership Council' which should cover both Grow Africa and the New Alliance, ensuring oversight and mutual accountability.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006655/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: L'Aquila obligations on soaring food prices

At the 2009 G8 conference in L'Aquila, Italy, the leaders of the Group of Eight industrialised nations agreed to mobilise EUR 14.3 billion over three years in response to soaring food prices. I understand that only around half of the funding promised by the G8 members has so far been delivered. The Camp David Declaration at this year's G8 summit reaffirms the commitment of the leaders to fulfil their outstanding L'Aquila financial pledges.

Can the Commission confirm whether it has yet met its obligations under the L'Aquila G8 accord? What steps is it taking to encourage Member State Governments to meet their outstanding commitments, if applicable?

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

The Commission confirms it has fulfilled its pledge made, on behalf of the EU, in 2009 in L'Aquila. By early 2012, the Commission committed nearly USD 4 billion, exceeding its pledge of USD 3.8 billion almost one year ahead of schedule.

The Honourable Member is invited to consult this year's Camp David Accountability Report ([1]) which details progress of all G8 members. As 2012 draws the close for fulfilling the L'Aquila pledge, this year's report confirmed that all G8 members have either fully committed their financial pledges or are on track to do so by the end of 2012. The Commission has played an active role in this process and works together with all G8 members, including those belonging to the EU.

Moreover, the Camp David Declaration indeed committed members to fulfil outstanding pledges as well as to maintaining strong support to address current and future global food security challenges, and agree to take new steps to accelerate progress towards food security and nutrition. For its part, the Commission has consistently played a major role in leading support for global food security, and will continue to do so. Sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security are at the top of the Commission's long-term development cooperation agenda ([2]) and are an important aspect of its dialogue with partner governments. They are expected to feature prominently in the next programming phase which will cover development assistance during 2014-2020.

([1]) http://www.g20civil.com/upload/iblock/ce6/g8report.pdf
([2]) Increasing the impact of EU development policy: an agenda for change, COM(2011) 637 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006656/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Gibraltar and the Firearms Directive (Directive 91/477/EEC)

I am grateful for the Commission's reply to my question concerning Gibraltar and Directive 91/477/EEC and the issue of EU firearms permits (Question E-004205/2012). The Commission states that the Firearms Directive does not apply to Gibraltar. The reply notes Case C-30/01, Commission v United Kingdom, which established that EU rules on the free movement of goods do not apply to Gibraltar.

Whereas the main elements of the Firearms Directive concern the free movement of goods, other elements of the directive concern the free movement of persons, not least with regard to an authorisation for hunters and shooters to be able to cross EU borders. The Commission notes that the directive establishes the 'European firearms pass' which under certain conditions allows its holder, in possession of a firearm, to move more easily between Member States for activities such as hunting or competitive shooting (under Article 12 (2)).

Importantly, however, the seventh recital of the directive notes the implications that this legislation has for the free movement of persons, and not just the free movement of goods: 'Whereas, however, more flexible rules should be adopted in respect of hunting and target shooting in order to avoid impeding the free movement of persons more than is necessary'.

— A person moving between EU borders with a firearm in order to be able to engage in hunting or competitive shooting activities is not in a fundamentally different position to a tourist moving between EU borders with a camera in order to take photographs during a holiday. Does the Commission not agree that in neither case could the carrying of a firearm or a camera be considered a free movement of goods issue?

— In light of this, I would be most grateful if you could confirm whether the provisions of Directive 91/477/EEC that establish the 'European firearms pass', which under certain conditions allows its holder, in possession of a firearm, to move more easily between Member States for activities such as hunting or competitive shooting, is a free movement of persons issue and that these provisions, therefore, are applicable to Gibraltar?

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

Directive 91/477/EEC of 18 June 1991 establishes the key principle that any transfer of firearms falling within the scope of the directive is subject to authorisation from both the authorities of the Member State of departure and those of the Member State of arrival.

The European firearms pass is a document established by that directive, which is based exclusively on Article 95 of the EC Treaty (replaced by Article 114 TFEU) on the completion of the internal market, and does not apply to Gibraltar.

The movement of goods within the internal market can indeed be subject to different rules depending on, for example, their degree of dangerousness, which is why a specific instrument for firearms was drawn up, in this case Directive 91/477.

The purpose of the European firearms pass, which only Member States have the competence to issue, is not to ensure the free movement of people as such, but simply to facilitate transfers of firearms by the owner from one Member State to another.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006657/12
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: The future of plastic bags in Europe

A study carried out by the BIO Intelligence Service (BIOIS), published on 12 September 2011, recognised that only plastic carrier bags thinner than 15 microns constitute a significant risk to the environment, and the marine environment in particular.

Several independent studies have shown that thick plastic carrier bags, especially those made from recycled plastic materials, are the most appropriate bags in terms of carbon footprint, energy consumption, resource efficacy and sustainability.

In its answer to parliamentary Question E-003842/2012 of 30 May 2012, the Commission stated that it intends to reduce the environmental impact of plastic carrier bags.

1. Given the environmental advantages of plastic carrier bags made from recycled materials, does the Commission currently have any strategies to encourage the use of thicker, recycled plastic bags over thinner, environmentally damaging bags?

2. Directive 2008/98/EC obliges Member States to introduce recycling facilities whilst raising incineration and recycling rates. But given that it has fallen short of fulfilling its objectives, how does the Commission plan to promote recycling measures, facilities and management-systems across Europe in future?

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

A decision on a possible Commission initiative on plastic carrier bags and its possible scope will be taken upon completion of an ongoing assessment of various options to reduce their environmental impacts. The assessment will take due account of the key principles and provisions of EU waste legislation including Article 4 of Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) (Waste Framework Directive) which requires Member States, in their legislation on waste prevention and waste management, to apply the following waste hierarchy: (a) prevention; (b) preparing for re-use; (c) recycling; (d) other recovery, e.g. energy recovery; and (e) disposal. This waste hierarchy is also reflected in Directive 94/62/EC ([2]) on Packaging and Packaging Waste.

The option of favouring the use of thicker plastic carrier bags (including those made from recycled materials) over thinner 'single use' bags will be assessed in terms of environmental (and economic and social) impacts and consistency with the waste hierarchy.

In line with its institutional role the Commission is taking a range of measures to ensure effective implementation of EU waste legislation, bearing in mind the large differences in performance of Member States. While the most advanced Member States have already met (and sometimes exceeded) the EU's legally binding waste management targets (e.g. in terms of recycling and diversion of waste from landfills), others are still landfilling the bulk of their waste. To address this 'performance gap' the Commission will organise seminars in the autumn of 2012 to discuss with the less advanced Member states how to move forward and ensure compliance with EU legislation ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.
([3]) See http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/888&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN for more information.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006658/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Processi ingiusti e pena di morte in Iran

Il 28 giugno 2012 il Servizio informazioni dell'ONU (UN News Centre) ha pubblicato un articolo in cui tre esperti dei diritti umani condannano l'esecuzione di tre uomini, avvenuta intorno al 19 giugno ad Ahwaz, in Iran. Gli uomini, due dei quali fratelli, erano stati condannati per «inimicizia contro Dio» e «corruzione nel mondo» e sono stati di conseguenza giustiziati. Ai sensi del diritto internazionale, la pena di morte deve essere utilizzata solo per i crimini più gravi: ogni altro uso o abuso di questa forma di punizione equivale ad esecuzione arbitraria.

Inoltre, nonostante il divieto di esecuzioni pubbliche, emanato da un giudice supremo iraniano nel 2008, solo quest'anno sono stati registrati 25 casi, pari a una percentuale significativa delle esecuzioni effettuate finora in Iran, nel 2012 (almeno 140). La maggior parte dei casi che ha portato alla pena di morte riguarda reati legati alla droga, che gli esperti non ritengono costituiscano un reato abbastanza grave per soddisfare i requisiti internazionali per la pena capitale. Oltre ad esprimere preoccupazione per la frequenza apparentemente inutile con cui viene utilizzata la pena di morte in Iran, gli esperti sostengono anche di aver motivo per sospettare che i processi che portano a tali esecuzioni manchino di un'adeguata trasparenza, il che solleva gravi preoccupazioni per quanto riguarda l'equità dei processi stessi. Gli esperti dell'ONU dei diritti umani hanno chiesto al governo iraniano di porre immediatamente fine all'uso della pena di morte.

Alla luce di quanto sopra può il VP/HR far sapere:

1. Se è a conoscenza del ricorso frequente alla pena di morte in Iran, spesso in circostanze che lasciano intendere che sia il risultato di un processo ingiusto?

2. Reputa che tali sentenze violino le norme internazionali in materia di processi equi e diritti umani?

3. Quale posizione sarà adottata nei confronti dell'Iran, alla luce della denuncia delle Nazioni Unite di tale sistema di giudizio e di condanna?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza del crescente numero di esecuzioni capitali in Iran ed è profondamente preoccupata. Secondo fonti attendibili di quest'anno, l'Iran è il primo paese al mondo per numero di condanne a morte pro capite. L'UE ha espresso in numerose occasioni la propria preoccupazione ed ha anche esortato l'Iran a non applicare la pena di morte quando viola direttamente le norme minime internazionali, vale a dire per reati non gravi, come quelli legati alla droga o per «moharebeh» (inimicizia contro Dio). Il più delle volte le condanne a morte sono il risultato di un processo ingiusto, e sono spesso utilizzate per eliminare oppositori politici, difensori dei diritti umani, avvocati, blogger, artisti, donne nonché membri delle sempre vulnerabili minoranze etniche e religiose. Così è stato nel caso dei tre arabi di Ahwaz recentemente giustiziati. La loro esecuzione è stata condannata esplicitamente e pubblicamente il 21 giugno 2012 da una dichiarazione del portavoce dell'AR/VP.

L'UE continuerà a monitorare la situazione dei diritti umani in Iran e utilizzerà tutti i mezzi disponibili per invitare il paese a rispettare i propri obblighi internazionali, sia bilateralmente che nei consessi multilaterali. Ha inoltre applicato 78 sanzioni mirate nei confronti di cittadini iraniani responsabili di massicce violazioni dei diritti umani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006658/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Unfair trials and death penalties in Iran

On 28 June 2012, the United Nations News Centre published an article in which three UN human rights experts condemned the execution of three men on or around 19 June in Ahwaz, Iran. The men, two of them brothers, had been convicted of 'enmity against God' and 'corruption on earth' and were accordingly sentenced to death. According to international law the death penalty is to be used only for the most serious crimes: any other use or abuse of that form of punishment is tantamount to arbitrary execution.

Furthermore, despite the banning of public executions by an Iranian Chief Justice in 2008, 25 instances have been recorded this year alone, amounting to a significant proportion of the executions carried out in Iran thus far in 2012 (at least 140). Most of the cases which resulted in the death penalty concern drug-related offences, which the experts do not think constitute a crime serious enough in nature to meet the international requisites for capital punishment. In addition to expressing concern over the seemingly unnecessary frequency with which the death penalty is used in Iran, the experts also say they have reason to suspect that the trials leading to such executions lack adequate transparency, raising major concerns regarding due process and the fairness of such trials. UN human rights experts have called on Iran's government to immediately halt the use of the death penalty.

The following questions are submitted for the consideration of the Vice-President/High Representative:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of Iran's frequent use of the death penalty, often in circumstances suggesting it is the outcome of an unfair trial?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider those sentences to be in violation of the international standards concerning fair trials and human rights?

3. What position will be adopted toward Iran in the light of the UN's denunciation of this system of trial and punishment?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is well aware and deeply concerned by the increasing number of executions in Iran, which — according to reliable sources during the course of 2012 — make it the world's leading country imposing the death penalty per inhabitant. The EU has expressed, on numerous occasions, its concern about these figures and has also urged Iran to refrain from imposing the death penalty in direct violation of international minimum standards, i.e. for non-serious crimes such as drug offences or 'moharebeh' (enmity against God). Death sentences are, most of the times, a result of unfair trial, whereas they are often used in order to suppress political opponents, Human Rights defenders, lawyers, bloggers, artists, women as well as members of the ever vulnerable ethnic and religious minorities. Such was the case of the three Ahwazi Arabs executed recently in the country. Their execution was explicitly and publicly condemned through an HR/VP Spokesperson's Statement issued on 21 June 2012.

The EU will continue to monitor the situation of Human Rights in Iran and use all its tools available to call on the country to abide by its international obligations, both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. The EU has also applied 78 targeted sanctions on Iranian individuals responsible for massive human rights violations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006659/12
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Ritardi dei pagamenti e recepimento della direttiva 2011/7/UE

Premesso che:

— la direttiva 2011/7/UE del 16 febbraio 2011 rafforza le tutele delle imprese contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali. Tra le novità, si segnala l'obbligo da parte delle pubbliche amministrazioni all'interno dell'UE di provvedere ai pagamenti nei confronti delle imprese entro un termine massimo uniforme di 60 giorni;

— i ritardi dei pagamenti della pubblica amministrazione (PA) nei confronti delle aziende creditrici, in particolare nella regione Campania, hanno raggiunto livelli di cronicità insostenibile, che arrivano, in alcune fattispecie, anche a raggiungere anni di attesa;

— nelle more del recepimento, gli Stati membri devono mettere in campo azioni volte a facilitare il recepimento e l'agevole implementazione delle direttive europee;

— la Corte di giustizia europea ha riconosciuto (nelle sentenze Francovich e Bonifici) l'obbligo degli Stati membri di risarcire i danni provocati dalla mancata o dalla scorretta attuazione delle direttive;

può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. la Commissione possiede dati statistici sui ritardi dei pagamenti della PA in Italia? Possiede tali dati scorporati per regione?

2. Ha l'Italia fornito una cronologia o un piano di azione che indichino le tappe verso l'adeguamento della realtà italiana ai parametri europei in materia di ritardi dei pagamenti della pubblica amministrazione? Intende la Commissione richiedere tale informazione?

3. Ritiene la Commissione che l'attuale condizione dei ritardi dei pagamenti in Italia, e in particolare in Campania, sia in qualche modo in contrasto con i requisiti dettati dalla direttiva 2000/35/CE?

4. Ritiene la Commissione che l'Italia possa rischiare una messa in mora per non recepimento della direttiva sui ritardi dei pagamenti o per non adeguamento alla direttiva stessa qualora la situazione di cronico ritardo non venisse risolta entro il 16 marzo 2013? Potrebbe lo Stato italiano essere obbligato a risarcire i danni da mancata o scorretta attuazione delle direttive citate?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2012)

Secondo gli ultimi dati disponibili ([1]), nel 2011 le amministrazioni pubbliche italiane hanno registrato un periodo medio di 180 giorni per il pagamento di servizi e merci acquistate e un ritardo medio sui pagamenti di 90 giorni.

La direttiva 2011/7/UE relativa alla lotta contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali dovrà essere recepita dagli Stati membri entro il 16 marzo 2013. Tenendo in considerazione l'entità dei ritardi di pagamento e i danni che essi arrecano alle imprese europee, soprattutto in un'epoca di crisi economica senza precedenti, la Commissione ha invitato gli Stati membri a intensificare i propri sforzi a livello nazionale per anticiparne il recepimento e l'attuazione al 2012.

A seguito di ciò, la Commissione è stata informata dalle autorità italiane della loro intenzione di recepire la direttiva entro il 15 novembre 2012.

Per quanto riguarda l'attuale direttiva 2000/35/CE, essa non impone alle autorità pubbliche di effettuare i pagamenti entro un periodo determinato e non prevede alcuna armonizzazione dei termini di pagamento. La situazione in Italia non può pertanto essere considerata una violazione della suddetta direttiva.

([1]) Indicatore di rischio sui pagamenti in Europa 2012, Intrum Justitia.

La Commissione baderà a monitorare il recepimento e l'attuazione della direttiva 2011/7/UE e prenderà in considerazione l'ipotesi di avviare procedure di infrazione ai sensi dell'articolo 258 del TFUE nei casi di mancata conformità alla stessa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006659/12
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Late payments and transposition of Directive 2011/7/EU

Directive 2011/7/EU of 16 February 2011, which increases protection for businesses against late payment, contains a number of new provisions, for example those requiring public authorities within the EU to make payment to businesses within a standard maximum deadline of 60 days.

The fact is that persistently late payments by public administrations to businesses, particularly in the Campania region, have reached unsustainable levels, with businesses being forced to wait years for payment in certain cases.

Pending entry into force of EU directives, Member States are required to take the necessary measures to facilitate their transposition and implementation.

The European Court of Justice (Francovich and Bonifici) has ruled that Member States ere required sto make good damages arising from non-implementation of directives or failure to implement them properly.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission have statistical data regarding late payment by public authorities in Italy? Does it have a breakdown by region?

2. Has Italy provided a step-by-step timetable or programme of action for compliance with EU provisions governing late payments by public authorities? Will the Commission request such information?

3. Does the Commission consider that the current situation regarding late payments in Italy, particularly in Campania, constitutes an infringement of Directive 2000/35/EC?

4. Does the Commission consider that Italy may be issued with a letter of formal notice for failure to transpose the directive on late payments or for non-compliance with the directive if the problem of persistent late payment is not resolved by 16 March 2013? Might it be required to make good losses suffered for non-implementation of the directive or failure to implement it properly?

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

According to the latest data available ([1]), in 2011 the Italian public authorities had an average payment period of 180 days for services and goods procured, and an average delay of 90 days.

Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment in commercial transactions has to be transposed by Member States by 16 March 2013 at the latest. Taking into account the magnitude of late payments and their detrimental effect on European enterprises, especially at a time of unprecedented economic crisis, the Commission invited Member States to step up their efforts at a national level for an early transposition and implementation in 2012.

Consequently, the Commission has been informed by the Italian authorities of their intention to transpose the directive by 15 November 2012.

As regards the current Directive 2000/35/EC, it does not oblige public authorities to pay within a specific period, providing no harmonisation of the payment period. Therefore, the situation in Italy could not be considered an infringement of this directive.

The Commission will monitor the transposition and implementation of Directive 2011/7/EU, and will consider launching infringement procedures according to Article 258 TFUE in cases of non-compliance.

([1]) European Payment Index 2012, Intrum Justitia.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006660/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(3 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διαφάνεια και επάρκεια διεθνών οίκων πιστοληπτικής αξιολόγησης

Σύμφωνα με δηλώσεις του επικεφαλής της Ευρωπαϊκής Αρχής Κινητών Αξιών και Αγορών στον Ευρωπαϊκό τύπο, τρεις διεθνείς οίκοι αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας ελέγχονται για τη διαφάνεια και την αυστηρότητα των διαδικασιών και των μεθόδων που ακολουθούν. Σε σειρά πράξεων κοινοβουλευτικού ελέγχου προς την Επιτροπή την τελευταία εξαετία (ερωτήσεις υπ' αριθ. 1) E-0212/2006 στις 17.1.2006 με θέμα την Αξιοπιστία των οίκων αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας, 2) H-0984/2008 στις 2.12.2008 με θέμα την Ευθύνη της Κομισιόν για το ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο λειτουργίας των οίκων αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας, 3) H-0124/2010 στις 4.3.2010 με θέμα τη Σύσταση Ευρωπαϊκής Αρχής αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας, 4) E-3984/2010 στις 7.6.2010 με θέμα το Ολιγοπώλιο διεθνών οίκων αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας), έχουν αναδειχθεί ποικίλες πτυχές της εν γένει προβληματικής λειτουργίας των διεθνών οίκων. Εν προκειμένω, ήδη από τον Δεκέμβριο του 2008, ο τότε αρμόδιος Επίτροπος Τσάρλι Μακ Κρίβι είχε αναφερθεί στον «μη ικανοποιητικό τρόπο με τον οποίο οι οργανισμοί διαχειρίσθηκαν τις συγκρούσεις συμφερόντων τους», στην «απουσία ποιότητας των μεθοδολογιών που χρησιμοποιούν» και στην «ανεπαρκή διαφάνεια γύρω από τις δραστηριότητές τους ή την ακατάλληλη εσωτερική διακυβέρνησή τους». Εξάλλου, αξιοσημείωτη είναι η δέσμευση του Επιτρόπου κ. Μισέλ Μπαρνιέ για ένα αυστηρότερο ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο λειτουργίας των εν λόγω οίκων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδόν τέσσερα έτη από την απάντηση του κ. Μακ Κρίβι και έξι από τότε που ξέσπασε η χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση στις ΗΠΑ, η ΕΕ βρίσκεται ακόμα σε διαδικασία ελέγχου. Πώς δικαιολογεί την παρέλευση μιας ολόκληρης εξαετίας χωρίς η ΕΕ να ασκεί αποτελεσματική εποπτεία επί των διεθνών οίκων αξιολόγησης;

2. Σε περίπτωση που τελικώς επιβεβαιωθούν οι κατηγορίες περί αδιαφάνειας και ανεπαρκών μεθόδων εκ μέρους των διεθνών οίκων αξιολόγησης, ποιά συγκεκριμένα μέτρα συμμόρφωσης προβλέπονται;

3. Δεδομένου ότι η υποβάθμιση κρατικών ομολόγων και τραπεζών έχει προκαλέσει ανυπολόγιστη ζημία, τόσο σε οικονομικό όσο και σε κοινωνικό επίπεδο, σε σειρά κρατών μελών, πρόκειται η ΕΕ να στραφεί εναντίον διεθνών οίκων αξιολόγησης των οποίων οι μέθοδοι και οι πρακτικές θα επιβεβαιωθεί ότι δεν είναι διαφανείς και επαρκείς;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Αυγούστου 2012)

Η ΕΕ προσπάθησε επί σειρά ετών να συγκροτήσει ένα ισχυρό νομικό πλαίσιο για τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας (ΟΑΠΙ), συμπεριλαμβανομένων των εποπτικών εξουσιών που παραχωρήθηκαν πέρυσι στην Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Κινητών Αξιών και Αγορών (ΕΑΚΑΑ) από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο.

Τον Νοέμβριο 2008 η Επιτροπή πρότεινε κανονισμό της ΕΕ για τους ΟΑΠΙ, ο οποίος πραγματεύεται μεταξύ άλλων την έλλειψη διαφάνειας και τις περιπτώσεις σύγκρουσης συμφερόντων. Το κείμενο εγκρίθηκε τον Σεπτέμβριο 2009 και τέθηκε σε ισχύ τον Δεκέμβριο 2009 ([1]).

Τον Ιούνιο 2009 η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε δεύτερη πρόταση για την ΕΑΚΑΑ, ώστε να επιφορτισθεί με αποκλειστικές εποπτικές εξουσίες επί των ΟΑΠΙ που είναι εγγεγραμμένοι στην ΕΕ. Το κείμενο εγκρίθηκε τον Μάιο 2011 και τέθηκε σε ισχύ τον Ιούνιο 2011 ([2]).

Η ΕΑΚΑΑ αποτελεί τον κεντρικό επόπτη των ΟΑΠΙ που δραστηριοποιούνται στην ΕΕ. Η ΕΑΚΑΑ έχει την εξουσία να διερευνά και να επιβάλλει πρόστιμα εάν ένας ΟΑΠΙ παραβιάζει τις υποχρεώσεις που υπέχει βάσει του ενωσιακού δικαίου. Τον Μάρτιο 2012 η ΕΑΚΑΑ εξέδωσε την πρώτη έκθεσή της σχετικά με την εποπτεία των ΟΑΠΙ ([3]).

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1060/2009 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2009, για τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας.

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 513/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 11ης Μαΐου 2011, για την τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1060/2009 για τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας.

([3]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2012-207.pdf.

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση του γεγονότος ότι παραμένουν σημαντικές ανησυχίες, ιδίως όσον αφορά, μεταξύ άλλων, τις αξιολογήσεις του δημόσιου χρέους, τις μεθοδολογίες για τις αξιολογήσεις, την ευθύνη των ΟΑΠΙ και την υπερβολική εμπιστοσύνη στις αξιολογήσεις. Ως εκ τούτου, τον Νοέμβριο 2011 η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε τρίτη πρόταση για την τροποποίηση του ισχύοντος κανονιστικού πλαισίου, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστούν τα προαναφερόμενα ζητήματα. Η πρόταση αυτή αποτελεί τώρα αντικείμενο διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ του Συμβουλίου και του Κοινοβουλίου, αναμένεται δε να εγκριθεί έως τα τέλη 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006660/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Transparency and reliability of international credit rating agencies

The Head of the European Securities and Market Authority has been quoted by the European press as indicating that three international credit rating agencies are under investigation regarding the transparency and rigour of their procedures and methods.

In exercise of parliamentary control, a number of questions have been submitted to the Commission over the last six years (E-0212/2006 of 17 January 2006 concerning the reliability of credit rating agencies,

H-0984/2008 of 2 December 2008 concerning Commission responsibility for the regulatory framework governing credit rating agencies, H-0124/2010 of 4 March 2010 concerning the creation of a European credit rating authority and E-3984/2010 of 7 June 2010 concerning the oligopoly of international credit rating agencies). These questions touched on various aspects of the general problem of international credit rating agencies and the operation thereof. In December 2008 the Commissioner who was then responsible, Charlie McCreevy, referred to unsatisfactory management, conflicts of interest, flawed methodology, lack of transparency and unsuitable internal administrative procedures. In this connection, Commissioner Michel Barnier gave an undertaking to introduce a more stringent regulatory framework regarding rating agencies.

In view of this:

1. Almost four years after the above statement by Mr McCreevy and six years from the onset of the US financial crisis, the EU is still investigating. How is it possible a full six years on to justify its failure to exercise effective supervision of international credit rating agencies?

2. Should allegations of lack of transparency and flawed procedures in respect of international credit rating agencies prove true, what specific measures are envisaged to remedy matters?

3. Given that the downgrading of state securities and banks has caused incalculable damage in both economic and social terms in a number of Member States, will the EU take action regarding international credit agencies whose methods and practices turn out to be non-transparent and unreliable?

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

The EU has been working for several years to build a strong legal framework for credit rating agencies (CRAs), including supervisory powers that were granted last year to the European Securities and Markets Authorites (ESMA) by the European Parliament and the Council.

In November 2008, the Commission proposed an EU Regulation on CRAs, addressing i.a. lack of transparency and conflicts of interest. The text was adopted in September 2009 and entered into force in December 2009 ([1]).

In June 2009, the Commission made a second proposal for the ESMA to be entrusted with exclusive supervisory powers over CRAs registered in the EU. The text was adopted in May 2011 and entered into force in June 2011 ([2]).

ESMA is the central supervisor for CRAs operating in the EU. ESMA has the power to investigate and impose fines if a CRA is in breach of its obligations under EC law. In March 2012, ESMA issued its first report on the supervision of CRAs ([3]).

The Commission is aware that important concerns remain, notably as regards sovereign ratings, methodologies for ratings, the liability of CRAs and excessive reliance on ratings amongst others. Therefore, in November 2011, the Commission put forward a third proposal amending the current regulatory framework in order to address the aforementioned issues. This proposal is currently being negotiated between Council and Parliament and is expected to be adopted by the end of 2012.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 16 September 2009, on credit rating agencies.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 513/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 11 May 2011, amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies.
([3]) http://www.esma.europa.eu/system/files/2012-207.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006661/12
to the Commission
Godfrey Bloom (EFD)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Licence to brew beer in Cyprus

Will the Commission investigate:

— whether the difficulties and very long delays suffered by the Aphrodite's Rock Brewing Company in its attempts to open for business in Cyprus are a function of:

1. the existence of non-tariff trade barriers and/or

2. efforts by the Cypriot authorities to manipulate regulations in order to prevent or discourage competition and/or

3. tacit and potentially illegal bureaucratic connivance in favour of existing Cypriot business, and

— whether the brewing sector in Cyprus is operating in accordance with all the requirements of all relevant aspects of EC law?

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

Article 13 of the Services Directive requires that authorisation procedures are clear, made public in advance and provide the applicants with a guarantee that their application will be dealt with objectively and impartially. It also seeks to ensure that authorisation procedures do not unduly complicate or delay the provision of the service. For these purposes, applications for authorisation must be processed as quickly as possible and the periods of time within which authorities will need to complete authorisation procedures, need to be fixed and made public in advance.

The Republic of Cyprus has implemented these principles by means of horizontal law No 76(I)/2010 and specific authorisation procedures in the services sector should comply with them. The Commission services would need further information on the facts at stake in order to verify whether these principles have been respected in the specific authorisation procedure referred to in the question of the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006662/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Number of Commission employees at pay grades 15 and 16

1. Can the Commission confirm that there are currently 229 employees at the Commission in pay grades 15 and 16, with gross annual incomes of above — or equivalent to — EUR 178 920, which is the gross annual salary (before taxes) of the French President, François Hollande, as of May 2012?

2. Can the Commission also confirm that there are currently 229 employees at the Commission in pay grades 15 and 16, with net annual incomes of above — or equivalent to — EUR 105 562, which is the net annual salary (after taxes) of the French President, François Hollande, as of May 2012?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2012)

1-2. The Commission does not possess data about the income of heads of state or government.

The number of civil servants in grades AD 15 and 16 of the various institutions can be found in the annual budget ([1]).

The numbers regularly change due to nominations and departures. The provisions on salaries, complementary rights and deductions (pensions, joint sickness insurance, special levy) are found in the Staff Regulations ([2]). Provisions on taxes to be paid by civil servants are found in Regulation No 260/68 ([3]).

([1]) See e.g. the Draft General Budget of the European Commission for the financial year 2013, working document part II, Commission Human Resources: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/2013/DB2013/DB2013-WDII-HR.pdf

([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/docs/toc100_en.pdf

([3]) See Regulation No 260/68 of the Council of 29 February 1968 laying down the conditions and procedure for applying the tax for the benefit of the European Communities, OJ L 56, 4.3.1968.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-006663/12
до Комисията
Владко Тодоров Панайотов (ALDE)
(3 юли 2012 г.)

Относно: Химически следи от летателни апарати

Химическите следи, оставяни от летателни апарати (т.нар. chemtrails), стават все по-видими — факт, за който съществуват доказателства и който е признат от научната общност.

Те са резултат, от една страна, от научни експерименти или, от друга, от интервенции за цели на здравеопазването, за защита на селското стопанство или, на последно място, но не по важност — за цели, свързани с опазването на климата, по-специално с оглед на борбата с глобалното затопляне.

1. Извършвала ли е Комисията или някоя от държавите членки някакви проучвания във връзка с тези практики?

2. Известни ли са на Комисията някакви инициативи в тази област, на държава членка или частни? Информирана ли е Комисията за каквито и да било геоинженерни проучвания относно парниковия ефект? Защо Комисията не е настояла за разследване на този въпрос с държавите членки? Защо Европейската агенция за околната среда не е по-тясно ангажирана?

3. Като вземем предвид потенциалното въздействие на подобни практики, най-вече страничните ефекти или други кумулативни ефекти — резултат от използваните химически вещества, планира ли Комисията да проучи и евентуално да регламентира тези дейности, по-специално когато се извършват в европейското въздушно пространство?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Хедегор от името на Комисията
(20 август 2012 г.)

Европейската комисия няма какво да добави към предходните отговори относно предполагаемото изпускане в атмосферата на химически инверсионни следи от летателни апарати. Приканваме уважаемия член на Парламента да направи справка с отговори E-2455/2007 от г-н Meijer, E-6621/2011 от г-жа Childers, и E-2906/2012 от г-н Rossi ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006663/12
to the Commission
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Chemtrails from aircraft

Chemtrails released from aircraft are becoming more and more visible, a fact that is evidenced and acknowledged by the scientific community.

They are the result of scientific experiments, on the one hand, or, on the other, of interventions for health purposes, for the protection of agriculture, or, last but not least, for climate protection purposes, in particular with a view to combating global warming.

1. Has the Commission carried out any studies in relation to these practices or have any of the Member States done any studies on this?

2. Does the Commission know of any existing Member-State or private initiatives in this respect? Is it aware of any geoengineering studies on the greenhouse gas effects? Why has the Commission not insisted on investigating the matter with the Member States? Why was the European Environment Agency not involved more closely?

3. Taking into consideration the potential impact of such practices, notably side-effects or other cumulative effects arising from the chemical substances used, is the Commission planning to study and possibly regulate these activities, in particular when carried out within EU airspace?

Answer given by Mrs Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2012)

The Commission does not have anything to add to previous replies on the alleged release of chemtrails in the atmosphere. We invite the Honourable Member to refer to replies E-2455/2007 by Mr Meijer, E-6621/2011 by Mrs Childers, and E-2906/2012 by Mr Rossi ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006664/12
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the following articles of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union have come into force as part of EC law:

Art. 118 Intellectual rights

Art. 152 Social policy

Art. 189 Space policy

Art. 194 Energy policy

Art. 195 Tourism

Art. 196 Civil protection

Art. 197 Administrative cooperation

Art. 209 Development cooperation

Art. 214 Humanitarian aid

Art. 215 Sanctions

Arts 216-218 International agreements

Arts 220-221 Third countries and Union delegations

1. Can the Commission provide a list of all initiatives which have been taken under each of the preceding articles?

2. Can the Commission also indicate, for each initiative, whether it could have been brought forward under the Treaties prior to the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, and, if so, which article of the Treaty establishing the European Community could have been used as the legal base?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(17 August 2012)

The EUR-Lex database can provide a list of measures proposed by the Commission under the articles of the Treaty on the Functioning on the European Union as mentioned in parliamentary Question E-006664/2012. An extract from this database is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

Commission proposals and recommendations are made on the basis of the Treaties in force at the time of their adoption.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006665/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Terminally ill patient seeking healthcare in another Member State

I have been contacted by a constituent who tells me that his terminally ill grandmother recently moved to the south of France to live with his parents. He tells me that his grandmother was healthy enough to travel but that her condition has deteriorated since she arrived.

My constituent tells me that his parents are having trouble renewing his grandmother's European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). When my constituent spoke to the relevant health department in the United Kingdom, he was told that his grandmother would not be covered by the EHIC as she had travelled with a pre-existing medical condition.

Could the Commission confirm whether:

1. A terminally ill UK citizen has a right to healthcare in France if the condition was diagnosed in the UK prior to travelling to France?

2. The patient can be refused treatment in France if their previous EHIC card has expired?

3. The patient has a right to a new EHIC card, thus allowing them access to healthcare in a different Member State?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 August 2012)

1. The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) proves that the holder is a person insured for public healthcare in a Member State and facilitates their access to the right, as guaranteed by Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([1]), to receive any healthcare that becomes necessary during a temporary stay in another Member State, including treatment arising from chronic or pre-existing conditions (such as terminal illness).

2. The EHIC cannot, however, be used by a person who has travelled to another country with the intention of receiving medical care there. Similarly, it cannot be used by an EU citizen who in fact resides in the Member State where they seek to receive treatment. Therefore, on the facts of the case, it is possible that the UK authorities are refusing to issue a new EHIC as they consider that the person in question now resides in France. The question whether the person concerned is habitually resident in another Member State needs to be assessed on the facts of the case. So, if the constituent's grandmother can be considered as still having her centre of interests in the UK, then the UK should issue her a new EHIC.

3. If, however, she has moved her centre of interests, and hence her residence, to France, then she should follow the procedure for pensioners residing in another Member State and request an S1 form (certificate of entitlement to healthcare in a Member State) from the UK authorities. This form can then be used to register for healthcare in France and will ensure that healthcare is provided on the same terms and conditions as those applied to French nationals. The obligation on the UK authorities to reimburse France for the cost of treatment remains the same, regardless of whether the EHIC or S1 is used.

([1]) OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006666/12
alla Commissione
Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Investimenti in titoli greci

Alcune settimane fa la Grecia ha messo in atto le clausole di azione collettiva (CAC) sullo swap del debito sovrano. Questo significa che i risparmiatori europei che hanno investito il loro denaro nei bond di un Paese dell'area euro dovranno subire un taglio forzato al loro investimento senza che abbiano aderito alla proposta del Governo greco.

All'annuncio della ristrutturazione del debito era stato da più parti garantito che questo «haircut» avrebbe coinvolto solo banche e istituzioni finanziarie.

I risparmiatori hanno poi dovuto apprendere all'ultimo minuto che questo scambio avrebbe riguardato anche loro, che in tutta questa vicenda rappresentano l'aspetto virtuoso.

Chi detiene in portafoglio obbligazioni greche è infatti un risparmiatore che ha creduto nelle emissioni di uno Stato sovrano dell'area euro e, in passato, alle affermazioni assertive dei vertici della Banca centrale europea che escludevano nella maniera più assoluta la possibilità che il debito greco non riuscisse ad essere onorato nei confronti dei risparmiatori.

La situazione venutasi a creare è dunque paradossale: lo swap ha consentito alla Grecia di ridurre il proprio debito pubblico grazie all'aiuto del Fondo salva Stati, le banche hanno potuto contare su innesti di capitale della BCE, i fondi che detenevano obbligazioni greche saranno risarciti dai Credit Default Swap, ma i piccoli risparmiatori saranno costretti a subire una perdita del loro investimento.

In questa colossale operazione di salvataggio finanziario i piccoli risparmiatori rischiano di essere gli unici a pagare il prezzo più alto con l'unica colpa di aver investito in titoli di un Stato sovrano dell'Unione europea, comportamento questo che in verità andrebbe premiato.

Alla luce di quanto esposto può la Commissione precisare se intende intervenire affinché anche i piccoli risparmiatori che hanno investito in titoli greci vengano tutelati nei loro investimenti e se e come intende ribadire, e in quali sedi, l'essenziale principio di giustizia per cui se manca la tutela del risparmio per chi investe in titoli di Stato vengono messe in dubbio le basi stesse della finanza pubblica e viene giustificata la speculazione selvaggia sui titoli?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

Il secondo piano di risanamento economico a favore della Grecia ha affrontato le principali difficoltà che sta attraversando la Grecia. Per maggiori dettagli rimandiamo al seguente sito:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/ greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm.

Come indicato anche nelle conclusioni dei vertici dei capi di Stato e di governo della zona euro del 21 luglio e del 26 ottobre 2011, il coinvolgimento del settore privato nel finanziamento del secondo piano di risanamento economico a favore della Grecia era principalmente di competenza delle autorità greche. Considerato che l'argomento in oggetto esula dal diritto dell'UE, compete unicamente allo Stato membro interessato garantire il rispetto degli obblighi relativi ai diritti fondamentali derivanti da accordi internazionali e dalla legislazione nazionale. La posizione della Commissione non le consente pertanto di esprimersi in merito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006666/12
to the Commission
Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Investment in Greek state securities

A few weeks ago Greece activated the collective action clause (CAC) triggering the sovereign debt swap, with the result that European savers who have invested their money in bonds issued by a euro area country will be forced to accept a write-down in the value of their investment without having approved the proposal by the Greek Government. However, when this debt structuring measure was originally announced, assurances were repeatedly given that only banks and financial institutions would be required to take a 'haircut'. It was therefore only at the last minute that savers, who, when all is said and done, stand on the side of virtue in this affair, were informed that they would also be affected. Those holding Greek bonds in their investment portfolios are in fact savers who entrusted their funds to a sovereign state in the euro area and believed in the promises given by European Central Bank leaders that there was absolutely no question of failure to honour Greek debts as far as they were concerned.

Under the current arrangements, however, the paradoxical situation arises where the authorised debt swap has allowed Greece to reduce its own public debt thanks to aid from the state rescue fund, banks have received ECB capital injections and funds holding Greek bonds will be reimbursed through the credit default swap, while small savers will be forced to accept a write-down in the value of their investments. As a result, they are likely to be the only ones to bear the brunt of this colossal financial rescue operation, their only fault having been to invest in securities issued by a European Union sovereign state, whereas in all fairness, they deserve to be rewarded.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to take action to protect small savers who invested in Greek securities?

Does it intend to uphold this essential principle of justice and, if so, how and in which forum, given that failure to protect savers investing in state securities will undermine the very bases of public finance and justify uncontrolled speculation in securities?

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

The 2nd Greek economic adjustment programme addresses the major challenges which Greece is facing — see for more details:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

In line with the conclusions of the summit of the Euro Area Heads of States and Governments on 21 July and 26 October 2011, the implementation of the private sector involvement in the financing of the 2nd Greek economic adjustment programme was the primary responsibility of the Greek authorities. As this matter falls outside the implementation of EC law, it is thus for Member States alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position to comment further on these questions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006667/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Green Hill

Green Hill, azienda italiana di proprietà dell'americana Marshall Bioresources, si occupa essenzialmente dell'allevamento di cani beagle per i laboratori di vivisezione.

Testimonianze interne all'azienda rivelano il ricorso a operazioni illegali quali l'utilizzo e la soppressione di cani non registrati nonché la manipolazione di cuccioli tramite maschere inalatorie o altri strumenti immobilizzatori atti a rendere l'animale facilmente utilizzabile in età matura.

Stante che la direttiva 2010/63/UE non impone «l'utilizzo di metodi alternativi», può la Commissione far sapere se ritiene opportuno intervenire su operazioni chiaramente illegali, considerato il fine ultimo della direttiva, che è quello della protezione degli animale utilizzati per fine scientifici?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(16 agosto 2012)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni relative all'azienda Green Hill, alla quale fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare, e non sta al momento esaminando presunte infrazioni.

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici, che entrerà in vigore il 1º gennaio 2013 ([1]), sostituirà la direttiva 86/609/CEE.

Applicare correttamente e far rispettare la legislazione UE è responsabilità degli Stati membri. Qualsiasi potenziale operazione illegale deve pertanto essere notificata alle autorità italiane. Qualora le autorità degli Stati membri non intervengano in modo soddisfacente, la Commissione prende in esame la possibilità di condurre un'indagine.

Per quanto riguarda i cani «registrati», l'articolo 18 della direttiva 86/609/CEE prescrive che «ogni cane, gatto o primate non umano […] deve essere dotato, prima dello svezzamento, di un marchio di identificazione individuale». Sulla base della descrizione fornita dall'onorevole parlamentare è impossibile stabilire se si è verificata una violazione della legislazione UE.

L'articolo 4, paragrafo 1, della nuova direttiva 2010/63/UE descrive il principio della sostituzione, della riduzione e del perfezionamento: «gli Stati membri assicurano che, ove possibile, un metodo o una strategia di sperimentazione scientificamente soddisfacente che non comporti l'uso di animali vivi possa essere utilizzato in sostituzione di una procedura».

Inoltre, l'articolo 13, paragrafo 1, di detta direttiva, dispone che «fatto salvo il divieto di taluni metodi ai sensi della legislazione nazionale, gli Stati membri assicurano che una procedura non sia eseguita qualora la legislazione dell'Unione riconosca altri metodi o strategie di sperimentazione per ottenere il risultato ricercato che non prevedano l'impiego di animali vivi».

In conclusione, ai sensi della nuova direttiva l'utilizzo di metodi alternativi è obbligatorio, con alcune eccezioni specifiche.

([1]) GU L 276 del 20 ottobre 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006667/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Green Hill

Green Hill is an Italian firm owned by the US-based Marshall BioResources and its main activity is the breeding of beagles for vivisection laboratories.

Evidence obtained in-house speaks of illegal operations such as the use or killing of unregistered dogs and the manipulation of puppies by means of inhalation masks or other immobilising devices to make them easy to use when they are fully grown.

Given that the use of alternative methods is not mandatory under Directive 2010/63/EU, does the Commission think that it should intervene in response to blatantly illegal operations, bearing in mind that the ultimate object of the directive is to protect animals used for scientific purposes?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2012)

The Commission has no information on the firm Green Hill as referred to by the Honourable Member, and is not currently investigating infringement allegations.

Directive 86/609/EEC will be replaced by Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes taking effect on 1 January 2013 ([1]).

It is the responsibility of the Member State authorities to correctly apply and enforce EU legislation. Therefore, the Italian authorities should be notified of any potential illegal operations. Should Member State authorities fail to take satisfactory action, the Commission would consider an investigation.

Concerning 'registered' dogs, Article 18 of Directive 86/609/EEC prescribes that each dog, cat and non-human primate, shall '…be provided with an individual identification mark…' at the pre-weaning stage. As per the description provided by the Honourable Member, it is impossible to determine whether a breach of EU legislation has taken place.

Under the new Directive 2010/63/EU, Article 4(1) describes the Three Rs principle of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement: Member States shall ensure that, wherever possible, a scientifically satisfactory method or testing strategy, not entailing the use of live animals, shall be used instead of a procedure.

Furthermore, Article 13(1) provides that without prejudice to national legislation prohibiting certain types of methods, Member States shall ensure that a procedure is not carried out if another method or testing strategy for obtaining the result sought, not entailing the use of a live animal, is recognised under the legislation of the Union.

In conclusion, under the new Directive, the use of alternative methods is mandatory, with some specific exceptions.

([1]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006668/12
à Comissão
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(3 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Testes genéticos de ancestralidade para fins de propaganda racista

Um deputado da extrema-direita húngara declarou ter realizado um teste genético na tentativa de provar a sua «pureza étnica» através da empresa Nagy Gén que diz ter concluído que o parlamentar húngaro não tem ascendência cigana ou judaica.

A Sociedade Europeia de Genética Humana já condenou veementemente a realização deste teste, considerando-o eticamente inaceitável e sem validade científica. Os testes genéticos têm essencialmente o propósito de diagnosticar e predizer doenças humanas ou de fazer estudos de âmbito populacional (Convenção sobre os Direitos Humanos e a Biomedicina) e não o de reclamar a pureza «racial». Este tipo de uso destes testes reaviva a memória dos piores momentos da História da Europa. Abre a porta à discriminação «racial», a políticas eugénicas, à contratação laboral seletiva com base na etnia e a políticas de imigração baseadas no património genético, o que a própria Convenção de Oviedo claramente condena. O teste realizado, sem validade científica ou qualquer justificação ética, foi utilizado por um político para fins políticos duvidosos. Face ao exposto solicito à Comissão as seguintes informações:

1. A Comissão vai avançar com legislação e regulamentação na área dos testes genéticos para impedir que esta e outras empresas, públicas ou privadas, continuem a anunciar e realizar testes de ancestralidade e «pureza racial»?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(10 de setembro de 2012)

A Comissão Europeia tem repetidamente rejeitado e condenado todas as manifestações de xenofobia e racismo e utiliza todos os instrumentos à sua disposição, em conformidade com os Tratados, para lutar contra estes fenómenos, uma vez que são incompatíveis com os valores e princípios com base nos quais a UE foi criada. O artigo 21.° da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia proíbe toda e qualquer discriminação em razão da origem étnica ou de características genéticas e em conformidade com o seu artigo 8.° todas as pessoas têm direito à proteção dos dados de caráter pessoal que lhes digam respeito, nomeadamente os dados genéticos. Nos termos do n.° 1 do seu artigo 51.°, a Carta tem por destinatários os Estados-Membros apenas quando apliquem o direito da União e não amplia as competências da UE, tal como definido nos Tratados.

A Diretiva 2000/43/CE do Conselho ([1]) proíbe a discriminação com base na raça ou na origem étnica em inúmeros domínios, nomeadamente no acesso ao emprego e à atividade profissional. Os Estados-Membros são obrigados a aplicar plenamente as disposições da diretiva e a criar procedimentos e recursos para as pessoas que aleguem ser vítimas de tal discriminação. A Hungria transpôs a referida diretiva.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/43/CE do Conselho, de 29 de junho de 2000, que aplica o princípio da igualdade de tratamento entre as pessoas, sem distinção de origem racial ou étnica, JO L 180 de 19.7.2000, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006668/12
to the Commission
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Genetic ancestry testing for racist propaganda purposes

A far-right Hungarian Member of Parliament has said that he has been genetically tested in order to prove his 'ethnic purity'. The company which carried out the test, Nagy Gen, claims to have concluded that the Hungarian MP has no Roma or Jewish ancestors.

The European Society of Human Genetics has strongly condemned the test, which it considers to be ethically unacceptable and scientifically worthless. Genetic testing serves essentially to diagnose or predict human diseases or study populations (Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine); its object is not to enable test subjects to lay claim to 'racial' purity. Using tests for this last-mentioned purpose revives the memory of the darkest moments in European history. It opens the door to 'racial' discrimination, eugenic policies, ethnically based selection of employees, and immigration policies based on genetic inheritance, practices which the Oviedo Convention explicitly condemns. The test carried out, which is scientifically worthless and has no ethical justification, has been used by a politician for dubious political ends.

1. Will it draw up legislation and rules on genetic tests so as to prevent the company concerned in this case and other public or private companies from continuing to advertise and carry out ancestry and 'racial purity' tests?

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

The European Commission has repeatedly rejected and condemned all manifestations of xenophobia and racism and uses all the instruments at its disposal, in line with the Treaties, to fight against these phenomena as they are incompatible with the values and principles the EU is founded on. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights prohibits discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin as well as genetic features and in line with its Article 8 everyone has the right to the protection of his/her personal data, including genetic data. According with its Article 51(1) the Charter applies to the Member states only when they are implementing Union law and does not extend the EU competencies as defined in the Treaties.

Council Directive 2000/43/EC ([1]) prohibits discrimination based on race or ethnic origin in a number of fields, including access to employment and occupation. Member States are obliged to give full effect to the provisions of the directive and put in place procedures and remedies for persons who claim to be victims of such discrimination. Hungary has transposed that directive.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-006669/12
à Comissão
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(3 de julho de 2012)

Assunto: Testes genéticos — regulamentação, acreditação e publicidade

Um deputado da extrema-direita húngara declarou ter realizado um teste genético na tentativa de provar a sua «pureza étnica». A empresa Nagy Gén verificou (apenas) 18 marcadores do genoma do deputado para variantes que diz serem características de ascendência dos povos Roma e Judeu. A conclusão da empresa é que o parlamentar húngaro não tem ascendência cigana ou judaica.

Este episódio, já condenado pela Sociedade Europeia de Genética Humana, vem mostrar a falta de regulamentação, acreditação e publicidade de todos os testes genéticos. No caso particular dos testes de ancestralidade, a sua utilização e comercialização era vista como recreativa. Porém, este caso expõe a fragilidade da legislação europeia no que diz respeito à venda direta de testes genéticos.

Face ao exposto e tendo este conta este tipo de teste e, na generalidade, todos os testes, solicito as seguintes informações:

1. Que medidas tenciona a Comissão tomar face à regulação da garantia de qualidade e acreditação dos laboratórios onde este e outros testes genéticos humanos são executados, nomeadamente quando de venda livre aos consumidores e com caráter transfronteiriço (por exemplo, venda via internet)?

2. Que medidas tenciona a Comissão tomar quanto às práticas de publicidade enganosa e aos usos indevidos de testes genéticos sem validade científica, relacionados ou não com a saúde?

3. Que medidas tenciona a Comissão tomar nomeadamente face à regulação da publicidade e venda livre destes e outros testes genéticos, nomeadamente os relacionados com a saúde e com a «identidade pessoal» (paternidade/maternidade e ancestralidade), diretamente aos consumidores e frequentemente envolvendo menores ou terceiros sem o seu consentimento?

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

A Comissão pretende adotar uma proposta de revisão da Diretiva 98/79/CE relativa aos dispositivos médicos de diagnóstico *in vitro* ([1]), (DDIV), no Outono de 2012.

No âmbito dessa revisão, a Comissão pretende esclarecer que os testes genéticos com uma finalidade médica são abrangidos pela legislação relativa a DDIV. A proposta prevê igualmente que os testes genéticos médicos oferecidos às pessoas na União através de serviços da sociedade da informação, na aceção da Diretiva 98/34/CE ([2]), e os utilizados no contexto de uma atividade comercial e destinados a prestar um serviço de diagnóstico ou terapêutico a pessoas na UE devem respeitar os requisitos da legislação relativa a DDIV. A revisão irá também exigir que qualquer instituição de saúde que fabrique e utilize testes genéticos nas suas instalações esteja acreditada em conformidade com a norma EN ISO 15189 ou qualquer outra norma reconhecida equivalente.

Os testes genéticos com um objetivo não-terapêutico, como os testes para determinar a paternidade ou a ascendência, continuam a não ser abrangidos pelo âmbito de aplicação da legislação relativa a DDIV. Não está igualmente previsto que essa legislação abranja a publicidade aos testes genéticos ou a utilização dos resultados obtidos nesses testes.

A Diretiva 2005/29/CE ([3]) poderá ser aplicável nessa situação. Nela se requer que os operadores comerciais não induzam os consumidores em erro, por exemplo, sobre as suas qualificações e as características dos produtos colocados à venda, incluindo os resultados que podem ser esperados da sua utilização. Além disso, a diretiva prevê que as autoridades competentes possam exigir que os profissionais apresentem provas respeitantes à exatidão dos factos que tenham alegado.

([1]) JO L 331 de 7.12.1998.
([2]) JO L 204 de 21.7.1998, p. 37.
([3]) JO L 149 de 11.6.2005, p. 22.

As práticas transfronteiriças consideradas desleais são abrangidas pelo domínio de competência da rede de autoridades públicas responsáveis pela aplicação da legislação no território da UE, estabelecida pelo regulamento relativo à cooperação no domínio da defesa do consumidor ([4]).

Qualquer alegada violação à diretiva deve ser denunciada junto das autoridades nacionais e dos tribunais.

([4]) JO L 364 de 9.12.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006669/12
to the Commission
Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Genetic tests — regulation, accreditation, and advertising

A far-right Member of the Hungarian Parliament has said that he has been genetically tested in order to prove his 'ethnic purity'. The Nagy Gen company examined (only) 18 markers in his genome for variants which it claims to be characteristic of Roma or Jewish ancestry. According to its findings, he has no Roma or Jewish ancestors.

This episode, which has been condemned by the European Society of Human Genetics, highlights the inadequacy of regulation, accreditation, and advertising arrangements regarding genetic tests as a whole. In one specific case, ancestry tests, their use and marketing was thought to serve recreational purposes. However, the case described above exposes the weakness of the European legislation on the direct sale of genetic tests.

1. What measures will the Commission take to regulate the quality assurance and accreditation of the laboratories which carry out human genetic tests of the type concerned here and other types, especially in cases where tests are sold freely to consumers on a cross-border basis (on the Internet, for instance)?

2. What measures will it take as regards misleading advertising and improper uses of scientifically worthless genetic tests, health-related or otherwise?

3. What measures will it take to regulate advertising and the free and direct sale of the abovementioned and other genetic tests, especially health-related and 'personal identity' tests (paternity/maternity and ancestry), which frequently involve children or third parties who have not given their consent?

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

The Commission intends to adopt a proposal revising Directive 98/79/EC ([1]) on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices (IVD) in the autumn of 2012.

In this revision, the Commission intends to clarify that genetic tests pursuing a medical purpose are covered by the legislation on IVD. The proposal will also provide that medical genetic tests offered to persons in the Union by means of information society services, within the meaning of Directive 98/34/EC ([2]), and those used in the context of a commercial activity to provide a diagnostic or therapeutic service to persons within the EU must comply with the requirements of the legislation on IVD. The revision will also require that any health institution which manufactures and uses genetic tests on its premises is accredited in accordance with standard EN ISO 15189 or any other equivalent recognised standard.

Genetic tests intended for a non-medical purpose, such as paternity or ancestry tests, will remain outside the scope of the legislation on IVD. Nor is it planned to cover either the advertising of genetic tests or the use of results obtained from such tests.

Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]) may be applicable in this situation. It requires traders not to mislead consumers, for instance, about the qualifications of the trader and the characteristics of products offered for sale, including the results to be expected from their use. It furthermore provides that traders can be required by competent authorities to provide evidence supporting their claims.

Cross-border unfair practices fall under the competences of the EU-wide enforcement network established by the regulation on Consumer Protection Cooperation ([4]).

Any alleged breach of the directive should be brought to the attention of national authorities and courts.

([1]) OJ L 331, 7.12.1998.
([2]) OJ L 204, 21.7.1998, p. 37.
([3]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([4]) OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006670/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μείωση μοναδιαίου κόστους εργασίας σε Ελλάδα και ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με σχετική μελέτη του Ινστιτούτου Εργασίας της Γενικής Συνομοσπονδίας Εργατών Ελλάδος (ΙΝΕ/ΓΣΕΕ), το μοναδιαίο κόστος εργασίας στην Ελλάδα έχει περιορισθεί κατά 8 % την τελευταία διετία ενώ η μείωση του πραγματικού εισοδήματος των μισθωτών αγγίζει το 50 % για το ίδιο χρονικό διάστημα. Οι έλληνες πολίτες βρίσκονται αντιμέτωποι με μια πρωτοφανή κοινωνική και ανθρωπιστική κρίση λόγω της ραγδαία αυξανόμενης ανεργίας (έγκυρες εκτιμήσεις αναφέρουν ότι θα ξεπεράσει το 24 % μέχρι το τέλος του 2012), των συνεχών μειώσεων στις αμοιβές των εργαζομένων και την επιβολή βαριάς φορολογίας. Με δεδομένο ότι στο Μνημόνιο Δανεισμού της χώρας προβλέπεται πρόσθετη μείωση 15 % του μοναδιαίου κόστους εργασίας για τη διετία 2012-14, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει, λοιπόν, τη συμβατότητα ενδεχόμενης πρόσθετης μείωσης του μοναδιαίου κόστους με τους στόχους της Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής ΕΕ2020 για την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού καθώς μια τέτοια εξέλιξη θα οδηγήσει με μαθηματική ακρίβεια ένα σημαντικό τμήμα του ελληνικού πληθυσμού σε συνθήκες φτώχειας ή ακόμα και σοβαρής υλικής υστέρησης;

2. Προτίθεται ως μέλος και της Τρόικα να υποστηρίξει ή επεξεργάζεται εναλλακτικές προτάσεις και ισοδύναμα μέτρα για την αύξηση της ανταγωνιστικότητας, που δεν θα έχουν περαιτέρω δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις στη δοκιμαζόμενη κοινωνική συνοχή της Ελλάδος;

3. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη μείωση του μοναδιαίου κόστους εργασίας στα άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Το ποσοστό που αναφέρεται για τη μείωση των αποδοχών εργασίας φαίνεται σαφώς υπερεκτιμημένο σε σύγκριση με τα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία.

Οι μειώσεις του κόστους εργασίας αποτελούν απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση για να επανακτήσει την ανταγωνιστικότητά της η ελληνική οικονομία και να μειωθεί η ανεργία. Οι εν λόγω μειώσεις είναι δυνατόν να προέλθουν επίσης από το μη μισθολογικό κόστος εργασίας και από κέρδη παραγωγικότητας. Η μείωση του κόστους εργασίας ανά μονάδα προϊόντος δεν σημαίνει απαραίτητα αντίστοιχη μείωση της αγοραστικής δύναμης ([1]). Οι μεταρρυθμίσεις των αγορών προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών είναι ουσιαστικής σημασίας για να εξασφαλιστεί η μετακύλιση του χαμηλότερου κόστους στις τιμές.

Η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι η μείωση του κόστους εργασίας και το ευρύτερο θεματολόγιο μεταρρυθμίσεων, το οποίο περιλαμβάνεται στο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής και είναι σύμφωνο με την ΕΕΑ 2012 ([2]), θα στηρίξουν την οικονομική και κοινωνική ανάκαμψη της Ελλάδας. Η Επιτροπή και το Συμβούλιο συνέστησαν στην Ελλάδα να εφαρμόσει με επιμέλεια τις πολιτικές που συμφωνήθηκαν βάσει του προγράμματος, στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου. Προκειμένου να αποφευχθεί η φτώχεια των εργαζομένων και να καταστεί η εργασία οικονομικά συμφέρουσα, συνιστά επίσης στη δέσμη μέτρων για την απασχόληση ([3]) τον προσεκτικό σχεδιασμό των εργασιακών επιδομάτων και τη θέσπιση αναπροσαρμοζόμενων κατώτατων μισθολογικών ορίων ([4]).

2. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί την εφαρμογή του 2ου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας (Μάρτιος 2012) και αξιολογεί σε τακτική βάση τη συμμόρφωση με τις πολιτικές που καθορίζονται στο σχετικό μνημόνιο ([5]). Πρωταρχικός στόχος των εν λόγω πολιτικών είναι η αντιμετώπιση του δημοσιονομικού ελλείμματος και του ελλείμματος των εξωτερικών λογαριασμών της Ελλάδας, καθώς και η στήριξη της ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης με βαθιές διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στις αγορές εργασίας, προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών.

3. Η Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με τις στατιστικές αρχές των κρατών μελών, συγκεντρώνει και δημοσιεύει εγκαίρως στοιχεία σχετικά με το κόστος εργασίας στα κράτη μέλη ([6]). Η Επιτροπή καταρτίζει επίσης προβλέψεις για την εξέλιξη του κόστους εργασίας μεσοπρόθεσμα.

([1]) Σε περίπτωση μείωσης των τιμών των εμπορευμάτων και υπηρεσιών εγχώριας παραγωγής.
([2]) Ετήσια Επισκόπηση της Ανάπτυξης http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_el.pdf.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/headlines/news/2012/04/20120418_el.htm.
([4]) Προκειμένου να μην αποβούν εις βάρος της ζήτησης εργασίας.
([5]) Μνημόνιο Συννενόησης.
([6]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/labour_costs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006670/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Reduction of unit labour costs in Greece and the EU

The Employment Institute of the Greek General Confederation of Labour (GGCL) reports an 8% fall in unit labour costs in Greece over the last two years accompanied by a fall in earnings of almost 50% in real terms over the same period. Greek citizens are now facing an unprecedented crisis in social and human terms caused by the steep rise in unemployment (informed sources predicting that it will exceed 24% by the end of 2012), constant pay cuts and heavy taxation. Given that the memorandum of understanding for Greece requires a further 15% reduction in unit labour costs for the two-year period from 2012 to 2014:

1. Does the Commission consider an additional reduction of unit labour costs to be compatible with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy in terms of combating poverty and social exclusion, given that such a development will, with relentless mathematical precision, force a substantial part of the Greek population into poverty, not to say destitution?

2. Will the Commission as member of the Troika support or formulate alternative recommendations or equivalent measures to increase competitiveness which will not further undermine Greece's sorely tested social cohesion?

3. Does it have information regarding the reduction in unit labour costs in other EU Member States?

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

1. The figure mentioned for the fall in labour earnings, seems to be clearly on the high side when compared with available data.

Reductions in labour costs are a crucial condition for the Greek economy to regain competitiveness and to reduce unemployment. This can also come from reductions in non-wage labour costs and from productivity gains. A fall in unit labour costs does not necessarily translate into a corresponding reduction in purchasing power ([1]). Reforms of product and service markets are essential to ensure that lower costs are passed on to prices.

The Commission is of the view that a reduction of labour costs and the broader reform agenda included in the Economic Adjustment Programme and in line with the 2012 AGS ([2]), will support the economic and social recovery of Greece. The Commission and Council have recommended Greece to thoroughly implement the policies agreed under the Programme, in the context of the EU Semester. In order to avoid in-work poverty and making work pay, it also recommends in the Employment Package ([3]) careful design of in-work benefits and adjustable wage floors ([4]).

2. The Commission is monitoring the implementation of the 2nd EAP for Greece (March 2012) and assesses on a regular basis compliance with the policies defined in the associated MoU ([5]). These policies aim primarily to address Greece's budgetary and external accounts gaps and support growth and employment through deep structural reforms in the labour, product and services markets.

3. The Commission, together with the statistical authorities of the Member States, compile and publish data on labour costs in the Member States on a timely basis ([6]). The Commission produces also forecasts of labour costs evolution over the medium term.

([1]) If goods and services prices produced domestically decline.
([2]) Annual Growth Survey: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_en.pdf.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/headlines/news/2012/04/20120418_en.htm
([4]) So as not to prove detrimental to labour demand.
([5]) Memorandum of Understanding.
([6]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/labour_costs.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006671/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κοινωνικά άδικες οι παρεμβάσεις στη Συλλογική Αυτονομία και οι οριζόντιες μισθολογικές μειώσεις που προβλέπονται στο 1ο Μνημόνιο Δανεισμού της Ελλάδος

Σύμφωνα με απόφαση του Ειρηνοδικείου Αθηνών, οι νόμοι Ε-3833/2010 και Ε-3845/2010 οι οποίοι συντάχθηκαν με γνώμονα τις επαχθείς δεσμεύσεις που ανέλαβε η Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο του 1ου Μνημονίου Δανεισμού, και συγκεκριμένα το περιεχόμενό τους που προβλέπει αλλαγές στο καθεστώς της Συλλογικής Αυτονομίας αλλά και την οριζόντια μείωση αποδοχών και επιδομάτων των εργαζομένων στο Δημόσιο Τομέα, κρίθηκαν αντίθετες με την Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμβαση Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου, τις Διεθνείς Συμβάσεις Εργασίας και το Ελληνικό Σύνταγμα. Βασικά επιχειρήματα της Δικαστικής Αρχής για τη συγκεκριμένη υπόθεση υπήρξαν: α) Για τις παρεμβάσεις στο καθεστώς της συλλογικής αυτονομίας, αφενός ότι δεν συνδυάστηκαν με αντισταθμιστικά μέτρα (όπως οι μειώσεις σε φόρους και τιμές) ενώ αντιθέτως συνοδεύτηκαν με φοροεισπρακτικού χαρακτήρα μέτρα, και αφετέρου ότι ως «ρυθμίσεις εξαιρετικού χαρακτήρα», όπως χαρακτηρίστηκαν, δεν ορίζεται ένα σαφές και εύλογο χρονικό διάστημα για την επαναφορά στο προγενέστερο καθεστώς, ώστε αυτές να είναι συνταγματικά ανεκτές. β) Για τις περικοπές στους μισθούς στο Δημόσιο Τομέα, ότι πραγματοποιήθηκε μείωση ιδίου ύψους (οριζόντια) στις αποδοχές με συνέπεια να παραβιάζεται η αρχή της ισότητας και να εντοπίζεται μια κοινωνικά άδικη δυσαναλογία στην ανάληψη δημοσίων βαρών κατά των χαμηλόμισθων. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί το γεγονός ότι οι έλληνες πολίτες καλούνται να συμπράξουν στο στόχο της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, υφιστάμενοι μέτρα που κινούνται στο όριο της συνταγματικότητας και καταστρατηγούν στην πράξη διακηρυγμένες ευρωπαϊκές αρχές για κοινωνική δικαιοσύνη και ισότητα; Πόσο μπορεί αυτό να επηρεάσει την αποτελεσματικότητα του προγράμματος;

2. Με δεδομένη και τη συμμετοχή της στην «Τρόικα», επεξεργάζεται κάποιο σχέδιο για τον δραστικό περιορισμό της κοινωνικής αδικίας, που βιώνουν οι χαμηλόμισθοι και οι ευπαθείς κοινωνικές ομάδες στην Ελλάδα; Είναι διατεθειμένη να συμβάλει στην ανακούφισή τους με την αποδοχή τροποποιήσεων και την αντικατάσταση των συγκεκριμένων μέτρων από άλλα ισοδύναμα;

3. Προτίθεται να θέσει ένα σαφές χρονικό πλαίσιο για την επαναφορά του Συστήματος Συλλογικών Διαπραγματεύσεων, όπως ίσχυε μέχρι την προ-Μνημονίου εποχή και ήταν απόλυτα συμβατό με Ευρωπαϊκές και Διεθνείς Συμβάσεις για την προστασία των δικαιωμάτων του ανθρώπου;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Αυγούστου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει τις αποφάσεις δικαστηρίων των κρατών μελών. Τα μέτρα που συνιστούν τις προϋποθέσεις πολιτικής στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής συμφωνούνται μεταξύ του ΔΝΤ, της Επιτροπής εξ ονόματος των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ που παρέχουν το δάνειο και των ελληνικών αρχών. Οι τελευταίες αυτές αρχές καθορίζουν τις νομοθετικές διατάξεις που απαιτούνται για την εκπλήρωση των εν λόγω προϋποθέσεων στο πλαίσιο των ισχυουσών εθνικών νομικών και θεσμικών ρυθμίσεων. Η Επιτροπή ενεργεί εξ ονόματος των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ. Όλα τα μέρη μερίμνησαν για την τήρηση των σχετικών συμβάσεων της ΔΟΕ ([1]).

2. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας και υποβάλλει έκθεση στο Συμβούλιο και στα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ σε τακτική βάση, όπως απαιτείται από τις αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου δυνάμει του άρθρου 126 παράγραφος 9 και του άρθρου 136 της ΣΛΕΕ και από τη συμφωνία χορήγησης χρηματικού δανείου στην Ελλάδα. Η μισθολογική πολιτική στον δημόσιο τομέα αποτελεί αποκλειστική ευθύνη της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης. Εντούτοις, η Επιτροπή ενθαρρύνει τα κράτη μέλη που εφαρμόζουν παρόμοια προγράμματα να επιδιώκουν τη δίκαιη κατανομή των βαρών της οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

3. Το πρόγραμμα δεν αποθαρρύνει με κανένα τρόπο τις συλλογικές διαπραγματεύσεις. Μάλιστα, η Επιτροπή έχει παρατηρήσει αυξημένη δραστηριότητα συλλογικής διαπραγμάτευσης σε επίπεδο επιχείρησης και, πιο πρόσφατα, σε επίπεδο κλάδου επίσης. Λαμβανομένων υπόψη της απότομης αύξησης της ανεργίας και της ανάγκης μείωσης του κόστους παραγωγής στην Ελλάδα, κρίθηκε σκόπιμο να αναθεωρηθούν ορισμένοι κανόνες σχετικά με τη συλλογική διαπραγμάτευση, με σκοπό την προώθηση της πιο δραστικής προσαρμογής των μισθών στις μεταβολές της οικονομικής δραστηριότητας ώστε να προετοιμαστεί το έδαφος για τη βιώσιμη αύξηση της απασχόλησης. Ο στόχος αυτός αναμένεται να επιτευχθεί λαμβάνοντας καλύτερα υπόψη τις ειδικές συνθήκες που αντιμετωπίζουν οι μεμονωμένοι εργοδότες και ιδιαίτερα τις διάφορες επιπτώσεις της κρίσης στη δραστηριότητά τους.

([1]) Διεθνής Οργάνωση Εργασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006671/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Social injustices arising from interference in collective autonomy and pay cuts across the board under the first Loan Memorandum for Greece

Under a judgment issued by the Athens District Court, the provisions of laws E-3833/2010 and E-3845/2010 regarding the burdensome commitments undertaken by Greece under the first Loan Memorandum, in particular those concerning the envisaged changes to collective autonomy and cuts in public sector pay and entitlements across the board, run counter to the European Convention on Human Rights, international labour conventions and the Greek Constitution. The basic arguments put forward by the Court were that:

(a)On the one hand, these interferences with collective autonomy were accompanied not by compensatory measures (such as tax and price cuts) but, on the contrary, by further fiscal measures, while, on the other hand, although the measures were described as being of an 'exceptional nature', no clear or reasonable timescale had been indicated for a return to the status quo, as required under the Constitution;

(b) The flat-rate public sector pay cuts across the board infringed the principle of equal treatment and created a social injustice by placing a disproportionately high burden on low earners.

In view of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of the fact that Greek citizens are being called upon to collaborate in measures bordering on the unconstitutional in a bid to achieve financial reform, thereby undermining in practice the avowed European principles of social justice and equality? To what extent could this influence the effectiveness of the programme?

2. Given that the Commission forms part of the 'Troika', is it drawing up any plans for the radical curtailment of social injustices afflicting low earners and vulnerable social categories in Greece? Is it prepared to assist them by adopting amendments overturning the offending provisions favour of others producing an equivalent result?

3. Will it set a clear deadline for a return to the collective bargaining arrangements in place prior to the Memorandum which were fully in accordance with European and international conventions on the protection of individual rights?

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

1. The Commission does not comment rulings by Courts of the Member States (MS). The measures that constitute the policy conditionality under the economic adjustment programme are agreed between the IMF, the Commission on behalf of the lending Euro Area Member States and the Greek authorities. The latter frame the legal provisions needed to comply with that conditionality into the existing national legal and institutional arrangements. The Commission is acting on behalf of the Euro Area MS. All parties have been keen on respecting the relevant ILO ([1]) conventions.

2. The Commission is monitoring the implementation of the economic adjustment programme of Greece and reports to the Council and the Euro Area MS on a regular basis as requested by the Council Decisions under Articles 126(9) and 136 of TFEU and the Greek Financial Loan Agreement. Wage policy for public sector employees is the sole responsibility of the Greek Government. Nonetheless, the Commission encourages MS under a programme to pursue a fair distribution of the burden of economic adjustment.

3. The programme in no way discourages collective bargaining. In fact, the Commission has taken notice of increasing collective bargaining activity at firm, and more recently, also at sector level. Against the sharp increases in unemployment and the need to lower the costs of producing in Greece, it was found appropriate to revise some rules on collective bargaining with a view to promoting a stronger responsiveness of wages to economic activity in order to pave the way for a sustainable increase in employment. That is expected to be achieved by better taking account of the specific conditions faced by individual employers, notably the differentiated impact of the crisis on their activity.

([1]) International Labour Organisation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006672/12
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: La questione della sanità in Campania

La Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea stabilisce, all'articolo 35 — «Protezione della salute» — che ogni individuo ha il diritto di accedere alla prevenzione sanitaria e che l'Unione europea ha il compito di garantire, tramite le legislazioni nazionali, un livello elevato di protezione della salute umana.

L'alta percentuale di pazienti che in Campania, ritenendo di trovare cure mediche migliori al di fuori della propria regione, si sottopone ad una vera e propria «migrazione sanitaria» che costa alla regione circa 400 milioni di euro, mostra che il sistema sanitario regionale è affetto da una forte carenza qualitativa, sia nel servizio pubblico che in quello privato, sottraendosi in tal modo ai requisiti stabiliti dall'Unione europea.

Pertanto, in considerazione dei fatti più sopra indicati, si chiede alla Commissione quanto segue:

1. non crede la Commissione che, conformemente alle disposizioni della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, ogni cittadino europeo abbia diritto all'assistenza sanitaria e che in tutti i 27 Stati membri dell'Unione debba essere garantito in modo eguale il suo elevato livello?

2. non crede la Commissione che la carente qualità del sistema sanitario in Campania, o di qualsiasi altra regione dell'UE in condizioni simili, possa portare le amministrazioni competenti a dover subire sanzioni o in taluni casi a trovarsi esclusa da programmi finanziati dall'UE in tema di salute e tutela dei consumatori?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(23 agosto 2012)

L'articolo 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali stabilisce che ogni individuo ha il diritto di accedere alla prevenzione sanitaria e di ottenere cure mediche alle condizioni stabilite dalle legislazioni e prassi nazionali. L'articolo non impone tuttavia agli Stati membri di mettere in atto siffatte legislazioni e prassi né di garantire un elevato livello di assistenza. Ai sensi del trattato sul funzionamento della UE, l'organizzazione e la fornitura di servizi sanitari e di assistenza medica compete agli Stati membri.

La direttiva 2011/24/UE ([1]) concernente l'applicazione dei diritti dei pazienti relativi all'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera, che dovrà essere recepita dagli Stati membri entro il 25 ottobre 2013, impone agli Stati stessi di mettere a disposizione del pubblico informazioni relative alle norme di qualità e di sicurezza. Questo aumento dell'informazione disponibile avvantaggierà tutti i cittadini della UE non solo quelli cui interessa ricevere un'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera. La Commissione e gli Stati membri si adoperano inoltre a favore di uno scambio di pratiche esemplari nel campo dei sistemi di controllo della qualità grazie al finanziamento del Programma sanitario (2008-2013).

Per il nuovo periodo di programmazione (2014-2020) dei Fondi strutturali, la Commissione propone una condizionalità ex ante sulla salute che imponga agli Stati membri di tracciare un quadro strategico e finanziario per gli investimenti nel settore sanitario.

I programmi sulla salute e i consumatori non prevedono tuttavia tale condizionalità ex ante né mirano a finanziare progetti di sviluppo strutturale nelle regioni. Essi sostengono lo sviluppo delle politiche UE e lo scambio di pratiche esemplari tra Stati membri.

([1]) GU L 88 del 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006672/12
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Health services in Campania

Article 35 — 'Healthcare' — of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights states that everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare, the Union's task being to provide, through national laws, for a high level of human health protection.

In Campania, a high percentage of patients, believing that they can obtain better treatment outside their home region, embark on out-and-out 'health migration', entailing a cost of roughly EUR 400 million to the region. This shows that regional health services, both public and private, are of woefully poor quality and thus fall short of EU requirements.

1. Does the Commission not believe that, under the Charter of Fundamental Rights, every European citizen is entitled to healthcare and a high level of care must be guaranteed equally in all 27 Member States?

2. Does it not believe that, if health services are not of the requisite quality, whether in Campania or in any other EU region in a similar situation, the authorities responsible should incur penalties or, in certain cases, the regions in question should be excluded from EU-funded health and consumer protection programmes?

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

Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights stipulates that everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. This Article, however, neither obliges Member States to establish those laws and practices, nor to ensure a high level of care. According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care is the responsibility of the Member States.

Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, due to be transposed by Member States by 25 October 2013, requires each Member State to make available to the public information on quality and safety standards. This increase in available information will benefit all EU citizens, not only those who are interested in receiving cross-border healthcare. In addition, the Commission and the Member States are working on an exchange of good practice on quality assurance systems with the financial support of the health programme (2008-2013).

For the new programming period (2014-2020) of the structural funds, the Commission has proposed a health-related *ex-ante* conditionality requiring Member States to have an established strategic and budgetary framework for health investment.

The Health and Consumer Programmes, however, do not include such an *ex-ante* conditionality, nor do they aim at financing structural development projects in regions. They support EU policy development and the exchange of best practices between the Member States.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006673/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Assicurazione per i disabili mentali

Dopo anni di lotte anche in Italia sarà applicata la legge 18 del 3 marzo 2009, che recepisce la Convezione dell'ONU sui diritti delle persone con disabilità, a norma della quale tutte le persone affette da disagio mentale potranno stipulare una polizza d'assicurazione contro gli infortuni o le malattie. In particolar modo l'articolo 25 della legge sottolinea che queste persone devono poter ottenere, nei paesi nei quali è consentito dalla legislazione nazionale, un'assicurazione sulla vita.

La Commissione:

1. può indicare in quanti e quali paesi dell'UE tale legge è stata già applicata?

2. non crede che sia necessario un controllo, attraverso le associazioni o gli enti preposti, sulle compagnie di assicurazione affinché tale regolamento sia adeguatamente applicato?

3. se per disagio mentale si intendono anche forme di grave depressione, non crede che sia importante armonizzare, all'interno dell'UE, i criteri di identificazione di queste patologie affinché le persone affette possano godere degli stessi diritti dei cittadini colpiti da altre disabilità?

4. ritiene di presentare al Consiglio una proposta affinché il diritto all'assicurazione per i disabili sia garantito in tutti gli Stati dell'Unione?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(24 agosto 2012)

La Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità (UNCPRD) è stata firmata dall'Unione europea e da tutti gli Stati membri, ventidue dei quali l'hanno già ratificata. La procedura di ratifica è invece ancora in corso in Finlandia, Irlanda, Malta, Paesi Bassi e Polonia. Tutti gli Stati Parti dovranno rispettare il disposto dell'articolo 25, lettera e), cioè «vietare nel settore delle assicurazioni le discriminazioni a danno delle persone con disabilità, le quali devono poter ottenere, a condizioni eque e ragionevoli, un'assicurazione per malattia e, nei paesi nei quali sia consentito dalla legislazione nazionale, un'assicurazione sulla vita».

L'UE è vincolata dall'UNCRPD nei limiti delle proprie competenze, ma l'adesione a questo trattato internazionale non modifica la suddivisione delle competenze tra l'Unione e i suoi Stati membri. Questi ultimi, infatti, sono responsabili del rispetto dei loro obblighi ai sensi della Convenzione. L'attuazione da parte degli Stati Parti dell'UNCRPD viene monitorata anzitutto mediante una struttura a livello nazionale, come previsto dall'articolo 33 della Convenzione. L'eventuale ruolo di monitoraggio da parte della Commissione riguarda unicamente il modo in cui gli Stati membri attuano ed applicano la normativa UE rientrante nel campo d'applicazione della Convenzione.

Le decisioni sullo stato di disabilità e, di conseguenza, sui relativi diritti e benefici sono di esclusiva competenza delle autorità nazionali, a cui spetta quindi stabilire, per esempio, se gravi forme di depressione possano essere definite disabilità e debbano pertanto rientrare nel campo d'applicazione dell'UNCRPD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006673/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Insurance for persons with mental disabilities

After years of struggle Law 18 of 3 March 2009 transposing into Italian law the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which stipulates that all persons with mental disabilities may take out insurance against accidents or sickness, will finally enter into force. In particular, Article 25 of the law emphasises that such persons must be able to obtain life insurance in those countries whose national laws make provision for such an arrangement.

1. Can the Commission state which EU Member States have already introduced similar laws?

2. Does it not take the view that insurance companies should be monitored by associations or the relevant supervisory bodies with a view to ensuring that the laws in question are properly applied?

3. If mental disability also covers serious forms of depression, does it not regard it as important that the criteria governing the identification of such diseases should be harmonised in the EU, so that the persons affected can enjoy the same rights as those with other disabilities?

4. Will it submit to the Council a proposal designed to ensure that persons with disabilities are entitled to insurance in all the EU Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 August 2012)

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) was signed by all EU Member States and the European Union. Twenty-two Member States have ratified the Convention, while the ratification procedure is still ongoing in Finland, Ireland, Malta, Netherlands and Poland. All state parties to the Convention will have to comply with the requirement expressed in Article 25.e and 'prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of health insurance, and life insurance where such insurance is permitted by national law, which shall be provided in a fair and reasonable manner'.

While the EU is bound by the UNCRPD to the extent of its competences, the adherence to this international treaty does not change the division of competences between the EU and its Member States. It is the responsibility of the Member States themselves to comply with their obligations under the UNCRPD. The implementation by the state parties of the UNCRPD is in the first place monitored by a framework set up at national level, as required by Art.33, UNCRPD. Any monitoring role of the Commission in this regard is limited to how Member States implement and apply EU legislation falling under the scope of the Convention.

Decisions on disability status and therefore on connected rights and benefits are of the exclusive competence of national authorities. This concerns for example the question whether serious forms of depression qualify as a disability and would come under the scope of the UNCRPD.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006674/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Siero anti-malaria

Di recente le cronache hanno riportato la notizia di un siero anti-zanzara che, una volta iniettato, renderebbe per circa 18 ore il sangue letale per gli insetti. A sperimentarlo è stato il biologo olandese Bart Knols, il quale afferma che se tutti prendessero questa pillola per tre settimane ci sarebbe la possibilità di debellare la malaria che, ancora oggi, uccide nel mondo due bambini ogni minuto. Lo scienziato, però, non sa ancora se tale cura possa essere innocua per donne incinte e bambini e per perfezionare i suoi studi è alla ricerca di fondi.

La Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza di questo nuovo ritrovato medico?

2. ha avuto richieste per finanziarne la ricerca?

3. ritiene di prendere informazioni in merito?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(23 agosto 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della notizia riportata recentemente sulla stampa su prodotti anti-zanzara che, utilizzati per uccidere le zanzare portatrici della malaria, potrebbero potenzialmente essere utilizzati per controllare la malattia. Tuttavia, poco è stato riferito di questa scoperta nella letteratura scientifica, il che rende difficile valutare e controllare la validità delle asserzioni.

La Commissione, che non ha ricevuto domande di finanziamento per questa specifica linea di ricerca, sostiene un'ampia gamma di altre attività di ricerca sulla malaria mediante il 7° programma quadro ([1]) e attraverso il partenariato Europa-Paesi in via di sviluppo per gli studi clinici (*European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership* — EDCTP) ([2]). Vi rientrano 6 progetti di ricerca sul miglioramento degli strumenti e delle tecnologie per il controllo della zanzara anofele, con un finanziamento di oltre 29 milioni di euro. Inoltre, a seguito del recente invito a presentare proposte FP7-HEALTH-2012-INNOVATION-1 ([3]), è in fase di negoziazioni un progetto coordinato dal dott. Bart Knols intitolato «MCD — *A low cost mosquito contamination device for sustainable malaria mosquito control*» (MCD — dispositivo a basso costo per il controllo sostenibile della zanzara anofele).

([1]) Decisione n. 1982/2006/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 18 dicembre 2006, concernente il settimo programma quadro della Comunità europea per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2007-2013), GU L 412 del 30.12.2006, pag. 1.

([2]) Decisione n. 1209/2003/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 giugno 2003, concernente la partecipazione della Comunità a un programma di ricerca e sviluppo destinato a sviluppare nuovi interventi clinici per lottare contro l'HIV/AIDS, la malaria e la tubercolosi grazie a un partenariato a lungo termine tra l'Europa e i paesi in via di sviluppo, realizzato da più Stati membri, GU L 169 dell'8.7.2003, pag. 1.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/cooperation?callIdentifier=FP7-HEALTH-2012-INNOVATION-1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006674/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Anti-malaria serum

Recently, reports have appeared in the press concerning an anti-mosquito serum which, once injected, makes blood lethal to the insects for around 18 hours. This has been verified experimentally by the Dutch biologist Bart Knols, who claims that if everybody took this pill for three weeks, it would be possible to defeat malaria, which is still killing two children every minute worldwide. However, the scientist does not yet know whether this procedure can be harmless to pregnant women and children, and he is seeking funding in order to complete his research.

1. Is the Commission aware of this medical discovery?

2. Has the Commission received any requests for funding of relevant research?

3. Will it seek information on the subject?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

The Commission is aware of the recent reports in the press about an anti-mosquito product that potentially could be used to control malaria by killing the disease carrying mosquitos. However, little has been reported about this discovery in the scientific literature, making it difficult to evaluate and scrutinise the validity of the claims.

The Commission has not received any request for funding for this specific line of research, but the Commission supports a wide range of other malaria research activities through the 7th Framework Programme ([1]) and through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) ([2]). This includes 6 research projects on improved tools and technologies to control the malaria mosquito for more than EUR29 million. Furthermore, following the recent call for proposals FP7-HEALTH-2012-INNOVATION-1 ([3]), a project coordinated by Dr Bart Knols titled 'MCD — A low cost mosquito contamination device for sustainable malaria mosquito control' is currently under negotiation.

([1]) Decision No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013), OJ 2006/L 412/1.

([2]) Decision No 1209/2003/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 June 2003 on Community participation in a research and development programme aimed at developing new clinical interventions to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through a long-term partnership between Europe and developing countries, undertaken by several Member States, OJ 2003/L169/1.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/cooperation?callIdentifier=FP7-HEALTH-2012-INNOVATION-1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006675/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(3 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Tratta di esseri umani

Dal rapporto sulla «tratta degli esseri umani» redatto dal Dipartimento di Stato americano risulta che nel mondo ci sono 27 milioni di persone ridotte in schiavitù nelle maniere più diverse: per fini sessuali, lavori forzati, manodopera infantile, arruolamento in reparti militari. La maggior parte di loro è concentrata in Asia, Africa e America meridionale. I paesi in cui si registra maggiormente il fenomeno sono, tra gli altri, Algeria, Siria, Libia, Iran, Sudan, Congo, Nord Corea. C'è anche un gruppo di nazioni «sotto osservazione», in cui si registra un alto numero di vittime, ma di cui difficilmente si hanno notizie. Tra esse spiccano Cina e Russia. Dal rapporto si evince che nel 2011 sono stati liberati appena 42 291 nuovi schiavi, quasi tutti in Europa e Nord America. Nei paesi dove è più alta la concentrazione, invece, non sono rispettati affatto gli standard minimi di lotta alla tratta.

La Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza del Rapporto e soprattutto dell'esistenza della tratta di nuovi schiavi anche in Europa?

2. considerato il numero di persone salvate dalla schiavitù in Europa, come giustifica la presenza del fenomeno malgrado l'esistenza di apposite leggi?

3. Come può l'UE collaborare con le rappresentanze di paesi inclusi nelle zone geopolitiche incriminate per non lasciare a pochi singoli rappresentanti delle polizie locali il compito di arginare il fenomeno?

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

La Commissione ha preso nota della relazione sulla tratta di esseri umani del Dipartimento di Stato degli Stati Uniti. La tratta di esseri umani è un fenomeno in costante evoluzione: i trafficanti adattano i loro metodi di reclutamento, trasferimento e sfruttamento delle vittime, rendendone più difficile il rintracciamento. La Commissione ha assunto un solenne impegno nei confronti della lotta a questa grave violazione dei diritti dell'uomo. Di conseguenza, in questi ultimi anni sono state adottate diverse iniziative.

È stato designato un coordinatore antitratta dell'Unione (UE-CAT) con il compito di fornire un orientamento strategico complessivo in materia di tratta di esseri umani in modo da migliorare il coordinamento e la coerenza tra le istituzioni e le agenzie dell'UE, nonché gli Stati membri, i paesi terzi e gli operatori internazionali.

La Commissione ha recentemente adottato una strategia dell'UE ([1]), riconoscendo la necessità di una risposta pluridisciplinare nell'affrontare in modo coordinato e completo questo grave fenomeno. Prioritari sono la prevenzione del crimine, l'azione penale contro i trafficanti, la protezione delle vittime, la cooperazione e il coordinamento fra gli operatori del settore, il miglioramento delle conoscenze e una risposta efficace alle tendenze emergenti. La strategia integra la direttiva 2011/36/UE ([2]) che presenta un'impostazione incentrata sulle vittime e sui diritti dell'uomo, e che deve essere recepita dagli Stati membri entro il 6 aprile 2013.

Il Consiglio ha adottato nel 2009 un documento mirato all'azione sul rafforzamento della dimensione esterna dell'UE nell'azione contro la tratta degli esseri umani, che si collega alla politica dell'UE in materia di relazioni esterne e alle attività di programmazione con i paesi e regioni terzi e le organizzazioni a livello internazionale. La prima relazione di attuazione raccomandava di elaborare un elenco di paesi e regioni terzi prioritari in vista di future partnership in questo settore entro dicembre 2012.

La Commissione affronta anche il problema della tratta di esseri umani a livello europeo e internazionale attraverso i suoi programmi di finanziamento ([3]).

([1]) Strategia dell'UE per l'eradicazione della tratta di esseri umani 2012-2016: http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/crime/docs/trafficking_in_human_beings_eradication-2012_2016_en.pdf

([2]) Direttiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 aprile 2011, concernente la prevenzione e la repressione della tratta degli esseri umani e la protezione delle vittime.

([3]) La Commissione finanzia una serie di progetti che possono essere consultati sul sito web dedicato alla lotta contro la tratta di esseri umani: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/trafficking-in-human-beings/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006675/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(3 July 2012)

Subject: Trafficking in persons

According to the US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons report, across the world 27 million people are living in various forms of slavery, ranging from sex trafficking, forced labour and child labour to unlawful recruitment into armed forces. Most of the victims are in Asia, Africa and South America. The countries in which the problem is most acute include Algeria, Syria, Libya, Iran, Sudan, Congo and North Korea. Another group of countries, in which there are a large number of victims but details are hard to come by, are on a 'watch list'. Prominent among those countries are China and Russia. According to the figures given in the report, in 2011 no more than 42 291 trafficking victims were identified and helped, almost all of them in Europe and North America. However, in the countries where the number of victims is highest, the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking are being ignored.

1. Is the Commission aware of this report and of the existence of a modern-day slave trade, including in Europe?

2. In view of the number of persons who have been saved from slavery in Europe, how can it account for slavery's continued existence despite the laws against it?

3. How can the EU cooperate with representatives of the countries in the offending geopolitical areas, so as not to leave the problem solely in the hands of a small number of local police officers?

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

The Commission has noted the US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report. Human trafficking is an ever-changing phenomenon: traffickers adapt their recruiting, transporting and exploitation methods, making it harder to track them. The Commission is deeply committed to addressing this gross violation of human rights. Therefore, a number of initiatives have been taken in recent years.

An EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator (EU ATC) was appointed to provide an overall strategic policy orientation for trafficking in human beings so as to improve the coordination and coherence between EU institutions and EU agencies as well as Member States, third countries and international actors.

The Commission recently adopted an EU Strategy ([1]), recognising the need for a multidisciplinary response addressing human trafficking in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. It prioritises the prevention of the crime, prosecution of traffickers, protection of the victims, cooperation and coordination among relevant actors and the increase of knowledge and effective response to emerging trends. The strategy complements Directive 2011/36/EU ([2]) which takes a human rights and victim-centred approach, and which is to be transposed by the Member States by 6 April 2013.

The Council adopted in 2009 the Action Oriented Paper (AOP) on strengthening the EU external dimension on combating trafficking in human beings, which links to the EU's external relations policy and the programming activities with third countries, regions and organisations at international level. The first implementation report recommended developing a list of priority third countries and regions for future partnerships in this field by December 2012.

The Commission also addresses human trafficking issue at the European and international level, through its funding programmes ([3]).

([1]) EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016: http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/crime/docs/trafficking_in_human_beings_eradication-2012_2016_en.pdf.

([2]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.

([3]) It funds a variety of projects which can be found on the Anti-Trafficking website — http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-006676/12
do Komisji
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(4 lipca 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Dalsze pytanie w sprawie danych z przeprowadzonej przez Komisję oceny skutków dotyczących przedsiębiorczości kobiet w UE

W nawiązaniu do odpowiedzi na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004603/2012, udzielonej przez p. Tajaniego w dniu 21 czerwca 2012 r., chciałabym zapytać, jak Komisja, a w szczególności DG ds. Przedsiębiorstw i Przemysłu, może udowodnić, że budżet wydatków i alokacja funduszy są neutralne płciowo, czego zapewnienie jest prawnym obowiązkiem Komisji na mocy prawodawstwa dotyczącego równouprawnienia płci, jeżeli Komisja nie gromadzi odpowiednich danych segregowanych według kryterium płci?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Antonia Tajaniego w imieniu Komisji
(13 sierpnia 2012 r.)

Komisja podlega zobowiązaniom określonym w art. 89.1 i 109.1 rozporządzenia finansowego Komisji, które nakłada obowiązek równego traktowania wszystkich jej działań finansowych. Oznacza to między innymi, że każdy urzędnik uznany za winnego dyskryminacji ze względu na płeć podlega postępowaniu dyscyplinarnemu. Weryfikacja, czy ta ogólna zasada równego traktowania, jest skutecznie stosowana przy każdej transakcji finansowej, jest stałym elementem systemów kontroli stosowanych do wszystkich rodzajów wydatków.

Komisja realizuje również projekty, które są w szczególności ukierunkowane na wspieranie kobiet. Są one prowadzone w ramach programu Small Business Act i obejmują:

— Europejską Sieć Ambasadorek Przedsiębiorczości: od 2009 r. 320 odnoszących sukcesy kobiet przedsiębiorców w 22 państwach europejskich służy za wzór i promuje przedsiębiorczość wśród kobiet w każdym wieku. Ambasadorki przyczyniły się również do utworzenia co najmniej 201 nowych przedsiębiorstw należących do kobiet;

— Europejską Sieć Mentorów Dla Kobiet Przedsiębiorców, zrzeszającą 170 mentorów w UE zapewniających doradztwo i wsparcie dla kobiet przedsiębiorców we wczesnych fazach prowadzenia ich przedsiębiorstw.

Ponadto Komisja przeprowadza analizę skutków projektu pod kątem płci, np. spośród przedsiębiorców zgłoszonych i zaakceptowanych do udziału w programie „Erasmus" dla młodych przedsiębiorców, kobiety stanowią 45 % zarejestrowanych nowych przedsiębiorców i 23 % zarejestrowanych przyjmujących przedsiębiorców. Jest to wynik otwartej, konkurencyjnej procedury naboru dla biorących udział w programie przedsiębiorców. W celu dalszej poprawy równowagi płci Komisja promuje program w ramach sieci przedsiębiorczości kobiet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006676/12
to the Commission
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(4 July 2012)

Subject: Follow-up question on the Commission's impact assessment data on women entrepreneurs in the EU

Following the reply to Written Question E-004603/2012 given by Mr Tajani on 21 June 2012, I would like to ask how the Commission, particularly DG Enterprise, can demonstrate that expenditure budgets and the allocation of funds are gender-neutral, in accordance with its legal obligation under EU gender equality legislation, when it does not collect relevant gender-disaggregated data.

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2012)

The Commission is subject to the obligations established in Articles 89.1 and 109.1 of its Financial Regulation, which imposes the general principle of equal treatment to all its financial activities. *Inter alia*, any official found responsible of gender discrimination would be subject to disciplinary procedures. The verification that the general principle of equal treatment is effectively applied in each financial transaction is embedded in the control systems applied to all kinds of expenditure.

The Commission is also implementing projects that are specifically geared towards supporting women. Those are carried out under the Small Business Act for Europe and include:

— the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors: since 2009, 320 successful female entrepreneurs in 22 European countries have been serving as inspiring role models and promoting entrepreneurship among women of all ages. The ambassadors have also helped to set up at least 201 new women-owned enterprises;

— the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs, which offers advice and support to women entrepreneurs during the early phases of their businesses through 170 mentors in the EU.

Furthermore, the Commission analyses a project's impact in gender terms: e.g., out of the entrepreneurs registered and accepted for Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, 45% of the registered New Entrepreneurs and 23% of the registered Host Entrepreneurs are women. This is the result of an open, competitive recruitment procedure for participating entrepreneurs. To further improve the gender balance, the Commission is promoting the programme through its Women Entrepreneurship Network.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006677/12
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(4 July 2012)

Subject: Youth jobs guarantee

1. Has the Commission any plans to implement an EU-wide 'youth jobs guarantee'?

2. If not, will the Commission cooperate with — and facilitate the efforts of — Member States who wish to implement a youth jobs guarantee using, for example, ESF funds?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

The European Commission has announced that, in December 2012, it will propose a Council recommendation on youth guarantees. In doing so, the Commission intends to recommend that Member States implement such schemes, taking into account their diversity and different starting points.

In the staff working document 'Elements for a Common Strategic Framework 2014 to 2020' ([1]), the Commission proposes that one 'key action for the European Social Fund is to contribute to the sustainable integration of the NEETs into the labour market by the introduction of a "Youth Guarantee", with a particular focus on apprenticeship-type vocational training and internships for graduates to acquire first work experience'. Such funding should significantly facilitate Member States' efforts to implement such schemes.

([1]) SWD (2012) 61 final of 14 March 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006683/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Programa de Desarrollo Rural en Galicia

El Programa de Desarrollo Rural (PDR) de Galicia para el período 2007-2013 aplica las disposiciones del Reglamento (CE) n° 1698/2005, de 20 de septiembre de 2005, relativo a la ayuda al desarrollo rural a través del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader). En el proceso de formulación estratégica del PDR de Galicia, se tuvo en cuenta el elevado peso económico y social de los sectores agrícola y forestal en el conjunto de la economía gallega, así como la situación de dependencia que presenta gran parte del espacio rural, de las explotaciones agrícolas y de los agricultores que ejercen las actividades agrícola y silvícola. Sin embargo, el PDR de Galicia no corresponde a los objetivos establecidos, puesto que no ha respondido con la agilidad y el rigor que serían necesarios a la transformación y la adecuación a la convergencia comunitaria de las explotaciones agrícolas gallegas y del sector rural de Galicia. La aplicación del PDR por parte del Gobierno de Galicia se ha revelado como un proceso lento y absolutamente ineficaz, llegando incluso a la no utilización de innumerables ayudas que estaban previstas y presupuestadas para los años 2010 y 2011, que ni siquiera fueron puestas a disposición de los interesados, o a la reducción significativa de los montantes de las ayudas o el hecho de que los respectivos beneficiarios no hubiesen cobrado las ayudas desde 2009. La falta de transparencia del Gobierno de Galicia en la gestión de los fondos comunitarios destinados al desarrollo rural también es absolutamente preocupante.

En la última reunión del Comité de Seguimiento, celebrada en Sober (Lugo) el 10 de junio de 2011, la Comisión Europea constató que el órgano de gestión había admitido que tenía atrasos tanto en la convocatoria de propuestas como en los procedimientos de ejecución, de forma que no se podían efectuar los pagos hasta que no se ultimasen los procedimientos de control.

¿Puede informar la Comisión del estado actual de esta situación?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de agosto de 2012)

En respuesta a la pregunta sobre la gestión del Programa de Desarrollo Rural en Galicia ((PDR) para el período 2007-2013, hay que señalar en primer lugar que la autoridad de gestión es responsable de la gestión y aplicación eficiente, eficaz y correcta del programa (artículo 75 del Reglamento (CE) n° 1698/2005 ([1])), de conformidad con el principio de subsidiariedad por el que se rige la implementación de los programas de desarrollo rural.

Si bien se registraron retrasos al principio de la aplicación del programa, según los últimos datos disponibles a 31 de marzo de 2012, el grado de ejecución del PDR en Galicia es del 44,31 %, siendo la media nacional de 42,71 %. En comparación, el grado de ejecución del PDR en Galicia a finales de 2010 era del 34,45 %. Los niveles de ejecución del programa por eje son de 46,58 % para el eje 1 (aumento de la competitividad de los sectores agrícola y forestal), 51,39 % para el eje 2 (mejora del medio ambiente y del espacio rural mediante la gestión de las tierras), 39,01 % para el eje 3 (mejora de la calidad de vida en las zonas rurales y fomento de la diversificación de la actividad económica) y 16,77 % para el eje 4 (Leader).

La Comisión supervisa periódicamente la aplicación del programa de Galicia, en particular en las reuniones de los comités de seguimiento y en las reuniones anuales.

([1]) DO L 277 de 21.10.2005, pp. 1-40.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006683/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 July 2012)

Subject: Galicia's rural development programme

Galicia's rural development programme (RDP) for 2007 to 2013 gives effect to Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The strategy underlying the Galician RDP has allowed for the considerable economic and social weight of the agricultural and forestry sectors within the Galician economy as a whole and for the state of dependence extending to most rural areas, farms, and farmers working in agriculture and forestry. The Galician RDP, however, is failing to achieve the aims laid down, as it has not been responding with the necessary speed and rigour to the changes that Galician farms and the rural world are undergoing or to the moves towards EU-wide convergence. The Galician Government's implementation of the RDP has proved to be a slow process and totally ineffective: so much so that innumerable aids provided for in the budgets for the years 2010 and 2011 were not used; secondly, the amount of aid has been greatly cut and those for whom it is intended have received nothing since 2009. The lack of transparency in the Government's management of EU rural development funds is a further source of serious anxiety.

At the last meeting of the Monitoring Committee, held in Sober (Lugo) on 10 June 2011, the Commission noted the managing body's admission that there had been delays in both the call for proposals and the implementing procedures. This means that no payments can be made while checks have still to be completed.

Can the Commission outline the current state of play?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(7 août 2012)

En réponse à la question relative à la gestion du Programme de Développement Rural en Galice (PDR) pour le période 2007-2013, il convient de préciser en premier lieu que l'autorité de gestion désignée est responsable de la gestion et de la mise en œuvre efficaces, effectives et correctes du programme (cf. article 75 du règlement (CE) 1698/2005 ([1])), en conformité avec le principe de subsidiarité qui régit la mise en œuvre des programmes de développement rural.

Si des retards ont pu être constatés au début de la mise en œuvre du programme, selon les dernières données disponibles au 31 mars 2012 le taux d'exécution du PDR en Galice est de 44,31 %, la moyenne nationale étant de 42.71 %. À titre de comparaison, l'exécution du PDR en Galicie était de 34.45 % fin 2010. Les niveaux d'exécution du programme par axe sont de 46.58 % pour l'axe 1 (amélioration de la compétitivité des secteurs agricole et forestier), 51.39 % pour l'axe 2 (amélioration de l'environnement et de l'espace rural par la gestion des terres), 39.01 % pour l'axe 3 (amélioration de la qualité de la vie en milieu rural et promotion de la diversification des activités économiques) et 16.77 % pour l'axe 4 (Leader).

La Commission suit régulièrement la mise en œuvre du programme de Galice, y compris lors de réunions de comités de suivi et des réunions annuelles.

([1]) JO L 277, 21.10.2005, pp. 1-40.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-006692/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(4 iulie 2012)

Subiect: Înghețarea conturilor clienților de către o bancă din Italia

La începutul lunii iunie, Banca Network Investimenti din Italia a decis înghețarea conturilor clienților săi, iar recent a anunțat că înghețarea va fi prelungită cu încă două luni. Prin această decizie au fost afectați circa 28 000 de clienți. Potrivit presei italiene, alte zece bănci aflate, de asemenea, sub administrare specială ar putea să recurgă la măsuri excepționale similare.

Având în vedere implicațiile transfrontaliere ale acestei situații, respectiv faptul că o parte dintre clienții afectați nu sunt cetățeni italieni, Comisia este rugată să precizeze care sunt aspectele relevante pentru protecția consumatorilor europeni de servicii bancare și care sunt măsurile pe care ar putea să le adopte având în vedere problema creată.

Răspuns dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(20 august 2012)

Directiva 94/19/CE ([1]) prevede că statele membre (SM) trebuie să creeze sisteme de garantare a depozitelor care să asigure protejarea deponenților. În cazul în care depozitele dintr-o bancă devin indisponibile, sistemul de garantare a depozitelor trebuie să asigure compensarea deponenților, pentru o sumă de până la 100 000 EUR. Această compensație trebuie plătită deponenților în termen de 20 de zile de la data la care autoritățile competente constată că depozitele au devenit indisponibile. Acest termen poate fi prelungit cu 10 zile în circumstanțe excepționale. Italia a încorporat directiva sus-menționată în legislația națională printr-un Decret Legislativ ([2]).

Directiva 97/9/CE ([3]) prevede introducerea în toate SM a unor sisteme de compensare pentru investitori recunoscute oficial. Sistemele respective compensează investitorii cu minimum 20 000 EUR în cazul incapacității unei întreprinderi de investiții de a rambursa investitorilor fondurile care le sunt datorate sau care le aparțin și pe care aceasta le deține în numele lor în legătură cu activitățile de investiții sau de a restitui investitorilor orice instrument care le aparține și pe care îl deține, administrează sau gestionează în numele acestora în legătură cu activitatea de investiții. Sistemele acoperă, de asemenea, investitorii de la sucursalele înființate de întreprinderile de investiții în alte SM. Sistemul trebuie să fie în măsură să plătească creanțele în termen de trei luni de la stabilirea eligibilității și a valorii creanței. Termenul limită poate fi prelungit cu încă trei luni.

Ambele directive se aplică tuturor clienților afectați, indiferent de cetățenia acestora. Legislația italiană de punere în aplicare ([4]) pare a fi, la prima vedere, în conformitate cu directivele. Implementarea în cazuri individuale a legislației de punere în aplicare ține de responsabilitatea exclusivă a autorităților italiene. Comisia ar putea interveni numai în cazul unor încălcări evidente ale directivei.

([1]) Directiva 94/19/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 30 mai 1994 privind sistemele de garantare a depozitelor, modificată prin Directiva 2009/14/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 11 martie 2009, JO L 68, 13.3.2009, p. 3-7.
([2]) Decretul Legislativ nr. 49 din 24 martie 2011.
([3]) Directiva 97/9/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 3 martie 1997 privind sistemele de compensare pentru investitori, JO L 84, 26.3.1997 p. 22.
([4]) Directiva 97/9/CE a fost pusă în aplicare în dreptul italian prin Decretul Ministerial nr. 485 din 14.11.1997, prin Decretul Ministerial din 30.6.1998 și prin Decretul Legislativ nr. 415 din 23.7.1996.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006692/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(4 July 2012)

Subject: Freezing of customer accounts at an Italian bank

At the beginning of June 2012, the Italian Banca Network Investimenti bank decided to freeze its customers' accounts; it recently announced that they would remain frozen for a further two months. This decision has affected around 28 000 customers. According to the Italian press, a further 10 banks are likewise under special administration and could be hit by similar exceptional measures.

Bearing in mind the cross-border implications of this situation and the fact that some of the customers affected are not Italian citizens, can the Commission say what aspects are relevant for the protection of European banking service consumers, and what measures it could take in response to this problem?

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

Directive 94/19/EC ([1]) provides that Member States (MS) must set up deposit guarantee schemes entrusted with the protection of depositors. When deposits in a bank become unavailable, the deposit guarantee scheme must ensure the compensation of depositors for an amount up to EUR 100 000. This compensation must be paid out to depositors within the time limit of 20 days from the date when the authorities make the determination that the deposits have become unavailable. This deadline can be extended for 10 days in exceptional circumstances. Italy has incorporated this directive in national law through Legislative Decree ([2]).

Directive 97/9/EC ([3]) provides for the introduction of officially recognised investor compensation schemes in all MS. Those schemes compensate investors up to a minimum of EUR 20 000 in case of an investment firm's inability to repay money owed to or belonging to investors and held on their behalf in connection with investment business, or to return to investors any instruments belonging to them and held, administered or managed on their behalf in connection with investment business. The schemes also cover investors at branches set up by their member investment firms in other MS. The scheme must be in position to pay within 3 months of the establishment of the eligibility and the amount of the claim. The deadline can be extended for 3 more months.

Both Directives apply to all affected customers irrespective of their nationality. The Italian implementing legislation ([4]) seems to be at first sight in compliance with the directives. The application of implementing legislation to individual cases is the sole responsibility of the Italian authorities. The Commission might intervene only in the event of obvious violations of the directive.

([1]) Directive 94/19/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 1994 on deposit-guarantee schemes, as amended by Directive 2009/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009, OJ L 68, 13.3.2009, p. 3-7.
([2]) Decreto legislativo 24 marzo 2011, n. 49.
([3]) Directive 97/9/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 March 1997 on investor-compensation schemes, OJ L 084, 26.3.1997 p. 0022-0031.
([4]) Directive 97/9/EC has been implemented in Italian law in Ministerial Decree 485 of 14/11/1997, Ministerial Decree of 30.6.1998 and Legislative Decree 415 of 23.7.1996.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006705/12
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(4. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Spirituosen-Verordnung (EG) Nr. 110/2008

Als ehemaliger Berichterstatter des Europäischen Parlaments für die Spirituosen-Grundverordnung (EG) Nr. 110/2008 habe ich von den Arbeiten der Kommission im EU-Spirituosenausschuss an einer Durchführungsverordnung zur Überarbeitung der Anhänge II und III erfahren. Betroffen sind unter anderem Begriffsbestimmungen für verschiedene Spirituosen und die Verwendung bestimmter zusammengesetzter Begriffe als Produktbezeichnungen.

Welches Ziel verfolgt die Kommission mit der Ausarbeitung dieser Durchführungsverordnung, und welchen Stand haben die Beratungen erreicht?

Wann erwartet die Kommission ein abschließendes Ergebnis?

Antwort von Herrn Çioloş im Namen der Kommission
(28. August 2012)

Auf Ersuchen von Mitgliedstaaten arbeitet die Kommission mit Unterstützung des Spirituosenausschusses an zwei Verordnungsentwürfen

1) einer Verordnung der Kommission zur Änderung der Anhänge II und III der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 110/2008 ([1]) über Spirituosen. Diese Anhänge enthalten die Liste der Definitionen von Spirituosen bzw. die Liste der in der EU für Spirituosen eingetragenen geografischen Angaben;

Die Änderungen sollen sich nicht auf die bestehenden Kategorien von Spirituosen auswirken, sondern die Listen in diesen Anhängen lediglich insofern ändern, als gemäß den Bestimmungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 110/2008 eine neue Definition und eine neue geografische Angabe aufgenommen werden.

2) einer Verordnung der Kommission zur Festlegung von Durchführungsbestimmungen zur Verordnung (EG) Nr. 110/2008 insbesondere in Bezug auf

— die Einführung von Durchführungsbestimmungen über die Verwendung von zusammengesetzten Begriffen und Anspielungen, die den Namen einer Spirituosenkategorie oder eine geografische Angabe enthalten;

— das Verfahren für die Eintragung von geografischen Angaben für Spirituosen.

Diese Durchführungsmaßnahmen sollen die Vorschriften über die Verwendung von zusammengesetzten Begriffen nicht ändern, sondern sie nur präzisieren, damit harmonisierte Etikettierungsvorschriften in allen Mitgliedstaaten gewährleistet sind.

Beide Verordnungsentwürfe finden bei den Mitgliedstaaten breiten Konsens; die Abstimmung im Spirituosenausschuss könnte noch vor Jahresende 2012 stattfinden.

([1]) ABl. L 39 vom 13.2.2008, S. 16-54.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006705/12
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(4 July 2012)

Subject: Spirit Drinks Regulation (EC) No 110/2008

As a former rapporteur for the basic Spirit Drinks Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, I have learnt of the Commission's work in the EU Spirit Drinks Committee on an implementing regulation to revise Annexes II and III. This will affect, among other things, the definitions of various spirit drinks and the use of certain compound terms as product descriptions.

What is the Commission's objective in drawing up these implementing regulations? What stage have discussions reached?

When does the Commission expect there to be a final result?

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

Following Member States request, the Commission, assisted by the Committee for Spirit Drinks, is working on two draft regulations.

1. A Commission regulation amending Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 ([1]) on spirit drinks, which include respectively the list of definitions for spirit drinks and the list of geographical indications registered in the EU for spirit drinks

The objective of the modifications is not to affect the existing categories of spirit drinks but only to amend the lists in those Annexes for the inclusion of a new definition and a new geographical indication, according to the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008.

2. A Commission regulation laying down certain detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, in particular as regards:

— the introduction of detailed rules on the use of compound terms and allusions that include the name of a spirit drink category or geographical indication;

— the procedure for the registration of geographical indications for spirit drinks.

These implementing measures do not aim at affecting the rules on the use of compound terms but only introduce clarification on their use, in order to ensure harmonised labelling provisions in all Member States.

Wide consensus has been expressed by Member States on these two draft regulations and the vote by the Committee for Spirit Drinks could take place before the end of 2012.

([1]) OJ L 39, 13.2.2008, p. 16-54.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006721/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(4. juli 2012)

Om: Advarsel mod fartradarer og alkotestudstyr i Frankrig

Vil Kommissionen i forlængelse af svaret på spørgsmål E-003471/2012 underrette spørgeren, når der er truffet en afgørelse i sagen?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(14. august 2012)

I forlængelse af svaret på forespørgsel E-003471/2012 ([1]) ønsker Kommissionen at oplyse det ærede medlem om, at idet der ikke findes EU-lovgivning vedrørende ekstraudstyr i køretøjer, er det medlemsstaterne frit stillet at vedtage lovgivning herom, forudsat at traktatens principper om ikkediskriminering og proportionalitet overholdes.

Efter nøje undersøgelser af de seneste foranstaltninger, som Frankrig har indført, er Kommissionen af den holdning, at der bør ses nærmere på den praktiske anvendelse af disse foranstaltninger, navnlig deres gavn for trafiksikkerheden og deres proportionalitet, før den kan drage en konklusion.

Skulle Kommissionen nå til den konklusion, af bestemmelserne ikke stemmer overens med EU-reglerne, træffer den de nødvendige foranstaltninger.

([1]) Kan findes på http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006721/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(4 July 2012)

Subject: Speed detector warning devices and alcohol test kits in France

Further to its answer to Question E-003471/2012, will the Commission inform me when a decision is taken on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2012)

Further to its answer to Question E-003471/2012 ([1]), the Commission wishes to inform the Honourable Member that in the absence of EU legislation concerning additional equipment on board of vehicles, Member States are free to legislate, provided that the Treaty principles of non-discrimination and proportionality are respected.

After careful analysis of the recent measures imposed by France, the Commission takes the view that the practical application of these measures, in particular their road safety benefits and their proportionality need to be further monitored over a longer period and assessed before a conclusion can be drawn.

Should the Commission come to the conclusion that the provisions conflict with EC law, it will take appropriate steps.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-006728/12
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 juli 2012)

Betreft: Verkiezingskandidatuur van commissaris De Gucht (2)

In de gedragscode voor Europese Commissarissen is opgenomen dat zij moeten terugtreden als zij de intentie hebben om zich verkiesbaar te stellen en een actieve rol te spelen in de verkiezingscampagne.

In haar antwoord op vraag P-005565/2012 stelt de Commissie dat commissaris De Gucht de intentie heeft om deel te nemen aan de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen van oktober 2012, maar dat hij geen actieve rol in de campagne zal spelen en dat hij voornemens is om zijn mandaat als lid van de Commissie te blijven vervullen.

Hoe definieert de Commissie „actief deelnemen" aan een verkiezingscampagne? Valt volgens de Commissie het over de campagne spreken op de nationale radio of het deelnemen aan televisie-uitzendingen hieronder? Valt het innemen van een verkiesbare plaats op de lijst hieronder (bijvoorbeeld.d. tweede plaats, zoals in het geval van de heer De Gucht)?

Of impliceert de Commissie met antwoord op vraag P-005565/2012 dat zij de gedragscode zo interpreteert dat Eurocommissarissen enkel afstand moeten doen van hun mandaat wanneer beide voorwaarden vervuld zijn (1: deelnemen aan verkiezingen, 2: een actieve rol spelen in de verkiezingscampagne)? Is de Commissie bijgevolg van oordeel dat een Commissaris die zich niet verkiesbaar stelt, wel een actieve rol mag spelen tijdens een verkiezingscampagne zonder te verzaken aan zijn of haar functie als Europees Commissaris? Is deze houding niet in strijd met een andere bepaling van de gedragscode die stelt dat Commissarissen zich dienen te onthouden van publieke verklaringen of interventies ten voordele van een politieke partij of vakbond waarvan zij lid zijn?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(8 augustus 2012)

De Commissie verwijst de geachte Parlementsleden naar haar antwoord op vraag P-5565/2012 ([1]).

De gedragscode voor leden van de Commissie bepaalt dat wanneer een lid van de Commissie voornemens is zich verkiesbaar te stellen voor een mandaat, hij niet mag deelnemen aan de werkzaamheden van de Commissie tijdens de periode waarin hij actief deelneemt aan de campagne. In de andere gevallen is het de Voorzitter die — rekening houdende met de specifieke omstandigheden van de situatie — moet beslissen of de beoogde deelname in overeenstemming is met de uitoefening van de functie van het desbetreffende lid van de Commissie.

Het loutere feit van het innemen van een verkiesbare plaats op een kieslijst betekent niet automatisch dat de kandidaat actief deelneemt aan de campagne.

In de gedragscode voor leden van de Commissie wordt ook vermeld dat de leden van de Commissie politiek actief mogen zijn en dat zij lid mogen zijn van nationale of Europese politieke partijen voor zover door hun activiteiten op dit vlak hun beschikbaarheid ten dienste van de Commissie of de onafhankelijkheid bij het uitoefenen van hun functie niet in het gedrang komt. Een actieve deelname van een lid van de Commissie aan een nationale kiescampagne zou onverenigbaar zijn met de eisen op het vlak van beschikbaarheid en onafhankelijkheid, ongeacht of de Commissaris wel of niet kandidaat is. Een beperkte deelname aan een politiek debat of een of andere specifieke tussenkomst waardoor zowel de beschikbaarheid als de onafhankelijkheid van de Commissaris niet in het gedrang komen, moet daarentegen niet als onverenigbaar worden beschouwd.

Hierbij moet nog worden opgemerkt dat in de gedragscode voor de leden van de Commissie wordt bepaalt dat de Commissarissen zich dienen te onthouden van publieke verklaringen of interventies ten voordele van een politieke partij of vakbond waarvan zij lid zijn, behalve wanneer zij zich voor een mandaat verkiesbaar hebben gesteld.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006728/12
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 July 2012)

Subject: Commissioner De Gucht standing for election (2)

The Code of Conduct for Commissioners stipulates that they must resign if they intend to stand for election and to play an active role in the election campaign.

In its answer to Question P-005565/2012, the Commission states that Commissioner De Gucht intends to participate in the Municipal Council elections in October 2012, but that he will not play an active role in the campaign and that he intends to continue to fulfil his mandate as a Member of the Commission.

How does the Commission define 'active participation' in an election campaign? Does speaking about the campaign on national radio or taking part in television broadcasts fall under this heading? Does standing for election in a position on a party list which is likely to result in the candidate's being elected (e.g. in second place, as in the case of Mr De Gucht) fall under this heading?

Or does the Commission imply in its answer to Question P-005565/2012 that it interprets the Code of Conduct as meaning that European Commissioners only need resign from their Commission post if both conditions are fulfilled (1: participating in elections, 2: playing an active role in the election campaign)? Does the Commission therefore believe that a Commissioner who is not standing for election is permitted to play an active role in an election campaign without renouncing his or her post as a Commissioner? Does not this position contradict another provision in the Code of Conduct which states that Commissioners should refrain from making public statements or comments favourable to a political party or trade union to which they belong?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(8 août 2012)

La Commission prie les Honorables Parlementaires de se référer à la réponse à la question P-5565/2012 ([1]).

Le code de conduite des Commissaires prévoit que lorsqu'un membre de la Commission a l'intention de se porter candidat à un mandat électoral il doit s'abstenir de participer aux travaux de la Commission pendant la période de participation active à la campagne et que dans les autres cas, il appartient au Président de décider, compte tenu des circonstances particulières de la situation, si la participation envisagée est compatible avec l'exercice des fonctions du membre de la Commission concerné.

Le simple fait de figurer en rang utile sur une liste électorale n'implique pas automatiquement une participation active du candidat.

Le Code de conduite des commissaires précise aussi que les membres de la Commission peuvent être politiquement actifs et peuvent être membres de partis politiques nationaux ou européens, pour autant que leurs activités à ce titre ne remettent pas en cause leur disponibilité au service de la Commission ou l'indépendance de leur fonction. Une participation active d'un membre de la Commission à une campagne électorale nationale ne serait pas compatible avec les exigences de disponibilité et d'indépendance que le Commissaire soit candidat ou non. Par contre, une participation limitée à un débat politique ou à l'une ou l'autre intervention ponctuelle ne mettant pas en cause ni la disponibilité ni l'indépendance du Commissaire ne devrait pas être considérée comme incompatible.

Il convient de souligner que le Code de conduite des commissaires stipule que ceux-ci doivent s'abstenir de toute déclaration ou intervention publique au nom du parti ou du syndicat dont ils sont membres, sauf s'ils sont candidats à un mandat électoral.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006743/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(5 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Biocarburanti: un vero mercato unico?

Il 6 giugno 2012 la Commissione ha pubblicato una comunicazione intitolata «Energie rinnovabili: un ruolo di primo piano nel mercato energetico europeo».

In essa la Commissione riconosce che non esiste un mercato per i combustibili alternativi a livello dell'UE.

Cosa intende fare la Commissione per garantire che la realizzazione di un vero mercato unico per i biocarburanti non sia ostacolata da alcuna barriera, di diritto o di fatto, contribuendo così a garantire che gli Stati membri raggiungano i rispettivi obiettivi, fissati nel quadro della direttiva sull'energia da fonti rinnovabili?

La comunicazione riconosce inoltre che le preoccupazioni in merito alla sostenibilità in questo settore sono già state affrontate con i criteri di sostenibilità dei biocarburanti, introdotti dalle direttive sulle energie rinnovabili e sulla qualità dei combustibili. La stessa comunicazione indica tuttavia che a breve saranno prese in esame anche le conseguenze dei cambiamenti indiretti della destinazione dei terreni.

Può la Commissione chiarire quali sono i suoi progetti e se intende distinguere i biocarburanti sulla base delle materie prime utilizzate?

Infine, può la Commissione fornire chiarimenti sulle proprie politiche in materia di biocarburanti, indicando altresì se sono previste modifiche alle stesse ed in che direzione?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(17 agosto 2012)

A parere della Commissione, un mercato per i combustibili alternativi a livello UE esiste. Per preservare da rischi la funzionalità del mercato comune, la Commissione vaglia i regimi di sostegno ai biocarburanti verificando che non contengano elementi discriminatori. I biocarburanti devono essere prodotti in modo sostenibile. Gli Stati membri hanno instaurato procedure che stabiliscono quali prove i produttori di biocarburanti debbano fornire per dimostrare il rispetto dei relativi criteri di sostenibilità fissati dall'UE. Al fine di alleviare l'onere amministrativo e favorire gli scambi, la Commissione ha riconosciuto nove regimi volontari utilizzabili in tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE per dimostrare il rispetto dei criteri di sostenibilità. La Commissione confida di poter riconoscere altri regimi a conclusione di un processo di valutazione approfondita, offrendo così agli operatori del mercato un numero ancora superiore di alternative.

La Commissione sta mettendo a punto una valutazione d'impatto inerente alla valutazione di una serie di opzioni politiche atte a minimizzare gli impatti indiretti, associati alla produzione di biocarburanti, sul cambiamento della destinazione dei terreni. A seguito di un dibattito orientativo del Collegio in materia, la Commissione sta mettendo a punto una proposta legislativa volta a modificare le direttive sulle energie rinnovabili ([1]) e sulla qualità dei carburanti ([2]), che sarà adottata contestualmente al testo definitivo della valutazione d'impatto.

([1]) Direttiva 2009/28/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2009, sulla promozione dell'uso dell'energia da fonti rinnovabili — GU L 140 del 5.6.2009.

([2]) Direttiva 98/70/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 13 ottobre 1998, relativa alla qualità della benzina e del combustibile diesel — GU L 350 del 28.12.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006743/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(5 July 2012)

Subject: Biofuels: a true single market?

On 6 June 2012, the Commission issued a communication entitled 'Renewable energy: a major player in the European energy market'.

The Commission acknowledges in this communication that there is no EU-wide market for alternative fuels.

What does the Commission intend to do to ensure that no legal or de facto barriers jeopardise the achievement of a true single market for biofuels, and thereby help to ensure that Member States achieve their targets under the Renewable Energy Directive?

Furthermore, the communication acknowledges that sustainability concerns in the biofuel sector are already addressed through the biofuels sustainability criteria contained in the Renewable Energy Directive and the Fuel Quality Directive. However, it also mentions that it will soon address indirect land use change (ILUC) impacts as well.

Can the Commission clarify what its plans are and whether it intends to differentiate between biofuels on the basis of the raw materials used?

Finally, can the Commission clarify its policies in relation to biofuels and indicate if any changes are being contemplated and, if so, what direction they may take?

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

In the view of the Commission there is an EU-wide market for alternative fuels. In order to ensure that the functionality of the common market is not put at risk, the Commission scrutinises the support schemes for biofuels to ensure that the schemes do not include discriminatory elements. Biofuels must be produced in a sustainable way. Member States have implemented procedures determining what evidence biofuel producers have to provide to demonstrate compliance with the EU sustainability criteria for biofuels. In order to lower the administrative burden and to facilitate trade, the Commission has recognised nine voluntary schemes that can be used to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria in all EU Member States. The Commission is confident that after a thorough assessment process more schemes can be recognised providing market participants with even more options to demonstrate compliance.

The Commission is currently finalising an impact assessment focusing on the evaluation of a number of policy options for minimising the indirect land use change impacts associated with the production of biofuels. Following a recent College orientation debate on this topic, the Commission is now finalising a legislative proposal for amending the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]) and Fuel Quality Directive ([2]), which is to be adopted together with the final draft of the impact assessment.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.
([2]) Directive 98/70/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 1998 relating to the quality of petrol and diesel fuels, OJ L 350, 28.12.1998.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006762/12
a la Comisión
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) y Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Manipulación del líbor y el euríbor por parte de Barclays

El 27 de junio de 2012, en una operación similar a la de la Commodity Futures Trading Commission (Comisión del Comercio en Futuros sobre Mercancías) de los Estados Unidos, la Autoridad de Servicios Financieros del Reino Unido sancionó a Barclays Bank p.l.c. por conducta poco ética en relación con el líbor (London Interbank Offered Rate) y con el euríbor ([1]) (Euro Interbank Offered Rate). La falta de Barclays incluyó:

— suministrar datos en el proceso de fijación del líbor y el euríbor teniendo en cuenta las peticiones de operadores de derivados sobre tipos de interés de Barclays. Dichos operadores actuaban con fines de lucro y pretendían beneficiar las posiciones de negociación de Barclays;

— intentar influir en los suministros de datos relativos al euríbor de otros bancos que contribuyen al proceso de fijación del índice;

— reducir sus suministros de datos relativos al líbor durante la crisis financiera como resultado de la preocupación de la dirección ante las críticas de los medios de comunicación.

Además, Barclays no dispuso de sistemas y controles adecuados para sus procesos de suministro de datos relativos al líbor y al euríbor hasta junio de 2010 y no revisó sus sistemas y sus controles en varios puntos en los que hubiera sido adecuado.

1. ¿Qué repercusiones tiene la manipulación de los índices líbor y euríbor a la luz de la actual crisis financiera y económica?

2. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión o la Autoridad Bancaria Europea (ABE) seguir investigando? ¿Considera la Comisión que se trata del único caso de manipulación del mercado o es posible que exista una manipulación a gran escala que implique a otros participantes?

3. ¿Cómo valora la Comisión el papel de las autoridades competentes en este caso?

4. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión estudiar si la manipulación del líbor se hizo con el fin de obtener bonificaciones? De ser así, ¿estima la Comisión que el actual marco de remuneraciones es adecuado?

5. ¿Qué papel desempeñan la Comisión, la ABE y el BCE en la prevención de tales comportamientos poco éticos?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de agosto de 2012)

Es demasiado pronto para estimar el impacto completo de la supuesta manipulación del LIBOR y el Euribor por varios bancos, ya que siguen en curso las investigaciones nacionales.

La Comisión está investigando actualmente varias posibles acuerdos de cártel relativos a los índices de referencia como el Euribor y el LIBOR y el comercio de los derivados asociados. Incumbe a la Comisión hacer cumplir las normas de competencia de la UE, en particular el artículo 101 del Tratado, e imponer sanciones cuando resulte necesario.

Corresponde a las autoridades de vigilancia competentes investigar si los distintos bancos bajo su supervisión han infringido la legislación de la UE en materia de servicios financieros, en cooperación con la Autoridad Bancaria Europea y la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados, según proceda.

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml

La Comisión ha reaccionado con celeridad al escándalo del LIBOR mediante la adopción de propuestas modificadas de un Reglamento ([2]) y una Directiva ([3]) sobre el abuso del mercado, a fin de prohibir claramente y tipificar como delito en toda la Unión la manipulación de los índices de referencia, incluido el LIBOR. En cuanto a la regulación de los índices de referencia más en general, la Comisión está examinando esta cuestión de forma prioritaria. La estrecha cooperación con los socios internacionales de la UE y con foros internacionales como el Consejo de Estabilidad Financiera es fundamental a este respecto. Mantendremos al Parlamento Europeo informado del curso de este asunto.

([2]) Propuesta modificada de Reglamento las operaciones con información privilegiada y la manipulación del mercado, COM(2012) XXX.

([3]) Propuesta modificada de Directiva sanciones penales para las operaciones con información privilegiada y la manipulación del mercado, COM(2012) XXX.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006762/12
til Kommissionen
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) og Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5. juli 2012)

Om: Barclays' manipulation af Libor/Euribor-renten

Den 27. juni 2012 idømte de finansielle tilsynsmyndigheder — ligesom den amerikanske råvarefutures-kommissionen (Commodity Futures Trading Commission) — Barclays Bank Plc bøder for forseelser med relation til London interbankrenten (Libor) og EUR Interbank Offered Rate (Euribor). Barclays' forseelse omfatter:

— indsendelse af indberetninger, som er indgået i processen for fastsættelsen af Libor- og Euribor-rente, hvori der er taget hensyn til input fra Barclays' egne rentederivathandlere. Disse handleres motiv var profit, og de søgte at fremme Barclays handelsposition

— forsøg på at påvirke Euribor-indberetninger fra andre banker, der bidrager til rentefastsættelsesprocessen

— nedjustering af Libor-indberetninger under den finansielle krise på grund af ledelsens bekymringer over negativ omtale i medierne.

Endvidere har Barclays ikke etableret passende systemer og kontrolforanstaltninger i forbindelse med bankens Libor- og Euribor-indberetningsprocesser inden juni 2010, og den har undladt at revidere sine systemer og kontroller på en række relevante punkter.

1. Hvilke konsekvenser har Libor- og Euriborrentemanipulationerne i lyset af den nuværende finansielle og økonomiske krise?

2. Har Kommissionen eller Den Europæiske Banktilsynsmyndighed (EBA) til hensigt at foretage yderligere undersøgelser? Mener Kommissionen, at dette er det eneste tilfælde af markedsmanipulation, eller er det muligt, at der i større stil er forekommet markedsmanipulation med andre deltagere?

3. Hvordan vurderer Kommissionen de kompetente myndigheders rolle i denne sag?

4. Agter Kommissionen at foretage en vurdering af, om Libor-rentemanipulationen var drevet af udsigten til bonusser? Hvis det er tilfældet, betragter Kommissionen så de nuværende lønrammer som værende passende?

5. Hvilken rolle spiller Kommissionen, EBA og ECB med hensyn til at forhindre sådanne overtrædelser?

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

Det er endnu for tidligt at vurdere alle konsekvenserne af flere bankers påståede manipulation af Libor- og Euribor-renten, da de nationale undersøgelser endnu ikke er afsluttet.

Kommissionen undersøger i øjeblikket flere mulige kartelaftaler, der omfatter benchmarks som Euribor og Libor og handel med relaterede derivater. Kommissionen har ansvaret for at håndhæve EU's antitrustregler, særlig traktatens artikel 101, og om nødvendigt pålægge sanktioner.

Det er de kompetente tilsynsmyndigheders ansvar at undersøge, hvorvidt de enkelte banker, som de fører tilsyn med, har overtrådt EU's lovgivning om finansielle tjenesteydelser, om nødvendigt i samarbejde med Den Europæiske Banktilsynsmyndighed og Den Europæiske Værdipapir- og Markedstilsynsmyndighed.

Kommissionen reagerede omgående på Libor-skandalen ved at vedtage de ændrede forslag til en forordning ([1]) og et direktiv ([2]) om markedsmisbrug, for klart at forbyde og ulovliggøre manipulation af benchmarks, herunder Libor, i hele EU. Hvad angår reguleringen af benckmarks mere generelt, er det en prioritet for Kommissionen at undersøge dette spørgsmål. I denne henseende er det afgørende med et tæt samarbejde med EU's internationale partnere samt internationale myndigheder såsom FSB. Europa-Parlamentet holdes løbende underrettet om udviklingen.

([1]) Ændret forslag til forordning om insiderhandel og kursmanipulation, KOM(2012)xxxx.
([2]) Ændret forslag til direktiv om strafferetlige sanktioner for insiderhandel og kursmanipulation, KOM(2012)xxxx.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006762/12
an die Kommission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) und Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Manipulation von LIBOR/EURIBOR durch Barclays

Ähnlich wie die US Commodity Futures Trading Commission verhängte die britische Financial Services Authority am 27. Juni 2012 wegen Manipulationen des Referenzzinssatzes im Interbankengeschäft (London Interbank Offered Rate — LIBOR) und des Zinssatzes für Termingelder in Euro im Interbankengeschäft (Euro Interbank Offered Rate — EURIBOR) eine Strafe gegen Barclays Bank Plc ([1]). Barclays soll die Zinssätze wie folgt manipuliert haben:

— durch Meldungen, die in die Festsetzung des LIBOR- und des EURIBOR-Satzes einflossen und Wünsche der Derivate-Händler von Barclays berücksichtigten, die gewinnmotiviert und bestrebt waren, zum Vorteil der Handelspositionen von Barclays zu handeln,

— durch versuchte Einflussnahme auf die EURIBOR-Meldungen anderer Banken, die an der Festsetzung des Zinssatzes mitwirkten,

— durch künstlich niedrig gehaltene LIBOR-Meldungen während der Finanzkrise, da das oberste Management negative Kommentare in den Medien befürchtete.

Außerdem verfügte Barclays bis Juni 2010 nicht über adäquate Systeme und Kontrollen in Bezug auf seine LIBOR- und EURIBOR-Meldeverfahren und versäumte es, seine Systeme und Kontrollen an mehreren Stellen angemessen zu überprüfen.

1. Welche Auswirkungen hat die Manipulation der LIBOR- und EURIBOR-Zinssätze vor dem Hintergrund der gegenwärtigen Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise?

2. Planen die Kommission oder die Europäische Bankenaufsichtsbehörde (EBA) weitere Untersuchungen? Hält die Kommission dies für einen einmaligen Fall von Marktmanipulation, oder sind weitreichende Marktmanipulationen unter Mitwirkung weiterer Akteure denkbar?

3. Wie wird die Kommission die Rolle der zuständigen Behörden in diesem Fall bewerten?

4. Plant die Kommission eine Untersuchung, ob die Manipulation des LIBOR-Zinssatzes durch das Streben nach Boni motiviert war? Wenn ja, erachtet die Kommission den derzeitigen Vergütungsrahmen als angemessen?

5. Welche Rolle müssen Kommission, EBA und EZB übernehmen, um derartige Manipulationen zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(14. August 2012)

Noch ist es verfrüht, die Auswirkungen der angeblichen Manipulation von LIBOR und EURIBOR durch verschiedene Banken in vollem Umfang abzuschätzen, da die Ermittlungen auf nationaler Ebene noch im Gange sind.

Die Kommission untersucht derzeit mehrere etwaige Kartellabsprachen, die Benchmarks wie EURIBOR und LIBOR und den Handel mit Derivaten betreffen. Es ist Aufgabe der Kommission, die EU-Kartellvorschriften, insbesondere Artikel 101 AEUV, durchzusetzen und erforderlichenfalls Sanktionen zu verhängen.

Die zuständigen Aufsichtsbehörden haben — gegebenenfalls in Zusammenarbeit mit der Europäischen Bankenaufsichtsbehörde und der Europäischen Wertpapier- und Marktaufsichtsbehörde — zu prüfen, ob einzelne ihrer Aufsicht unterstehende Banken gegen EU-Rechtsvorschriften für Finanzdienstleistungen verstoßen haben.

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml

Die Kommission hat unverzüglich auf den LIBOR-Skandal reagiert und eine geänderte Fassung ihrer Vorschläge für eine Verordnung ([2]) und eine Richtlinie ([3]) über Marktmissbrauch angenommen mit dem Ziel, Manipulationen von Benchmarks, einschließlich des LIBOR, unionsweit offiziell zu verbieten und unter Strafe zu stellen. Generell erachtet die Kommission die Regulierung von Referenzwerten als vordringliche Aufgabe. Von entscheidender Bedeutung ist dabei eine enge Zusammenarbeit mit den internationalen Partnern der EU und internationalen Foren wie dem Rat für Finanzstabilität (FSB). Das Europäische Parlament wird über die diesbezüglichen Fortschritte auf dem Laufenden gehalten.

([2]) Geänderter Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation (KOM(2012)XXX).
([3]) Geänderter Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über strafrechtliche Sanktionen für Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation (KOM(2012)XXX).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006762/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) και Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χειραγώγηση του διατραπεζικού επιτοκίου του Λονδίνου (LIBOR)/διατραπεζικού επιτοκίου δανεισμού σε ευρώ (EURIBOR) από την τράπεζα Barclays

Ακολουθώντας παρόμοια τακτική με την αμερικανική επιτροπή προθεσμιακών συναλλαγών σε εμπορεύματα, στις 27 Ιουνίου η Αρχή Χρηματοπιστωτικών Υπηρεσιών επέβαλε στην Barclays Bank Plc πρόστιμο για αθέμιτη πρακτική σχετιζόμενη με το LIBOR και το EURIBOR ([1]). Η αθέμιτη πρακτική της Barclays περιελάμβανε:

— υποβολή προσφορών οι οποίες αποτελούσαν μέρος της διαδικασίας καθορισμού του LIBOR και του EURIBOR, η οποία λάμβανε υπόψη αιτήματα από στελέχη της Barclays που ασχολούνται με αγοραπωλησίες παραγώγων επιτοκίου. Τα εν λόγω στελέχη είχαν κίνητρο το κέρδος και επεδίωκαν να επωφεληθούν από τις εμπορικές θέσεις της Barclays·

— προσπάθεια να ασκηθεί επιρροή στις προσφορές EURIBOR άλλων τραπεζών που συμβάλλουν στη διαδικασία καθορισμού του επιτοκίου·

— μείωση των προσφορών της για το LIBOR κατά τη διάρκεια της χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης λόγω ανησυχιών ανώτερων διευθυντικών στελεχών για δυσμενή σχόλια των ΜΜΕ.

Επιπλέον, η Barclays δεν έθεσε σε εφαρμογή και δε διεξήγαγε ελέγχους σε σχέση με τις διαδικασίες υποβολής προσφορών για το LIBOR και το EUROBOR μέχρι τον Ιούνιο του 2010 και δεν επανεξέτασε τα συστήματα και τους ελέγχους της σε μια σειρά κατάλληλων σημείων.

1. Ποιος είναι ο αντίκτυπος αυτής της χειραγώγησης των επιτοκίων LIBOR και TRIBOR ενόψει της τρέχουσας χρηματοπιστωτικής και οικονομικής κρίσης;

2. Πρόκειται η Επιτροπή ή η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Τραπεζών(ΕΑΤ)να διεξαγάγει επιπλέον έρευνες σχετικά με αυτή την υπόθεση; Πιστεύει η Επιτροπή ότι πρόκειται για μεμονωμένη υπόθεση ή ότι θα μπορούσε να έχει επιχειρηθεί χειραγώγηση της αγοράς σε μεγαλύτερη κλίμακα με τη συμμετοχή άλλων ενδιαφερομένων;

3. Πώς αξιολογεί η Επιτροπή το ρόλο των αρμόδιων αρχών σε αυτή την υπόθεση;

4. Πρόκειται να εκτιμήσει η Επιτροπή εάν η χειραγώγηση του LIBOR θα μπορούσε να έχει καθοδηγηθεί από πριμοδοτήσεις; Αν τούτο συμβαίνει, θεωρεί η Επιτροπή το ισχύον πλαίσιο αποδοχών κατάλληλο;

5. Ποιος είναι ο ρόλος της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, της ΕΑΤ και της ΕΚΤ στην αποτροπή τέτοιου είδους παραβάσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Αυγούστου 2012)

Είναι πολύ νωρίς για να εκτιμηθεί ο πλήρης αντίκτυπος της πιθανολογούμενης χειραγώγησης του LIBOR και του EURIBOR από διάφορες τράπεζες, καθώς βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη οι διεξαγόμενες σε εθνικό επίπεδο έρευνες.

Η Επιτροπή διερευνά επί του παρόντος διάφορες πιθανές συμφωνίες σύμπραξης σχετικές με επιτόκια αναφοράς, συμπεριλαμβανομένων του EURIBOR και του LIBOR, και σχετικές με την εμπορία συναφών παραγώγων. Στην Επιτροπή εναπόκειται η ευθύνη της επιβολής των αντιμονοπωλιακών κανόνων της ΕΕ, και ιδίως του άρθρου 101 της Συνθήκης, και της επιβολής, κατά περίπτωση, κυρώσεων.

Καθήκον των αρμόδιων εποπτικών αρχών είναι να διερευνήσουν, σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Τραπεζών και την Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Κινητών Αξιών και Αγορών, εφόσον συντρέχει ανάγκη, κατά πόσον οι μεμονωμένες τράπεζες υπό την εποπτεία τους έχουν παραβιάσει την ενωσιακή νομοθεσία για τις χρηματοπιστωτικές υπηρεσίες.

Η Επιτροπή ενήργησε ταχύτατα για να αντιδράσει στο σκάνδαλο του LIBOR, υιοθετώντας τροποποιημένες προτάσεις κανονισμού ([2]) και οδηγίας ([3]) για την κατάχρηση αγοράς, ώστε να απαγορεύσει σαφώς και να ποινικοποιήσει σε ολόκληρη

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml
([2]) Τροποποιημένη πρόταση κανονισμού για τις πράξεις προσώπων που κατέχουν εμπιστευτικές πληροφορίες και τις πράξεις χειραγώγησης της αγοράς, COM(2012)XXX.
([3]) Τροποποιημένη πρόταση οδηγίας σχετικά με τις ποινικές κυρώσεις για τις πράξεις προσώπων που κατέχουν εμπιστευτικές πληροφορίες και τις πράξεις χειραγώγησης της αγοράς, COM(2012)xxx.

την Ένωση τη χειραγώγηση των επιτοκίων αναφοράς, όπως το LIBOR. Όσον αφορά την υπαγωγή, ευρύτερα, των επιτοκίων αναφοράς σε κανονιστικές ρυθμίσεις, η Επιτροπή εξετάζει το ζήτημα αυτό κατά προτεραιότητα. Υπό το πρίσμα αυτό, είναι ουσιαστικής σημασίας η στενή συνεργασία με τους διεθνείς εταίρους της ΕΕ και διεθνή βήματα όπως το FSB (Συμβούλιο χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας). Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο θα κρατείται ενήμερο για τη συντελούμενη πρόοδο.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006762/12
à la Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) et Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5 juillet 2012)

Objet: Manipulation des taux de référence interbancaires LIBOR/Euribor par la banque Barclays

Dans le cadre d'une démarche similaire à celle du régulateur des bourses du commerce américain (US Commodity Futures Trading Commission), l'Autorité britannique des services financiers a infligé, le 27 juin 2012, une amende à la banque Barclays Bank Plc, pour faute grave touchant aux taux de référence interbancaires LIBOR (London interbank borrowing offered rate) et Euribor (Euro interbank borrowing offered rate) ([1]). Cette faute grave de Barclays incluait les agissements suivants:

— avoir fait, dans le cadre de la fixation des taux LIBOR et Euribor, des soumissions qui prenaient en compte des demandes émanant de traders sur des produits dérivés de taux d'intérêts de Barclays. Ces traders étaient motivés par la recherche de profits et visaient à favoriser la position commerciale de Barclays;

— avoir cherché à influencer les soumissions Euribor d'autres banques participant au processus de fixation du taux;

— avoir réduit les soumissions LIBOR pendant la crise financière, après que de hauts responsables de la banque se soient inquiétés d'un écho négatif dans les médias.

Par ailleurs, Barclays n'avait pas, jusqu'en juin 2010, un système de contrôle approprié des procédures de soumission LIBOR et Euribor, et n'a donc pas procédé à un réexamen de ses systèmes au niveau de plusieurs agences.

1. Quel est, à la lumière de l'actuelle crise économique et financière, l'impact de cette manipulation des taux LIBOR et Euribor par Barclays?

2. La Commission, ou l'Association bancaire pour l'euro (ABE), mèneront-elles des enquêtes plus approfondies sur cette affaire? S'agit-il pour la Commission d'un cas isolé, ou bien est-on en présence d'une manipulation du marché à plus grande échelle, impliquant d'autres opérateurs?

3. Que pense la Commission du rôle joué par les autorités compétentes dans cette affaire?

4. La Commission va-t-elle rechercher si la manipulation du taux LIBOR a eu lieu pour multiplier les bonus? Dans l'affirmative, juge-t-elle approprié le cadre de rémunération actuel?

5. Quel rôle jouent la Commission européenne, l'ABE et la BCE dans la prévention de manipulations de ce genre?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(14 août 2012)

Il est encore trop tôt pour évaluer pleinement l'incidence de la manipulation supposée des taux LIBOR et Euribor par plusieurs banques, étant donné que des enquêtes nationales sont en cours.

La Commission enquête actuellement sur plusieurs ententes présumées qui impliqueraient des taux de référence, notamment l'Euribor et le LIBOR, et concerneraient des opérations portant sur des produits dérivés. Il appartient à la Commission de faire appliquer les règles de l'UE relatives aux ententes et abus de position dominante, en particulier l'article 101 du TFUE, et d'infliger des sanctions le cas échéant.

Ce sont les autorités de contrôle compétentes, en coopération, en tant que de besoin, avec l'Autorité bancaire européenne et l'Autorité européenne des marchés financiers, qui déterminent si certains établissements bancaires placés sous leur surveillance ont enfreint la législation de l'UE sur les services financiers.

La Commission a réagi rapidement au scandale du LIBOR en adoptant des propositions modifiées d'un règlement ([2]) et d'une directive ([3]) sur les abus de marché, afin que toute manipulation des taux de référence, y compris du LIBOR,

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml
([2]) Proposition de règlement sur les opérations d'initiés et les manipulations de marché, COM(2012)XXX.
([3]) Proposition de directive relative aux sanctions pénales applicables aux opérations d'initiés et aux manipulations de marché COM(2012)xxx.

soit expressément interdite et érigée en infraction. De manière plus générale, la Commission examine actuellement la régulation des taux de référence et en fait une de ses priorités. À cet égard, il est indispensable d'entretenir une collaboration étroite avec les partenaires et forums internationaux de l'Union européenne tel que le Conseil de stabilité financière. Le Parlement européen sera tenu informé de l'évolution de la situation.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006762/12
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) en Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5 juli 2012)

Betreft: Manipulatie van LIBOR/EURIBOR door Barclays

Op 27 juni 2012 heeft de Autoriteit financiële diensten, die daarbij op soortgelijke wijze te werk ging als de Amerikaanse Futures Trading Commission, Barclays Bank Plc een boete opgelegd wegens wangedrag met betrekking tot het LIBOR-tarief (London Interbank Offered Rate) en het EURIBOR-tarief (Euro Interbank Offered Rate) ([1]). Bij het wangedrag van Barclays ging het o.a. om:

— het in het kader van de LIBOR- en EURIBOR-vaststelling indienen van cijfers waarbij rekening werd gehouden met verzoeken van Barclays-handelaren in rentederivaten. Deze handelaren werden gedreven door winstbejag en waren uit op voordeel voor de handelsposities van Barclays;

— poging tot beïnvloeding van de EURIBOR-cijfers die door andere bij de tariefvaststelling betrokken banken werden ingediend;

— verlaging van de door Barclays ingediende LIBOR-cijfers tijdens de financiële crisis omdat het hogere management bezorgd was over negatieve commentaren in de media.

Daarnaast beschikte Barclays tot juni 2010 niet over adequate systemen en controles voor de totstandkoming van zijn LIBOR- en EURIBOR-cijfers en liet de bank na de systemen en controles op een aantal belangrijke punten te herzien.

1. Wat zijn in het licht van de huidige financiële en economische crisis de gevolgen van de manipulatie van het LIBOR- en EURIBOR-tarief?

2. Is de Commissie of de Europese Bankautoriteit (EBA) van plan verder onderzoek te verrichten? Is de Commissie van mening dat dit het enige geval van marktmanipulatie is, of is het mogelijk dat er op grote schaal marktmanipulatie heeft plaatsgevonden waarbij andere deelnemers betrokken waren?

3. Hoe wil de Commissie de rol van de bevoegde autoriteiten in dit geval beoordelen?

4. Is de Commissie voornemens na te gaan of de LIBOR-manipulatie is ingegeven door de jacht op bonussen? Zo ja, acht de Commissie het huidige vergoedingenstelsel adequaat?

5. Wat is de rol van de Commissie, de EBA en de ECB bij het voorkomen van dergelijk wangedrag?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(14 augustus 2012)

Het is nog te vroeg om de volledige impact in te schatten van de vermeende manipulatie van LIBOR en EURIBOR door verschillende banken, aangezien het nationale onderzoek nog lopende is.

De Commissie onderzoekt momenteel verscheidene mogelijke kartelovereenkomsten met betrekking tot benchmarks waaronder EURIBOR en LIBOR en de handel in daarmee samenhangende derivaten. Het behoort tot de taken van de Commissie toe te zien op de naleving van de mededingingsregels van de EU, met name artikel 101 van het Verdrag, en waar nodig sancties op te leggen.

Het is aan de bevoegde toezichthoudende autoriteiten om — in samenwerking met de Europese Bankautoriteit en de Europese Autoriteit voor effecten en markten — na te gaan of afzonderlijke banken onder hun toezicht de EU-wetgeving inzake financiële diensten hebben overtreden.

De Commissie heeft prompt gereageerd op het LIBOR-schandaal door gewijzigde voorstellen vast te stellen voor een verordening ([2]) en een richtlijn ([3]) betreffende marktmisbruik, om de manipulatie van benchmarks met inbegrip van

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml.
([2]) Gewijzigd voorstel voor een verordening betreffende handel met voorwetenschap en marktmanipulatie, COM(2012) XXX.
([3]) Gewijzigd voorstel voor een richtlijn betreffende strafrechtelijke sancties voor handel met voorkennis en marktmanipulatie, COM(2012) XXX.

LIBOR duidelijk te verbieden en strafbaar te stellen in de hele EU. De regulering van benchmarks in het algemeen wordt door de Commissie prioritair onderzocht. Nauwe samenwerking met de internationale partners van de EU en internationale fora zoals de FSB is in dit verband essentieel. Het Europees Parlement zal van de vooruitgang ter zake op de hoogte worden gehouden.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-006762/12
till kommissionen
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) och Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5 juli 2012)

Angående: Barclays manipulation av Libor/Euribor

Den 27 juni 2012, på ett liknande sätt som den amerikanska finansderivatinspektionen *US Commodity Futures Trading Commission*, bötfällde den brittiska finansinspektionen *Financial Services Authority* banken Barclays Bank Plc för att gjort sig skyldig till överträdelser avseende referensräntorna Libor (London Interbank Offered Rate) och Euribor (Euro Interbank Offered Rate) ([1]). Barclays överträdelser bestod bland annat i att

— lämna uppgifter som utgör delar av processen för att fastställa Libor och Euribor och som tog hänsyn till önskemål från Barclays räntederivathandlare, vilka drevs av vinstintressen och försökte att gynna Barclays handelspositioner,

— försöka påverka uppgiftslämnandet till Euribor från andra banker som bidrar till processen för att fastställa räntesatser,

— minska sitt uppgiftslämnande till Libor under finanskrisen till följd av den högsta ledningens oro för negativa kommenterar i medierna.

Dessutom hade inte Barclays adekvata system och kontroller för processen med uppgiftslämnande till Libor och Euribor förrän i juni 2010 och missade ett antal lämpliga tillfällen att se över sina system och kontroller.

1. Vilka är följderna av Libor- och Euribor-manipulationerna i ljuset av den pågående finansiella och ekonomiska krisen?

2. Avser kommissionen eller Europeiska bankmyndigheten (EBA) att företa ytterligare undersökningar? Tror kommissionen att detta är det enda fallet av marknadsmanipulation eller är det möjligt att det funnits storskaliga marknadsmanipulationer där andra aktörer varit inblandade?

3. Hur kommer kommissionen att bedöma de behöriga myndigheternas roll i detta fall?

4. Avser kommissionen att undersöka huruvida manipulationerna av Libor drevs av bonusjakt? Anser kommissionen i så fall att dagens ersättningsregelverk är lämpligt?

5. Vad har kommissionen, EBA och ECB för roll för att förhindra sådana överträdelser?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(14 augusti 2012)

Det är för tidigt att uppskatta de fulla verkningarna av flera bankers påstådda manipulation av Libor och Euribor, eftersom nationella utredningar fortfarande pågår.

Kommissionen undersöker för närvarande flera möjliga kartellarrangemang som inbegriper referensräntor, däribland Euribor och Libor, samt handel med relaterade derivat. Det är kommissionens ansvar att se till att EU:s antitrustregler följs, särskilt artikel 101 i fördraget, och att vid behov införa sanktioner.

Det är de behöriga tillsynsmyndigheternas ansvar att undersöka om enskilda banker som står under myndigheternas tillsyn har brutit mot EU:s lagstiftning om finansiella tjänster, om nödvändigt i samarbete med Europeiska bankmyndigheten och Europeiska värdepappers- och marknadsmyndigheten.

Kommissionen har reagerat snabbt på Liborskandalen genom att anta ändrade förslag till en förordning ([2]) och ett direktiv ([3]) om marknadsmissbruk, för att tydligt förbjuda och kriminalisera manipulation av referensräntor, inklusive Libor, i hela unionen. Kommissionen är också i färd med att granska regleringen av referensräntor mer generellt som en prioriterad fråga. Ett nära samarbete med EU:s internationella partner och internationella forum, exempelvis FSB, är av avgörande betydelse i detta hänseende. Europaparlamentet kommer att hållas underrättat om händelseutvecklingen.

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml
([2]) Ändrat förslag till förordning om insiderhandel och otillbörlig marknadspåverkan (KOM(2012) XXX).
([3]) Ändrat förslag till direktiv om straffrättsliga påföljder för insiderhandel och otillbörlig marknadspåverkan (KOM(2012) XXX).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006762/12
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sylvie Goulard (ALDE), Philippe De Backer (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE), Wolf Klinz (ALDE), Olle Schmidt (ALDE) and Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)
(5 July 2012)

Subject: Barclays' manipulation of LIBOR/EUROBOR

On 27 June 2012, in a move similar to that of the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the Financial Services Authority fined Barclays Bank Plc for misconduct relating to the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) and the Euro Interbank Offered Rate (EURIBOR) ([1]). Barclays' misconduct included:

— making submissions which formed part of the LIBOR and EURIBOR setting process that took into account requests from Barclays' interest rate derivatives traders. These traders were motivated by profit and sought to benefit Barclays' trading positions;

— seeking to influence the EURIBOR submissions of other banks contributing to the rate setting process;

— reducing its LIBOR submissions during the financial crisis as a result of senior management's concerns over negative media comment.

In addition, Barclays failed to have adequate systems and controls in place relating to its LIBOR and EURIBOR submissions processes until June 2010 and failed to review its systems and controls at a number of appropriate points.

1. What is the impact of the manipulation of LIBOR and EURIBOR rates in light of the current financial and economic crisis?

2. Does the Commission or the European Banking Authority (EBA) intend to conduct further investigations? Does the Commission believe this to be the only case of market manipulation or is it possible that there was large-scale market manipulation involving other participants?

3. How will the Commission assess the role of the competent authorities in this case?

4. Does the Commission intend to assess whether the manipulation of LIBOR was bonus-driven? If so, does the Commission consider the current remuneration framework appropriate?

5. What is the role of the Commission, the EBA and the ECB in preventing such misconduct?

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

It is too early to estimate the full impact of the alleged manipulation of LIBOR and Euribor by several banks, as national investigations are ongoing.

The Commission is currently investigating several possible cartel arrangements involving benchmarks including Euribor and LIBOR and trading in related derivatives. It is the Commission's responsibility to enforce EU antitrust rules, in particular Article 101 of the Treaty, and to impose sanctions where necessary.

It is for the competent supervisory authorities to investigate whether individual banks under their supervision have breached EU financial services legislation, in cooperation with the European Banking Authority and the European Securities and Markets Authority as necessary.

The Commission has acted promptly to respond to the LIBOR scandal by adopting amended proposals for a regulation ([2]) and for a directive ([3]) on market abuse, to clearly prohibit and criminalise throughout the Union the manipulation of benchmarks including LIBOR. Concerning the regulation of benchmarks more broadly, the Commission is examining this matter as a priority. Close cooperation with the EU's international partners and international for a like the FSB is essential in this regard. The European Parliament will be kept informed of progress.

([1]) http://www.fsa.gov.uk/library/communication/pr/2012/070.shtml.
([2]) Amended proposal for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation, COM(2012)XXX.
([3]) Amended proposal for a directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation, COM(2012)xxx.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006768/12
komissiolle (Varapuheenjohtajalle / Korkealle edustajalle)
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(5. heinäkuuta 2012)

Aihe: VP/HR – Palestiinalaisalueen kansainvälinen asema

Euroopan unionin ensisijaisena tavoitteena Lähi-idässä on pysyvän rauhan vakiinnuttaminen alueelle. Tämän hyväksi toimiessaan EU on asettanut yhdeksi keskeiseksi pyrkimyksekseen toteuttaa ns. kahden valtion mallin mukaisen suunnitelman Israelin ja palestiinalaisten välisen konfliktin lopullisena ratkaisuna. Tällä hetkellä yksi keskeisistä esteistä suunnitelman etenemiselle on edellytysten puuttuminen suorilta rauhanneuvotteluilta. Niiden syntymistä ei ole edesauttanut muiden muassa Euroopan unionin eräiden jäsenvaltioiden suhtautuminen palestiinalaisten pyrkimyksiin YK:n jäseneksi.

Haluan esittää seuraavat kysymykset komissiolle:

1. Millä perusteella EU-maat ovat tehneet päätöksensä Palestiinan kansainvälisestä asemasta?

2. Euroopan unioni on sitoutunut edistämään demokratiaa, ihmisoikeuksia ja oikeusvaltion periaatteita, joten on vaikea ymmärtää, miten sen jäsenvaltiot voivat olla tukemassa terroristijärjestö Hamasin osittain johtaman PA:n autonomian yksipuolisia pyrkimyksiä kansainvälisellä näyttämöllä YK:ssa?

3. EU:n pyrkimyksenä on noudattaa yhtenäistä ulkopoliittista linjaa, joten kuinka on mahdollista, että sen jäsenvaltiot ovat tehneet esim. Palestiinan UNESCO-jäsenyyden suhteen toisistaan poikkeavia ratkaisuja ja osa on jopa tukenut sitä?

4. Onko komission ylipäätään mahdollista luoda edellytykset kaikkien jäsenvaltioiden pysymiselle yhdenmukaisen toimintalinjan ja Euroopan unionin arvojen takana ja tällä tavoin vahvistaa EU:n roolia Lähi-idän kvartetin yhtenä osapuolena?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(24. elokuuta 2012)

EU:n jäsenvaltiot ovat ilmaisseet olevansa valmiita tunnustamaan Palestiinan valtion, kun tilanne sen sallii. Kolmannen valtion tunnustaminen kuuluu kuitenkin jäsenvaltioiden päätösvallan alaan.

Neuvoston 14. toukokuuta 2012 antamat päätelmät osoittavat, että EU-maiden näkemykset Lähi-idän rauhanprosessista ja tarpeesta suojella kahden valtion ratkaisun edellytyksiä ovat varsin yhtenevät.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006768/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(5 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — International status of the Palestinian region

The EU's primary objective in the Middle East is to establish a lasting peace in the region. In its actions to that end, the EU has set as one of its central endeavours to set up a plan based on a 'two-state model' to finally resolve the conflict between Israel and Palestine. At present one of the main obstacles to making progress on this plan is the absence of the conditions for direct peace negotiations. One thing that has not helped to create these conditions is the attitude of some EU Member States towards Palestinian efforts to become a UN member.

I should like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. On what basis have the EU countries taken their decisions on the international status of Palestine?

2. The European Union has committed itself to promoting democracy, human rights and the principles of the rule of law, so it is hard to see how its Member States can support the unilateral efforts towards autonomy by the Palestinian Authority, which is partly led by the terrorist organisation Hamas, on the international stage at the UN. How can this be?

3. The EU seeks to follow a uniform line in foreign policy, so how is it possible that its Member States have proposed differing solutions concerning Palestine's membership of Unesco, for example, and some have even supported it?

4. Is the Commission even in a position to create the conditions whereby all Member States stand behind a uniform line of action and the values of the European Union, and thus to strengthen the EU's role as a member of the Middle East Quartet?

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

The EU member states have stated their readiness to recognise the State of Palestine when appropriate. The recognition of third States remains a prerogative of the member states.

The Council conclusions of 14 May 2012 prove the advanced level of convergence of views that exists within the EU on the Middle East Peace Process and the need to protect prospects for a two state solution.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006775/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(6. juli 2012)

Om: EU-støtte til nynazistiske grupper i Litauen

Fornylig blev den nynazistiske, litauiske ungdomsgruppe Union of Lithuanian Nationalist Youth (ULNY), som den 11. marts 2012 stod bag en nynazistisk march i Vilnius, uden modstand optaget i paraplyorganisationen Lithuanian Council of Youth Organisations (LCYO), der modtager støtte fra både Litauens regering og EU. LCYO er den største ungdomsorganisation i Litauen og består af 64 grupper med over 200 000 medlemmer.

Er Kommissionen enig i, at ULNY er en nynazistisk organisation, og at sådanne i givet fald er uforeneligt med EU's grundlag?

Vil Kommissionen oplyse, hvor meget LCYO — herunder ULNY — modtager i støtte fra EU?

Agter Kommissionen at udtale kritik af, at ULNY er blevet optaget i LCYO, og herunder præcisere, at organisationer som ULNY er uforenelige med EU's grundlag?

Agter Kommissionen på baggrund af ovenstående at fratage LCYO EU-støtten indtil ULNY er fjernet fra organisationen?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Androulla Vassiliou
(18. september 2012)

Kommissionen har ikke ydet tilskud til ULNY.

Det tilskud, der gennem programmet Aktive Unge blev ydet til LCYO, en paraplyorganisation, der repræsenterer de litauiske ungdomsorganisationer, beløb sig til i alt 416 263 EUR over en femårig periode fra 2008 til 2012.

Som følge af de seneste ændringer i paraplyorganisationen og i overensstemmelse med målsætningerne for programmet Aktive Unge, navnlig målet om »at fremme EU's grundlæggende værdier blandt unge, navnlig respekt for menneskeværdighed, lighed, respekt for menneskerettighederne, tolerance og ikke-forskelsbehandling«, vil Kommissionen sørge for, at der først ydes eventuelle tilskud til LCYO i forbindelse med specifikke projekter efter en særlig grundig evaluering af, hvorvidt projekterne overholder disse principper.

Kommissionen minder om, at medlemsstaterne iflg. rammeafgørelse 2008/913/JAI ([1]) skal straffe offentlig tilskyndelse til vold eller had rettet mod en gruppe af personer, der er defineret under henvisning til race, hudfarve, religion, herkomst eller national eller etnisk oprindelse. Denne rammeafgørelse straffer ligeledes offentligt forsvar for eller benægtelse eller grov bagatellisering af folkedrab, forbrydelser mod menneskeheden eller krigsforbrydelser som defineret i artikel 6 i charteret for Den Internationale Militærdomstol indeholdt i bilaget til London-aftalen af 8. april 1945, når denne adfærd udøves på en måde, der sandsynligvis vil tilskynde til vold eller had. Medlemsstaterne skal gennemføre denne rammeafgørelse i deres lovgivning.

([1]) Rammeafgørelse 2008/913/JAI af 28. november 2008, EUT L 328 af 6.12.2008, s. 55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006775/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(6 July 2012)

Subject: EU support for neo-Nazi groups in Lithuania

Recently the neo-Nazi Lithuanian youth group the Union of Lithuanian Nationalist Youth (UNLY), which was behind a neo-Nazi march on 11 March 2012 in Vilnius, was admitted without demur into the umbrella organisation the Lithuanian Council of Youth Organisations (LCYO) which receives support both from the Lithuanian Government and from the EU. The LCYO is the largest youth organisation in Lithuania and comprises 64 groups with over 200 000 members.

Does the Commission agree that ULNY is a neo-Nazi organisation, and that as such it is incompatible with the EU's founding principles?

Can the Commission state how much the LCYO — including UNLY — receives in aid from the EU?

Does the Commission propose to criticise the admission of UNLY as a member of the LCYO, and state clearly that organisations such as UNLY are incompatible with the EU's founding principles?

In the light of the above, does the Commission propose to withdraw EU support from the LCYO until UNLY is expelled from the organisation?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(18 septembre 2012)

La Commission n'a pas octroyé de subvention à l'ULNY.

Les subventions octroyées, à partir du programme Jeunesse en Action, à la LCYO, organisme représentatif des organisations lituaniennes de jeunesse, ont atteint un montant total de 416 263 euros sur les cinq années de la période 2008-2012.

Compte tenu des récents changements intervenus dans cette organisation, et en conformité avec les objectifs du programme Jeunesse en Action, en particulier celui de «promouvoir les valeurs fondamentales de l'Union auprès des jeunes, et notamment le respect de la dignité humaine, l'égalité, le respect des Droits de l'homme, la tolérance et la non-discrimination», la Commission veillera à ce que d'éventuelles subventions au titre de projets spécifiques ne soient accordées à la LCYO qu'après un examen particulièrement attentif de la conformité des projets à ces principes.

La Commission rappelle que la Décision-Cadre 2008/913/JAI ([1]) impose aux États membres de punir l'incitation publique à la violence ou à la haine visant des personnes définies par référence à la race, la couleur, la religion, l'ascendance, l'origine nationale ou ethnique. Cette Décision-Cadre pénalise également l'apologie, la négation ou la banalisation grossière publiques des crimes définis à l'article 6 de la charte du Tribunal militaire international annexée à l'accord de Londres du 8 août 1945, lorsque le comportement est exercé d'une manière qui risque d'inciter à la violence ou à la haine. Il appartient aux États membres d'assurer la mise en œuvre de la décision-cadre à travers leurs lois nationales.

([1]) Décision-cadre 2008/913/JAI du 28 novembre 2008, JO L 328/55 du 6.12.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006778/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Louis Michel (ALDE), Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE), Hannu Takkula (ALDE), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) y Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Procedimientos de trabajo normalizados en relación con la sala de situación construida por la UE para la Liga Árabe en El Cairo

El 26 de junio de 2012, el Director General para la Respuesta a las Crisis del SEAE presentó la finalización de la sala de situación, el proyecto «teléfono rojo», construida por el SEAE en la sede de la Liga de los Estados Árabes en El Cairo ([1]). El Sr. Miozzo declaró que el centro «crearía confianza entre interlocutores importantes en una región proclive a sufrir conflictos», y garantizó que el SEAE «tendría gente fiable al otro lado de la línea telefónica». A tal fin, se han instalado en las oficinas de la Liga Árabe en El Cairo ordenadores, pantallas de televisión y sistemas de comunicación por un valor de 9 millones de euros. Según el Sr. Miozzo, se están preparando sistemas similares para la Unión Africana en Adís Abeba y para la Asociación de Naciones del Asia Sudoriental en Yakarta. También está previsto el establecimiento de un centro de información panárabe.

1. ¿Puede la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante facilitar al Parlamento un plan detallado o una estrategia en los que se exponga la función de estas salas de situación construidas y equipadas por la UE en terceros países en lo que se refiere al desarrollo de lazos más estrechos con el mundo árabe y en África y Asia para fines de lucha contra el terrorismo o de coordinación de acciones conjuntas durante crisis ([2])?

2. ¿Puede la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante facilitar más detalles sobre los acuerdos operativos entre los países de acogida y el SEAE, en particular sobre los acuerdos con el Departamento de Respuesta a las Crisis?

3. ¿Puede la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante facilitar más detalles sobre las medidas de salvaguarda para garantizar que el uso de las salas de situación se limite estrictamente a la respuesta ante crisis y que los países de acogida no las utilicen para fines internos, en particular para fines que impliquen la violación de las libertades fundamentales y los derechos humanos? Este último aspecto es motivo de especial preocupación, habida cuenta del mal historial de los Estados miembros de la Liga Árabe en materia de derechos humanos.

4. ¿Puede la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante definir los tipos de crisis comprendidos en el ámbito de la cooperación entre el SEAE y la Liga Árabe?

5. ¿Que normas se aplicarán en materia de seguridad, información y comunicación?

6. ¿Están consideradas las salas de situación y los funcionarios de la UE destinados a ellas como misiones diplomáticas de la UE y cubiertas, por lo tanto, por las obligaciones contraídas por los países de acogida en virtud del Convenio de Viena?

7. ¿Han celebrado las partes acuerdos vinculantes jurídicamente con obligaciones expresas en materia de transparencia y rendición de cuentas? En caso afirmativo, ¿puede la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante proporcionar al Parlamento los textos de dichos acuerdos?

8. ¿Contempla la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante algún papel para el Parlamento en lo relativo al control democrático de las actividades del SEAE de respuesta a las crisis en el mundo árabe y en África y Asia?

9. ¿Depende el incremento de la cooperación de que se den unas condiciones que reflejen las normas de la UE en materia de derechos civiles y políticos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de agosto de 2012)

1. El objetivo es crear un sistema de alerta rápida que sirva como instrumento regional de paz y estabilidad para catástrofes de origen humano o natural. El proyecto lo realiza el PNUD que utiliza sus capacidades regionales.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/24/116757
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7197

2. El proyecto con la Liga Árabe está coordinado por la delegación de la UE en El Cairo y lo realiza la oficina regional del PNUD de El Cairo. El importe total del proyecto es de 2 265 190 EUR; el 85 % lo financia la UE. El CPS lo examinó y se le mantiene informado con regularidad.

3. No se ha instalado tecnología alguna en la sala de la Liga Árabe que pueda ser perjudicial para la vida privada o los derechos humanos. Al contrario, ofrece nuevas oportunidades para el diálogo y la transparencia entre la UE y la Liga Árabe.

4. El trabajo se basa en el análisis de riesgos previsibles y se centra en las crisis y desastres naturales actuales de la región.

5. Las actividades de alerta se basan en información de fuentes públicas.

6. La sala de situación de El Cairo es propiedad de la Liga Árabe, que se ocupa también de dotarla de personal.

7. Todos los detalles se publican en el «Informe Anual de 2011 sobre el Instrumento de Estabilidad» de la Comisión Europea (véase también: http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/index_en.htm).

8. El Parlamento conserva su papel, como en todos los proyectos financiados por la UE.

9. Esta cooperación tiene por finalidad fomentar una mejor comprensión entre la UE y los demás actores, especialmente en el ámbito de la prevención de conflictos, construcción de la paz y respuesta ante la crisis.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006778/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Louis Michel (ALDE), Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE), Hannu Takkula (ALDE), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) und Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Standardverfahren für das von der EU eingerichtete Lagezentrum (situation room) der Arabischen Liga in Kairo

Am 26. Juni 2012 präsentierte der Exekutivdirektor des Bereichs Krisenreaktion des EAD die Fertigstellung eines Lagezentrums, das Projekt „Rotes Telefon", das der EAD im Hauptquartier der Arabischen Liga in Kairo eingerichtet hatte ([1]). Herr Miozzo erklärte, das Zentrum werde Vertrauen zu wichtigen Partnern in einem konfliktträchtigen Teil der Welt herstellen, und er versicherte, beim EAD würden zuverlässige Personen am anderen Ende der Leitung sitzen. Zu diesem Zweck wurden Computer, Bildschirme und Kommunikationssysteme in einem Wert von 9 Mio. EUR in den Räumlichkeiten der Arabischen Liga in Kairo installiert. Nach Aussage von Herrn Miozzo werden vergleichbare Systeme für die Afrikanische Union in Addis Ababa und für den Verband Südostasiatischer Nationen in Jakarta entwickelt. Die Einrichtung eines panarabischen Informationszentrums wird ebenfalls in Erwägung gezogen.

1. Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin dem Parlament einen detaillierten Plan oder eine ausführliche Strategie vorlegen, in dem/der die Rolle dieser von der EU eingerichteten/geförderten Lagezentren in Drittländern in Bezug auf die Entwicklung engerer Beziehungen zu Ländern in der arabischen Welt und in Afrika und in Asien zum Zwecke der Bekämpfung des Terrorismus oder zur Koordinierung gemeinsamer Maßnahmen während einer Krise erläutert wird ([2])?

2. Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin nähere Einzelheiten über die operationellen Vereinbarungen zwischen den Gastländern und dem EAD vermitteln, insbesondere über Vereinbarungen mit dem Bereich Krisenreaktion?

3. Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin zusätzliche Einzelheiten über Vorsorgemaßnahmen mitteilen, mit denen sichergestellt werden soll, dass die Lagezentren ausschließlich für Maßnahmen zur Krisenbewältigung genutzt werden und nicht für den einheimischen Gebrauch durch die Gastländer, vor allem nicht für Zwecke, die mit Verletzungen der Grundrechte und der Menschenrechte einhergehen? Besonders letzterer Aspekt bietet angesichts der schlechten Bilanz der Mitgliedstaaten der Arabischen Liga, was die Menschenrechte betrifft, Anlass zu Besorgnis.

4. Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin klarstellen, welche Arten von Krisen in den Bereich der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem EAD und der Arabischen Liga fallen?

5. Welche Sicherheits- sowie Informations- und Kommunikationssicherheitsstandards gelten?

6. Werden die Lagezentren und die dort tätigen EU-Beamten als diplomatische Vertretungen der EU eingestuft und unterliegen die Gastländer damit in diesem Zusammenhang den Verpflichtungen im Rahmen des Wiener Übereinkommens?

7. Sind die Parteien rechtsverbindliche Vereinbarungen eingegangen, in denen auch Verpflichtungen in Bezug auf Transparenz und Rechenschaftspflicht festgelegt wurden? Falls ja, kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin dem Parlament den Wortlaut dieser Vereinbarungen übermitteln?

8. Soll das Europäische Parlament nach Auffassung der Vizepräsidentin/Hohen Repräsentantin eine demokratische Kontrolle der Krisenbewältigungsmaßnahmen des EAD in der arabischen Welt und in Afrika und Asien sicherstellen?

9. Hängt eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit von Bedingungen ab, die den Normen der EU im Bereich der bürgerlichen und politischen Rechte entsprechen?

([1]) http://euobserver.com/24/116757
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7197

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

1. Ziel ist die Schaffung eines Frühwarnsystems, das bei von Menschen verursachten Katastrophen und Naturkatastrophen als regionales Instrument für Frieden und Stabilität dient. Das Projekt wird vom UNDP mithilfe seiner Kapazitäten in der Region durchgeführt.

2. Das Projekt mit der Arabischen Liga wird von der EU-Delegation in Kairo koordiniert und vom UNDP-Regionalbüro in Kairo durchgeführt. Der Gesamtbetrag des Projekts umfasst 2 265 190 EUR — davon werden 85 % von der EU finanziert. Das Politische und Sicherheitspolitische Komitee hat das Vorhaben erörtert und wird regelmäßig unterrichtet.

3. Im Lagezentrum bei der Arabischen Liga wurde keine Technologie eingerichtet, die möglicherweise die Privatsphäre oder Menschenrechte verletzt. Vielmehr bietet es neue Möglichkeiten für Dialog und Transparenz zwischen der EU und der Arabischen Liga.

4. Die Arbeit basiert auf Risikoprognoseanalysen und befasst sich schwerpunktmäßig mit aktuellen Krisen und Naturkatastrophen in der Region.

5. Die Warnsysteme stützen sich auf offene Informationsquellen.

6. Das Lagezentrum in Kairo gehört der Arabischen Liga und wird von ihren Mitarbeitern betrieben.

7. Alle Einzelheiten wurden im „Jahresbericht 2011 der Europäischen Kommission über das Stabilitätsinstrument“ veröffentlicht (siehe http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/index_en.htm).

8. Das Parlament behält seine Rolle in Bezug auf von der EU finanzierte Drittländerprojekte bei.

9. Ziel der Zusammenarbeit ist die Förderung einer besseren Verständigung zwischen der EU und anderen Akteuren, insbesondere in den Bereichen Konfliktprävention, Friedenskonsolidierung und Krisenreaktion.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006778/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Louis Michel (ALDE), Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE), Hannu Takkula (ALDE), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) et Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6 juillet 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — mode opératoire normalisé de la salle de crise de la Ligue arabe au Caire mise en place par l'UE

Le 26 juin 2012, le directeur général du département de réponse aux crises du SEAE a présenté la finalisation d'une salle de crise, le projet «téléphone rouge», mise en place par le SEAE au siège de Ligue des États arabes au Caire ([1]). M. Miozzo a déclaré que le centre «générerait de la confiance entre des interlocuteurs importants dans une région du monde enclin à des conflits», et a assuré que le SEAE «aurait des personnes fiables de l'autre côté de la ligne téléphonique». Dans cette perspective, des ordinateurs, des écrans de télévision et des systèmes de communication ont été installés dans les bureaux de la Ligue arabe au Caire pour un montant estimé à 1,9 million d'euros. M. Miozzo a indiqué que des systèmes similaires étaient en cours d'élaboration pour l'Union africaine à Addis-Abeba et pour l'Association des nations de l'Asie du Sud-est à Jakarta. La mise en place d'un centre d'information panarabe est également envisagée.

1. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle fournir au Parlement européen un plan complet ou une stratégie détaillée définissant la fonction de ces salles de crise établies par l'Union européenne ou avec son soutien dans les pays tiers par rapport au développement de liens plus étroits avec les pays du monde arabe, d'Afrique et d'Asie dans la lutte contre le terrorisme ou la coordination d'actions conjointes pendant des crises? ([2])

2. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle fournir plus de détails sur les accords opérationnels entre les pays d'accueil et le SEAE, en particulier le département de réponse aux crises?

3. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle fournir des détails supplémentaires sur les garanties qui assurent que l'utilisation de la/des chambre(s) de veille est strictement limitée aux réponses aux crises et n'est pas utilisée par les pays d'accueil pour un usage domestique, notamment des atteintes aux libertés fondamentales et aux Droits de l'homme? Ce dernier aspect constitue un motif particulier d'inquiétude eu égard au triste bilan des pays membres de la Ligue arabe en matière de respect des Droits de l'homme.

4. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle définir quels types de crises s'inscrivent dans le cadre de la coopération entre le SEAE et les États de la Ligue arabe?

5. Quelles normes seront appliquées en matière de sécurité, d'information et de communication?

6. Les salles de crise sont-elles considérées, ainsi que les fonctionnaires de l'UE qui y sont affectés, comme des missions diplomatiques de l'UE, et donc couvertes par les obligations contractées par les pays d'accueil en vertu de la Convention de Vienne?

7. Les parties ont-elles conclu des accords juridiquement contraignants, et notamment des obligations en matière de transparence et de reddition de compte? Dans l'affirmative, la Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante peut-elle fournir les textes de ces accords au Parlement européen?

8. La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante estime-t-elle que le Parlement européen doive jouer un rôle pour garantir un contrôle démocratique des activités de réponse aux crises du SEAE dans le monde arabe, en Afrique et en Asie?

9. Une coopération renforcée dépend-elle de l'existence de conditions qui reflètent les normes de l'UE en matière de droits civils et politiques?

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

1. L'objectif est d'instaurer un système d'alerte rapide faisant office d'instrument régional de paix et de stabilité face aux catastrophes provoquées par l'homme et aux catastrophes naturelles. Le projet est mis en œuvre par le PNUD sur la base de ses compétences régionales.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/24/116757
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7197

2. Le projet mené en partenariat avec la Ligue arabe est coordonné par la délégation de l'UE au Caire et mis en œuvre par le bureau régional du PNUD au Caire. Il s'élève au total à 2 265 190 euros, dont 85 % est financé par l'UE. Ce projet a été examiné par le COPS, qui est régulièrement tenu informé.

3. Aucune technologie susceptible de portée atteinte à la vie privée ou aux Droits de l'homme n'a été installée dans la chambre de veille de la Ligue arabe. Bien au contraire, il s'agit là d'un outil qui offre de nouvelles possibilités de dialogue et de transparence entre l'UE et la Ligue arabe.

4. Le travail repose sur l'analyse des risques prévisibles et se concentre sur les crises régionales actuelles et les catastrophes naturelles.

5. Les mécanismes d'alerte se fondent sur des renseignements de source ouverte.

6. La Ligue arabe est propriétaire de la salle de crise au Caire et assure les besoins en personnel.

7. Tous les détails sont publiés dans le Rapport annuel 2011 de la Commission européenne concernant l'instrument de stabilité (voir aussi: http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/index_en.htm).

8. Le Parlement conserve son rôle en ce qui concerne les projets financés par l'UE dans les pays tiers.

9. Cette coopération a pour but de promouvoir une meilleure compréhension entre l'UE et les autres acteurs, notamment dans le domaine de la prévention des conflits, de la consolidation de la paix et de la réaction en cas de crise.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006778/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Louis Michel (ALDE), Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE), Hannu Takkula (ALDE), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) en Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6 juli 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Standaard werkwijzen voor de door de EU geïnstalleerde „situation room" van de Arabische Liga in Caïro

Op 26 juni 2012 ging de directeur van de crisisreactieafdeling van de EDEO op een presentatie in op de voltooiing van een „situation room", een „rode-telefoon-project", dat de EDEO in het hoofdkwartier van de Arabische Liga in Caïro ([1]) heeft gerealiseerd. De heer Miozzo verklaarde dat het centrum „vertrouwen met belangrijke partners in een conflictgevoelig deel van de wereld zou scheppen" en gaf de verzekering dat de EDEO ervoor zorgt dat er „vertrouwde mensen aan het andere einde van de lijn" zouden zitten. Daartoe werden computers, beeldschermen en communicatiesystemen voor een waarde van 9 miljoen EUR in de kantoren van de Arabische Liga in Caïro geïnstalleerd. Volgens de heer Miozzo worden soortgelijke systemen ontwikkeld voor de Afrikaanse Unie in Addis Abeba, en voor de Associatie van zuidoostaziatische naties in Djakarta. Ook wordt de instelling van een pan-Arabisch informatiecentrum beoogd.

1. Kan de VP/HR het Parlement een gedetailleerd plan of een gedetailleerde strategie voorleggen waarin de rol wordt verklaard van deze door de EU aangelegde of gefaciliteerde „situation rooms" in derde landen, in verband met de ontwikkeling van nauwere banden met landen in de Arabische wereld alsmede in Afrika en Azië, in het kader van de bestrijding van het terrorisme of de coördinatie van gezamenlijke acties in crisissituaties ([2])?

2. Kan de VP/HR meer details verstrekken over de operationele overeenkomsten tussen de gastlanden en de EDEO, in het bijzonder over overeenkomsten met de crisisreactieafdeling?

3. Kan de VP/HR aanvullende bijzonderheden verstrekken over veiligheidsmaatregelen die ervoor moeten zorgen dat het gebruik van de „situation room(s)" strikt tot crisisreacties beperkt blijft en intern gebruik door de gastlanden is uitgesloten, in het bijzonder als het gaat om toepassingen die tot schending van de fundamentele vrijheden en mensenrechten kunnen leiden? Dit laatste punt verdient bijzondere aandacht, gezien de slechte reputatie op mensenrechtengebied van de staten die lid zijn van de Arabische Liga.

4. Kan de VP/HR omschrijven welke soorten crises binnen de samenwerking tussen de EDEO en de Arabische Liga vallen?

5. Welke veiligheids-, informatie- en communicatiebeveiligingsnormen zijn van toepassing?

6. Hebben de „situation rooms", met inbegrip van eventueel in deze centra gedetacheerde EU-ambtenaren, de status van diplomatieke missies van de EU en vallen ze op grond daarvan onder de verplichtingen van de gastlanden krachten het Verdrag van Wenen?

7. Hebben beide partijen juridisch bindende overeenkomsten gesloten waarin ook voorwaarden zijn opgenomen inzake transparantie en rekenschap? Zo ja, kan de VP/HR deze teksten doen toekomen aan het Europees Parlement?

8. Ziet de VP/HR voor het EP een rol weggelegd bij het democratisch toezicht op de werkzaamheden van de EDEO-crisisreactieafdeling in de Arabische wereld, Afrika en Azië?

9. Is de samenwerking afhankelijk gesteld van voorwaarden die recht doen aan de EU-normen met betrekking tot politieke en burgerrechten?

Antwoord van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(28 augustus 2012)

1. De bedoeling is een vroegtijdig waarschuwingssysteem te creëren dat als instrument voor vrede en stabiliteit in de regio kan dienen wanneer zich door mensen veroorzaakte rampen en natuurrampen voordoen. Het project wordt uitgevoerd door het Ontwikkelingsprogramma van de Verenigde Naties (UNDP) met gebruikmaking van zijn regionale capaciteiten.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/24/116757/?rk=1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7197.

2. Het project met de Arabische Liga wordt gecoördineerd door de EU-delegatie in Caïro en wordt uitgevoerd door het regionaal kantoor van het UNDP in Caïro. De totale kosten van het project bedragen 2 265 190 EUR; hiervan wordt 85 % door de EU gefinancierd. Het PVC heeft het project besproken en wordt regelmatig geïnformeerd.

3. Er is geen technologie in de „situation room" bij de Arabische Liga geïnstalleerd die de privacy of de mensenrechten zou kunnen schenden; integendeel, de toegepaste technologie biedt nieuwe mogelijkheden voor dialoog en transparantie tussen de EU en de Arabische Liga.

4. De werkzaamheden zijn gebaseerd op voorspellende risicoanalyse en zijn gericht op bestaande regionale crisissituaties en natuurrampen.

5. De waarschuwingssystemen maken gebruik van open source-informatie.

6. De Arabische Liga is eigenaar van de „situation room" in Caïro en stelt het personeel aan.

7. Alle details zijn in het „Jaarverslag 2011 van de Europese Commissie over het stabiliteitsinstrument" gepubliceerd (zie ook: http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/index_en.htm).

8. Het Parlement behoudt de rol die het bij alle door de EU gefinancierde projecten in derde landen speelt.

9. Deze samenwerking is bedoeld om de verstandhouding tussen de EU en andere actoren te verbeteren, met name op het gebied van conflictpreventie, vredesopbouw en crisisbestrijding.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006778/12
komissiolle (Varapuheenjohtajalle / Korkealle edustajalle)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Louis Michel (ALDE), Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE), Hannu Takkula (ALDE), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) ja Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6. heinäkuuta 2012)

Aihe: VP/HR – EU:n perustaman, Kairossa sijaitsevan Arabiliiton tilannekeskuksen vakioidut toimintaohjeet

Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinnon kriisinhallintaosaston johtaja esitteli 26. kesäkuuta 2012 "Red Telephone" -projektin eli ulkosuhdehallinnon perustaman tilannekeskuksen Arabiliiton pääkonttoriin Kairoon ([1]). Agostino Miozzo kertoi, että keskus loisi "konfliktialttiilla alueella luottamusta tärkeiden kumppaneiden välille", ja vakuutti, että siten Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinnolla olisi "luotettavia ihmisiä rajan toisella puolella". Tätä tarkoitusta varten Arabiliiton toimitiloihin Kairossa on asennettu yhteensä 9 miljoonan euron arvosta tietokoneita, TV-ruutuja ja muita viestintäjärjestelmiä. Miozzon mukaan samanlaisia järjestelmiä kehitetään parhaillaan Afrikan unionille Addis Abebaan ja Kaakkois-Aasian maiden liitolle Jakartaan. Lisäksi suunnitteilla on Arabimaiden yhteisen tietokeskuksen perustaminen.

1. Voisiko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja toimittaa parlamentille yksityiskohtaisen suunnitelman tai strategian, josta käy ilmi näiden EU:n perustamien tai tukemien kolmansien maiden tilannekeskusten rooli EU:n sekä Arabimaiden, Afrikan ja Aasian välisen yhteistyön kehittämisessä nykyistä tiiviimmäksi, jotta voidaan torjua terrorismia ja järjestää yhteisiä kriisinhallintatoimia? ([2])

2. Voisiko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja toimittaa lisätietoja isäntämaiden ja Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinnon välisistä operatiivisista sopimuksista, ennen kaikkea kriisinhallintaosaston tekemistä sopimuksista?

3. Voisiko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja antaa lisätietoja siitä, millaisilla suojatoimilla varmistetaan, että tilannekeskuksia käytetään yksinomaan kriisinhallinnassa eikä isäntämaiden omissa toimissa tai varsinkaan perusvapauksia ja ihmisoikeuksia loukkaavissa toimissa? Jälkimmäisten poissulkeminen on erityisen tärkeää, kun otetaan huomioon Arabiliiton jäsenmaiden huono ihmisoikeustilanne.

4. Voisiko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja määritellä, minkälaiset kriisit kuuluisivat Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinnon ja Arabiliiton välisen yhteistyön piiriin?

5. Mitkä ovat toiminnalle asetetut turva-, tiedotus- ja tietoturvallisuusvaatimukset?

6. Määritelläänkö tilannekeskukset EU:n diplomaattisiksi edustustoiksi ja onko isäntämaiden siten noudatettava Wienin yleissopimuksen asettamia velvoitteita, kuten EU:n virkamiesten lähettämistä tilannekeskuksiin?

7. Ovatko osapuolet päässeet oikeudellisesti sitoviin sopimuksiin, joissa määritellään myös avoimuus- ja vastuuvelvoitteet? Jos näin on, voisiko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja toimittaa näiden sopimusten tekstit parlamentille?

8. Suunnitteleeko varapuheenjohtaja / korkea edustaja roolia myös parlamentille, jotta voitaisiin varmistaa Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinnon kriisinhallintatoimien demokraattinen valvonta Arabimaissa sekä Afrikassa ja Aasiassa?

9. Ovatko lisääntyvän yhteistyön edellytyksenä ehdot, jotka ovat kansalaisoikeuksia ja poliittisia oikeuksia koskevien EU:n vaatimusten mukaiset?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(28. elokuuta 2012)

1. Tavoitteena on luoda varhaisvaroitusjärjestelmä, jota voidaan käyttää alueellisena rauhan ja vakauden turvaamisvälineenä ihmisten aiheuttamissa katastrofeissa ja luonnonkatastrofeissa. Hankkeen toteutuksesta vastaa UNDP alueellisten yksikköjensä avulla.

2. Hanketta Arabiliiton kanssa koordinoi Kairossa toimiva EU:n edustusto ja sen toteutuksesta vastaa UNDP:n paikallistoimisto Kairossa. Hankkeen kokonaismäärärahat ovat 2 265 190 euroa. EU:n rahoitusosuus tästä

([1]) Ks. http://euobserver.com/24/116757
([2]) Ks. http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7197

summasta on 85 prosenttia. Poliittisten ja turvallisuusasioiden komitea on keskustellut kysymyksestä, ja sille toimitetaan säännöllisesti tietoja.

3. Arabiliiton tiloihin ei ole asennettu yksityisyyttä tai ihmisoikeuksia mahdollisesti loukkaavaa teknologiaa. Sitä vastoin ne tarjoavat uusia tilaisuuksia EU:n ja Arabiliiton välisiin vuoropuheluihin ja avoimuuteen.

4. Työskentely perustuu ennustavaan riskianalyysiin, ja siinä keskitytään tämänhetkisiin alueellisiin kriiseihin ja luonnonkatastrofeihin.

5. Varoitustoiminta perustuu julkisiin tietolähteisiin.

6. Kairon tilannekeskuksen omistaa ja sen henkilöstöstä vastaa Arabiliitto.

7. Yksityiskohtaiset tiedot on julkaistu Euroopan komission kertomuksessa ”Vakautusvälinettä koskeva vuosikertomus 2011” (ks. myös http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/index_en.htm).

8. Parlamentilla on oma roolinsa kuten kaikissa EU:n rahoittamissa kolmansia maita koskevissa hankkeissa.

9. Yhteistyön tavoitteena on edistää EU:n ja muiden toimijoiden välistä yhteisymmärrystä erityisesti konfliktien ennaltaehkäisyn, rauhanrakentamisen ja kriisinhallinnan aloilla.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006778/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Louis Michel (ALDE), Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ALDE), Hannu Takkula (ALDE), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) and Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(6 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Standard operating procedures for the EU-built situation room of the Arab League in Cairo

On 26 June 2012, the Managing Director of the Crisis Response Department of the EEAS presented the completion of a situation room, the 'red telephone' project, built by the EEAS in the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo ([1]). Mr Miozzo stated that the centre would 'create trust with important partners in a conflict-prone part of the world', and ensured that the EEAS would 'have reliable people on the other side of the line'. To that end, computers, TV screens and communication systems to a value of EUR 9 million have been installed in the Arab League offices in Cairo. According to Mr Miozzo, similar systems are being developed for the African Union in Addis Ababa, and for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Jakarta. The establishment of a pan-Arab information centre is also envisaged.

1. Can the VP/HR provide Parliament with a detailed plan or strategy which sets out the role of these EU-built/facilitated situation rooms in third countries as regards developing closer links with countries in the Arab world, and in Africa and Asia, for the purpose of fighting terrorism or coordinating joint actions during crises? ([2])

2. Can the VP/HR provide more details about the operational agreements between the host countries and the EEAS, in particular agreements with the Crisis Response Department?

3. Can the VP/HR provide additional details about the safeguards to ensure that the use of the situation room(s) is strictly limited to crisis responses and not to domestic use by the host countries, and in particular not to uses involving violations of fundamental freedoms and human rights? The latter is of special concern given the poor track record on human rights of member states of the Arab League.

4. Can the VP/HR define which types of crises fall within the spectrum of cooperation between the EEAS and the Arab League?

5. Which security, information and communication security standards apply?

6. Are the situation rooms, including any EU officials posted in them, qualified as EU diplomatic missions and thereby covered by the obligations of the host countries under the Vienna Convention?

7. Have the parties entered into legally binding agreements in which also transparency and accountability obligations are set out? If so, can the VP/HR provide the texts of these agreements to Parliament?

8. Does the VP/HR envisage a role for Parliament to ensure democratic oversight of the EEAS' crisis response activities in the Arab world and in Africa and Asia?

9. Does increased cooperation depend on conditions that reflect EU civil and political rights standards?

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

1. The objective is to create an early warning system to serve as a regional instrument of peace and stability for man-made and natural disasters. The project is implemented by the UNDP using its regional capabilities.

2. The project with the Arab League is coordinated by the EU delegation in Cairo and implemented by UNDP regional office in Cairo. Total amount of the project is 2,265,190 EUR; 85 % is financed by the EU. The PSC discussed it and is kept regularly informed.

3. No, potentially harmful technology to privacy or human rights has been installed in the Arab League room. on the contrary it offers new opportunities for dialogue and transparency between the EU and the Arab League.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/24/116757.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7197.

4. The work is based on predictive risk analysis and focuses on current regional crises and natural disasters.

5. Warning activities are based on open source information.

6. The situation room in Cairo is owned and staffed by the Arab League.

7. All details are published in the 'Annual report from the European Commission on the Instrument for Stability in 2011' (see also: http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/docs/index_en.htm).

8. The Parliament retains its role, as for all third country projects financed by the EU.

9. This cooperation aims at promoting a better understanding between the EU and other actors, especially in the field of conflict prevention, peace-building and crisis response.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006779/12
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(6 juillet 2012)

Objet: Utilisation du dioxyde de soufre contre le frelon asiatique

Arrivé en Aquitaine en 2004, le frelon asiatique (Vespa velutina) ne cesse de se propager en France et de décimer nombre d'essaims d'abeilles auxquels il s'attaque avec virulence. Ce phénomène s'ajoute aux autres causes de surmortalité des abeilles comme l'utilisation intensive de pesticides. Or, les abeilles ont un rôle fondamental dans la pollinisation des plantes et pas moins de 35 % de notre diversité alimentaire est lié à leur pollinisation. Le frelon asiatique risque de devenir rapidement un problème européen au vu de la vitesse de sa propagation. Des moyens efficaces doivent donc être mis en œuvre pour l'enrayer au plus vite.

La filière apicole est unanime: le dioxyde de soufre (SO_2) est aujourd'hui le seul produit identifié permettant d'anéantir les nids de cet hyménoptère. Cette substance nécessite des règles strictes d'utilisation mais ses effets n'ont pas la rémanence des insecticides. Néanmoins, son utilisation contre le frelon asiatique est aujourd'hui interdite car il ne figure par au registre européen des substances biocides, rendu obligatoire par la directive communautaire 98/8/CE relative à la mise sur le marché des produits biocides. Cette interdiction entraîne l'utilisation de substances beaucoup plus nocives, à l'image de pesticides comme le Protéus (par ailleurs interdit en Allemagne et en Italie) ou encore le Dipter. Ces substances portent de graves préjudices aux colonies d'abeille et mettent en péril les productions de miel. De même, certaines collectivités engagées dans des objectifs de non utilisation de pesticides ne peuvent plus tenir leurs engagements.

Cette situation semble tout à fait contraire au droit européen, notamment à la directive instaurant un cadre d'action communautaire pour parvenir à une utilisation des pesticides compatible avec le développement durable (2009/128/CE).

1. La Commission compte-t-elle autoriser l'utilisation du dioxyde de soufre dans le cas précis de l'éradication des nids de frelons asiatiques, au vu de la dangerosité des substances alternatives employées?

2. Dans le cas contraire que propose la Commission comme moyen de substitution?

3. La Commission entend-elle créer un groupe de travail afin de trouver une solution mettant fin à la propagation de cet insecte «nuisible»?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(23 août 2012)

L'utilisation du dioxyde de soufre dans le but spécifique d'éliminer les nids de frelons asiatiques est assimilée à l'utilisation d'un produit biocide et relèverait de la directive 98/8/CE.

Conformément aux dispositions de cette directive, la mise sur le marché d'un produit biocide est subordonnée à la délivrance d'une autorisation par l'État membre sur le territoire duquel le produit biocide doit être commercialisé. La Commission n'a pas compétence pour autoriser la mise sur le marché de ces produits.

Le dioxyde de soufre ne figure cependant pas sur la liste des substances pouvant être utilisées dans les produits biocides. Les États membres ne peuvent donc pas autoriser les produits biocides contenant du dioxyde de soufre en vue de leur utilisation spécifique pour éliminer les nids de frelons asiatiques.

La directive susmentionnée inclut toutefois une disposition prévoyant qu'un État membre peut autoriser temporairement, pour une période n'excédant pas cent vingt jours, la mise sur le marché de produits biocides ne satisfaisant pas à ses dispositions, en vue d'un usage limité et contrôlé en cas de danger imprévu ne pouvant être maîtrisé par d'autres moyens.

Si la vitesse de propagation du frelon asiatique et l'insecte lui-même représentent une trop grande menace pour les abeilles, et en l'absence de meilleures solutions, les États membres peuvent, comme vous le mentionnez, recourir à cette disposition de la directive afin d'autoriser temporairement l'utilisation du dioxyde de soufre.

Les autorisations temporaires pourraient être prorogées sous réserve de l'approbation de la Commission.

En ce qui concerne les solutions possibles à long terme, la Commission propose la présentation d'un dossier visant à obtenir l'inscription du dioxyde de soufre sur la liste des substances actives autorisées, ce qui permettra ensuite aux États membres d'autoriser les produits qui satisfont aux exigences de la directive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006779/12
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(6 July 2012)

Subject: Use of sulphur dioxide against the Asian hornet

The Asian hornet (Vespa velutina), which arrived in Aquitaine in 2004, has since been spreading steadily in France and decimating bee populations, on which it preys. This is yet another cause — along with factors such the intensive use of pesticides — of the mass death of bees. Bees play a crucial role in plant pollination, their activity accounting for no less than 35 % of our food diversity. Given the speed at which it is spreading, the Asian hornet could soon pose a problem Europe-wide. Effective steps to halt its advance must therefore be taken as quickly as possible.

There is unanimity among beekeepers that sulphur dioxide ($SO2^2$) is the only product currently identified as being effective in destroying Asian hornet nests. It is a substance that must be used in accordance with strict rules but its period of residual activity is much shorter than that of insecticides. However, using it against the Asian hornet is currently banned because it is not listed in the European Register for Biocidal Products, compulsorily introduced under Directive 98/8/EC concerning the placing of biocidal products on the market. The ban means that much more harmful substances have to be used, including pesticides such as Proteus (use of which is actually prohibited in Germany and Italy) or Dipter. These substances are extremely harmful to bee populations and put honey production at risk. In addition, their use is at odds with undertakings given by certain local authorities which are committed to cutting pesticide use.

It is a situation that flies in the face of European law, and particularly of Directive 2009/128/EC establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides.

1. Does the Commission intend to authorise the use of sulphur dioxide for the specific purpose of eradicating Asian hornet nests, given the dangerous nature of the alternative substances used?

2. If not, what alternative does the Commission propose?

3. Does the Commission intend to set up a working party to identify a solution that will halt the advance of this harmful insect?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2012)

The use of sulphur dioxide for the specific purpose of eradicating Asian hornet nets would be regarded as a biocidal product use and would be covered by Directive 98/8/EC.

In accordance with this directive, the placing on the market of a biocidal product is subject to an authorisation to be granted by the Member State on the territory of which the biocidal product is to be placed. The Commission itself has no power to authorise such placing on the market.

Sulphur dioxide is however not included in the positive list of substances that can be used in biocidal products, which implies that Member States cannot grant authorisations to biocidal products containing sulphur dioxide for the specific purpose of eradicating Asian hornet nets.

The directive does however include a provision, which entitles Member States to temporarily authorise for a period not exceeding 120 days, the placing on the market of biocidal products not complying with its provisions for a limited and controlled use if such a measure appears necessary because of an unforeseen danger which cannot be contained by other means.

If the speed of spreading and the Asian hornet itself are such a threat to bee populations, and in the absence of better alternatives, as you indicate, Member States could use that provision of the directive to temporarily authorise the use of sulphur dioxide.

Temporary authorisations may be extended subject to approval by the Commission.

Regarding possible long term solutions, the Commission suggests that a dossier should be submitted with a view to having sulphur dioxide included in the positive list of active substances and to subsequently allow Member States to grant authorisations to products that would comply with the requirements of the directive.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006785/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Iraniani arrestati in Kenia per aver progettato attentati

Il 3 luglio il quotidiano britannico *Daily Telegraph* ha riferito che due iraniani, presumibilmente appartenenti alla divisione al-Quds della Guardia Rivoluzionaria iraniana, sono stati arrestati perché sospettati di aver progettato attentati terroristici in Kenia. Tra i possibili obiettivi figurerebbero l'Alta Commissione britannica, l'Ambasciata di Israele e una sinagoga. I sospettati, Ahmad Abolfathi Mohammad e Sayed Mansour Mousavi, sono stati accusati di essere in possesso di 15 chili di un potente esplosivo denominato RDX, un componente del Semtex, importato in Kenia attraverso l'Iraq.

Secondo gli investigatori, i due uomini avrebbero progettato di far esplodere almeno trenta obiettivi diversi nell'intento di colpire centri di interesse del Regno Unito, degli Stati Uniti, di Israele e dell'Arabia Saudita, oltre a strutture turistiche e ad altri importanti edifici commerciali. Gli investigatori hanno affermato che, se si fosse verificato, l'attentato dinamitardo sarebbe stato innanzi tutto attribuito ad al-Shabab in Somalia, invece che all'Iran. Tuttavia, un ispettore keniano ha affermato: «I nostri ufficiali hanno nutrito forti sospetti nei loro confronti non appena sono atterrati in Kenia [sic] ». Gli inquirenti ritengono che i due uomini avessero l'intenzione di progettare e portare a termine un attacco terroristico, poiché si aggiravano per la capitale keniana, Nairobi, al fine di effettuare una ricognizione di luoghi quali l'Alta Commissione britannica e una sinagoga.

Gli agenti di al-Quds sono coinvolti anche nei possibili attentati dinamitardi in Thailandia e negli attentati ai danni della moglie di un diplomatico israeliano a Nuova Delhi e di alcuni insegnanti israeliani di una scuola ebraica in Azerbaigian. Molti ritengono che si tratti di una ritorsione per la morte di diversi scienziati iraniani impegnati nel programma nucleare del paese.

1. È l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente al corrente dell'arresto di agenti iraniani della divisione al-Quds in Kenia?

2. Quali misure ha adottato l'UE per valutare la minaccia rappresentata dagli agenti della Guardia Rivoluzionaria iraniana e la loro intenzione di colpire obiettivi europei nell'Africa orientale e in Medio Oriente?

3. È l'UE disposta a dare un aiuto concreto ai governi del Corno d'Africa e dell'Africa centrale, dato che rappresentano un possibile obiettivo per gruppi quali la divisione al-Quds della Guardia Rivoluzionaria iraniana?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(27 agosto 2012)

Il SEAE è al corrente dell'arresto, nelle passate settimane, di persone sospettate di coinvolgimento nella pianificazione di attentati terroristici in Kenya. Il SEAE non può tuttavia confermare l'affiliazione di tali persone, che sarà oggetto di indagine nell'ambito di ulteriori procedimenti penali.

I servizi di intelligence nazionali dell'UE sono impegnati in continue valutazioni delle minacce terroristiche, qualsiasi sia la loro origine, ad obiettivi europei, in tutto il mondo e in particolare nelle aree di nota attività, fra cui l'Africa orientale e il Medio Oriente.

Per garantire la protezione delle persone soggiornanti nel paese, l'UE solleva regolarmente questioni relative alla sicurezza nel dialogo con le autorità africane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006785/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iranians arrested in Kenya for planning attacks

On 3 July, the UK's *Daily Telegraph* reported that two Iranians, who are allegedly agents of the al-Quds division of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, were arrested on suspicion of planning terror attacks in Kenya. They scouted the British High Commission, the Israeli Embassy and a synagogue as possible targets. The individuals Ahmad Abolfathi Mohammad and Sayed Mansour Mousavi were charged with possessing 15kg of a powerful explosive called RDX, which is a component of Semtex and was imported to Kenya via Iraq.

Investigators believe that the pair had planned to bomb as many as thirty different targets affecting British, US, Israeli and Saudi Arabian interests, as well as tourist facilities and other prominent commercial buildings. Investigators have suggested that a major bomb attack would have led many to first suspect al-Shabab from Somalia, instead of Iran. Yet one Kenyan detective reported: 'Our officers were highly suspicious of them from the moment that they landed in-country [sic] '. Detectives suspected that their intention was clear to plan and execute terrorist attacks, since they drove around the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, casing places such as the British High Commission and a synagogue.

Al-Quds agents were also involved in the possible bomb attacks in Thailand, as well as the targeting of the wife of an Israeli diplomat in New Delhi and Israeli teachers at a Jewish school in Azerbaijan. Many believe the attacks are in retaliation for a number of deaths of Iranian scientists linked to the country's nuclear programme.

1. Is the High Representative/Vice-President aware of the arrest of Iranian al-Quds operatives in Kenya?

2. What steps is the EU currently taking to assess the threat of Iranian Revolutionary Guard operatives planning attacks on European targets in East Africa and the Middle East?

3. Is the EU prepared to offer practical support to governments in the Horn of Africa and central Africa, which are possible targets by groups such as the Iranian Revolutionary Guards al-Quds division?

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

The EEAS is aware of the arrests in recent weeks of individuals suspected of involvement in planning terror attacks in Kenya. However, the EEAS is not in a position to confirm the affiliations of those individuals, which will be examined in the course of the further criminal proceedings.

The EU's national intelligence services are engaged in continuous assessments of terrorist threats from all sources on European targets, all over the world, and notably in areas where they are known to be active, including East Africa and the Middle East.

The EU regularly raises security concerns in its dialogue with African authorities to ensure the safety of all people staying in the country.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006845/12
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(10 juillet 2012)

Objet: Corruption: Euro 2012 en Ukraine

Alors que l'Euro de football 2012 vient de s'achever, de nombreuses voix se font entendre pour dénoncer des soupçons de plus en plus détaillés sur des cas de corruption qui se seraient multipliés à grande échelle dans le cadre des projets d'infrastructures inhérents à ce genre de compétition.

Alors que l'Union européenne ébauche un début de politique sportive dans le cadre du traité de Lisbonne, que le Parlement européen souligne l'importance de lutter contre la corruption notamment par l'organisation d'une commission parlementaire exceptionnelle sur le sujet et que la politique de voisinage de l'UE est, elle aussi, de plus en plus une politique majeure de l'Union, ma question sera triple:

1. La Commission a-t-elle connaissance de ces allégations? Dans quelle mesure peut-elle agir en coopération avec l'UEFA dans l'examen de ces différents cas de corruption?

2. De quelle façon la Commission entend-elle favoriser des pratiques plus éthiques sur les marchés publics des partenaires économiques de l'UE?

3. Où en est l'action de la Commission dans la lutte indispensable contre les paradis fiscaux qui servent et nourrissent la corruption internationale?

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

La Commission a été informée d'allégations de corruption parues dans les médias dans le cadre de l'Euro 2012 et formulées par certaines organisations de la société civile. Ces allégations concerneraient principalement les prix d'achats élevés de plusieurs biens et services. La Commission n'a connaissance, à ce jour, d'aucune enquête judiciaire significative concernant des allégations de corruption de fonctionnaires ukrainiens ou de sociétés privées associées à l'Euro 2012.

Si l'on excepte les règles générales relatives au respect des principes de transparence, de concurrence ouverte et de gestion saine des procédures, qui visent à garantir l'équité des processus de passation des marchés, l'acquis de l'UE régissant les marchés publics ne contient aucune disposition spécialement destinée à éviter la corruption liée aux procédures d'appel d'offres ([1]). La Commission est consciente du problème et tente de le résoudre comme il se doit: actuellement, des projets d'assistance technique visent, entre autres, à rapprocher la législation ukrainienne relative aux marchés publics de l'acquis de l'UE dans le but d'aboutir à une plus grande transparence des procédures. Un rapprochement entre la législation ukrainienne et l'acquis de l'UE est également prévu par l'accord d'association entre l'UE et l'Ukraine.

La Commission étudie actuellement les réactions possibles et prévoit d'adopter une communication sur la bonne gouvernance en lien avec les paradis fiscaux et les stratégies fiscales agressives, d'ici fin 2012. Cette initiative pourrait présenter des mesures supplémentaires et plus efficaces pour protéger les recettes fiscales des États membres en réduisant les possibilités de pratiques fiscales dommageables. Elle pourrait prévoir une approche coordonnée à l'échelle de l'UE en termes d'incitations et de sanctions. La Commission souhaite également inclure une clause sur la bonne gouvernance dans le domaine fiscal dans tous les accords concernés passés avec des pays tiers (améliorant de ce fait la transparence des systèmes fiscaux).

([1]) Exception faite de l'article 45 de la directive 2004/18/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 31 mars 2004 relative à la coordination des procédures de passation des marchés publics de travaux, de fournitures et de services (JO L 134 du 30.4.2004), qui prévoit l'exclusion de toute nouvelle procédure d'appel d'offres de tout soumissionnaire ayant été reconnu coupable de corruption.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006845/12
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Corruption concerning Euro 2012 in Ukraine

In the wake of the recent 2012 European Football Championships, increasingly detailed allegations of large-scale corruption in infrastructure projects carried out for the championships have been made.

At a time when the EU is paving the way for a policy on sport under the Lisbon Treaty, Parliament has stressed the importance of combating corruption by setting up a special parliamentary committee on corruption, and given that EU neighbourhood policy is becoming a focal point of EU action, I would like to ask three questions.

1. Is the Commission aware of these allegations? To what extent can it cooperate with UEFA to study these cases?

2. How does the Commission intend to encourage more ethical behaviour by the EU's trading partners in public procurement?

3. What progress has the Commission made in the critical fight against tax havens, which provide the lifeblood for corrupt activity at a global level?

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

The Commission has been informed about allegations of corruption in the context of Euro2012 made in the media and by civil society organisations. Reportedly, these claims concern mostly the high prices paid for the purchase of several goods and services. As yet, the Commission is not aware of significant judicial investigation activities concerning corruption allegations of Ukrainian government officials or private companies involved in Euro2012.

Apart from general rules in the EU procurement *acquis* regarding transparency, open competition and sound procedural management which should lead to a fair procurement process, there are no provisions in the EU procurement *acquis* specifically aiming at the prevention of corruption in relation to tender procedures ([1]). The Commission is aware of the problem and tries to address it as appropriate: current technical assistance projects aim, *inter alia*, at bringing the Ukrainian public procurement legislation closer to the EU *acquis* in view of more transparent procedures. An approximation of Ukraine's legislation to the EU's *acquis* is also foreseen in the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

The Commission is evaluating possible policy responses and is planning a communication on good governance in relation to tax havens and aggressive tax planning by the end of 2012. This initiative may outline additional and improved action to secure Member States' tax revenues by reducing opportunities for harmful tax practices. It may set out to achieve a coordinated approach at EU level in terms of incentives and sanctions. The Commission also aims to continue to include a clause on good governance in the tax area in all relevant agreements with third countries (thereby enhancing transparency of tax systems).

([1]) Except for Article 45 of Directive 2004/18/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (OJ L 134, 30.4.2004) which excludes tenderers who have been convicted for corruption from new tender procedures.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006848/12
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 juillet 2012)

Objet: Commerce de pesticides illégaux et contrefaits

En janvier 2012, l'organisation de coopération policière Europol a tenu à attirer l'attention de l'Union européenne et des États membres sur l'augmentation importante du commerce de pesticides illégaux et contrefaits. Selon l'organisation, plus de 25 % des pesticides en circulation dans certains États membres proviennent du commerce illicite; la partie nord-est de l'Europe étant la plus touchée.

Outre la menace qu'une telle augmentation fait peser sur les agriculteurs européens, ces pesticides contrefaits présentent des risques majeurs pour la santé des consommateurs et pour l'environnement.

Europol souligne notamment que «le manque d'harmonisation de la législation dans les différents pays d'Europe et une marge exceptionnelle — pour un risque faible, un profit élevé — font du trafic de pesticides contrefaits et illégaux un secteur à croissance rapide du crime organisé».

L'organisation a enfin élaboré une série de recommandations pour tenter d'enrayer le phénomène, notamment «l'adoption d'une réponse globale pour traiter les menaces liées à ce trafic», ainsi que la réalisation «d'une étude sur l'amélioration de la traçabilité des matériaux dangereux utilisés dans la production illégale de pesticides».

La Commission a d'ores déjà indiqué qu'elle allait réfléchir à des mécanismes supplémentaires dans le cadre des contrôles aux frontières extérieures afin d'empêcher la mise sur le marché de pesticides illégaux ou contrefaits.

1. Afin de réduire efficacement les menaces que représente le commerce illégal de pesticides, comment la Commission compte-t-elle concrètement améliorer l'harmonisation de la politique européenne en la matière?

2. Au vu des recommandations d'Europol, la Commission pourrait-elle indiquer si elle a déjà procédé à l'étude susdite ou si elle envisage de le faire?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(23 août 2012)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse donnée à la question E-00554/2012 ([1]).

En outre, en ce qui concerne la deuxième question, à l'heure actuelle, une étude sur «l'amélioration de la traçabilité des matériaux dangereux utilisés pour la production illicite de pesticides» n'a pas été effectuée et la Commission envisage d'étudier consciencieusement les recommandations d'Europol.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006848/12
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Trade in illegal and counterfeit pesticides

In January 2012, the police cooperation organisation Europol wanted to draw the attention of the EU and its Member States to the significant increase in the trade in illegal and counterfeit pesticides. According to Europol, more than 25 % of pesticides currently circulating in some Member States are illegal, with north-eastern Europe being the most affected.

In addition to the threat that such an increase poses to European farmers, these counterfeit pesticides have major risks for consumer health and the environment.

Europol stresses in particular that the exceptional 'low risk — high profit' margin, combined with the lack of harmonisation among EU Member States in legislation and implementation, make the illegal and counterfeit pesticide trade a fast growing area of organised crime.

The organisation has drawn up a series of recommendations in an attempt to halt the phenomenon, including the adoption of a 'comprehensive response' to address the wide spectrum of health and environmental threats associated with this illegal trade and 'a study on the improved traceability of hazardous materials used in the illegal production of pesticides'.

The Commission has already said it will now consider additional mechanisms relating to external border controls in order to prevent the marketing of illegal and counterfeit pesticides.

1. To effectively reduce the threats posed by the illegal trade in pesticides, how will the Commission actually improve the harmonisation of EU policy in this area?

2. Given Europol's recommendations, could the Commission say whether it has already carried out the abovementioned study or whether it intends to do so?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its responses to Question E-00554/2012 ([1]).

Moreover, with respect to the second question, at present a study 'on the improved traceability of hazardous materials used in the illegal production of pesticides' has not been carried out and the Commission is thoroughly considering the Europol's recommendations.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006850/12
aan de Commissie
Wim van de Camp (PPE)
(10 juli 2012)

Betreft: Toename skimfraude, cash trapping en phishing in de Europese Unie

Uit Nederlandse mediaberichten, waaronder de Elsevier van 30 juni 2012 bladzijde 44-49, blijkt dat op grote schaal in Europa door criminelen cash trapping, skimming en phishing wordt toegepast. Zo registreerde het European ATM Security Team in 2011 10 808 incidenten in Europa.

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van berichten dat in de Europese Unie een toename is van cash trapping, skimming en phishing?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe groot de schade was in 2011 in de Europese Unie door skimfraude, cash trapping en phishing?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe in Europees verband wordt samengewerkt in de strijd tegen cash trapping, skimming en phishing?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven in hoeverre wordt samengewerkt met de Verenigde Staten om cash trapping, skimming en phishing te voorkomen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(6 september 2012)

Cybercriminaliteit, waaronder phishing, neemt over het geheel genomen toe, maar het is moeilijk om accurate gegevens over verschillende soorten cybercriminaliteit te verzamelen doordat de lidstaten cyberdelicten op verschillende wijzen indelen. Het Europees centrum inzake cybercriminaliteit (EC3), dat in 2013 wordt opgericht, zal de lidstaten meer operationele en forensische steun verlenen bij het identificeren en verstoren van grootschalige grensoverschrijdende phishingnetwerken binnen de EU. In 2011 ondersteunde Europol talrijke onderzoeken naar de wetshandhaving in de EU. Verscheidene „fabrieken" die skimmingapparaten maken en wereldwijde netwerken die apparatuur, kaartgegevens en geld smokkelen werden dankzij doeltreffende grensoverschrijdende samenwerking verstoord. Meer informatie over specifieke acties zal worden verstrekt in het jaarlijkse Europolverslag van 2011, dat binnenkort wordt gepubliceerd.

Daarnaast neemt de Commissie deel aan het SecuRe Pay Forum, dat door het Eurosysteem in het leven is geroepen. Dit is een vrijwillige samenwerking tussen toezichthouders van de EU om zwakke en kwetsbare plekken op het gebied van de veiligheid van betalingen aan te pakken. De Commissie en Europol nemen hieraan als waarnemer deel.

De samenwerking tussen de EU en de VS vindt plaats binnen de werkgroep van de EU en de VS op het gebied van internetveiligheid en cybercriminaliteit, die een vervolg is op de Europees-Amerikaanse top van november 2010.

De werkgroep legt zich toe op cyberincidentbeheer, publiek-private partnerschappen, bewustmaking en cybercriminaliteit. Beide partijen zijn het erover eens dat de samenwerking kan worden uitgebreid door verdere prioritaire gebieden in de toekomst aan te wijzen.

Daarnaast is er operationele samenwerking: zo is bijvoorbeeld in 2011 een aantal gezamenlijke onderzoeksoperaties tussen de EU-lidstaten, Europol, de FBI en Interpol van start gegaan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006850/12
to the Commission
Wim van de Camp (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Increase in skimming, cash trapping and phishing in the European Union

Reports in the Dutch media, including the 30 June 2012 issue of Elsevier (pp. 44-49), indicate that criminals are practising cash trapping, skimming and phishing on a large scale in Europe. In 2011, the European ATM Security Team recorded 10 808 incidents in Europe.

1. Is the Commission aware of reports that cash trapping, skimming and phishing have increased in the European Union?

2. Can the Commission indicate how much was lost in the European Union in 2011 due to skimming, cash trapping and phishing?

3. Can the Commission indicate the form taken by European cooperation to combat cash trapping, skimming and phishing?

4. Can the Commission indicate the extent to which cooperation exists with the United States to combat cash trapping, skimming and phishing?

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

Cybercrime, including phishing, is generally on the rise, but it is difficult to collect accurate data on different types of cybercrime due to the varying ways in which Member States classify cybercrimes. The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3), to be launched in 2013, will provide more operational and forensic support to Member States in identifying and disrupting large-scale cross-border phishing networks within the EU. In 2011, Europol supported multiple EC law enforcement investigations. Several 'factories' making skimming devices and global networks smuggling equipment, card data and money were disrupted as a result of effective cross-border cooperation. More information on specific actions will be set out in the 2011 Europol Annual Review, which will be published shortly.

Furthermore, the Commission participates in the SecuRe Pay Forum that has been set up by the Eurosystem. It is a voluntary cooperation between EU overseers and supervisors to address weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the field of payments security. The Commission and Europol participate as observers.

Cooperation between the EU and US takes place within the EU-US Working Group on Cyber-security and Cybercrime, established as a follow up of the EU-US Summit of November 2010.

The Working Group focuses on cyber incident management, public-private partnerships, awareness raising and cybercrime. Both sides agree that the scope for cooperation may be broadened by identifying further priority areas in the future.

There is also operational cooperation: for example, in 2011, a number of joint investigations were initiated between EU Member States, Europol, the FBI and Interpol.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-006851/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(10 juli 2012)

Betreft: Barroso wil Hamas in regering van „toekomstige Palestijnse staat"

„Barroso heeft, tijdens zijn eerste officiële bezoek aan het gebied", gepleit voor een „toekomstige Palestijnse staat". Tegelijkertijd heeft hij „zijn zorgen geuit" ten aanzien van de Israëlische nederzettingen in Judea en Samaria.

Barroso is voorstander van een „toekomstige Palestijnse staat" met een gezamenlijke regering van de Palestijnse Autoriteit en Hamas. Opgemerkt dient te worden dat Hamas door de EU formeel als terroristische organisatie wordt betiteld.

Sinds 2000 heeft de EU 4 miljard euro aan de Palestijnen geschonken; Barroso heeft bekend gemaakt dat hij nog eens 20 miljoen euro extra wil geven.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Barroso in Palestine: „We are laying foundations of future state""?

2. Klopt het dat Barroso voornoemde uitspraken heeft gedaan? Concreet: klopt het dat Barroso voorstander is van Hamas, een terroristische organisatie, in de regering van een „toekomstige Palestijnse staat"? Zo ja, namens wie — wat heeft hij gezegd?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven waarom Barroso, en dus de Commissie, voorstander is van terroristen in de regering van een „toekomstige Palestijnse staat"? Is dit niet in strijd met het feit dat Hamas nota bene door de EU zelf op de lijst van terroristische organisaties is gezet? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe zij de overlevingskansen van de Staat Israël en zijn kinderen inschat wanneer Hamas daadwerkelijk deel uitmaakt van de regering van een „toekomstige Palestijnse staat"?

5. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening (1) dat er nooit een Palestijnse staat hoeft te worden gesticht aangezien deze [al bestaat: Jordanië; en (2) dat er voortaan geen cent EU-geld meer naar de Palestijnen dient te vloeien? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(3 september 2012)

De EU heeft consequent tot intra-Palestijnse verzoening achter president Mahmoud Abbas opgeroepen, overeenkomstig de beginselen uit diens speech van 4 mei 2011, als een belangrijk element voor de eenheid van een toekomstige Palestijnse staat en om tot een tweestatenoplossing te komen. De EU kijkt ernaar uit dat verkiezingen worden georganiseerd als een belangrijke bijdrage aan de opbouw van een Palestijnse staat.

We herinneren e.a.n dat de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van 23 mei 2011 verklaard heeft dat een nieuwe, uit onafhankelijke figuren samengestelde Palestijnse regering het beginsel van geweldloosheid dient te ondersteunen en zich moet blijven inzetten om tot een tweestatenoplossing en een vreedzame oplossing van het Israëlisch-Palestijnse conflict te komen. Daarbij moeten overeenkomsten en verplichtingen uit het verleden worden aanvaard, zo ook het wettelijke recht van Israël om te bestaan. Of de EU haar samenwerking met een nieuwe Palestijnse regering voortzet, zal afhangen van de mate waarin deze beleidslijnen en verbintenissen worden onderschreven. De EU roept de internationale gemeenschap, Israël en regionale partners op om op basis hiervan met de regering samen te werken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006851/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Barroso wishes Hamas to join the government of a 'future Palestinian State'

'Barroso has pledged support for a future Palestinian state on his first official trip to the region.' At the same time he 'voiced concern' about the Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria.

Barroso advocates a 'future Palestinian state' with a government formed jointly by the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. It should be noted that the EU formally regards Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

Since 2000, the EU has given the Palestinians EUR 4 billion; Barroso has announced that he wishes to give them an extra EUR 20 million.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Barroso in Palestine: "We are laying foundations of future state"'?

2. Is it true that Barroso made the above statements? More specifically, is it true that Barroso is in favour of Hamas — a terrorist organisation — joining the government of a 'future Palestinian State'? If so, what statement did he make and on whose behalf?

3. Can the Commission indicate why Barroso — and, therefore, the Commission — advocates the inclusion of terrorists in the government of a 'future Palestinian State'? Is there not a contradiction between this position and the fact that Hamas was placed on the list of terrorist organisations by the EU itself? If not, why not?

4. Can the Commission indicate what view it takes of the chances of survival of the State of Israel and its children if Hamas were indeed to join the government of a 'future Palestinian State'?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV (1) that no Palestinian State ever need be established, as one already exists in the form of Jordan and (2) that in future the Palestinians should not receive another cent in EU funding? If not, why not?

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

The EU has consistently called for intra-Palestinian reconciliation behind President Mahmoud Abbas, in line with the principles set out in his speech of 4 May 2011, as an important element for the unity of a future Palestinian state and for reaching a two-state solution. The EU looks forward to the holding of elections as an important contribution to Palestinian state-building.

It is recalled that the Foreign Affairs Council of 23 May 2011 stated that a new Palestinian government composed of independent figures should uphold the principle of non-violence, and remain committed to achieving a two-state solution and to a negotiated peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, accepting previous agreements and obligations, including Israel's legitimate right to exist. The EU's ongoing engagement with a new Palestinian government will be based on its adherence to these policies and commitments. The EU calls on the international community, Israel, and regional partners to work with the government on this basis.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-006852/12
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(10. heinäkuuta 2012)

Aihe: Liikenneopetuksen laadun taso EU:n alueella

Vuonna 2009 Euroopan tieliikenteessä menehtyi noin 35 000 ihmistä. Tämän lisäksi liikenneonnettomuudet ovat myös merkittävä kansanterveysongelma, joka merkitsee EU:n alueella onnettomuuskustannuksina kymmenien miljardien eurojen kuluja ja tietenkin suunnatonta määrää inhimillistä kärsimystä.

Tarkoituksenmukaiseksi suunniteltu ja tehokas liikenneopetus on yksi keino, jonka avulla voidaan parantaa synkkiä liikenneonnettomuustilastoja. Ongelman muodostaa kuitenkin se, että suurimmassa osassa EU:n jäsenvaltioista laki ei velvoita liikenneopettajien jatkokoulutukseen. Tämän johdosta näyttää siltä, että kaikkien EU:n jäsenvaltioiden liikenneopetuksessa ei päästä niin tulokselliseen toimintaan kuin olisi mahdollista.

Yllä esittämäni johdosta kysyn komission jäseneltä seuraavaa:

1. Onko komission tarkoituksena pyrkiä tehostamaan EU:n kaikkien jäsenvaltioiden liikenneopetusta ja parantamaan sen tasoa?

2. Onko komissiossa valmisteilla esitystä direktiiviksi, joka määrittelisi liikenneopettajien ammatilliset minimivaatimukset ja pätevyysedellytykset?

3. Aikooko komissio edellyttää kaikkia liikenneopettajia osallistumaan tietyin väliajoin ammatilliseen täydennyskoulutukseen?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(20. elokuuta 2012)

Komissio on tietoinen siitä, että on tärkeää parantaa kaikkien tienkäyttäjäryhmien liikenneopetusta. Osana vuosien 2011–2020 tieliikenneturvallisuuden poliittisten suuntaviivojen ([1]) täytäntöönpanoa komissio aikoo kehittää yhteisen tieliikenneturvallisuuden koulutus- ja opetusstrategian, johon voi tarvittaessa sisältyä ehdotukset liikenneopettajien pätevyyttä, kelpoisuutta ja jatkokoulutusta koskevista EU:n yhteisistä vähimmäisvaatimuksista.

([1]) KOM(2010) 389 lopullinen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006852/12
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Quality of road safety training in the EU

In 2009 some 35 000 lives were lost in road traffic in Europe. In addition, road traffic accidents are a major public health problem, which means that accident costs in the EU run into tens of billions of euros, to say nothing of the untold human suffering.

Appropriately planned and effective road safety training is one way of improving the dismal road accident statistics. However, there is a problem in that most Member States' laws do not make it compulsory for road safety teachers to undergo further training. Accordingly it seems that road safety training is not as effective as it might be in all the EU Member States.

In the light of the above, can the Commissioner answer the following:

1. Does the Commission propose to seek to make road safety training more effective in all EU Member States and improve its quality?

2. Is the Commission preparing a proposal for a directive to define the minimum professional qualifications and competence requirements for road safety teachers?

3. Does the Commission propose to require all road safety teachers to participate in additional professional training courses at specified intervals?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2012)

The Commission is aware of the importance of further improving training on road safety for all categories of road users. In the framework of the implementation of the policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020 ([1]), the Commission intends to work on the development of a common educational and training road safety strategy, which may include, if appropriate, proposals for common minimum EU qualification, competence and continuing education requirements for driving instructors.

([1]) COM(2010) 389 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-006853/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(10 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Licenziamenti Nokia

L'azienda di telecomunicazioni Nokia Siemens Network ha annunciato, nel novembre 2011, di voler licenziare a livello globale circa 17000 dipendenti entro il 2013.

In particolare si parla di 445 tagli previsti in Italia, di cui 367 riguardanti lo stabilimento di Cassina de' Pecchi. L'obiettivo dell'impresa è quello di spostare la produzione in Asia e far rimanere in Europa solo la customizzazione.

— Si chiede se, vista la portata europea dell'ondata di licenziamenti, il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione sia in grado di attenuare gli effetti devastanti in termini di posti di lavoro persi e se la Commissione non voglia impegnarsi al fine di evitare un ingente dislocamento della produzione in favore dei territori asiatici.

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(6 agosto 2012)

Se i licenziamenti presso Nokia Siemens Networks cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato avvengono o sono avvenuti in seguito a trasformazioni rilevanti della struttura del commercio mondiale all'origine di gravi perturbazioni economiche l'Italia potrebbe decidere di chiedere un sostegno al Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG), a condizione che siano soddisfatti anche gli altri criteri per l'intervento del Fondo.

L'articolo 2 del regolamento FEG ([1]) prevede almeno 500 licenziamenti nell'arco di quattro messi in uno Stato membro (compresi i lavoratori in esubero dei fornitori o dei produttori a valle). Se debitamente motivata dallo Stato membro, una richiesta di contributo del FEG può essere ritenuta ammissibile «in circostanze eccezionali» anche se le condizioni fissate nel regolamento FEG non sono interamente soddisfatte. Nella domanda lo Stato membro deve dimostrare la natura di tali circostanze eccezionali.

La Commissione non è stata ancora contattata dall'Italia in merito ai licenziamenti cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato. Si invita quest'ultimo a rivolgersi direttamente alla persona di contatto del FEG responsabile per l'Italia i cui estremi sono reperibili sul sito web del FEG ([2]) per accertare se l'Italia intenda inoltrare una domanda per i lavoratori interessati.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1927/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 dicembre 2006, che istituisce un Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione, GU L 406 del 30.12.2006, pag. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006853/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Nokia redundancies

The Nokia Siemens Networks telecommunications company announced in November 2011 that it intends to cut its global workforce by about 17 000 by 2013.

There is talk in particular of 445 jobs to be shed in Italy, 367 of which will be accounted for by the Cassina de' Pecchi factory. Nokia Siemens Networks is aiming to transfer production to Asia and reduce its European operations solely to customisation.

— Given the European implications of this wave of redundancies, could the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund be used to mitigate the devastating effects in terms of job losses? Will not the Commission endeavour to prevent a massive transfer of production to Asian countries?

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

If the redundancies at Nokia Siemens Networks to which the Honourable Member refers occur or have occurred as a result of changing world-trade patterns leading to serious economic disruption, Italy could decide to apply for support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), provided that the Fund's other criteria are met.

Article 2 of the EGF Regulation ([1]) requires at least 500 redundancies over a period of four months in an enterprise in a Member State (including workers made redundant in its suppliers or downstream producers). If it is duly substantiated by the Member State, an application for a contribution from the EGF may be considered admissible 'in exceptional circumstances', even if the conditions laid down in the EGF Regulation are not entirely met. The Member State's application would need to demonstrate the nature of such exceptional circumstances.

The Commission has not yet been approached by Italy about the redundancies referred to by the Honourable Member. He is advised to get in touch with the EGF contact person for Italy, whose details are available on the EGF website ([2]), to find out whether Italy intends making an application for the affected workers.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, OJ L 406, 30.12.2006, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-006854/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(10. juli 2012)

Om: Nye telepakker som følge af roamingreguleringen

Den danske avis, Ekstra Bladet, har gennem et par dage dokumenteret, hvordan en række danske teleselskaber — som følge af den nye regulering af roaming — har tilbudt danske forbrugere nye telepakker. Det er ikke i sig selv problematisk, da vi jo ønsker mere konkurrence på markedet. Men problemet er, at flere af tilbuddene reelt skaber øget forvirring og gør det dyrere at være forbruger, når der tales over landegrænser inden for EU. Tilbuddene gør det også mere uigennemsigtigt for den enkelte forbruger, hvad han/hun reelt betaler for at ringe/modtage opkald i udlandet. Der er eksempler på pakker, hvor opkaldsafgiften alene er på 6 DKK, og der afregnes ikke pr. sekund men pr. påbegyndt minut. Teleselskaberne siger, at blot forbrugeren taler længe nok, så bliver det billigere end EU-prisloftet. Selskaberne TDC og Telenor er blandt firmaerne, der har lavet disse nye pakker.

Mit spørgsmål er:

— Kender Kommissionen til lignende tilfælde i andre medlemslande?

— Vurderer Kommissionen, at disse nye telepakker overhovedet er lovlige, både i henhold til den nye roamingforordning og i henhold til øvrige EU-forbrugerbeskyttelsesregler(bl.a. forbud mod vildledelse)? Såfremt Kommissionen erklærer produkterne for lovlige, vil den så lave nye tiltag for at forhindre, at de europæiske forbrugere betaler overpris og bliver vildledt til at tro, at de får et produkt billigere, end de ellers ville kunne have fået det?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Neelie Kroes
(28. august 2012)

Kommissionen overvåger forsat udviklingen på roamingmarkedet i hele EU og er opmærksom på, at der på visse markeder er blevet lanceret alternative roamingtilbud. Roamingforordningen finder direkte anvendelse, og med henblik på at sikre, at teleoperatørerne overholder forordningen, spiller de nationale tilsynsmyndigheder en vigtig rolle i forbindelse med tilsyn og håndhævelse inden for deres jurisdiktioner.

Roamingforordningen kræver, at operatørerne som standard tilbyder »eurotariffen«, og at disse maksimale priser skal gælde for alle forbrugere, medmindre de har valgt særlige pakker tilbudt af udbyderne. Operatørerne kan frit tilbyde andre roamingtariffer, men er forpligtede til også at tilbyde »eurotariffen«. Operatørernes alternative tilbud reguleres ikke, og det er op til forbrugerne at vurdere, om de vil drage fordel af den regulerede tarif, eller om de foretrækker alternative tilbud. Fremkomsten af alternative tilbud er en positiv udvikling, da den potentielt kan øge konkurrencepresset på roamingpriserne.

For at forbedre gennemsigtigheden af detailpriserne og hjælpe roamingkunderne med at træffe velfunderede beslutninger er det et krav, at udbyderne gratis oplyser roamingkunderne om de gældende roamingtakster. Det gælder for alle telekommunikationstilbud, at de skal være klare, forståelige, gøre det muligt at foretage sammenligning og være gennemsigtige med hensyn til priser og tjenesternes kendetegn. Den nye roamingforordning kræver desuden, at reklamer og markedsføring af roamingtilbud overholder direktiv 2005/29/EF om virksomheders urimelige handelspraksis over for forbrugerne på det indre marked.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006854/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: New telecoms packages following the Roaming Regulation

The Danish daily *Ekstra Bladet* has been reporting for some days that a number of Danish telecommunications firms — following on the new Roaming Regulation — have offered Danish consumers new telecoms packages. This is not a problem in itself: we want more competition on the market. The problem is that many of the offers actually increase confusion and make it more expensive to be a consumer when making calls across borders within the EU. The offers also make it less clear for the individual consumer what he or she is really paying to make or receive calls from abroad. There are examples of packages where the call charges alone are DKK 6, calculated not per second but per minute in one-minute increments. The telecoms firms say that if consumers speak for long enough it will be cheaper than the EU price ceiling. The firms putting together these packages include TDC and Telenor.

I should therefore like to ask:

— Is the Commission aware of similar cases in other Member States?

— Does the Commission consider that these new telecoms packages are even legal, either under the new Roaming Regulation or under other EU consumer protection rules (e.g. those that ban misleading advertising)? If the Commission finds that these products are legal, will it take new measures to prevent European consumers from paying too much and being misled into believing they are receiving a product more cheaply than they would otherwise have done?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2012)

The Commission is continuing to monitor the developments of roaming market across the EU and has noticed the emergence of alternative roaming offers in some markets. The Roaming Regulation applies directly and national regulatory authorities in Member States play an important supervision and enforcement role to ensure compliance of telecoms operators with the regulation within their jurisdictions.

The Roaming Regulation requires operators to offer the 'Eurotariff' as a default and these maximum prices apply to all consumers unless they opted for special packages offered by operators. Operators are free to offer other roaming tariffs but must also offer the 'Eurotariff'. The alternative offers by operators are not regulated and it is for the consumers to assess whether they want to benefit from the regulated tariff or whether they prefer alternative offers. The emergence of alternative offers is a positive development as it has a potential to increase competitive pressure on roaming prices.

In order to improve the transparency of retail prices and to help roaming customers to make informed decisions, providers are required to supply roaming customers with information free of charge on the roaming charges applicable. As for all telecommunications offers, this information has to be clear, understandable, permit comparison and be transparent with regard to prices and service characteristics. The new Roaming Regulation further requires explicitly that advertising and marketing of roaming offers to consumers comply with Directive 2005/29/EC concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006856/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Case involving a Serbian constituent

I have been contacted by a constituent who has had a legal case ongoing before a Croatian court in Zagreb for more than 20 years. The case reference is Ps-1200/90.

My constituent, who is of Serbian origin, initiated the court proceedings on 31 July 1989 against the defendant, who is a Croatian national, after her tenancy right to her three-room apartment at 25 Dvorničićeva Street in Zagreb was annulled.

She tells me that a verdict has yet to be reached on the case and that the sitting tenant has filed a counter-claim in order to transfer the apartment into her ownership.

The Municipal Civil Court in Zagreb claims that the lengthy duration of this case is due to the inefficient delivery of documents to my constituent. However, I have heard concerns from some of my parliamentary colleagues that, although this case predates the wars in the former Yugoslavia, the Serbian ethnicity of my constituent may be playing a part in the unreasonable delay in delivering a judgment.

Given that Croatia will join the European Union in 2013, could the Commission confirm:

1. whether it is aware of my constituent's case or of similar cases of alleged discrimination against Serbs by the Croatian legal system?

2. what action it is taking to speed up the conclusion of the court proceedings, which the Croatian authorities appear to be delaying?

3. whether it is putting any pressure on the Croatian authorities to conduct their court cases on the basis of a fair and unbiased approach ahead of their accession to the EU?

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

The Croatian legal framework provides for the general protection of minorities and the conditions for its implementation are in place. The Croatian Government has expressed its commitment to the rights of minorities and the Croatian Constitution foresees a guaranteed representation of minorities in parliament.

Croatia needs to continue to foster a spirit of tolerance towards minorities, in particular Croatian Serbs, and to take appropriate measures to protect those who may still be subjected to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence. However, the Commission, while it does not follow individual cases such as the one referred to by the Honourable Member, is not aware of discrimination against Serbs by the Croatian legal system.

In the accession negotiations with Croatia, particular importance was given to reforms in the areas of judiciary and the respect of fundamental rights. A specific chapter dealt with 'judiciary and fundamental rights'. Croatia had to meet demanding benchmarks at the stage of opening and closing this chapter, also in relation to the efficiency, independence impartiality and accountability of the judiciary. As a result, Croatia has made significant progress in these areas. The Commission will continue monitoring developments in line with Article 36 of the Act of Accession and maintain a close dialogue with Croatia in order to help and guide it during the remaining part of the accession preparations. Financial assistance is also provided to Croatia to support its efforts in this field.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006858/12
an die Kommission
Christa Klaß (PPE)
(10. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Änderung der Richtlinien 2000/60/EG und 2008/105/EG in Bezug auf prioritäre Stoffe im Bereich der Wasserpolitik

Am 31. Januar 2012 hat die Kommission einen Vorschlag zur Änderung der Richtlinien 2000/60/EG und 2008/105/EG in Bezug auf prioritäre Stoffe im Bereich der Wasserpolitik vorgelegt. Mit diesem Vorschlag wird die bestehende Liste prioritärer Stoffe um 15 weitere Stoffe ergänzt. Darunter fallen u. a. die Wirkstoffe Aclonifen, Bifenox, Cybermethrin, Quinoxyfen und Diclofenac.

1. Wie kommt die Kommission zu der Annahme, dass gerade diese Stoffe unter besondere Beobachtung gestellt werden sollen?

Zu den Pflanzenschutzmittelwirkstoffen Aclonifen, Bifenox, Cybermethrin und Quinoxyfen:

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die durch die Aufnahme in die Liste entstehende Diskrepanz zwischen den Politikbereichen Pflanzenschutz und Wasser?

3. Wie ist es vereinbar, dass ein Wirkstoff wie Quinoxyfen einerseits für 10 Jahre genehmigt ist, andererseits im Genehmigungszeitraum als prioritär gefährlich eingestuft wird, mit der Konsequenz, dass die Verwendung des Stoffes zu beenden ist?

4. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass mangelnde Kohärenz zwischen den einzelnen Politikbereichen die Innovationsbereitschaft untergräbt, und wenn ja, welche Maßnahmen beabsichtigt die Kommission, um die Innovationsbereitschaft für die Entwicklung von Pflanzenschutzmittel-Wirkstoffen zu erhalten und zu fördern?

Zu dem Schmerzmittelwirkstoff Diclofenac:

5. Wie beurteilt die Kommission den medizinischen Wert des Schmerzmittelwirkstoffs Diclofenac?

6. Hat die Kommission bei ihrer Einschätzung die Konsequenzen für die Patienten infolge der Aufnahme des Wirkstoffes Diclofenac in die Liste berücksichtigt?

7. Hat die Kommission berücksichtigt, dass Mitgliedstaaten aufgrund der Aufnahme des Wirkstoffes Diclofenac in die Liste dessen Verwendung verbieten könnten? Ist in einem solchen Fall sichergestellt, dass Patienten und Ärzte weiterhin eine breite Wirkstoffauswahl haben?

8. Hat die Kommission sichergestellt, dass die als Alternativen vorgeschlagenen Arzneimittel in ihrer spezifischen Wirkung und Verträglichkeit gleich sind?

9. Hat die Kommission die alternativen Schmerzmittelwirkstoffe hinsichtlich ihrer Umweltauswirkungen untersucht?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(28. August 2012)

1. Die Kommission hat vorgeschlagen, diese vier Wirkstoffe in die Liste aufzunehmen, weil bei der jüngsten technischen Überprüfung festgestellt wurde, dass sie ein erhebliches Risiko für oder durch die aquatische Umwelt darstellen.

2. Nach Auffassung der Kommission liegt hier keine Diskrepanz vor. Die Umweltqualitätsnormen würden wahrscheinlich erreicht, wenn die spezifischen Bedingungen für die Genehmigung eines Wirkstoffs gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 über das Inverkehrbringen von Pflanzenschutzmitteln ([1]) eingehalten und die in der Richtlinie für die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden vorgesehenen Methoden berücksichtigt werden.

([1]) ABl. L 309 vom 24.11.2009.

3. Beim Beschluss zur Aufnahme von Quinoxyfen in die Liste der prioritären gefährlichen Stoffe wurden Daten herangezogen, die zum Zeitpunkt der Zulassung dieses Wirkstoffs gemäß den Pflanzenschutzvorschriften noch nicht vorlagen. Der Vorschlag im Zusammenhang mit der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie erging unbeschadet der Anwendung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009.

4. Die Kommission ist sowohl auf technischer als auch auf politischer Ebene um Wahrung der Kohärenz bemüht. Der Bedarf an umweltfreundlicheren Produkten dürfte eher dazu beitragen, die Innovationsbereitschaft anzuregen.

5. und 9. Bei der Zulassung von Arzneimitteln gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 726/2004 ([2]) stützt sich die Kommission auf die Bewertung der Wirksamkeit und der möglichen Umweltrisiken eines Produkts durch die Europäische Arzneimittel-Agentur.

6. Die Kommission hat in ihrem Risikobewertungsbericht anerkannt, dass die Bedürfnisse der Patienten berücksichtigt werden müssen.

7. Die Kommission erwägt kein Verbot der Anwendung von Diclofenac durch die Mitgliedstaaten. Die Mitgliedstaaten sollen selbst entscheiden, welche Maßnahmen am sinnvollsten sind.

8. Es ist nicht Sache der Kommission, Alternativen zu Diclofenac vorzuschlagen.

([2]) ABl. L 136 vom 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006858/12
to the Commission
Christa Klaß (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Amendments to Directives 2000/60/EC and 2008/105/EC on priority substances in the field of water policy

On 31 January 2012 the Commission presented a proposal amending Directives 2000/60/EC and 2008/105/EC for priority substances in the field of water policy. This proposal adds 15 substances to the existing list of priority substances. These include the active ingredients Aclonifen, Bifenox, Cypermethrin, Quinoxyfen and Diclofenac.

1. Why does the Commission believe that it is precisely these substances that should be placed under special observation?

Re: the pesticide active ingredients Aclonifen, Bifenox, Cypermethrin and Quinoxyfen:

2. How does the Commission view the discrepancy between the policy areas of pesticides and water resulting from inclusion in the list?

3. How can it square the fact that an active ingredient such as Quinoxyfen is, on the one hand, approved for a period of 10 years while, on the other hand, is considered during the approval period as priority hazardous, which means that use of this substance should be discontinued?

4. Does the Commission agree that a lack of consistency between individual policy areas undermines the spirit of innovation, and if so, what measures does it intend to take in order to maintain and promote the spirit of innovation for the development of pesticide active ingredients?

Re: the analgesic active ingredient Diclofenac:

5. How does the Commission assess the medical value of the analgesic active ingredient Diclofenac?

6. In its assessment has the Commission taken into account the consequences for patients of including Diclofenac in the list?

7. Has the Commission considered that Member States could ban the use of Diclofenac due to its inclusion on the list? In such an eventuality, are measures in place to ensure that patients and doctors continue to have a wide choice of active ingredients?

8. Has the Commission ensured that the drugs proposed as alternatives are identical as regards their specific effect and the ability of patients to tolerate them?

9. Has the Commission examined the environmental impact of alternative analgesic active ingredients?

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

1. The Commission has proposed these 4 substances for inclusion because they were identified during the recent technical review as posing a significant risk to or via the aquatic environment.

2. The Commission does not consider that there is a discrepancy. The environmental quality standards for those substances would likely be achieved by respecting the specific conditions attached to the approval of the active substance under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]) on placing of the plant protection products on the market and taking account of the approaches presented in the directive on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides.

3. The decision to list Quinoxyfen as a priority hazardous substance took account of data not available when it was authorised under the Plant Protection Products legislation.The proposal under the Water Framework Directive is without prejudice to the application of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009.

4. The Commission is concerned to ensure a consistent approach at both the technical and policy levels. The spirit of innovation should rather be stimulated by the need for more environmentally friendly products.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.

5 and 9. In the context of the authorisation of medicinal products in accordance with Regultion (EC) No 726/2004 ([2]) the Commission relies on the European Medicines Agency to assess the efficacy and potential environmental risks of a product.

6. The Commission has acknowledged in its impact assessment report that patients' needs should be taken into account.

7. The Commission does not envisage that Member States would need to ban the use of Diclofenac. Member States should decide on the most suitable measures to take.

8. It is not for the Commission to propose alternatives to Diclofenac.

([2]) OJ L 136, 30.4.2004.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006859/12
an die Kommission
Christa Klaß (PPE)
(10. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Reduzierung von Plastiktüten

Die Deutsche Umwelthilfe hat in einem Hintergrundpapier folgendes zu biologisch abbaubaren Plastiktüten festgestellt:

„Biologisch abbaubare Plastiktüten stellen keine umweltfreundlichere Alternative zu Plastiktüten aus fossilen Rohstoffen dar. Sie bestehen zum größten Teil immer noch aus Rohöl [70 %]*, werden aufgrund eines Kunststoffgemisches mit unterschiedlichen Materialeigenschaften nicht recycelt und trotz angeblicher Kompostierbarkeit nicht kompostiert. Gleichzeitig vereinen biologisch abbaubare Plastiktüten aufgrund fossiler und nachwachsender Rohstoffanteile die Nachteile beider Materialien. Einerseits führen sie nicht zum vollständigen Ersatz von fossilen Rohstoffen, und andererseits führen sie beim Anbau der Rohstoffe zu stärkeren Umweltauswirkungen (z. B. Naturraumbeanspruchung, Eutrophierung, Versauerung, Ökotoxizität sowie höherer Energie- und Wasserverbrauch).“*

Auch das Deutsche Bundesumweltamt äußert sich biologisch abbaubaren Kunststoffen gegenüber sehr kritisch. Es zeichnet daher in Deutschland nur solche Tüten mit dem Umweltzeichen „Blauer Engel“ aus, die zu mindestens 80 % aus recyceltem Kunststoffmaterial bestehen, jedoch keine anderen Tüten. Die Zielsetzungen des „Blauen Engels“ sind Umwelt-, Gesundheits-, Klima-, Wasser- sowie Ressourcenschutz.

1. Sind der Kommission die negativen Umweltauswirkungen und Eigenschaften von biologisch abbaubaren Plastiktüten bekannt?

2. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von den Hintergründen, Zielen und Durchführungsmethoden der deutschen Umweltauszeichnung „Blauer Engel“?

3. Hat die Kommission die oben genannten Informationen in der Diskussion über mögliche Maßnahmen zur Reduzierung von Plastiktüten ausreichend berücksichtigt?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(30. August 2012)

Die Kommission prüft zurzeit verschiedene Optionen zur Eindämmung der Verwendung von Plastiktüten. Dabei werden Studien zur Ökobilanz, Daten zu den unterschiedlichen Arten von Plastiktüten sowie die möglichen ökologischen, wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Auswirkungen der jeweiligen Optionen umfassend berücksichtigt.

Die Regelung zur Verleihung des Umweltzeichens „Blauer Engel“, mit der eine Zusammenarbeit im Rahmen der Regelung für das EU-Umweltzeichen besteht, ist der Kommission gut bekannt.

Nach Abschluss der oben genannten Prüfung wird ein Beschluss über eine mögliche Initiative der Kommission und den genauen Umfang dieser Initiative ergehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006859/12
to the Commission
Christa Klaß (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Reduction in the use of plastic bags

The German environmental organisation Deutsche Umwelthilfe has noted in a background paper on biodegradable plastic bags:

'Biodegradable plastic bags do not constitute a more environmentally friendly alternative to plastic bags made of fossil raw materials. They still consist chiefly [70%] of crude oil, are not recycled owing to the mixture of plastics with different material properties and are not composted in spite of their alleged compostability. At the same time, owing to their fossil and renewable raw material components, biodegradable plastic bags combine the disadvantages of both materials. On the one hand, they do not lead to a complete replacement of fossil raw materials, and on the other hand they have an increased environmental impact in growing the raw materials (e.g. land use, eutrophication, acidification, ecotoxicity, and higher energy and water consumption).'

The German Federal Environmental Agency has also taken a very critical stance on biodegradable plastics. It therefore awards the environmental label 'Blue Angel' in Germany only to bags which consist of at least 80% recycled plastic material, but no other bags. The objectives of the 'Blue Angel' label are to protect the environment, health, the climate, water and natural resources.

1. Is the Commission aware of the negative environmental impacts and properties of biodegradable plastics?

2. Is the Commission aware of the background, objectives and *modus operandi* of the German environmental label 'Blue Angel'?

3. Has the Commission sufficiently taken into account the above information above in the debate on possible measures to reduce the use of plastic bags?

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

The Commission is currently assessing various options to reduce the use of plastic carrier bags. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) studies and data related to different types of carrier bags as well as potential environmental, economic and social impacts of such options are being comprehensively considered in this assessment.

As far as the Blue Angel is concerned, the Commission is well aware of this scheme with which there is a collaboration in the framework of the EU Ecolabel scheme.

A decision on a possible Commission initiative on plastic bags and its exact scope will be taken upon completion of the abovementioned assessment process.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006861/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(10 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Οι παρατηρητές στα αλιευτικά σκάφη παρεμποδίζονται κατά την άσκηση των καθηκόντων τους

Ο κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1386/2007 θεσπίζει μέτρα που ισχύουν στη ζώνη διακανονισμού της Οργάνωσης Αλιείας Βορειοδυτικού Ατλαντικού (NAFO), συμπεριλαμβανομένων των υποχρεώσεων των πλοιάρχων και των παρατηρητών επί των αλιευτικών σκαφών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Ωστόσο, σύμφωνα με πρόσφατη έρευνα της βρετανικής εφημερίδας *The Guardian*, αποκαλύφθηκε ότι οι παρατηρητές που εποπτεύουν τις ευρωπαϊκές αλιευτικές ποσοστώσεις υφίστανται μια συστηματική τακτική εκφοβισμού, προτάσεων δωροδοκίας και υπονόμευσης από τα πληρώματα αλιείας.

Μετά από συνεντεύξεις με περισσότερους από 20 πρώην και νυν παρατηρητές αλιείας και μετά την εξέταση των αρχείων της ΕΕ, η εφημερίδα ανέφερε ότι οι απειλές και η παρενόχληση είναι κοινά φαινόμενα επί ισπανικών και πορτογαλικών αλιευτικών σκαφών, τα οποία είναι διαβόητα για πρακτικές κατάφωρης υπεραλίευσης. Επιπλέον, ένα μεγάλο πρόβλημα φαίνεται να είναι ότι οι παρατηρητές που εντοπίζουν παραβιάσεις, επιτρέπεται μόνο να καλέσουν ένα επιθεωρητή επί του σκάφους, αλλά δεν μπορούν να του κοινοποιήσουν οποιαδήποτε στοιχεία ή λεπτομέρειες για τις παραβάσεις.

1. Είναι ενήμερη η Επιτροπή για τα φαινόμενα εκφοβισμού των παρατηρητών στα ύδατα της NAFO;

2. Μπορεί να παράσχει στοιχεία σχετικά με άλλες παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις σε σκάφη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης;

3. Έχει η Επιτροπή ενημερωθεί για τυχόν συγκεκριμένα μέτρα που θεσπίζονται από τα κράτη μέλη για να προστατεύουν τα δικαιώματα των παρατηρητών επί των αλιευτικών σκαφών της ΕΕ;

4. Ποια συγκεκριμένα μέτρα έχει η Επιτροπή λάβει ή σχεδιάζει να λάβει προκειμένου να προστατευθούν τα δικαιώματα των παρατηρητών επί των αλιευτικών σκαφών της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ορισμένα περιστατικά εκφοβισμού των παρατηρητών συμμόρφωσης στα ύδατα που υπάγονται στην Οργάνωση Αλιείας Βορειοδυτικού Ατλαντικού (NAFO). Ωστόσο, η έρευνα που πραγματοποίησε η βρετανική εφημερίδα The Guardian αναφέρεται σε μια σειρά συγκεκριμένων περιπτώσεων που έχουν παρατηρηθεί κυρίως παλαιότερα. Στο παρόν στάδιο, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει στη διάθεσή της στοιχεία που αναφέρονται σε άλλα παρόμοια σοβαρά περιστατικά εκφοβισμού σε ανάλογους τύπους αλιείας με συμμετοχή αλιευτικών σκαφών της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι είναι πολύ σημαντικό να μπορούν οι παρατηρητές να εκτελούν τα καθήκοντά τους χωρίς να παρεμποδίζονται ή να υφίστανται εκφοβισμό. Τα μέτρα διατήρησης και επιβολής των κανονισμών της NAFO δεν εμποδίζουν τους παρατηρητές συμμόρφωσης να ανταλλάσσουν δεδομένα και πληροφορίες σχετικά με την αλιευτική δραστηριότητα του σκάφους με κάθε επιθεωρητή, ανά πάσα στιγμή. Τα καθήκοντα και τα δικαιώματα των παρατηρητών συμμόρφωσης επί των αλιευτικών σκαφών της ΕΕ αναφέρονται στο άρθρο 73 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1224/09 του Συμβουλίου (κανονισμός ελέγχου), τα οποία είναι σύμφωνα με τους ισχύοντες κανόνες της NAFO. Τέλος, είναι σημαντικό να σημειωθεί ότι οποιαδήποτε παρεμπόδιση του έργου των παρατηρητών θεωρείται σοβαρή παράβαση για την οποία εφαρμόζεται το σύστημα κυρώσεων που προβλέπεται στον κανονισμό ελέγχου.

Μετά από πρωτοβουλίες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, τα τελευταία χρόνια η ίδια η NAFO εξέτασε το εν λόγω ζήτημα. Από το 2010, η NAFO ανέπτυξε ηλεκτρονικές τεχνολογίες για την καθημερινή παρακολούθηση της αλιευτικής δραστηριότητας των σκαφών στη θάλασσα, προσφέροντας πολύτιμη εναλλακτική λύση για τη χρήση και τη συστηματική επιβίβαση των παρατηρητών συμμόρφωσης. Κάθε σκάφος υπόκειται τώρα σε αξιολόγηση των κινδύνων τόσο από τη NAFO όσο και από το ενδιαφερόμενο συμβαλλόμενο μέρος που θα πρέπει να οδηγεί στη διενέργεια ελέγχου τόσο στη θάλασσα όσο και στον λιμένα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006861/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Observers on board fishing vessels prevented from carrying out their duties

Regulation (EC) No 1386/2007 establishes measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), including the obligations of masters and observers on board EU fishing vessels. However, according to a recent investigation by the British newspaper *The Guardian*, it was revealed that observers monitoring European fishing quotas are being regularly intimidated, offered bribes and undermined by the fishing crews they are observing.

After interviewing more than 20 former and current fisheries observers and examining EU records, the newspaper stated that threats and harassment are common onboard Spanish and Portuguese fishing boats, which are notorious for egregious overfishing. Furthermore, a major problem seems to be that observers who spot violations are only allowed to summon an inspector onboard, but cannot provide the inspector with any details or records of infringements.

1. Is the Commission aware of the phenomenon of observer intimidation in NAFO waters?

2. Can it provide data on any other similar cases occurring on European Union vessels?

3. Has the Commission been informed of any concrete measures adopted by Member States to protect the rights of observers onboard EU fishing vessels?

4. What concrete measures has the Commission adopted or is planning to adopt in order to protect the rights of observers onboard EU fishing vessels?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(27 September 2012)

The Commission is aware of certain incidents of intimidation of compliance observers in the waters subject to Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO). However, the investigation by the British newspaper *The Guardian* refers to a number of specific cases that have been observed mainly some time ago.At this stage, there are no data available to the Commission referring to similar other serious incidents of intimidation in other similar fisheries involving EU fishing vessels.

The Commission considers it of high importance that observers can carry out their tasks without being hindered or intimidated. The NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) do not impede compliance observers to exchange data and information about the fishing activity of a vessel with any inspector, at any time. The tasks and rights of compliance observers on EU fishing vessels are referred to in Article 73 of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/09 (Control Regulation) which are in coherence with the NAFO rules in force. Finally, it is relevant to note that any obstruction of the work of observers is considered a serious infringement to which the penalty point sytem set out in the Control Regulation applies.

Following initiatives of the European Union, NAFO itself adressed this issue in the recent years. Since 2010, NAFO developed electronic technologies to monitor daily the fishing activity of vessels at sea, offering a valuable alternative to the use and systematic embarkment of compliance observers. Each vessel is now subjected to a risk assessment evaluation both by NAFO and the Contracting Party concerned that should drive inspection both at sea and in port.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006862/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Soia OGM alterata proveniente dall'Europa orientale

Secondo dati recenti riportati dalla stampa italiana, la Guardia di finanza avrebbe sequestrato oltre 1 700 tonnellate di soia geneticamente modificata. Dai risultati delle analisi effettuate dai finanzieri, con l'ausilio dell'azienda sanitaria locale, è emersa la presenza nella soia di una quantità di OGM superiore di quasi il doppio del limite consentito.

La soia geneticamente modificata proveniente dall'Europa orientale veniva venduta in Italia nonostante contenesse quasi il doppio di organismi geneticamente modificati rispetto alla soglia limite consentita dalla vigente normativa europea.

Alla luce di queste informazioni e considerato che la salute dei cittadini europei deve essere sempre tutelata, può la Commissione far sapere:

— quali sono i controlli posti in essere per garantire la veridicità delle attestazioni che accompagnano i prodotti geneticamente modificati;

— se ritiene opportuno che, per i prodotti geneticamente modificati, venga eseguita una verifica più approfondita del rispetto delle normative europee vigenti per evitare che si verifichino situazioni analoghe a quelle sopra descritte?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(28 agosto 2012)

Spetta agli Stati membri garantire l'esistenza di controlli delle prescrizioni in fatto di etichettatura di generi alimentari e mangimi al fine di verificare la presenza di OGM autorizzati. Il diritto dell'Unione europea impone a ogni Stato membro di svolgere controlli regolari commisurati al rischio e con opportuna frequenza così da assicurare che i prodotti alimentari ed i mangimi commercializzati siano conformi alla legislazione europea.

L'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario della Commissione ha la responsabilità di verificare mediante controlli, ispezioni e attività correlate la conformità alle prescrizioni in fatto di sicurezza alimentare nell'Unione europea e la conformità alle prescrizioni in fatto d'importazioni in Europa per i paesi terzi che esportano nell'UE.

La Commissione non ha ricevuto dagli Stati membri alcun dato che indichi un aumento dei casi di non conformità dell' etichettatura tale da comprovare la necessità di maggiori controlli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006862/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Adulterated GM soya from Eastern Europe

According to recent information reported by the Italian press, the financial police (*Guardia di Finanza*) have seized over 1 700 tonnes of GM soya. According to the results of tests carried out by the police with the help of the local health authority, the soya contained a quantity of GM soya that was nearly double the authorised limit.

The genetically modified soya from Eastern Europe was being sold in Italy even though it contained almost twice the amount of genetically modified organisms of the threshold limit under current EU legislation.

In the light of this information and given that the health of European citizens must always be protected, can the Commission say:

— what controls are in place to ensure the veracity of the certificates which accompany genetically modified products;

— whether it does not agree that, for genetically modified products, more in-depth monitoring should be carried out to ensure that existing EU legislation is being complied with, to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future?

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

Member States are responsible for ensuring that controls are in place concerning the labelling requirements of food and feedstuffs for the presence of authorised GMOs. European Union law requires that Member States carry out controls regularly, on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency so as to ensure that food and feed which is placed on the market complies with EC law.

The Commission's Food and Veterinary Office through its audits, inspections and related activities, is responsible for checking on compliance with the requirements of EU food safety within the European Union and on compliance with EU import requirements in third countries exporting to the EU.

The Commission has not received data from Member States, which would suggest a wider issue of non-compliance on labelling which would support the need for further controls.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006863/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Futuro della proposta di regolamento che modifica la direttiva 2001/18/CE sulla possibilità di limitare o vietare la coltivazione di OGM a livello nazionale

Gli Stati membri provano ormai da tempo gravi difficoltà a trovare un accordo su una posizione comune in merito alla proposta di regolamento che modifica la direttiva 2001/18/CE per quanto concerne la possibilità a livello nazionale di limitare o vietare la coltivazione di OGM. Al riguardo il Ministro dell'ambiente danese, a margine dell'ultimo Consiglio Ambiente, ha riferito che attualmente non è possibile raggiungere una maggioranza qualificata in seno al Consiglio dei ministri dell'Unione europea per la presenza di una minoranza di blocco formata da più paesi tra cui Germania, Francia, Regno Unito e Belgio.

Ciò premesso, potrebbe la Commissione europea riferire su cosa intenderà fare nei prossimi mesi riguardo a tale proposta?

Potrebbe, inoltre, chiarire se intende prendere le misure necessarie disposte dal Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea e dal diritto comunitario derivato per far rispettare pienamente la vigente legislazione sulla coltivazione di OGM, che al momento, in diversi casi, non è pienamente rispettata dagli Stati membri?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(22 agosto 2012)

Al Consiglio «Ambiente» dell'11 giugno 2012 la presidenza danese ha concluso che un accordo politico sulla questione non sia possibile, alla luce del risultato delle consultazioni informali e dei pareri espressi dagli Stati membri nella riunione del COREPER del 31 maggio 2012. Dal 1º luglio 2012 il dossier è passato alla presidenza cipriota.

La Commissione è delusa del mancato raggiungimento di un accordo politico, nonostante gli sforzi profusi dalla presidenza danese e dalla Commissione stessa per elaborare un testo di compromesso. Una maggioranza di Stati membri ha espresso chiaramente la propria disponibilità ad adottare la proposta e ha dimostrato flessibilità nel venire incontro alle attese degli Stati più scettici. La Commissione s'impegna a continuare a lavorare sul testo sotto le prossime presidenze.

La Commissione sta altresì riflettendo su come procedere riguardo alle autorizzazioni di coltivazione in sospeso e sul modo più adatto per dar seguito alle clausole di salvaguardia pendenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006863/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Future of the proposal for a regulation amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs nationally

Member States have long been having serious problems trying to agree on a common position on the proposal for a regulation amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs nationally. In this regard, the Danish Minister for the Environment, on the sidelines of the last Environment Council, reported that it is currently impossible to achieve a qualified majority in the EU Council of Ministers due to the presence of a blocking minority consisting of several countries, including Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Belgium.

Could the Commission therefore say what it intends to do in the coming months with regard to this proposal?

Could it also clarify whether it intends to take the necessary measures, as laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in secondary Community legislation, to ensure full compliance with existing legislation on the cultivation of GMOs which, in several cases, is not being fully complied with by Member States?

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

At the Environment Council of 11 June 2012, the Danish Presidency concluded that a political agreement on this file is not possible, taking into account the outcome of the informal consultations and Member States views at the Coreper meeting of 31 May 2012. The Cypriot Presidency has now taken charge of the file, with effect from 1 July 2012.

The Commission is disappointed that no political agreement could be found, despite the tremendous efforts deployed by the Danish Presidency and the Commission itself to build a compromise text. A majority of Member States clearly expressed their willingness to have this proposal adopted, and showed flexibility to meet the expectations of those being more sceptical. The Commission is committed to keep working on the text under forthcoming presidencies.

The Commission is also reflecting on how to proceed with the pending authorisations for cultivation, and on the most appropriate way to follow-up on the pending safeguard clauses.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006864/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Penuria di medicinali adattati ai bambini affetti da patologie gravi

Secondo un'indagine effettuata dall'Accademia nazionale francese di farmacia, i medicinali che si adattano ai bambini sono attualmente poco numerosi, soprattutto per quanto riguarda il trattamento di patologie gravi.

La conseguenza diretta è quella di indurre ad utilizzare, in situazione di penuria di tali medicinali, altri farmaci approvati per uso esclusivo degli adulti, esponendo in tal modo i minori, già affetti da una patologia, a un più grave rischio di insorgenza di problematiche connesse.

Considerato che il mercato europeo dispone attualmente per le malattie dei minori di medicinali specialmente adattati, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza dei fatti sovra esposti;

— se ritiene opportuno che, anche per questa tipologia di medicinali, debba esservi uno speciale adattamento per i minori al fine di favorire la loro distribuzione sul mercato?

Risposta di John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(23 agosto 2012)

L'onorevole parlamentare si riferisce a una situazione che per la Commissione ha rappresentato una delle principali spinte a formulare una proposta sui medicinali a uso pediatrico. Tale atto legislativo, adottato nel 2006 e noto come regolamento pediatrico ([1]), mira ad ampliare il numero dei medicinali opportunamente adattati all'uso pediatrico e a ridurre quello delle specialità per adulti ma utilizzate sui bambini.

Uno dei principali requisiti di tale regolamento è quello di fornire — in genere all'atto della richiesta di autorizzazione per la commercializzazione di medicinali nuovi e per l'estensione della linea di medicinali coperti da brevetto — dati relativi all'uso del medicinale sui bambini ottenuti con indagini dalle caratteristiche convenute e riconosciute. Tale requisito impone a chi chieda un'autorizzazione per un medicinale destinato ad adulti di studiare anche le possibilità di usarlo sui bambini.

Dati i tempi necessari allo sviluppo dei medicinali, il regolamento pediatrico non comporterà un aumento improvviso dei medicinali a uso pediatrico. Crescerà invece il numero di medicinali sui quali saranno stati effettuati studi per consentirne l'uso su pazienti più giovani.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1901/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 12 dicembre 2006, relativo ai medicinali per uso pediatrico, GU L 378 del 27.12.2006, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006864/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Shortage of medicines for children suffering from serious illnesses

According to a survey conducted by the French National Academy of Pharmacy, medicines suitable for children are currently few and far between, especially as regards the treatment of serious illnesses.

The shortage of such medicines results directly in the use of other drugs that have been approved for adult use only. This exposes children, who are already suffering from a disease, to a more serious risk of further problems.

Given that there are currently medicines specially tailored to sick children on the European market, can the Commission say:

— whether it is aware of these issues;

— whether it does not agree that this type of medicines, too, should be specially adapted to children in order to facilitate their distribution on the market?

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

The situation to which the honourable member refers was one of the main triggers for the Commission to bring forward a proposal on medicines for children. This act, known as the paediatric regulation ([1]), was adopted in 2006 and aims at increasing the number of suitably adapted medicinal products for the paediatric population and at reducing the number of products used in children that have been approved for adults only.

One of the key requirements of this regulation is to provide — in principle, at the time of marketing authorisation applications for new medicines and line-extensions for existing patent-protected medicines — data on the use of the medicine in children resulting from an agreed investigation plan. This requirement obliges applicants for products for adults to also study the potential use of their product in children.

Given the time required for the development of medicinal products, the paediatric regulation will not lead to a sudden increase of medicines for children. Instead, it will result in a steadily growing number of medicinal products that have been researched for their use for young patients.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on medicinal products for paediatric use, OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-006865/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 luglio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibile interdizione dei sistemi di monitoraggio epidemiologico derivante dalla revisione della direttiva 95/46/CE

I registri di patologia sono strumenti indispensabili per il controllo delle malattie e del loro impatto sulla popolazione. Essi richiedono un'accurata identificazione dei casi di malattia e la corretta attribuzione a ogni paziente di tutti i dati necessari provenienti da diverse fonti al fine di caratterizzare i rischi, valutare i percorsi clinici e offrire alla sanità pubblica strumenti di controllo e programmazione basati su dati reali. Per realizzare tutto ciò, è necessario avere accesso ai dati personali sensibili dei pazienti.

La revisione in atto della direttiva 95/46/CE rischia di bloccare le attività dei sistemi di sorveglianza basati sugli archivi sanitari personali (in particolare i registri tumori). Nello specifico, essa prevede il consenso informato per la registrazione dei dati dei pazienti e la possibilità di ognuno di negare tale consenso.

La situazione che ne deriverebbe è preoccupante: i registri conterrebbero dati distorti stante l'alta soglia di non adesione delle persone più esposte ai rischi e l'impossibilità di richiedere il consenso ai deceduti. In particolare, l'Associazione italiana registri tumori teme che, a seguito della revisione, non sia più possibile determinare elementi essenziali quali il numero dei nuovi casi insorgenti e dei decessi per tumore, l'impatto dei programmi di prevenzione e screening e la sopravvivenza dei pazienti trattati.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza:

1. delle effettive conseguenze della revisione della direttiva 95/46/CE a livello di sistemi di sorveglianza e, quindi, del rischio di blocco degli archivi dei dati sanitari personali, in particolare, il registro tumori;

2. degli effetti che scaturiranno da tale revisione per ciò che riguarda la procedura di richiesta del consenso;

3. degli esiti a lungo termine sul registro tumori e, di conseguenza, sui pazienti?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2012)

Il 25 gennaio 2012 la Commissione ha adottato un pacchetto di riforma della protezione dei dati che comprende, tra l'altro, una proposta di regolamento concernente la tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali e la libera circolazione di tali dati ([1]) mirante a riformare le norme europee di protezione dei dati del 1995 ([2]).

Tale proposta tiene conto dei problemi connessi alla sorveglianza e alla ricerca in materia di salute. Mentre nell'ambito della vigente direttiva 95/46/CE sulla protezione dei dati le disposizioni applicabili al trattamento dei dati personali sono attuate dagli Stati membri in modo piuttosto disomogeneo, la proposta di regolamento armonizza specificamente le condizioni e le garanzie per il trattamento dei dati personali relativi alla salute e per finalità di ricerca.

La proposta fissa, in particolare, le condizioni e le garanzie per il trattamento dei dati personali a fini sanitari (articolo 81) e per finalità storiche, statistiche e di ricerca scientifica (articolo 83), comprese le condizioni e le garanzie per il trattamento dei dati personali relativi alla salute che risulti necessario per finalità di ricerca, come la creazione di registri dei pazienti per migliorare le diagnosi, distinguere tra tipi simili di malattie e condurre studi sulle terapie.

Nel rispetto di tali condizioni e garanzie specifiche, non è necessario il consenso dell'interessato per trattare i dati personali relativi alla salute.

Il regolamento proposto agevolerà quindi la creazione e il funzionamento di registri di patologia e la ricerca connessa.

([1]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente la tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali e la libera circolazione di tali dati (regolamento generale sulla protezione dei dati) (COM/2012/011 final).

([2]) Direttiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, relativa alla tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali, nonché alla libera circolazione di tali dati (GU L 281 del 23.11.1995, pag. 31).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006865/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Revision of Directive 95/46/EC: risk of impeding epidemiological monitoring systems

Disease registries are essential in order to control diseases and gauge their public health impact. They require cases of disease to be identified accurately; furthermore, all relevant data from the various sources have to be correctly matched to the individual patients to whom they refer so as to enable risks to be characterised and clinical approaches assessed and to provide public health services with control and planning tools based on real data. To make all this possible, however, it is necessary to have access to patients' sensitive personal data.

The revision of Directive 95/46/EC now under way poses the risk of halting monitoring systems based on personal medical records (especially tumour registries). According to one specific proposal, patients would be called upon to give their informed consent to registration of their data and could refuse to do so in every case.

The potential consequences are alarming: registry data would be distorted because there would be a high plateau of non-participation by persons most at risk and it would be impossible to obtain the consent of those who had died. In particular, the Italian Association of Tumour Registries fears that, as a result of the revision, it will no longer be possible to establish essential facts such as the number of incipient new cases and of tumour deaths, the impact of prevention and screening programmes, and the survival rate among patients treated.

1. Does the Commission know how monitoring systems might in fact be affected by the revision of Directive 95/46/EC? Is it aware of the risk of obstruction entailed for health data archives and tumour registries in particular?

2. What will be implications of the revision for the consent procedure?

3. What will be the long-term consequences for tumour registries and hence patients?

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

On 25 January 2012, the Commission adopted a data protection reform package which contains a proposal for a regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data aiming at reforming the EU's 1995 Data Protection Rules ([1]).

This proposal takes into account the problems in relation to health monitoring and research on health issues. While under the current Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC the relevant provisions for processing personal data have been implemented by the Member States in a rather divergent manner, the proposal for the regulation specifically harmonises the conditions and safeguards for processing personal data concerning health and for research purposes.

The proposal specifically lays down conditions and safeguards for processing personal data for health purposes (Article 81) and for historical, statistical and scientific research purposes (Article 83), including conditions and safeguards for processing of personal data concerning health which is necessary for research purposes, such as patient registries set up for improving diagnoses and differentiating between similar types of diseases and preparing studies for therapies.

Under these specific conditions and safeguards, the consent of the data subject is not required for the processing of personal data concerning health.

The proposed Regulation will thus facilitate the setting up and operation of disease registries and related research.

([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, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-006866/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(10 juillet 2012)

Objet: État des lieux du Plan solaire méditerranéen

Lancé lors de la présidence française de l'Union européenne en 2008, le Plan solaire méditerranéen (PSM) est un des projets phares de l'Union pour la Méditerranée. Il vise la construction d'ici à 2020 de 20 GW de capacité de production d'énergie renouvelable, en utilisant un mélange de technologies, y compris les cellules photovoltaïques, les centrales solaires thermodynamiques (CST), l'énergie éolienne, la biomasse et l'hydroélectricité.

Le PSM s'attache à étendre l'utilisation de l'Énergie Renouvelable (EnR) dans la région et contribue à développer un marché de l'électricité durable dans la zone euro-méditerranéenne. Pour atteindre son objectif, le PSM a mis en place, en 2010, un projet d'une durée de 3 ans intitulé *«Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan»*, avec un budget de 4,6 millions d'euros.

En parallèle, la Commission européenne s'est félicitée de la collaboration établie entre les deux initiatives industrielles Desertec Industrial Initiative (Dii) et Medgrid dans le domaine de l'énergie solaire au sud de la Méditerranée.

— La Commission pourrait-elle faire état de l'avancement du projet *«Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan»* et nous informer de l'évolution de la coopération entre Dii et Medgrid suite à la signature du protocole d'accord du 24 novembre 2011?

— Quel type de soutien la Commission européenne compte-t-elle apporter à la coopération Dii-Medgrid et à chacune de ces deux initiatives industrielles?

— Plus largement, quel cadre réglementaire la Commission européenne entend-elle donner au PSM?

— De quelle manière le PSM pourra-t-il aider l'Union européenne à atteindre son objectif de 20 % d'énergies renouvelables dans son mix énergétique à l'horizon 2020? La Commission a-t-elle établi des projections sur cette contribution?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(27 août 2012)

Afin de soutenir la réalisation des objectifs du plan solaire méditerranéen, la Commission a mis en place en 2010 un projet sur trois ans intitulé «Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan» («Ouvrir la voie au plan solaire méditerranéen»), doté d'un budget de 4,6 millions d'euros. Jusqu'à présent, l'équipe chargée du projet a atteint les résultats prévus dans les programmes de travail existants. Les rapports qui s'ensuivent ont été examinés avec les bénéficiaires lors de plusieurs réunions et sont disponibles en anglais sur le site internet du projet: (http://www.pavingtheway-msp.eu/).

En novembre 2011, la Commission s'est félicitée de la signature d'un protocole d'accord entre les deux initiatives issues du secteur privé Desertec Industry Initiative (Dii) et Medgrid. Ce document instaure une coopération plus étroite entre lesdites initiatives et confère au projet une dimension véritablement européenne. La Commission suit avec intérêt l'évolution de ces initiatives, essentielles à la promotion d'un partenariat dans le domaine des énergies renouvelables entre l'UE et les pays du sud du bassin méditerranéen. Toutefois, à ce jour, aucun soutien spécifique n'a été apporté aux initiatives industrielles proprement dites, notamment parce que les propositions du projet ne sont pas encore suffisamment concrètes.

La Commission propose également des mesures concrètes destinées à renforcer la perspective d'un marché des énergies renouvelables sur le pourtour méditerranéen, et à consolider le lien avec la politique de l'UE en matière d'énergies renouvelables par un travail sur l'encadrement des investissements. Le détail de ces mesures figure dans la communication de la Commission du 6 juin 2012 sur les «énergies renouvelables: un acteur de premier plan sur le marché européen de l'énergie» ([1]).

([1]) COM(2012)271 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006866/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Progress of the Mediterranean Solar Plan

Launched during the French Presidency of the EU in 2008, the Mediterranean Solar Plan (MSP) is one of the flagship projects of the Union for the Mediterranean. Its aim is the construction, by 2020, of 20 GW of renewable energy production capacity using a mixture of technologies, including photovoltaic cells, thermodynamic solar power plants, wind energy, biomass and hydro-electricity.

The MSP seeks to expand the use of renewable energy in the region and is helping to develop a market for renewable energy in the Euro-Mediterranean area. To attain its objective, the MSP set up in 2010 a three-year project entitled 'Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan', with a budget of EUR 4.6 million.

At the same time, the Commission welcomed the cooperation between two industrial initiatives, Desertec Industrial Initiative (Dii) and Medgrid, in the field of solar energy in the southern Mediterranean.

— Can the Commission outline the progress of the 'Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan' project and say how cooperation between Dii and Medgrid has developed following the signature of the memorandum of understanding of 24 November 2011?

— What type of support does the Commission propose to provide for cooperation between Dii-Medgrid cooperation and for each of the two industrial initiatives separately?

— More generally, what regulatory framework does the Commission propose to provide for the MSP?

— How could the MSP contribute to the European Union attaining its target of 20% of renewable energy in its energy mix by 2020? Has the Commission made any projections concerning this contribution?

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

To support the objectives of the Mediterranean Solar Plan, the Commission set up in 2010 a three-year project entitled 'Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan', with a budget of EUR 4.6 million. The project team insofar has delivered on the agreed outputs according to the existing workplans. The reports produced have been discussed in several meetings with the beneficiaries and are available on the project's website: http://www.pavingtheway-msp.eu/.

In November 2011, the Commission welcomed the signature of the memorandum of understanding between the Desertec Industry Initiative (Dii) and Medgrid, which establishes a closer cooperation between these two private sector initiatives and promotes its truly European dimension. The Commission follows with interest developments in these initiatives that are key for the promotion of a renewable energy partnership between the EU and countries in the Southern Mediterranean. However, so far there has been no specific support for the industrial initiatives themselves, also given that the project proposals are not yet sufficiently concrete.

The Commission also proposes concrete steps to enhance the perspective for renewable energy trade around the Mediterranean and to strengthen the link with the EU renewable energy policy by addressing the investment framework. This is described in detail in the Commission Communication of 6 June 2012 'Renewable Energy: a major player in the European energy market' ([1]).

([1]) COM(2012)271 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-006867/12
a la Comisión
Pilar Ayuso (PPE)
(10 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Directrices de ayudas de Estado — Régimen de comercio de emisiones

El pasado 5 de junio de 2012 se publicaron las Directrices relativas a determinadas medidas de ayuda estatal en el contexto del régimen de comercio de derechos de emisión de gases de efecto invernadero. En estas directrices se dan las pautas para la concesión de ayudas a actividades sometidas al régimen de comercio de emisiones.

En el Anexo IV se establecen una serie de «regiones» dentro de la Unión Europea, aunque no se dan mayores criterios para su definición.

— ¿Puede explicar la Comisión cuáles han sido los criterios para la creación de estas regiones?

— ¿Por qué hay una región «Europa Centro-occidental» y otra «Nórdica», mientras el resto de países no están agrupados en casi ninguna región?

En dicho Anexo también se establecen los factores regionales de emisión. La Comisión afirma que se ha tenido en cuenta el factor de emisión de cada fuente energética, entre otras cosas.

— ¿Puede enumerar la Comisión todos los elementos se han tenido en cuenta para la elaboración de los factores de emisión?

— ¿Qué factor de emisión se ha aplicado a los distintos combustibles?

— ¿No sería más sencillo y transparente aplicar un mismo factor de emisión para todos los Estados miembros?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de septiembre de 2012)

Las nuevas Directrices relativas a las ayudas estatales en el contexto del RCDE de la UE después de 2012 ([1]) definen las normas para la concesión de ayudas destinadas a los costes de las emisiones indirectas, es decir, el aumento de los costes de la emisión de CO_2 en los precios de la electricidad para las empresas de determinados sectores y subsectores a los que se considera expuestos a un riesgo significativo de fuga de carbono.

Las zonas se definen como zonas geográficas: que consisten en submercados acoplados mediante intercambios de energía, o en las que no existen congestiones declaradas y los precios diarios por hora del intercambio de electricidad muestran una divergencia de precios en euros no superior al 1 % en la mayoría de las horas del año. Como resultado de este cálculo, algunos Estados miembros se agruparon en zonas geográficas supranacionales (Nórdica, Europa Centro-Occidental, Iberia, Chequia y Eslovaquia) o se limitaron a la frontera nacional del Estado miembro.

El cálculo del factor regional de emisión de CO_2 solo tiene en cuenta la cantidad de electricidad producida a partir de combustibles fósiles, porque estas instalaciones (fundamentalmente de gas y carbón) son las que casan la oferta y la demanda y fijan los precios de la electricidad al por mayor. El factor de emisión de CO_2 para cada zona es una media de las emisiones de CO_2 generadas por cada uno de los combustibles fósiles consumidos en la generación, ponderado por la cantidad de electricidad producida a partir de dichos combustibles fósiles. Las emisiones de CO_2 por unidad de combustible se calculan utilizando el mismo método en toda la UE.

La transparencia en el cálculo del factor de emisión de CO_2 se garantiza al aplicar el mismo método en toda la UE. Cada Estado miembro solo puede utilizar uno de los factores, igual o inferior al factor regional de emisión de CO_2. Tras evaluar otras opciones tales como un factor de emisión de CO_2 a nivel de la UE, se escogió la diferenciación regional pues corresponde a la realidad actual, en términos de la integración del mercado de la electricidad en la UE. Esta segmentación tenderá a disminuir a medio plazo, a medida que las fuerzas de liberalización del mercado lleven a unos precios más convergentes en la UE.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:158:0004:0022:ES:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-006867/12
to the Commission
Pilar Ayuso (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: State aid guidelines — emissions trading scheme

Guidelines on certain state aid measures in the context of the greenhouse gas emission allowance trading scheme post-2012 were published on 5 June 2012. This document contains guidelines on awarding aid to activities subject to the emissions trading scheme.

Annex IV sets out a list of 'regions' within the European Union but no major criteria are given for defining them.

— Can the Commission explain what criteria were used to create these regions?

— Why are there a 'Central-West Europe' region and a 'Nordic' region, while most other countries are not grouped into any single region?

This Annex also establishes regional emission factors. The Commission states that it has taken into account the emission factor of each energy source, *inter alia*.

— Can the Commission list all the elements that were taken into account when compiling the emission factors?

— What emission factor has been applied to the different fuels?

— Would it not be easier and more transparent to apply the same emission factor for all Member States?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 2012)

The new Guidelines for state aid in connection to the EU ETS after 2012 ([1]) define the rules for granting aid for indirect emission costs, i.e. increased CO_2 costs in electricity prices, to undertakings in sectors and subsectors deemed to be exposed to a significant risk of carbon leakage.

The areas are defined as geographic zones: consisting of submarkets coupled through power exchanges, or within which no declared congestion exists and hourly day-ahead power exchange prices show divergence in Euro of maximum 1% for most hours of the year. As a result of this calculation, some Member States were grouped into supra-national geographic areas (Nordic, Central-West Europe, Iberia, Czech-Slovakia) or limited to the national border of the Member State.

The calculation of the regional CO_2 factor takes into account only the amount of electricity produced from fossil fuels, because these plants (mainly gas and coal) are those matching supply and demand and set the wholesale electricity price. For each zone the CO_2 factor is an average of the CO_2 emissions caused by each fossil fuel consumed in generation, weighted by the amount of electricity produced from such fossil fuel. CO_2 emissions per unit of fuel are calculated using the same method across the EU.

Transparency of the CO_2 factor calculation is ensured by applying the same methodology across the EU. Each Member State can use only one factor, equal or inferior to the regional CO_2 factor. After assessing other options such as an EU-level CO_2 factor, the regional differentiation was retained as it corresponds to the current reality in terms of electricity market integration in the EU. This segmentation will tend to diminish in the medium term, as market liberalisation forces lead to a more converging price in the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/energy/legislation_en.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006868/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Endurecimiento de la estrategia de la UE hacia Israel para avanzar hacia la solución de los dos Estados

En mi pregunta E-004582/2012, sobre la «Colonización de Israel en Cisjordania: legalización de los asentamientos ilegales de Brujín, Rejelim y Sansana», pregunté a la Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad, Catherine Ashton, si había alertado al Gobierno de Israel sobre la posibilidad de que la Unión Europea congele el Acuerdo de Asociación vigente por el incumplimiento constante de lo establecido en la cláusula segunda del mismo, relativa al respeto de los derechos humanos y del Derecho internacional y si a luz de la ineficiencia de las medidas de presión adoptadas por la UE hasta la fecha, tal y como demuestran los constantes incumplimientos del Derecho internacional y de unos compromisos mínimos por parte del Gobierno de Israel, consideraba la Alta Representante necesario endurecer la estrategia adoptada por la UE respecto a Israel.

En su respuesta E-004582/2012, enviada hoy, la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante no me aclara si ha alertado o no en alguna ocasión a las autoridades israelíes sobre la posibilidad de congelación del Acuerdo de Asociación en virtud del incumplimiento del artículo segundo del mismo y si considera o no necesario endurecer la política y las relaciones que la UE mantiene con Israel por las constantes violaciones de los derechos humanos y los obstáculos que la política que desarrollan suponen para la solución basada en la existencia de los dos Estados.

Por lo tanto, ante la ausencia de respuesta concreta a estas demandas reitero las preguntas,

— ¿Ha alertado la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante en alguna ocasión al Gobierno de Israel de la posibilidad de que la Unión Europea congele el Acuerdo de Asociación vigente por el incumplimiento constante de lo establecido en la cláusula segunda del mismo, relativa al respeto de los derechos humanos y del Derecho internacional?

— A luz de la ineficiencia de las medidas de presión adoptadas por la UE hasta la fecha, tal y como demuestran los constantes incumplimientos del Derecho internacional y de unos compromisos mínimos por parte del Gobierno de Israel, ¿considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante necesario endurecer la estrategia adoptada por la UE respecto a Israel?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de agosto de 2012)

Por lo que se refiere a la actual estrategia para con Israel, la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-004582/2012 remitía a las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de mayo de 2012. Como declaró la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta en su discurso ante el Parlamento Europeo el 12 de junio de 2012, las conclusiones «expresaban una posición consensuada clara y sólida… que sientan un planteamiento común de la UE ante los cambios sobre el terreno. Supuso un importante paso adelante.». La UE disfruta de una estrecha relación con Israel y utiliza este diálogo con el país en virtud del Acuerdo de asociación para aclarar su posición con respecto a cuestiones de derechos humanos y Derecho internacional. Como también declaró la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta el 12 de junio de 2012, «insistir en la necesidad de que se respete la legislación internacional y humanitaria es absolutamente coherente con nuestra amistad con Israel.».

La UE cree que este dialogo de hecho ha dado frutos y va unido al compromiso de mantener el actual Acuerdo de asociación con Israel. La posición de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta con respecto a la posibilidad de congelar este Acuerdo se expuso en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-10294/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006868/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Stricter EU strategy concerning Israel to encourage a two-state solution

In Written Question E-004582/2012 on 'Israeli colonisation in the West Bank: legalisation of the illegal settlements of Bruchín, Rechelim and Sansana' I asked the Vice-President/High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, whether the EU could freeze the current Association Agreement owing to the constant infringement of the provisions of its second clause regarding respect for human rights and international law, and whether, in light of the ineffectiveness of the means of exerting pressure adopted by the EU to date, demonstrated by the constant breaches of international law as well as minimum commitments by the Israeli Government, she thought it necessary to toughen EU strategy concerning Israel.

In the reply she gave to the question, forwarded today, she indicates that not once has she raised the possibility of freezing this agreement for failure to comply with this clause, and that she does not think it necessary to toughen policy towards Israel on account of its constant human rights violations and the obstacles its policy places to a two-state solution.

I therefore re-state my questions,

— Has the High Representative alerted the Israeli Government to the possibility that the European Union may freeze the current Association Agreement owing to the constant infringement of the provisions of its second clause regarding respect for human rights and international law?

— In light of the ineffectiveness of the means of exerting pressure adopted by the EU to date, demonstrated by the constant breaches of international law as well as minimum commitments by the Israeli Government, does the High Representative think it necessary to toughen up the strategy adopted by the EU regarding Israel?

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

In terms of current strategy vis-à-vis Israel, the reply to Written Question E-004582/2012 referred to the May 2012 Council of Foreign Affairs conclusions. As the HR/VP said in her speech to the Parliament on 12 June 2012, these 'expressed a clear and strong consensual position…forging a common EU approach to developments on the ground. This was an important step forward' The EU enjoys a strong relationship with Israel and uses its dialogue with the country under the Association Agreement to make clear its position with regard to issues of human rights and international law. As the HR/VP further said on 12 June 2012, 'Insisting on the need to respect international and humanitarian law is absolutely consistent with our friendship with Israel'.

The EU believes that such dialogue does in fact bring results and is united in its commitment to maintaining the current Association Agreement with Israel. The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing this agreement was set out in the reply to Written Question E-10294/2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006869/12
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D), Udo Bullmann (S&D) und Peter Simon (S&D)
(10. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: Antworten auf die Anfragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004723/2012

Kann die Kommission bei der Antwort auf die Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004723/2012 folgende Klarstellungen vornehmen:

In ihrer Antwort schreibt die Kommission, dass sie die Richtlinie 2003/41/EG im Hinblick auf die Einführung einer risikobasierten Beaufsichtigung von Pensionsfonds überprüft. Dies bedeutet im Folgeschluss, dass eine Einführung von Solvency II von der Kommission nicht ausgeschlossen wird.

Es schließt sich jedoch die Frage an, warum es Regeln für Pensionsfonds geben soll, die „… konsistent mit anderen Finanzdienstleistungserbringern, insbesondere Versicherungsunternehmen …" sind. Damit würde die Kommission gewährleisten, dass auch Versicherungsunternehmen auf den äußerst lukrativen Markt der Betriebsrenten vorstoßen könnten. Das Modell der sozialpartnerschaftlich vereinbarten Betriebsrente wäre damit zum Tode verurteilt.

1. Warum überprüft die Kommission eine Richtlinie und deren Ausweitung auf die betriebliche Altersvorsorge, wenn diese gar kein Finanzprodukt im klassischen Sinne ist?

2. Wieso will die Kommission strengere Finanzregeln auf ein Produkt anwenden, das man weder (wie gewöhnliche Finanzprodukte) kaufen noch verkaufen kann?

3. Welche Absicht verfolgt die Kommission bei ihrem Vorgehen, dieses soziale Konstrukt mit wesensfremden Regularien zu überziehen, so dass es für viele Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer gänzlich unattraktiv wird, auf diese Weise zusätzlich für das Alter vorzusorgen?

4. Was hält die Kommission von der Tatsache, dass eine massive Aufstockung der Eigenkapitalquote bei Betriebsrentenfonds die ArbeitgeberInnen dazu zwingen wird, das Angebot an arbeitgeberfinanzierter Betriebsrente massiv einzuschränken bzw. im schlimmsten Falle ganz einzustellen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(12. September 2012)

Die Kommission ist sich der sozialen Bedeutung der betrieblichen Altersvorsorge und der Besonderheiten, die entsprechende Regelungen im Vergleich zu anderen Finanzprodukten, insbesondere zu Versicherungsverträgen, aufweisen, in vollem Umfang bewusst. Die Einführung einer risikobasierten Beaufsichtigung von Pensionsfonds erfordert eine vorsichtige, aber gründliche Überarbeitung der Richtlinie 2003/41/EG ([1]). Die bloße Ausweitung der Richtlinie Solvency II auf derartige Fonds ist von der Kommission nicht beabsichtigt.

Bei der Überarbeitung der EbAV-Richtlinie geht es um Transparenzvorschriften, Governance-Anforderungen, Aufsichtsregelungen und in gewissem Maße auch um Absatzpraktiken.

EbAV sind Finanzinstitute, die zur Ausübung der aus einem Altersversorgungssystem erwachsenden Tätigkeiten eingerichtet werden. Die Höhe der Rentenleistungen und die Bedingungen für deren Auszahlung werden durch das entsprechende Altersversorgungssystem geregelt. Zwischen den von einer EbAV einzuhaltenden Aufsichtsregelungen und den für das betreffende Altersversorgungssystem geltenden sozial- und arbeitsrechtlichen Vorschriften muss ein Gleichgewicht hergestellt werden. Die Auswirkungen für die Beschäftigten werden Gegenstand der Folgenabschätzung sein, die den Vorschlag der Kommission begleiten wird.

Die Kommission teilt voll und ganz die Auffassung, dass eine Aufstockung der Eigenkapitalquote für Betriebsrentenfonds, die Arbeitgeber dazu zwingen würde, das Angebot an arbeitgeberfinanzierter Betriebsrente einzuschränken oder schlimmstenfalls ganz einzustellen, vermieden werden muss. Um unerwünschte Folgen zu vermeiden und sicherzustellen, dass die Besonderheiten der nationalen Märkte in vollem Umfang berücksichtigt werden, arbeitet die Kommission mit Unterstützung der EIOPA ([2]) in diesem Herbst eine quantitative Folgenabschätzung aus. Dies wird Rentenversicherern die Möglichkeit geben, vor einem etwaigen Gesetzesvorschlag verschiedene technische Parameter und Optionen zu testen. Die Ergebnisse dieser quantitativen Folgenabschätzung werden maßgeblich in die spätere Folgenabschätzung und die Überarbeitung der Richtlinie einfließen.

([1]) EbAV-Richtlinie.
([2]) Europäische Aufsichtsbehörde für das Versicherungswesen und die betriebliche Altersversorgung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006869/12
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D), Udo Bullmann (S&D) and Peter Simon (S&D)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Answer to the question for Written Answer E-004723/2012

The Commission is asked to provide clarification of the following points in its answer to the question for Written Answer E-004723/2012.

In its answer to that question, the Commission stated that it is preparing a review of Directive 2003/41/EC in order to introduce risk-based prudential supervision for pension funds. From this it follows that the possibility of introducing Solvency II is not being excluded by the Commission.

However, there also follows on from this the question as to why there should be rules for pension funds that 'ensure regulatory consistency with the treatment of other financial service providers, notably insurance undertakings'. That would ensure that insurance undertakings could also move into the highly lucrative market of occupational pensions. This would spell the end for the model of the occupational retirement scheme agreed between the social partners.

1. Why is the Commission reviewing a directive and considering its extension to include occupational pension schemes when these are not financial products in the conventional sense?

2. Why does the Commission wish to apply stricter financial rules to a product that cannot be bought and sold in the same way as ordinary financial products?

3. What is the Commission's intention in pursuing this course of action, imposing alien rules and regulations on this social construct which will make it a totally unattractive proposition for many employees to obtain additional pension cover of this kind for themselves?

4. What view does the Commission take of the fact that a massive increase in capital adequacy ratios for occupational pension funds will oblige employers to severely limit, or indeed in the worst cases completely end, the provision of employer-funded occupational pensions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2012)

The Commission is fully aware of the social importance of occupational pension schemes and the specifities of such schemes compared to other financial products, in particular insurance contracts. Introducing risk-based prudential supervision for pension funds requires a careful but thorough revision of Directive 2003/41/EC ([1]). The Commission does not intend to simply extend the Solvency II Directive to such funds.

The review of the IORP Directive concerns transparency rules, governance requirements, prudential rules and to some extent selling practices.

IORPs are financial institutions set-up to carry out activities arising from a pension scheme stipulating the retirement benefits and under which conditions they are granted. A balance needs to be found between the prudential regulation that the IORP must comply with and the social and labour law applicable to the pension scheme. The impact on employees will be examined in the impact assessment report accompanying the Commission's proposal.

The Commission fully agrees that an increase in capital adequacy ratios for occupational pension funds, obliging employers to limit or in the worst cases end the provision of employer-funded occupational pensions must be avoided. To avoid any unintended consequences and ensure that the specificities of national markets are fully taken into account, the Commission, with the support of EIOPA ([2]), is preparing a Quantitative Impact Study this autumn. This will allow pension providers to test different technical parameters and options before any legislative proposal. The QIS' results will be a key input for the impact assessment report and the review of the directive.

([1]) IORP Directive.
([2]) European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-006870/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(10. Juli 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Fatwa gegen Shahin Najafi

Shahin Najafi ist ein iranischer Musiker und Rapper, der in seinen Texten Kritik am iranischen Regime übt. Seit 2005 lebt Najafi im deutschen Exil und muss seit Kurzem um sein Leben fürchten, weil gegen ihn eine Fatwa ausgesprochen wurde. Besonders ein Lied, in dem er den zehnten Imam anruft zurückzukehren, und Kritik an Korruption und politischer Unterdrückung und die Ohnmacht der Opposition anspricht, wurde vom iranischen Großajatollah als Blasphemie bezeichnet. Shahin Najafi wurde in der Fatwa namentlich genannt, und es wurde ein Kopfgeld in Höhe von 100 000 Dollar auf ihn ausgesetzt.

1. Ist dieser Fall der Kommission bekannt?

2. Hat die Hohe Vertreterin der EU für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik den Fall gegenüber der iranischen Regierung angesprochen und ihre Besorgnis zum Ausdruck gebracht?

3. Welche Maßnahmen werden ergriffen, um die Sicherheit von Shahin Najafi zu gewährleisten?

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

Wie in der Antwort auf eine ähnliche parlamentarische Frage (PQ E-005379/2012) dargelegt, ist der Fall von Herrn Shahin Najafi — eines der zahlreichen Beispiele für die systematische Unterdrückung der Meinungsfreiheit in Iran — der HV/VP bekannt. Die Hohe Vertreterin hat Iran wiederholt dazu aufgefordert, die Verfolgung iranischer Künstler zu beenden. Eine solche Behandlung ist unvereinbar mit den international gültigen Menschenrechtsgrundsätzen, zu deren Einhaltung Iran sich freiwillig verpflichtet hat. Das Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung in Form von Kunstwerken und Schrift ist in Artikel 19 des Internationalen Pakts über bürgerliche und politische Rechte verankert.

Durch die Regelungen für politisches Asyl in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten bietet die EU verfolgten Künstlern und Intellektuellen sowie den Opfern autoritärer Regime traditionell einen sicheren Zufluchtsort.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006870/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Fatwa against Shahin Najafi

Shahin Najafi is an Iranian musician and rapper who is critical of the Iranian regime in the texts of his songs. He has been in exile in Germany since 2005 and has recently been living in fear of his life because a fatwa has been declared against him. One song, in particular, calling on the tenth Imam to return and expressing criticism of corruption and political repression and the impotence of the opposition, was singled out by the Iranian Grand Ayatollah as blasphemous. Shahin Najafi was explicitly named in the fatwa and a bounty of USD 100 000 has been offered on his head.

1. Is the Commission aware of this case?

2. Has the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy brought up this case in talks with the Iranian Government and expressed her concern?

3. What action is being taken to guarantee the safety of Shahin Najafi?

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

As stated in the reply to the similar parliamentary question (PQ E-005379/2012), the HR/VP is aware of the case of Mr Shahin Najafi, one of the numerous examples of systematic oppression of the freedom of expression in Iran. The High Representative has repeatedly called on Iran to put an end to the persecution of all members of Iran's artistic community. Such treatment is incompatible with the international human rights principles that Iran has freely signed up to. The right to freedom of expression through art and writing is enshrined in Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In addition, the EU member states, through their application of political asylum regimes, have a long tradition of making the EU a safe haven for persecuted artists and intellectuals and for victims of authoritarian regimes.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006871/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κοινοποίηση αποφάσεων εθνικών αρχών για αθέμιτες πρακτικές επιχειρήσεων

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα του τύπου, στις 2.2.2012 το εφετείο των Παρισίων επέβαλε στην εταιρία Carrefour να επιστρέψει στους προμηθευτές της 17 εκατομμύρια ευρώ και, επιπλέον, να καταβάλει 2 εκατομμύρια ευρώ ως πρόστιμο, για κατάχρηση δεσπόζουσας θέσης.

Πιο συγκεκριμένα, το γαλλικό κράτος (Γενική Διεύθυνση Κατανάλωσης, Ανταγωνισμού και Καταπολέμηση της Απάτης (DGCCRF) του γαλλικού Υπουργείου Οικονομικών), από το 2006, ξεκίνησε έλεγχο για τους όρους που επιβάλλονται στους προμηθευτές της εταιρίας και έκρινε ότι οι ρήτρες που επέβαλλε η εταιρία στους προμηθευτές της ήταν καταχρηστικές, καθώς και ότι η εταιρία επωφελούνταν από «σαφώς δυσανάλογες αμοιβές».

Το γαλλικό Υπουργείο Οικονομικών προσέφυγε στην δικαιοσύνη δύο χρόνια αργότερα: η Carrefour καταδικάστηκε με πρόστιμο 2 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ και άσκησε έφεση.

Το εφετείο των Παρισίων, όπως αναφέρθηκε παραπάνω, όχι μόνο επιβεβαίωσε το πρόστιμο αλλά επέβαλε την επιστροφή στους προμηθευτές 17 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ.

Με δεδομένο ότι υπάρχουν καταγγελίες και στην Ελλάδα για ανάλογες πρακτικές της ίδιας εταιρίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Θα μπορούσε να παρουσιάσει τα βασικά σημεία της παραπάνω γαλλικής υπόθεσης; Μπορεί να διευκολύνει στην ανεύρεση των συγκεκριμένων αποφάσεων ώστε να βοηθηθεί και η σχετική έρευνα στην Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Αυγούστου 2012)

Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος ζητεί πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις πρακτικές της Carrefour μετά από πρόστιμο που της επιβλήθηκε σε αστική υπόθεση για πρακτικές λιανικής, οι οποίες συνίστανται σε εικαζόμενες αδικαιολόγητες πληρωμές από προμηθευτές. Στις 2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, το Εφετείο Παρισίων διέταξε την Carrefour να επιστρέψει 17 εκατ. ευρώ στους προμηθευτές της και της επέβαλε πρόστιμο ύψους 2 εκατ. ευρώ.

Βάσει των πληροφοριών που έχει στη διάθεσή της η Επιτροπή, τα πραγματικά περιστατικά της υπόθεσης διαφέρουν από όσα αναφέρονται στα σχετικά δημοσιεύματα του Τύπου. Στις πρακτικές δεν επιβλήθηκε πρόστιμο διότι αποτελούσαν «κατάχρηση δεσπόζουσας θέσης» ή βάσει άλλων διατάξεων περί ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ (άρθρα 101 έως 109 της ΣΛΕΕ) ή άλλης ισοδύναμης εθνικής νομοθεσίας περί ανταγωνισμού.

Το γαλλικό Υπουργείο Οικονομικών εφάρμοσε στην υπόθεση εθνικές διατάξεις (συγκεκριμένα το άρθρο L. 442-6 I-1 του γαλλικού εμπορικού κώδικα (code du commerce)) που αποβλέπουν στην προστασία της δίκαιης μεταχείρισης στο πλαίσιο εμπορικών συναλλαγών. Το δίκαιο ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ δεν καλύπτει το θέμα της δίκαιης μεταχείρισης στο πλαίσιο εμπορικών συναλλαγών.

Όσον αφορά τις πρακτικές που εφαρμόζει η Carrefour στην Ελλάδα, η Επιτροπή σημειώνει ότι για ορισμένες από αυτές έχουν ήδη επιβληθεί πρόστιμα στην εταιρεία από την ελληνική αρχή ανταγωνισμού. Όπως αναφέρεται στην έκθεση περί τροφίμων του ΕΔΑ, που δημοσιεύθηκε στις 24 Μαΐου 2012 ([1]), «στην εταιρεία εκμετάλλευσης σουπερμάρκετ Carrefour, επιβλήθηκε πρόστιμο το 2010 για την επιβολή τιμών λιανικής, καθώς και για τον περιορισμό διασταυρούμενων πωλήσεων, με την απαγόρευση στους δικαιοδόχους του δικτύου καταστημάτων της να πωλούν σε άλλους δικαιοδόχους του ιδίου δικτύου ή σε άλλους εγκεκριμένους διανομείς του ομίλου Carrefour στην Ελλάδα.»

([1]) Έκθεση για την επιβολή του δικαίου ανταγωνισμού και τις ενέργειες παρακολούθησης των αγορών από τις ευρωπαϊκές αρχές ανταγωνισμού στον τομέα των τροφίμων («Report on competition law enforcement and market monitoring activities by European competition authorities in the food sector»), Μάιος 2012. Έγγραφο διαθέσιμο στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/food_report_en.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006871/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Publication of decisions by national authorities regarding unfair business practices

According to press reports, on 2 February 2012 the Paris Court of Appeal ordered the company Carrefour to refund 17 million euros to its suppliers and also to pay a 2 million euro fine for abusing its dominant market position.

More specifically, the French State (DG Consumption, Competition and Anti-Fraud Office (DGCCRF) of the French Ministry of Finance) in 2006 began examining the conditions imposed on the company's suppliers and found that they were abusive and that the company benefited from 'clearly disproportionate fees'.

The French Ministry of Finance initiated legal proceedings two years later: Carrefour was sentenced to pay a 2 million euro fine. It appealed against this sentence.

As mentioned above, the Paris Court of Appeal not only upheld the fine, but the ordered the company to repay 17 million euros to its suppliers.

Given that there have also been complaints in Greece about similar practices by the same company, will the Commission say:

Could it outline the basic points of the French case? Can it help find the specific decisions in question so as to assist the investigations in a related case in Greece?

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

The Honourable Member asks about the practices of Carrefour in light of a fine it received in civil proceedings for practices in the retail sector, consisting in allegedly undue payments perceived from suppliers. On 2 February 2012 the Paris Court of Appeal ordered Carrefour to refund EUR 17 million to its suppliers and levied a EUR 2 million fine.

Based on information available to the Commission, the facts of the case differ from the press report referred to. The practices were not fined as 'abuse of a dominant position', or on the basis of any other EU competition provisions (Articles 101 to 109 TFEU) nor any equivalent national competition law provision.

The French Ministry of Finance pursued the case on the basis of national law provisions (notably Article L. 442-6 I-1 of the French *code du commerce*) aimed at protecting fairness in business transactions. EU competition law does not cover fairness in business transactions.

As for Carrefour's practices in Greece, the Commission notes that some Carrefour practices have already been fined by the Greek Competition Authority. As mentioned in the ECN Report on Food, published on 24 May 2012 ([1]): 'the supermarket operator Carrefour was fined in 2010 for imposing retail prices as well as for restricting cross-supplies by prohibiting the members of its franchise network from selling to other franchisees of the network or to other authorised distributors of the Carrefour Group in Greece.'

([1]) 'Report on competition law enforcement and market monitoring activities by European competition authorities in the food sector', May 2012. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/food_report_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006872/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πληροφορίες Ευρωπαϊκών Τραπεζών σε φορολογικές αρχές κρατών μελών σε περίπτωση δειγματοληπτικών ελέγχων

Μια από τις εξαγγελίες που ανακοίνωσε η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση, στα πλαίσια του στόχου της πάταξης της φοροδιαφυγής, είναι η εφαρμογή του ηλεκτρονικού περιουσιολογίου μέσα στο 2013 για όλους τους φορολογικούς κατοίκους της Ελλάδας με το οποίο θα καταγράφεται η κινητή και ακίνητη περιουσία τους στην Ελλάδα και το εξωτερικό, περιλαμβανομένων και των καταθέσεων. Για όποιον δεν συμμορφωθεί και δεν δηλώσει την περιουσία του, εκτός από τις χρηματικές ποινές, θα προβλέπεται αυστηρή ποινή μέσω θέσπισης ποινικού αδικήματος. Η Αυστρία και το Λουξεμβούργο είναι δύο χώρες στις τράπεζες των οποίων πολλοί Έλληνες κατέχουν σημαντικά ποσά καταθέσεων. Επίσης, στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση εξελίσσεται ένας διάλογος σχετικά με την φορολόγηση των καταθέσεων και την αμοιβαία ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών για καταθέσεις πολιτών των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ. Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι υποχρεωμένες οι Τράπεζες του Λουξεμβούργου και της Αυστρίας να παράσχουν πληροφορίες, για τους Έλληνες που διατηρούν καταθέσεις σε αυτές, σε Ελληνική Αρχή εφόσον το ζητήσει με σκοπό να προβεί σε διασταυρώσεις και επαληθεύσεις στοιχείων στα πλαίσια της λειτουργίας του περιουσιολογίου;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει την ικανοποίησή της για την εξαγγελία της Ελληνικής Κυβέρνησης σχετικά με τη δημιουργία ηλεκτρονικού περιουσιολογίου εντός του 2013. Η θέσπιση των εθνικών φορολογικών διατάξεων εμπίπτει στο πεδίο αρμοδιότητας των κρατών μελών, τα οποία δύνανται να θεσπίζουν τις διατάξεις εκείνες τις οποίες θεωρούν κατάλληλες, εφόσον δεν συγκρούονται με διατάξεις που έχουν θεσπιστεί σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο.

Όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση σε πληροφορίες, δεδομένου ότι στην ΕΕ δεν έχουν τεθεί σε ισχύ ρυθμίσεις παρεμφερείς προς αυτές του αμερικανικού νόμου FATCA (νόμος για την επιβολή φορολογίας στους λογαριασμούς της αλλοδαπής), οι τράπεζες δεν υποχρεούνται να διαβιβάζουν πληροφορίες απευθείας στις φορολογικές αρχές άλλου κράτους μέλους, ένα όμως κράτος μέλος μπορεί να ζητήσει από άλλο κράτος μέλος να του κοινοποιήσει οποιαδήποτε πληροφορία το άλλο κράτος μέλος έχει στην κατοχή του ή απέκτησε ως αποτέλεσμα διοικητικής έρευνας εντός της επικράτειάς του.

Η οδηγία 2011/16/ΕΕ της 15ης Φεβρουαρίου 2011 σχετικά με τη διοικητική συνεργασία στον τομέα της φορολογίας, η οποία πρόκειται να τεθεί σε ισχύ την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2013, προβλέπει ρητά ότι κράτος μέλος στο οποίο απευθύνθηκε σχετικό αίτημα δεν μπορεί να αρνηθεί την παροχή πληροφοριών αποκλειστικά και μόνον επειδή κάτοχος των εν λόγω πληροφοριών είναι τράπεζα, άλλο χρηματοπιστωτικό ίδρυμα, εξουσιοδοτημένος αντιπρόσωπος ή πρόσωπο που ενεργεί υπό την ιδιότητα του πράκτορα ή του διαχειριστή ή επειδή οι πληροφορίες αφορούν ιδιοκτησιακά συμφέροντα προσώπου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006872/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Information provided by European Banks to tax authorities of Member States in the event of spot checks

One of the announcements made by the Greek Government, as part of its drive to stamp out tax evasion, is the implementation of an electronic register of assets in 2013 for all tax residents of Greece, which will record their movable and immovable property in Greece and abroad, including deposits. Anyone who fails to comply and to declare their assets will face strict punishment apart from fines, since this is being made a criminal offence. Austria and Luxembourg are two countries in whose banks many Greeks hold significant deposits. Furthermore, a debate is taking place in the European Union on the taxation of savings and reciprocal exchanges of information on deposits of citizens of EU Member States.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Are banks in Luxembourg and Austria obliged to provide information about Greeks holding these deposits with them to the relevant Greek Authority, should the latter request such information in order to make cross-checks and confirm data as part of the operation of the register of assets?

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

The Commission welcomes the announcement by the Greek Government regarding the implementation of an electronic register of assets in 2013. The definition of national tax provisions lies within the responsibility of Member States which may adopt the provisions they deem appropriate provided that they do not contradict provisions established at European level.

With regards to access to information, as no FATCA-type arrangements are in force in the EU, banks are not obliged to communicate information directly to another Member State's tax authorities but a Member State may request another Member State to communicate any information that the other Member State has in its possession or obtains as a result of administrative enquiries within its territory.

Council Directive 2011/16/EU of 15 February 2011 on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation, due to enter into effect on 1 January 2013, explicitly foresees that the requested Member State may not decline to provide information solely because that information is held by a bank, other financial institution, nominee or person acting in an agency or fiduciary capacity or because it relates to ownership interests in a person.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006873/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στοιχεία για τα ποσοστά αυτοκτονιών στις χώρες μέλη

Πριν την εφαρμογή του Μνημονίου η Ελλάδα είχε ένα από τα χαμηλότερα ποσοστά αυτοκτονιών παγκοσμίως, ενώ σήμερα τόσο στην Ελλάδα όσο και σε άλλες χώρες που εφαρμόζουν σκληρές δημοσιονομικές πολιτικές οι δείκτες αυτοκτονιών αυξάνουν δραματικά. Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Υγείας, το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2010 οι αυτοκτονίες αυξήθηκαν κατά 40 %, ενώ μόνο τον μήνα Ιούνιο, βάσει των στοιχείων του Εθνικού Κέντρου Άμεσης Βοήθειας, σημειώθηκαν 50 αυτοκτονίες, ύστερα από 350 απόπειρες. Δημοσιεύματα του τύπου από Ιταλία και Πορτογαλία εμφανίζουν εξίσου ανησυχητικά στοιχεία. Στη Γαλλία η δικαστική έρευνα για τις ευθύνες του πρώην Διευθύνοντος Συμβούλου της France Telecom για τις 30 αυτοκτονίες στην εταιρεία την περίοδο 2008-2009, είναι απολύτως ενδεικτική της συσχέτισης των εργασιακών συνθηκών και της εργασιακής ασφάλειας με τις αυτοκτονίες.

Ενώ όλα δείχνουν ότι είμαστε μπροστά σε μια ανθρωπιστική κρίση με κυριότερη έκφραση της τις αυτοκτονίες, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεν εμφανίζεται να ανησυχεί και μάλιστα δεν διαθέτει καν τα σχετικά στοιχεία. Είναι χαρακτηριστικό ότι στην απάντηση της στις 08.02.2012 σε σχετική ερώτηση μου ο Ευρωπαίος Επίτροπος σημειώνει ότι «η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στοιχεία για τις αυτοκτονίες στην Ελλάδα για τα έτη 2010 και 2011, αφού τα στοιχεία της Eurostat είναι μόνο ως το 2009».

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι τα περιστατικά αυτά αυτοκτονιών, που ασφαλώς συνδέονται με την οικονομική κρίση και τα προγράμματα σκληρής λιτότητας που επιβάλλονται, δεν είναι αρκετά ώστε να αναζητήσει η ίδια και η Eurostat τους πραγματικούς αριθμούς των αυτοκτονιών εντός εύλογου χρόνου; Μπορεί λοιπόν να μας δώσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία για τον αριθμό των αυτοκτονιών στις χώρες μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης την τελευταία 5ετία ή τουλάχιστον ασφαλείς ενδείξεις για την πορεία αυτών των τραγικών δεικτών στις χώρες μέλη;

2. Μήπως αυτές οι καθημερινές αυτοκτονίες πρέπει επιτέλους να αντιμετωπιστούν ως ανθρωπιστική κρίση και να λαμβάνονται υπόψη στη χάραξη αλλά και στα αποτελέσματα των εφαρμοζόμενων πολιτικών;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Αυγούστου 2012)

Η αντιμετώπιση των αυτοκτονιών εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών. Η Eurostat συγκεντρώνει στοιχεία σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό — που παρέχονται από τα κράτη μέλη — και δημοσιεύει τα στοιχεία στη βάση δεδομένων για τη δημόσια υγεία ([1]) από το 2001 και μετά. Προς το παρόν, τα στοιχεία για το 2010 διατίθενται για 21 κράτη μέλη.

Για το 2010, το τελευταίο έτος σχετικά με το οποίο διατίθενται στοιχεία, η Ελλάδα ανέφερε στην Eurostat ότι το ποσοστό αυτοχείρων ανήλθε σε 2,9 ανά 100 000 άτομα, που αντιστοιχεί συνολικά σε 377 περιπτώσεις. Αυτό αποτελεί ελαφριά μείωση σε σύγκριση με το 2009, όταν οι αυτοκτονίες στην Ελλάδα έφθασαν το ποσοστό του 3 ανά 100 000 άτομα, συνολικά 391 περιπτώσεις. Μολονότι η πρόληψη των αυτοκτονιών εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών, οι εργασίες στο πλαίσιο του ευρωπαϊκού συμφώνου για την ψυχική υγεία και ευημερία, ιδίως όσον αφορά την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών σχετικά με την κατάθλιψη, μπορεί να συμβάλει στην υποστήριξη της εθνικής δράσης για την πρόληψη των αυτοκτονιών.

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να παραπέμψει τον κ. βουλευτή στις απαντήσεις της στις ερωτήσεις E-002077/2012 και E-000761/2012 ([2]) σχετικά με τη δράση και τα σχέδια σχετικά με το ίδιο θέμα.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006873/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Data on suicide rates in Member States

Before the implementation of the Memorandum, Greece had one of the lowest suicide rates in the world. Today, however, both in Greece and other countries with tough fiscal policies suicide indicators are increasing dramatically. According to data from the Greek Ministry of Health, during the first half of 2010 suicides increased by 40%, while in the month of June alone, according to data from the National Centre for Emergency Care, 50 suicides and 350 attempted suicides were recorded. Press reports from Italy and Portugal show equally alarming data. In France, a judicial investigation into the responsibility of the former CEO of France Telecom for the 30 suicides that occurred among company employees in 2008-2009 is very revealing about the link between working conditions and job security and the suicides.

Although everything indicates that we are facing a humanitarian crisis which finds its most dramatic expression in the act of suicide, the Commission does not seem to be concerned — in fact it does not even have the relevant data. It is characteristic that, in the answer to my question of 8 February 2012, the relevant Commissioner noted that the Commission had no information on suicides in Greece for the years 2010 and 2011, since Eurostat data were available only until 2009.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it take the view that these suicides, which are certainly related to the economic crisis and the harsh austerity programmes being imposed, are not sufficient reason for Eurostat itself to investigate the real numbers of suicides within a reasonable period of time? Can it therefore provide comparative data on the number of suicides in EU Member States over the last five years or at least reliable information about trends in these tragic occurrences in Member States?

2. Does it not agree that these suicides — which occur virtually on a daily basis — should finally be addressed as a humanitarian crisis and taken into account in planning and evaluating the outcome of the policies that are being implemented?

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

Addressing suicide falls under the responsibility of Member States. Eurostat collects data on this issue — as provided by the Member States — and publishes the data on its public health database ([1]) since 2001. At present, data for 2010 are available for 21 Member States.

For 2010, the latest year on which data is available, Greece has reported to Eurostat a suicide rate of 2.9 per 100 000 people, representing a total of 377 cases. This is a slight decrease compared to 2009, when suicide is Greece reached a rate of 3 per 100 000 people, a total of 391 cases. While preventing suicide is an issue falling under the responsibility of Member States, work under the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being in particular as regards exchange between Member States on depression can help support national action in suicide prevention.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to E-002077/2012 and E-000761/2012 ([2]) on EU action and projects referring to the same subject.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-006875/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(10 Ιουλίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ελληνικό Ταμείο Εγγυοδοσίας Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων για Μικρές και Μεσαίες Επιχειρήσεις και οι καθυστερήσεις ως προς τη λειτουργία του

Σύμφωνα με κοινή υπουργική απόφαση ([1]) της 31ης Μαΐου 2012 αποφασίστηκε η σύσταση Ταμείου Εγγυοδοσίας με την επωνυμία «Ελληνικό Ταμείο Εγγυοδοσίας Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων για Μικρές και Μεσαίες Επιχειρήσεις (ΕΛΤΕπ ΜΜΕ)». Για τη σύσταση του Ταμείου προβλέπεται να καταβληθούν τμηματικά από το Πρόγραμμα Δημοσίων Επενδύσεων, μέσω της Τράπεζας της Ελλάδας, προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων, συνολικοί πόροι ύψους πεντακοσίων εκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Παράλληλα, στις 5 Ιουνίου το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων ενέκρινε ([2]) το χρηματικό ποσό των 500 εκ. ευρώ για την πρώτη φάση του προγράμματος.

Δεδομένων των παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σε ποιο στάδιο βρίσκονται οι διαδικασίες προκειμένου να ξεκινήσει τη λειτουργία του το νέο Ταμείο και να διοχετευτούν οι πόροι στην πραγματική οικονομία;

2. Δικαιολογείται το γεγονός ότι παρά την παρέλευση ενός μήνα και πλέον από την ολοκλήρωση των τυπικών διαδικασιών, το Ταμείο παραμένει αδρανές; Αν όχι, που οφείλονται οι καθυστερήσεις αυτές;

3. Πως σκοπεύει να ενεργήσει προκειμένου να ξεπεραστεί το πρόβλημα αυτό και να μην επαναληφθεί;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012)

1. Η πρώτη δόση ύψους 150 εκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο του Ταμείου Εγγυήσεων για τις ΜΜΕ (ύψους 500 εκατ. ευρώ) καταβλήθηκε από τις ελληνικές αρχές στο Ταμείο τον Ιούλιο, μετά την πρώτη συνεδρίαση του διοικητικού συμβουλίου της ΕΤΕπ που πραγματοποιήθηκε στις 3 Ιουλίου, αφότου οι ελληνικές αρχές όρισαν τα μέλη τους στο διοικητικό συμβούλιο. Το διοικητικό συμβούλιο της ΕΤΕπ ενέκρινε τον Ιούνιο την πρώτη δόση ύψους 500 εκατ. ευρώ για τις ενδιάμεσες τράπεζες που λειτουργούν στην Ελλάδα, με ορισμένες προϋποθέσεις σχετικά με τις διαβεβαιώσεις που πρέπει να παρέχονται από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος και το ελληνικό ταμείο χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας, κατά περίπτωση, οι οποίες δεν έχουν ακόμη προσδιοριστεί.

2. Επιπλέον, τα εκκρεμή συμβατικά ζητήματα μεταξύ της ΕΤΕπ και της Ελλάδας για τις ελληνικές συμβάσεις αποσαφηνίστηκαν προσφάτως και σύντομα αναμένεται να επέλθει η αμοιβαία συμφωνία για τις τελικές ρήτρες. Όσον αφορά τις υπογραφές με τις τράπεζες στο πλαίσιο του Ταμείου Εγγυήσεων για τις ΜΜΕ, ένα πρόσθετο στοιχείο είναι ότι οι εν λόγω τράπεζες πρέπει να υπογράψουν με την Ελλάδα ένα ειδικό μνημόνιο συμφωνίας (παρόμοιο με το μνημόνιο που είχε συμφωνηθεί προηγουμένως μεταξύ Ελλάδας και Επιτροπής στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος κρατικών εγγυήσεων για τράπεζες, κάτι που οι σχετικές τράπεζες υπέγραψαν το 2011), προκειμένου να συμμορφωθούν με θέματα κρατικών ενισχύσεων.

3. Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με την ΕΤΕπ και τις ελληνικές αρχές για την εποπτεία της κατάστασης και για να διασφαλίσει την αποτελεσματική ενεργοποίηση του εν λόγω Ταμείου.

([1]) Αριθ. 2932/B2/488.
([2]) http://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/ca_provisional_summary_20120605_en.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006875/12
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: EIB-approved Hellenic Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises and delays in launch

Under a joint ministerial decision ([1]) of 31 May 2012, it was decided to set up a guarantee fund entitled 'Hellenic Guarantee Fund of the European Investment Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises'. For the establishment of the Fund, provision has been made for total funds amounting to five hundred million euros to be paid in instalments by the Public Investment Programme, through the Bank of Greece, to the European Investment Bank. Furthermore, on 5 June, the Board of Governors of the European Investment Bank approved ([2]) the sum of 500 million euros for the first phase of the programme.

Given the above, will the Commission say:

1. What stage have procedures reached for the launch of the new Fund and for funds to be channelled into the real economy?

2. Is it justifiable that the Fund is still not operational over a month after the completion of formalities? If not, what is the cause of this delay?

3. What action will it take to resolve this problem and ensure that it does not recur?

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

1. The first instalment of EUR 150 million under the Guarantee Fund for SMEs (of EUR 500million) has been paid by the Greek authorities to the Fund in July, following the first meeting of the Investment Board which took place on 3 July after the Greek authorities had nominated their Members to the Board. The EIB Board of June approved a first tranche of up to EUR 500 million for intermediary banks operating in Greece, with some conditionalities pertaining to confirmations to be provided by the Greek Central Bank and the Hellenic Financial Stability Fund where relevant, which are currently still awaited.

2. In addition, outstanding contractual issues between the EIB and Greece on Greek contracts have recently been clarified and final mutually agreed clauses are expected to be reached soon. With regard to signatures with banks under the Guarantee Fund for SMEs, an additional element is that the relevant banks must sign with Greece a specific Memorandum of Understanding (similar to the one previously agreed between Greece and the Commission in the context of the state guarantee programme for banks, which the relevant banks signed in 2011) in order to meet state aid issues.

3. The Commission is working closely with the EIB and the Greek authorities to monitor the situation and ensure the effective activation of this Fund.

([1]) No 2932/B2/488.
([2]) http://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/ca_provisional_summary_20120605_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006876/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Sewage pollution

Is the Commission aware of the sewage pollution problems at Kinnegar Lagoons, Holywood, County Down, Northern Ireland?

Has the Commission taken any action on this issue?

Will the Commission outline the number and nature of the interventions it has made in relation to pollution caused in Northern Ireland by Northern Ireland Water Ltd?

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

To date, the Commission has received no complaints about pollution at the Kinnegar Lagoons, Holywood, County Down, Northern Ireland. It is difficult to comment without details of the alleged pollution and its causes. According to the most recent information available (reference date 31/12/2010) on the implementation of the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive ([1]), no problem was reported in the area as regards the treatment of waste water. The Commission will publish its 7th report later in 2012. Earlier reports are available online ([2]).

Infringement action was taken against the United Kingdom in Case C-405/05 in Commission v. United Kingdom where judgment was given on 25 January 2007. This case covered a number of agglomerations in Northern Ireland and the failure by the United Kingdom to ensure that adequate treatment facilities be provided. However, this situation was resolved within a year of the judgment being given for all the Northern Irish agglomerations concerned. There are currently no open infringement cases concerning urban waste water treatment infrastructure operated by Northern Ireland Water Ltd or otherwise at this date.

([1]) Council Directive 91/271/EEC, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-urbanwaste/implementation/implementationreports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006877/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D)
(10 July 2012)

Subject: Mobile Phone Lessons for Adults

The Mobile Phone Lessons for Adults initiative was set up three years ago in my constituency and has since witnessed extraordinary success and spread across Ireland.

As the name suggests, it provides lessons in using mobile phone technology to older citizens who are in need of them. It does so in conjunction with pupils from local secondary schools. It is truly a working example of active citizenship and intergenerational solidarity.

In this — the EU year of intergenerational solidarity — what advice and support can the Commission offer to ensure its continuation?

The founder is now looking for support to continue and expand the programme, possibly beyond Irish borders. Will the Commissioner issue a declaration or letter of support for intergenerational programmes such as the excellent Mobile Phone Lessons for Adults initiative?

Will the Commission outline what EU funding (perhaps under education funding) might be available to intergenerational programmes such as Mobile Phone Lessons for Adults in its current form and, if none is available, what changes or additions it would suggest to improve the initiative's chances of receiving funding?

Further information on the programme is available on request.

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

2012 is the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. The Commission actively supports initiatives related to the theme of the European Year in several ways, which could be of benefit to the initiative on Mobile Phone Lessons for Adults.

Firstly, as part of the Year, the Commission has launched the European Year 2012 Awards to celebrate organisations and individuals that promote active ageing through their activities:

ttp://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?catId=1026

Secondly, national projects on active ageing and intergenerational solidarity can apply for European funding through the European Social Fund (ESF). More information about ESF funding in Ireland can be found in:

http://www.esf.ie/en/homepage.aspx

Lastly, if the initiative on Mobile Phone Lessons for Adults is looking to expand beyond national borders, it can apply for funding through the Grundtvig programme for adult education:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/grundtvig_en.htm

The Grundtvig programme has supported numerous European projects on the theme of active ageing and intergenerational solidarity. Some of these projects will be presented at the European conference One Step Up in Later Life: Learning for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity in November 2012.