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 293 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-006794/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Ejecución del Fondo Social Europeo en España

El Fondo Social Europeo (FSE), en virtud del Reglamento (CE) n° 1081/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo relativo al Fondo Social Europeo, ha concedido al Estado español un presupuesto de 8 050 millones de euros para el período 2007-2013 para financiar las acciones previstas en los cuatro ejes prioritarios establecidos en el Reglamento de funcionamiento del Fondo Social Europeo.

El fomento del empleo, la inclusión social, la promoción de la igualdad de oportunidades o la formación continua del capital humano son algunos de los objetivos previstos por el FSE y tienen vital importancia en la actual situación de grave crisis, con consecuencias catastróficas en términos de empleo, como lo demuestra las altas tasas de desempleo, tanto en Galicia (21 %), como en el conjunto de España (25 %), que representan más del doble de la media de la Unión Europea.

Para el presente año fiscal, el Estado español había presupuestado 650 millones de euros con cargo al FSE, pero no hay una explicación clara de los objetivos que se pretende financiar con estos recursos. Asimismo, no se ha aclarado la distribución de dichos recursos entre las diferentes comunidades autónomas, teniendo en cuenta el nivel de su PIB y la categoría regional a la que pertenecen. Por otro lado, muchos trabajadores sociales denuncian el retraso en el pago de las subvenciones del Fondo Social Europeo y, lo que es peor, la posibilidad de perder una parte de estos fondos porque ni el Estado ni la administración autonómica aportan la parte de cofinanciación que les corresponde. En el caso de Galicia, la contribución pública para complementar los recursos del FSE procedentes de la Comisión Europea es del 25 %, por tratarse de una región del objetivo de convergencia.

1. ¿Puede comunicar la Comisión el nivel de ejecución del FSE en España entre 2007 y 2011?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión tomar medidas para fomentar y evitar que el Estado español pierda parte de los recursos del FSE por no contribuir con la parte de cofinanciación de los proyectos que le corresponde, sobre todo cuando tiene la mayor tasa de desempleo de la Unión?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007036/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(13 de julio de 2012)

Asunto: Ejecución del Fondo Social Europeo en Galicia

El Fondo Social Europeo (FSE), en virtud del Reglamento (CE) n° 1081 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo relativo al Fondo Social Europeo, concede al Estado español un importe de 8 050 millones EUR para el periodo 2007-2013 para sufragar acciones previstas en los cuatro ejes prioritarios establecidos en el Reglamento de funcionamiento del FSE.

El fomento de la capacidad de inserción profesional, la promoción de la inclusión social, la facilitación de la igualdad de oportunidades o la formación permanente de capital humano son algunos de los objetivos para los que está previsto el FSE, de vital importancia en la actual situación de grave crisis, que tiene efectos catastróficos sobre el empleo, como demuestran las altas tasas de desempleo, tanto en Galicia (21 %) como en el conjunto del Estado español (25 %), superiores en más del doble a la media de la Unión Europea.

En el actual ejercicio, el Estado español ha recibido 65 millones EUR con cargo al FSE, pero sin que se facilite una explicación clara de cuáles son los objetivos que pueden financiarse con dichos recursos. Tampoco se facilita la distribución de estos recursos entre las distintas Comunidades Autónomas, en función del PIB y la categoría regional en que se incluyen. Por otra parte, diversos agentes sociales han denunciando desde hace tiempo el atraso en el pago de las subvenciones con cargo al FSE e, incluso, la posibilidad de estar perdiendo parte de estos fondos debido a que el Estado o la administración autonómica no aportan la parte de cofinanciación que les corresponde. En el caso de Galicia, la contribución pública para complementar los recursos del FSE abonados por la Comisión Europea es del 25 % ya que se trata de una región objetivo de la política de cohesión.

Por todo lo anterior:

¿Puede informar la Comisión sobre el nivel de ejecución del FSE en el Estado español entre 2007 y 2011?

¿Tiene intención la Comisión de adoptar alguna medida para evitar que el Estado español pierda parte de los recursos procedentes del FSE por no aportar la parte de cofinanciación de los proyectos que le corresponde, sobre todo cuando tiene la tasa de desempleo más alta de la UE?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de agosto de 2012)

El gasto certificado entre 2007 y 2011 en España ascendió a 3 273 725 480,47 EUR. Ello representa el 40,63 % del importe total del FSE a disposición de España para el período de programación 2007-2013.

En cooperación con las autoridades nacionales, la Comisión está adoptando todas las medidas posibles para impedir la pérdida de recursos del FSE destinados a España, teniendo en cuenta que su tasa de desempleo es la mayor de la UE, alrededor del 25 %, y que su tasa de desempleo juvenil se sitúa en torno al 50 %.

Entre las medidas adoptadas para invertir más en acciones encaminadas a luchar contra el desempleo y el desempleo juvenil y para facilitar la absorción de fondos del FSE, la Comisión se dispone a modificar varios programas operativos del FSE en España, a iniciativa de las autoridades españolas.

El principal objetivo de dichas modificaciones es reorientar los fondos hacia los sectores en que son más necesarios, en consonancia con la Iniciativa de Oportunidades para la Juventud, así como mejorar la ejecución financiera de los programas operativos del FSE. Los programas operativos sujetos a modificación son los siguientes en la actualidad:

PO Asturias, PO Melilla, PO Murcia, PO Adaptabilidad y Empleo, PO Asistencia Técnica, PO Baleares, PO Cataluña y PO Navarra.

La Comisión está siguiendo de cerca la ejecución de todos los programas operativos del FSE en España y debatirá con las autoridades nacionales las medidas destinadas a mitigar los riesgos relacionados con la absorción o la cofinanciación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-006794/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(9 July 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the European Social Fund in Spain

Under Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund, the European Social Fund (ESF) allocated a budget of EUR 8.050 billion to Spain for the period 2007-2013, to finance actions provided for under the four priority axes established in the ESF implementing regulation.

Promoting employability, fostering social inclusion, facilitating equal opportunities and promoting lifelong learning are among the objectives at which the ESF is targeted. These objectives are of crucial importance in the current severe crisis, which is having a disastrous impact on employment, as can be seen from the high rates of unemployment both in Galicia (21%) and in Spain as a whole (25%), which is more than twice the average figure for the European Union.

Spain had earmarked a budget of EUR 650 million for the ESF in the current financial year, but it did not provide a clear statement of the objectives that would be eligible for funding from these resources. It also neglected to lay down how these resources would be distributed among the various autonomous communities, taking account of the level of their GDP and the regional category to which they belong. Moreover, various societal actors have complained at delays in the payment of ESF grants and, even more seriously, at the possibility that some of these funds could be lost because either the state or the autonomous government is failing to provide its share of co-financing. In the case of Galicia, the state contribution to be added to the ESF resources provided by the Commission stands at 25 %, since it is classed as a convergence region.

1. Can the Commission provide information on the level of ESF implementation in Spain between 2007 and 2011?

2. Will the Commission take any steps to provide a boost and avoid a situation where Spain could lose some of these ESF resources because it has failed to contribute its share of co-financing for projects, particularly bearing in mind that it has the highest rate of unemployment in the EU?

Question for written answer E-007036/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(13 July 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the European Social Fund in Galicia

Under the terms of Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund (ESF), Spain was allocated a total of EUR 8 050 million from the ESF for the period 2007-13, to finance action provided for under the four priority axes established in the ESF implementing regulation.

Promoting employability, fostering social inclusion, facilitating equal opportunities and promoting lifelong learning are among the objectives at which the ESF is targeted. These objectives are of crucial importance in the current severe crisis, which is having a disastrous impact on employment, as can be seen from the high rates of unemployment both in Galicia (21%) and in Spain as a whole (25%), which is more than twice the average figure for the European Union.

Spain has received EUR 65 million from the ESF for the current financial year, but no clear explanation has been given as to the objectives which are to be funded with these resources. Nor has any information been provided concerning the distribution of these resources among the various autonomous communities on the basis of GDP and the regional category to which they belong. Various social agents have been complaining for some time about the delays in paying out ESF subsidies and even warning that part of this funding could be lost if the State or the autonomous authorities fail to provide their share of co-financing. In the case of Galicia, the public contribution required to counterbalance ESF funds provided by the Commission is 25%, as it is a region targeted by cohesion policy.

In light of the above:

Can the Commission provide information on the level of ESF implementation in Spain between 2007 and 2011?

Does the Commission intend to take any steps to prevent Spain from losing part of these ESF resources because of its failure to contribute its share of co-financing for the projects involved, particularly at a time when it has the highest level of unemployment in the EU?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2012)

The certified expenditure between 2007 and 2011 in Spain was EUR 3 273 725 480.47. This represents 40.63% of the total ESF amount available to Spain for the programming period 2007-2013.

In cooperation with the national authorities, the Commission is taking all steps it can to avoid the loss of ESF resources for Spain, bearing in mind that it has the highest rate of unemployment in the EU, about 25%, and that the rate of youth unemployment is about 50%.

Among the measures taken to invest more in actions addressing unemployment and youth unemployment and in order to facilitate the absorption of the ESF, the Commission is proceeding, at the initiative of the Spanish authorities, to modify several ESF operational programmes in Spain.

The main purpose of these modifications is to refocus funding where most needed in line with the Youth Opportunities Initiative and to improve the financial implementation of the ESF operational programmes. The operational programmes subject to modification are currently the following:

OP Asturias, OP Melilla, OP Murcia, OP Adaptabilidad y Empleo, OP Asistencia Técnica, OP Baleares, OP Cataluña and OP Navarra.

The Commission closely monitors the implementation of all ESF operational programmes in Spain and will discuss with the national authorities measures to mitigate absorption or co-funding risks.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008765/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1º ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Emergenza umanitaria in Somalia

Dopo giorni di violentissimi combattimenti tra i militari di Mogadiscio, appoggiati da un contingente dell'Amisom, la forza dell'Unione Africana, e le milizie radicali islamiche di al Shabaab, legati ai terroristi si Al Qaeda, l'esercito keniano afferma di aver assunto il controllo della città portuale somala di Kisimaio, ultima roccaforte degli estremisti islamici Shabaab.

I militari hanno assunto il controllo della città con un'offensiva lanciata nel corso della notte.

Dall'inizio di settembre ad oggi, oltre 10mila persone sono fuggite da Kisimaio per timore delle frequenti escalation di violenza.

I flussi di persone in fuga sono aumentati, circa 7 500 persone sono scappate dalla zona nel corso degli ultimi quattro giorni.

La Somalia, martoriata da due decenni di conflitti e violenze, rimane una delle peggiori crisi umanitarie al mondo e genera il più alto numero di rifugiati, preceduta solo dall'Afghanistan e dall'Iraq.

Alla luce di quanto precede, si interroga la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

1. Se la delegazione dell'Unione europea in Somalia è a conoscenza dell'emergenza umanitaria causata dai combattimenti.

2. Se la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ritiene efficaci le misure attuate a garanzia dei diritti umani fondamentali della popolazione somala e, in caso di risposta negativa, se ha intenzione di chiedere alla comunità internazionale di porre in atto misure più incisive?

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

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza della situazione umanitaria in Somalia, in particolare delle condizioni degli sfollati interni e dei rifugiati, e ha fornito cospicui aiuti umanitari per sopperire alle esigenze delle popolazioni colpite. L'intento della Commissione, che dal 2008 ha erogato più di 262 milioni di euro di aiuti umanitari a favore della Somalia, è di contrastare la grave insicurezza alimentare attraverso iniziative di aiuto alimentare e finanziario, senza tralasciare altri settori importanti quali l'approvvigionamento idrico, la sanità, l'igiene, la salute/nutrizione, gli alloggi e l'assistenza agli sfollati interni in Somalia e ai rifugiati somali nella regione.

Il servizio dell'UE per gli aiuti umanitari segue da vicino la situazione umanitaria a Kismayo e nel resto del paese. La delegazione dell'UE in Somalia sta lavorando in stretta collaborazione con i partner locali, regionali e internazionali, in particolare con l'Unione africana, per migliorare la situazione attuale e garantire la protezione dei civili. L'UE continuerà ad utilizzare tutti gli strumenti a sua disposizione, tra cui il canale diplomatico attraverso le sue delegazioni nella regione, il dialogo con le organizzazioni internazionali e con il rappresentante speciale dell'UE (RSUE per il Corno d'Africa), per promuovere i diritti umani fondamentali per la popolazione somala.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008765/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Humanitarian crisis in Somalia

After days of extremely violent clashes between soldiers in Mogadishu (supported by Amisom forces and African Union troops) and the radical Islamic militia Al-Shabaab, which has links to the al-Qa'ida terrorist network, the Kenyan army confirmed that it has taken control of the Somali port of Kismayo, the final stronghold of the Islamic extremist group Al-Shabaab.

Soldiers took control of the city during a night-time offensive.

Since the beginning of September, more than 10 000 people have fled Kismayo, fearing the frequent escalation of violence.

The constant stream of those escaping has increased, with approximately 7 500 people fleeing the area over the last four days.

Somalia, blighted by conflict and violence for the last 20 years, is facing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world and, after Afghanistan and Iraq, is generating the highest number of refugees in the world.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative state:

1. Whether the European Union delegation in Somalia is aware of the humanitarian crisis caused by the fighting?

2. Whether the Vice-President/High Representative believes that the measures put in place to ensure the fundamental human rights of the Somali people are effective and, if not, whether she intends to call on the international community to lay down more stringent measures?

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

The EU is aware of the overall humanitarian situation in Somalia, including the plight of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees. The EU has responded to the needs of affected populations with significant humanitarian assistance. Since 2008, the Commission allocated over EUR 262 million in humanitarian aid to Somalia. Its focus is to address the severe food insecurity through food aid and cash based initiatives and other key sectors as water, sanitation, hygiene, health/nutrition, shelter and assistance to internally displaced populations in Somalia and assistance to Somali refugees in the region.

The EU's Humanitarian Aid department is following closely the humanitarian situation in Kismayo and in the rest of the country. The EU delegation to Somalia is working closely with its local, regional and international partners, the African Union in particular, to improve the current situation and ensure civilian protection. The EU will continue to use its full range of instruments, including diplomacy through its delegations in the region and to international organisations as well as the EU Special Representative (EUSR for the Horn of Africa), to promote fundamental human rights for Somali people.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008766/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE), Jean-Paul Besset (Verts/ALE), Karima Delli (Verts/ALE) y Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(1 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Condiciones de detención en las cárceles de la República Italiana

En las cárceles italianas, con una capacidad reglamentaria de 45 568 plazas, se hallan detenidas 66 271 personas, de las cuales 23 773 son extranjeros. De los más de 66 000 reclusos, 25 970 están a la espera de juicio, mientras que los condenados con sentencia firme son 38 906. De ellos, 685 están sujetos al artículo 41 bis, un régimen penitenciario especial que los órganos de la Unión consideran, con razón, una forma sofisticada de tortura, prohibida por el artículo 3 de la Convención Europea de Derechos Humanos y el artículo 4 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea. En Italia hoy en día más de la mitad de los reclusos está en prisión preventiva: es uno de los porcentajes más altos de Europa, que refleja claramente una anomalía italiana, por no mencionar el hacinamiento, que alcanza el 157 % contra una media europea del 97 %. En lo que va de año en las cárceles italianas han muerto 117 detenidos, 40 de los cuales se han suicidado.

La República Italiana ya ha sido llamada al orden por el Comité de Ministros del Consejo de Europa y ha sido condenada miles de veces por el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos; en la actualidad hay más de 1 000 apelaciones pendientes, que probablemente se liquidarán mediante una «sentencia piloto».

1. ¿No cree la Comisión que debe intervenir con suma urgencia para garantizar el respeto de los derechos de las personas detenidas y unas condiciones de vida dignas, poniendo fin a los tratos inhumanos, crueles y degradantes que se aplican en todas las cárceles de la República Italiana?

2. ¿No cree que esta situación puede constituir un incumplimiento de las obligaciones que se desprenden de la legislación de la UE, y qué medidas piensa adoptar para el seguimiento del Libro Verde sobre la detención?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de enero de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-2438/2012 del Sr. Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 de la Sra. Childers, E-7035/2012 de la Sra. Romero López, E-007488/2012 de la Sra. Griesbeck, E-009607/2012 del Sr. Particiello y E-010564/2012 de la Sra. Angelilli ([1]).

La Comisión concede gran importancia al respeto de los derechos fundamentales de las personas detenidas en la EU. Sin embargo, las condiciones de detención competen a los Estados miembros, que están obligados a observar las normas vigentes del Consejo de Europa en la materia. Con todo, la Comisión publicó el año pasado un Libro Verde sobre el refuerzo de la confianza mutua en el ámbito de la detención ([2]). En la página web ([3]) se ha publicado un resumen de las mencionadas respuestas, de las que se desprende que, si bien existe un amplio consenso sobre los problemas relativos a la detención preventiva excesiva, la mayoría de los Estados miembros no respalda una decidida intervención legislativa de la UE.

Sobre la base de los resultados del Libro Verde, la Comisión tiene previsto centrarse en la correcta aplicación de los instrumentos de reconocimiento mutuo existentes adoptados en el ámbito de la detención ([4]), antes de formular nuevas propuestas legislativas, y publicará informes relativos a las tres Decisiones Marco para mediados de 2013.

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

([2]) Libro Verde: Reforzar la confianza mutua en el espacio judicial europeo — Libro Verde relativo a la aplicación de la legislación de justicia penal de la UE en el ámbito de la detención, COM(2011) 0327 final.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

([4]) Decisión Marco 2008/909/JAI del Consejo, de 27 de noviembre de 2008, relativa a la aplicación del principio de reconocimiento mutuo de sentencias en materia penal por las que se imponen penas u otras medidas privativas de libertad a efectos de su ejecución en la Unión Europea (DO L 327 de 5.12.2008, p. 27); Decisión Marco 2008/947/JAI del Consejo, de 27 de noviembre de 2008, relativa a la aplicación del principio de reconocimiento mutuo de sentencias y resoluciones de libertad vigilada con miras a la vigilancia de las medidas de libertad vigilada y las penas sustitutivas (DO L 337 de 16.12.2008, p. 102), y Decisión marco 2009/829/JAI del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2009, relativa a la aplicación, entre Estados miembros de la Unión Europea, del principio de reconocimiento mutuo a las resoluciones sobre medidas de vigilancia como sustitución de la prisión provisional (DO L 294 de 11.11.2009, p. 20).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008766/12
an die Kommission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE), Jean-Paul Besset (Verts/ALE), Karima Delli (Verts/ALE) und Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(1. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Haftbedingungen in italienischen Gefängnissen

In den italienischen Gefängnissen, die für 45 568 Personen ausgelegt sind, sitzen derzeit 66 271 Häftlinge ein, davon 23 773 Ausländer. Bei 25 970 dieser über 66 000 Häftlinge steht das Gerichtsurteil noch aus, während 38 906 ihre Freiheitsstrafe verbüßen. Bei 685 von ihnen wird Artikel 41a angewandt, eine Sonderform der Haft, die nach Auffassung der EU-Organe zu Recht als eine ausgefeilte Form der Folter anzusehen ist, die nach Artikel 3 der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention und Artikel 4 der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union strengstens verboten ist. Mehr als die Hälfte der derzeitigen Häftlinge in Italien befinden sich in Untersuchungshaft. Dies ist einer der höchsten Anteile in Europa, was ein Beleg für die außergewöhnlichen Zustände in Italien ist, von der Überbelegung der Haftanstalten dort ganz zu schweigen, die einen Wert von 157 % erreicht hat, während der EU-Durchschnittswert bei 97 % liegt. Seit Anfang dieses Jahres sind 117 Häftlinge in italienischen Gefängnissen gestorben, davon mindestens 40 durch Selbstmord.

Die Italienische Republik ist bereits vom Ministerkomitee des Europarates gerügt und in Tausenden von Fällen vom Europäischen Gerichtshof für Menschenrechte verurteilt worden. Gegenwärtig sind des Weiteren über 1 000 Klagen vor diesem Gericht anhängig, die voraussichtlich im Rahmen eines „Grundsatzurteils" („arrêt pilote") behandelt werden.

Kann die Kommission angesichts dieses Sachverhalts folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Hält es die Kommission nicht für geboten, rasch zu handeln, um die ausnahmslose Wahrung der Rechte inhaftierter Personen und menschenwürdige Haftbedingungen sicherzustellen, indem einer unmenschlichen, grausamen und erniedrigenden Behandlung in allen Gefängnissen Italiens Einhalt geboten wird?

2. Ist die Kommission nicht der Auffassung, dass dies möglicherweise einen Verstoß gegen die Verpflichtungen Italiens gemäß den EU-Rechtsvorschriften darstellt, und welche Folgemaßnahmen gedenkt sie im Anschluss an das Grünbuch zur Inhaftierung zu ergreifen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(22. Januar 2013)

Die Kommission darf die Damen und Herren Abgeordneten auf die Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-2438/2012 von Herrn Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 von Frau Childers, E-7035/2012 von Frau Romero López, E-007488/2012 von Frau Griesbeck, E-009607/2012 von Herrn Particiello und E-010564/2012 von Frau Angelilli hinweisen ([1]).

Die Kommission misst der Wahrung der Menschenrechte von in der EU inhaftierten Personen große Bedeutung bei. Allerdings fallen Inhaftierungsbedingungen in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten, die durch die bestehenden einschlägigen Standards des Europarats gebunden sind. Trotzdem hat die Kommission im vergangenen Jahr ein Grünbuch über die Stärkung des gegenseitigen Vertrauens im Bereich des Freiheitsentzugs veröffentlicht ([2]). Eine Zusammenfassung der Antworten findet sich auf der Website zum Grünbuch ([3]). Aus den Antworten geht hervor, dass die meisten Mitgliedstaaten trotz des breiten Konsenses zu den mit übermäßiger Untersuchungshaft verbundenen Problemen keine starken gesetzlichen Eingriffe auf EU-Ebene befürworten.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=2CDB1800867AE29E4F782B0389196F00.node1
([2]) Grünbuch: Stärkung des gegenseitigen Vertrauens im europäischen Rechtsraum — Grünbuch zur Anwendung der EU-Strafrechtsvorschriften im Bereich des Freiheitsentzugs — KOM(2011)327 endg.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

Ausgehend von den Ergebnissen des Grünbuchs will sich die Kommission vor der Ausarbeitung neuer Legislativvorschläge auf die ordnungsgemäße Durchführung der bestehenden Instrumente zur gegenseitigen Anerkennung im Bereich des Freiheitsentzugs ([4]) konzentrieren und wird bis Mitte 2013 Durchführungsberichte zu den drei Rahmenbeschlüssen vorlegen.

([4]) Rahmenbeschluss 2008/909/JI des Rates vom 27. November 2008 über die Anwendung des Grundsatzes der gegenseitigen Anerkennung auf Urteile in Strafsachen, durch die eine freiheitsentziehende Strafe oder Maßnahme verhängt wird, für die Zwecke ihrer Vollstreckung in der Europäischen Union (ABl. L 327 vom 5.12.2008, S. 27); Rahmenbeschluss 2008/947/JI des Rates vom 27. November 2008 über die Anwendung des Grundsatzes der gegenseitigen Anerkennung auf Urteile und Bewährungsentscheidungen im Hinblick auf die Überwachung von Bewährungsmaßnahmen und alternativen Sanktionen (ABl. L 337 vom 16.12.2008, S. 102); Rahmenbeschluss 2009/829/JI des Rates vom 23. Oktober 2009 über die Anwendung — zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union — des Grundsatzes der gegenseitigen Anerkennung auf Entscheidungen über Überwachungsmaßnahmen als Alternative zur Untersuchungshaft (ABl. L 294 vom 11.11.2009, S. 20).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008766/12
à la Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE), Jean-Paul Besset (Verts/ALE), Karima Delli (Verts/ALE) et Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(1er octobre 2012)

Objet: Conditions de détention dans les prisons de la République italienne

Ce sont 66 271 personnes qui sont aujourd'hui incarcérées dans les prisons italiennes, dont 23 773 étrangers, pour une capacité réglementaire de seulement 45 568 individus. Parmi ces 66 271 prisonniers, 25 970 sont encore en attente d'un jugement, tandis que le nombre de prisonniers condamnés s'élève à 38 906. Parmi ceux-ci, 685 sont soumis à l'article 41 bis, un régime de détention particulier que les institutions européennes considèrent à juste titre comme une forme déguisée de torture, strictement interdite par l'article 3 de la convention européenne des Droits de l'homme et par l'article 4 de la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne. Aujourd'hui, en Italie, la moitié des incarcérations sont des détentions provisoires, soit un des taux les plus élevés d'Europe, qui montre clairement l'existence d'une anomalie propre à la République italienne, sans parler de la surpopulation carcérale qui atteint 157 % en Italie contre 97 % en moyenne dans le reste de l'Union. Depuis le début de cette année, 117 détenus sont morts dans les prisons italiennes, dont au moins 40 par suicide.

La République italienne a déjà été rappelée à l'ordre par le comité des ministres du Conseil de l'Europe et condamnée des milliers de fois par la Cour européenne des Droits de l'homme; en outre, plus de 1 000 recours seraient encore pendants, qui seront probablement traités selon la procédure de l'«arrêt pilote».

la Commission peut-elle dire:

1. si elle n'estime pas qu'il est urgent d'agir pour veiller au respect uniforme des droits des personnes placées en détention et de conditions de vie décentes, afin de faire cesser les traitements inhumains, cruels et dégradants infligés dans toutes les prisons d'Italie?

2. si elle n'estime pas qu'une telle situation peut constituer une violation des obligations en vertu du droit de l'Union européenne, et quelles mesures elle se propose d'étudier, dans le cadre du suivi à donner au livre vert sur la détention?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(22 janvier 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer aux réponses adressées aux questions écrites E-2438/2012 de M. Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 de Mme Childers, E-7035/2012 de Mme Romero López, E-007488/2012 de Mme Griesbeck, E-009607/2012 de M. Particiello et E-010564/2012 de Mme Angelilli ([1]).

La Commission accorde une grande importance au respect des droits fondamentaux des personnes détenues dans l'UE. Toutefois, les conditions de détention relèvent de la compétence des États membres, qui sont tenus par les normes du Conseil de l'Europe en la matière. Néanmoins, la Commission a publié l'an dernier un Livre vert sur le renforcement de la confiance mutuelle dans le domaine de la détention ([2]). Un résumé des réponses a été publié sur le site web ([3]). Il ressort de ces réponses que, malgré l'existence d'un vaste consensus sur les problèmes liés à la durée excessive de la détention provisoire, la plupart des États membres ne sont pas favorables à une intervention législative ferme au niveau de l'UE.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Renforcer la confiance mutuelle dans l'espace judiciaire européen – Livre vert sur l'application de la législation de l'UE en matière de justice pénale dans le domaine de la détention, COM(2011) 327 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_fr.htm

À la suite du Livre vert, la Commission envisage de mettre l'accent sur la mise en œuvre adéquate des instruments adoptés dans le domaine de la détention ([4]) en matière de reconnaissance mutuelle, avant d'élaborer de nouvelles propositions législatives, et elle publiera des rapports sur la mise en œuvre des trois décisions-cadres pour la mi-2013.

([4]) Décision-cadre 2008/909/JAI du 27 novembre 2008 concernant l'application du principe de reconnaissance mutuelle aux jugements en matière pénale prononçant des peines ou des mesures privatives de liberté aux fins de leur exécution dans l'Union européenne (JO L 327 du 5.12.2008, p. 27), décision-cadre 2008/947/JAI du 27 novembre 2008 concernant l'application du principe de reconnaissance mutuelle aux jugements et aux décisions de probation aux fins de la surveillance des mesures de probation et des peines de substitution (JO L 337 du 16.12.2008, p. 102) et décision-cadre 2009/829/JAI du 23 octobre 2009 concernant l'application, entre les États membres de l'Union européenne, du principe de reconnaissance mutuelle aux décisions relatives à des mesures de contrôle en tant qu'alternative à la détention provisoire (JO L 294 du 11.11.2009, p. 20).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008766/12
alla Commissione
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE), Jean-Paul Besset (Verts/ALE), Karima Delli (Verts/ALE) e Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(1º ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Condizioni di detenzione nelle carceri della Repubblica italiana

Nelle carceri d'Italia, a fronte di una capienza regolamentare di 45 568 posti, sono rinchiuse 66 271 persone, delle quali 23 773 stranieri. Degli oltre 66 000 detenuti, 25 970 sono ancora in attesa di giudizio mentre i condannati definitivi risultano essere 38 906. Di questi detenuti 685 sono sottoposti al 41 bis, un regime detentivo speciale che gli organismi dell'Unione considerano, a ragione, una forma sofisticata di tortura, severamente proibita dall'articolo 3 della Convenzione europea dei diritti umani e dall'articolo 4 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea. In Italia oggi oltre la metà delle persone recluse è sottoposta a custodia cautelare: si tratta di una delle percentuali più alte in Europa, che fotografa chiaramente un'anomalia tutta italiana, per non parlare del sovraffollamento, che ha raggiunto il 157 % contro una media europea del 97 %. Dall'inizio dell'anno nelle carceri italiane sono morti già 117 detenuti, dei quali ben 40 per suicidio.

La Repubblica italiana è stata già richiamata dal Comitato dei ministri del Consiglio d'Europa e condannata migliaia di volte dalla Corte europea dei diritti umani; attualmente sarebbero pendenti oltre 1 000 ricorsi che, probabilmente, verranno esaminati con una «sentenza pilota».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se non ritenga urgente agire per assicurare il rispetto uniforme dei diritti delle persone detenute e di condizioni dignitose di vita ponendo fine ai trattamenti disumani, crudeli e degradanti posti in essere in tutte le carceri della Repubblica italiana;

2. se non ritenga che tale situazione possa costituire una violazione degli obblighi ai sensi del diritto dell'UE, e quali misure si proponga di adottare nel quadro del seguito da dare al Libro verde sulla detenzione?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(22 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare le risposte fornite alle interrogazioni scritte E-2438/2012 dell'onorevole Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 dell'onorevole Childers, E-7035/2012 dell'onorevole Romero López, E-007488/2012 dell'onorevole Griesbeck, E-009607/2012 dell'onorevole Particiello ed E-010564/2012 dell'onorevole Angelilli ([1]).

La Commissione attribuisce grande importanza al rispetto dei diritti fondamentali dei detenuti nell'Unione europea. Le condizioni detentive rientrano però nelle competenze degli Stati membri, a loro volta vincolati alle norme internazionali definite in materia dal Consiglio d'Europa. Ciononostante, lo scorso anno la Commissione ha pubblicato un Libro verde sul rafforzamento della fiducia reciproca nel settore della detenzione ([2]). Sul sito della Commissione è possibile consultare la sintesi delle risposte fornite in merito ([3]), da cui emerge che, nonostante l'ampio consenso sui problemi dovuti al ricorso eccessivo alla custodia cautelare, la maggior parte degli Stati membri non è favorevole a interventi normativi particolarmente incisivi a livello dell'UE.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Libro verde: Rafforzare la fiducia reciproca nello spazio giudiziario europeo — Libro verde sull'applicazione della normativa dell'UE sulla giustizia penale nel settore della detenzione, COM(2011) 0327 definitivo.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

In base ai risultati del Libro verde, la Commissione intende concentrarsi sulla corretta attuazione degli strumenti di riconoscimento reciproco esistenti in materia di detenzione ([4]) prima di mettere a punto nuove proposte legislative e pubblicherà, entro la metà del 2013, relazioni sull'attuazione delle tre decisioni quadro.

([4]) Decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI del Consiglio, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea, GU L 327 del 5.12.2008, pag. 27; decisione quadro 2008/947/GAI del Consiglio, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze e alle decisioni di sospensione condizionale in vista della sorveglianza delle misure di sospensione condizionale e delle sanzioni sostitutive, GU L 337 del 16.12.2008, pag. 102; decisione quadro 2009/829/GAI del Consiglio, del 23 ottobre 2009, sull'applicazione tra gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle decisioni sulle misure alternative alla detenzione cautelare, GU L 294 dell'11.11.2009, pag. 20.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008766/12
à Comissão
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE), Jean-Paul Besset (Verts/ALE), Karima Delli (Verts/ALE) e Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(1 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Condições de detenção nas prisões da República Italiana

Encontram-se atualmente detidas nas prisões italianas 66 271 pessoas, 23 773 das quais são estrangeiras, apesar de a capacidade regulamentar dessas prisões ser de apenas 45 568 lugares. Por outro lado, desses 66 271 detidos, 25 970 aguardam julgamento, enquanto o número de prisioneiros condenados ascende a 38 906. De entre estes últimos, 685 estão submetidos ao artigo 41.° bis, um regime de detenção especial que os organismos da União consideram tratar-se, a justo título, de uma forma disfarçada de tortura, rigorosamente proibida pelo artigo 3.° da Convenção Europeia dos Direitos do Homem e pelo artigo 4.° da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia. Em Itália, atualmente, metade das pessoas reclusas encontra-se em regime de prisão preventiva: trata-se de uma das percentagens mais elevadas da Europa, que reflete claramente uma anomalia caracteristicamente italiana, para não falar da superlotação, que atinge uma taxa de 157 %, face a uma média europeia de 97 %. Desde o início do ano, já morreram nas prisões italianas 117 detidos, dos quais 40 por suicídio.

A República Italiana já foi chamada à ordem pelo Comité de Ministros do Conselho da Europa e condenada milhares de vezes pelo Tribunal Europeu dos Direitos do Homem. Além disso, encontram-se pendentes mais de 1 000 recursos, que, provavelmente, serão examinados através de um «acórdão-piloto».

Tendo em conta este facto, pode a Comissão indicar:

1. Não considera que deveria intervir para garantir o respeito uniforme dos direitos das pessoas detidas e de condições de vida dignas, pondo termo aos tratamentos desumanos, cruéis e degradantes praticados em todas as prisões da República Italiana?

2. Não considera que tal situação pode constituir uma violação das obrigações na aceção do direito da UE? Quais as medidas que prevê adotar no quadro do seguimento a dar ao Livro Verde respeitante à detenção?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(22 de janeiro de 2013)

A Comissão remete os Senhores Deputados para as respostas às perguntas escritas E-2438/2012 de Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 de Childers, E-7035/2012 de Romero López, E-007488/2012 de Griesbeck, E-009607/2012 de Particiello e E-010564/2012 de Angelilli ([1]).

A Comissão confere grande importância ao respeito dos direitos fundamentais das pessoas que se encontram em regime de detenção na União Europeia. Todavia, as condições de detenção são um domínio da competência dos Estados-Membros que estão vinculados pelas normas em vigor do Conselho da Europa sobre a matéria. Não obstante, no ano passado, a Comissão publicou um Livro Verde sobre o reforço da confiança mútua no domínio da detenção ([2]). Um resumo das respostas recebidas foram publicadas num sítio web ([3]) específico. Resulta das referidas respostas que, apesar de existir um amplo consenso sobre os problemas relacionados com a duração excessiva da prisão preventiva, a maioria dos Estados-Membros não apoia uma ação legislativa forte a nível da UE.

([1]) (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html)
([2]) Livro Verde intitulado «Reforçar a confiança mútua no espaço judiciário europeu — Livro Verde sobre a aplicação da legislação penal da UE no domínio da detenção», COM(2011) 0327 final.
([3]) (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm)

Com base nos resultados do Livro Verde, a Comissão pretende centrar-se na correta aplicação dos instrumentos de reconhecimento mútuo existentes adotados no domínio da detenção ([4]) antes de elaborar qualquer nova proposta legislativa e publicará relatórios sobre a aplicação das três decisões-quadro na matéria em meados de 2013.

([4]) Decisão-Quadro 2008/909/JAI do Conselho, de 27 de novembro de 2008, relativa à aplicação do princípio do reconhecimento mútuo às sentenças em matéria penal que imponham penas ou outras medidas privativas de liberdade para efeitos da execução dessas sentenças na União Europeia, JO L 327 de 5.12.2008, p. 27, Decisão-Quadro 2008/947/JAI do Conselho, de 27 de novembro de 2008, respeitante à aplicação do princípio do reconhecimento mútuo às sentenças e decisões relativas à liberdade condicional para efeitos da fiscalização das medidas de vigilância e das sanções alternativas, JO L 337 de 16.12.2008, p. 102, e Decisão-Quadro 2009/829/JAI do Conselho, de 23 de outubro de 2009, relativa à aplicação, entre os Estados-Membros da União Europeia, do princípio do reconhecimento mútuo às decisões sobre medidas de controlo, em alternativa à prisão preventiva, JO L 294 de 11.11.2009, p. 20.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008766/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Jan Philipp Albrecht (Verts/ALE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE), Jean-Paul Besset (Verts/ALE), Karima Delli (Verts/ALE) and Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Conditions in Italian prisons

Despite a maximum capacity of 45 568, Italian prisons currently accommodate 66 271 detainees of which 23 773 are foreign nationals. Of the 66 000 prisoners, 25 970 are still awaiting trial, whilst 38 906 have been convicted definitively. Of these prisoners, 685 are subject to 41A, a special detention regime that EU bodies rightly consider a sophisticated form of torture and which is strictly prohibited under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and under Article 4 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. More than half of those currently incarcerated in Italy are subject to pre-trial detention. This is one of the highest rates in Europe, clearly demonstrating an anomaly specific to Italy, and which also adds to overcrowding, which has reached 157 % — compared to the European average of 97 %. Since the beginning of this year, 117 prisoners have died in Italian prisons; 40 of these deaths were suicide.

Italy has already been reprimanded by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and condemned a multitude of times by the European Court of Human Rights. There are currently more than 1 000 appeals pending, which will probably be dealt with using the 'pilot judgment procedure'.

In the light of the above, can the Commission say:

1. whether it does not agree that urgent action should be taken to ensure that the rights of prisoners and dignified living conditions are comprehensively respected, so as to put an end to inhumane treatment and the cruel and degrading situations in all Italian prisons;

2. whether it does not agree that this situation could be a breach of Italy's obligations under EC law, and what measures it intends to adopt as part of its follow-up to the Green Paper on detention?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answers to the Written Questions E-2438/2012 by Mr Stoyanov, E-6882/2012 by Ms Childers, E-7035/2012 by Ms Romero López, E-007488/2012 by Ms Griesbeck, E-009607/2012 by Mr Particiello and E-010564/2012 by Ms Angelilli ([1]).

The Commission attaches great importance to the respect of the fundamental rights of persons that are in detention in the EU. However, detention conditions come under the competence of Member States who are bound by the existing Council of Europe standards on the matter. Nevertheless, last year the Commission published a Green Paper on strengthening mutual trust in the field of detention ([2]). A summary of the replies has been published on the website ([3]). It follows from these replies that although there is a broad consensus on the problems related to excessive pre-trial detention, most Member States however do not support strong legislative intervention at EU level.

Based on the outcome of the Green Paper, the Commission intends to focus on the proper implementation of the existing mutual recognition instruments adopted in the field of detention ([4]) before developing any new legislative proposals and will publish implementation reports on the three Framework Decisions by mid-2013.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Green Paper Strengthening mutual trust in the European judicial area — A Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention, COM(2011) 0327 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm
([4]) The framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27, the framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions, OJ 16.12.2008, L 337/102, and the framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention, OJ 11.11.2009, L 294/20.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008767/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(1 de Outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Efeitos para a saúde de organismos geneticamente modificados

A publicação de um estudo sobre os efeitos para a saúde de Organismos Geneticamente Modificados (milho NK603, da multinacional Monsanto), levado a cabo por um grupo de cientistas franceses, colocou a Agência de Segurança Sanitária francesa e a Autoridade Europeia de Segurança Alimentar a analisar este dossiê.

As pesquisas realizadas mostram que ratos alimentados com OGM durante dois anos desenvolveram tumores e outros danos em múltiplos órgãos vitais. O presidente do comité de pesquisa e informação independentes sobre genética referiu que «os testes regulamentares decorrem durante três meses, mas os problemas como a morte dos ratos por tumor surgem apenas ao quarto mês. Isto significa que os testes regulamentares de três meses são ineficazes para determinar o impacto na saúde de um tratamento OGM ou de uma alimentação OGM ao longo da vida».

Ainda na sequência desta notícia, a Comissão Europeia anunciou que suspendeu a análise de um pedido feito pela Monsanto para a renovação de autorização para a produção do OGM, o MON 810. Este organismo geneticamente modificado, a batata Amflora e o milho T25 são os únicos cuja cultura é autorizada na Europa.

Assim sendo, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tendo em conta a imperiosa salvaguarda do princípio da precaução, à luz das conclusões deste estudo (e independentemente de uma avaliação mais detalhada das mesmas, designadamente por parte da AESA), que medidas imediatas tomou a Comissão tendo em vista a salvaguarda da saúde pública?

2. Pondera a necessidade de suspensão imediata de todos os transgénicos em uso na alimentação e nas rações animais? Em caso negativo, em que estudos se baseia para não o fazer?

3. Que estudos adicionais irá a Comissão promover para avaliar os efeitos na saúde dos OGM atualmente autorizados na Europa (incluindo aqueles que são utilizados nas rações animais)?

4. Qual(is) a(s) razão(ões) para a suspensão da análise do pedido feito pela Monsanto para a renovação de autorização para a produção do MON 810? Não serão estas razões extensíveis aos demais OGM cujo cultivo é atualmente autorizado na Europa?

Resposta dada por Maroš Šefčovič em nome da Comissão
(27 de novembro de 2012)

1. 2. e 3. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a sua resposta às suas questões escritas P-008278/2012 e P-08334/2012 ([1]), que abordam os resultados do estudo de Séralini *et al.* e as medidas de acompanhamento da Comissão.

4. Após a publicação do estudo de Séralini *et al.*, a Comissão referiu que, se este estudo revelar novos factos científicos sobre a segurança dos OGM em geral que exijam a adoção de medidas de acompanhamento, uma das quais poderá ser a suspensão do processo de renovação da autorização para o MON810. Ainda não foi tomada qualquer decisão em relação a essa medida de acompanhamento.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008767/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: The impact on health of genetically modified organisms

The publication of a study by a group of French scientists on the impact on health of Genetically Modified Organisms (NK603 maize from the Monsanto multinational) has led the French Food Safety Agency and the European Food Safety Authority to review the report.

The study showed that rats fed with the Monsanto GMO over two years developed tumours and suffered other damage to several vital organs. The President of the Committee for Research and Independent Information on Genetic Engineering stated that 'the regulatory tests are conducted for three months, but the problems with the rats dying from tumours arise only after four months. This means that the three-month regulatory tests are incapable of determining the impact of a GMO treatment or a GMO food on health over a lifetime.'

Following this news, the European Commission announced that it had suspended the review of a request made by Monsanto to renew the production licence for GMO MON 810. This genetically modified organism, the Amflora potato and T25 maize are the only GMOs currently approved for cultivation in Europe.

I ask the Commission:

1. Considering the statutory requirement of the precautionary principle and in light of the conclusions of this study (independent of a more detailed assessment by the EFSA), what immediate measures has the Commission taken to protect public health?

2. Does it consider it necessary to immediately suspend all GMO use in food and animal feed? If not, what studies have been used as the basis for this decision?

3. What additional studies will the Commission underwrite to evaluate the impact on health of the GMOs currently authorised for use in Europe (including those used in animal feed)?

4. For what reason(s) has the Commission suspended the review of Monsanto's request to renew the MON 810 production licence? Should these same reasons not be extended to the other GMOs currently authorised for production in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Sefcovic on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2012)

1-3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions P-008278/2012 and P-008334/2012 ([1]), which addresses the results of the study by Séralini et al and follow up measures by the Commission.

4. After the publication of the study by Séralini et al. the Commission said that should this study bring new scientific facts on the safety of GMOs in general, requiring to adopt follow up measures, one of these could be the suspension of the process for renewal of MON810. No such follow-up measure has yet been decided.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008768/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Sea fishery officers

Could the Commission detail the number of fishery officers in Portugal, Spain, Ireland, UK, France, Belgium and Denmark, together with the number of arrests and prosecutions in each country for the last available year?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2012)

The Commission does not have recent data on the total number of fisheries officers, arrests and prosecutions requested by the Honourable Member.

The control, inspection and enforcement of the rules of the CFP are the primary responsibility of Member States. The role of the Commission is to verify that the control system is working properly and where necessary require Member States to take measures to address shortcomings. The Commission carries out regular inspections and audits to gather indicators such as the number of infringements observed and the rate of recidivism. When the Member States approach is considered not robust enough, the Commission asks the Member States concerned to adopt specific corrective measures. The Commission is currently auditing the catch registration system of Member States, has adopted a plan of action in respect of one Member State this year and is assessing the need for similar decisions for a number of other Member States. Other priorities of the Commission are the implementation of the Electronic Reporting System and on the control of specific fisheries, such as for example the bluefin tuna fishery both in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

Member States regularly pool their means of control and inspection, including in the framework of Joint Deployment Plans, like the one set up for the implementation of the Specific Control and Inspection Programme for pelagic species in Western Waters. The EFCA ([1]) coordinates the implementation of these Plans.

In the framework of joint deployment plans, the EFCA compiles information on presumed infringements detected in the fisheries concerned. The Honourable Member is also invited to consult the Annual report 2011 of the EFCA ([2]) where such statistics can be found.

([1]) European Fisheries Control Agency.
([2]) http://cfca.europa.eu/pages/docs/basic%20docs/Annual%20Report%202011_edited.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008769/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(1. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Automatische Gesichtserkennung

Facebook stoppt nach heftiger Kritik von Datenschützern die umstrittene Gesichtserkennungs-Funktion in Europa. Facebook argumentierte stets, diese Funktion solle den Nutzern helfen, Fotos ihrer Freunde zu finden und zu markieren. Datenschützer hingegen forderten aufgrund des enormen Missbrauchspotenzials, dass Nutzer ausdrücklich um ihre Zustimmung zur Freischaltung der Funktion befragt werden müssen. Schließlich kann man den Menschen ja nicht raten, keine Fotos von sich hochzuladen, wenn sie nicht erkannt werden wollen. Denn andere Nutzer können ja (ohne vorher eine Zustimmung einzuholen) Fotos des Betreffenden hochladen und diese markieren.

Dies widerspricht auch dem in einigen Mitgliedstaaten geltenden „Recht am eigenen Bild", wonach jeder Mensch grundsätzlich selbst darüber bestimmen darf, ob überhaupt und in welchem Zusammenhang Bilder von ihm veröffentlicht werden, wenngleich dieses Recht im angelsächsischen Raum weitaus freier gestaltet ist als etwa im deutschen Rechtsraum.

Software-Entwickler arbeiten daran, die hinter der automatischen Gesichtserkennung stehende Software über sogenannte Schnittstellen weiterzuentwickeln, so dass noch viel mehr Funktionen, Programme und Apps vorstellbar sind.

1. Wie steht die EU-Kommission zur automatischen Gesichtserkennung etwa im Hinblick auf das „Recht am eigenen Bild"?

2. Inwieweit ist die automatische Gesichtserkennung mit EU-Datenschutzregeln vereinbar?

3. Was ist diesbezüglich für den Fall weiterer Programme zur automatischen Gesichtserkennung geplant?

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

Die Gesichtserkennung setzt die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten voraus. Für eine solche Verarbeitung gelten die nationalen Rechtsvorschriften zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie 95/46/EG. Die Gesichtserkennung kann unterschiedlichen Zwecken dienen: Sie kann für die automatische Identifizierung von Personen auf Bildern in sozialen Netzwerken ebenso eingesetzt werden wie für die Überwachung und die Kriminalitätsbekämpfung. Welche Garantien notwendig sind, hängt daher vom Anwendungszweck ab.

Da das Recht am eigenen Bild im EU-Recht nicht ausdrücklich definiert ist, gab die nach Artikel 29 der Richtlinie 95/46/EG eingesetzte Datenschutzgruppe im Hinblick auf eine kohärente Auslegung der nationalen Rechtsvorschriften zur Umsetzung dieser Richtlinie in ihrer Stellungnahme 02/2012 Empfehlungen zur Verwendung der Gesichtserkennung in sozialen Netzwerken ab ([1]).

Laut der Stellungnahme ist die Gesichtserkennung nicht unvereinbar mit dem EU-Recht. Allerdings wird darauf hingewiesen, dass die Gesichtserkennung Datenschutzbedenken hervorruft, und es werden Empfehlungen ausgesprochen, wie sie unter Wahrung des Rechts von Einzelpersonen auf Schutz der sie betreffenden Daten einzusetzen ist. Gemäß der Stellungnahme muss vor Verwendung der Gesichtserkennung in sozialen Netzwerken unter anderem die gültige Einwilligung der betroffenen Person eingeholt werden.

Am 25. Januar 2012 legte die Kommission ihre Vorschläge für die EU-Datenschutzreform vor und übermittelte sie dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat. In der vorgeschlagenen Verordnung zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr ([2]) werden die Rechte der betroffenen Personen und die Pflichten der für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen in Bezug auf Online-Daten wie Bilder und Gesichtserkennungsdaten, insbesondere durch die Einführung des Rechts auf Vergessenwerden und des Rechts auf Datenübertragbarkeit, klargestellt und gestärkt.

([1]) Stellungnahme 02/2012 zur Gesichtserkennung bei Online- und Mobilfunkdiensten: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/article-29/documentation/opinion-recommendation/files/2012/wp192_de.pdf

([2]) KOM(2012)11: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0011:DE:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008769/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Automatic face recognition

Following stiff criticism from data protection interest groups, Facebook is going to abandon its controversial face recognition function in Europe. Facebook always argued that this function was intended to help users find and tag photos of their friends. On the other hand, in view of the enormous potential for abuse, data protection groups demanded that users should be expressly asked for permission to activate the function. After all, it is not enough simply to advise people not to upload photos of themselves if they do not want to be recognised, as other users can upload and tag photos of these people (without obtaining their permission first).

This also contradicts the 'right to one's own image' as it applies in a number of Member States, according to which people can decide for themselves whether and to what extent photos taken of them can be published, although this right is much more liberal in Anglo-Saxon territories than in the German judicial area, for example.

Software developers are working to advance the software behind automatic face recognition, so that many more functions, programmes and apps could be made.

1. What is the Commission's view of automatic face recognition, for example in the context of the 'right to one's own image'?

2. To what extent is automatic face recognition reconcilable with EU data protection regulations?

3. What is planned in this regard in the event that more programmes are developed for automatic face recognition?

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

Face recognition implies the processing of personal data. National laws implementing Directive 95/46/EC apply to such processing activities. Facial recognition can be used for applications as diverse as identifying automatically individuals on pictures in social networks, to surveillance and crime fighting, therefore required safeguards vary depending on the application.

In order to ensure consistent interpretation of the national laws implementing Directive 95/46/EC, and taking into account that the right to one's own image is not explicitly defined in EC law, the Working Party set up under Article 29 of Directive 95/46/EC, in its opinion 02/2012 issued guidance on the use of facial recognition in social network ([1]).

The opinion does not consider facial recognition irreconcilable with EC law. The opinion clarifies that facial recognition raises data protection concerns and makes recommendations on how to implement facial recognition while respecting an individual's right to personal data protection. According to the opinion, the valid consent of the individual is one of the necessary requirements to allow facial recognition use in social networks.

On 25 January 2012, the Commission presented its proposals for the EU data protection Reform and submitted them to the European Parliament and the Council. The proposed Regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data ([2]) clarifies and strengthens the rights of data subjects and the obligations of controllers with regard to processing of online data such as pictures and facial recognition data, *inter alia* by the introduction of the right to be forgotten and the right to data portability.

([1]) Opinion 2/2012 on facial recognition in online and mobile services: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/article-29/documentation/opinion-recommendation/files/2012/wp192_en.pdf

([2]) COM(2012) 11: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0011:EN:NOT

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008770/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(1. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Kopfgeld auf Mohammed-Filmmacher

Die massiven und teilweise gewaltsamen Proteste in der islamischen Welt gegen ein islamfeindliches US-Video halten an. In Pakistan soll laut BBC-Bericht sogar von höchster Stelle zu Gewalt aufgerufen worden sein: Eisenbahnminister Ghulam Ahmed Bilour soll ein Kopfgeld von 100 000 Dollar (rund 77 000 EUR) auf die Tötung des Filmproduzenten ausgesetzt und die Taliban sowie Al-Qaida explizit dazu aufgefordert haben, den Produzenten zu töten, um Gotteslästerer das Fürchten zu lehren.

1. Welche Reaktion erfolgte seitens der Hohen Vertreterin hinsichtlich des islamkritischen Videos und der nachfolgenden gewaltsamen Proteste in der islamischen Welt?

2. Welche Reaktion erfolgte ggf. auf die Tötungsaufrufe?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(17. Januar 2013)

Die EU hat die jüngsten durch den Film „Innocence of Muslims“ („Die Unschuld der Muslime“) ausgelösten Reaktionen, insbesondere die Proteste und Gewaltakte in mehreren Ländern, sehr aufmerksam verfolgt.

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin hat die Gewalt in ihrer Erklärung vom 14. September 2012 scharf verurteilt und in einer gemeinsamen Erklärung mit dem Generalsekretär der Organisation für Islamische Zusammenarbeit (OIC), dem Generalsekretär der Arabischen Liga (AL) und dem Kommissar für Frieden und Sicherheit der Afrikanischen Union (AU) vom 20. September 2012 nachdrücklich zu Frieden und Toleranz aufgerufen.

Für Gewalt kann es keine Rechtfertigung geben. Viele führende Persönlichkeiten des öffentlichen und politischen Lebens in den überwiegend muslimischen Ländern haben die Gewaltakte ebenfalls umgehend verurteilt. Auch sollte nicht vergessen werden, dass die Proteste in einer Reihe von Ländern friedlich verliefen.

Die EU verurteilt jegliche Verbreitung von religiösem Hass, der zu Feindseligkeit oder Gewalt aufstachelt. So bedauerte der Sprecher der Hohen Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin öffentlich die von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochene Aussetzung eines Kopfgeldes. Als besonders besorgniserregend bezeichnete er die Tatsache, dass der Mordaufruf von einem Mitglied der pakistanischen Regierung ausging, auch wenn sich der Ministerpräsident des Landes von den Bemerkungen distanzierte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008770/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Bounty on anti-Islam filmmaker

The enormous wave of sometimes violent protest in the Islamic world against a US video critical of Islam continues. According to a BBC report, violence has even been incited at the highest levels in Pakistan: Railways Minister Ghulam Ahmed Bilour is said to have offered a bounty of USD 100 000 (around EUR 77 000) for the killing of the film's producer, explicitly calling on the Taliban and al-Qaida to kill the producer to strike fear into blasphemers.

1. What was the response of the High Representative to the anti-Islam video and the subsequent violent protests in the Islamic world?

2. What was her response, if any, to the calls for the killing of the producer?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2013)

The EU has followed very closely recent events triggered by the trailer 'Innocence of Muslims', notably the protests and violence that took place in several countries.

The HR/VP has firmly condemned the violence in her statement of 14 September 2012 and she has sent a strong message of peace and tolerance in the joint statement she made with the Secretary General of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Secretary General of the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union (AU) on 20 September 2012.

There can be no justification for violence. Many leading public and political figures in the Muslim majority world have also been swift in their condemnation of the violence. One should not forget either that in a number of countries, the protests have been peaceful.

The EU condemns any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to hostility and violence, wherever they come from. In this regard, the HR/VP Spokesperson publicly deplored the call for a bounty which is referred to. He expressed particular concern that this call should come from a member of the government of Pakistan, even if the Prime Minister of this country has dissociated himself from the remarks.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008771/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(1. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Verknüpfung von Facebook mit Kundendaten

Facebook will mit einem Unternehmen zusammenarbeiten, das nach eigenen Angaben „nahezu jeden Haushalt in den USA und auch eine Billion Dollar in Konsumententransaktionen" kennt. Demnach besteht Datalogix' Geschäftsmodell darin, herauszufinden, was Konsumenten tatsächlich kaufen, wenn sie eine bestimmte Werbung gesehen haben. Angeblich werden die Nutzerdaten anonymisiert, doch das lässt sich nur schwer nachvollziehen. Und natürlich sind solche Unternehmen aufgrund der Fülle des ihnen vorliegenden Materials in der Lage, anschließend diese Informationen auch wieder zu entanonymisieren.

Datalogix ist vor allem in den USA aktiv und hat mit in den Staaten überaus beliebten Bonus- und Rabatt-Karten über 1 000 Einzelhändler und Einzelhandelsketten Informationen und vor allem E-Mail-Adressen von etwa 70 Millionen US-Haushalten erhoben. Diese Adressen gleicht Datalogix nun mit den Angaben für Facebook-Konten ab.

Wer Facebook nutzt, nimmt damit automatisch an der Auswertung durch Datalogix teil. Facebook-Nutzer können das nur auf den Seiten des Marktforschungsinstituts Datalogix ausschalten. Auch daran stoßen sich Datenschützer und fordern, dass diese Daten nur mit ausdrücklicher Zustimmung der Nutzer ausgewertet werden sollten.

1. Ist etwas Derartiges auch innerhalb der EU möglich oder ist dies mit EU-Datenschutzbestimmungen nicht vereinbar?

2. Für den Fall, dass eine Verknüpfung von Kundendaten mit Facebook im Rahmen der EU-Datenschutzbestimmungen möglich ist, plant die Kommission eine dahin gehende Überarbeitung, dass diese Daten nur mit ausdrücklicher Zustimmung der Nutzer ausgewertet werden können?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(10. Dezember 2012)

Laut den in der Presse und von der Electronic Frontier Foundation veröffentlichten Informationen ([1]) erstreckt sich die Partnerschaft zwischen Datalogix und Facebook auf USA-spezifische Daten und auf Daten über US-Haushalte.

Falls eine solche Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten auf die EU ausgeweitet werden sollte, würde sie unter die nationalen Rechtsvorschriften zur Umsetzung der Datenschutzrichtlinie 95/46/EG ([2]) fallen. Falls diese Verarbeitung auch die Speicherung bestimmter Informationen wie Cookies auf den Geräten der Endnutzer oder auf Mobiltelefonen einschließen würde, würden zudem die nationalen Rechtsvorschriften zur Umsetzung der Datenschutzrichtlinie für elektronische Kommunikation ([3]) zur Anwendung gelangen.

Laut der Analyse, die die zuständigen Datenschutzbehörden zum Thema Werbung auf der Basis von Behavioural Targeting durchgeführt haben, müsste für eine solche Verarbeitung vorab eine in Kenntnis der Sachlage erteilte Einwilligung der Nutzer ([4]) eingeholt werden, um die Anforderungen der Datenschutzrichtlinie für elektronische Kommunikation und der Richtlinie 95/46/EG zu erfüllen, und die einzelnen Nutzer hätten auf jeden Fall das Recht, gegen eine solche Verarbeitung Widerspruch ([5]) einzulegen.

Die Kommission hat am 25. Januar 2012 mehrere Vorschläge zur Reform der Datenschutzvorschriften der EU angenommen. Die vorgeschlagene Verordnung ([6]) wäre unter anderem direkt anwendbar auf Verarbeitungen, die sich auf die Überwachung des Verhaltens von Einzelpersonen in der EU beziehen. Sie soll die Rechte der von der Verarbeitung betroffenen Personen im Zusammenhang mit Online-Tätigkeiten wie sozialen Netzwerken präzisieren und stärken. In ihr wird insbesondere klargestellt, dass es jeweils der vorherigen, ausdrücklichen, spezifischen und in Kenntnis der Sachlage erteilten Zustimmung des Betroffenen bedarf.

([1]) Siehe den am 25.9.2012 erschienenen Artikel der Electronic Frontier Foundation: https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2012/09/deep-dive-facebook-and-datalogix-whats-actually-getting-shared-and-how-you-can-opt

([2]) Richtlinie 95/46/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. Oktober 1995 zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr.

([3]) Richtlinie 2002/58/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. Juli 2002 über die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und den Schutz der Privatsphäre in der elektronischen Kommunikation, zuletzt geändert durch die Richtlinie 2009/136/EG.

([4]) Stellungnahme 2/2010 der Artikel-29-Datenschutzgruppe zur Werbung auf Basis von Behavioural Targeting: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/privacy/docs/wpdocs/2010/wp172_de.pdf

([5]) Artikel 14 der Richtlinie 95/46/EG.

([6]) Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr (Datenschutz-Grundverordnung): http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:DE:HTML

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008771/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Linking Facebook data with customer data

Facebook is planning to cooperate with Datalogix, a company that claims to be in, according to its own description, 'almost every US household and more than USD 1 trillion in consumer transactions'. According to the information from Datalogix, the company's business model involves finding out what consumers actually buy when they have seen a particular advertisement. It claims its user data are rendered anonymous, though this is difficult to verify. Due to the huge volume of material available to them, such companies are naturally in a position to reverse the anonymisation process at a later stage.

Datalogix is mainly active in the USA and, working with over 1 000 retailers and retail chains, has used bonus and discount cards popular in the United States to gather information, in particular e-mail addresses, from about 70 million US households. Datalogix is now merging these addresses with Facebook account information.

Anyone using Facebook automatically participates in Datalogix evaluation. Facebook users can only deactivate this function on the Datalogix website. Data protection groups also have difficulty with this and demand that it should only be possible to evaluate this data with the express agreement of users.

1. Is something similar possible within the EU, or is this irreconcilable with EU data protection rules?

2. If it is possible to link customer data with Facebook data under EU data protection rules, is the Commission planning to revise these rules, so that these data can only be evaluated with the express agreement of users?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2012)

According to the information reported in the press and by the Electronic Frontier Foundation ([1]), the partnership between Datalogix and Facebook covers US related data and US households.

If such processing of personal data were to be extended to the EU, the national laws implementing the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC ([2]) would apply to it. And if such processing implied storing some information such as cookies on the terminal equipment or on mobile phones, the national laws implementing the ePrivacy Directive ([3]) would also apply.

Taking into account the analysis of the data protection authorities in the context of behavioural advertising, such a processing would require prior specific and informed consent ([4]) of the user in order to fulfil the requirements of both the ePrivacy Directive and Directive 95/46/EC, and that individuals would in any case have among other the right to object to it ([5]).

The Commission adopted on 25 January proposals for an EU data protection Reform. The proposed Regulation ([6]) will *inter alia* be directly applicable when the processing relates to the monitoring of the behaviour of individuals in the EU. It will clarify and further strengthen the rights of data subjects in the context of online activities, such as social networking. In particular the Commission proposal clarifies that consent shall be prior informed, specific and explicit.

([1]) EFF article of 25.9.2012:
https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2012/09/deep-dive-facebook-and-datalogix-whats-actually-getting-shared-and-how-you-can-opt

([2]) 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.

([3]) Directive 2002/58/EC (Directive on privacy and electronic communications) as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC.

([4]) Data Protection Working Party 29 opinion on online behavioural advertising:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/privacy/docs/wpdocs/2010/wp171_en.pdf

([5]) As per Article 14 of Directive 95/46/EC.

([6]) The proposal 'Proposal for a regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation)' is available on Eur-lex at:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0011:EN:NOT

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008773/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(1º ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Condizioni di povertà estrema per le donne del Bangladesh separate o divorziate

Un recente rapporto pubblicato da HRW, denuncia la difficilissima condizione nella quale vivono oggigiorno le donne del Bangladesh, costrette a confrontarsi quotidianamente con leggi discriminatorie nell'ambito di matrimonio, separazione e divorzio. Secondo le stime governative, circa 330 000 donne sono divorziate e un numero imprecisato sono separate dal marito.

Nel settimo Paese più popoloso del mondo, più del 55 % delle ragazze e donne sopra ai 10 anni sono sposate; per molte, infatti, il matrimonio è l'unica garanzia di una sicurezza economica.

Spesso però, tali unioni comportano difficoltà finanziarie, causate principalmente da pressioni sociali nei confronti delle donne, costrette a lasciare il proprio posto di lavoro una volta sposate, private della possibilità di gestire entrate e risparmi e frequentemente estromesse dal mondo lavorativo una volta separate.

Il diritto del Bangladesh sulla persona spesso costringe le donne a matrimoni violenti o a condizioni di povertà estrema una volta divorziate. Tale condizione è esacerbata dalla lentezza burocratica giudiziaria delle istanze preposte a garantire alle donne i diritti minimi legati al matrimonio e al suo scioglimento.

I programmi di assistenza sociale sono altresì inadeguati e le barriere divengono per le donne spesso insormontabili. L'instabilità matrimoniale è stata definita vera e propria causa di estrema povertà nei nuclei familiari alla cui guida vi siano donne.

Nonostante i piccoli ma significativi passi in avanti degli ultimi anni, soprattutto riguardo al riconoscimento delle perdite economiche quali atto di violenza domestica, molto resta da fare.

Come intende dunque agire la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al fine di rafforzare le politiche di protezione e assistenza sociale nei confronti delle donne separate o divorziate in Bangladesh?

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

I diritti delle donne e un accesso adeguato alla giustizia sono già tra le principali priorità della politica in materia di diritti umani condotta dall'UE nei confronti del Bangladesh.

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza dell'esistenza di disposizioni che discriminano le donne nella legislazione bangladese e segue attentamente il rispetto degli impegni assunti dal governo del Bangladesh per eliminare le discriminazioni nei confronti delle donne, enunciati in diversi documenti politici, quali il manifesto elettorale del governo «Vision 2021», la politica nazionale di sviluppo delle donne (2011) e la politica nazionale in materia di istruzione (2010).

I diritti delle donne sono un tema ricorrente nel dialogo dell'UE con le autorità bangladesi, nel cui ambito l'Unione ha sollevato questioni quali lo scioglimento delle riserve del Bangladesh alla CEDAW ([1]), legate all'eliminazione delle discriminazioni previste dalla legge (articolo 2) e delle discriminazioni nelle relazioni matrimoniali e familiari (articolo 16), l'attuazione della politica nazionale di sviluppo per le donne e della legge sulla violenza domestica e le iniziative in corso per contrastare le discriminazioni nei confronti delle donne.

Le questioni di genere, e in particolare l'emancipazione femminile, ricoprono una posizione centrale nei programmi dell'UE. L'assistenza dell'Unione europea si è incentrata particolarmente sul sostegno alle famiglie monoparentali guidate da una donna, sulla difesa dei diritti delle donne, sulle opportunità di istruzione a loro disposizione e sul libero esercizio dei loro diritti sessuali e riproduttivi.

In particolare, i programmi di sicurezza alimentare approvati nell'ambito dei programmi indicativi pluriennali per il 2007-2010 e per il 2011-2013 (62 milioni di euro) riservano particolare attenzione alle famiglie monoparentali più povere guidate da una donna. La protezione delle donne indigenti continuerà a essere una questione trasversale nel prossimo ciclo di programmazione (2014-2020).

([1]) CEDAW = Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (commissione per l'eliminazione delle discriminazioni nei confronti delle donne).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008773/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Extreme poverty for separated or divorced women in Bangladesh

A recent report published by Human Rights Watch sheds light on the extremely difficult situation currently experienced by women in Bangladesh, who are forced every day to face discriminatory laws in terms of marriage, separation and divorce. According to government estimates, around 330 000 women are divorced and an unspecified number are separated from their husbands.

In the seventh most populous country in the world, over 55 % of women and girls aged over 10 are married. For many women and girls, marriage is their only guarantee of financial security.

Often, however, these marriages involve financial difficulties, caused mainly by social pressures on women, who are forced to leave their jobs once they are married, are unable to manage income and savings and are frequently excluded from the world of work if they become separated.

Personal law in Bangladesh often forces women into violent marriages or into extreme poverty if they get divorced. This situation is made worse by the slow legal bureaucracy of the courts which are responsible for guaranteeing women minimum rights with regard to marriage and the dissolution of marriage.

Social care programmes are also inadequate and the obstacles for women often become insurmountable. Marital instability has been established as a real cause of poverty among female-headed households.

Despite the small but significant progress in recent years, particularly with regard to recognition of financial losses as an act of domestic violence, there is still a long way to go.

What does the Vice-President/High Representative therefore intend to do to strengthen protection and social care policies for separated or divorced women in Bangladesh?

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

Women's rights and adequate access to justice are already among the main priorities of the EU's human rights policy towards Bangladesh.

The HR/VP is aware of the existence of provisions in Bangladeshi legislation which are discriminatory against women. It is following closely the commitments made by the Government of Bangladesh to eliminate discrimination against women, as reflected in a number of policy documents such as Vision 2021 (the Government's election manifesto), the National Women Development Policy (2011) and the National Education Policy (2010).

Women's rights are regularly raised in the EU's dialogue with the authorities of Bangladesh. The EU has raised matters such as the elimination of Bangladesh's reservations to the CEDAW ([1]), which are related to the elimination of discrimination under the law (Article 2) and the discrimination in marriage and family relations (Article 16), the implementation of the National Women Development Policy, the implementation of the Domestic Violence Law and ongoing efforts to curb discrimination against women.

Gender, and more particularly women's empowerment, has a central place in EU programmes. In its assistance, the EU has paid particular attention to support for women-headed households, women's rights advocacy, education opportunities for women and the free exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights.

Particularly, food security programmes approved under the Multi-annual Indicative Programmes 2007-10 and 2011-13 (EUR 62 million) have a specific focus on ultra-poor women-headed households. The protection of destitute women will continue to be a cross-cutting concern during the forthcoming programming cycle (2014-2020).

([1]) CEDAW = Convention Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-008774/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(1 października 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Pilna potrzeba misji obserwacyjnej procesu Vladimira Kozlova w Kazachstanie

W dniu 15 marca 2012 r. Parlament Europejski przyjął rezolucję w sprawie Kazachstanu, która wzywa Wysoką Przedstawiciel Unii do Spraw Zagranicznych i Polityki Bezpieczeństwa do uważnego monitorowania rozwoju sytuacji w tym kraju. Obecnie w Kazachstanie odbywa się proces jednego z liderów opozycji, Vladimira Kozlova, który wkracza w decydującą fazę i w najbliższym czasie spodziewane jest ogłoszenie wyroku. Vladimirowi Kozlovowi grozi do 13 lat więzienia, dlatego tę sprawę należy uznać za bardzo pilną. Obecność przedstawicieli instytucji europejskich i organizacji międzynarodowych przyczyniła się do uniewinnienia lub złagodzenia wyroków sądowych pozostałych liderów opozycji.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zadać następujące pytania:

Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel uważa za zasadną konieczność monitorowania procesu Vladimira Kozlova w Kazachstanie?

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych przewiduje wysłanie swoich przedstawicieli do Kazachstanu na proces Vladimira Kozlova, który wchodzi w decydującą fazę i w najbliższym czasie spodziewane jest ogłoszenie wyroku?

Czy zgodnie z wezwaniem rezolucji Wysoka Przedstawiciel przedstawi Parlamentowi Europejskiemu sprawozdanie z przeprowadzonych obserwacji?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca i podległe jej służby uważnie śledzą sytuację w Kazachstanie od czasu zamieszek w Żangaözen w grudniu 2011 r., a w szczególności przypadek Vladimira Kozlova. Proces Vladimira Kozlova rozpoczął się 16 sierpnia, a zakończył 8 października 2012 r. Został on oskarżony o zorganizowanie zamieszek w grudniu 2011 r., wzniecanie niepokoju społecznego oraz próbę obalenia rządu. Prokuratura wystąpiła o dziewięć lat pozbawienia go wolności, został on jednak skazany na siedem i pół roku pozbawienia wolności oraz konfiskatę mienia. Zgodnie z postulatem Parlamentu Europejskiego zawartym w rezolucji z dnia 15 marca 2012 r. delegatura UE w Astanie obserwowała proces sądowy Vladimira Kozlova wraz z przedstawicielami USA, OBWE i niektórych państw członkowskich. W dniu 9 października 2012 r. rzecznik Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej wydał oświadczenie wyrażające obawy dotyczące przebiegu procesu sądowego.

Delegatura UE nie zaprzestaje śledzić rozwoju sytuacji w związku z możliwym odwołaniem się Vladimira Kozlova od wydanego wyroku. Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych oraz Specjalny Przedstawiciel Unii Europejskiej w Azji Środkowej podzielili się wnioskami i wrażeniami z obserwacji procesu z Parlamentem Europejskim, w tym przy okazji spotkań delegacji ds. Azji Środkowej w dniach 18 września oraz 15 października 2012 r. Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych jest gotowa udzielić odpowiedzi na dalsze pytania i regularnie informować Parlament Europejski o rozwoju sytuacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008774/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Urgent need for an observation mission to monitor the Vladimir Kozlov trial in Kazakhstan

On 15 March 2012, the European Parliament adopted a resolution concerning Kazakhstan which called on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to monitor developments in that country closely. At present, the trial of opposition leader Vladimir Kozlov is taking place in Kazakhstan. The trial is entering its final stages and a judgment is expected shortly. Vladimir Kozlov could be sentenced to a maximum of 13 years in prison, making this a very urgent matter. The presence of representatives from European institutions and international organisations has resulted in the acquittal of other opposition leaders, as well as a reduction in sentencing severity.

Therefore, I would like to ask the following questions:

Does the High Representative agree that monitoring the Vladimir Kozlov trial in Kazakhstan is necessary?

Does the European External Action Service plan to send its representatives to Kazakhstan for the Vladimir Kozlov trial, which is entering its final stages and in which a judgment is expected shortly?

Will the High Representative, acting in accordance with the requirements of the Resolution, present a report on these observations to the European Parliament?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President and her services have been closely following the situation in Kazakhstan since the violent events of December 2011 in Zhanaozen, especially the case of Mr Kozlov. The trial of Mr Kozlov started on 16 August and was finalised on 8 October 2012. He was accused of organising the violent events that took place in December 2011, inciting social hatred and attempting to overthrow the government. Whereas the prosecution had asked for his 9 year imprisonment, Vladimir Kozlov has been sentenced to seven and a half years of imprisonment with confiscation of property. In line with the demand of the European Parliament, in its resolution dating from 15 March 2012, the EU Delegation in Astana observed the trial, in cooperation with the US, OSCE and some EU Member States. The spokesperson of the HR/VP published a statement, expressing concern about this trial procedure on 9 October 2012.

The EU Delegation is and will continue to also follow the developments regarding a possible appeal by Mr Kozlov against the verdict. The European External Action Service and the EU Special Representative for Central Asia have shared the results and impressions from the observation of the trial with the European Parliament, including on the occasion of the Central Asia Delegation meetings of 18 September and 15 October 2012. The European External Action Service is available to answer any questions and to inform the European Parliament on the developments regularly.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008775/12
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(1º ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Terremoto in Emilia Romagna — Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE

Il Presidente del Consiglio dei ministri italiano Mario Monti ha approvato, con il Ministro dell'Economia italiano Vittorio Grilli, il decreto che istituisce il Fondo per la ricostruzione delle aree terremotate colpite dal sisma dello scorso 20 e 29 maggio 2012 in Emilia Romagna, Lombardia e Veneto.

Inoltre, l'Unione europea ha destinato, secondo il Trattato UE (art.107, par. 2), una parte dei fondi di solidarietà UE (per calamità naturali) a ricoprire il 2,5 % dei costi di ricostruzione dei danni accertati alle infrastrutture in Emilia Romagna.

Sono passati circa quattro mesi dal terremoto che ha colpito l'Emilia Romagna e la ricostruzione non è iniziata. Più di tremila persone vivono ancora nelle tendopoli e cinquemila sono i posti di lavoro a rischio, soprattutto nel settore agroalimentare, dove la Coldiretti valuta un danno di mezzo miliardo di euro. Il danno per l'economia è ingente poiché l'Emilia Romagna produce l'1,5 % del Pil nazionale. I contributi dell'UE attraverso il Fondo di solidarietà non sono ancora stati erogati all'Emilia Romagna.

Si chiede pertanto alla Commissione:

1. In che modo l'UE intende anticipare il via libera e sollecitare l'invio degli aiuti per concludere l'operazione di risanamento economico delle popolazioni terremotate?

2. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE affinché vengano erogati fondi del Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE per cofinanziare la ricostruzione delle infrastrutture danneggiate dal terremoto in Emilia Romagna?

3. L'Unione europea ha già individuato insieme alle autorità locali in Emilia Romagna quali sono le infrastrutture danneggiate dal terremoto e per le quali vi sarà il contributo del Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE per i lavori di ricostruzione?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(13 novembre 2012)

Il regolamento n. 2012/2002 del Consiglio stabilisce i tipi di interventi di emergenza essenziale che possono ottenere finanziamenti dal Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE. Tra essi, sono previsti il ripristino del funzionamento della infrastrutture, gli alloggi provvisori, i costi dei servizi di soccorso, la protezione del patrimonio culturale e l'opera di risanamento. Non possono essere rifusi danni ai privati.

I tipi specifici di operazioni da finanziare in Emilia Romagna, Veneto e Lombardia, saranno stabiliti d'accordo con le autorità italiane, una volta che la sovvenzione di 670 milioni di euro proposta dalla Commissione, sarà stata approvato dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio. Il regolamento specifica che l'impiego della sovvenzione, compresa la selezione dei singoli progetti, è di competenza esclusiva delle autorità italiane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008775/12
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Earthquake in Emilia-Romagna — EU Solidarity Fund

The Italian Prime Minister, Mario Monti, with the Italian Minister for the Economy, Vittorio Grilli, has approved a decree establishing the fund for the reconstruction of the areas devastated by the earthquake of 20 and 29 May 2012 in the regions of Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto.

In addition, in accordance with Article 107(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union , the European Union has earmarked part of the EU Solidarity Fund (for natural disasters) to cover 2.5% of the costs to repair the damage caused to infrastructure in Emilia-Romagna.

Around four months have passed since the earthquake that struck Emilia-Romagna and reconstruction has not yet begun. More than 3 000 people are still living in camps and 5 000 jobs are at risk, particularly in the agri-food sector, in which Coldiretti, the national farmers' confederation, puts the cost of the damage at EUR 500 million. The damage to the economy is huge since Emilia-Romagna produces 1.5% of Italian GDP. Emilia-Romagna has still not received the EU aid through the Solidarity Fund.

Can the Commission state:

1. How the EU intends to bring forward the go-ahead and urge that aid be sent to complete the economic recovery of the earthquake victims?

2. What measures the EU intends to take so that funds from the EU Solidarity Fund are paid out to co-finance the reconstruction of infrastructure damaged by the earthquake in Emilia-Romagna?

3. If the European Union has already identified, together with the local authorities in Emilia-Romagna, which infrastructures were damaged by the earthquake and which will receive aid from the EU Solidarity Fund for reconstruction works?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 November 2012)

Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 determines the types of essential emergency operations that may receive funding from the EU Solidarity Fund. These include the restoration to working order of infrastructure, temporary accommodation, the cost of the rescue services, the protection of the cultural heritage and cleaning-up. Private damage may not be compensated.

The specific types of operations to be funded in Emilia-Romagna, Veneto and Lombardy will be laid down in agreement with the Italian authorities once the EUR 670 million grant proposed by the Commission has been approved by the European Parliament and the Council. The regulation specifies that the implementation of the grant, including the selection of individual projects, is the sole responsibility of the Italian authorities.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008776/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(1 octombrie 2012)

Subiect: Libera circulație a persoanelor

Libera circulație a persoanelor permite tot mai multe călătorii ale cetățenilor europeni în alte state membre sau în interiorul țării de origine. Pe de altă parte, noile tehnologii permit o căutare mai facilă de informații utile turiștilor, precum locuri de cazare, bilete de avion, programe culturale la instituțiile culturale etc.

Pentru cei care iubesc natura și doresc să străbată diferite trasee turistice cu bicicleta sau la pas nu există încă suficiente facilități care să le permită identificarea traseelor sau a diverselor facilități de care pot dispune.

În ce măsură Comisia sprijină eforturile administrațiilor locale și regionale, precum și parteneriatele de tip public-privat pentru realizarea de proiecte de hărți electronice și geolocalizare prin GPS, destinate turiștilor din statele membre, respectiv aplicații tehnologice noi, cunoscute sub numele de „informații fără contact", care pot fi utilizate atât de locuitorii statelor membre, cât și de turiștii din alte țări?

Răspuns dat de domnul Tajani în numele Comisiei
(14 noiembrie 2012)

Comisia împărtășește punctul de vedere conform căruia noile tehnologii reprezintă un factor important pentru promovarea călătoriilor în diferitele state membre, precum și pentru obținerea de informații turistice și de servicii. Cadrul politic pentru turismul european ([1]) răspunde provocării pe care o constituie inovarea în plină expansiune, care reprezintă un factor determinant pentru competitivitatea sectorului turismului, în special prin integrarea instrumentelor și serviciilor IT în cadrul tuturor activităților turistice.

În special în domeniul turistic, Comisia cofinanțează mai multe proiecte transfrontaliere care au ca scop susținerea produselor transnaționale de turism tematic, inclusiv, printre altele, traseele cicliste transnaționale pe distanțe lungi sau traseele europene de turism cultural. Printre aceste proiecte se numără realizarea de hărți ale traseelor, elaborarea de strategii de dezvoltare a traseelor, precum și promovarea eventualelor oferte turistice interesante și încurajarea utilizării noilor tehnologii (inclusiv a tehnologiilor de geolocalizare).

În general, sunt în desfășurare mai multe activități în cadrul Inițiativei privind TIC& sectorul turismului, care este dezvoltată în cooperare cu părțile interesate. Scopul este de a crea un instrument la nivel de întreprinderi (B2B) care să ofere informații și instrumente TIC actualizate întreprinderilor din sectorul turismului pentru a le ajuta să își înființeze, să își gestioneze și să își promoveze activitățile turistice.

Ambiția Comisiei este de a continua și pe viitor în această direcție, cu condiția ca autoritățile bugetare să pună la dispoziție resurse suficiente în acest scop.

([1]) Comunicare a Comisiei către Parlamentul European, Consiliu, Comitetul Economic și Social European și Comitetul Regiunilor: „Europa, destinația turistică favorită la nivel mondial — un nou cadru politic pentru turismul european". COM(2010) 352 final, 30.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008776/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Free movement of persons

The free movement of persons allows European citizens to travel more often to other Member States or within their own country. At the same time, new technologies allow an easier search for useful tourist information such as accommodation, airline tickets, cultural programmes in cultural institutions, etc.

For those who love nature and want to cycle or walk along various tourist routes there are still insufficient resources to allow them to identify these routes or the various facilities available.

How will the Commission support the efforts of local and regional governments and public-private partnerships to carry out digital mapping projects and GPS geolocation for tourists from Member States, namely new technological applications known as 'contactless information' that can be used by both Member State residents and tourists from other countries?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2012)

The Commission shares the view that new technologies represent an important factor for promoting travel between Member States, as well as for obtaining tourist information and procuring services. The policy framework for tourism in Europe ([1]) addresses the challenge of developing innovation as a determining factor for the competitiveness of the tourism industry, notably by the integration of IT tools and services into all tourism activities.

Particularly in the tourism field, the Commission is co-financing several cross border projects which aim at supporting transnational thematic tourism products including, among others, transnational long distance cycle routes or European cultural tourism routes. Some of these projects include mapping of the routes, strategies for their development and promotion of potentially attractive tourism offers, and encourage the use of new technologies (including geolocation technologies).

In general, several activities are being carried out within the scope of the ICT & Tourism Business Initiative, which is developed in cooperation with the stakeholders. The aim is to create a B2B instrument which provides information and up-to-date ICT-tools to tourism companies to help them set up, manage and promote tourism businesses.

It is the ambition of the Commission to continue along the same lines in the future, provided that sufficient resources are made available by the budgetary authorities.

([1]) Commission Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe'. COM(2010) 352 final, 30.6.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008777/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Railway sector — liberalisation

Will the Commission set out how it believes incumbents are using 'dirty tricks' to impede railway liberalisation and competition — and what is being done about this?

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

It is the Commission's view that a structure in which the rail infrastructure manager is a fully controlled subsidiary of a railway holding creates a potential for conflict of interest. This potential conflict exists in the role of the infrastructure manager to offer non-discriminatory access to all railway undertakings, whether they are part of the holding or external new entrant operators, and his function within the holding where he has to take account of the interests of the holding and its transport subsidiaries. There are numerous examples in the reports of national competition authorities, regulatory bodies and in informal complaints from competitors of practices resulting from this conflict of interest.

The Commission has announced to strengthen the independence of infrastructure managers in its forthcoming Fourth Package proposal, beyond the existing independence requirements for track access charging and path allocation. Even where Member States have implemented these existing requirements and created independent allocation and charging bodies, there are other functions of infrastructure management which can be the origin of discriminatory practices, such as investment and maintenance. Currently an impact assessement is prepared for the Fourth Rail Package which will contain a thorough impact analysis of the functioning of the market and the need for such measures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008778/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Railway sector — anti-trust

How does the Commission explain the silence of anti-trust and competition authorities when faced by railway operators such as SNCF, Deutsche Bahn, NS Cargo, Transfesa and others using their financial power to buy out and price-dump on new entrants and potential competitors?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2012)

The Commission and National Competition Authorities (NCAs) are active in the enforcement of competition law in the rail sector. As is typical for recently liberalised sectors, they investigate whether for instance national rail incumbents abuse their dominant position in the rail infrastructure market or in the rail transport market to prevent competition from new entrants, thereby infringing Article 102 TFEU.

For example, the Commission initiated proceedings against the Deutsche Bahn Group in June 2012 and the Italian Competition Authority fined the Italian incumbent FS for hindering access by its competitors to passenger rail services in July 2012.

The press also reported proceedings pending before the French competition authority against SNCF, regarding notably a number of alleged pricing abuses. The Commission is not currently investigating any predatory pricing behaviour by rail incumbents but would also consider investigating any concrete and substantiated allegations in this regard, as such behaviour may infringe Article 102 TFEU.

The Commission and NCAs also assess under their respective merger rules whether acquisitions by incumbent railway undertakings would substantially reduce competition.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008779/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: British support for the railway sector

Will the Commission set out why, in its view, the British taxpayer pays much more in support for the railway sector than what taxpayers in other Member States pay, despite higher fares?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2012)

In principle it is for the Member States to decide how to balance income from taxpayers and farepayers, whilst taking account of EU rules on financing of railway infrastructure and on public service passenger services.

Such financing decisions often take consideration of investment programmes in Member States, including renewals of, enhancements to and construction of new infrastructure. In the UK, infrastructure expenditure increased substantially following the Hatfield accident as inherited underinvestment was addressed. Between 1997 and 2010 passenger growth of 57% occured while rail industry expenditure increased by 60% or GBP 4 billion to around GBP 11 billion ([1]).

Along with the irregular patterns of large investment programmes, geographical characteristics, overall transport policies and broader sustainability objectives of the Member States may mean that no definitive short period comparatives can be made on sector support.

Sir Roy McNulty's report developed options and recommendations to reduce the upward pressure on fares and the burden on the taxpayer through reductions in total UK system costs. The UK Government stated in its command paper ([2]) that it intended to incentivise the rail industry to at minimum deliver efficiencies worth some GBP 2.5 billion by 2018/19. However, the suggestion that the UK taxpayer subsidy is excessive in comparison to other countries is not confirmed by all indicators. In terms of public funding per track-kilometre,it seems that the UK is only slightly above the EU average with at least seven other Member States having a higher ratio.

Additional information can be found in the annex which is sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat of the European Parliament.

([1]) Realising the potential of GB Rail by Sir Roy McNulty published May 2011.
([2]) Reforming our Railways: Putting the Customer First published in March 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008780/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Resistance to liberalisation of the railway sector

Will the Commission set out — country-by-country where applicable — the role of resistance to railway liberalisation and maintenance of the role of the state in exacerbating the debt problems of Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2012)

The Commission has on several occasions commissioned inquiries about the financial situation of railway undertakings and infrastructure managers, including their debt problems. It quotes in particular the study of RGL Forensics and others of 2009 on the 'Separation of accounts between railway undertakings and infrastructure managers' (which also contains an analysis of their financial situation and the impact of state financing), the study of Ecorys of 2006 ('Analysis of the financial situation of infrastructure managers and railway undertakings') and the study of NERA of 2004 on the 'Financing of and public budget contributions to railways'.

The Commission pursues a coherent policy of revitalisation of the railway sector, through market opening and the creation of sound financing conditions for infrastructure. It is convinced that market opening will increase the attractiveness of rail transport and improve financial conditions for infrastructure financing and transport operation. In the Recast of the First Railway Package which was proposed by the Commission and adopted by EU co-legislators in October 2012, the conditions for a sound financing of infrastructure have been improved, including the requirement of compulsory multi-annual contracts between the State and the infrastructure managers. For passenger traffic, the Commission will make a proposal in its Fourth Railway Package to liberalise domestic services which will have a great potential for savings in the Member States.

As regards the state aid dimension of the question, detailed information by country can be found in the respective report:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/expenditure.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008781/12
to the Commission
John Bufton (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Railway sector — competition

Railway equipment, especially locomotives, has to be approved for use in different member states and by different railway administrations before they can enter traffic: is this process of 'approval' being used by railway operators to prevent competition?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2012)

Directive 2008/57/EC ([1]) sets out an authorisation of placing in service of railway vehicles, which is issued in each Member State by the National Safety Authority, except when a full cross-acceptance of the first authorisation can be established in other Member States. Under this framework, manufacturers and railway undertakings report going through an excessively long and costly authorisation process ([2]). They also report restrictive interpretations of the legislation by the National Safety Authorities. Allegations were also made by operators concerning the use of these administrative barriers to prevent competition.

Commission Recommendation of 29 March 2011 on the authorisation for the placing in service of structural subsystems and vehicles under Directive 2008/57/EC clarifies some of the issues raised by the stakeholders. However, besides a closer monitoring of the implementation of EU rail legislation and wider dissemination and training activities, a revision of the EU process for the placing in services of vehicle is needed. This Commission intends to address this issue in its 4th railway package proposals.

([1]) Directive 2008/57/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 on the interoperability of the rail system within the Community (Recast), OJ L 191, 18.7.2008, pp. 1-45.
([2]) See final report of the task force on railway vehicles authorisation available on ERA website: http://www.era.europa.eu/Document-Register/Pages/Report_TF_Railway_Vehicles_Auth.aspx

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008782/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιτόκια στην ΕΕ

Παρατηρούνται τεράστιες αποκλίσεις στο ύψος των επιτοκίων που επικρατούν ανάμεσα στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ. Το οξύμωρο είναι ότι οι χώρες που αντιμετωπίζουν σήμερα σοβαρά οικονομικά προβλήματα (Ισπανία, Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία, Κύπρος) έχουν και τα πιο ψηλά επιτόκια, γεγονός που δυσκολεύει αφάνταστα τις προσπάθειές τους για ανάκαμψη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε να επιτευχθεί εξορθολογισμός της κατάστασης και σύγκλιση επιτοκίων, που είναι απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση για την επίτευξη της οικονομικής και νομισματικής ένωσης και την προώθηση της ενιαίας αγοράς;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Οι αποκλίσεις των επιτοκίων μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ αντικατοπτρίζουν την αντίληψη περί κινδύνου, καθώς και τις διαφορές στην οικονομική τους συγκυρία και τα μακροοικονομικά τους μεγέθη. Στην παρούσα συγκυρία, φαίνεται ότι οι μεγάλες αποκλίσεις των επιτοκίων σε αρκετά κράτη μέλη περιλαμβάνουν μεταξύ άλλων αβάσιμα ασφάλιστρα κινδύνου μετατροπής.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα, το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο και τις κυβερνήσεις κάθε κράτους αντίστοιχα, προσπαθεί να τονώσει την εμπιστοσύνη προς τις χώρες αυτές μέσω της προώθησης και της εφαρμογής οικονομικών και δημοσιονομικών μεταρρυθμίσεων, με στόχο τη μείωση του χρέους και την αποκατάσταση της ανταγωνιστικότητας στα υπερχρεωμένα κράτη μέλη.

Τα εν λόγω μέτρα ενίσχυσης της αξιοπιστίας έχουν ήδη οδηγήσει σε σαφή πτωτική τάση των επιτοκίων στη δευτερογενή αγορά για κράτη μέλη στην περιφέρεια της ευρωζώνης, ιδιαίτερα για τα ιρλανδικά και τα πορτογαλικά κρατικά ομόλογα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008782/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: EU interest rates

There are huge differences between the current interest rate levels in EU Member States. Ironically, countries dealing with serious economic problems (Spain, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus) have the highest interest rates. This is making their recovery attempts extremely difficult.

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

What action will it take to rationalise the situation and converge interest rates, which is a necessary condition for achieving economic and monetary union and promoting the single market?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 November 2012)

Interest rate differentials among EU Member States are reflecting risk perceptions in addition to differences in their cyclical conditions and macroeconomic fundamentals. At the current juncture, high interest rate spreads seem to also include ungrounded redenomination risk premia in several Member States.

The European Commission, together with the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund and the respective national governments tries to boost confidence in these countries through the promotion and implementation of economic and financial reforms aiming at reducing debt and restore competitiveness in higly-indebted Member States.

These creditibility enhancing measures have already resulted in a clear downward trend of interest rates on the secondary market for euro-area peripheral Member States, particularly for Irish and Portuguese Government bonds.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008783/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Φοροδιαφυγή στην ΕΕ

Η φοροδιαφυγή αποτελεί ένα από τα σοβαρότερα προβλήματα για την ΕΕ αφού ανέρχεται σε 1 τρισεκατομμύριο ευρώ ετησίως ενώ υπάρχουν χώρες όπου ξεπερνά το 10 % του ΑΕΠ. Ειδικά όμως στις δοκιμαζόμενες από την κρίση χώρες αποτελεί πραγματική ανοικτή πληγή αφού περιορίζει δραστικά τα κρατικά έσοδα και την προσπάθεια εξυγίανσης των δημοσίων οικονομικών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Τι προτείνει για την καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ και ειδικά στις χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού νότου όπου το φαινόμενο λαμβάνει τεράστιες διαστάσεις;

— Υπάρχει πανευρωπαϊκή στρατηγική για την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή πρόκειται να καταρτίσει σχέδιο δράσης τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, το οποίο θα εξετάζει τρόπους ενίσχυσης της καταπολέμησης της φορολογικής απάτης και της φοροδιαφυγής, θα καλύπτει τόσο την άμεση όσο και την έμμεση φορολογία και θα προβλέπει σειρά δράσεων στον τομέα αυτό. Οι προβλεπόμενες δράσεις αποσκοπούν, μεταξύ άλλων, στην ενίσχυση της διοικητικής συνεργασίας και στη στήριξη της ανάπτυξης της υφιστάμενης πολιτικής της χρηστής διακυβέρνησης, ειδικά όσον αφορά τους φορολογικούς παραδείσους και τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό, που ενδέχεται να είναι επιζήμιοι για τα φορολογικά έσοδα των κρατών μελών. Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει επίσης το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της στην γραπτή ερώτηση E-008428/2012.

Όσον αφορά μια παρευρωπαϊκή στρατηγική για την καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής, η Επιτροπή αναφέρεται σε αυτήν στην ανακοίνωσή της της 27ης Ιουνίου 2012 ([1]), η οποία αναλύει την υπάρχουσα κατάσταση και προτείνει συγκεκριμένους τρόπους αντιμετώπισης του προβλήματος, οι οποίοι θα αναλύονται περαιτέρω στο προαναφερόμενο σχέδιο δράσης.

([1]) COM(2012) 351 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008783/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Tax evasion in the EU

Tax evasion is one of the EU's most serious problems, costing EUR 1 trillion every year. There are countries where it exceeds 10% of GDP. However, tax evasion is particularly problematic in countries hit hard by the crisis, as it substantially reduces state revenues and the effort to consolidate public finances.

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

— What will it do to combat tax evasion throughout the EU and specifically in southern European countries, where the problem is growing?

— Is there a pan-European strategy for combating this problem?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2012)

The Commission plans to issue an Action Plan in December 2012 which will consider ways to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion covering both direct and indirect taxation, and will specify a series of actions in this area. The actions envisaged are intended , *inter alia*, to enhance administrative cooperation and to support the development of the existing good governance policy, more specifically in regard to tax havens and aggressive tax planning, both of which are potentially very harmful to Member States tax revenues. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E- 008428/2012.

With regard to a pan- European strategy for combating tax evasion, the Commission refers to its communication of 27 June 2012 ([1]) which analyses the existing situation and proposes concrete ways forward which will be further detailed in the abovementioned Action Plan.

([1]) COM(2012) 351 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008784/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Οίκοι αξιολόγησης

Έχει αποδειχθεί ότι οι διεθνείς οίκοι αξιολόγησης έχουν διαδραματίσει αρνητικό ρόλο στη δημιουργία και την παράταση της κρίσης στην Ευρώπη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποια είναι η απάντηση της ΕΕ;

— Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η Επιτροπή για την αντιμετώπιση της αρνητικής αυτής κατάστασης;

— Πώς αντιμετωπίζεται από την Επιτροπή το ενδεχόμενο σύστασης ενός ευρωπαϊκού οίκου αξιολόγησης;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται την άποψη ότι οι οργανισμοί αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας, με την υποτίμηση του πιστωτικού κινδύνου των δομημένων πιστωτικών προϊόντων, συνέβαλαν σε μεγάλο βαθμό στην αναταραχή που προκλήθηκε στις αγορές. Ενώ οι συνθήκες στις αγορές επιδεινώνονταν, οι οργανισμοί αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας (ΟΑΠΙ) δεν κατάφεραν να αποτυπώσουν εγκαίρως την επιδείνωση αυτή στις αξιολογήσεις τους.

Η Επιτροπή ασχολήθηκε ήδη με τις σημαντικές αδυναμίες στον τομέα της αξιολόγησης της πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας στις προτάσεις της για τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας (ΟΑΠΙΙ ([1]) και ΟΑΠΙ ΙΙ ([2])), και συγκεκριμένα με τις συγκρούσεις συμφερόντων που αφορούν τους αναλυτές αξιολογήσεων, την ποιότητα των μεθοδολογιών και τη διαφάνεια. Επίσης, στο πλαίσιο της πρότασης ΟΑΠΙ ΙΙ, ανατέθηκαν στην Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Κινητών Αξιών και Αγορών (ΕΑΚΑΑ), από τον Ιούνιο 2011, αποκλειστικές εποπτικές αρμοδιότητες επί των ΟΑΠΙ που έχουν εγγραφεί στα μητρώα της ΕΕ.

Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει επίσης, στην πρότασή της ΟΑΠΙ ΙΙΙ ([3]), σημαντικά θέματα που εξακολουθούν να αποτελούν πηγή προβληματισμού, ιδίως όσον αφορά τις αξιολογήσεις δημόσιου χρέους, τις μεθόδους αξιολόγησης που ακολουθούν οι ΟΑΠΙ, την ευθύνη των ΟΑΠΙ και την υπερβολική εξάρτηση από τις αξιολογήσεις. Η πρόταση αποτελεί τώρα αντικείμενο διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ του Συμβουλίου και του Κοινοβουλίου.

Η Επιτροπή αξιολόγησε τη σκοπιμότητα της δημιουργίας ανεξάρτητου ευρωπαϊκού ΟΑΠΙ στο πλαίσιο της εκτίμησης επιπτώσεων που συνοδεύει την πρόταση ΟΑΠΙ ΙΙΙ. Από την ανάλυση προέκυψε ότι η σύσταση ΟΑΠΙ με δημόσια χρηματοδότηση θα κοστίσει μεταξύ 300 και 500 εκατ. ευρώ σε διάστημα πέντε ετών και ότι θα μπορούσε να τεθεί από τους οίκους αξιολόγησης θέμα αξιοπιστίας και ανεξαρτησίας του εν λόγω ΟΑΠΙ. Επιπλέον, θα μπορούσε να θέσει τους ιδιωτικούς φορείς της αγοράς σε μειονεκτική θέση. Για τους λόγους αυτούς, η Επιτροπή αποφάσισε να μην δώσει περαιτέρω συνέχεια στην ιδέα αυτή. Ωστόσο, στο πλαίσιο των διεξαγόμενων διαπραγματεύσεων σχετικά με την πρόταση ΟΑΠΙ ΙΙΙ μεταξύ του Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, το θέμα αυτό έχει τεθεί εκ νέου προς συζήτηση. Η Επιτροπή είναι διατεθειμένη να συνεχίσει την περαιτέρω διερεύνηση τρόπων προώθησης των αξιολογήσεων ποιότητας από ανεξάρτητους φορείς.

([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]) Πρόταση ΚΑΝΟΝΙΣΜΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ για την τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1060/2009 για τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας. Βρυξέλλες, 15.11.2011, COM(2011) 747 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008784/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Rating agencies

It has been proven that international rating agencies have played a negative role in the creation and the continuation of the European crisis.

Will the Commission answer the following:

— What is the EU's response to this?

— What action does the Commission intend to take to deal with this negative situation?

— How is the Commission addressing the plan to set up a European rating agency?

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

The Commission shares the opinion that credit rating agencies have significantly contributed to the market turmoil by underestimating the credit risk of structured credit products. As market conditions were worsening, credit rating agencies (CRAs) failed to reflect it promptly in their ratings.

The Commission already addressed important failures in the credit rating field in its CRA I ([1]) and CRA II ([2]) proposals, namely conflicts of interests affecting rating analysts, quality of methodologies and transparency. Furthermore, in CRA II, the European Securities and Markets Authorities (ESMA) was entrusted with exclusive supervision powers over CRAs registered in the EU as of June 2011.

The Commission also addressed important remaining concerns in its CRA III proposal ([3]), notably as regards sovereign ratings, methodologies for ratings, the liability of CRAs and excessive reliance on ratings. This proposal is currently being negotiated between Council and Parliament.

The Commission assessed the feasibility of establishing an independent European CRA in the impact assessment accompanying the CRA III proposal. This analysis showed that setting up a CRA with public money, would cost between EUR 300 and 500 million over five years, and it could raise concerns vis-à-vis issuers regarding that CRA's credibility and independence. Moreover, this could put private market players to a disadvantage. For these reasons, the Commission decided not to pursue this idea further. However, within the current CRA III negotiations between the Parliament and the Council, this matter has been raised again. The Commission remains open to further explore possible ways to foster ratings that are of quality and that are issued by independent actors.

([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]) Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies. Brussels, 15.11.2011, COM(2011) 747 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008785/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μετανάστευση επιστημόνων

Το φαινόμενο της μετανάστευσης νέων ανθρώπων από τις χώρες του ευρωπαϊκού νότου προς τις χώρες του ευρωπαϊκού βορρά συνεχίζει να παίρνει ανησυχητικές διαστάσεις. Συχνό είναι το φαινόμενο διαρροής εγκεφάλων (brain drain), αφού αρκετοί ταλαντούχοι επιστήμονες αδυνατούν να βρουν εργασία στις χώρες του ευρωπαϊκού νότου και αναζητούν εργασία αλλού.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι σκοπεύει να κάνει η Επιτροπή για να βοηθήσει στην αντιμετώπιση αυτού του προβλήματος που αντιμετωπίζουν οι χώρες που πλήττονται από την κρίση;

2. Ποια η θέση της Επιτροπής για την εγκαθίδρυση ενός συστήματος εγγυημένης απασχόλησης για νέους αποφοίτους (κατά το πρότυπο του επιτυχημένου μοντέλου που ακολουθεί η Αυστρία);

3. Ποια βήματα έχουν γίνει προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή θέλει να βελτιώσει την προοπτική σταδιοδρομίας των επιστημόνων στην Ευρώπη. Προκειμένου να επιτευχθεί η δημιουργία ενός ευρωπαϊκού χώρου έρευνας, όπου οι ερευνητές, οι επιστημονικές γνώσεις και η τεχνολογία θα κυκλοφορούν ελεύθερα, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε ανακοίνωση τον Ιούλιο του 2012 ([1]), η οποία ορίζει τις συγκεκριμένες δράσεις που πρόκειται να εφαρμοστούν από κοινού από τα κράτη μέλη, τους ενδιαφερόμενους οργανισμούς ερευνών και την Επιτροπή.

Οι δράσεις Marie Curie του προγράμματος «Άνθρωποι» του ΠΠ7 χρηματοδοτούν ευρωπαϊκούς οργανισμούς με σκοπό την πρόσληψη ερευνητών από το εξωτερικό. Τα στοιχεία για την Ελλάδα καταδεικνύουν ότι από το 2007, 404 ερευνητές έχουν λάβει χρηματοδότηση για να μεταβούν εκεί ([2]). Τα σχέδια των δράσεων Marie Curie προσφέρουν εμπειρία στα καλύτερα ιδρύματα και εκπαίδευση σε δεξιότητες που απαιτούνται από τους εργοδότες, αυξάνοντας έτσι τις ευκαιρίες σταδιοδρομίας εντός ή εκτός του ακαδημαϊκού τομέα. Πάνω από 200 κέντρα EURAXESS σε 40 χώρες προσφέρουν καθοδήγηση σε διακινούμενους ερευνητές. Το προτεινόμενο πρόγραμμα «Ορίζοντας 2020» θα βοηθήσει στην αύξηση των επενδύσεων στην έρευνα και την καινοτομία.

2. και 3. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος «Ευρώπη 2020» και της εμβληματικής πρωτοβουλίας του «Νεολαία σε κίνηση» ([3]), που ξεκίνησε το Σεπτέμβριο του 2010, η Επιτροπή παρουσίασε ένα πλαίσιο προτεραιοτήτων πολιτικής για τη μείωση της ανεργίας των νέων, καλώντας ιδιαίτερα τα κράτη μέλη να εφαρμόσουν προγράμματα παροχής εγγυήσεων για τους νέους. Από τότε, η πρόοδος που έχει σημειωθεί είναι πολύ αργή, ενώ η κατάσταση των νέων έχει επιδεινωθεί και κανένα σημάδι αντιστροφής αυτής της τάσης δεν είναι ορατό.

Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να προτείνει σύσταση του Συμβουλίου, ως μέρος της δέσμης μέτρων για την απασχόληση των νέων, σχετικά με τις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για τη θέσπιση εγγυήσεων για τους νέους καλώντας τα κράτη μέλη να διασφαλίσουν ότι όλοι οι νέοι λαμβάνουν μιας καλής ποιότητας προσφορά απασχόλησης, συνεχούς εκπαίδευσης, μαθητείας ή πρακτικής άσκησης εντός συγκεκριμένου χρονικού διαστήματος από τη στιγμή που θα μείνουν άνεργοι ή ύστερα από την τυπική εκπαίδευσή τους.

([1]) Μια ενισχυμένη σύμπραξη του Ευρωπαϊκού Χώρου Έρευνας για αριστεία και ανάπτυξη COM(2012) 392 τελικό, της 17ης Ιουλίου 2012.
([2]) Συμπεριλαμβανομένων 198 Ελλήνων.
([3]) COM(2010) 1047 της 15ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008785/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Scientist migration

The trend of young people migrating from southern European to northern European countries continues to grow. The 'brain drain' phenomenon occurs frequently, as many talented scientists fail to find employment in southern European countries and seek work elsewhere.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. What will it do to help combat this problem, which many crisis-affected countries face?

2. What is the Commission's position on establishing a guaranteed employment system for young graduates (similar to Austria's successful model)?

3. What steps have been taken with this objective in mind?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2012)

1. The Commission wants to improve the career prospect of scientists across Europe. In order to achieve a European Research Area, where researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely, the Commission has adopted a communication in July 2012 ([1]) laying down precise actions to be implemented jointly by Member States, Research Stakeholder Organisations and the Commission.

Marie Curie Actions of the FP7 PEOPLE programme finance European organisations to recruit researchers from abroad. The figures for Greece show that since 2007 404 researchers have been financed to move there ([2]) . Marie Curie Actions projects provide experience in the best institutions and training in skills demanded by employers, thus increasing career opportunities within or outside academia. Over 200 EURAXESS centres in 40 countries provide guidance to mobile researchers. The proposed programme Horizon 2020 will help to increase investment in research and innovation.

2 and 3. In the framework of Europe 2020 and its 'Youth on the Move' flagship initiative ([3]), launched in September 2010, the Commission presented a framework of policy priorities to reduce youth unemployment, calling in particular on Member States to set up Youth Guarantee schemes. Since then, progress has been very slow, while the situation of young people has aggravated and no sign of reversing trends are in sight.

The Commission intends to propose in December 2012 as part of a Youth Employment Package a Council recommendation on guidelines to establish Youth Guarantees calling on Member States to ensure that all young people receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a certain time of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

([1]) A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth COM(2012) 392 final of 17 July 2012.
([2]) Including 198 Greeks.
([3]) COM(2010) 1047 of 15 September 2010.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008786/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κύπρος και συντάξεις

Σε επανειλημμένες εκθέσεις της για την κυπριακή οικονομία η Επιτροπή έχει εντοπίσει ότι η Κύπρος είναι χώρα χαμηλών συντάξεων και ότι χρειάζεται βελτίωση της κατάστασης. Από τα επίσημα στατιστικά στοιχεία της Eurostat προκύπτει ότι η Κύπρος δαπανά μόνο 7,3 % του ΑΕΠ για συντάξεις, ενώ ο μέσος όρος της ΕΕ είναι 13,4 %. Επιπλέον προκύπτει ότι το ποσοστό των ατόμων της τρίτης ηλικίας που ζουν κάτω από το όριο της φτώχειας στην Κύπρο (41,2 %) είναι το ψηλότερο μεταξύ των χωρών της Ευρωζώνης όπου ο μέσος όρος είναι 15,4 %. Παρόλα ταύτα η Τρόικα, στην οποία συμμετέχει και εκπρόσωπος της Επιτροπής, φέρεται να εισηγείται περαιτέρω μειώσεις των συντάξεων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πώς θα ενεργήσει ώστε, μέσα από τη συμμετοχή της στην Τρόικα, να διασφαλίσει ότι δεν θα υπάρξουν τέτοια μέτρα που θα μειώνουν ακόμη περισσότερο τις ήδη χαμηλές συντάξεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Στο πλαίσιο της Λευκής Βίβλου για τις συντάξεις ([1]), η Επιτροπή προτείνει σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Κύπρου, να εναρμονίσουν τα οικεία συνταξιοδοτικά συστήματα σε βιώσιμη βάση και να μεριμνήσουν για επαρκείς και ασφαλείς συντάξεις βραχυπρόθεσμα και μακροπρόθεσμα, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα τρέχοντα υψηλά ποσοστά φτώχειας μεταξύ των συνταξιούχων. Για τη βιωσιμότητα και την επάρκεια των συνταξιοδοτικών συστημάτων θα χρειαστεί ισορροπημένη προσέγγιση.

Καθώς το δεύτερο μέρος της υποχρεωτικής σύνταξης υιοθετήθηκε μόλις το 1980, το κυπριακό συνταξιοδοτικό σύστημα συνεχίζει να διανύει την περίοδο ωρίμανσης. Συνεπώς, αναμένεται ότι, μακροπρόθεσμα, θα έλθουν στο προσκήνιο προβλήματα οικονομικής βιωσιμότητάς του.

Η Κυπριακή Κυβέρνηση έχει ήδη λάβει τα πρώτα μέτρα για τη βελτίωση της οικονομικής βιωσιμότητας των συνταξιοδοτικών συστημάτων, το 2009 για το γενικό σύστημα κοινωνικών ασφαλίσεων (ΓΣΚΑ) και το 2011 για το σύστημα συντάξεων των κρατικών υπαλλήλων (ΣΣΚΥ). Το ΓΣΚΑ χρηματοδοτείται εν μέρει από τις εισφορές των εργαζομένων και των εργοδοτών, αλλά είναι σημαντικό το μερίδιο συμβολής της κυβέρνησης στο σύστημα για κάθε ασφαλισμένο. Το 2011 θεσπίστηκε η εισφορά στο ΣΣΚΥ από τους εργαζόμενους, το οποίο όμως χρηματοδοτείται κατά κύριο λόγο από τη γενική φορολογία.

Στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου Ευρωπαϊκού εξαμήνου, η Κύπρος έχει λάβει σύσταση «να βελτιώσει περαιτέρω τη μακροπρόθεσμη βιωσιμότητα και επάρκεια του συνταξιοδοτικού συστήματος και να αντιμετωπίσει το υψηλό ποσοστό ηλικιωμένων που κινδυνεύουν από τη φτώχεια. Να μεριμνήσει για αύξηση της πραγματικής ηλικίας συνταξιοδότησης, ευθυγραμμίζοντας μεταξύ άλλων την πραγματική ηλικία συνταξιοδότησης με την αύξηση του προσδόκιμου ζωής» ([2]).

([1]) COM (2012) 55, 16.02.2012, Λευκή Βίβλος, Ατζέντα για επαρκείς, ασφαλείς και βιώσιμες συντάξεις, http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7341&langId=en

([2]) Σύσταση του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με το εθνικό πρόγραμμα μεταρρυθμίσεων της Κύπρου για το 2012 και την έκδοση γνώμης του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με το πρόγραμμα σταθερότητας της Κύπρου για την περίοδο 2012-2015, http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11247.en12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008786/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Cyprus and pensions

In its many reports on the Cypriot economy, the Commission has found that Cyprus has low pensions and that this must be improved. Official Eurostat statistics show that Cyprus spends only 7.3% of GDP on pensions, whereas the EU average is 13.4%. Furthermore, these statistics show that the number of elderly people living below the poverty line in Cyprus (41.2%) is the highest among EU countries, where the average is 15.4%. Nevertheless, the Troika, which includes a representative from the Commission, appears to be introducing further reductions in pensions.

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

— How will it act as a member of the Troika to ensure that pensions will not be further reduced?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2012)

In the context of the White Paper on Pensions ([1]), the Commission advocates all Member States, including Cyprus, to bring their respective pension systems to a viable footing and to ensure adequate and safe pensions in the short-term and long-term, while keeping in mind the current high poverty rates among pensioners. A balanced approach will be necessary to address sustainability and adequacy of pension systems.

With the second part of the compulsory pension introduced only in 1980, the Cypriot pension system is still maturing. Therefore, it is expected that in the long-term, sustainability concerns will come to the forefront.

The Cypriot government has already taken the first steps to improve the financial viability of the pension schemes, in 2009 for the General Social Insurance System (GSIS) and in 2011 for the Government Employees Pension System (GEPS). While the GSIS is partly financed through contributions by employees and employers, the government is contributing significantly to the scheme for every ensured person. In the GEPS employee contributions were introduced in 2011, but it is mostly financed by general taxation.

In the context of the second European Semester, Cyprus has received a recommendation to 'further improve the long-term sustainability and adequacy of the pensions system and address the high at-risk-of-poverty rate for the elderly. Ensure an increase in the effective retirement age, including through aligning the statutory retirement age with the increase in life expectancy' ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 55, 16.2.2012, White Paper, An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7341&langId=en

([2]) Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2012 of Cyprus and delivering a Council Opinion on the Stability Programme of Cyprus, 2012-2015: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11247.en12.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008787/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(1. oktober 2012)

Om: Danmarks begrænsning af Erasmus-studerendes muligheder for at komme til Danmark

I de sidste ti år har der været 47 781 EU-borgere i Danmark på et Erasmus udvekslingssemester. I samme tidsperiode har der været 21 398 danske borgere ude i de andre EU-lande for at studere under samme ordning. Dermed kan det i absolutte termer siges, at Danmark betaler for flere studerende, end det antal de får betalt for i andre EU-lande. På denne baggrund har den danske regering valgt at lægge pres på uddannelsesinstitutionerne, hvilket har resulteret i, at disse har valgt at afvise flere hundrede EU-borgere årligt.

Det følger af afgørelse 1298/2008/EF, at et af de specifikke mål med Erasmus Mundus programmet er at forbedre evner og kvalifikationer hos europæerne gennem mobilitet.

Finder Kommissionen, at ovennævnte initiativ bryder med principperne i afgørelse 1298/2008/EF angående europæiske studerendes mobilitet?

Finder Kommissionen, at ovennævnte initiativ til ny praksis er i modstrid med den fri bevægelighed og ikke-forskelsbehandling?

Hvad har Kommissionen tænkt sig at foretage over for Danmark, såfremt den mener, at den nye praksis strider mod principperne i ovennævnte afgørelse?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Androulla Vassiliou
(28. november 2012)

De danske studerende deltager aktivt i Erasmusprogrammet i en lidt højere grad end gennemsnittet i EU. Danmark er også en attraktiv Erasmusdestination, hvor de indgående strømme er ca. 2,5 gange højere end de udgående strømme.

Skævheder i strømmen af studerende mellem lande er et udbredt fænomen. Det er blevet aftalt i forbindelse med Bolognaprocessen, at når ubalancerne er vedvarende, bør regeringerne undersøge årsagerne, forsøge at øge strømmen i den svage retning og i sidste instans søge bilaterale løsninger med partnerlandene.

De danske institutioner er blevet opfordret til at opnå en bedre balance mellem den indgående og den udgående mobilitet i de bilaterale Erasmusaftaler, som de indgår med partnerinstitutioner i hele Europa. Kommissionen mener, at dette især bør opnås i overensstemmelse med ånden i Bolognamobilitetsstrategien, dvs. ved at øge den udgående mobilitet.

Studenterudvekslingerne inden for Erasmusprogrammet er omfattet af Erasmuschartret, der har til formål at sikre den højest mulige kvalitet i tilrettelæggelsen af udvekslingerne. I dette særlige tilfælde har Kommissionen ingen dokumentation for begrænsninger i adgangen til videregående uddannelse i Danmark på grundlag af de studerendes nationalitet.

Erasmus Mundus-programmet vedrører hovedsagelig ikke-EU-studerende (ca. 70 %). Udvekslingerne er ikke baseret på bilaterale udvekslinger mellem hjemlandets og værtslandets universiteter, men på en global mekanisme, hvor de studerende er mobile mellem to eller tre forskellige institutioner i forskellige lande. Som en konsekvens heraf er ubalance i mobilitetsstrømmene ikke et problem i dette program.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008787/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Denmark's restriction of opportunities for Erasmus students to study in Denmark

Over the past 10 years, 47 781 EU citizens have come to Denmark as part of the Erasmus exchange programme. In the same period, 21 398 Danish citizens went to other EU countries to study under the same scheme. So in absolute terms, it can be said that the number of students Denmark is paying for is greater than the number of Danish students being paid for by other EU countries. As a result, the Danish Government has chosen to put increased pressure on educational establishments, resulting in the rejection of several hundred EU citizens every year.

Decision 1298/2008/EC states that one of the specific objectives of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to enhance the abilities and qualifications of European citizens through mobility.

Does the Commission consider that this pressure from the Danish government violates the principles set out in Decision 1298/2008/EC regarding the mobility of European students?

Does the Commission consider that this initiative to introduce new practices contravenes the principles of freedom of movement and non-discrimination?

What action does the Commission intend to take against Denmark if it believes that these new practices contravene the principles set out in the abovementioned decision?

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

Danish students actively participate in the Erasmus programme at a rate slightly higher than the EU average. Denmark is also an attractive Erasmus destination, with inbound flows around 2.5 times higher than the outbound flow.

Imbalances in student flows between countries are a common phenomenon. It has been agreed within the Bologna Process that where imbalances are sustained, governments should investigate the causes, try to increase flows in the weaker direction and ultimately seek solutions bilaterally with partner countries.

Danish institutions have been invited to achieve a better balance of inbound/outbound mobility in the bilateral Erasmus agreements that they sign with partner institutions across Europe. The Commission believes that this balance should in particular be achieved in the spirit of the Bologna mobility strategy, that is by increasing outward mobility.

Student exchanges within the Erasmus programme are governed by the Erasmus charter, which aims to ensure the highest quality in the organisation of exchanges. In this particular case, the Commission has no evidence of restrictions in access to Danish higher education based on the nationality of students.

The Erasmus Mundus programme mainly concerns non-EU students (approx. 70%); mobility exchanges are not based on bilateral exchanges between a home and host university, but on a global mechanism where students are mobile between two or three different institutions in different countries. As a consequence, the balance of mobility flows is not an issue in this programme.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008788/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(1. oktober 2012)

Om: Søfart

Brugen af lodser er obligatorisk ved navigering i mange nationale farvande. Dette kan være nødvendigt for sejladsens sikkerhed, idet lodserne besidder viden om lokale forhold. Mange EU medlemslande giver dog mulighed for at opnå en undtagelse fra reglen med lodsfritagelsescertifikater (Pilotage Exemption Certificates) (PEC). I henhold til Kommissionens retningslinjer for betingelserne for at opnå en PEC, skal disse være fair og ikke indeholde elementer af protektionisme.

I Estland fremgår det af lovreglerne for erhvervelse af en PEC, at eksamen udelukkende kan foretages på estisk.

Hvad er Kommissionens vurdering af Estlands sprogkrav for PEC-eksamen? Indebærer sprogkravet efter Kommissionens opfattelse elementer af protektionisme?

Vil Kommissionen, såfremt den mener, at ovennævnte kan indebære elementer af protektionisme, tage kontakt til de estiske myndigheder?

Er Kommissionen endvidere vidende om andre EU-medlemsstater, som stiller lignende krav, og hvad vil den i givet fald foretage for at forbedre den retlige ramme med henblik på at sikre et maritimt transportområde uden barriere?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(29. november 2012)

I handlingsplanen ([1]) for oprettelse af et europæisk søtransportområde uden barrierer foreslog Kommissionen medlemsstaterne at skabe en lovgivningsmæssig ramme, som skal lette udstedelsen af lodsfritagelsesbeviser, hvilket vil gøre det muligt for skibsførere, der ikke taler et lands eget sprog, at få udstedt et lodsfritagelsesbevis. De krav, der stilles, for at man kan få et fritagelsesbevis, skal være rimelige og må ikke være protektionistiske.

I 2012 udarbejdede Kommissionen en undersøgelse med det formal at revurdere medlemsstaternes lovgivning om lodsfritagelsesbeviser. Undersøgelsen viser, at situationen ikke har ændret sig væsentligt i mange lande ([2]).

Kommissionen vil nu undersøge, hvilke yderligere foranstaltninger der kan tages i brug for at lette udstedelsen af lodsfritagelsesbeviser. Foranstaltningerne skal tage højde for de mulige konsekvenser, de kan have for sikkerheden, og de skal være forholdsmæssige. Kommissionen planlægger at forelægge et nyt initiativ om lodsfritagelsesbeviser medio 2013.

Ovenstående taget i betragtning påtænker Kommissionen ikke at kontakte de estiske myndigheder særskilt.

([1]) Meddelelse og handlingsplan: etablering af et europæisk søtransportområde uden barrierer KOM(2009)0010 endelig af 21. januar 2009.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/short_sea_shipping/pilotage_exemptions_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008788/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Maritime navigation

The use of pilots is mandatory when navigating in many national waters. This may be necessary to ensure the safety of shipping, as the pilots have knowledge of local conditions. However, many EU Member States allow an exemption from the rule in the form of Pilotage Exemption Certificates (PECs). According to the Commission's guidelines on requirements for obtaining a PEC, these must be fair and avoid any elements of protectionism.

Estonian regulations governing the obtaining of a PEC state that the examination may only be taken in Estonian.

What is the Commission's view on Estonia's language requirement for the PEC examination? Does the Commission consider that the language requirement is a form of protectionism?

If the Commission believes that the abovementioned may be a form of protectionism, will it contact the Estonian authorities?

Is the Commission aware of any other EU Member States that enforce similar requirements and, if so, what does it intend to do to improve the legal framework with a view to ensuring a maritime transport sector without barriers?

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

In the action plan ([1]) for the establishment of a European maritime transport space without barriers, the European Commission recommended to the Member States to create a regulatory framework to facilitate the granting of Pilotage Exemption Certificates (PECs) which would allow shipmasters who do not speak the country's native language to obtain PECs. The requirements for obtaining PECs should be reasonable and should not be protectionist.

In 2012 the Commission carried a study in view to re-assessing the legislation on PECs in the Member States. The study shows that the situation has not changed significantly in many countries ([2]).

The Commission will now assess which further measures could be undertaken to render the issuance of PECs easier. The measures will need to take into consideration the possible impact on safety and be proportionate. The Commission is planning to come up with a new PEC initiative in mid-2013.

In view of this, the Commission does not envisage contacting the Estonain authorities separately.

([1]) Communication and action plan with a view to establishing a European maritime transport space without barriers; COM(2009) 10 final of 21 January 2009.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/short_sea_shipping/pilotage_exemptions_en.htm

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008789/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(1. oktober 2012)

Om: Togpassagerers rettigheder

Deutsche Bahn har i de senere år haft store problemer med togforsinkelser, og passagerne har som følge heraf haft problemer med at nå deres videre forbindelser, hvilket fører megen spildtid med sig.

Ifølge forordning 1371/2007 om jernbanepassagerers rettigheder, har en passager ret til at få tilbagebetalt billetprisen for den del af rejsen, der allerede er foretaget, efter 60 minutters forsinkelse. Såfremt videre færden ikke længere er relevant som følge af forsinkelsen, ydes der kompensation for den fulde billetpris, returbillet inklusiv. Men såfremt passageren vælger at fortsætte rejsen, er kompensationen skåret ned til 25 % af billetprisen for forsinkelse på mellem 60 til 119 minutter, og 50 % af billetprisen på forsinkelser på over 120 minutter.

De lempelige regler for passagerernes rettigheder i forbindelse med forsinkelser giver ikke de pågældende jernbaneselskaber noget incitament til at forsøge at forhindre forsinkelser, og slet ikke forsinkelser på over 120 minutters. Dette skaber store vanskeligheder for mange pendlere og i særdeleshed pendlere, der skal skifte tog på deres strækning.

På ovennævnte baggrund ønskes det oplyst, om Kommissionen har overblik over hyppigheden af forsinkelser for Deutsche Bahn togforbindelser, og hvorvidt der har været en stigning heraf.

Hertil ønskes det oplyst, hvordan Kommissionen forholder sig til mulighederne for at forbedre de togrejsendes rettigheder, så det fremover vil være muligt at opnå kompensation i forbindelse med forsinkelser, der overskrider 30 minutter. Det skulle i særdeleshed gælde i de tilfælde, hvor en sådan forsinkelse resulterer i, passageren ikke når sit næste tog, såfremt denne forbindelse er købt på samme billet.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionen vegne af Siim Kallas
(31. oktober 2012)

I henhold til artikel 28 i forordning (EF) nr. 1371/2007 ([1]) skal jernbanevirksomhederne udarbejde rapporter om deres servicekvalitetsniveau, som bl.a. omfatter data om punktlighed (bilag III til forordningen). Rapporten fra Deutsche Bahn kan findes på Det Europæiske Jernbaneagenturs websted ([2]). Ifølge rapporten var den overordnede punktlighed i langdistancepassagertrafik i 2011 80 % (medregnet forsinkelser på op til 5 min.) og 92,9 % (medregnet forsinkelser på op til 15 min.). 89,9 % af passagererne nåede deres videre forbindelser. Forsinkelserne beregnes ved ankomststedet, og derfor er ikke-opnåede tilslutningsforbindelser på rejser, hvor der foretages flere skift, omfattet af forordningen, når forsinkelsen på ankomststedet overstiger 60 min.

Selvom forsinkelserne bestemt er et stort problem for den enkelte rejsende, er der intet, der tyder på en væsentlig grad af manglende overholdelse fra Deutsche Bahn eller andre jernbanevirksomheder i EU. Det er derfor ikke berettiget at ændre forordningen efter mindre end tre års anvendelse, så der kan kræves erstatning for mindre forsinkelser. Det skal også bemærkes, at der inden for alle andre transportformer først kan anmodes om erstatning efter langt større forsinkelser.

([1]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1371/2007 af 23. oktober 2007 om jernbanepassagerers rettigheder og forpligtelser (EUT L 315 af 3.12.2007, s. 14).

([2]) http://www.era.europa.eu/Document-Register/PRR%20Documents/2011-DB%20Fernverkehr%20AG.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008789/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Train passengers' rights

In the last few years, Deutsche Bahn has experienced significant problems with train delays and passengers have consequently found it difficult to catch their onward connections, resulting in considerable time wastage.

According to Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights, after 60 minutes' delay, a passenger shall have the right to reimbursement of the ticket price for that part of the journey already made. If the ongoing journey is no longer relevant as a consequence of the delay, compensation of the full ticket price, including the return ticket, shall be provided. However, if the passenger chooses to continue the journey, compensation is restricted to 25% of the ticket price for a delay of 60 to 90 minutes and 50% of the ticket price for delays of over 120 minutes.

These lax rules on passengers' rights in relation to delays do not give the railway companies any incentive to try to prevent delays, especially delays of over 120 minutes. This results in considerable difficulties for many commuters, in particular commuters having to change trains during their journey.

Can the Commission state whether it has an overview of the frequency of delays for Deutsche Bahn train connections and the extent to which these have been increasing.

Can the Commission also state its position regarding opportunities for improving train passengers' rights to ensure that in future they will be able to obtain compensation for delays exceeding 30 minutes. In particular, this should apply in cases where such a delay results in passengers failing to catch their onward train, where this connection has been purchased as part of the same ticket.

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2012)

According to Article 28 of Regulation No 1371/2007 ([1]) railway undertakings must report on their service quality standards, which include i. a. data on punctuality of services (Annex III of the regulation). The report from Deutsche Bahn (DB) is available on the ERA website ([2]). According to that report, in 2011, the overall punctuality in passenger long distance services was 80.0% for 5-minutes-delays and 92.9% for 15-minutes-delays. Connectivity was at 89.9%. Delays are calculated at the point of arrival. Thus, missed connections in multi-segment journeys are covered by the regulation when the delay on arrival exceeds 60 minutes.

As a result, whilst delays represent indeed a huge problem for the individual traveller, there is no indication of significant non-compliance of DB, nor of other EU railway undertakings which, after less than three years of operation, would justify an amendment of the regulation with a view to shorten the delay after which compensation is due. It must also be taken into consideration that in all other modes of transport passengers may request compensation only after much longer delays.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p. 14.
([2]) http://www.era.europa.eu/Document-Register/PRR%20Documents/2011-DB%20Fernverkehr%20AG.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008790/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil(PPE)
(1 ta' Ottubru 2012)

Suġġett: Tradutturi għal-lingwa Maltija — nuqqas ta' uffiċjali permanenti

Tqabbil bejn l-għadd ta' karigi allokati għall-impjieg ta' uffiċjali permanenti bħala tradutturi fl-Unità tal-Lingwa Maltija tad-DĠ Traduzzjoni u l-għadd ta' impjegati li fiha fir-realtà juri li hemm nuqqas akut ta' uffiċjali permanenti.

Il-Kummissjoni x'miżuri qed tieħu biex tindirizza dan in-nuqqas akut?

Barra minn hekk, dawn il-miżuri jinkludu xi forma ta' deroga minn deċiżjoni interna li ma tippermettix l-ingaġġ ta' aġenti temporanji b'kuntratti tat-tip TA 2(a), bħala miżura interim biex tindirizza n-nuqqas ta' persunal bejn konkorsi tal-EPSO?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šefčovič f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Novembru 2012)

Fir-rigward tal-kompetizzjonijiet għal tradutturi Maltin, l-għadd relattivament baxx ta' reklutaġġi huwa konsegwenza diretta tal-għadd limitat ta' applikanti. Din il-kwistjoni mhix speċifika għall-kompetizzjonijiet lingwistiċi iżda tidher f'kompetizzjonijiet oħra li fihom huma involuti l-applikanti Maltin.

Sabiex jiżdiedu l-applikazzjonijiet minn ċittadini ta' Stati Membri mhux rappreżentati biżżejjed, l-EPSO għamlet ħilitha biex tinvolvi l-Istati Membri kkonċernati, pereżempju permezz ta' informazzjoni u tħejjija aħjar ta' kandidati potenzjali fil-pajjiżi tagħhom stess. Kemm l-Università ta' Malta kif ukoll l-Istituzzjonijiet Ewropej jagħmlu sforz kontinwu biex iqajmu għarfien dwar l-opportunitajiet ta' karriera fi ħdan l-Unjoni Ewropea, billi jorganizzaw żjarat ta' livell għoli f'Malta, jistabbilixxu kuntatti mal-mezzi tax-xandir, jorganizzaw jiem iddedikati għall-karrieri u affarijiet oħra ta' dan it-tip.

Aġenti temporanji tat-tip 2(a) jiġu ingaġġati biex jimlew postijiet temporanji. Dan mhuwiex il-każ għat-tradutturi Maltin, li l-funzjonijiet tagħhom huma ta' natura permanenti. Madankollu, aġenti temporanji tat-tip 2(b), jiġifieri dawk f'postijiet permanenti, jiġu reklutati regolarment biex jissostitwixxu l-uffiċjali permanenti nieqsa, jekk ikun meħtieġ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008790/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Maltese language translators — shortage of permanent officials

A comparison between the benchmarks for permanent officials to be employed as translators in the Maltese Unit in DG Translation and the actual numbers employed shows that there is an acute shortage of such permanent officials.

What measures is the Commission taking to address this acute shortage?

Moreover, do these measures include some form of a derogation from an internal decision not to allow the hiring of temporary agents as TA 2(a)s, as an interim measure to address such shortages of staff between EPSO competitions?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2012)

As regards the competitions for Maltese translators, the relatively low number of recruitments is the direct consequence of a limited number of applicants. This issue is not specific to linguistic competitions but appears in other competitions involving Maltese applicants too.

In order to foster applications from nationals of underrepresented member states, EPSO has endeavoured to involve the concerned Member States e.g. through better information and preparation of potential candidates in their home countries. Both the University of Malta and the European institutions make a continuous effort to raise awareness about career opportunities within the European Union, organising high-level visits to Malta, taking contacts with the media, organising career days and the like.

Temporary agents of type 2(a) are engaged to fulfil temporary posts. This is not the case for Maltese translators, whose functions are of permanent nature. However, temporary agents of type 2(b), i.e. those on permanent posts, are recruited regularly for replacing missing permanent officials, if needed.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008791/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 ta' Ottubru 2012)

Suġġett: Ftehimiet ta' riammissjoni ma' pajjiżi terzi

B'referenza għat-13-il Ftehim ta' Riammissjoni ma' pajjiżi terzi li daħlu fis-seħħ, il-Kummissjoni tista' tagħti:

— rendikont ta' kemm-il persuna ntbagħtu lura f'kull wieħed minn dawn il-pajjiżi terzi permezz ta' dawn il-Ftehimiet ta' Riammissjoni; kif ukoll

— rendikont tal-Istati Membri minn fejn dawn il-persuni ntbagħtu lura?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(10 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Bħal ma stqarret il-Kummissjoni fl-evalwazzjoni tagħha tal-ftehimiet ta' rijammissjoni tal-UE ppreżentati fit-23 ta' Frar 2011 (COM(2011) 76), ma hemm l-ebda dejta komprensiva dwar l-għadd ta' rijammissjonijiet li saru taħt il-ftehimiet ta' rijammissjoni tal-UE mill-Istati Membri tal-UE. Il-Kummissjoni tirrifletti kif għandha ttejjeb l-istatistiċi eżistenti għall-iskop tal-implimentazzjoni tal-ftehimiet ta' rijammissjoni tal-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008791/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Readmission agreements with third countries

Further to the 13 readmission agreements with third countries that have entered into force, can the Commission provide the following:

— a breakdown of how many persons were returned to each of these third countries through these readmission agreements; and

— a breakdown of the Member States from which these persons have been returned?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2012)

As the Commission informed in its evaluation of the EU readmission agreements presented on 23 February 2011 (COM(2011) 76), there is no comprehensive data on the number of readmissions carried out under the EU readmission agreements by the EU Member States. The Commission reflects how to improve the existing statistics for the purpose of the EU readmission agreements' implementation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008792/12
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: National Roma integration strategies

The plight of the Roma people has recently been given heightened attention, in particular with the Commission's communication on 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020'.

However, this strategy explicitly calls on Member States to revise their national Roma integration strategies, leaving responsibility for the Roma primarily with the Member State. In some cases, this is likely to render the process painfully slow, given the existence of ingrained practices and attitudes in some countries.

Unless exclusion, criminalisation, and under-par education are tackled directly and across Europe, we will condemn the next generation to the same stigmatisation experienced by past and present Roma generations.

Can the Commission explain what it is doing to ensure that the momentum on this issue is not lost and that pressure continues to be exerted on Member States to implement the necessary changes?

Are there any other provisions for dedicating more EU Structural Fund monies to investing in the future of the Roma?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2012)

In order to retain the momentum prompted by the EU Framework and the first progress report, the Commission continues regular dialogue with the Member States and all other stakeholders. In addition to the meetings of the network of the National Roma Contact Points, bilateral meetings with the relevant Member States are organised to follow up the implementation of national strategies. Such meetings took place with France, Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania and a further meeting is scheduled in Slovakia. A roundtable with civil society as well as a meeting of the European Platform for Roma inclusion are also planned.

As regards the EU funds, the Commission will:

— produce a compendium of EU funding sources for Roma inclusion to inform potential beneficiaries of the existing possibilities offered by the EU;

— support the exchange of good practices and define guidelines for using EU funds for Roma inclusion at the level of ESF and ERDF managing authorities;

— raise awareness and support capacity building at the level of local authorities to help them better use EU funds for Roma inclusion;

— promote — within the EU Strategy for the Danube region — partnerships between policy-makers and other stakeholders to address the poverty and social exclusion of marginalised communities, especially the Roma communities.

Finally the Commission aims at improving the quality and relevance of EU funding for Roma inclusion by proposing to link the allocation of EU funds to national Roma Integration Strategies for the 2014-2020 programming period.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008794/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(1º ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Sistema di sorveglianza a priori

Con riferimento alle dichiarazioni della Direzione generale Commercio, che è orientata a non rinnovare il sistema della «sorveglianza a priori» (regolamento (CE) n. 76/2002) delle importazioni di prodotti siderurgici da paesi terzi in scadenza a fine anno 2012, si richiama l'attenzione della Commissione sul fatto che per il settore siderurgico è essenziale conoscere in anticipo i flussi di importazione per impostare rapidamente corrette politiche commerciali, anche perché molti dei prodotti interessati sono anche soggetti a dazi antidumping compensativi in quanto già fortemente penalizzati da importazioni aggressive per prezzi e volumi negli scorsi anni.

Il sistema non ha obiettivi protezionistici, in quanto le licenze di importazione sono concesse dagli Stati membri in modo assolutamente automatico, e inoltre non grava sulla struttura organizzativa della Commissione in quanto è oggi pienamente già funzionante. In considerazione dell'attuale situazione critica del settore siderurgico, fortemente penalizzato dalla negativa congiuntura economica, si rivolgono alla Commissione i seguenti quesiti:

1. come intende la Commissione salvaguardare la capacità dell'industria siderurgica europea, caratterizzata da una forte tradizione tecnologica e innovativa, di reagire velocemente ai cambiamenti del mercato in assenza di informazioni rapide sull'andamento dei flussi di importazione?

2. La Commissione non ritiene che allo stato attuale sia più opportuno rinnovare l'attuale sistema per il prossimo biennio, come richiesto dall'industria europea e dalle loro associazioni Eurofer ed ESTA, piuttosto di far decadere questa fonte di informazione dimostratasi importante negli scorsi anni?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(25 ottobre 2012)

1. Nel 2009 la Commissione ha posto in essere un meccanismo statistico — «Surveillance 2» — che consente il monitoraggio in tempo quasi reale delle importazioni di prodotti siderurgici. Dieci giorni dopo la fine del mese in esame è disponibile l'85 % delle informazioni pertinenti, mentre dopo quindici giorni sono disponibili tutte le informazioni. «Surveillance 2» è pienamente operativo dal 2011 e copre tutti i prodotti. Questo meccanismo funziona già molto bene per il monitoraggio delle importazioni di prodotti tessili. Esso dovrebbe consentire all'industria siderurgica europea di continuare a ricevere celermente informazioni sui cambiamenti intervenuti sul mercato.

2. La Commissione ha indicato che non ha intenzione di proporre il prolungamento del meccanismo di sorveglianza a priori per le importazioni di certi prodotti siderurgici. Si è registrato un costante calo delle importazioni dall'inizio del 2012 — tendenza che non «*minaccia di danneggiare i produttori comunitari*» come prescritto dal regolamento n. 260/2009. Inoltre, le licenze rilasciate dalle autorità dell'UE non indicano un aumento nel breve termine delle importazioni di prodotti sotto sorveglianza. Infine, il mantenimento di un meccanismo di sorveglianza a priori contraddirebbe la più ampia agenda dell'UE in tema di agevolazione degli scambi. Pertanto, la Commissione preferisce servirsi degli strumenti statistici alternativi di cui dispone, in particolare di «Surveillance 2» quale descritto al punto 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008794/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: A priori Community surveillance system

With reference to the statements by the Directorate-General for Trade, which is considering not renewing the a priori Community surveillance system (Regulation (EC) No 76/2002) for imports of steel products from third countries, which is due to expire at the end of 2012, the Commission should note that it is vital for the steel sector to have advance information on import flows in order swiftly to frame fair trade policies, also because many of the goods in question are also subject to anti-dumping countervailing duties, as they have already been heavily penalised by aggressive imports, in terms of prices and volumes, in recent years.

The system has no protectionist aims, as import licences are granted by Member States automatically, nor is it a burden on the Commission's organisational structure, as it is already fully up and running. In view of the current critical situation in the steel industry, which has been heavily affected by the economic downturn, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How does the Commission intend to safeguard the ability of the European steel industry, which is characterised by a strong tradition of technology and innovation, to react quickly to market changes in the absence of prompt information on developments in import flows?

2. Does the Commission not believe that, as things stand, it would be more appropriate to renew the current system for the next two years, as called for by the European steel industry and its associations EUROFER and ESTA, rather than remove this source of information that has proven to be important in recent years?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(25 October 2012)

1. In 2009, the Commission has put in place a statistical mechanism — 'Surveillance 2' — which allows almost real time monitoring of imports of steel products. Ten days after the end of the concerned month 85% of the relevant information is available and within fifteen days, all relevant information is available. 'Surveillance 2' has been fully operational since 2011 and covers all products. This mechanism already works very well for the monitoring of textiles imports. It should allow the European steel industry to continue getting quickly informed of market changes.

2. The Commission has indicated that it has no intention to propose the prolongation of the prior surveillance mechanism for certain steel imports. There has been a steady decrease in actual imports since the beginning of 2012 — a trend which does not '*threaten to cause injury to Community producers*' as required by Regulation No 260/2009. In addition, the licences issued by EU authorities do not indicate any rise in imports of the products under surveillance in the near term. Finally, the maintenance of a prior surveillance mechanism would contradict the EU's broader trade facilitation agenda. Therefore, the Commission prefers relying on alternative statistical tools it has at its disposal in particular 'Surveillance 2' as described in point 1.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-008795/12
till kommissionen
Christian Engström (Verts/ALE)
(1 oktober 2012)

Angående: CleanIT

Den ideella föreningen European Digital Rights släppte den 21 september 2012 ett dokument, skrivet inom det av kommissionen finansierade projektet CleanIT, angående användningen av internet för terroristsyften. ([1]) Dokumentet väcker allvarliga farhågor om projektets verksamhet och förslag, och huruvida de är förenliga med de grundläggande rättigheterna, trots de försäkringar som görs på projektets webbplats, där man säger att syftet inte är att begränsa friheten på internet, men att säkerheten de facto är ett bekymmer, och att användningen av internet för terroristsyften bör hindras. ([2]) Kommissionen finansierar också projekt som CEO Coalition, som arbetar med att bekämpa material med övergrepp mot barn på internet.

Har kommissionen bedömt vilka konsekvenser sådana projekt kommer att ha på strategin mot nedkoppling (No Disconnect Strategy), och i stort på extern politik till förmån för att stärka friheterna på internet?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(14 november 2012)

Initiativet Clean IT drivs av det nederländska ministeriet för säkerhet och rättvisa. Det sammanför offentliga och privata partner för att skapa en öppen debatt om hur vi ska hantera terrorismrelaterat innehåll på internet ([3]).

Medlemsstaterna har vid ett flertal tillfällen uppmanat kommissionen att ta itu med denna fråga ([4]).

Projektet är ett lokalt förankrat initiativ utan lagstiftningsmässiga mål. Det drivs på ett öppet sätt. En särskild webbplats ([5]) har utvecklats för att ge alla medborgare möjlighet att delta och utbyta tankar och idéer.

Slutsatserna av projektet kommer enbart att återspegla författarnas åsikter och inte Europeiska kommissionens. Kommissionen kommer inte att vara ägare till slutresultatet av Clean IT-projektet, men den kommer som en del av sin slutliga utvärdering av projektet att bedöma huruvida det har uppnått de resultat som beskrivs i projektförslaget. Detta sker för alla projekt som samfinansieras genom programmet Förebyggande och bekämpande av brott (Isec).

CEO Coalition är ett branschstyrt initiativ för att göra internet säkrare för barn. Dess medlemsföretag har godkänt en avsiktsförklaring och förbundit sig att arbeta för dess genomförande på fem konkreta punkterna, varav en är att undersöka om man kan förkorta den tid det tar att ta bort anmält innehåll. Kommissionens roll är att underlätta självreglering och inte att tvinga på medlemmarna vissa åtgärder eller finansiera deras verksamhet. När det gäller anmälningar och åtgärder har generaldirektoratet för kommunikationsnät, innehåll och teknik ett nära samarbete med generaldirektoratet för inre marknaden och tjänster, som har deltagit i CEO Coalitions möten.

([1]) http://www.edri.org/cleanIT
([2]) http://www.cleanitproject.eu/faq/
([3]) Närmare bestämt "offentlig uppmaning till terroristbrott", "utbildning för terroristsyften" och "rekrytering för terroristsyften" som utgör brott i och med antagandet av rambeslut 2008/919/RIF av den 28 november 2008.
([4]) Rådets slutsatser, 15–16.6.2006 och rådets slutsatser, 27.11.2008.
([5]) www.cleanitproject.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008795/12
to the Commission
Christian Engström (Verts/ALE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: CleanIT

On 21 September 2012, the non-profit association European Digital Rights released a document written by the Commission-funded CleanIT project regarding the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes ([1]). The document raises serious concerns regarding the compatibility of the project's activities and proposals with fundamental rights, notwithstanding assurances made on the project's website that the project 'does not aim to restrict Internet freedom, but we do have security concerns and want to limit the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes' ([2]). The Commission is also funding projects such as the 'CEO Coalition' to fight child abuse material on the Internet.

Has the Commission assessed which repercussions such projects will have on the 'No disconnect' strategy and, in general, on external policies in favour of strengthening freedoms on the Internet?

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

The Clean IT initiative is run by the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice. It brings together public and private partners for an open debate on how to deal with terrorist content on the Internet ([3]).

Member States on numerous occasions called upon the Commission to address this issue ([4]).

The project is a bottom-up initiative with no legislative aims. The project is run in a transparent way. A dedicated website ([5]) has been developed to provide everyone with the opportunity to participate and to share thoughts and ideas.

The conclusions of the project will only reflect the opinion of the authors and will not represent the views of the European Commission. The Commission will not be an owner of the Clean IT final result, however, as a part of the project's final evaluation, the Commission will assess whether or not the project has produced the deliverables as described in the project proposal, as it is the case with all projects co-funded by ISEC.

The CEO Coalition to make the Internet a better place for Children is an industry-led initiative where the member companies have endorsed a Statement of Purpose and committed to work towards its implementation on five concrete points out of which one is to identify if they can speed up the time to removing notified content. The role of the Commission is to facilitate the self-regulatory process and not to force specific actions on the members or to fund its activities. In terms of Notice and Action, DG CNECT works closely with DG MARKT who have participated in the Coalition meetings.

([1]) http://www.edri.org/cleanIT
([2]) http://www.cleanitproject.eu/faq/
([3]) Specifically the 'public provocation to commit a terrorist offence', 'training materials' and 'recruitment for terrorism' which have been criminal offences across the adoption of Framework Decision 2008/919 JHA of 28 November 2008.
([4]) Council Conclusions, 15-16.06.2006 and Council Conclusions, 27.11.2008.
([5]) www.cleanitproject.eu

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-008796/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Νέα συζήτηση για τη βιωσιμότητα του ελληνικού χρέους

Έντονες είναι οι συζητήσεις σχετικά με τη βιωσιμότητα του ελληνικού χρέους, για το οποίο ελληνικές και διεθνείς αναλύσεις δείχνουν ότι ο στόχος του 120% ως το 2020, δεν είναι εφικτός δίχως άμεσες και καίριες παρεμβάσεις. Οίκοι αξιολόγησης προειδοποιούν ότι η βιωσιμότητα του ελληνικού χρέους δεν θεωρείται διασφαλισμένη και επενδυτικές τράπεζες προβλέπουν ότι, με τις υπάρχουσες πολιτικές, η ύφεση θα ανέλθει μεταξύ 7,5% και 10,7%, τον επόμενο χρόνο. Το ΔΝΤ τονίζει συνεχώς ότι το νέο «κούρεμα», που θα αφορά τον «επίσημο τομέα» είναι αναγκαίο.

Στον αντίποδα ο Ευρωπαίος Επίτροπος Όλι Ρεν δήλωσε ότι «η Επιτροπή δεν προσβλέπει σε νέα αναδιάρθρωση του ελληνικού χρέους», άποψη που φαίνεται ότι αγγίζει, τουλάχιστον μέχρι τώρα, και άλλους θεσμικούς παράγοντες της ΕΕ.

Επειδή όμως δεν φτάνει να ξορκίζουμε την πραγματικότητα, και επειδή είναι γνωστό ότι και η Επιτροπή έχει αναπτύξει διάφορα σενάρια εξέλιξης του ελληνικού χρέους υπό διαφορετικές υποθέσεις εργασίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιες οι δικές της αναλύσεις για την βιωσιμότητα του ελληνικού χρέους;

— Τι προτίθεται να προτείνει για την απευθείας ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των ελληνικών τραπεζών από τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Στήριξης (ΕΜΣ);

— Τι προτίθεται να προτείνει για το κούρεμα των ελληνικών ομολόγων του επίσημου τομέα; Τα ελληνικά ομόλογα που κατέχει η ΕΚΤ και αγοράστηκαν στη δευτερογενή αγορά πρέπει να εξοφληθούν από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση στην ονομαστική τους αξία;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

1. Σύμφωνα με τις προβλέψεις της Επιτροπής για το 2012, που δημοσιεύθηκαν το φθινόπωρο, το 2012 προβλέπεται αύξηση του ελληνικού ακαθάριστου δημόσιου χρέους στο 176,7% του ΑΕΠ. Η αύξηση αυτή ξεπερνά κατά 16 εκατοστιαίες μονάδες τις εαρινές προβλέψεις, συνεκτιμά δε αναθεωρήσεις του ονομαστικού ΑΕΠ, λιγότερη ανάπτυξη και έσοδα από ιδιωτικοποιήσεις και λοιπές προσαρμογές αποθεμάτων-ροών. Ο δείκτης χρέους προβλέπεται να αυξηθεί στο 188,4% του ΑΕΠ το 2013, κυρίως λόγω της σημαντικής ονομαστικής συρρίκνωσης της οικονομίας, να κορυφωθεί δε το 2014 σε 188,9%. Στη συνέχεια αναμένεται μείωσή του με επιταχυνόμενο ρυθμό, υποστηριζόμενο από την ισχυρότερη αύξηση του ονομαστικού ΑΕΠ και τη βελτίωση του δημοσιονομικού ισοζυγίου ([1]).

2. Η τελευταία εκτίμηση που αφορά τη βιωσιμότητα του χρέους παρατίθεται στο δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα ([2]), η δε Τρόικα πραγματοποιεί επισκόπηση του προγράμματος από τον Ιούλιο του 2012 και, στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η βιωσιμότητα του χρέους συγκαταλέγεται μεταξύ των ζητημάτων τα οποία αποτελούν αντικείμενο εμπεριστατωμένης ανάλυσης. Στη διάρκεια έκτακτης συνεδρίασης της Ευρωομάδας που συγκλήθηκε στις 20 Νοεμβρίου 2012 ([3]) εξετάστηκαν τα ζητήματα των χρηματοδοτικών αναγκών και της βιωσιμότητας του χρέους.

3. Η εκταμίευση των κονδυλίων για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση και τη διαδικασία εξυγίανσης των ελληνικών τραπεζών διενεργείται από το ΕΤΧΣ. Αυτό συνάδει με τους όρους του δεύτερου προγράμματος προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, το οποίο συμφωνήθηκε τον Μάρτιο του 2012, και συνεπώς δεν εξετάζεται το ενδεχόμενο απευθείας ανακεφαλαιοποίησης των ελληνικών τραπεζών.

([1]) Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, προβλέψεις του φθινοπώρου για το 2012-2014: ταξίδι σε ταραγμένα νερά, σ. 65-66, που διατίθεται στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2012_autumn/el_en.pdf

([2]) Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, Το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα — Μάρτιος 2012, που διατίθεται στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

([3]) Δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας για την Ελλάδα, 12 Νοεμβρίου 2012, η οποία διατίθεται στη διεύθυνση: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/133445.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008796/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Further discussions on the viability of Greece's debts

The viability of Greek debt is currently the subject of intense discussions, with Greek and international analysts concurring that the target of 120% by 2020 cannot be achieved without immediate direct action. According to rating agencies, the viability of Greece's debt is by no means guaranteed, while investment banks are predicting that with current policies the recession will continue to bite next year, quoting figures of between 7.5% and 10.7% , with the IMF constantly stressing the need for further 'haircuts' in the 'official sector'.

European Commissioner, Olli Rehn, on the other hand, announced that the Commission was not envisaging any further restructuring of Greece's debt; a point of view which, until now at least, appears to be shared by other EU institutional players.

However, given the need to face up to reality and the fact that the Commission is known to have been envisaging different scenarios regarding Greece's debt in the light of a number of working hypotheses:

— What are the Commission's own conclusions regarding the viability of Greek debt?

— What will be its recommendations regarding the immediate recapitalisation of Greek banks by the European Support Mechanism?

— What recommendations will it make regarding 'haircuts' for Greek official sector bondholders? Will the Greek Government be required to redeem at face value Greek bonds held by the ECB and purchased on the secondary market?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 November 2012)

1. According to the Commission's 2012 Autumn Forecast, the Greek gross public debt is projected to increase to 176.7% of GDP in 2012. This is 16 pps. higher than foreseen in spring, reflecting revisions to nominal GDP, lower growth and privatisation proceeds and other stock flow adjustments. The debt ratio is projected to rise to 188.4% of GDP in 2013, mainly on account of the sizeable nominal contraction of the economy and to peak in 2014 at 188.9%. Thereafter it is expected to fall at an accelerating pace, supported by stronger nominal GDP growth and an improving budget balance ([1]).

2. While the last assessment concerning debt sustainability can be found in the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece ([2]), the Troika has been carrying out a review of the Programme since July 2012, and in that context debt sustainability is among the items that are under thorough analysis. The Eurogroup discussed the issues of financing needs and debt sustainability at an extraordinary meeting convened on 20 November 2012 ([3]).

3. The disbursement of funds for the recapitalisation and resolution process of Greek banks is carried out by the EFSF. This is in accordance with the terms of the second adjustment programme for Greece agreed in March 2012 and therefore a direct recapitalisation of Greek banks is not considered.

([1]) European Commission, Autumn forecast 2012-14: sailing through rough waters, pp. 65-66, to be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2012_autumn/el_en.pdf

([2]) European Commission, The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece — March 2012, to be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

([3]) Eurogroup statement on Greece, 12 November 2012, to be found at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/133445.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008798/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(1. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Fahrerlose Fahrzeuge in der EU

Der US-Bundesstaat Kalifornien hat Medienberichten zufolge am 26. September 2012 die Nutzung von „fahrerlosen" computergesteuerten Fahrzeugen auf öffentlichen Straßen genehmigt. Grundlage des Urteils sind die Erfolge einzelner Pilotprojekte, unter anderem des Konzerns Google, dessen Flotte von computergesteuerten Fahrzeugen auf öffentlichen Straßen fast 500 000 Kilometer unfallfrei zurücklegte.

1. Gibt es derzeit EU-Richtlinien, die die Nutzung von fahrerlosen Fahrzeugen regulieren?

2. Sind der Kommission nationale Regelungen oder Richtlinien zur Nutzung solcher Fahrzeuge bekannt?

3. Plant die Kommission, eine entsprechende Richtlinie vorzuschlagen oder zu ändern?

4. Sieht die Kommission die Möglichkeit, fahrerlose computergesteuerte Fahrzeuge EU-weit zu regulieren beziehungsweise zuzulassen? Wenn ja, gibt es dazu schon konkrete Vorschläge oder Kriterien?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(30. November 2012)

Es gibt keine EU-Richtlinie, die die Nutzung fahrerloser Fahrzeuge in der EU regelt.

Die Kommission plant derzeit auch nicht, entsprechende Vorschläge zu Fragen des Fahrzeugbetriebs vorzulegen, da dieses Thema Gegenstand internationaler Initiativen und Regelungen ist.

Es bedarf einer Anpassung der Wiener Konvention, um die Fragen zur Weiterentwicklung der teilweisen oder vollständigen Automatisierung von Fahrzeugen zu behandeln. Mit der Arbeitsgruppe „Straßenverkehrssicherheit" der UN-Wirtschaftskommission für Europa — Abteilung Verkehr — wurden unlängst Gespräche aufgenommen, um diese Fragen zu erörtern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008798/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Driverless cars in the EU

According to media reports, the US State of California approved the use of 'driverless' computer-controlled cars on public roads on 26 September 2012. The judgment is based on the success of individual pilot projects, including one operated by Google, whose fleet of computer-controlled vehicles has covered almost 500 000 kilometres without an accident.

1. Are there any EU directives in place that regulate the use of driverless cars?

2. Is the Commission aware of national regulations or directives on the use of such vehicles?

3. Is the Commission planning to propose or amend a corresponding directive?

4. Does the Commission believe it will be possible to regulate and/or approve driverless computer-controlled cars on an EU-wide basis? If so, are specific proposals or criteria already available?

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

There is no EU directive which regulates the use of driverless cars.

Currently, the Commission does not have any plans to propose any dedicated legislation on this topic as the operation of vehicles is specifically addressed and governed at international level.

An adaptation of the Vienna Convention is necessary to address questions in relation to further development in the area of partly automated or fully automated driving. Discussions on these issues have recently started with the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety of the UN-ECE Transport Division.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008799/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκή Εβδομάδα Ευαισθητοποίησης στο θέμα της καρδιακής ανακοπής

Στις 13 Ιουνίου 2012, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ενέκρινε γραπτή δήλωση, η οποία συγκέντρωσε 395 υπογραφές, σχετικά με τη θέσπιση Ευρωπαϊκής Εβδομάδας Ευαισθητοποίησης στο θέμα της καρδιακής ανακοπής (PE484.525). Όπως δηλώνει ο τίτλος της δήλωσης, το Κοινοβούλιο ζητεί να καθιερωθεί Ευρωπαϊκή Εβδομάδα Ευαισθητοποίησης στο θέμα της καρδιακής ανακοπής. Πρέπει να γνωρίζουμε όλοι ότι, κάθε χρόνο στην ΕΕ, περίπου 500 000 άνθρωποι πέφτουν θύμα αιφνίδιας καρδιακής ανακοπής και ότι, μεταξύ αυτών, περίπου 400 000 υφίστανται την ανακοπή εκτός νοσοκομείου με τις πιθανότητες επιβίωσής τους να μην υπερβαίνουν το 10 %. Σε παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις, εάν υπάρξει εντός 3-4 λεπτών παρέμβαση από παριστάμενους καθώς και έγκαιρος απινιδισμός, οι πιθανότητες επιβίωσης υπερβαίνουν το 50 %. Με τον τρόπο αυτό θα σώζονταν 100 000 ζωές στην ΕΕ κάθε χρόνο.

Καλούμε συνεπώς την Επιτροπή να απαντήσει στο εξής ερώτημα:

Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να καταθέσει προτάσεις για συγκεκριμένα μέτρα και συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες σε αυτό το σημαντικό ζήτημα, μεταξύ των οποίων πρόταση θέσπισης ετήσιας Εβδομάδας Ευαισθητοποίησης στο θέμα της καρδιακής ανακοπής και στα 27 κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του σχετικού χρονοδιαγράμματος;

Απάντηση του κ. Šefčovič εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παρέχει υποστήριξη στα κράτη μέλη για το ζήτημα της καρδιακής ανακοπής μέσω σχεδίων που χρηματοδούνται από το πρόγραμμα «Υγεία», όπως τα «EuroHeart I και II», «EURHOBOP» και «SITS EAST» ([1]), τα οποία ασχολούνται με καρδιαγγειακές παθήσεις, και γενικότερα με την προώθηση της υγείας μέσω των στρατηγικών της ΕΕ για τη διατροφή και τη σωματική άσκηση, καθώς και μέσω των δράσεων κατά του καπνίσματος ([2]).

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με τα κράτη μέλη, κίνησε διαδικασία προβληματισμού σχετικά με τα χρόνια νοσήματα, σε συνέχεια των συμπερασμάτων του Συμβουλίου με τίτλο «Καινοτόμες προσεγγίσεις των χρόνιων νοσημάτων στον τομέα της δημόσιας υγείας και των συστημάτων υγειονομικής περίθαλψης» ([3]). Αυτή η διαδικασία — ενώ δεν επικεντρώνεται σε συγκεκριμένη ασθένεια — θα βοηθήσει να προσδιοριστεί η προστιθέμενη αξία των ενεργειών σε επίπεδο ΕΕ για την υποστήριξη των κρατών μελών.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή, σε αντίθεση με τις προαναφερθείσες δραστηριότητες, δεν προβλέπει τη θέσπιση Εβδομάδας Ευαισθητοποίησης στο θέμα της καρδιακής ανακοπής, έτσι όπως προτείνεται από τη δήλωση του Κοινοβουλίου «Εβδομάδα Ευαισθητοποίησης στο θέμα της καρδιακής ανακοπής» ([4]), λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τον κύριο στόχο των ενεργειών της ΕΕ για τους οριζόντιους παράγοντες που επηρεάζουν ένα ευρύ φάσμα χρόνιων νοσημάτων, ως μέσο μεγιστοποίησης της προστιθέμενης αξίας των ενεργειών και των περιορισμένων πόρων.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/health_problems/cardiovascular_diseases/index_en.htm#
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/118282.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0266+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008799/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: European cardiac arrest awareness week

On 13 June 2012, Parliament adopted with 395 signatures the Written Declaration on establishing a European cardiac arrest awareness week (PE484.525). According to the declaration, Parliament calls for the establishment of a European cardiac arrest awareness week. It should be borne in mind that each year in the EU approximately 500 000 people suffer a sudden cardiac arrest, and that, among these instances, approximately 400 000 are out-of-hospital events where the survival rate is less than 10%. In such cases, intervention within 3-4 minutes by bystanders, and early defibrillation, can increase the chance of survival to more than 50%. This would save about 100 000 lives in the EU each year.

We therefore ask the Commission to answer the following:

Does it intend to put forward proposals for concrete measures and actions on this important issue, including a proposal to establish a European cardiac arrest awareness week, every year throughout the 27 Member States, including a time schedule for this?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(6 November 2012)

The Commission is providing support to the Member States in the area of cardiac arrest through projects financed by the Health Programme specifically dealing with cardiovascular diseases such as EuroHeart I and II, EURHOBOP and SITS EAST ([1]), and on health promotion more in general through the EU strategies on nutrition and physical activity and work on tobacco control ([2]).

Moreover, the Commission has launched a reflection process on chronic diseases with the Member States, following up on the Council conclusions on 'Innovative approaches for chronic diseases in public health and healthcare systems' ([3]). This process — while not disease-specific — should help identify added value action at EU level in support of the Member States.

However, the Commission is not envisaging to establish, in addition to the abovementioned activities, a cardiac arrest awareness week as suggested by the Parliament's Declaration 'European cardiac arrest awareness week' ([4]) taking into account the main focus of EU action on horizontal factors that impact on a wide range of chronic diseases as a means of maximising added value of action and limited resources.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/health_problems/cardiovascular_diseases/index_en.htm#
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/118282.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0266+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008800/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Speed limiters

Would the Commission consider it useful and necessary to introduce speed limiters in cars as part of the type approval for new cars sold in the internal market? Has the Commission carried out any impact assessment study on the matter?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2012)

At present EU type-approved vehicles of categories M_2, M_3, N_2 and N_3, namely buses and heavy goods vehicles, have to meet the prescriptions concerning speed limitation devices as laid down in UNECE regulation No 89 ([1]) or Council Directive 92/24/EEC ([2]).

However, the Commission does not consider introducing such speed limitation devices in passenger cars. Consequently, an impact assessment study concerning the possible introduction of speed limitation devices in passenger cars with respect to type approval is not envisaged.

([1]) Regulation No 89 of the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations (UN/ECE), Uniform prescriptions for approval of: I. Vehicles with regard to limitation of their maximum speed or their adjustable speed limitation function; II. Vehicles with regard to the installation of a speed limitation device (SLD) or adjustable speed limitation device (ASLD) of an approved type; III. Speed limitation device (SLD) and adjustable speed limitation device (ASLD), OJ L 158, 19.6.2007, p. 1, and amendments to Regulation No 89, OJ L 4, 7.1.2012, p. 25.

([2]) Council Directive 92/24/EEC of 31 March 1992 relating to speed limitation devices or similar speed limitation on board systems of certain categories of motor vehicles, OJ L 129, 14.5.1992, p. 154.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008801/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Απέλαση του αλλοδαπού προσωπικού της οργάνωσης Save the Children από το Πακιστάν

Θα γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι, τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012, οι πακιστανικές αρχές διέταξαν τα αλλοδαπά μέλη του προσωπικού της φιλανθρωπικής οργάνωσης Save the Children να εγκαταλείψουν την χώρα. Σύμφωνα με πολυάριθμα δημοσιεύματα του διεθνούς τύπου, η ενέργεια αυτή συνιστά αντίποινα για την εικαζόμενη συνδρομή που προσέφερε η οργάνωση στις αμερικανικές υπηρεσίες κατά τις προσπάθειες τους να επιβεβαιώσουν την παρουσία του Osama bin Laden στο Abbottabad του Πακιστάν.

Ποια είναι η άποψη της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την απέλαση του προσωπικού της Save the Children; Σε ποιο βαθμό στηρίζει η Επιτροπή, άμεσα ή έμμεσα, τις δραστηριότητες της Save the Children στο Πακιστάν; Πόσο θα επηρεαστούν, κατά την εκτίμηση της Επιτροπής, οι δραστηριότητες της Save the Children — και οι συνθήκες διαβίωσης των παιδιών που έχει αναλάβει η οργάνωση — από αυτές τις πρόσφατες εξελίξεις; Ποια στοιχεία — εφόσον υπάρχουν — έχει στη διάθεσή της η Επιτροπή προς επιβεβαίωση της εικαζόμενης ανάμειξης της Save the Children στην επιχείρηση εντοπισμού του Osama bin Laden;

Απάντηση της κας Georgieva εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει επίσημες πληροφορίες για τους λόγους απέλασης του προσωπικού της οργάνωσης Save the Children ούτε στοιχεία που να αποδεικνύουν την εικαζόμενη ανάμειξή της στην υπόθεση Μπιν Λάντεν.

Από τις πλημμύρες του 2010, η ΕΕ άρχισε να παρέχει χρηματοδοτική στήριξη για το ανθρωπιστικό έργο της οργάνωσης Save the Children στο Πακιστάν μέσω συμφωνιών επιδότησης από τη Γενική Διεύθυνση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για την Ανθρωπιστική Βοήθεια και την Πολιτική Προστασία (ΓΔ ECHO). Η βοήθεια περιλαμβάνει έκτακτη επισιτιστική ασφάλεια, διατροφή και πολυτομεακή στήριξη στους πλημμυροπαθείς καθώς και στα εσωτερικά εκτοπισθέντα άτομα στον Βορρά. Τα ποσά είναι 7,3 εκατ. ευρώ (2010) και 10,5 εκατ. ευρώ (2011). Το 2012, 4,9 εκατ. ευρώ χορηγήθηκαν για την παροχή βοήθειας σε εκτοπισθέντες από την περιοχή Khyber. Επίσης, η Save the Children είναι ο κύριος οργανισμός μίας κοινοπραξίας έξι διεθνών μη κυβερνητικών οργανώσεων για επιδότηση ύψους 14 εκατ. ευρώ με σκοπό την παροχή έκτακτης επισιτιστικής βοήθειας και στήριξης διατροφής σε θύματα θεομηνιών. Το θεματικό πρόγραμμα επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας της ΕΕ βρίσκεται στη διαδικασία σύναψης σύμβασης με την Save the Children για έργο επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας διάρκειας 48 μηνών στο Sindh κόστους 10 εκατ. ευρώ ως μέτρο σύνδεσης αρωγής και ανάπτυξης.

Παρά την απέλαση του αλλοδαπού προσωπικού της, οι δραστηριότητες της Save the Children για τη στήριξη των πλημμυροπαθών και των πληθυσμών που πλήττονται από συγκρούσεις συνεχίζονται χωρίς διακοπή. Η ΓΔ ECHO παρακολουθεί την εφαρμογή της ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειάς της στο Πακιστάν από το γραφείο της στο Ισλαμαμπάντ. Σε περίπτωση που η επίτευξη των στόχων της διατρέξει κίνδυνο, η ΕΕ μπορεί ανά πάσα στιγμή να αποφασίσει να μειώσει ή ακόμη και να διακόψει τη διοχέτευση βοήθειας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008801/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Expulsion of Save the Children's foreign staff from Pakistan

The Commission will be aware that in September 2012 the Pakistani authorities ordered the foreign staff of the charity Save the Children to leave the country. It has been widely reported in the international media that this move was in retaliation for the charity's alleged involvement in assisting US officials in their efforts to confirm the presence of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

What is the Commission's view of the expulsion of the Save the Children personnel? To what extent does the Commission support, directly and indirectly, the activities of Save the Children in Pakistan? What is the Commission's assessment of the extent to which Save the Children's activities in Pakistan — and the well-being of the children assisted by the charity — will be undermined by these recent developments? What evidence, if any, does the Commission have regarding the veracity of the alleged involvement of Save the Children in the operation to identify the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2012)

The Commission has no official information on the reasons for the expulsion of Save the Children staff and no evidence concerning the veracity of the its alledged involvement in the Bin Laden case

Since the 2010 floods, the EU has provided financial support for the humanitarian work of Save the Children in Pakistan through grant agreements from the Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO). Assistance includes emergency food security, nutrition and multi-sector support to flood-affected people as well as to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the North. The amounts are EUR 7.3 million (2010) and EUR 10.5 million (2011). In 2012, EUR 4.9 million is provided to assist IDPs displaced from the Khyber Agency. Save the Children is also the lead agency of a consortium of six international non-governmental organisations for a EUR 14 million grant to provide emergency food and nutrition support to disaster-affected people. The EU's Food Security Thematic Programme is in the process of contracting with Save the Children a 48 month food security project in Sindh for EUR 10 million as a measure to link relief and development.

Despite the the expulsion of its expatriate staff, Save the Children's activities in support of flood-affected and conflict-affected populations are continuing uninterrupted. DG ECHO monitors implementation of its humanitarian assistance in Pakistan from its office in Islamabad. Should at any time the achievement of targets be at risk, the EU may decide to reduce or even interrupt the channelling of assistance.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008802/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Τα δικαιώματα της γυναίκας στο Ισραήλ

Σύμφωνα με πολλούς ντόπιους, στην Ιερουσαλήμ, τα δικαιώματα της γυναίκας υποβαθμίζονται εξαιτίας της αύξησης της επιρροής εξτρεμιστικών ομάδων στην υπερ-ορθόδοξη κοινότητα.

Ο διαχωρισμός των φύλων γίνεται όλο και πιο έντονος σε όλη την ισραηλινή κοινωνία από τα σχολεία και τις επιχειρήσεις έως ακόμη σε έναν ραδιοφωνικό σταθμό που δεν επιτρέπει γυναίκες, και τουλάχιστον μία φορά συνέβη μια γυναίκα να αναγκαστεί να καθίσει στο πίσω μέρος του λεωφορείου.

Ο διαχωρισμός με βάση το φύλο είναι παράνομος στο Ισραήλ. Η πλειοψηφία του ισραηλινού πληθυσμού, η ισραηλινή κυβέρνηση, και τα περισσότερα από τα ισραηλινά μέσα ενημέρωσης έχουν καταδικάσει τις ενέργειες και προσπάθησαν να ελέγξουν με τη βοήθεια της αστυνομίας το θέμα, αλλά παραμένει.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την ανισότητα των φύλων και την παραβίαση των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών στο Ισραήλ, θα ήθελα να ρωτήσω:

— προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει δράση για να αντιμετωπίσει αυτό το ζήτημα;

— έχει η Επιτροπή μιλήσει με ισραηλινούς αξιωματούχους σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου κας Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Η ΕΕ συνεδριάζει τακτικά με το Ισραήλ για τη συζήτηση θεμάτων που αφορούν τα δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου, στο πλαίσιο της διμερών τους σχέσεων. Το ζήτημα των δικαιωμάτων της γυναίκας εξετάζεται με ιδιαίτερη προσοχή στις συνεδριάσεις αυτές. Η προσεχής συνεδρίαση της ομάδας εργασίας ΕΕ-Ισραήλ σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου θα διεξαχθεί στις 13 Νοεμβρίου 2013.

Όπως σωστά τονίσατε, η Ισραηλινή Κυβέρνηση καταδίκασε τις ενέργειες που αναφέρονται στην ερώτησή σας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008802/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Women's rights in Israel

According to many Jerusalem residents, women's rights in Israel are declining as extremist groups gain more traction in the ultra-Orthodox community.

Gender segregation in schools and businesses is becoming more and more prevalent in Israeli society, with one radio station not allowing women, and on at least one occasion a woman was forced to sit in the back of the bus.

Segregation on the basis of gender is illegal in Israel. A majority of the Israeli population, the Israeli Government and most of the Israeli media have condemned such actions, and have tried to police the issue, but it remains unresolved.

In light of the gender inequality and the infringement of women's rights in Israel, I would like to ask:

— Does the Commission intend to take any action to address this issue?

— Has the Commission talked with Israeli officials about this issue?

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

The EU holds regular meetings with Israel to discuss human rights issues in the framework of its bilateral relations. The question of women's rights is specifically addressed at these meetings. The next meeting of the EU-Israel Working Group on human rights will be held on 13 November 2013.

As you rightly point out, the Israeli government has condemned the actions mentioned in your question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008803/12
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(1º ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Tessera sanitaria

Un cittadino italiano che si trovava nella Repubblica ceca è dovuto ricorrere all'assistenza sanitaria ma, pur essendo cittadino di uno Stato membro e in possesso della carta sanitaria europea, ha dovuto pagare per tutte le prestazioni ricevute.

Considerato che le norme e i principi comuni devono essere rispettati da tutte le autorità nazionali nell'applicare il diritto nazionale e che in quasi tutti i paesi dell'UE (ad eccezione della Francia) l'assistenza è in forma diretta e dunque gratuita, a parte il pagamento dell'eventuale ticket, può la Commissione far sapere se è al corrente che la Repubblica ceca ha un sistema sanitario organizzato in modo tale che il possesso della carta sanitaria europea non è di per sé sufficiente per ottenere delle cure senza ulteriori esborsi a carico del paziente non residente nel paese?

La Commissione concorda nel valutare ciò contrario ai principi operativi condivisi dai sistemi sanitari di tutta l'Unione, cosi come riconosciuto dagli Stati membri nelle conclusioni del Consiglio dell'1 e 2 giugno 2006 sui valori e principi comuni dei sistemi sanitari dell'Unione europea e compresi nella direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio concernente l'applicazione dei diritti dei pazienti relativi all'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2012)

La normativa dell'Unione in fatto di sicurezza sociale dispone il coordinamento e non l'armonizzazione dei sistemi di sicurezza sociale. Chi si trova temporaneamente in un altro Stato membro dell'Unione europea o in Islanda, Liechtenstein, Norvegia o Svizzera ha diritto alle cure sanitarie indispensabili fornite dal sistema pubblico di assistenza sanitaria a parità di condizioni con coloro che sono assicurati in tale paese. Ciò significa che sarà curato alle stesse condizioni ma anche che dovrà pagare qualsiasi importo eventualmente dovuto dal paziente. La tessera europea di assicurazione malattia (TEAM) certifica tale diritto.

Nel caso della Repubblica ceca ciò significa che il viaggiatore deve rivolgersi ad un medico convenzionato con uno dei fondi cechi di assicurazione malattia. Il medico richiederà il pagamento di una piccola quota a carico del paziente e chiederà la firma di un «Potvrzeni o naroku» (certificato attestante il diritto). All'occorrenza il medico rilascerà copie del «Potvrzeni o naroku» per la prescrizione di medicine, esami di laboratorio o altre indagini diagnostiche. Se al viaggiatore viene addebitato il costo integrale della cura, questi dovrebbe chiedere il rimborso all'istituto competente al ritorno nel paese di residenza.

Si possono avere informazioni sull'uso della tessera europea di assicurazione sanitaria selezionando il paese in questione sulle pagine web della Commissione europea dedicate alla TEAM. La Commissione europea ha inoltre pubblicato recentemente una app per smartphone sull'utilizzo della TEAM e le informazioni in merito sono anch'esse accessibili da smartphone.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008803/12
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Health card

An Italian citizen who happened to be in the Czech Republic and had to seek healthcare was forced to pay for all the services he received, despite being a national of a Member State and having the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) with him.

Given that common rules and principles must be observed by all national authorities when applying national law, and that in almost all EU countries (except France), healthcare is provided directly and therefore free of charge, apart from the payment of prescription charges, is the Commission aware that the Czech Republic has a health system organised in such a way that possession of the European Health Insurance Card is not in itself sufficient to obtain care without further payment by a patient who is not a resident of the country?

Does the Commission agree that this is contrary to the operating principles shared by health systems throughout the EU, as recognised by the Member States in the Council Conclusions of 1 and 2 June 2006 on common values and principles in EU health systems and included in both the directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2012)

EC law in the field of social security provides for the coordination and not the harmonisation of social security schemes. Persons who are staying temporarily in another Member State of the European Union, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway or Switzerland are entitled to necessary healthcare within the public healthcare system on the same conditions as persons insured in that country. This means that they should be treated under the same conditions, but also that they will have to pay any patient fees that might apply. The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) confirms this right.

For the Czech Republic this means that a visitor should consult a doctor who has a contract with one of the Czech health insurance funds. The doctor will charge a small patient fee and ask for a 'Potvrzeni o naroku' (certificate of entitlement) to be signed. If necessary, the doctor will issue copies of a 'Potvrzeni o naroku' for the prescription of medicines, laboratory tests or other examinations. If a visitor is charged the full cost of a treatment he or she should ask for reimbursement from his or her competent institution when returning home.

Information on how to use the EHIC can be found by selecting the appropriate country on the web pages of the European Commission dedicated to the EHIC. The European Commission has also recently launched a smartphone application on the EHIC and such information can therefore also be accessed via smartphones.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008805/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διαδικασία επί παραβάσει κατά της Ελλάδας για φαρμακευτικά προϊόντα από παράλληλες εισαγωγές

Στις 26/01/2012, η Επιτροπή έστειλε αιτιολογημένη γνώμη στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση σχετικά με τις τιμές των φαρμακευτικών προϊόντων από παράλληλες εισαγωγές. Με βάση την διαδικασία, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση είχε προθεσμία 2 μηνών για να απαντήσει.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: Ποια είναι η παραβίαση που διερευνάται από την Επιτροπή; Ποια προβλήματα προκύπτουν σε σχέση τις παράλληλες εισαγωγές; Γιατί η ανάγκη υποβολής «Δελτίου έρευνας και επαλήθευσης τιμών» είναι «περιττές απαιτήσεις»; Μπορεί να ενημερώσει για την πορεία της υπόθεσης; Έχει απαντήσει η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση; Τι ισχυρίζεται;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Η εν λόγω υπόθεση, η οποία ερευνάται επί του παρόντος από την Επιτροπή, αφορά παράβαση του άρθρου 34 ΣΛΕΕ από την ελληνική νομοθεσία σχετικά με τον καθορισμό των τιμών των παράλληλα εισαγόμενων φαρμακευτικών προϊόντων.

Η Επιτροπή, με την αιτιολογημένη γνώμη της που εξέδωσε στις 26 Ιανουαρίου 2012, έκρινε ότι τα εθνικά μέτρα και/ή οι πρακτικές εμποδίζουν το εμπόριο των «παράλληλα» εισαγόμενων φαρμακευτικών προϊόντων. Ειδικότερα, η Επιτροπή εξήγησε ότι οι κανόνες ή οι πρακτικές που έχουν ως αποτέλεσμα να κατευθύνονται οι εισαγωγές με τέτοιο τρόπο ώστε μόνον ορισμένοι έμποροι να μπορούν να πραγματοποιούν τις εν λόγω εισαγωγές, ενώ άλλοι να εμποδίζονται να το πράξουν, συνιστούν παράβαση του άρθρου 34 της ΣΛΕΕ.

Ομοίως, εάν ένα κράτος μέλος έχει ήδη στην κατοχή του όλες τις φαρμακευτικές πληροφορίες σχετικά με ένα συγκεκριμένο φαρμακευτικό παρασκεύασμα, φαίνεται αδικαιολόγητο να απαιτεί από έναν δεύτερο επιχειρηματία που εισάγει ένα φαρμακευτικό παρασκεύασμα που είναι όμοιο από κάθε άποψη με το προηγούμενο να του υποβάλει τις εν λόγω πληροφορίες εκ νέου. Για παράδειγμα, η υποχρέωση υποβολής αίτησης για άδεια κυκλοφορίας στην αγορά, επιπλέον της άδειας παράλληλης εισαγωγής, ή η ανάγκη υποβολής δελτίου έρευνας και επαλήθευσης τιμών φαίνεται ότι είναι απαιτήσεις περιττές και ότι είναι δύσκολο να εκπληρωθούν από τον παράλληλο εισαγωγέα.

Σε συνέχεια της απάντησης που ελήφθη από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση στις 10 Μαΐου 2012, η Επιτροπή ερευνά και εξετάζει περαιτέρω όλα τα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία. Καθώς η υπόθεση βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί, στο στάδιο αυτό, να διαθέσει περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με το περιεχόμενο της αλληλογραφίας μεταξύ της Επιτροπής και των οικείων κρατών μελών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008805/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Infringement proceedings against Greece over pharmaceutical products from parallel imports

On 26 January 2012, the Commission sent a reasoned opinion to the Greek Government on the price of pharmaceutical products from parallel imports. In accordance with procedure, the Greek Government has a two-month deadline to respond.

In view of the above, will the Commission answer the following: What instance of infringement is being investigated by the Commission? What problems have arisen in relation to parallel imports? Why are an 'investigation report and price verification' deemed 'unnecessary requirements'? Can it provide information on the progress of the case? Has the Greek Government responded and, if so, how?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2012)

The case referred to and currently investigated by the Commission concerns an infringement of Article 34 TFEU by the Greek legislation on the fixing of prices of parallel imported medicine.

In its reasoned opinion of 26 January 2012, the Commission took the view that national measures and/or practices hindered trade in medicines imported 'in parallel'. More specifically, the Commission explained that rules or practices which result in imports being channelled in such a way that only certain traders can affect these imports, while others are prevented from doing so, contravene Article 34 TFEU.

Similarly, if a Member State already has in its possession all the pharmaceutical particulars relating to the medicinal preparation in question, it seems unjustifiable to require a second trader who imports a medicinal preparation which is in every respect the same, to produce the particulars in question once again. For example, the obligation to submit a marketing authorisation in addition to the parallel import authorisation, or the need to submit a research and verification price sheet, seem unnecessary and difficult for the parallel importer to fulfil.

Following the answer received from the Greek Government on 10 May 2012, the Commission is further investigating and examining all information available. As the case is ongoing, the Commission cannot, at this stage, provide more detail on the content of the correspondence between the Commission and the Member State concerned.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008806/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(1 octombrie 2012)

Subiect: Măsuri preconizate în cazul încheierii premature a unui studiu clinic

În cadrul Propunerii de regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind trialurile clinice cu medicamente de uz uman și de abrogare a Directivei 2001/20/CE din 17 iulie 2012, nu este specificat modul în care se soluționează situația încheierii premature a unui studiu clinic în etapa de randomizare sau după aceasta, când pacienții au primit una sau mai multe doze din medicația testată.

În momentul de față, SPONSORUL studiului clinic poate să își asume sau nu sarcina de a asigura continuitatea administrării unei medicații autorizate specifice bolii studiate pacienților admiși în studiu, pentru o anumită perioadă de timp după data stopării premature a acestuia, neexistând nicio obligativitate referitoare la acest lucru în propunerea de regulament amintită.

Majoritatea acestor companii farmaceutice care acționează în calitate de SPONSORI în cadrul studiilor clinice nu prevăd gestionarea stopării premature ca un punct important în cadrul PROTOCOLULUI studiului. Chiar dacă demarează această acțiune de asigurare a medicației, se lovesc de necunoașterea cadrului legislativ național al unei țări incluse în studiu referitor la sistemul de acordare a medicației autorizate pentru boala studiată.

În anumite țări participante la studiu, precum România, pot fi cazuri în care un medicament autorizat pentru boala respectivă nu este distribuit decât prin Program național. În general, Programul național are un număr restrâns de locuri raportate la numărul de pacienți înregistrați la nivel național cu boala respectivă. Astfel, deși pacienților li se garantează asigurarea pe o anumita perioadă de timp a unui medicament, este foarte complicată obținerea acestuia.

Poate Comisia să impună SPONSORULUI ca, înainte de lansarea unui studiu clinic cu un medicament neautorizat, să consulte legislația națională a țării în care se face studiul, precum și posibilitatea procurării unui medicament similar autorizat?

Astfel, se poate suplini lipsa continuității administrării medicației specifice în cazul stopării premature a unui studiu clinic, mai ales în faza de randomizare. Comisia trebuie, în opinia mea, să ia în considerare și situația stopării premature a unui studiu clinic.

Răspuns dat de dl Šefčovič în numele Comisiei
(5 noiembrie 2012)

Propunerea Comisiei de regulament privind trialurile clinice ([1]) nu include o dispoziție generală care să oblige sponsorii să asigure tratamentul post-trial — nici după stoparea prematură a unui trial clinic, nici în urma încheierii acestuia în condiții normale.

Acest aspect trebuie avut în vedere de la caz la caz, în contextul evaluării preliminare a unei cereri pentru un trial clinic.

În acest scop, propunerea Comisiei prevede obligația care revine sponsorului să prezinte în dosarul de cerere privind trialul clinic „o descriere a măsurilor de îngrijire a subiecților după încheierea participării lor la trial, în cazul în care astfel de îngrijiri suplimentare sunt necesare ca urmare a participării subiecților la trial și în cazul în care acestea diferă de îngrijirea care se acordă în mod normal pentru afecțiunea medicală în cauză” ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 369.
([2]) A se vedea punctul 13 din secțiunea 4 a anexei I la propunerea COM(2012) 369.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008806/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Measures envisaged in the event of early termination of clinical trials

The proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on clinical trials on medicinal products for human use, and repealing Directive 2001/20/EC of 17 July 2012, does not provide a solution for the early termination of clinical trials during or after the randomisation phase when patients have received one or several doses of the investigational medicinal product.

At present, the clinical trial SPONSOR may or may not assume responsibility for ensuring continued administration of an authorised medication specific to the disease being studied to patients enrolled in the trial for a certain period of time after the early termination of the trial. The aforementioned proposal for a regulation does not make this compulsory.

Most pharmaceutical companies acting as SPONSORS in a clinical trial do not view the management of early termination as an important part of the trial PROTOCOL. Even if action is taken to ensure the supply of medication, they are confronted with a lack of knowledge of the national legislative framework applicable to the system for granting an authorised medication for the disease studied in the country included in the trial.

There are cases in some countries participating in trials, like Romania, where a medicinal product authorised for the relevant disease is not distributed outside of the National Programme. Generally, the National Programme has a limited number of places compared with the number of patients registered nationally with a certain disease. Therefore, although patients are guaranteed the supply of a medicinal product for a certain period of time, obtaining it is very complicated.

Can the Commission make it compulsory for SPONSORS to consult the national legislation of the country where the trial is taking place, as well as the possibility of obtaining a similar authorised medicinal product, before launching a clinical trial with an unauthorised medicinal product?

This would ensure that there is no lack of continuity in the administration of specific medication if a clinical trial is terminated early, especially in the randomisation phase. I believe that the Commission should also consider the situation of early terminations of clinical trials.

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2012)

The proposal of the Commission for a 'Clinical Trials Regulation' ([1]) does not include a general provision obliging sponsors to ensure post-trial treatment — be it after early termination or following the regular end of a clinical trial.

This aspect is to be considered on a case-by-case basis in the context of the prior assessment of a clinical trial application.

To this end, the proposal of the Commission obliges the sponsor to submit, in the clinical trial application dossier, 'a description of the arrangements for taking care of the subjects after their participation in the trial has ended, where such additional care is necessary because of the subjects' participation in the trial and where it differs from that normally expected for the medical condition in question' ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 369.
([2]) See margin number 13 in Section 4 of Annex I to the proposal COM(2012) 369.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008807/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προσδιορισμός τραπεζικών εργασιών

Στα περισσότερα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης το τραπεζικό σύστημα εμφανίζει παθογένειες και επιβάλλεται η ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών προς αποφυγή πτωχεύσεών τους και απώλειας των καταθέσεων σε αυτές των ευρωπαίων πολιτών. Έχει παρατηρηθεί σε ευρεία έκταση ότι οι απώλειες των τραπεζών και οι επισφαλείς απαιτήσεις τους δεν οφείλονται στα αμιγή τραπεζικά προϊόντα αλλά στην έκθεση τους σε «τοξικά» προϊόντα, τα οποία κατά βάση είναι δημιουργήματα ανεξέλεγκτης χρηματοοικονομικής φαντασίας που τα καθιστούν προϊόντα τυχερού παιγνίου ή στοιχήματος.

Με την πεποίθηση ότι οι τράπεζες δεν είναι καζίνο και το φόβο ότι, εάν συνεχισθεί η ίδια πρακτική των τραπεζών, συντόμως και πάλι οι ευρωπαίοι πολίτες θα αναγκασθούν να τις στηρίξουν, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Μήπως θα πρέπει να επαναπροσδιοριστούν από την Επιτροπή σε συνεργασία με την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα οι νόμιμες τραπεζικές εργασίες;

— Μήπως θα πρέπει να αποκλεισθούν των τραπεζικών συναλλαγών προϊόντα στοιχήματος και τυχερών παιγνίων;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Ο ευρωπαϊκός τραπεζικός τομέας και οι ευρωπαίοι πολίτες έχουν υποστεί σημαντικές απώλειες από την αρχή της χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης το 2007. Αν και είναι αλήθεια ότι οι τραπεζικές τυχοδιωκτικές πρακτικές που θυμίζουν καζίνο («casino banking») δημιούργησαν κινδύνους οι οποίοι παρερμηνεύτηκαν, οι απώλειες των τραπεζών της ΕΕ οφείλονταν σε μεγάλο βαθμό σε συμβατικά τραπεζικά προϊόντα. Η Επιτροπή είναι εξαιρετικά ενεργή όσον αφορά την ενίσχυση του κανονιστικού πλαισίου για την αντιμετώπιση κινδύνων που απορρέουν τόσο από τις «παραδοσιακές» τραπεζικές δραστηριότητες όσο και από το «casino banking».

Από τη σύστασή της το 2011, η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Τραπεζών στοχεύει στην κατάρτιση ρυθμιστικών τεχνικών προτύπων, τα οποία, αφού εγκριθούν από την Επιτροπή, θα καταστούν νομικά δεσμευτικά. Οι κανόνες αυτοί αποτελούν μία κοινή βάση για ολόκληρη την ενιαία αγορά και το εν λόγω ενιαίο εγχειρίδιο κανόνων είναι αναγκαίο για τη σταθερότητα και την ακεραιότητα της εσωτερικής αγοράς της ΕΕ.

Οι κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις έχουν ήδη τροποποιηθεί σημαντικά ώστε να λαμβάνονται καλύτερα υπόψη οι κίνδυνοι που συνδέονται με την τιτλοποίηση και να καθοριστούν βελτιωμένα κίνητρα. Επιπλέον, η επικείμενη νομοθεσία (CRR/CRD4) θα αυξήσει σημαντικά την ποιότητα και την ποσότητα του κεφαλαίου το οποίο πρέπει να διαθέτουν τα πιστωτικά ιδρύματα προκειμένου να καλύπτονται οι δυνητικοί κίνδυνοι.

Τα τελευταία δύο χρόνια, προκειμένου να βελτιωθεί η ρύθμιση των χρηματοπιστωτικών προϊόντων, έχει υιοθετηθεί μία σειρά νομοθετικών μέτρων, ήτοι ο κανονισμός που απαιτεί κεντρική εκκαθάριση των συναλλαγών τυποποιημένων εξωχρηματιστηριακών παραγώγων ή ο κανονισμός για τις ανοικτές πωλήσεις. Η Επιτροπή έχει ξεκινήσει διαβούλευση για την έκθεση της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων υψηλού επιπέδου για τις δυνατές μεταρρυθμίσεις της δομής του τραπεζικού τομέα της ΕΕ και είναι πιθανόν να εξετάσει το ενδεχόμενο εφαρμογής επιπρόσθετων πρωτοβουλιών με στόχο την ενίσχυση των ευρωπαϊκών τραπεζών.

Όλα τα εν λόγω μέτρα πρέπει να εξασφαλίσουν ότι οι τράπεζες θα απόσχουν από παρακινδυνευμένα επιχειρηματικά σχέδια.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008807/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Defining banking

In most EU Member States, the banking system is in trouble, and banks are being recapitalised to avoid bankruptcy and losses to European citizens' bank deposits. On a wider scale, it has been observed that bank losses and bad debts are not caused by pure banking products but by their exposure to 'toxic' products, which are essentially unregulated financial inventions which become games of chance or betting.

On the basis that banks are not casinos and fearing that, if the same banking practice continues, European citizens will soon need support again, will the Commission answer the following:

— Should legal banking practices be redefined by the Commission in cooperation with the European Central Bank?

— Should banking transactions involving products based on betting and games of chance be prohibited?

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

The European banking sector and European citizens have suffered significant losses since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2007. While it is true to say that so called 'casino banking' generated risks that were misunderstood, much of EU banks' losses were due to conventional banking products. The Commission has been extremely active in strengthening the regulatory framework that would address risks stemming from both 'traditional' banking and 'casino' banking.

Since 2011 the European Banking Authority is operational, with the task of drafting regulatory or implementing technical standards that, once endorsed by the Commission, will become legally binding. These rules constitute a common foundation across the single market and this single rulebook is needed for the stability and integrity of the EU's internal market.

Capital requirements have already been significantly amended to better take into account the risks linked to securitisation and to put in place better incentives. Furthermore, the forthcoming legislation (CRR/CRD4) will strongly raise the quality and the quantity of capital that credit institutions have to hold to cover potential risks.

In order to improve the regulation of financial products several legislative measures were adopted in the last two years: the regulation requiring central clearing of standardised over-the-counter derivatives transactions or the regulation on short selling. The Commission launched a consultation on the 'High-level Expert Group on possible reforms to the structure of the EU banking sector report' and may consider implementing additional initiatives to strengthen European banks.

All these measures should ensure that banks refrain from taking on too risky business.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008808/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Υπόθεση Siemens στην Ελλάδα

Η Επιτροπή εξέφρασε στο παρελθόν την πρόθεση να ασχοληθεί με την πολύκροτη υπόθεση Siemens (και κυρίως με τις προμήθειες στον τομέα της υγείας). Είναι γνωστό ότι το κόμμα ΛΑ.Ο.Σ έδωσε μεγάλη μάχη στην Εξεταστική Επιτροπή που συγκρότησε η Βουλή των Ελλήνων και αναγνωρίστηκε από όλους η συνεισφορά του στην αποκάλυψη πτυχών που πρώτη φορά έβλεπαν το φως της δημοσιότητας. Η Επιτροπή είχε κινητοποιηθεί στο παρελθόν για την υπόθεση π.χ. των ναυπηγείων στην Ελλάδα ή για την «Ολυμπιακή Αεροπορία», αλλά στην υπόθεση της παραπάνω γερμανικής εταιρείας δεν φάνηκε να αντιδρά το ίδιο άμεσα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τελικά ζήτησε στοιχεία η Επιτροπή για την πολύκροτη αυτή υπόθεση στην Ελλάδα και τις προμήθειες που έγιναν και από ποιον;

2. Τι απάντησε η ελληνική πλευρά γι' αυτό το θέμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να πληροφορήσει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου ότι, σύμφωνα με τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, η ανάθεση συμβάσεων από τα ελληνικά νοσοκομεία στη Siemens αποτέλεσε κατά το παρελθόν αντικείμενο ελέγχου από το Σώμα Επιθεωρητών Υπηρεσιών Υγείας.

Στη συνέχεια, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής ζήτησαν από τις ελληνικές αρχές να τους επιτρέψουν την πρόσβαση στα πορίσματα της εν λόγω έρευνας.

Βάσει των πληροφοριών που κοινοποιήθηκαν, φαίνεται ότι οι εν λόγω συμβάσεις έχουν ήδη εκτελεστεί. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι, σύμφωνα με τη νομολογία του Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ([1]), η Επιτροπή σε τέτοιες περιπτώσεις δεν είναι σε θέση να διερευνήσει περαιτέρω τις επίμαχες συμβάσεις για τυχόν παραβιάσεις της ενωσιακής νομοθεσίας.

([1]) Βλ. απόφαση C-362/90, Επιτροπή κατά Ιταλικής Δημοκρατίας, Συλλογή 1992, σ. I-02353.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008808/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Siemens case in Greece

In the past, the Commission has expressed its intention to deal with the sensational Siemens case (and in particular, procurement tenders in the health sector). It is well known that the LAOS party worked hard in the Committee of Inquiry set up by the Hellenic Parliament, and the role it played in revealing previously unknown information was recognised by all. In the past, the Commission has acted in the case of shipyards in Greece and the 'Olympic Airways' case. However, it does not seem to be reacting as quickly in the case of the abovementioned German company.

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

1. In the end, did the Commission ask for information on this sensational case in Greece, such as the procurement tenders awarded and who they were awarded by?

2. What was Greece's response to this question?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member of the Parliament that, according to the information available, the award of contracts to Siemens by the Greek Hospitals was verified in the past by the Body of Inspectors for Public Health Services.

Subsequently, the Commission services submitted a request to the Greek authorities in order to have access to the conclusions of the above investigation.

On the basis of the information communicated, it appears that the contracts in question have already been performed. This implies that, following the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union ([1]), the Commission in such cases is not in a position to further investigate the contracts at stake for possible violations of EC law.

([1]) See Case C-362/90, Commission v. Italian Republic, [1992] ECR I-02353.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008809/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόστιμα που έχουν επιβληθεί στην Ελλάδα

Κάθε χώρα της ΕΕ έχει πρόστιμα που εκκρεμούν λόγω παραβιάσεων της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ και δεν έχουν πληρωθεί ακόμη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποιες περιπτώσεις — και για ποια ποσά κατά περίπτωση; — υπάρχουν πρόστιμα που έχουν επιβληθεί στην Ελλάδα από την ΕΕ και δεν έχουν πληρωθεί ακόμη;

— Υπάρχουν και ημερήσια πρόστιμα που έχουν επιβληθεί στην Ελλάδα; Αν ναι, σε ποιες περιπτώσεις και για ποια ποσά ημερησίως;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

1. Όλα τα πρόστιμα που επιβλήθηκαν ποτέ σε κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ έχουν καταβληθεί. Η Επιτροπή αποστέλλει απευθείας στο Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου και στη Γραμματεία του Κοινοβουλίου πίνακα με τα σχετικά στοιχεία.

2. Στην υπόθεση C-109/08, το Δικαστήριο διέταξε την Ελλάδα να καταβάλει πρόστιμο 31 536 ευρώ ανά ημέρα καθυστερήσεως. Η Ελλάδα κατέβαλε όλα τα οφειλόμενα ποσά και η υπόθεση έχει κλείσει.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008809/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Fines imposed on Greece

Every EU Member State has fines which have not yet been paid for breaching EC law.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— What infringements are the fines for and how much is each fine? Are there EU-imposed fines on Greece which have not yet been paid?

— Are there any daily fines imposed on Greece? If so, which instances do these fines concern and how much is the daily fine?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(29 November 2012)

1. All fines ever imposed on any EU Member State have been paid. The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat a table containing the data in the matter.

2. In Case C-109/08, the Court of Justice ordered Greece to pay a daily fine of EUR 31 536. Greece has paid all due amounts and the case has recently been closed.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008810/12
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(1. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Barrierefreiheit für Assistenzhunde

In der EU fällt es blinden Menschen deutlich schwerer, von ihren Freizügigkeitsrechten als EU-Bürger Gebrauch zu machen als sehenden. Schuld hieran ist ein Flickenteppich nationaler Gesetzgebungen für die Bewegungsfreiheit von Assistenzhunden. Dort, wo das EU-Recht den Zugang von Assistenzhunden regelt, bleibt eine klare Definition „anerkannter Begleithunde" oft aus (siehe z. B. Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates) und private Interessenvertretungen von Hundeausbildungsstätten (wie z. B. ADI und IGDF) monopolisieren daher die Kompetenz, eine Anerkennung zu erteilen.

Welche Schritte unternimmt die Europäische Kommission, blinden Unionsbürgern die gleichen Freizügigkeitsrechte zu garantieren wie sehenden? Gibt es Vorhaben, die Anerkennung von Assistenzhunden zu harmonisieren und die freie Trainerwahl auch außerhalb der internationalen Interessenvertretungen von Hundeausbildungsstätten zu ermöglichen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(30. November 2012)

Die Kommission misst der Beseitigung von Barrieren für die Freizügigkeit von Personen mit Behinderungen, darunter auch sehbehinderten Personen mit Begleithunden, große Bedeutung bei. Zugänglichkeit ist ein wesentlicher Aktionsbereich der Europäischen Strategie zugunsten von Menschen mit Behinderungen 2010-2020 ([1]).

Am 11. Juni 2012 hat die Kommission Auslegungsleitlinien zur Anwendung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2006 über die Rechte von behinderten Flugreisenden und Flugreisenden mit eingeschränkter Mobilität veröffentlicht. Diese Leitlinien enthalten einen Abschnitt über Begleithunde. Darüber hinaus sind in sämtlichen Verordnungen über Passagierrechte bei Bahn-, Schiffs- und Busreisen besondere Bestimmungen über behinderte Personen und Personen mit eingeschränkter Mobilität enthalten, auch im Hinblick auf blinde Menschen und Begleithunde. Die Kommission wird die Anwendung der Verordnungen über die Rechte von Schiffs- und Busreisenden aufmerksam verfolgen, sobald sie in den nächsten Monaten in Kraft treten.

Derzeit plant die Kommission keine Harmonisierung der Anerkennung von Begleithunden. Sie unterstützt jedoch das Forschungsvorhaben „European Guide Dog Mobility Standards" (EGDMS) ([2]), das möglicherweise Schlussfolgerungen und Empfehlungen zu diesem Thema liefern wird. Mit dem Abschluss des EGDMS-Projekts ist Ende 2012 zu rechnen.

Die Kommission hat zudem ein dreijähriges Partnerschaftsabkommen mit der European Guide Dog Federation (EGDF) ([3]) geschlossen, in deren Rahmen die EGDF einen Zuschuss zu ihren Betriebskosten erhält. Die Kommission wird die EGDF sowie andere einschlägige zivilgesellschaftliche Organisationen konsultieren, bevor sie weitere Schritte in diesem Bereich plant.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:DE:NOT
([2]) http://www.egdms.eu/
([3]) http://www.guidedogsofeurope.org/Content/Default.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008810/12
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(1 October 2012)

Subject: Accessibility for assistance dogs

Within the EU, blind people find it significantly more difficult to exercise their right to freedom of movement as EU citizens than sighted people. The reason for this is the patchwork of national regulations for the freedom of movement of assistance dogs. Even when EC law regulates access for assistance dogs, there is frequently no clear definition of 'recognised assistance dogs' (see, for example, Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council) and private interest groups from dog training institutions (such as ADI and IGDF) therefore monopolise the authority to issue recognition.

What steps is the European Commission taking to guarantee blind citizens of the Union the same freedom of movement as sighted citizens? Are there any plans to harmonise the recognition of assistance dogs and to enable a free choice of trainer, even going outside the international interest groups of dog training institutions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 November 2012)

The Commission attaches great importance to removing barriers to the freedom of movement for persons with disabilities, including visually impaired people using guide dogs. Accessibility is a key priority of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]).

On 11 June 2012 the Commission published interpretative guidelines on the application of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air. These guidelines contain a section on guide and assistance dogs. In addition, the regulations on passenger rights travelling by rail, waterborne transport, and bus or coach all contain specific provisions on disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, including blind people and guide dogs. The Commission will closely monitor the application of the waterborne and coach passenger right Regulations as soon as they are applicable in the next months.

Presently, the Commission has no plans for harmonisation of the recognition of guide dogs. However, the Commission is supporting the European Guide Dog Mobility Standards (EGDMS) project ([2]), a research undertaking which may present conclusions and recommendations on this subject. The EGDMS project is expected to be finished by the end of 2012.

The Commission has also concluded a three year partnership agreement with the European Guide Dog Federation ([3]) (EGDF) in the frame of which EGDF receives a subsidy of its operating costs. The Commission will consult the EGDF and other relevant civil society organisations prior to planning any further steps in this area.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:EN:NOT
([2]) http://www.egdms.eu/
([3]) http://www.guidedogsofeurope.org/Content/Default.aspx

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008812/12
an die Kommission
Tanja Fajon (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D) und Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(2. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Ausmaß und Quantifizierung des Betrugs mit (und Zweckentfremdung von) EU-Mitteln

In einer vom Parlament im Dezember 2011 veröffentlichten Studie mit dem Titel „Wie werden EU-Gelder durch das organisierte Verbrechen zweckentfremdet?" kommt man zu dem Schluss, dass „nur wenige Informationen von OLAF, Europol, Eurojust und dem Rechnungshof darüber vorliegen, wie und in welchem Ausmaß EU-Gelder zweckentfremdet werden". Weiter heißt es in dem Bericht, dass „die Frage, in welchem Ausmaß EU-Gelder (einschließlich durch den Mehrwertsteuerbetrug) vom organisierten Verbrechen zweckentfremdet werden, anhand der verfügbaren Informationen nicht zu beantworten ist". Dieser Punkt wurde von Wim Wensink, einem Vertreter von Price Waterhouse Coopers, in einer Anhörung des Sonderausschusses des Parlaments gegen organisiertes Verbrechen, Korruption und Geldwäsche vom 24. September 2012 bestätigt und hervorgehoben.

Hinzu kommt, dass es offenbar unterschiedliche Meinungen über das allgemeine Ausmaß von Betrugsfällen gibt, die auf das Konto des organisierten Verbrechens oder anderer Urheber gehen. Laut dem Entwurf für eine Richtlinie zur strafrechtlichen Betrugsbekämpfung zum Schutz der finanziellen Interessen der Union (2012/0193(COD)) beläuft sich das vermutete Ausmaß von Betrugsfällen auf 600 Mio. EUR pro Jahr, und im Jahresbericht 2010 „Schutz der finanziellen Interessen der Europäischen Union — Betrugsbekämpfung", auf den die Richtlinie Bezug nimmt, wird geschätzt, dass in jenem Jahr Betrugsfälle in Höhe von 478 Mio. EUR verübt wurden. Des Weiteren hat ein Vertreter von OLAF auf der oben erwähnten Sitzung des Sonderausschusses die Kosten des Betrugs im Jahr 2011 auf 404 Mio. EUR beziffert.

Angesichts des Entwurfs für eine Richtlinie (2012/0193(COD)), der demnächst im Parlament erörtert wird, wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung der folgenden relevanten Fragen ersucht:

— Liegen der Kommission verlässliche und detaillierte Informationen und Daten über das Ausmaß des Betrugs mit und Zweckentfremdung von EU-Mitteln (durch die organisierte Kriminalität) vor?

— Falls ja, warum werden diese Informationen nicht an die zuständigen Stellen (z. B. Europol, Eurojust, OLAF) weitergeleitet und Untersuchungsberichte von Sachverständigen für das Parlament erstellt?

— Warum erstellt die Kommission Legislativentwürfe zur Bekämpfung und Verhinderung von Betrug, ohne das Ausmaß dieses Sachverhalts und die verantwortlichen Hauptakteure wie z. B. die potenziellen Täter vorab zu ermitteln und ohne die verwendeten Begriffe (z. B. Betrug, Zweckentfremdung, Unregelmäßigkeit) vorher genau zu definieren?

— Gedenkt die Kommission, falls diese Daten nicht verfügbar sind, das Ausmaß der Durchdringung und Zweckentfremdung von EU-Geldern durch die organisierte Kriminalität in einer gesonderten Analyse zu untersuchen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(4. Dezember 2012)

Die Zahlen, auf die sich die Frauen Abgeordneten beziehen, betreffen verschiedene Jahre und Sektoren ([1]).

Der Jahresbericht über den Schutz der finanziellen Interessen der EU („Bericht nach Artikel 325") wird auf der Grundlage der Berichte der Mitgliedstaaten über Betrug und sonstige Unregelmäßigkeiten erstellt, die in einem bestimmten Jahr aufgedeckt wurden. Die Berichterstattungspflichten der Mitgliedstaaten sind in sektorbezogenen Rechtsvorschriften festgelegt, die eine Unterscheidung zwischen diesen beiden Arten von Unregelmäßigkeiten ermöglicht (was sich im Bericht 2011 widerspiegelt), nicht jedoch zwischen im Kontext der organisierten Kriminalität begangenem und sonstigem Betrug. Ebenso sehen die Rechtsvorschriften zwecks Verringerung des Verwaltungsaufwands für Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten vor, dass die Mitgliedstaaten nicht alle Unregelmäßigkeiten melden müssen. Die Kommission wirkt jedoch kontinuierlich auf eine verbesserte Berichterstattungsdisziplin der Mitgliedstaaten hin.

([1]) Der Betrag von 600 Mio. EUR/Jahr wird in dem Bericht nach Artikel 325 von 2010 genannt. Er bezieht sich auf mutmaßlichen Betrug bei den Ausgaben und Einnahmen. Der Betrag von 478 Mio. EUR steht für gemeldete mutmaßliche Betrugsfälle bei den Ausgaben allein. Der Betrag von 404 Mio. EUR bezieht sich auf das Jahr 2011 und sowohl auf die Ausgaben als auch auf die Einnahmen.

Die Berichte nach Artikel 325, ihre Anhänge und die Folgenabschätzungen für neue Legislativvorschläge werden auf der Website der Kommission veröffentlicht. Die Folgenabschätzung untersucht die Ursachen für jedes ermittelte Problem einschließlich unterschiedlicher Arten von Tätern, wenn eine solche Unterscheidung von Bedeutung für die vorzuschlagenden Maßnahmen ist.

Der Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Bekämpfung von Betrug mit strafrechtlichen Mitteln dient der Angleichung der Definitionen von Betrug und anderen Straftaten, die erstmals in einem Übereinkommen von 1995 harmonisiert wurden ([2]). Die Folgenabschätzung zu dem Vorschlag wurde vor der Veröffentlichung der Zahlen für 2011 fertiggestellt und stützt sich daher auf den Bericht nach Artikel 325 von 2010.

Die Kommission möchte die Frauen Abgeordneten auf ihre Mitteilungen über eine Betrugsbekämpfungsstrategie ([3]), Korruptionsbekämpfung in der EU ([4]) und eine EU-Strategie der inneren Sicherheit ([5]) hinweisen.

([2]) Übereinkommen vom 26. Juli 1995 (ABl. C 316 vom 27.11.1995) (Betrug); erstes Protokoll vom 27. September 1996 (ABl. C 313 vom 23.10.1996) und Übereinkommen vom 26. Mai 1997 (ABl. C 195 vom 25.6.1997) (Bestechung); Protokoll vom 29. November 1996 (ABl. C 151 vom 20.5.1997) (Auslegung durch den Gerichtshof); zweites Protokoll vom 19. Juni 1997 (ABl. C 221 vom 19.7.1997) (Geldwäsche).

([3]) KOM(2011)376 endg. und SEK(2011)787.

([4]) KOM(2011)308 endg.

([5]) KOM(2010)673 endg.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008812/12
alla Commissione
Tanja Fajon (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D) e Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Portata e quantificazione delle frodi (e dell'uso improprio) ai danni dei fondi dell'UE

Uno studio pubblicato nel dicembre 2011 dal Parlamento europeo sull'uso improprio dei fondi dell'UE da parte della criminalità organizzata rileva che: «La conclusione è che si dispone di poche informazioni da parte di OLAF, Europol, Eurojust e ECA su come e in quale misura la criminalità organizzata faccia uso improprio dei fondi dell'UE» e che «sulla base delle informazioni disponibili è impossibile fornire risposte in merito alla misura dell'uso improprio dei fondi dell'UE — comprese le frodi IVA — da parte della criminalità organizzata». Queste affermazioni sono state confermate ed illustrate da Wim Wensink del Price Warehouse Coopers in una recente audizione, organizzata dalla commissione CRIM del Parlamento europeo il 24 settembre 2012.

Inoltre, la portata delle frodi in generale, siano esse commesse dalla criminalità organizzata o meno, risulta aperta a diverse interpretazioni. La proposta di direttiva sulla lotta contro la frode che lede gli interessi finanziari dell'Unione mediante il diritto penale (2012/0193 (COD)) afferma che le frodi sospette ammontino a 600 milioni di euro l'anno, mentre la relazione annuale sulla tutela degli interessi finanziari dell'Unione europea — Lotta contro la frode (2010) cui la direttiva fa riferimento, stima che le frodi ammontino a 478 milioni di euro per l'anno stesso. Nella riunione sopracitata della commissione CRIM un rappresentante dell'OLAF ha poi valutato i costi della frode nel 2011 pari a 404 milioni di euro.

Alla luce della proposta di direttiva (2012/0193 (COD)) che sta per essere discussa in sede di Parlamento europeo, le seguenti domande e relative risposte risultano notevolmente significative:

— Dispone la Commissione di informazioni e dati attendibili e dettagliati sulla portata delle frodi e dell'uso improprio dei fondi dell'UE (da parte della criminalità organizzata)?

— Qualora tali dati esistano, perché l'informazione non è condivisa dalle agenzie competenti (ad. es.: Europol, Eurojust, OLAF) con i ricercatori che elaborano relazioni di studio per il Parlamento europeo?

— Perché la Commissione sta elaborando proposte legislative sulla lotta e la prevenzione delle frodi senza conoscere preventivamente la portata di questa questione strategica, senza individuare gli attori chiave (i potenziali responsabili) che ne sono la causa e senza definire chiaramente i termini utilizzati nel settore (ad es.: frode, uso improprio, irregolarità)?

— Se i dati non sono disponibili, è disposta la Commissione ad indagare, con un'analisi specifica, sul livello di penetrazione e di uso improprio dei fondi dell'UE da parte della criminalità organizzata?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(4 dicembre 2012)

Le cifre citate dall'onorevole parlamentare si riferiscono a vari anni e a diversi settori ([1]).

La relazione annuale sulla tutela degli interessi finanziari dell'UE («relazione a norma dell'articolo 325») viene elaborata sulla base delle relazioni degli Stati membri sulle irregolarità fraudolente e non fraudolente individuate nel corso di un determinato anno. Gli obblighi di comunicazione degli Stati membri sono precisati nella legislazione settoriale, che permette di distinguere tra questi due tipi di irregolarità (come risulta nella relazione del 2011), ma non tra frodi commesse nel contesto della criminalità organizzata e altri tipi di frode. Inoltre, per ridurre l'onere amministrativo per le autorità degli Stati membri, la normativa stabilisce che gli Stati membri non debbano comunicare tutte le irregolarità. Tuttavia, la Commissione non cessa di adoperarsi per migliorare la disciplina relativa alla segnalazione dei casi da parte degli Stati membri.

Le relazioni a norma dell'articolo 325, i loro allegati e le valutazioni d'impatto utilizzati per le nuove proposte legislative sono pubblicati sul sito web della Commissione. Le valutazioni d'impatto esaminano le cause dei singoli problemi individuati, compresi i tipi di autori, laddove tale distinzione sia pertinente per le misure da proporre.

([1]) L'importo di 600 milioni di EUR all'anno è contenuto nella relazione a norma dell'articolo 325 del 2010. Si tratta di casi di sospetta frode a livello delle spese e delle entrate. L'importo di 478 milioni di EUR è l'ammontare della sospetta frode nel solo settore delle spese. L'importo di 404 milioni di EUR interessa il 2011 e i due settori delle spese e delle entrate.

La proposta di direttiva sulla lotta contro la frode mediante il diritto penale è intesa ad allineare ulteriormente le definizioni di frode e altri reati che sono state armonizzate per la prima volta in una convenzione del 1995 ([2]). La valutazione d'impatto della proposta è stata conclusa prima della pubblicazione delle cifre relative al 2011 e si basa quindi sulla relazione a norma dell'articolo 325 del 2010.

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare la sua comunicazione sulla strategia antifrode ([3]), la comunicazione sulla lotta alla corruzione nell'UE ([4]) e la strategia di sicurezza interna dell'UE ([5]).

([2]) Convenzione del 26 luglio 1995 (GU C 316 del 27.11.1995) (frode); primo protocollo del 27 settembre 1966 (GU C 313 del 23.10.1996) e convenzione del 26 maggio 1997 (GU C 195 del 25.6.1997) (corruzione); protocollo del 29 novembre 1996 (GU C 151 del 20.5.1997) (interpretazione della Corte); secondo protocollo del 19 giugno 1997 (GU C 221 del 19.7.1997) (riciclaggio di denaro).

([3]) COM(2011) 376 definitivo e SEC(2011) 787.

([4]) COM(2011) 308 definitivo.

([5]) COM(2010) 673 definitivo.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-008812/12
za Komisijo
Tanja Fajon (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D) in Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(2. oktober 2012)

Zadeva: Obseg in količinska opredelitev goljufij (in zlorab) sredstev EU

Študija z naslovom „Kako organizirani kriminal zlorablja sredstva EU?“, ki jo je Parlament objavil decembra 2011, navaja, da je „na voljo malo podatkov o tem, kako in v kakšnem obsegu organizirani kriminal zlorablja sredstva EU, ki so na voljo v okviru uradov OLAF, Europol in Eurojust ter Računskega sodišča“ in da je „na vprašanje, v kakšnem obsegu organizirani kriminal zlorablja sredstva EU – vključno z goljufijami, povezanimi z DDV, – na podlagi razpoložljivih informacij nemogoče odgovoriti“. Vprašanje je na nedavni predstavitvi, ki jo je 24. septembra 2012 organiziral odbor CRIM Parlamenta, potrdil in izpostavil Wim Wensink iz podjetja Price Waterhouse Coopers.

Poleg tega se zdi, da je mogoče splošni obseg goljufij, ne glede na to, ali jih zagreši organizirani kriminal ali ne, razumeti na različne načine. Predlog direktive o boju proti goljufijam, ki škodijo finančnim interesom Unije, z uporabo kazenskega prava (2012/0193(COD)) navaja, da je letni znesek domnevnih goljufij 600 milijonov EUR, v letnem poročilu o zaščiti finančnih interesov Evropske unije – boj proti goljufijam –, na katerega se direktiva sklicuje, pa je ocena, da je znesek goljufij v istem letu 478 milijonov EUR. Na zgoraj omenjeni seji odbora CRIM je predstavnik urada OLAF stroške goljufij v letu 2011 ocenil na 404 milijone EUR.

V luči predloga direktive (2012/0193(COD)), o kateri bo potekala razprava v Parlamentu, so pomembna naslednja vprašanja in ustrezni odgovori:

— Ali ima Komisija zanesljive in podrobne informacije in podatke o obsegu goljufij in zlorab sredstev EU (ki jih zagreši organizirani kriminal)?

— Če ti podatki obstajajo, zakaj jih pristojne agencije (npr. Europol, Eurojust, OLAF) ne delijo z raziskovalci, ki za Parlament pripravljajo poročila o študijah?

— Zakaj Komisija pripravlja zakonodajne predloge o boju proti goljufijam in o njihovem preprečevanju, ne da bi imela predhodno znanje o obsegu vprašanja politike, ne da bi opredelila ključne akterje (tj. potencialne storilce), odgovorne za to vprašanje, in ne da bi jasno opredelila pojme, ki se uporabljajo na tem področju (npr. goljufija, zloraba, nepravilnost)?

— Če podatki niso na voljo, ali je Komisija pripravljena preučiti obseg prodiranja v sredstva EU in njihove zlorabe, ki ju zagreši organizirani kriminal, s specifično analizo?

Odgovor komisarja Šemete v imenu Komisije
(4. december 2012)

Podatki, ki jih spoštovane poslanke omenjajo, se nanašajo na različna leta in na različna področja ([1]).

Letno poročilo o zaščiti finančnih interesov EU („poročilo o izvajanju člena 325“) se pripravi na podlagi zadevnih letnih poročil držav članic. Obveznosti poročanja držav članic so določene v področni zakonodaji, ki dopušča razlikovanje med nepravilnostmi, ki pomenijo goljufijo, in nepravilnostmi, ki ne pomenijo goljufije (kar se odraža v poročilu za leto 2011), vendar ne med goljufijami, storjenimi v okviru organiziranega kriminala in drugih kontekstih. Poleg tega zakonodaja z namenom zmanjšanja upravnega bremena za organe držav članic določa, da državam članicam ni treba poročati o vseh nepravilnostih. Vendar si Komisija nenehno prizadeva izboljšati disciplino držav članic pri poročanju.

Poročila o izvajanju člena 325, njihove priloge in ocene učinka, ki se uporabljajo za nove zakonodajne predloge, so objavljeni na spletni strani Komisije. V okviru ocen učinka se preučujejo vzroki vsake ugotovljene težave, vključno s tipom storilcev, kadar je takšno razlikovanje relevantno za predlagane ukrepe.

([1]) Poročilo o izvajanju člena 325 za leto 2010 navaja letni znesek v višini 600 milijonov EUR. Predstavlja sporočene primere suma goljufij pri odhodkih in prihodkih. Znesek 478 milijonov EUR predstavlja raven sporočenega suma goljufij samo na področju izdatkov. Znesek 404 milijone EUR se nanaša na leto 2011 ter pokriva odhodke in prihodke.

Predlog direktive o boju proti goljufijam z uporabo kazenskega prava je namenjen nadaljnji uskladitvi opredelitve goljufij in drugih kaznivih dejanj, ki so bila prvič usklajeni s konvencijo ([2]) iz leta 1995. Ocena učinka za predlog je bila zaključena pred objavo podatkov za leto 2011 in zato temelji na poročilu o izvajanju člena 325 za leto 2010.

Komisija spoštovane poslanke vabi, da upoštevajo njena sporočila o strategiji za boj proti goljufijam ([3]), o boju proti korupciji v EU ([4]) in o strategiji notranje varnosti EU ([5]).

([2]) Konvencija z dne 26. julija 1995 (UL C 316, 27.11.1995) (goljufije); Prvi protokol z dne 27. septembra 1996 (UL C 313, 23.10.1996) in Konvencija z dne 26. maja 1997 (UL C 195, 25.6.1997) (korupcija); Protokol z dne 29. novembra 1996 (UL C 151, 20.5.1997) (razlaga Sodišča); Drugi protokol z dne 19. junija 1997 (UL C 221, 19.7.1997) (pranje denarja).

([3]) COM(2011) 376 final in SEC(2011) 787.

([4]) COM(2011) 308 final.

([5]) COM(2010) 673 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008812/12
to the Commission
Tanja Fajon (S&D), Barbara Weiler (S&D) and Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Extent and quantification of fraud (and misuse) of EU funds

A study published by Parliament in December 2011 entitled 'How does organised crime misuse EU funds?' states that '[t]he conclusion is that little information on how and to what extent organised crime misuse EU funds is available from OLAF, Europol, Eurojust and ECA' and that '[t]he question of the extent of the misuse of EU funds — including VAT fraud — by organised crime is, based on the available information, impossible to answer'. The issue was confirmed and highlighted by Wim Wensink, from Price Waterhouse Coopers, at a recent hearing organised by Parliament's CRIM committee on 24 September 2012.

Furthermore, the extent of fraud in general, whether committed by organised crime or not, seems to be open to different interpretations. The proposal for a directive on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (2012/0193(COD)) states that suspected fraud amounts to EUR 600 million annually, while the report on the protection of the European Union's financial interests-Fight against fraud-Annual (2010), which the directive refers to, estimates that fraud amounts to EUR 478 million for the same year. Furthermore, at the CRIM committee meeting mentioned above, an OLAF representative estimated costs of fraud in 2011 at EUR 404 million.

In light of the proposal for a directive (2012/0193(COD)), which is about to be discussed in the Parliament, the following questions and appropriate responses bear significance:

— Does the EC have reliable and detailed information and data on the extent of fraud and misuse of EU funds (committed by organised crime)?

— If such data does exist, why is the information not shared by the competent agencies (e.g. Europol, Eurojust, OLAF) with researchers preparing study reports for Parliament?

— Why is the EC drafting legislative proposals on combating and preventing fraud without prior knowledge as to the extent of the policy issue, without identifying the key actors (i.e. potential perpetrators) responsible for the issue, and without clearly defining the terms used in the field (e.g. fraud, misuse, irregularity)?

— If the data is not available, is the EC ready to investigate the extent of the penetration and misuse of EU funds by organised crime with a specific analysis?

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

The figures to which the Honourable Members refer represent different years and different sectors ([1]).

The Annual Report on the Protection of EU's financial interests ('Article 325 Report') is established on the basis of Member States' reports on fraudulent and non-fraudulent irregularities detected in a given year. Member States' reporting duties are set out in sectorial legislation which allows for a distinction between these two types of irregularities (which is reflected in the 2011 Report) but not between fraud committed in the context of organised crime and other. Also, in order to reduce the administrative burden on Member States' authorities the legislation provides that Member States do not have to report all irregularities. However, the Commission is continuously striving to improve the reporting discipline of Member States further.

The article 325 Reports, their annexes and the impact assessments used for new legislative proposals are published on the Commission's website. The impact assessments look at the causes of each problem identified, including types of perpetrators where such a distinction is of relevance for the measures to be proposed.

([1]) The amount of EUR 600 million/year is contained in the 2010 Article 325 Report. It represents reported suspected fraud on the expenditures and revenues sides. The EUR 478 million is the level of reported suspected fraud in the expenditure field alone. The amount of EUR 404 million covers the year 2011 and both fields of expenditures and revenues.

The proposal for a directive on the fight against fraud by means of criminal law aims at aligning further the definitions of fraud and other offences which were first harmonised in a 1995 Convention ([2]). The impact assessment for the proposal was concluded before the 2011 figures were published and is therefore based on the 2010 Article 325 Report.

The Commission would invite the Honourable Members to refer to its communications on an anti-fraud strategy ([3]), on Fighting Corruption in the EU ([4]) and on an EU Internal Security Strategy ([5]).

([2]) Convention of 26 July 1995 (OJ C 316, 27.11.1995) (fraud); First Protocol of 27 September 1996 (OJ C 313, 23.10.1996) and Convention of 26 May 1997 (OJ C 195, 25.6.1997) (corruption); Protocol of 29 November 1996 (OJ C 151, 20.5.1997) (court interpretation); Second Protocol of 19 June 1997 (OJ C 221, 19.7.1997) (money laundering).

([3]) COM(2011) 376 final and SEC(2011) 787.

([4]) COM(2011) 308 final.

([5]) COM(2010) 673 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008813/12
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(2 oktober 2012)

Betreft: Europese steun ten gunste van de uitbating van de lijn Deurne-Manchester aan BMI Regional

De Britse luchtvaartmaatschappij BMI Regional vliegt vanaf maandag 29 oktober 2012 tweemaal per dag heen en weer tussen Deurne (Antwerpen) en Manchester met een Embraer ERJ 134. Naar verluidt krijgt BMI Regional voor deze nieuwe luchtvaartroute steun uit de Europese begroting. Daardoor moet het bedrijf de eerste drie jaar geen land- en vertrekrechten betalen en is er een korting per vertrekkende passagier. Het bedrijf moet naar verluidt deze steun wel investeren om de route te promoten.

City Jet, de vorige uitbater van de luchtverbinding Antwerpen-Manchester stopte halverwege september met deze verbinding.

Mag ik van de Commissie vernemen:

1. Vanuit welk Europese begrotingslijn deze toelage gefinancierd wordt?

2. Of het klopt dat de vorige uitbater van deze lijn (City Jet) op dezelfde manier gefinancierd werd? Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de redenen waarom City Jet met deze activiteiten stopte?

3. Welke reden er is om dit soort verbindingen te financieren?

4. Aan welke voorwaarden en verwachtingen BMI Regional moet voldoen om deze toelagen op te strijken?

5. Welke activiteiten gefinancierd kunnen worden onder het hoofdstuk „promotie”?

6. Of de financiering van dit soort activiteiten geen verkapte steun is om een al jarenlang onrendabele luchthaven alsnog open te houden?

Antwoord van dhr. Kallas namens de Commissie
(30 november 2012)

De Commissie bevestigt dat geen steun uit de Europese begroting (inclusief het Europees Fonds voor Regionale Ontwikkeling) wordt verleend voor deze luchtvaartactiviteiten. De informatie volgens dewelke BMI Regional steun uit de Europese begroting ontvangt voor deze nieuwe luchtverbinding is onjuist. De Commissie bevestigt voorts ook dat geen van de betrokken lidstaten een openbaredienstverplichting heeft opgelegd voor de route Deurne (Antwerpen)-Manchester.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008813/12
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: BMI Regional receives European support to operate Deurne-Manchester route

From Monday 29 October 2012, British airline BMI Regional will operate two return flights a day between Deurne (Antwerp) and Manchester using Embraer ERJ 134 jets. It is reported that BMI Regional is receiving funding from the European budget for this new air traffic route. This means that the airline will have to pay no landing or airport departure charges during the first three years and will enjoy a discount per departing passenger. Reportedly, the airline must invest this subsidy in order to promote the route.

CityJet, the previous operator of the Antwerp-Manchester route, discontinued this service in mid-September.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Which European budget line is going to cover this subsidy?

2. Is it true that this route's previous operator (CityJet) was funded in the same way? Is the Commission familiar with the reasons why CityJet discontinued this service?

3. What is the reason for funding these kinds of routes?

4. What are the conditions and expectations which BMI Regional must meet in order to qualify for this subsidy?

5. What activities can be funded under the heading of 'promotion'?

6. Does funding for these kinds of activities not amount to covert support to keep open an airport which has been unprofitable for years?

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

The Commission can confirm that the European budget (including European Regional Development Fund) is not providing funding for these air carrier operations. The information according to which BMI Regional is receiving funding from the European budget for this new air traffic route is inaccurate. Furthermore, the Commission can also confirm that the route Deurne-Antwerp is not subject to a public service obligation imposed by any of the Member States involved.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008814/12
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Nutrient profiling

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims established the principle of setting nutrient profiles to determine whether or not claims can be made on foods or certain categories of foods. However, as the nutrient profile list currently stands, 'meat alternative' products are currently not included in the draft categories and, as such, will be at a competitive disadvantage in the market place. 'Meat alternative' products will be submitted to much stricter nutritional requirements then actual meat products, making it impossible for them to compete on an equal level playing field.

Does the Commission believe that 'meat alternative' products will be included in any forthcoming amended category list?

Can the Commission confirm the current timeframe for the proposed work on nutrient profiling? When are the nutrient profiles likely to be introduced and set?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 October 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-009510/2010 ([1]) by Ms McClarkin.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008815/12
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Homeopathic medicinal products

With reference to the answer given to my Written Question E-003839/12 on 7 June 2012 by the Commission, it needs to be clarified that the question concerned was not intended to provide an incentive to the Commission to review 'the EU rules' on the authorisation requirements for homeopathic medicinal products.

Firstly, the problems raised in Question E-003839/12 are not related to the simplified registration procedure. This procedure does not permit therapeutic indication. Secondly, it does not increase the need to review the respective 'EU rules' for authorisations: the matter could be resolved promptly and permanently by an amendment to Annex A to Directive 2001/83/EC, e.g. in Part III (3) under Module 5 as follows:

'The provisions of Module 5 shall apply to the marketing authorisation referred to in Article 16(1) with the following specifications: Any missing information must be justified. If clinical efficacy of whole product can be sufficiently demonstrated, further information (for e. g. pharmaco-dynamic, pharmaco-kinetic studies and contribution of individual active substances to efficacy) is not required.'

This proposal would not compromise the quality, safety or efficacy of these products.

1. Does the Commission acknowledge the necessity to complement the authorisation requirements for homeopathic medicinal products in order to make the authorisation procedure accessible in practice for manufacturers of homeopathic medicinal products?

2. Will the Commission take into consideration the abovementioned amendment to Annex A to Directive 2001/83/EC?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 November 2012)

As explained in the Commission's answer to Written Question E-003839/2012 ([1]), the EU legal framework for medicinal products provides differentiated procedures allowing homeopathic medicinal products to be marketed either on the basis of a marketing authorisation or a simplified registration procedure. These procedures take into account the specificities of these products without compromising the quality, safety and efficacy of these products. The requirements for the marketing authorisation procedure, which apply also to non-homeopathic medicinal products, ensure a level playing field for all applicants under this procedure. In addition, homeopathic medicinal products can also be approved, under specific conditions, by a simplified registration procedure applying only to homeopathic medicinal products.

The Commission considers that these rules provide for the necessary and appropriate flexibility for the approval of homeopathic medicinal products and does not see the need for an amendment to Annex A of Directive 2001/83/EC ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008816/12
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Civil aviation safety agreement

The 'Agreement between the United States of America and the European Union on cooperation in the regulation of civil aviation safety' entered into force on 1 May 2011. The stated purpose of the agreement was 'to automatically accept certain approvals issued within the other certification system (an approval issued by one party constitutes a valid approval by the other party) and enable the reciprocal acceptance of findings of compliance during validation processes'. In particular, the Maintenance Annex Guidance (MAG) section provides that American authorities would automatically approve maintenance companies approved already by their European counterparts and vice versa.

However, it appears that while Europe has kept its side of the agreement, the United States has not. Currently, the European Aviation Safety Agency is providing approvals for firms right across the United States, but an equivalent process is not taking place from the US side. In a recent letter, John Benning of the American Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) explained that under the Section 1616 of the '9/11 Commission Recommendation Act of 2007' the FAA is currently not permitted to certify new FAA repair stations outside the United States. This restriction will remain in place until the US Transport Security Administration publishes final repair station security rules. Mr Benning has no estimate as to when this will happen. This results in European firms being at a huge competitive disadvantage over American firms as even European aircraft owners prefer to have certification with dual approval.

What is the Commission's position on this issue and what action, if any, is it taking to rectify the imbalances in the current agreement?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2012)

The situation as described by the Honourable Member is known to the Commission and has been the subject of several exchanges with the relevant US authorities, notably through the Bilateral Oversight Board of the bilateral aviation safety agreement referred to. The Commission has voiced its continued strong concerns regarding the failure of the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to oversee the release of a final rule on Foreign Repair Stations (FRS). The moratorium on the issuance of new FAA repair station certifications resulting from this lack of action by the TSA has been in place since 2008, leading to 32 European companies awaiting approval.

In parallel there are currently around 30 to 50 applications from U.S. companies pending for approval by EASA, the granting of which would create an increased imbalance in the market due to the lack of reciprocity.

Moreover, the Commission has repeatedly expressed its concerns with the security measures for FRS advocated in the TSA's draft rule of 18 November 2009, indicating that they would impose extra-territorial obligations on EU repair stations that may not be legally introduced in EU Member States. Considering that in the case of non-compliance U.S. authorities would revoke maintenance approvals, thus preventing EU repair stations from working on U.S. registered aircraft, the Commission has indicated its willingness to work with the TSA to ensure that these concerns are duly addressed.

The Commission has made it clear to its US counterparts that this is not a tenable situation and that there must be a resolution.The Commission is currently exploring what action could be taken on this matter in the context of the EU/US bilateral aviation safety agreement.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008817/12
à la Commission
Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)
(2 octobre 2012)

Objet: Promotion de l'épargne-retraite privée par la Commission

Dans sa réponse P-007376/2012 à la question avec demande de réponse écrite P-007376/2012, posée par Karima Delli, la Commission considère que «les fonds de pension professionnels sont habituellement des investisseurs à long terme qui utilisent d'autant moins l'effet de levier (consistant à emprunter pour investir) que la directive sur les institutions de retraite professionnelle l'interdit».

La Commission laisse penser que les fonds de pension n'ont pas de rôle déstabilisateur sur les marchés financiers, car elle omet d'évoquer le rôle joué par la privatisation de l'épargne collective dans la financiarisation de l'économie, et la relation des fonds de pension avec les fonds d'investissements. En tant que premiers investisseurs institutionnels par la taille, les fonds de pression exercent pourtant un rôle fondamental lorsque, en contrepartie d'un investissement dans un portefeuille du fonds d'investissement ou d'une compagnie, ils exigent des taux de rentabilité de court terme qui n'ont rien à voir avec la capacité de croissance de l'économie réelle, induisant le recours aux techniques de High Yields (dont l'effet de levier) évoquées dans la question précédente. La croissance de l'endettement privé institutionnel en atteste. Quelle analyse la Commission fait-elle de cette situation?

La Commission se défend d'inciter les États européens à augmenter les dépenses fiscales d'incitation au développement de l'épargne-retraite privée. Par contre, elle reconnaît qu'elle travaille à «optimiser l'efficacité et l'intérêt économique des mesures, fiscales ou autres, d'incitation à l'épargne-retraite privée», ce qui revient exactement au même. En période de réduction des dépenses publiques, pourquoi la Commission continue-t-elle d'encourager des dépenses fiscales socialement injustes, et qui déséquilibrent davantage le budget des États?

Enfin, il est établi que le développement de la retraite privée par capitalisation, même sans manipulation financière, ne constitue pas une réponse au vieillissement démographique, puisque ce sont toujours les jeunes actifs qui payent par le fruit de leur travail les pensions des retraités, soit par des cotisations directes, soit par le prélèvement de remboursement d'emprunt ou de dividendes. Le véritable coût d'un système de retraite réside dans ses frais de gestion. La Commission est-elle en phase avec cette analyse?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(19 novembre 2012)

La capacité des fonds de pension d'agir en tant qu'investisseurs à long terme est fonction de l'échéance des décisions d'investissement et de la taille des portefeuilles de négociation, l'objectif de ces fonds étant d'obtenir des rendements élevés pour leurs investissements par rapport à leurs portefeuilles «Achat-conservation». Si quelques fonds de pension visent un certain niveau de rendement annuel sur des cycles pluriannuels, il ne s'agit pas d'une exigence prudentielle du point de vue de la directive sur les institutions de retraite professionnelle ([1]), laquelle exige que les institutions de retraite professionnelle placent les actifs qu'elles détiennent pour couvrir les engagements de retraite selon des modalités adaptées à la nature et à la durée de ces engagements. La révision dont fait l'objet la directive sur les institutions de retraite professionnelle vise à favoriser l'investissement à long terme en prévoyant une évaluation des engagements plus réaliste et des mesures incitatives pour améliorer la gestion des risques sur de longues périodes.

La Commission n'incite pas à augmenter les dépenses fiscales pour promouvoir les retraites privées, mais elle propose d'examiner si les ressources publiques consacrées à des mesures, fiscales et autres, d'incitation à ce type de retraites sont utilisées selon le meilleur rapport coût/efficacité, ce qui est particulièrement important en période de restrictions budgétaires.

Les régimes de retraite publics mettent en péril la viabilité des finances publiques en raison du vieillissement de la population. Ces risques peuvent être réduits par un relèvement de l'âge de la retraite, une diminution des pensions de retraite ou une augmentation des cotisations. Ces deux dernières possibilités étant hautement indésirables, il ne reste plus que les deux options examinées dans le livre blanc sur les retraites ([2]), à savoir trouver un meilleur équilibre entre la durée de la vie professionnelle et celle de la retraite, et développer l'épargne-retraite privée. Les frais de gestion représentent une part très faible des dépenses des régimes de retraite publics. Réduire ces frais ne pourra, au mieux, que contribuer très faiblement à la viabilité de retraites adéquates.

([1]) Directive 2003/41/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 3 juin 2003 concernant les activités et la surveillance des institutions de retraite professionnelle.
([2]) Livre blanc: Une stratégie pour des retraites adéquates, sûres et viables, COM(2012) 55 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008817/12
to the Commission
Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Promotion of private pension savings by the Commission

In its answer to written question No P-007376/2012, by Karima Delli, the Commission said 'occupational pension funds are typically long term investors and they do not engage in leveraging (borrowing to invest), not least as the IORP Directive outlaws this'.

The Commission implies that pension funds do not have a destabilising effect on the financial markets, since it fails to mention the role played by the privatisation of collective savings in the financialisation of the economy, and the connection between pension funds and investment funds. As the largest institutional investors, pension funds do, however, play a fundamental role when, in exchange for investing in an investment fund or company portfolio, they command short-term rates of return which have nothing to do with the growth capacity of the real economy, thereby leading to the adoption of high yield techniques (including leverage) mentioned in the previous question. The increase in institutional private debt is evidence of this. What does the Commission make of this situation?

The Commission denies encouraging European countries to increase tax expenditure for promoting the development of private pension savings. On the other hand, it recognises that it is working to 'optimise the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of tax and other incentives for private pension saving', which is precisely the same. At a time of reduced public expenditure, why does the Commission continue to encourage tax expenditure which is socially unjust and further unbalances the State budgets?

Finally, it has been established that the development of funded private pension schemes, even without financial manipulation, is not an answer to population ageing, as it is always the case that young working people, through their earnings, pay the pensions of those who have retired, whether by means of direct contributions or by means of deductions from loan repayments or dividends. The true cost of a pension system lies in its administrative costs. Does the Commission agree with this analysis of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2012)

The capacity of pension funds to act as long-term investors depends on the time horizon for investment decisions and on the size of their trading book to generate high investment returns in relation to their buy-to-hold portfolio. While some pension funds target a certain level of annual returns during multi-annual cycles, this is not a prudential requirement from the perspective of the IORP Directive ([1]). The directive requires IORPs to invest the assets held to cover the pension liabilities in a manner appropriate to the nature and duration of those liabilities. The ongoing review of the IORP Directive aims to support long-term investment by making the valuation of liabilities more realistic and by providing incentives for better risk management over long periods of time.

The Commission does not encourage higher tax expenditure to promote private pensions, but proposes to examine whether public resources devoted to tax and other incentives for such pensions are used in a cost-effective way, which is particularly important at times of fiscal constraint.

Public pension systems pose risks to the sustainability of public finances due to population ageing. Such risks can be reduced by raising the retirement age, lowering pensions or increasing contributions. Lower pensions and higher contributions are highly undesirable. This leaves only the two options discussed in the White Paper on pensions ([2]): achieving a better balance between years in work and years in retirement; and saving more through private schemes. Administration costs represent a very small share of public pension spending. Cutting these costs can at best only make a very small contribution to the sustainability of adequate pensions.

([1]) 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.

([2]) White Paper: An Agenda for Adequate, Safe and Sustainable Pensions, COM(2012) 55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008819/12
to the Commission
Derek Roland Clark (EFD)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Wind farm, Stoke Heights

The electricity company Ecotricity is proposing to develop a wind farm of 15 turbines on a stretch of open land lying between two significant woodlands: Salcey Forest and Stoke Park Wood (planning application reference: 11/01193 Stoke Heights, Stoke Goldington).

Both these woods have significant populations of bats of several species. Various UK acts ensure the legal protection of all bat species and their roosts. Several of these acts directly implement the EU Habitats Directive. Since 2003, various surveys have established that bats have been killed in and around wind farms. The studies were carried out in West Virginia, USA, and in 14 European countries. The numbers of fatalities recorded are so high that there is serious concern about the conservation status of several species.

Can the Commission please tell me why Ecotricity is being allowed to continue to pursue this proposal notwithstanding the documented information available from several sources recording significant fatalities of these EU protected species?

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

All bats are protected under the Habitats Directive ([1]) which requires that in the case of a proposed development, the impact on bats need to be assessed and taken into account in relation to the provisions set out in Articles 12 and 16 of the Habitats Directive.

Under EU legislation, wind farm plans and projects are also subject to an assessment of impacts on wildlife and other environmental areas. In particular, the provisions of the directives on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA ([2])) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA ([3])) may apply.

It is for the competent authorities in the United Kingdom to ensure that assessments of wind-farms such as the one in Stoke Heights on bats are correctly carried out.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) Directive 2001/42/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([3]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008820/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Attacchi contro i cristiani in Kenya

La comunità cristiana in Kenya è tornata ad essere bersaglio di attacchi terroristici. Dopo i numerosi attentati degli ultimi mesi, l'ennesima retata contro i fedeli si è consumata in una Chiesa di San Policarpo a Nairobi, in cui è rimasto ucciso un bambino di nove anni e altri otto sono rimasti feriti.

Le chiese in Kenya sono finite recentemente nel mirino di numerosi attacchi che non sono mai stati rivendicati, ma che vengono attribuiti a una vendetta dei gruppi qaedisti per l'offensiva dell'esercito keniano in Somalia contro le milizie Shebaab.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È al corrente dei drammatici sviluppi dell'esplosione di violenza contro la comunità cristiana in Kenya?

2. Intende sollecitare la comunità internazionale sulla necessità di misure più incisive volte a fronteggiare l'escalation di violenza contro i cristiani?

3. Dal momento che i numerosi attacchi degli ultimi mesi non sono mai stati rivendicati, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante fornire aggiornamenti in merito al progresso delle indagini relative alla ricerca dei colpevoli?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Asthon è a conoscenza dei violenti episodi recentemente avvenuti in Kenya, tra cui il lancio di una granata sulla chiesa di San Policarpo a Nairobi, l'uccisione di due ufficiali di polizia kenyoti a Garissa lo stesso fine settimana e l'esplosione di due ordigni nella zona residenziale di Nairobi il 12 ottobre scorso. L'AR/VP nutre serie preoccupazioni circa tali attacchi e segue con estrema attenzione l'evolversi della minaccia terroristica nel paese.

Dall'incursione kenyota in territorio somalo dell'ottobre 2011 e da quando il Kenia sostiene l'AMISOM, 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 in tutti i casi.

Nell'ambito del dialogo intrattenuto con le autorità kenyote, l'UE solleva periodicamente la questione della sicurezza di tutti i kenyoti e gli stranieri che si trovano nel paese. Inoltre, per promuovere attivamente la pace e l'armonia in Kenya, l'UE finanzia, 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 religiose in Africa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008820/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Attacks on Christians in Kenya

The Christian community in Kenya has once again become the target of terrorist attacks. After numerous attacks in recent months, another raid took place at St Polycarp Church in Nairobi, in which a nine-year-old child was killed and eight others were injured.

Churches in Kenya have recently been targeted in numerous attacks. As no one has ever claimed responsibility for the attacks, they are believed to be revenge by a group of al-Qa'ida militants for the Kenyan army's offensive against the Al-Shabaab militia in Somalia.

In view of the above, can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following:

1. Is she aware of the dramatic developments in the explosion of violence against the Christian community in Kenya?

2. Does she intend to urge the international community to take stronger measures to deal with the escalating violence against Christians?

3. Since responsibility for the numerous attacks in recent months has never been claimed, can the Vice-President/High Representative provide updates on the progress of the investigation into finding those responsible?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President Ashton is fully aware of the violent incidents that happened in Kenya recently, including the grenade attack on a St Polycarp Church in Nairobi, the killing of two Kenyan police officers in Garissa the same weekend, and the twin explosions in a Nairobi residential estate on 12 October. She is very concerned about these incidents and follows closely the evolving situation of the terrorist threat in Kenya.

Since Kenya's incursion into Somali terrority in October 2011 and Kenya's contribution to Amisom, 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 High Representative/Vice-President attaches utmost importance to freedom of religion or beliefs and is fully committed to ensuring peaceful co-existence of religious communities in Africa.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008821/12
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(2. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Illegale Einwanderung

Politische Instabilität in Afrika führt nach Untersuchungen einiger Mitgliedstaaten sowie Europol zu erhöhter illegaler Einwanderung.

1. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, inwieweit sich die illegale Einwanderung durch Krisen in anderen Regionen, zum Beispiel im Nahen Osten, verändert hat?

2. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, wie sich die illegale Einwanderung durch den Krieg in Afghanistan verändert hat?

3. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, wie sich die illegale Einwanderung durch den Krieg im Irak verändert hat?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(4. Dezember 2012)

Zivile und sozioökonomische Unruhen sowie bewaffnete Konflikte führen häufig zu gemischten Migrationsströmen von irregulären Zuwanderern sowie Personen, die aus begründeter Angst vor Verfolgung um internationalen Schutz ansuchen. Die meisten der beispielsweise im Mittleren Osten, im Irak oder in Afghanistan von Krisen betroffenen Menschen bleiben in der Region, insbesondere in den Nachbarländern.

Trotzdem haben sich diese Migrationsbewegungen auch auf die Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union ausgewirkt. Die Kommission weist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Statistiken von Eurostat zu Asyl und Durchsetzung der Zuwanderungsgesetzgebung ([1]) hin, die nach Staatsangehörigkeit aufgeschlüsselt Zahlen zu Asylbewerbern und aufgefundenen irregulären Zuwanderern enthalten.

Diese Statistiken werden im Einklang mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 862/2007 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 11. Juli 2007 zu Gemeinschaftsstatistiken über Wanderung und internationalen Schutz ([2]) erhoben und veröffentlicht. So wurden 2011 beispielsweise insgesamt 73 370 afghanische und 27 265 irakische Staatsangehörige (Asylbewerber und irreguläre Zuwanderer zusammen) verzeichnet.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database
([2]) ABl. L 199 vom 31.7.2007, S. 23.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008821/12
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Illegal immigration

According to investigations by a number of Member States and Europol, political instability in Africa is leading to a rise in illegal immigration.

1. Can the Commission provide information on the extent to which illegal immigration has changed as a result of crises in other regions, such as the Middle East?

2. Can the Commission provide information on the extent to which illegal immigration has changed as a result of the war in Afghanistan?

3. Can the Commission provide information on the extent to which illegal immigration has changed as a result of the war in Iraq?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2012)

Civil and socioeconomic unrest, as well as armed conflicts have often triggered mixed migratory flows including irregular immigrants and people looking for international protection because of well-founded fear of persecution. Most of the people affected by crises such as the ones in the Middle East, Iraq or Afghanistan have remained in the region, notably in the neighbouring countries.

Nevertheless, the Member States of the European Union have also been affected by such migratory movements. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the statistics published by Eurostat on Asylum and Enforcement of Immigration Legislation ([1]) including figures on asylum-seekers as well as of apprehended irregular immigrants by their nationality.

Those statistics are collected and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection ([2]). By way of example, the total for Afghani and Iraqi nationals (asylum-seekers and irregular migrants taken together) were 73 370 and 27 265 respectively in 2011.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database
([2]) OJ L 199, 31.7.2007, p. 23.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008822/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Desaparición de mecanismos de apoyo a los productores fotovoltaicos

La Directiva europea 2001/77/CE estableció medidas para la promoción de la electricidad a partir de fuentes de energía renovables. Dicha Directiva europea expone claramente en su considerando 14 que los Estados miembros deben aplicar diferentes mecanismos de apoyo a las fuentes de energía renovables a escala nacional y garantizar el correcto funcionamiento de esos mecanismos de apoyo (a la espera de que entre en funcionamiento un marco comunitario).

En el caso español, el mecanismo de apoyo a la energía fotovoltaica es manifiestamente insuficiente, la mayoría de las inversiones realizadas bajo el amparo de la mencionada Directiva europea y en el marco legal del Real Decreto 661/2007 sufren un recorte retroactivo del 30 % como consecuencia de las normas dictadas con posterioridad, estas inversiones tienen un apalancamiento medio del 80 % y precisan refinanciación, puesto que en su mayoría fueron financiadas en base a las condiciones iniciales.

La volatilidad regulatoria provocada por las normas retroactivas (1565/2010 y RDL14/2010) junto con la perspectiva de una nueva imposición fiscal del 6 %, sumada a la gran inestabilidad de los mercados hace que la refinanciación de los proyectos fotovoltaicos por parte de la banca tradicional sea imposible. Al no tener acceso al mercado de capital, la mayoría de productores de energía fotovoltaica se enfrentan a una situación de *default*.

Esta situación ha provocado que se solicitase al Instituto de Crédito Oficial (ICO) la cantidad de 110 millones de euros para paliar las necesidades de tesorería de los proyectos fotovoltaicos. Estas peticiones de crédito han sido todas denegadas, a pesar que el Real Decreto-Ley 14/2010 establece claramente la obligación del ICO a habilitar una línea especial de crédito para proyectos fotovoltaicos.

Dado que los mecanismos de apoyo a los proyectos fotovoltaicos en España no funcionan correctamente, ¿está dispuesta la Comisión, mediante el *European Renewable Energy Fund* del Banco Europeo de Inversión o mediante el mecanismo que considere conveniente, a habilitar una línea de crédito de emergencia para los proyectos fotovoltaicos que sufren los recortes retroactivos en España?

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

Según la Directiva en materia de energías renovables ([1]), los Estados miembros tienen la responsabilidad de adoptar medidas que permitan alcanzar o superar los objetivos nacionales que fija en esta materia esa misma Directiva.

El papel principal del Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) es facilitar financiación a largo plazo para la realización de nuevas inversiones o, lo que es lo mismo, ayudar a los promotores para que destinen nuevas inversiones a iniciativas que vengan a apoyar los objetivos de la UE. Siendo así, los proyectos que ya han sido terminados no pueden normalmente recibir la financiación del BEI y es por tanto imposible para este intervenir de la forma que sugiere Su Señoría. Es importante también observar que el BEI tendría que verificar que ningún prestatario fue capaz de devolver los préstamos que se le concedieron.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008822/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Disappearance of the support mechanisms for photovoltaic producers

Directive 2001/77/EC lays down measures for the promotion of electricity from renewable energy sources. Recital 14 of that EU Directive clearly explains that the Member States must operate different mechanisms of support for renewable energy sources at the national level and guarantee the proper functioning of these support mechanisms (until a Community framework is put into operation).

In the case of Spain, the support mechanism for photovoltaic energy is clearly inadequate, most investments made under the aforementioned EU Directive and within the legal framework of Royal Decree No 661/2007 are being cut retroactively by 30% as a result of rules laid down at a later date. These investments have an average leverage of 80% and they require refinancing, since most of them were financed on the basis of the initial conditions.

The regulatory volatility caused by the retroactive rules (1565/2010 and Royal Decree-Law No 14/2010) together with the prospect of a new tax rate of 6%, added to the great instability of the markets makes refinancing of photovoltaic projects through traditional banking impossible. Not having access to the capital market, most photovoltaic energy producers are facing default.

This situation has led to the Official Credit Institute (ICO) being asked for EUR 110 million to meet the cash requirements of photovoltaic projects. These requests for credit have all been declined, despite Royal Decree-Law No 14/2010 clearly imposing an obligation on the ICO to provide a special line of credit for photovoltaic projects.

Given that the support mechanisms for photovoltaic projects in Spain are not functioning properly, is the Commission prepared, through the European Investment Bank's European Renewable Energy Fund or through a mechanism it deems appropriate, to provide an emergency line of credit for photovoltaic projects that are undergoing retroactive cuts in Spain?

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

According to the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]), Member States have the responsibility to introduce effective measures to achieve or exceed their national renewable energy targets as laid down in that directive.

The European Investment Bank (EIB)'s primary role is to provide long term finance for new investments — that is, to help promoters implement new investments in projects which support the EU's objectives. Given this, projects which are already complete are not normally eligible for EIB financing hence the EIB would not be in a position to intervene in the way suggested by the Honourable Member. It is also important to note that the EIB would have to confirm that any borrower was able to repay any loan facility made available to it.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, OJ 2009 L 140 , 05.06.2009.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008823/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ενεργειακή αποδοτικότητα κέντρων δεδομένων

Η ραγδαία ανάπτυξη των τεχνολογιών πληροφοριών και επικοινωνιών (ΤΠΕ) έχει οδηγήσει στη δημιουργία χιλιάδων κέντρων δεδομένων για τη στέγαση των διακομιστών των πολυεθνικών κολοσσών πληροφορικής. Η ενέργεια που καταναλώνουν τα κέντρα δεδομένων παγκοσμίως εκτιμάται ότι αντιστοιχεί στην απόδοση 30 πυρηνικών εργοστασίων ή αλλιώς σε 30 δισεκατομμύρια Watts, ενώ το 90 % ή παραπάνω της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας που προμηθεύονται από το δίκτυο σπαταλιέται, καθώς χρησιμοποιείται για τη διατήρηση των διακομιστών σε κατάσταση αναμονής προκειμένου να ανταποκριθούν σε πιθανή αύξηση των υπολογιστικών αναγκών. Τα κέντρα δεδομένων είναι επίσης υποχρεωμένα να χρησιμοποιούν εφεδρικές γεννήτριες, οι οποίες καταναλώνουν πετρέλαιο και εκπέμπουν επικίνδυνα αέρια στο περιβάλλον. Η Υπηρεσία Περιβαλλοντικής Προστασίας των ΗΠΑ (EPA) υπολογίζει ότι 1,5 % της συνολικής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στις ΗΠΑ καταναλώνεται από εξυπηρετητές και υπολογιστικά κέντρα. Είναι προφανές ότι οι ΤΠΕ μπορούν να συμβάλουν στην εν γένει ενεργειακή αποδοτικότητα (όπως σημειώνει η Επιτροπή με την ανακοίνωσή της COM(2009) 0111 τελικό), αλλά αποτελούν και οι ίδιες έναν σημαντικό καταναλωτή ενέργειας.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το πόσα κέντρα δεδομένων υπάρχουν στην ΕΕ και ποια είναι η συνολική ενεργειακή κατανάλωσή τους;

— Ποιες υπολογίζεται ότι είναι οι συνολικές εκπομπές CO_2 των κέντρων δεδομένων της ΕΕ; Οι εκπομπές αυτές καλύπτονται από το σύστημα εμπορίας δικαιωμάτων εκπομπών (ETS);

— Τι πρωτοβουλίες έχει αναλάβει η Επιτροπή για την βελτίωση της ενεργειακής αποδοτικότητας των υφιστάμενων, αλλά και των νέων κέντρων δεδομένων και υπηρεσιών και σε τι βαθμό έχουν επιφέρει αποτελέσματα οι πρωτοβουλίες αυτές;

— Το θέμα αποτελεί αντικείμενο του ICT4EE Forum και, αν ναι, ποια πρόοδος έχει συντελεστεί μετά από 2,5 χρόνια; Θεωρείται ικανοποιητικός ο εθελοντικός χαρακτήρας της μέτρησης της κατανάλωσης ενέργειας και των εκπομπών;

— Υπάρχουν σχετικά ερευνητικά προγράμματα που χρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΕ, στο πλαίσιο του 7ου ΠΠ ή άλλων προγραμμάτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει για τον αυξανόμενο αριθμό των νέων κέντρων δεδομένων. Αυτός είναι ένας λόγος για τον οποίο οι διακομιστές επιχειρήσεων θα συμπεριληφθούν στο πρόγραμμα εργασίας για τον οικολογικό σχεδιασμό 2012-2014 ([1]).

Μια προπαρασκευαστική μελέτη σε σχέση με τους διακομιστές επιχειρήσεων που θα εξετάζει τις διαστάσεις της ενεργειακής απόδοσης θα διενεργηθεί το 2013· το 2014/15 θα εξεταστούν οι απαιτήσεις για την καταλληλότητα του οικολογικού σχεδιασμού και την επισήμανση της ενεργειακής απόδοσης.

Συγκεκριμένες διαστάσεις διακομιστών είναι ήδη νομοθετικά κατοχυρωμένες για το 2013. Η Επιτροπή θα εκδώσει έναν κανονισμό για τον οικολογικό σχεδιασμό σχετικά με τους υπολογιστές και τους διακομιστές και τις απαιτήσεις για την απόδοση της εσωτερικής απόδοσης ενέργειας και έναν κανονισμό για τον οικολογικό σχεδιασμό σχετικά με τη δικτυωμένη κατάσταση αναμονής (δηλαδή την κατανάλωση ενέργειας συνδεδεμένων προϊόντων με το διαδίκτυο που βρίσκονται σε κατάσταση αναμονής).

Μία άλλη πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής ([2]) στοχεύει στη διαφάνεια των αναφορών του τομέα ΤΠΕ (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των κέντρων δεδομένων) σχετικά με την ενέργεια και το αποτύπωμα άνθρακα, καθώς και στη λήψη μετέπειτα ενεργειών (π.χ., ταχεία υιοθέτηση από τη βιομηχανία σχετικών προτύπων).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/documents/eco-design/working-plan/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.ict-footprint.eu

Το ΣΕΔΕ της ΕΕ εφαρμόζεται για τις διαδικασίες παραγωγής και όχι για τους τελικούς καταναλωτές ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας. Επομένως, τα κέντρα δεδομένων καλύπτονται από το ΣΕΔΕ της ΕΕ για τις άμεσες εκπομπές CO_2 που προέρχονται από την αυτοπαραγόμενη ηλεκτρική ενέργεια, δεδομένου ότι η εγκατάσταση παραγωγής έχει ισχύ άνω των 20 MW. Ωστόσο, οποιαδήποτε ηλεκτρική ενέργεια η οποία αγοράζεται από εξωτερικούς προμηθευτές και καταναλώνεται από τα κέντρα δεδομένων περιλαμβάνει, επίσης, την ενδεικτική τιμή του ΣΕΔΕ, καθώς οι παραγωγοί ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας καλύπτονται συνήθως από το ΣΕΔΕ της ΕΕ.

Σύμφωνα με το έργο της οδηγίας για τον οικολογικό σχεδιασμό ([3]), η κατανάλωση ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας των κέντρων δεδομένων εκτιμάται ότι είναι περίπου 56 TWh/έτος (ΕΕ-27 το 2010), δηλαδή σχεδόν 28 Mt CO_2/έτος (υπόθεση: ένταση του άνθρακα 0,5 t CO_2/MWh για την παραγωγή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στην ΕΕ).

([3]) http://www.ecodesign-wp2.eu/documents.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008823/12
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Data centre energy efficiency

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has led to the creation of thousands of data centres housing the servers of multinational computer giants. The energy consumed by these data centres worldwide is estimated to be the same as the output of 30 nuclear power plants or 30 billion watts. However, 90% or more of the electrical energy supplied by the network is wasted, as it is used to keep the servers on standby, so that they can respond to a likely increase in computer needs. The data centres also have to use standby generators, which consume fuel and emit dangerous gases into the atmosphere. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 1.5% of total electrical energy in the USA is consumed by server and computer rooms. It is clear that the ICT sector could contribute to overall energy efficiency (as stated by the Commission in Communication COM(2009) 0111 final). However, the sector itself is also a large energy consumer.

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

— Does it have information on how many data centres are in the EU and their total energy consumption?

— What are the total estimated CO_2 emissions of data centres in the EU? Are these emissions covered by the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)?

— What initiatives has the Commission taken to improve the energy efficiency of existing as well as new data centres and services, and to what extent have these initiatives achieved results?

— Is the issue included in the ICT4EE Forum and, if so, what progress has been made in two and a half years? Does it consider the voluntary nature for the measurement of energy consumption and emissions satisfactory?

— Are there any relevant EU-funded research programmes under FP7 or other programmes?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2012)

The Commission is aware of the increasing number of new data centres. This is one reason why enterprise servers will be included in the Ecodesign Working Plan 2012-2014 ([1]).

A preparatory study on enterprise servers looking at energy efficiency aspects will be launched in 2013; in 2014/15, the appropriateness of ecodesign and energy labelling requirements will be examined.

Certain aspects of servers will be regulated already in 2013. The Commission will adopt an Ecodesign Regulation on computers and servers with requirements on internal power supply efficiency and an Ecodesign Regulation on networked standby (i.e. energy consumption of network connected products in standby mode).

Another Commission initiative ([2]) aims at transparency in the energy and carbon footprint reporting of the ICT sector (incl. data centres) and follow-up actions (e.g. fast uptake by industry of relevant standards).

The EU ETS applies to production processes and not to final electricity consumers. Data centres are hence covered by the EU ETS for direct CO_2 emissions from auto-produced electricity, provided the generation installation has a capacity of >20MW. However, any electricity externally purchased and consumed by data centres also includes the ETS price signal as electricity producers are usually covered by the EU ETS.

Based on work on the Ecodesign Directive ([3]), the electricity consumption of data centres is estimated to be around 56 TWh/y (EU-27 in 2010), i.e. roughly 28 Mt CO_2/y (assumption: carbon intensity of 0.5 t CO_2/MWh for EU electricity production).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/documents/eco-design/working-plan/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.ict-footprint.eu
([3]) http://www.ecodesign-wp2.eu/documents.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008824/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(2. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Steigende Arbeitslosigkeit insbesondere bei älteren Menschen

Die jüngsten Statistiken zeigen, dass die Arbeitslosigkeit EU-weit zunimmt (11,4 %) und ganz offensichtlich von den Mitgliedstaaten nicht gebremst werden kann. Waren in Österreich im August dieses Jahres noch 289 223 Menschen ohne Arbeit, waren es im September schon 294 922; gegenüber dem Vorjahr bedeutet dies einen Anstieg um 6,4 %. Allerdings sind die älteren Menschen unter den Arbeitslosen (Personen über 50) besonders betroffen; in dieser Gruppe stieg die Arbeitslosigkeit um 9,4 %.

1. Kennt die Kommission diese Entwicklung in der Altersgruppe der über 50-Jährigen in Österreich? Wie sieht die Entwicklung EU-weit aus? Wie sieht die entsprechende Entwicklung insbesondere in Problemländern wie Griechenland, Spanien, Italien und Portugal aus?

(Bitte um Erläuterung.)

2. Welche Vorschläge gedenkt die Kommission zu unterbreiten, und welche Initiativen will sie einleiten, damit dieser Entwicklung, bei der wertvolles Potenzial am Arbeitsmarkt verloren geht, EU-weit erfolgreich entgegengewirkt werden kann?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(19. November 2012)

1. Die Kommission kennt die hohe Arbeitslosenquote bei älteren Menschen und ist darüber zutiefst besorgt. Österreich steht jedoch vergleichsweise besser da als andere Länder.

Äußerst besorgniserregend ist allerdings die sehr hohe Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit bei dieser Arbeitnehmergruppe. Im zweiten Quartal 2012 waren in der Europäischen Union insgesamt 56 % der arbeitslosen älteren Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer zwischen 50 und 64 Jahren seit mindestens 12 Monaten ohne Arbeit, gegenüber 44,4 % im Durchschnitt aller Altersgruppen. In Österreich beträgt dieser Anteil 42,1 %.

2. Die beschriebenen Entwicklungen sind für die Europäische Kommission besonders alarmierend, da die Verringerung der Arbeitslosenquoten bei älteren Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern von entscheidender Bedeutung für das Erreichen des EU-Ziels einer Beschäftigungsquote von 75 % bis zum Jahr 2020 ist.

Der Kommission ist bewusst, dass die Ankurbelung der Nachfrage nach Arbeitskräften eine notwendige, aber keineswegs ausreichende Bedingung darstellt, um die Arbeitslosigkeit bei älteren Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern zu verringern. Ergänzt werden sollte dies durch Initiativen, die die Work-Life-Balance vor allem bei älteren Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern verbessern, die Weiterbildung fördern, die Arbeitsbedingungen an die Bedürfnisse älterer Arbeitnehmer anpassen und Betreuungsangebote für ältere Menschen schaffen.

In den länderspezifischen Empfehlungen wurde besonderes Augenmerk auf das aktive Altern und Maßnahmen zur Verlängerung der Erwerbstätigkeit gelegt. Im Beschäftigungspaket wird den Mitgliedstaaten allgemein auch vorgeschlagen, die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen durch Senkung der Steuern auf Arbeit und stärkeren Rückgriff auf Einstellungszuschüsse für Neueinstellungen sowie Stärkung beschäftigungsintensiver Wirtschaftsbereiche wie IKT, grüne Wirtschaft und Gesundheit zu fördern.

Die Kommission führt derzeit das Europäische Jahr für aktives Altern und Solidarität zwischen den Generationen 2012 durch, das unter anderem darauf abzielt, die Möglichkeiten und Bedingungen für ältere Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer zu verbessern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008824/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Rising unemployment among older people in particular

The latest statistics show that unemployment is rising throughout the European Union (11.4%) and that the Member States are obviously unable to halt it. While there were 289 223 people out of work in Austria in August of this year, this figure rose to 294 922 in September, representing an increase of 6.4% on the previous year. The fact is, however, that older people (those over 50) are hit particularly hard by unemployment; in this group, unemployment levels rose by 9.4%.

1. Is the Commission aware of this development in the over-50 age bracket in Austria? What is the trend throughout Europe? How are things developing in problematic countries in particular, for example Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal?

(Please provide an explanation)

2. What proposals does the Commission intend to make and what initiatives does it plan to take to combat this development throughout Europe, helping to stem the loss of valuable potential in the labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 November 2012)

1. The Commission is aware and deeply concerned about the high unemployment rates among older persons. However, Austria is performing relatively better than other countries.

What is even more worrying are the very high long-term unemployment rates for this group of workers. For the European Union as a whole 56% of the unemployed older workers aged between 50 and 64 years was unemployed for 12 months or more unemployed in the second quarter of 2012, compared to 44.4% considering all age groups. In Austria the figure is 42.1%.

2. The developments described are of particular concern to the Commission because reducing the unemployment rates of older workers is essential for reaching the EU employment rate target of 75% by 2020.

The Commission is well aware that boosting demand for labour is a necessary but not sufficient condition to reduce unemployment of older workers. It should also be complemented by initiatives that improve work-life balance especially of older workers, stimulate training, adapt working conditions to the needs of older workers and provide care for the elderly.

The Country Specific Recommendations have paid attention to active ageing and to the measures that support workers staying longer in employment. In more general terms, the Employment Package ([1]) also proposes Member States to support job creation by reducing taxes on labour and making more use of hiring subsidies targeted to new jobs as well as fostering job rich sectors such as ICT, green economy and healthcare.

The Commission is currently implementing the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012 which aims, among other things, to improve the opportunities and conditions for senior workers.

([1]) COM(2012) 173.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008825/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nirj Deva (ECR)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Imprisonment of Pakistani doctor alleged to have assisted US authorities in finding Osama bin Laden

In May 2012 a Pakistani doctor, Shakil Afridi, was jailed for at least thirty years by a court in Pakistan. He was convicted of treason for having allegedly assisted US authorities to run a vaccination programme in Abbottabad, Pakistan, with the ultimate intention of gathering information about the suspected presence of Osama bin Laden in the town.

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's opinion of the sentence handed down to Dr Afridi?

2. To what extent does the Vice-President/High Representative agree with the comments of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton that Dr Afridi should be released because his work, regardless of whether he was aware of its ultimate purpose, served US and Pakistani interests?

3. To what extent does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that Dr Afridi's work, regardless of whether he was aware of its ultimate purpose, served EU interests as well?

4. To what extent is the Vice-President/High Representative concerned that most of the people detained in Pakistan over the circumstances of Osama bin Laden's killing have been those who were contributing — purposefully or not — to his capture, rather than those who helped shield him?

5. What concerns does the Vice-President/High Representative have about the safety of the conviction of Dr Afridi and the rigour of the system of tribal justice under which he was tried and convicted?

6. What representations have the Vice-President/High Representative and EU officials made to the Pakistani authorities with regard to this case, and in particular with regard to securing a reduced sentence or the release from prison of Dr Afridi?

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

The special operation carried out on 2 May in Pakistan directed against Osama Bin Laden's hideout represented a major blow against both al Qaeda and terrorist activities worldwide.

We are concerned about the trial of Dr Afridi even if the EU cannot intervene directly in the internal affairs of a partner country. The EU engages in regular political dialogue with Pakistan and the matter will be raised.

Following adoption of the EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan, the dialogue will be reinforced by regular sector dialogues on security, including counter-terrorism. Law enforcement and strengthening the criminal justice system — including more effective prosecutions in terrorist trials — as well as countering violent extremism are expected to be part of the dialogue.

After the June 2012 Foreign Affairs Council approved the EU Counter Terrorism/Security Strategy for Pakistan, it is expected that EU activities in support of security and counter-terrorism in Pakistan will be reinforced.

The EU is already supporting projects which are intended to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan, not least with the police and prosecution services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008826/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nirj Deva (ECR)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — India-Pakistan visa liberalisation

With regard to the recent moves by India and Pakistan to liberalise visa arrangements between the two countries:

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of this development?

2. How does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that this more relaxed visa regime and greater people-to-people contacts can contribute to a reduction in tension and a more substantial commercial relationship between the two countries?

3. Considering the history of Pakistan-based jihadi terrorists — directly or via proxy — carrying out attacks in India, what representations will the Vice-President/High Representative make to the Pakistani authorities to ensure that everything possible is done to prevent this commendable initiative from being derailed through misuse by Pakistani nationals seeking to plan or execute terrorist attacks in India?

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

The HR/VP very much welcomes the dialogue process between India and Pakistan. Keeping this dialogue on track and making progress on confidence building measures will be essential for peace and stability in the South Asia region. In this context steps taken to facilitate people-to-people contacts and trade and transit are of particular importance.

The HR/VP believes that liberalisation of visa arrangements will help to boost the confidence of the business community and thereby contribute towards fostering trade relations between the two countries, especially as trade liberalisation efforts are being pursued in parallel.

Following the adaption of a new political framework with Pakistan, the EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan, and the launch of the strategic dialogue in Islamabad by the HR/VP on 5 June, a reinforced sector dialogue on security will start. This will enable the EU to raise issues of security concerns including counter-terrorism. In as far as the Mumbai incident of November 2008 is concerned, the EU has encouraged Pakistan to cooperate with India to bring the perpetrators of these attacks to justice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008827/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nirj Deva (ECR)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Murder of British citizen Malik Iqbal in Pakistan

British citizen Malik Iqbal was murdered in Pakistan in September 2012. He had returned to the country to give evidence against several men accused of kidnapping him and demanding a ransom during an earlier visit to Pakistan.

1. What representations has the Vice-President/High Representative made, and what representations will she make, to the Pakistani authorities to express her disgust at the murder of Mr Iqbal, an EU citizen, and the abject failure of Pakistani officials to offer him adequate protection, despite the obvious threat to his life?

2. What safety and security advice does the Vice-President/High Representative wish to offer to other EU citizens contemplating a visit to Pakistan?

3. What does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that this incident says about the deficiency of law and order in Pakistan, and what efforts are her services making to assist the Pakistani authorities in addressing this deficiency?

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

The HR/VP thanks the Honourable Member for drawing her attention to the case of Mr Malik Iqbal. Representations to the Pakistani authorities in this case are the consular responsibility of the Member State concerned — in this case the UK. The provision of safety and security advice for EU citizens travelling abroad, including to Pakistan, is the responsibility of EU Member State authorities. For example, in the case of the UK, the FCO provides comprehensive advice.

The EU is concerned about the law and order situation in many areas of Pakistan, not least Karachi, the country's major business hub. The EU already engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan and has regularly conveyed its concern at the security situation in the country. At the same time the EU is funding projects which are intended to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan, not least with the police and prosecution services. After the adoption of the EU CT/Security Strategy for Pakistan by the June 2012 Foreign Affairs Council, it is expected that EU activities in support of security and counter-terrorism in Pakistan will be reinforced.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008828/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 octobre 2012)

Objet: Interdiction des acides gras trans d'origine industrielle

Le Conseil supérieur de la santé, organe officiel belge, vient de recommander l'interdiction de la vente d'aliments contenant plus de 2 g d'acides gras trans industriels par 100 g d'huile ou de graisse. En effet, ces acides qui sont très répandus dans la composition des margarines, pâtisseries, confiseries, biscuits ont des effets pervers sur la santé: cholestérol, effets pro-inflammatoires et pro-coagulants, etc.

Certains États membres, notamment le Danemark, ont banni totalement toutes les graisses trans de l'alimentation.

La Commission peut-elle faire savoir:

1. si elle entend également prendre des mesures d'interdiction concernant les acides gras trans au niveau de l'ensemble de l'Union ou si une substance considérée comme dangereuse dans un État membre peut circuler sans danger dans tous les autres États?

2. si, et comment, elle entend surveiller l'étiquetage des denrées alimentaires qui contiennent ces substances, mais ne mentionnent sur l'emballage que la mention «hydrogéné» ou même abrégée «hydr» que la majorité des consommateurs ne comprennent pas?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(15 novembre 2012)

L'article 30, paragraphe 7, du règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil ([1]) prévoit que la Commission rédige un rapport sur la présence de graisses trans dans les denrées alimentaires et, de manière générale, dans le régime alimentaire de la population de l'Union, pour le 13 décembre 2014. Le but de ce rapport est d'évaluer les effets de mesures appropriées qui pourraient aider les consommateurs à opérer des choix alimentaires plus sains en général. La Commission doit assortir ce rapport d'une proposition législative en tant que de besoin.

Elle encourage par ailleurs les initiatives d'autorégulation en vue de réduire encore la teneur en acides gras trans dans les produits alimentaires. Des engagements ont été pris dans le cadre de la plate-forme de l'Union européenne relative à l'alimentation, l'activité physique et la santé en faveur d'une modification de la composition des produits, afin de réduire leur teneur en acides gras trans ([2]).

Pour ce qui est de l'étiquetage des graisses hydrogénées, l'annexe VII du règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil (UE) impose que les huiles et graisses hydrogénées soient qualifiées par les expressions «totalement hydrogénées» ou «partiellement hydrogénées».

([1]) JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008828/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Ban on industrially-processed trans-fatty acids

The Belgian Board of Health recently recommended a ban on the sale of foodstuffs containing more than 2 g of industrially processed trans-fatty acids per 100 g of oil or fat. These acids, which are commonly used in margarines, pastries, confectionery and biscuits, have adverse effects on health and can cause high cholesterol, inflammation and blood clotting, etc.

Some Member States, including Denmark, have completely banned the use of all trans-fatty acids in foodstuffs.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it also plans to take steps to ban trans-fatty acids across the EU or if a substance considered to be dangerous in one Member State can still circulate freely in all other Member States?

2. if, and how, it intends to monitor the labelling of foods that contain these substances but only use the terms 'hydrogenated' or even 'hydr' for short on their packaging, which are incomprehensible to most consumers?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2012)

Article 30(7) of Parliament and Council Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([1]) requires the Commission to submit by 13 December 2014 a report on the presence of trans-fats in foods and in the overall diet of the Union population. The aim of the report is to assess the impact of appropriate means that could enable consumers to make healthier overall dietary choices. The Commission is also asked to accompany this report with a legislative proposal, if appropriate.

The Commission is also encouraging self-regulatory action in order to further decrease the content of trans-fats in food products. There are commitments in the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health that concern the reformulation of products to reduce the content of trans-fats ([2]).

Regarding the labelling of hydrogenated fat, Annex VII of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EU) No 1169/20011 requires hydrogenated oils and fats to be designated with the expression 'fully hydrogenated' or 'partly hydrogenated'.

([1]) OJ L 304/18, 22.11.2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008831/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Utilizzo da parte della Regione Veneto dei fondi comunitari in materia di istruzione e formazione

Nei giorni scorsi, a seguito di un esposto dettagliato inoltrato alle Procure di Padova, Vicenza e Venezia da un cittadino, la stampa locale ha sollevato questioni inerenti alla gestione dei fondi comunitari in materia di formazione.

I fondi comunitari vengono erogati al fine di raggiungere degli obiettivi conformi ad una programmazione approvata dalla Commissione.

Occorre, in un momento di grave crisi economica come quello che stiamo affrontando, avere la certezza dell'effettiva efficacia delle risorse utilizzate.

Non deve esserci alcuna opacità nella gestione delle risorse pubbliche e nemmeno l'ombra di un possibile errore nel loro utilizzo.

Ritenendo altresì doveroso garantire trasparenza di informazione ai cittadini su come i loro amministratori utilizzano i fondi pubblici, può la Commissione riferire:

1. se è in grado di quantificare con esattezza le risorse economiche messe a disposizione ed utilizzate dalla Regione Veneto in materia di istruzione e formazione;

2. se è a conoscenza di come queste risorse sono state impiegate e fornire quindi il dettaglio dei progetti che esse hanno finanziato;

3. con quali risultati sono stati utilizzati i fondi e quali sistemi utilizza per valutare l'effettiva efficacia dei progetti finanziati?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2012)

1. Il programma operativo del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) per la regione Veneto ammonta a 716 697 817 euro, in cui è compreso un contributo di 349 019 598 proveniente dal bilancio dell'UE. L'asse «capitale umano», che concerne azioni volte a migliorare le abilità e le competenze delle persone, ha una dotazione di 85 763 209 euro.

2. e 3. Come l'onorevole deputato forse saprà, un finanziamento UE di tal genere è gestito per il tramite delle autorità nazionali. Conformemente al principio di sussidiarietà i programmi operativi cofinanziati dal FSE sono attuati dagli Stati membri e dalle loro regioni. La Commissione non interviene nella selezione, nel monitoraggio e nella valutazione dei progetti.

La Commissione prende nota del caso menzionato dall'onorevole deputato. Essa scriverà alle autorità regionali del Veneto per chiedere loro ulteriori informazioni sulla fattispecie menzionata e terrà informato l'Onorevole deputato.

La Commissione fa presente inoltre all'onorevole deputato che egli ha la possibilità di contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione della regione Veneto (http://www.regione.veneto.it) per ottenere ulteriori informazioni.

Risposta complementare di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(11 gennaio 2013)

La regione Veneto ha risposto alla richiesta della Commissione di ulteriori informazioni sui risultati delle attività finanziate dal Fondo sociale europeo (FSE). Essa indica che i partecipanti sono stati estremamente soddisfatti della formazione erogata da diverse università in Veneto. Entro dodici mesi dal completamento della loro laurea magistrale, il 64 % aveva trovato un lavoro e tale percentuale sale a circa 81,4 % nel caso di quanti hanno ricevuto borse di ricerca.

Le attività accademiche finanziate dal FSE comprendono:

— lauree magistrali: 21 progetti approvati che interessano 306 beneficiari;

— borse di ricerca:129 progetti approvati che interessano 287 destinatari;

— corsi di dottorato: 97 progetti approvati che interessano 250 beneficiari;

— moduli di formazione professionale: 82 progetti approvati che interessano 6 771 destinatari.

L'FSE finanzia anche la vocazione professionale per 11 000 giovani in possesso del diploma di scuola media. Nell'ultimo triennio le persone che hanno seguito tali corsi hanno registrato risultati positivi in termini di collocamento: entro dodici mesi dal completamento del corso la metà (49 %) aveva trovato un lavoro, mentre il 16 % è passato a corsi di formazione avanzata.

La *Cassa Integrazione in deroga*, le cui politiche attive del mercato del lavoro sono finanziate dal FSE, ha versato prestazioni di disoccupazione a 44 000 lavoratori in Veneto nel periodo 2009-11. Il numero dei lavoratori interessati è aumentato nel periodo passando dal 37,1 % nel 2009 al 73,5 %.

Le misure attive del mercato del lavoro finanziate dal FSE hanno interessato il 36,8 % della popolazione, tra cui anche persone disponibili sul mercato del lavoro e persone in cerca di lavoro nonché lavoratori a rischio di disoccupazione.

Per quanto concerne il livello di impegni e di pagamenti, la regione sta facendo il suo dovere: entro ottobre la regione aveva impegnato quasi il 70 % e speso circa il 50 % del bilancio del PO.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008831/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: The use of EU funds for education and training in the Veneto region

Following a detailed complaint sent by a citizen to the prosecuting authorities of Padua, Vicenza and Venice, the local press has recently raised issues related to the management of EU funds for training.

EU funds are disbursed in order to achieve objectives which comply with a schedule approved by the Commission.

At a time of severe economic crisis such as the one we are facing, we need to be sure of the actual effectiveness of the resources used.

We cannot allow any lack of transparency in the management of public resources, nor even the slightest possible error in how they are put to use.

Furthermore, considering that the administrators of public funds have a duty to ensure transparency of information to citizens on how these public funds are used, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is in a position to quantify the exact amount of financial resources available to and used by the Veneto region in the field of education and training;

2. whether it is aware of how these resources were used and therefore provide details of the projects they have funded;

3. what results were achieved by using the funds and what systems were used to assess the actual effectiveness of the projects funded?

Preliminary answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2012)

1. The European Social Fund (ESF) Operational Programme for the Veneto Region amounts to EUR 716 697 817, including a contribution of EUR 349 019 598 from the EU budget. The 'human capital' axis, which focuses on actions to improve people's skills and competencies, amounts to EUR 85 763 209.

2 and 3. As the Honourable Member may know, any EU funding of this kind is managed via the National Authorities. According to the subsidiarity principle, the operational programmes co-financed by the ESF are implemented by the Member States and their regions. The Commission does not intervene in the selection, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

The Commission takes note of the case referred by the Honourable Member. It will write to the Veneto regional authorities to ask for further information on the alleged facts and keep the Honourable Member informed.

The Commission also suggests to the Honourable Member that he has the possibility to contact directly the Managing Authority of the Veneto Region (http://www.regione.veneto.it) in order to obtain further information

Supplementary answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 January 2013)

The Veneto Region has responded to the Commission's request for further information on the results of activities financed by the European Social Fund (ESF). It reports that participants were very satisfied with training provided by various universities in Veneto. Within 12 months of completing their master's degrees, 64% had found jobs, and that percentage rises to about 81.4% in the case of those receiving research grants.

The ESF-funded academic activities involve:

— Master's degrees: 21 approved projects involving 306 beneficiaries;

— Research grants:129 approved projects involving 287 recipients;

— PhD courses: 97 approved projects involving 250 beneficiaries;

— Vocational training modules: 82 approved projects involving 6 771 recipients.

The ESF also finances vocational training for 11 000 young people with a middle-school certificate. In the last three years those following the courses have had good success in terms of placement: within 12 months of completing the course, half (49%) were in employment, while 16% went on to further vocational training.

The *Cassa Integrazione in deroga*, whose active labour market policies are financed by the ESF, paid unemployment benefit to 44 000 workers in Veneto in 2009-11, the number of workers involved rose over the period from 37.1% in 2009 to 73.5%.

ESF-financed active labour market measures involved 36.8% of the population, comprising persons available and looking for work and workers at risk of becoming unemployed.

Regarding the level of commitments and payments the region is doing well: by October, the region had committed close to 70% and spent about 50% of the OP's budget.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008832/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(2 octobre 2012)

Objet: Stratégie européenne d'adaptation au changement climatique: l'importance du bassin méditerranéen

Depuis avril 2009, la Commission européenne met en œuvre les orientations du Livre blanc sur l'adaptation au changement climatique. La première phase de ce travail sera achevée en 2012 et jettera les bases de l'élaboration d'une stratégie d'adaptation communautaire globale à mettre en place à partir de 2013.

Cependant, les effets du changement climatique diffèrent d'une région à l'autre, les zones de montagne, les plaines inondables et les zones côtières étant particulièrement vulnérables. Des mesures d'adaptation devraient donc être mises en œuvre au niveau national ou régional pour répondre aux besoins spécifiques de certains territoires.

1. En matière d'impact du changement climatique, le bassin méditerranéen apparaît indubitablement comme une zone d'intérêt stratégique. Quel traitement particulier la Commission compte-t-elle accorder aux zones côtières méditerranéennes dans la future stratégie européenne d'adaptation au changement climatique?

2. Quel soutien financier la Commission compte-t-elle apporter à l'amélioration des connaissances en matière de météorologie, de climatologie et d'océanographie en Méditerranée?

3. Conformément à l'objectif d'intégration de la politique d'adaptation au changement climatique dans les autres politiques communautaires (fonds structurels, cadre pour la recherche et le développement, politique agricole commune, instrument LIFE), comment la Commission envisage-t-elle l'articulation avec la politique extérieure de l'Union européenne en Méditerranée?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(4 décembre 2012)

1. La stratégie d'adaptation a pour objectif de mieux préparer l'ensemble du territoire de l'Union européenne à faire face aux effets du changement climatique, notamment en intégrant la politique d'adaptation dans diverses politiques sectorielles, telles que: la politique maritime intégrée, mise en œuvre au niveau des bassins maritimes (dont la stratégie de la mer Méditerranée); la directive-cadre «stratégie pour le milieu marin» qui cible, entre autres, la capacité de résistance au changement climatique; la réforme en cours de la politique commune de pêche qui vise à garantir l'adaptation au changement climatique; la recommandation sur la gestion intégrée des zones côtières, en cours de révision, qui place la notion d'adaptation en tête des priorités.

2. Les programmes-cadres de recherche de l'Union européenne ([1]) ont consacré des fonds, notamment à l'étude des conséquences du changement climatique, à la recherche de mesures d'adaptation et de prévention et à l'étude des effets du climat sur l'eau et la sécurité dans la région ([2]). Le programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation «Horizon 2020», qui couvre la période 2014-2020, soutiendra l'amélioration des connaissances relatives à la climatologie et à l'océanographie. Le système «GMES» (surveillance mondiale pour l'environnement et la sécurité) ([3]) offrira une surveillance de la terre et présentera des prévisions en la matière. Il comprendra un service portant sur les changements climatiques. Une partie des ressources du Fonds pour les affaires maritimes et la pêche de l'UE sera consacrée à l'amélioration de l'accès aux données relatives au milieu marin et de leur utilisation.

([1]) Le sixième programme-cadre pour la recherche et le développement technologique (2002-2006) et le septième programme-cadre pour des actions de recherche, de développement technologique et de démonstration (2007-2013).

([2]) Parmi ses projets, figurent CIRCE, Pegaso, Perseus et MedSeA, ainsi que le groupe de projets Cliwasec;
CIRCE: Climate change and impact research: the Mediterranean environment (www.circeproject.eu),
PEGASO: People for ecosystem based governance in assessing sustainable development of oceans and coasts (www.pegasoproject.eu),
PERSEUS: Policy-orientated marine environmental research for the Southern European seas (http://www.perseus-net.eu/),
MedSeA: Mediterranean Sea acidification in a changing climate (www.medsea-project.eu),
CLIWASEC: (www.cliwasec.eu), qui comprend trois projets: CLICO, CLIMB et Wassermed.

([3]) (www.gmes.info)

3. La politique de voisinage de l'UE (PEV) vise à encourager la coopération sur des questions climatiques dans la région méditerranéenne, en aidant les pays à élaborer des politiques en matière de changement climatique. Parmi les projets existants figurent CLIM-RUN, qui vise à fournir des informations climatiques à l'échelle locale, et SWIM, qui a recours à des actions «sans regrets» pour adapter le secteur de l'eau. En 2013, un projet de la Commission européenne entend aider les pays PEV à accroître leur résistance au changement climatique, grâce à des mesures de coopération, de partage d'informations et de renforcement des capacités. Une prochaine communication conjointe du Service européen pour l'action extérieure et de la Commission européenne, consacrée aux relations entre l'Union européenne et le Maghreb, portera également sur le changement climatique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008832/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: European strategy for adapting to climate change: importance of the Mediterranean Basin

Since April 2009, the European Commission has been implementing the guidelines of the White Paper entitled 'Adapting to climate change: towards a European framework for action'. The first phase of this work will be completed in 2012 and will lay the foundations for a comprehensive EU adaptation strategy from 2013 onwards.

However, the effects of climate change vary from one region to another; mountain areas, floodplains and coastal areas are particularly vulnerable. Adaptation measures should be implemented at national or regional level to meet the specific needs of certain territories.

1. In terms of the impact of climate change, the Mediterranean Basin is undoubtedly an area of strategic interest. In what specific way is the Commission planning to treat Mediterranean coastal areas in the future European strategy for adapting to climate change?

2. What financial support does the Commission plan to provide for the purpose of improving knowledge regarding the meteorology, climatology and oceanography of the Mediterranean?

3. In accordance with the objective of integrating the policy of adapting to climate change with other EU policies, such as the Structural Funds, the seventh framework programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities, the common agricultural policy and the LIFE instrument, how does the Commission plan to integrate it with the EU's external policy in the Mediterranean?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2012)

1. The Adaptation Strategy is about enhancing the preparedness of the entire EU territory to the impacts of climate change, by, *inter alia*, mainstreaming adaptation in sectoral policies including: Integrated Maritime Policy implemented at sea basin level, with the Mediterranean strategy; the Marine Strategy Framework Directive which targets, *inter alia*, climate change resilience; the ongoing reform of Common Fisheries Policy seeking support to adaptation; the recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zones Management under revision prioritises adaptation.

2. The EU Framework Programmes for research ([1]) provided funding e.g. on climate-induced changes on adaptation and prevention measures, water and security in the region ([2]). The framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2014-2020, Horizon 2020, will support knowledge on climatology and oceanography. The Global Monitoring for Environment and Security ([3]) will provide monitoring and forecasting of the Earth, including a climate change service. Part of the EU Maritime and Fisheries Fund will contribute towards better access and use of marine data.

3. The EU Neighbourhood Policy seeks cooperation on climate matters in the Mediterranean region, assisting countries in developing climate change policies. Existing projects include CLIM-RUN, on climate local information; SWIM-Support, dealing with no-regrets water sector adaptation. In 2013, an EC project supports the transition of ENP countries to climate resilience, through cooperation, information sharing and capacity. A forthcoming EEAS-EC Communication on EU-Maghreb relations will also address climate change.

([1]) FP6 — Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2002-2006) and FP7 — Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities' (2007-2013).

([2]) These projects include CIRCE, PEGASO, PERSEUS and MedSeA and the CLIWASEC cluster. CIRCE — Climate change and impact research: the Mediterranean environment (www.circeproject.eu); PEGASO — People for ecosystem based governance in assessing sustainable development of oceans and coasts (www.pegasoproject.eu); PERSEUS — Policy-orientated marine environmental research for the Southern European seas (www.perseus-net.eu); MedSeA — Mediterranean Sea acidification in a changing climate (www.medsea-project.eu) and CLIWASEC — (www.cliwasec.eu) — includes three projects: CLICO, CLIMB and WASSERMED.

([3]) (www.gmes.info)

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008833/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(2 oktober 2012)

Betreft: Hamas: „Erdoğan is leider van moslimwereld"

Op een partijcongres in Ankara heeft de Turkse premier Erdoğan van de AKP gezegd dat zijn partij een „voorbeeld voor moslimstaten" is. Onder andere de presidenten van Egypte en Kirgizstan waren aanwezig.

Ter gelegenheid van het congres heeft Meshal, leider van de terroristische organisatie Hamas, gesteld dat de AKP het „ware gezicht van de islam" laat zien. Hij zei: „Erdoğan, je bent niet alleen leider in Turkije; je bent leider in de moslimwereld".

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Turkish ruling party model for Muslim states — Erdogan" ([1])?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat Erdoğan, althans door Hamas, als „leider in de moslimwereld" wordt gezien? Verwerpt de Commissie dit, aangezien Hamas een terroristische organisatie is (genoemd op de EU-terreurlijst)? Zo neen, hoe verdedigt de Commissie de vermeende banden tussen de AKP, regeringspartij van een kandidaat-lidstaat, en Hamas, een terroristische organisatie?

3. Zijn de vermeende banden tussen de AKP en Hamas voor de Commissie reden om alle toetredingsonderhandelingen met en alle EU-geldstromen naar Turkije direct stop te zetten? Zo neen, hoe verantwoordt zij dit tegenover de EU-burgers?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(14 november 2012)

De Turkse regeringspartij Partij voor Rechtvaardigheid en Ontwikkeling (AKP) heeft op 30 september 2012 in Ankara haar vierde algemeen congres gehouden. Er waren meer dan 100 buitenlandse gasten aanwezig. Verschillende buitenlandse gasten namen het woord.

Het strategisch document genaamd „Politieke visie van AKP-2023" dat op het congres werd bekendgemaakt, bevestigt duidelijk dat volledig EU-lidmaatschap een strategisch doel is voor Turkije, een proces dat de universele normen van de democratie tot stand zal brengen.

Tezelfdertijd wil de Commissie benadrukken dat Turkije een actief buitenlands beleid voert in de ruime regio en dat het een belangrijke regionale speler blijft in het Midden-Oosten. Turkije steunt het standpunt en de inspanningen van de EU inzake het vredesproces in het Midden-Oosten. Turkije wil Palestijnse verzoening en nationale eenheid blijven aanmoedigen. De Commissie heeft geen opmerkingen bij de verklaringen afgelegd door gasten van het congres.

([1]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19777742

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008833/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Hamas: 'Erdoğan is a leader of the Muslim world'

At an AKP party conference in Ankara, Turkish Prime Minister and the party's leader Erdoğan said that his party was an 'example for Muslim countries'. The presidents of Egypt and Kyrgyzstan were among the guests at the conference.

On the occasion of the conference, Meshal, leader of the terrorist organisation Hamas, stated that the AKP shows the 'true face of Islam'. He said: 'Erdoğan, you are not only a leader in Turkey; you are a leader in the Muslim world as well'.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Turkish ruling party model for Muslim states — Erdogan' ([1])?

2. What is the Commission's view of the fact that Erdoğan is regarded as 'a leader in the Muslim world', at least by Hamas? Does the Commission reject this, given that Hamas is a terrorist organisation (designated as such by the EU)? If not, how does the Commission defend the alleged links between the AKP, a candidate Member State's ruling party, and Hamas, a terrorist organisation?

3. Are the alleged links between the AKP and Hamas not enough reason for the Commission to immediately stop all accession negotiations with and all EU funding streams to Turkey? If not, how does it justify this to EU citizens?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2012)

Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) held its fourth general Congress on 30 September 2012 in Ankara. More than 100 foreign guests attended. Several of the foreign guests took the floor.

The strategic document released during the congress, named 'Political vision of AKP-2023', clearly reaffirms Turkey's 'full membership in the EU' as a 'strategic goal', a process which will 'achieve the universal standards of democracy'.

At the same time, the Commission would like to stress that Turkey continues to be active in its wider neighbourhood, and remains an important regional player in the Middle East. Turkey supports the EU position and the EU efforts on the Middle East Peace Process. Turkey sees a continuing role for itself in encouraging Palestinian reconciliation and national unity. The Commission has no comments to offer on statements made by invitees at this congress.

([1]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19777742

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008834/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Opt-out-Lösung im deutschen Meldegesetz

Am 28. Juni 2012 verabschiedete der Deutsche Bundestag eine Neuauflage des sogenannten Meldegesetzes. Der verabschiedete Gesetzestext erlaubt es deutschen Behörden, Meldedaten der Bürger an private Unternehmen (z. B. sogenannte „Adressenhändler") weiterzugeben, wenn der Bürger dem nicht ausdrücklich widerspricht („Opt-out"-Lösung). Als Alternativen kämen entweder ein absolutes Verbot einer solchen Datenweitergabe oder eine „Opt-in"-Lösung, bei der eine explizite Genehmigung des Bürgers für die Weitergabe personenbezogener Daten erforderlich ist, infrage.

1. Ist die vom Deutschen Bundestag beschlossene Form der Regulierung, und insbesondere die „Opt-out"-Lösung, nach Ansicht der Kommission mit bestehenden EU-Datenschutzrichtlinien vereinbar?

2. Falls ja, sehen die Pläne der Kommission eine Änderung bestehender EU-Richtlinien vor, oder überlegt sie, Änderungen vorzuschlagen, um „Opt-out"-Systeme für EU-Melderegister vorzuschreiben?

3. Falls nein, wird die Kommission ein Verfahren gegen Deutschland einleiten, wenn das Gesetz in Kraft tritt?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(7. Dezember 2012)

Der vom Deutschen Bundestag am 28. Juni 2012 verabschiedete Entwurf des Gesetzes zur Fortentwicklung des Meldewesens (Bundesmeldegesetz) hat nicht die Zustimmung des Bundesrates erhalten und ist daher nicht in Kraft getreten.

Gemäß der Richtlinie 95/46/EG ist die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten nur dann rechtmäßig, wenn eine der in Artikel 7 genannten Voraussetzungen erfüllt ist; dazu gehört, dass die betroffene Person ihre Einwilligung zu der fraglichen Verarbeitung gegeben hat oder die Verarbeitung für die Wahrnehmung einer Aufgabe erforderlich ist, die im öffentlichen Interesse liegt. Wie in Artikel 14 der Richtlinie geregelt, hat die betroffene Person das Recht, auf Antrag kostenfrei gegen eine vom für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen beabsichtigte Verarbeitung sie betreffender personenbezogener Daten für Zwecke der Direktwerbung Widerspruch einzulegen.

Erfolgt die Verarbeitung aufgrund der Einwilligung im Sinne von Artikel 7 Buchstabe a der Richtlinie 95/46/EG, muss diese explizit und rechtsgültig sein: eine stillschweigende Einwilligung ohne Zutun der betroffenen Person reicht nicht aus. Der Reformvorschlag der Kommission für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung (Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr (Datenschutz-Grundverordnung), KOM(2012)11 endg.) hält daran fest und präzisiert diesen Sachverhalt.

Das Grundrecht auf den Schutz personenbezogener Daten gilt sowohl für die Verarbeitung im privaten als auch im öffentlichen Sektor: grundsätzlich ist in beiden Bereichen dasselbe Schutzniveau zu gewährleisten. Daher erstreckt sich der Reformvorschlag der Kommission für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung auch auf beide Bereiche und sieht für beide dieselben Datenschutzprinzipien vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008834/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Opt-out solution in the German Registration of Persons Act

On 28 June 2012, the German Bundestag adopted a revision of the so-called Registration of Persons Act. The agreed wording allows the German authorities to shares citizens' registration data with private enterprises (such as the so-called 'address brokers') unless the citizen expressly forbids this (the 'opt-out' solution). The alternatives were either an absolute ban on such data sharing or an 'opt-in' solution in which the citizen's explicit approval is required before personal data can be shared.

1. Does the Commission believe the form of regulation agreed on by the German Bundestag, in particular the 'opt-out' solution, is reconcilable with existing EU data protection directives?

2. If so, do the Commission's plans foresee a change to the existing EU directives, or is the Commission considering proposing changes to regulate 'opt-out' systems for EU registers of persons?

3. If not, will the Commission take legal action against Germany when the act comes into force?

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

The 'Draft Law on the Development of the Registration of Persons Act' (Bundesmeldegesetz, adopted by the German Bundestag on 28 June 2012) has not been approved by the German Bundesrat and did therefore not enter into force yet.

Directive 95/46/EC provides that the processing of personal data is only lawful when one of the grounds for processing contained in Article 7 are present, such as when the data subject consents to the processing in question or when processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. A data subject has the right to object, on request and free of charge, to the processing of personal data relating to him which the controller anticipates being processed for the purposes of direct marketing (Article 14 of the Directive).

A consent as a ground for processing (in accordance with Article 7(a) of Directive 95/46/EC) has to be a real and valid consent: it cannot be presumed when the person remains silent or does not act. The Commission's reform proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation maintains and clarifies that situation.

In order to remove the obstacles to flows of personal data, the level of protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals with regard to the processing of such data must be equivalent in all Member States and has to be ensured in both the public and the private sectors. For this reason, the competence resulting from Article 16(2) TFEU to lay down rules concerning the free movement of personal data includes the competence to establish rules for the processing of such data both by public authorities and by private individuals. Hence, the scope of the Commission's reform proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation includes both the private and the public sector, and provides for the same principles of data protection.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008835/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Bugiardi digitali

Sempre più spesso capita di leggere che agenzie private pagano falsi internauti allo scopo di far loro pubblicare in Rete giudizi positivi su prodotti d'ogni tipo. Questo tipo d'operazione viene definita dagli esperti «crowdturfing» e viene affidata in genere a stagisti di agenzie di comunicazione e pubblicitarie oppure a studenti. Nel caso di Belkin, un produttore americano di elettronica di consumo, gli utenti venivano reclutati con un annuncio (65 cent per ogni commento positivo fasullo pubblicato su Amazon). Tra i nomi più noti colti in flagrante figurano Lifelift Style, Walmart, Orangina, Samsung, Tripadvisor, Expedia e Booking.com.

L'Unione europea giudica illegale il «crowdturfing», ma ciò nonostante esso continua a manifestarsi sul web.

Oltre alla formulazione della dichiarazione d'illegalità, può la Commissione precisare:

1. se ha il potere e gli strumenti per impedire il fenomeno e colpire chi lo pratica;

2. in che misura i governi nazionali possono collaborare per debellare queste azioni di pubblicità ingannevole e di concorrenza sleale;

3. come può il mercato interno funzionare correttamente se queste azioni illegittime continuano a manifestarsi?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(14 novembre 2012)

La Commissione conviene con l'onorevole parlamentare che le pratiche commerciali sleali minano il funzionamento del mercato interno e che è opportuno combatterle con efficacia.

La direttiva 2005/29/CE ([1]) vieta già le false recensioni sui siti Internet e, a tale riguardo, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare la risposta fornita alle interrogazioni scritte P-008065/2011 ed E-009539/2011 ([2]).

Spetta principalmente alle autorità e ai giudici nazionali indagare sulle pratiche adottate da determinate società che operano sul loro territorio. Soltanto le autorità nazionali competenti possono infatti valutare se, prendendo in considerazione tutti i fatti e le circostanze del caso, una società abbia messo in atto pratiche commerciali sleali o di pubblicità ingannevole.

Il regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 ([3]) invita le autorità nazionali responsabili dell'esecuzione della normativa che tutela i consumatori a collaborare le une con le altre, avvalendosi della rete di cooperazione europea per la tutela dei consumatori presente in tutta l'UE, al fine di garantire il miglior coordinamento possibile delle attività volte a porre fine alle pratiche sleali transfrontaliere.

Dall'esperienza acquisita è emersa tuttavia la necessità di coordinare in modo migliore l'applicazione delle norme, in particolare laddove si tratti di un problema ricorrente in diversi Stati membri. Per tale ragione, nell'agenda europea dei consumatori (COM(2012) 225) la Commissione annovera tra le priorità per i prossimi anni proprio l'applicazione effettiva della legislazione dell'UE in materia di consumatori.

Entro la fine dell'anno la Commissione presenterà una relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva 2005/29/CE, in cui tratterà dell'efficacia della cooperazione in materia di applicazione delle norme.

L'esperienza insegna infatti che tale coordinamento deve essere rafforzato qualora un problema ricorrente coinvolga diversi Stati membri.

([1]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE sulle pratiche commerciali sleali, GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005, pag. 22.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 sulla cooperazione tra le autorità nazionali responsabili dell'esecuzione della normativa che tutela i consumatori, GU L 364 del 9.12.2004, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008835/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Digital liars

We are increasingly being informed that private agencies are paying fake Internet users to write positive feedback comments on a range of different products on the Internet. This type of operation is known to experts as 'crowdturfing' and is usually entrusted to interns at advertising agencies or to students. In the case of Belkin, an American consumer electronics manufacturer, users were recruited through an advert (USD 0.65 for every bogus positive comment published on Amazon). Among the most well-known names caught red-handed were Lifelift Style, Walmart, Orangina, Samsung, Tripadvisor, Expedia and Booking.com.

The European Union considers 'crowdturfing' to be illegal, despite the fact that it continues to occur on the web.

In addition to formulating a declaration of illegality, can the Commission state:

1. whether it has the power and the means to prevent this activity and punish those who practise it;

2. the extent to which national governments can work together to get rid of these advertising ploys based on misleading the consumer and unfair competition;

3. how the internal market can function properly if these illegal actions continue to occur?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 November 2012)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that unfair commercial practices jeopardise the functioning of the internal market and should be effectively combatted.

Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) already prohibits the use of fake reviews on websites and in this connection the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions P-008065/2011 and E-009539/2011 ([2]).

It is primarily the competence of the national authorities and courts to investigate the practices of particular companies operating on their territories. Only national enforcement authorities are in a position to assess whether, taking into account all facts and circumstances of a case, a company has engaged in an unfair commercial practice or misleading advertising.

National enforcers are encouraged by Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 ([3]) to cooperate with each other via the EU-wide European Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network, in order to ensure the best possible coordination of action to stop to unfair practices across borders.

However, experience has shown a need for improving coordinated enforcement, in particular where a recurring problem arises in different Member States. The Commission has therefore in its Consumer Agenda (COM(2012) 225) made effective enforcement of EU consumer law a priority issue for the next years.

The Commission will present a report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC by the end of the year. In this report the effectiveness of enforcement cooperation will be addressed.

Experience has shown a need for better coordinated enforcement where a recurring problem arises in different Member States.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L149 of 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on consumer protection cooperation, OJ L364 of 9.12.2004, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008836/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Nuova terapia sperimentale

Una nuova terapia sperimentale viene praticata all'Università di Ottawa, dove i primi 23 pazienti trattati con iniezioni endovenose di virus che annientano il tumore stanno bene e hanno presentato solo qualche sintomo simil-influenzale per un solo giorno. La terapia infatti si basa sul fatto che alcuni virus vanno a cercare nell'organismo le cellule che proliferano e quando le raggiungono le annientano, riproducendosi. I dati dimostrano — come afferma il virologo John Bell su «Nature» — che la cura non presenta, almeno inizialmente, alcun problema di tossicità e il fatto che i virus vengano somministrati in modo sistemico in endovena e non nella sede del tumore renderebbe la terapia molto praticabile.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È al corrente dei risultati di questa nuova sperimentazione per combattere il cancro?

2. Se l'informazione scientifica conferma i dati comunicati dal virologo Bell, l'Agenzia per la salute e i consumatori (EAHC) non potrebbe comunicare ai governi l'opportunità di sperimentare questa nuova terapia anche in Europa?

3. Il virus vaccinia modificato e contenente il gene che potenzia le proprietà antitumorali, chiamato JX-594, esiste anche in Europa?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(26 novembre 2012)

1. La Commissione è al corrente dei risultati della fase I della terapia sperimentale cui si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare, praticata congiuntamente dall'Istituto di Ricerca dell'Ospedale di Ottawa, dall'università di Ottawa, dalla società di ricerca Jennerex e da diverse altre istituzioni ([1]), ([2]), ([3]).

2. L'Agenzia esecutiva per la salute e i consumatori (EAHC) è incaricata di attuare il programma europeo per la salute, il programma per i consumatori nonché l'iniziativa «Migliorare la formazione per rendere più sicuri gli alimenti» (*Better Training for Safer Food — BTSF*). I suoi compiti non prevedono interventi su problematiche connesse alla politica del settore.

3. La sicurezza, l'efficacia ed i meccanismi di azione del poxvirus oncolitico JX-594 per la cura di pazienti affetti da tumori solidi continuano ad essere oggetto di valutazione ([4]). Sono tuttora in corso varie sperimentazioni cliniche multicentro, cui prendono parte alcune istituzioni site in diversi Stati membri ([5]).

([1]) http://www.ohri.ca/newsroom/newsstory.asp?ID=269
([2]) Breitbach et al. (2011) Nature 577: 99-104.
([3]) Hwang et al. (2011) Molecular Therapy 19: 1913-22.
([4]) Parato et al. (2012) Molecular Therapy 20: 749-58.
([5]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/home

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008836/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: New experimental treatment

A new experimental treatment is being trialled at the University of Ottawa in which the first 23 patients who were treated with intravenous injections of viruses that destroy cancerous tumours are in good health, having only presented a few flu-like symptoms for no more than a day. The treatment is based on the fact that some viruses will go round the body looking for proliferating cells in which they can replicate, thus destroying the tumour cells. The data shows — as stated by virologist John Bell in the journal *Nature* — that, at least initially, the treatment presents no toxicity problems, as well as the fact that the viruses are administered intravenously and systemically, not at the tumour site, which would make the treatment very practical.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the results of this new trial for combating cancer?

2. If the scientific information confirms the data reported by John Bell, could the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers not notify governments of the advantages of trialling this new treatment in Europe?

3. Does the modified vaccine virus containing the gene which enhances its anti-tumour properties, JX-594, exist in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the results of the phase I clinical trial mentioned by the Honourable Member, conducted by the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, the University of Ottawa, the company Jennerex and several other institutions ([1]) ([2]) ([3]).

2. The Executive Agency for Health and Consumers is charged with the implementation of the EU Health programme, the Consumer programme and the Better Training for Safer Food initiative. It is not mandated to act on policy-related matters.

3. The safety, efficacy and mechanisms of action of the oncolytic poxvirus JX-594 for the treatment of patients with solid cancers continues to being assessed ([4]). Several multi-centre clinical trials, involving institutions in various Member States, are ongoing ([5]).

([1]) http://www.ohri.ca/newsroom/newsstory.asp?ID=269
([2]) Breitbach et al. (2011) Nature 577: 99-104.
([3]) Hwang et al. (2011) Molecular Therapy 19: 1913-22.
([4]) Parato et al. (2012) Molecular Therapy 20: 749-58.
([5]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/home

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008837/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
y Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(2 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Privatización del agua por parte de la Troika

El 15 de mayo de 2012, un grupo de ONG envió una carta a Olli Rehn sobre las recomendaciones de la Troika de que los servicios públicos como el agua deben ser privatizados ([1]).

La respuesta de la Comisión, que tardó cuatro meses en llegar, declara que «la Comisión considera que la privatización de los servicios públicos, incluidas las empresas de abastecimiento de agua, puede ofrecer beneficios a la sociedad cuando se lleva a cabo cuidadosamente. Con este fin, la privatización debe llevarse a cabo una vez que se ha preparado un marco regulatorio adecuado para evitar los abusos de los monopolios privados. (…)». Esta declaración reafirma el objetivo de privatización y parece contradecir la supuesta neutralidad de la UE sobre la cuestión de la propiedad pública o privada y la gestión de los servicios de agua colectivos (artículo 345 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea Unión y artículo 17, apartado 1, de la Directiva 2006/123/CE relativa a los servicios en el mercado interior).

El Parlamento Europeo dejó claro en sus resoluciones de 14 de enero de 2004, 10 de marzo de 2004 y 31 de mayo de 2006, que el sector del agua no debe ser liberalizado sino modernizado. Por lo tanto, el sector del agua no debe estar incluido en el ámbito de aplicación de la Directiva relativa a las concesiones de servicios. La Resolución del Parlamento Europeo de 3 de julio de 2012 relativa a la aplicación de la legislación de la UE sobre el agua ([2]), establece que «el acceso al agua debe constituir un derecho fundamental y universal». La Iniciativa ciudadana europea «Derecho al agua» ([3]) pide a la UE que intensifique sus esfuerzos para lograr el acceso universal al agua y al saneamiento.

1. ¿Cómo explica la Comisión la contradicción entre las recomendaciones de la Troika, el artículo mencionado del Tratado, el espíritu de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y las iniciativas del Parlamento Europeo?

2. ¿Constituyen estas recomendaciones una violación del artículo 345 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea y del principio de subsidiariedad de la UE?

3. ¿Retirará la Comisión estas recomendaciones en todos los países que han sido objeto de un rescate?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de enero de 2013)

No hay ninguna obligación, en virtud de los Tratados de la UE, de que los Estados miembros, incluidos los países del programa, privaticen el sector del agua.

Habida cuenta de las limitaciones presupuestarias generales y la necesidad de estabilizar y reducir el nivel de deuda pública, algunos Gobiernos de la UE disponen de recursos públicos limitados para la financiación de proyectos de inversión a medio plazo de modernización del sector del agua.

El proceso de modernización se puede llevar a cabo tanto en un régimen de propiedad pública como privada de los servicios del agua y la amplia experiencia de la UE ofrece varios modelos diferentes. La posición de la Comisión a este respecto es neutral, de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el artículo 345 del TFUE. En este contexto, y en el caso de que los Gobiernos decidan pasar a un régimen de propiedad privada, la Comisión considera que la creación de una autoridad reguladora y el funcionamiento adecuado de un entorno de mercado son indispensables para garantizar el éxito del proceso de privatización y la protección de los intereses de los consumidores.

La Comisión desearía también declarar que su propuesta de Directiva sobre la adjudicación de contratos de concesión no afecta en modo alguno a la discreción de las autoridades nacionales, regionales y locales para decidir sobre los medios más adecuados para prestar servicios a la población, incluidos los del agua. Estos pueden ser prestados directamente por las propias autoridades públicas o bien subcontratados a terceros. Sin embargo, la adjudicación de un contrato de concesión a un tercero para la provisión de servicios del agua tendrá que cumplir las normas propuestas, así como con los principios de igualdad de trato, de no discriminación y de transparencia del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/open-letter-eu-commission-water-privatisation
([2]) Textos aprobados, P7_TA(2012)0273.
([3]) http://www.right2water.eu/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008837/12
an die Kommission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE) und Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(2. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Privatisierung von Wasser durch die Troika

Am 15. Mai sandte eine Gruppe von Nichtregierungsorganisationen ein Schreiben an Herrn Olli Rehn, das sich auf die Empfehlungen der Troika zur Privatisierung öffentlicher Dienste bezog, unter anderem im Zusammenhang mit der Wasserversorgung ([1]).

Die Kommission antwortete mit einer Verzögerung von vier Monaten Folgendes: „Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass die Privatisierung öffentlicher Versorgungsunternehmen, darunter auch Wasserversorger, Vorteile für die Gesellschaft bringen kann, wenn sie umsichtig erfolgt. Daher sollte die Privatisierung erst nach Einführung eines geeigneten Regelungsrahmens erfolgen, um einen Missbrauch durch private Monopole zu vermeiden (…)". Diese Erklärung bestätigt das Ziel von Privatisierungen und scheint gegen die eigentlich vorgegebene Neutralität der EU bezüglich der Frage öffentlichen oder privaten Eigentums der gemeinschaftlichen Wasserversorgung und ihrer Verwaltung zu verstoßen (Artikel 345 AEUV und Artikel 17 Absatz 1 der Richtlinie 2006/123/EG über Dienstleistungen im Binnenmarkt).

Entsprechend den Entschließungen des Europäischen Parlaments vom 14. Januar 2004, 10. März 2004 und 31. Mai 2006 sollte der Wassersektor nicht liberalisiert, sondern modernisiert werden. Der Wassersektor sollte daher nicht in den Anwendungsbereich der Richtlinie über Dienstleistungskonzessionen fallen. Die Entschließung des Europäischen Parlaments vom 3. Juli 2012 besagt ([2]), dass der Zugang zu Wasser ein universelles Grundrecht sein sollte. Die Europäische Bürgerinitiative „Recht auf Wasser" ([3]) fordert von der EU stärkere Bemühungen, um zu einem allgemeinen Zugang zu Wasser und sanitärer Versorgung zu gelangen.

1. Wie erklärt die Kommission den Widerspruch zwischen den Empfehlungen der Troika, den genannten Artikeln der Verträge, dem Geist der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union und den Initiativen des Europäischen Parlaments?

2. Handelt es sich bei diesen Empfehlungen um einen Verstoß gegen Artikel 345 AEUV und den Grundsatz der Subsidiarität der EU?

3. Wird die Kommission diese Empfehlungen in allen Ländern, die aufgrund einer Notlage finanzielle Unterstützung erhalten, zurücknehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(14. Januar 2013)

Nach den EU-Verträgen besteht weder für die Mitgliedstaaten noch für die Programmländer eine Verpflichtung zur Privatisierung der Wasserversorgung.

Wegen der angespannten Haushaltslage und des Erfordernisses einer Stabilisierung und Verringerung der Staatsverschuldung fehlen einigen EU-Mitgliedstaaten die Mittel für Investitionen in Projekte zur mittelfristigen Modernisierung des Wassersektors.

Eine Modernisierung kann unabhängig davon erfolgen, ob die Wasserversorgungsbetriebe in öffentlichem oder privatem Besitz sind. EU-weit sind viele verschiedene Modelle vorhanden. Der Standpunkt der Kommission hierzu ist gemäß Artikel 345 AEUV neutral. Die Kommission vertritt die Auffassung, dass — sollte sich ein Land für die Privatisierung entscheiden — die Schaffung einer Wasserbehörde und eines geeigneten Marktumfelds wesentliche Voraussetzungen für eine erfolgreiche Privatisierung ist, bei der auch die Verbraucherinteressen geschützt sind.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/sites/default/files/Letter%20to%20the%20Commission%20on%20water%20privatization%20conditionalities.pdf
([2]) Angenommene Texte, P7_TA(2012)0273.
([3]) http://www.right2water.eu/

Die Kommission weist außerdem darauf hin, dass ihr Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Vergabe von Konzessionsverträgen den Ermessensspielraum der nationalen, regionalen und lokalen Behörden in keiner Weise bei der Wahl der am besten geeigneten Dienste, darunter der Wasserversorgungsdienste, für die Öffentlichkeit einschränkt. Diese können entweder direkt von den Behörden selbst angeboten werden oder an einen Dritten vergeben werden. Allerdings sind bei der Vergabe eines Konzessionsvertrags an einen Dritten für die Erbringung von Dienstleistungen im Bereich Wasser die vorgeschlagenen Vorschriften sowie die Grundsätze der Gleichbehandlung, der Nichtdiskriminierung und der Transparenz des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union zu beachten.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008837/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE) και Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποίηση του νερού από την Τρόικα

Στις 15 Μαΐου ομάδα από ΜΚΟ απέστειλε στον κ. Olli Rehn επιστολή σχετικά με τις συστάσεις εκ μέρους της Τρόικας να ιδιωτικοποιηθούν οι δημόσιες υπηρεσίες, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του νερού ([1]).

Στην απάντησή της η Επιτροπή, μετά από καθυστέρηση 4 μηνών, δηλώνει ότι «η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η ιδιωτικοποίηση των δημόσιων υπηρεσιών, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των εταιρειών παροχής ύδατος, μπορεί να αποδώσει οφέλη στην κοινωνία, όταν γίνεται προσεκτικά. Γι' αυτό τον σκοπό η ιδιωτικοποίηση πρέπει να πραγματοποιείται από τη στιγμή που έχει καταρτιστεί το κατάλληλο ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο, για να αποφεύγονται καταχρήσεις από ιδιωτικά μονοπώλια. (…)». Η δήλωση αυτή βεβαιώνει εκ νέου ότι υπάρχει στόχος ιδιωτικοποίησης και φαίνεται να παραβιάζει την υποτιθέμενη ουδετερότητα της ΕΕ σε ζητήματα δημόσιας ή ιδιωτικής κατοχής και διαχείρισης συλλογικών υπηρεσιών παροχής ύδατος (άρθρο 345 ΣΛΕΕ και άρθρο 17, παράγραφος 1, της οδηγίας 2006/123/ΕΚ σχετικά με τις υπηρεσίες στην εσωτερική αγορά).

Σύμφωνα με τα ψηφίσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, με ημερομηνίες 14.1.2004, 10.3.2004 και 31.5.2006, ο τομέας ύδατος δεν πρέπει να ελευθερωθεί αλλά να εκσυγχρονιστεί. Ο τομέας ύδατος δεν πρέπει επομένως να εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής της οδηγίας σχετικά με τις συμβάσεις παραχώρησης υπηρεσιών. Το ψήφισμα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου (3.7.2012) δηλώνει ότι η πρόσβαση στο νερό ([2]) πρέπει να είναι θεμελιώδες και καθολικό δικαίωμα. Η πρωτοβουλία Ευρωπαίων πολιτών Right to Water ([3]) ζητεί από την ΕΕ να αυξήσει τις προσπάθειές της να επιτευχθεί καθολική πρόσβαση στο νερό και στην αποχέτευση.

1. Πώς εξηγεί η Επιτροπή την αντίφαση ανάμεσα στις συστάσεις της Τρόικας, τα αναφερθέντα άρθρα των συνθηκών, το πνεύμα του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ και τις πρωτοβουλίες του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Μήπως αυτές οι συστάσεις αποτελούν παραβίαση του άρθρου 345 ΣΛΕΕ και της αρχής της επικουρικότητας της ΕΕ;

3. Θα αποσύρει η Επιτροπή αυτές τις συστάσεις σε όλες τις χώρες του μηχανισμού διάσωσης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Βάσει των συνθηκών της ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των χωρών του προγράμματος, δεν προκύπτει υποχρέωση ιδιωτικοποίησης του τομέα των υδάτων όσον αφορά τα κράτη μέλη.

Δεδομένων των συνολικών δημοσιονομικών περιορισμών και της ανάγκης για σταθεροποίηση και μείωση του ποσοστού του δημόσιου χρέους, οι κυβερνήσεις ορισμένων κρατών μελών διαθέτουν περιορισμένους δημόσιους πόρους για τη στήριξη μεσοπρόθεσμων επενδυτικών έργων που στοχεύουν στον εκσυγχρονισμό του τομέα των υδάτων.

Η διαδικασία εκσυγχρονισμού μπορεί να πραγματοποιηθεί στα πλαίσια δημόσιου ή ιδιωτικού ιδιοκτησιακού καθεστώτος των υποδομών υδάτων και η εκτενής πείρα της ΕΕ παρέχει ένα φάσμα διαφορετικών μοντέλων. Δυνάμει του άρθρου 345 της ΣΛΕΕ, η θέση της Επιτροπής στο ζήτημα αυτό είναι ουδέτερη. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι η δημιουργία μίας κανονιστικής αρχής και κατάλληλου περιβάλλοντος με επίκεντρο την αγορά αποτελούν απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις που εγγυώνται μία επιτυχημένη διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποίησης, προστατεύοντας παράλληλα τα συμφέροντα των καταναλωτών σε περίπτωση που οι κυβερνήσεις επιλέξουν να μεταβούν σε ιδιωτικό ιδιοκτησιακό καθεστώς.

Η Επιτροπή θέλει επίσης να δηλώσει ότι η πρότασή της για οδηγία σχετικά με την ανάθεση συμβάσεων παραχώρησης δεν επηρεάζει με κανέναν τρόπο τη διακριτική ευχέρεια των εθνικών, περιφερειακών και τοπικών αρχών να καθορίζουν τους καταλληλότερους τρόπους παροχής υπηρεσιών στο κοινό, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των υπηρεσιών ύδατος. Οι εν λόγω υπηρεσίες μπορεί να παρέχονται απευθείας από τις ίδιες τις δημόσιες αρχές ή να ανατίθενται σε τρίτους. Εντούτοις, η ανάθεση μίας σύμβασης παραχώρησης σε τρίτα μέρη για την παροχή υπηρεσιών ύδατος θα πρέπει να συμμορφώνεται με τους προτεινόμενους κανόνες, καθώς και με τις αρχές της ίσης μεταχείρισης, της μη διάκρισης και της διαφάνειας βάσει της Συνθήκης για τη Λειτουργία της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/sites/default/files/Letter%20to%20the%20Commission%20on%20water%20privatization%20conditionalities.pdf
([2]) Κείμενα που εγκρίθηκαν, P7_TA(2012)0273
([3]) http://www.right2water.eu/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008837/12
à Comissão
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE) e Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(2 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Privatização da água pela Tróica

Em 15 maio de 2012, um grupo de ONG enviou uma carta ao Comissário Olli Rehn sobre as recomendações da Tróica no sentido de que os serviços públicos, incluindo a água, devem ser privatizados ([1]).

A resposta da Comissão, que chegou após quatro meses, afirmava que «a Comissão considera que a privatização dos serviços públicos, incluindo as empresas de abastecimento de água, pode trazer benefícios para a sociedade, quando é feito cuidadosamente. Assim, a privatização deve ter lugar quando estiver preparado o quadro regulamentar adequado de molde a evitar abusos por parte de monopólios privados. (…)» Esta declaração confirma o objetivo da privatização e parece ir ao arrepio da suposta neutralidade da UE relativamente à questão da propriedade pública ou privada e à gestão dos serviços de água coletivos (artigo 345.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia União e artigo 17.°, n.° 1, da Diretiva 2006/123/CE relativa aos serviços no mercado interno).

O Parlamento Europeu tinha deixado claro nas suas resoluções de 14 de janeiro de 2004, 10 março de 2004 e 31 de maio de 2006, que o setor da água não deve ser liberalizado, mas sim modernizado. Por conseguinte, o setor da água não deve recair no âmbito de aplicação da Diretiva relativa à concessão de serviços. A Resolução do Parlamento Europeu de 3 de julho de 2012 sobre a aplicação da legislação da UE no domínio da água ([2]) afirma que «o acesso à água deveria constituir um direito fundamental e universal». A Iniciativa Europeia de Cidadãos intitulada «Right to Water» ([3]) insta a UE a redobrar os seus esforços para alcançar o acesso universal à água e ao saneamento.

1. Como é que a Comissão explica a contradição entre as recomendações da Tróica, o artigo supramencionado do Tratado, o espírito da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia e as iniciativas do Parlamento Europeu?

2. Estas recomendações constituem uma violação do artigo 345.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia e do princípio da subsidiariedade da UE?

3. A Comissão tenciona retirar estas recomendações em todos os países que estão a receber ajuda financeira?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(14 de janeiro de 2013)

Nos termos dos Tratados da UE, os Estados-Membros, incluindo os países que estão a receber ajuda financeira, não são obrigados a privatizar o setor da água.

Dadas as restrições orçamentais gerais e a necessidade de estabilizar e de reduzir o nível da dívida pública, alguns governos da UE dispõem de recursos públicos limitados para apoiar projetos de investimento a médio, destinados a modernizar o setor da água.

O processo de modernização pode ocorrer tanto no quadro de um regime de propriedade pública ou privada dos serviços de abastecimento de água, e a vasta experiência da UE oferece uma variedade de modelos para este efeito. Em conformidade com o artigo 345.° do TFUE, a Comissão mantém uma posição neutra nesta matéria. Neste contexto, a Comissão considera que a criação de uma autoridade regulamentar e um ambiente adequado para o funcionamento do mercado são condições essenciais para garantir o êxito de um processo de privatização, ao mesmo tempo que protege os interesses dos consumidores, no caso de os governos optarem pela passagem a um regime de propriedade privada.

A Comissão gostaria igualmente de referir que a sua proposta de Diretiva relativa à adjudicação de contratos de concessão não afeta de modo algum o poder de decisão das autoridades nacionais, regionais e locais sobre as formas mais adequadas de fornecimento de serviços, incluindo os de abastecimento de água, ao público em geral. Estes serviços podem ser fornecidos quer diretamente por autoridades públicas ou por subcontratação a terceiros. Contudo, a adjudicação de um contrato de concessão a terceiros para prestação de serviços de abastecimento de água terá de cumprir as regras propostas, bem como com os princípios da igualdade de tratamento, da não-discriminação e da transparência consagrados no Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/open-letter-eu-commission-water-privatisation
([2]) Textos Aprovados, P7_TA(2012)0273.
([3]) http://www.right2water.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008837/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE), Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE) and Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Privatisation of water by the Troika

On15 May 2012, a group of NGOs sent a letter to Olli Rehn about the Troika's recommendations that public services, including water, should be privatised ([1]).

The Commission's answer, which took four months to arrive, stated that 'the Commission believes that the privatisation of public utilities, including water supply firms, can deliver benefits to the society when carefully made. To this end, privatisation should take place once the appropriate regulatory framework has been prepared to avoid abuses by private monopolies. (…)'. This declaration reaffirms the goal of privatisation and appears to be in violation of the EU's supposed neutrality on the question of public or private ownership and management of collective water services (Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 17(1) of Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market).

As the European Parliament made clear in its resolutions of 14 January 2004, 10 March 2004 and 31 May 2006, the water sector should not be liberalised but modernised. The water sector should therefore not fall under the scope of the directive on service concessions. Parliament's resolution of 3 July 2012 on the implementation of EU water legislation ([2]) states that 'access to water should constitute a fundamental and universal right'. The European Citizens' Initiative 'Right to Water' ([3]) calls on the EU to step up its efforts to achieve universal access to water and sanitation.

1. How does the Commission explain the contradiction between the Troika's recommendations, the abovementioned Treaty article, the spirit of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the initiatives of the European Parliament?

2. Are these recommendations a violation of Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the EU's principle of subsidiarity?

3. Will the Commission withdraw these recommendations in all the bail-out countries?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 January 2013)

There is no obligation under the EU Treaties for Member States, including the programme countries, to privatise the water sector.

Given the overall budgetary constraints and the need to stabilise and reduce the level of public debt, some EU governments have available limited public resources for sustaining medium term oriented investment projects aiming to modernize the water sector.

The process of modernisation can happen both in a regime of public or private property of water utilities and EU wide experience offers a variety of different models. The Commission position on this is neutral in accordance with Article 345 of the TFEU. In this context, the Commission considers that the creation of a regulatory authority and an appropriate market functioning environment are crucial prerequisites for guaranteeing the success of a privatisation process while protecting consumers' interests, should governments choose to move to a regime of private property.

The Commission would also like to state that its proposal for a directive on the award of concession contracts does not affect in any way the discretion of national, regional and local authorities to decide on the most appropriate means of providing services, including water, to the public. These can either be provided directly by the public authorities themselves or outsourced to a third party. However, the award of a concession contract to a third party for the provision of water services will have to comply with the proposed rules as well as with the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination and transparency of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

([1]) http://corporateeurope.org/open-letter-eu-commission-water-privatisation
([2]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0273.
([3]) http://www.right2water.eu/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008838/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ανησυχητική αύξηση των ποσοστών παιδικής φτώχειας στην Ελλάδα: η ευρωπαϊκή κοινωνία σε κατάσταση εκτάκτου ανάγκης

Σύμφωνα με την «Τριμηνιαία Επισκόπηση της Επιτροπής» αναφορικά με την απασχόληση και την κοινωνία διαφαίνεται ξεκάθαρα ότι η κοινωνική κατάσταση στην Ευρώπη επιδεινώνεται ολοένα και περισσότερο. Είναι, πλέον, σαφές ότι η «ευρωπαϊκή οικογένεια» αποτελείται από κοινωνίες πολλών ταχυτήτων με αποκλίσεις τόσο στις ανάγκες, όσο και τα προβλήματα. Ο Ευρωπαϊκός Νότος τίθεται στο επίκεντρο των δυσμενών εξελίξεων με «δραματικές πρωτιές» αφενός στην ανεργία και την ανεργία των νέων και αφετέρου στις καταγεγραμμένες απώλειες εισοδημάτων και στα ποσοστά παιδικής φτώχειας. Ενδεικτικά αναφέρεται ότι στην Ελλάδα σημειώνεται ένα από τα μεγαλύτερα ποσοστά παιδικής φτώχειας (άνω του 20%), καθώς επίσης και η μεγαλύτερη απώλεια εισοδήματος, την ώρα που οι Έλληνες εργαζόμενοι πλήρους απασχόλησης κατέχουν τον υψηλότερο αριθμό ωρών εργασίας μαζί με τους Αυστριακούς. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι οι περικοπές στο κράτος πρόνοιας και ο δραστικός περιορισμός των κοινωνικών συστημάτων στο πλαίσιο υιοθέτησης πολιτικών λιτότητας για την αντιμετώπιση της κρίσης έχουν συμβάλει στην επιδείνωση της κοινωνικής κατάστασης στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Ποια η αύξηση της παιδικής φτώχειας στην Ελλάδα από την έναρξη εφαρμογής των Μνημονίων Δανεισμού της χώρας; Πού αποδίδεται η αύξηση αυτή; Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να λάβει κάποια άμεση πρωτοβουλία ή να προβεί σε αντίστοιχες συστάσεις προς τη συγκεκριμένη χώρα;

3. Γιατί, ενώ προτείνει να ακολουθηθούν πλήρως οι ειδικές κατά χώρα συστάσεις, στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας -όπου φαίνεται να υπάρχει εντονότατο κοινωνικό πρόβλημα- δεν περιλαμβάνεται κάτι σχετικό παρά μόνο η πιστή εφαρμογή του Προγράμματος Δημοσιονομικής Σταθερότητας;

4. Δεδομένου ότι η Τρόικα, κατά τις διαπραγματεύσεις της με την Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση, ζητά συνεχώς τη λήψη μέτρων που συρρικνώνουν το εισόδημα και αποδυναμώνουν πλήρως το «δίχτυ κοινωνικής προστασίας», με ποιο τρόπο θα μπορούσε να ανακουφιστεί η ελληνική κοινωνία;

5. Πώς η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος και της Τρόικα, μπορεί να συμβάλει στην αντιμετώπιση επώδυνων κοινωνικών φαινομένων στην Ελλάδα, όπως η παιδική φτώχεια, η καταπολέμηση της οποίας συνιστά στόχο πρώτιστης προτεραιότητας για την ΕΕ και απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση διαφύλαξης της κοινωνικής συνοχής;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Η διόρθωση μη διατηρήσιμων εξωτερικών και δημοσιονομικών ανισορροπιών συνεπάγεται δύσκολη διαδικασία προσαρμογής. Είναι σημαντικό το βάρος της εν λόγω προσαρμογής να επιμερίζεται δίκαια στο σύνολο της κοινωνίας. Για τον σχεδιασμό και την υλοποίηση του ελληνικού προγράμματος προσαρμογής έχουν ληφθεί δεόντως υπόψη οι κοινωνικές παράμετροι.

Η μέριμνα για την ελαχιστοποίηση του αντίκτυπου των μέτρων στις πλέον ευάλωτες πληθυσμιακές ομάδες αντικατοπτρίζεται σε συγκεκριμένα ληφθέντα μέτρα. Οι συνταξιοδοτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις αποβλέπουν στην προστασία των συνταξιούχων με τα χαμηλότερα εισοδήματα. Η τρέχουσα επανεξέταση των κοινωνικών προγραμμάτων αποσκοπεί στην καλύτερη στοχοθέτηση και την αποτελεσματικότερη προστασία των ευάλωτων πληθυσμιακών ομάδων. Οι αλλαγές στην πολιτική για την αγορά εργασίας έχουν σχεδιαστεί ώστε να βελτιώσουν τις προοπτικές απασχόλησης για τους νέους και εκείνους με χαμηλότερη κατάρτιση.

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το ζήτημα της παιδικής φτώχειας στην Ελλάδα. Το ποσοστό του κινδύνου φτώχειας για τα παιδιά (κάτω των 18 ετών) αυξήθηκε από 23% το 2010 σε 23,7% το 2011. Το εν λόγω ποσοστό υπερβαίνει τον μέσο όρο του 20,6% για το 2011 στην ΕΕ των 27 ([1]). Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο στηρίζει τις παρεμβάσεις στην ενεργό αγορά εργασίας στην Ελλάδα και αντιμετωπίζει έμμεσα την παιδική φτώχεια με την προώθηση μέτρων για τη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης των γονέων στην απασχόληση και την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο διαθέτει περίπου 2,26 εκατ. ευρώ στο επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα «Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού» 2007-2013 για την Ελλάδα, το οποίο αποσκοπεί, μεταξύ άλλων, στη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης στην απασχόληση και τη στήριξη της απασχολησιμότητας του εργατικού δυναμικού.

([1]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008838/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Alarming increase in child poverty in Greece: extreme hardship in Europe

From the Commission's three-month survey on social affairs and employment it emerges clearly that, in social terms, the situation in Europe is growing steadily worse. It is also clear that the 'European family' is made up of multi-speed societies with substantial disparities regarding the needs and problems of their members. Southern Europe, which is bearing the brunt of these difficulties, finds itself dismally leading the field with the highest unemployment and youth unemployment figures, compounded by falling incomes and child poverty. Greece, for example, is characterised by one of the highest rates of child poverty (over 20%) and the steepest fall in incomes, while at the same time Greeks in full employment are, together with Austrians, working the longest hours. In view of this:

1. Does it believe that welfare cuts and the drastic curtailment of social services as part of the austerity policy adopted in response to the crisis have been contributory factors in aggravating the social situation in the Member States?

2. To what extent has child poverty increased in Greece following its implementation of MoU loan arrangements? To what is this trend being attributed? Will the Commission take immediate action or make suitable recommendations with regard to Greece?

3. Given that it is calling for the full implementation of recommendations tailored to the individual needs of each country, why is it that, aside from compliance to the letter with the financial stability plan, it has made no special recommendations for Greece, which is facing the most acute social problems?

4. Given that, in its negotiations with the Greek Government, the Troika is constantly calling for measures effectively cutting incomes and weakening the welfare safety net, what measures could be taken to alleviate the situation for the Greek people?

5. How can the Commission as a member of the Troika help Greece confront its grievous social ills such as child poverty, for example, the alleviation of which must be an absolute priority for the EU and is fundamental to the safeguarding of social cohesion?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 December 2012)

Correcting unsustainable external and fiscal imbalances implies difficult adjustment process. It is important that the burden of this adjustment is borne fairly by the entire society. Social considerations have been prominent in the design and implementation of the Greek adjustment programme.

Concerns to minimise the impact of the measures on the most vulnerable strata of the population are reflected by concrete steps. Pension reforms aim at protecting the lowest income pensioners. The ongoing review of social programmes aims at better targeting and more effectively protecting the vulnerable. Labour market policy changes are designed to improve job prospects for young people and the lower-skilled.

The Commission is aware of the issue of child poverty in Greece. The rate of children (below 18 years old) at-risk of poverty has increased from 23% in 2010 to 23.7% in 2011. This rate is above the EU-27 average of 20.6% in 2011 ([1]). The European Social Fund is supporting Active Labour Market interventions in Greece and is tackling the child poverty indirectly by promoting measures to facilitate the access of parents to employment and to combat unemployment. To this end, the European Social Fund has earmarked around EUR 2.26 billion in the 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Operational Programme for Greece which aims, among others, at facilitating access to employment and support the employability of the workforce.

([1]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008839/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Studio sulla salute mentale

A seguito dell'interrogazione scritta in materia di tutela della salute e dell'incolumità degli insegnanti presentata dal sottoscritto il 4 novembre 2011, la Commissione aveva risposto che si sarebbe impegnata: «a condurre uno studio sulla salute mentale sul luogo di lavoro nel 2012-2013».

A un anno da questa risposta il problema, che affligge in particolare la categoria degli educatori, non trova ancora risposta — perlomeno in Italia — se non grazie al contributo di associazioni private che si fanno carico di organizzare corsi formativi diretti ai datori di lavoro.

Date queste premesse:

1. può la Commissione far sapere se codesto studio è stato avviato?

2. in caso affermativo, può la Commissione far sapere se sono aperte le consultazioni con la società civile e le organizzazioni di categoria e quali sono le modalità per potervi partecipare?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2012)

La Commissione ha pubblicato nel 2012 un bando di gara pubblico ([1]) per selezionare un contraente al quale affidare l'esecuzione dello studio citato nella risposta all'interrogazione E-010378/2011 ([2]). Si prevede che la procedura sarà completata entro la fine del 2012 con la selezione di un contraente. Lo studio si protrarrà per un anno e mezzo.

La portata dello studio imporrà consultazioni con la società civile e le organizzazioni professionali in tutti gli Stati membri e i paesi SEE. Spetterà al contraente definire le modalità di svolgimento delle consultazioni.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=625&langId=en&callId=356&furtherCalls=yes
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008839/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Study on mental health

Further to my written question of 4 November 2011, concerning the protection of teachers' health and safety, the Commission replied that it had undertaken 'to carry out a study on mental health at the workplace in 2012/13'.

One year on from that answer, the problem, which affects the category of teachers in particular, has still not been resolved — at least in Italy — if not with the help of private associations which have taken on the task of organising training courses for employers.

1. Can the Commission therefore say whether it has begun carrying out this study?

2. If it has, can it say whether consultations with civil society and with professional organisations have begun? If so, how can people participate in them?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2012)

The Commission published in 2012 a public call for tenders ([1]) with a view to choose a contractor for carrying out the study mentioned in its answer to E-010378/2011 ([2]). It is envisaged that the procedure be finalised by the end of 2012 and a contractor selected. The study will have duration of one and a half years.

The scope of the study will require consultations with the civil society and professional organisations across all the EU Member States and EEA countries. It is up for the contractor to define the modalities under which the consultations will be undertaken.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=625&langId=en&callId=356&furtherCalls=yes
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008840/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Ana Gomes (S&D) e Elisa Ferreira (S&D)
(2 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Detenção sem acusação de Zakaria Zubeidi

Zakaria Zubeidi, cofundador do «Freedom Theatre» do campo de refugiados de Jenin e ex-militante da Fatah que abandonou a luta armada em 2006, está preso em Jericó sem acusação ou julgamento desde 13 de maio de 2012. Foi detido durante uma vaga de prisões na sua cidade natal, na sequência de um ataque levado a cabo por homens armados à residência do governador de Jenin, que morreu pouco depois, vitimado por um ataque cardíaco. O seu advogado, Farid Hawwash, foi igualmente detido após ter criticado as forças de segurança palestinianas.

De acordo com a Human Rights Watch, «há mais de quatro meses que a Autoridade Palestiniana viola os direitos processuais básicos de Zubeidi a acusação e julgamento, e continua a ignorar as suas declarações no sentido de que os interrogadores o torturaram».

Em 9 de setembro, Zakaria iniciou uma greve de fome. Mais tarde, recebeu garantias de que seria libertado. No entanto, numa audiência que teve lugar em 17 de setembro, a sua detenção foi prorrogada por mais 19 dias. A detenção de Zubeidi é mais um golpe desferido ao «Freedom Theatre», que tem antagonizado as autoridades quer israelitas quer palestinianas, criticando os seus atos. Segundo o *The Guardian*, o teatro tem sido criticado por elementos conservadores do campo de refugiados de Jenin devido aos seus *workshops* de representação para ambos os sexos e às suas ideias progressistas.

1. Tenciona a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante efetuar todas as diligências necessárias junto das autoridades palestinianas para garantir a integridade física e psicológica do Sr. Zakaria Zubeidi?

2. Tenciona a Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante exigir a sua libertação imediata na ausência de acusações legais válidas ou, se tais acusações existirem, assegurar que tenha direito a um julgamento pronto e justo?

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

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente e os seus serviços têm acompanhado o caso de Zakaria Zubeidi, preso pelas forças de segurança palestinianas em 13 de maio de 2012. Z. Zubeidi foi posto em liberdade provisória em 1 de outubro, após várias greves de fome.

Z. Zubeidi é acusado de participar num ataque à residência do Governador de Jenin, Qaddura Musa, que faleceu devido a um ataque cardíaco pouco tempo depois, em 2 de maio de 2012, bem como da posse de uma arma utilizada durante o incidente. Z. Zubeidi nega qualquer envolvimento.

A audiência inicial de Z. Zubeidi foi adiada para 6 de dezembro de 2012. O Gabinete do Representante da UE em Jerusalém continuará a acompanhar a evolução deste caso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008840/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Gomes (S&D) and Elisa Ferreira (S&D)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Detention without charge of Zakaria Zubeidi

Zakaria Zubeidi, co-founder of the Jenin refugee camp's Freedom Theatre and a former Fatah militant who renounced armed struggle in 2006, has been held in prison in Jericho without charge or trial since 13 May 2012. He was detained in a wave of arrests in his home city following an attack by gunmen on the home of Jenin's governor, who shortly afterwards died of a heart attack. His lawyer, Farid Hawwash, was also arrested after criticising the Palestinian security forces.

According to Human Rights Watch, 'for more than four months, the Palestinian Authority has violated Zubeidi's basic due process rights to be charged and tried, and continues to ignore his statements that interrogators tortured him'.

On 9 September, Zakaria went on hunger strike. Later on he received assurances that he would be released, but at a court hearing on 17 September his detention was extended by a further 19 days. Zubeidi's detention is another blow to the Freedom Theatre, which has antagonised both Israeli and Palestinian authorities by criticising their actions. According to The Guardian, the theatre has been criticised by conservative elements in Jenin refugee camp over its mixed-gender acting workshops and progressive outlook.

1. Will the Vice-President/High Representative make all necessary demarches with the Palestinian authorities to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of Mr Zakaria Zubeidi?

2. Will the Vice-President/High Representative demand his immediate release in the absence of valid legal charges or, if such charges exist, ensure that he is given a prompt and fair trial?

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

The HR/VP and her services have been following the case of Mr Zakaria Zubeidi who was arrested by Palestinian Security forces on 13 May 2012. Mr Zubeidi was released on bail on 1 October following a series of hunger strikes.

Mr Zubeidi is facing charges of participating in an attack on the home of Jenin governor Qaddura Musa, who died of a heart attack shortly afterwards, on 2 May 2012, as well as possession of a weapon used in the incident. Mr Zubeidi denies any involvement.

Mr Zubeidi's initial court hearing has been postponed to 6 December 2012. The Office of the EU Representative in Jerusalem will continue to monitor developments on this case.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008841/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Ship dismantling in South Asian countries

Today ships full of toxic substances are dismantled on Asian beaches without respect for environmental, human health or safety concerns. Most ship-breaking yards are located in developing countries not only because of lower workforce costs but also because of less stringent environmental regulations; however, European responsibility remains clear in this respect given the significant number of European end-of-life ships, with 17% of world tonnage registered under an EU flag.

Being aware of the Commission's recent proposals with regard to ship recycling, can the HR/VP answer the following questions in light of this:

1. What foreign policy actions has the EU taken to encourage South Asian countries such as Bangladesh and Pakistan to ratify the Hong Kong Convention?

2. What plans does the Vice-President/High Representative have to develop joint projects with Pakistan and Bangladesh using 'green' ship recycling?

3. Has the European Maritime Safety Agency been able to work with port authorities of South Asian countries with regard to ship recycling? If not, is any form of cooperation foreseen in the future?

4. As regards the Commission's recent proposals aiming at improving the traceability of EU ships, will the Vice-President/High Representative have the authority to forbid a European ship to be dismantled in a third country which has not ratified the Hong Kong Convention? What actions will be planned in the event of a ship illegally exporting dangerous waste?

5. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to develop awareness-raising campaigns in Europe jointly with South Asian countries on the impact of toxic substances during ship dismantling on workers' health and safety as well as on the environment?

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

In discussions with Asian countries such as Bangladesh and Pakistan the Commission has on several occasions stressed the importance of sustainable ship recycling and, in particular, the key role of the Hong Kong Convention in that regard.

The Commission currently has no plans to develop joint projects with Pakistan and Bangladesh on ship recycling.

The European Maritime Safety Agency is not currently engaged in joint projects with South Asian countries and is not planning any form of cooperation in the near future.

The Commission proposal for a regulation on Ship Recycling ([1]) encompasses measures for the whole lifecycle of ships sailing under EU flag, including the option to recycle such ships according to EU rules in facilities that have been included in a future EU list of sustainable ship recycling facilities worldwide. Should this proposal be adopted, the dismantling of EU ships in facilities not on this list, regardless of their status as hazardous waste or not, would be considered illegal and handled accordingly, in line with the respective articles of the regulation.

No arrangements for awareness-raising campaigns on hazardous materials in the context of ship recycling currently exist.

([1]) COM(2012) 118 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008842/12
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: EU-Pakistan civil aviation agreement

On 24 February 2009, the EU and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan signed a civil aviation agreement in order to bring the 18 bilateral agreements between Member States and Pakistan into conformity with European law, and to remove nationality restrictions in bilateral air services agreements between Member States and Pakistan.

Can the Commission answer the following questions in light of this:

1. As of today, does the Commission have any information as to whether this agreement has strengthened aviation relations and encouraged further traffic between the EU and Pakistan? If so, what conclusions have been drawn and what does it intend to do to further deepen aviation relations between the EU and third countries such as Pakistan?

2. Has this agreement increased competition and greater choice of airlines for Pakistani expatriate communities in Europe?

3. Only 18 out of 27 Member States have concluded bilateral civil aviation agreements with Pakistan. To what extent does this hinder the positive impact of the EU-Pakistan civil aviation agreement?

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

The Commission wishes to inform the Honourable Member that the Horizontal Agreement between the EU and Pakistan (HA) does neither intend to increase traffic possibilities between the two Parties concerned, nor allow new competitors to enter the market. Its mere purpose is actually to bring the existing bilateral agreements between EU Member States and Pakistan in line with EC law, in particular to allow an airline of an EU Member State to operate to Pakistan from any other EU Member State (provided there are unused traffic rights under the relevant bilateral agreement), in keeping with the right of establishment that is enshrined by the Treaty.

Hence, while traffic rights have been established by only 18 Member States of the EU by means of the bilateral Agreements with Pakistan, this does not affect in any way the positive impact of the HA that is precisely to align any bilateral agreement with EC law, in accordance with ECJ 'open skies' judgment on 5 November 2002.

With regard to the intentions of the Commission for deepening further aviation relations with non-EU partners, the Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to its recent Communication on the EU's External Aviation Policy, which was adopted on 27 September 2012 ([1]). In this document, the Commission stresses *inter alia* the various objectives and means for fostering aviation relations with the neighbouring countries and key partners.

([1]) COM(2012) 556 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008843/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(2 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Caso del Bajo Aguán en Honduras

El conflicto agrario del Bajo Aguán es el más grave, en términos del grado de violencia en contra de los campesinos en Centroamérica, en los últimos 15 años. El 21 de septiembre de 2012, en Tegucigalpa, la policía dispersó violentamente una manifestación pacífica de centenares de campesinos del Bajo Aguán que exigían que se juzgue con imparcialidad el caso de las tres fincas en posesión del MARCA, y se ponga fin a la criminalización de la lucha campesina. La intervención policial dejó tres heridos hospitalizados y 27 detenidos. El día 22 de septiembre se manifestaron contra la reacción policial y, como respuesta, se volvió a hacer un uso excesivo de la fuerza, lo que resultó en varios campesinos heridos y la detención de 19 personas, entre ellas varios defensores de los derechos humanos. El 23 de septiembre fueron puestos en libertad condicional los 27 detenidos de Tegucigalpa y los 19 detenidos en Planes.

El 26 de septiembre uno de los detenidos, Leonel Acosta Avilés, volcó con su vehículo cuando unos desconocidos le dispararon en la carretera. El 27 de septiembre José Braulio Díaz López fue asesinado por desconocidos con armas de fuego. Esto demuestra que las autoridades de Honduras aún son imparciales contra las comunidades campesinas envueltas en un conflicto agrario para el que no se encuentra solución integral, justa, pacífica y sostenible. Persiste la violencia, las violaciones de los derechos humanos y la impunidad de los atentados.

Recordamos que la República de Honduras es Estado parte del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales, por lo que está obligada ante la comunidad internacional a respetar, proteger y garantizar estos derechos cuyos titulares también son los campesinos hondureños.

1. ¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante estos hechos?

2. ¿Es el caso del Bajo Aguán un tema particular en los diálogos de cooperación UE-Latinoamérica?

3. ¿Piensa exigirle al gobierno hondureño el cese inmediato de la represión, el hostigamiento y la violencia contra los integrantes de las comunidades campesinas y el pleno respeto de los derechos humanos?

4. ¿Procura ya que la cooperación internacional bilateral y multilateral que se brinda al Estado hondureño y a las compañías privadas esté condicionada al respeto irrestricto de los mismos?

5. ¿Promueve la UE un marco de cooperación, un concepto de seguridad basada en la promoción de la justicia y del pleno respeto de los derechos humanos?

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

La UE está al corriente y se preocupa de la situación de los derechos humanos en Honduras, en concreto en el Bajo Aguán, un conflicto histórico en el que la combinación de violaciones de los derechos humanos, los procesos de la reforma agraria, los intereses económicos, la presencia de tráfico de estupefacientes y la fragmentación del movimiento campesino hacen que la situación sea compleja y difícil.

La UE aboga por un marco de cooperación y un concepto de seguridad basado en la promoción de la justicia y el pleno respeto de los derechos humanos en Honduras. Las acciones de la UE a nivel local en este sentido son continuas y se han puesto en práctica a través del diálogo con las organizaciones de derechos humanos, de reuniones con los defensores de los derechos humanos en situación de riesgo, de visitas, y de declaraciones locales emitidas en casos específicos. En esta línea, la Delegación de la UE en Honduras ha visitado en dos ocasiones la región del Bajo Aguán y ha mantenido conversaciones con todas las partes implicadas en el conflicto.

La promoción y la protección de los derechos humanos son elementos clave de la cooperación bilateral de la UE en Honduras, con proyectos como el Programa de Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos, cuyo objetivo es contribuir a la instauración de una política nacional de derechos humanos, que establezca el respeto de los derechos humanos como principio rector de todas las intervenciones y de todos los servicios prestados por los organismos públicos. Además, la UE sigue apoyando a la sociedad civil hondureña y a los defensores de los derechos humanos a través del IEDDH ([1]).

([1]) IEDDH: Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos.

Cabe señalar que el Gobierno de Honduras firmó en agosto de 2012 una declaración conjunta con el grupo de donantes de Honduras, del que la UE es miembro activo. Mediante esta declaración, el Ejecutivo adoptó varios objetivos en materia de derechos humanos, incluido un compromiso para investigar y castigar violaciones de los derechos humanos. El Gobierno de Honduras también reconoció que el Estado es responsable de garantizar la seguridad de los ciudadanos de acuerdo con el Estado de Derecho, y reconoce el importante papel de la sociedad civil en este ámbito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008843/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Events in Bajo Aguan (Honduras)

The agrarian conflict in Bajo Aguán is the most serious, in terms of the level of violence against Central American peasants, to have arisen in the last 15 years. On 21 September 2012, police violently dispersed a peaceful demonstration in Tegucigalpa by hundreds of peasants from Bajo Aguán who were calling for an impartial trial in the case of three farms occupied by the peasants' rights group MARCA (Movimiento Auténtico Reivindicador Campesino del Aguan) and an end to the criminalisation of the land rights struggle. The police intervention resulted in three people being hospitalised and 27 arrested. On 22 September 2012, a demonstration was held to protest at the police retaliation, which was again met with excessive force. A number of people were injured and 19 were arrested, among them several human rights defenders. On 23 September the 27 people arrested in Tegucigalpa and the 19 held in Planes were provisionally released.

On 26 September 2012, one of the released detainees, Leonel Costa Avilés, was shot at by unknown persons while driving, causing his car to roll over. On 27 September, José Braulio Díaz López was shot dead by unidentified persons. This shows that the Honduran authorities are still biased against the peasant communities embroiled in this agrarian conflict, to which an integral, just, peaceful and sustainable solution has yet to be found, in an ongoing situation of violence, human rights violations and unpunished attacks.

It should be recalled that the Republic of Honduras is a signatory State of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and as such has an obligation before the international community to respect, protect and guarantee these rights, which also apply to Honduran peasants.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this situation?

2. Has the case of Bajo Aguán been specifically addressed in the context of EU-Latin America cooperation dialogue?

3. Does the VP/HR intend to call on the Honduran Government to immediately put an end to the repression, harassment and violence against members of peasant communities and fully respect human rights?

4. Is the VP/HR already making efforts to ensure that international bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Honduran State and private companies is strictly subject to unlimited respect for such rights?

5. Does the EU advocate a framework for cooperation and a concept of security based on the promotion of justice and full respect for human rights?

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

The EU is aware and concerned with the human rights situation in Honduras, specifically Bajo Aguán, a historical conflict where a combination of human rights violations, land reform processes, economic interests, presence of drug trafficking and a fragmented peasant movement make for a complex and difficult situation.

The EU advocates a cooperation framework and a concept of security based on the promotion of justice and full respect of human rights (HR) in Honduras. EU local actions in this sense are continuous and have been implemented through a dialogue with HR organisations, meetings with HR defenders at risk, visits, and local statements issued in specific cases. In this line the EU delegation in Honduras has visited twice the Bajo Aguán region where it spoke to all stakeholders involved in this conflict.

Human rights promotion and protection represent a key part of EU bilateral cooperation in Honduras, including projects such as the Programa de Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos which aims at contributing to the creation of a National HR Policy expected to establish human rights as a core principle to all government actions and service delivery. In addition, the EU continues to support Honduran civil society and HR defenders through the EIDHR ([1]).

([1]) EIDHR = European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

It is worth noting that the Honduran Government signed in August 2012 a joint declaration with the Honduras Group of Donors, of which the EU is an active member. Through it, the Executive adopted several HR objectives, including a commitment to investigate and punish HR violations. The Government of Honduras also recognised that the state is responsible for ensuring citizen security according to the rule of law, and acknowledged the important role of civil society in this field.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008845/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Trattamento inadeguato dei rifugiati birmani in Thailandia

Le politiche thailandesi nei confronti dei rifugiati sono ad oggi frammentarie, incerte e per lo più inadeguate. Tali lacune legislative pongono i rifugiati in condizioni di vulnerabilità rispetto a trattamenti arbitrari e abusivi.

La Thailandia non rientra tra gli Stati aderenti alla Convenzione di Ginevra del 1951 e nemmeno al Protocollo del 1967. Il Paese non si è dotato di leggi a protezione dei rifugiati, né di procedure di asilo formalizzate. Mancando un solido contesto legale, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo vivono in condizioni di forte precarietà.

Il numero di rifugiati Birmani presenti nel Paese è molto alto e tutti si trovano costretti a una scelta: vivere nei campi profughi, ed essere relativamente tutelati rispetto ad arresti e trasferimenti forzati, ma totalmente avulsi dalla realtà, o vivere e lavorare fuori dai campi, senza riconoscimento di status giuridico alcuno e con il rischio costante di arresti e deportazioni.

All'interno dei campi vivono circa 140 000 profughi. Il governo thailandese impone dure restrizioni alla libertà di movimento dei rifugiati, proibendo loro di spostarsi dalla zona in cui vivono, di avere un reddito o di garantire ai propri figli un buon livello di istruzione scolastica.

Al di fuori dei campi, si calcola vi siano tra 1,8 e 3 milioni di birmani. Qui i rifugiati non sono autorizzati a lavorare, loro unica chance è di presentarsi alle autorità non come rifugiati, ma come lavoratori migranti, spesso costretti a pagare tangenti per trovare un lavoro.

La situazione ha visto un parziale miglioramento nel 2011, quando è emersa la prospettiva di possibili rimpatri, ma gli ostacoli sono ancora molti.

Date le premesse, come intende dunque la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante assistere i Comitati dei campi profughi, le ONG attive in loco e l'UNHCR nell'avviare un processo di transizione da un modello di assistenza umanitaria a campo chiuso a un modello di accoglienza aperta che renda i rifugiati autosufficienti e capaci di reinserirsi nel proprio tessuto sociale una volta rimpatriati volontariamente e in sicurezza?

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

Per quanto concerne la questione dei rifugiati in Thailandia, l'Unione europea ha uno stretto rapporto di collaborazione con tutti i portatori di interesse e ha partecipato attivamente a iniziative volte a promuovere soluzioni sostenibili a favore dei rifugiati e alternative alla situazione di accampamento prolungato, quali il rimpatrio volontario a Myanmar, la sistemazione in paesi terzi e l'integrazione in Thailandia.

L'UE appoggia l'UNCHR ([1]) e il ruolo fondamentale che l'Agenzia svolge in questo processo in qualità di coordinatore degli attori internazionali che collaborano con le autorità di Birmania/Myanmar e della Thailandia per preparare, quando le condizioni lo permetteranno, l'eventuale ritorno dei rifugiati. È essenziale che il rimpatrio avvenga conformemente alle norme riconosciute a livello internazionale (rimpatrio volontario e sicuro).

Attraverso i suoi programmi di cooperazione allo sviluppo e di aiuto umanitario, l'UE finanzia un serie di progetti insieme all'UNHCR.

Nel 2012 il programma di aiuti alle popolazioni sradicate dell'UE avrà ancora una volta l'obiettivo diretto di finanziare l'attuazione di progetti simili e sarà integrato da iniziative di assistenza umanitaria per garantire servizi sanitari di base, la sicurezza alimentare e la sicurezza nei campi. Per preparare i rifugiati al loro futuro ritorno in Myanmar, il sostegno dell'UE per il 2011-2012 si è concentrato anche su attività legate alla sussistenza e sulla formazione.

L'UE sostiene inoltre le sinergie e la cooperazione tra le agenzie che operano nei campi e quelle che lavorano nelle regioni sudorientali di Birmania/Myanmar, luogo d'origine della maggior parte dei rifugiati.

([1]) UNHCR = United Nations Refugee Agency (Agenzia delle Nazioni Unite per i Rifugiati).

Complessivamente, l'UE ha fornito ai campi oltre 150 milioni di euro e, insieme ad altri donatori, chiede che venga adottato un approccio più sostenibile per gestire la situazione dei rifugiati in Thailandia: ciò è importante soprattutto a causa dell'evolversi della situazione in Birmania/Myanmar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008845/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Inadequate provision for Burmese refugees in Thailand

The policy followed by the Thai authorities with regard to refugees has to date been piecemeal, uncertain and generally inadequate. Legal loopholes in this area are leaving refugees vulnerable to arbitrary and inadmissible treatment.

Thailand has signed neither the 1951 Geneva Convention nor the 1967 Protocol thereto. It has neither refugee protection laws nor official asylum procedures. In the absence of any binding legal framework, refugees and asylum-seekers have absolutely no guarantees.

The numerous Burmese refugees in Thailand are all faced with the choice of either remaining in refugee camps, where they are relatively safe from arrest and forced removal but at the same time totally cut off from the world around them, or living and working outside the camps with absolutely no legal status and at constant risk of arrest and deportation.

The camps currently accommodate around 140 000 refugees. The Thai Government imposes harsh restrictions on them as a result of which their freedom of movement is limited, they are unable to leave the area in which they live, have any form of income or provide decent education for their children.

It is estimated that between 1.8 and 3 million Burmese are living outside the camps. Here their only chance is to declare themselves to the authorities, not as refugees who are not entitled to work, but as migrant workers, in which case they are frequently obliged to hand over bribes in order to find employment.

In 2011 matters seemed to improve slightly with the prospect of possible repatriation arrangements. However, many obstacles remain to be overcome.

In view of this:

What measures does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take to help the refugee camp committees, locally involved NGOs and the UNHCR to launch a transition from humanitarian assistance in closed off camps towards open arrangements allowing refugees to become self-sufficient and able to reintegrate within their own societies following their safe and voluntary repatriation?

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

The EU cooperates very closely with all stakeholders on the issue of the refugees in Thailand. The EU has been actively involved in advocating sustainable solutions for the refugees and alternatives to protracted encampment, such as voluntary repatriation to Myanmar, third country resettlement and integration in Thailand.

The EU supports UNHCR ([1]) in its central role in this process as coordinator among international actors working with authorities of both Burma/Myanmar and Thailand to prepare the possible return of the refugees, once conditions allow. It is fundamental that return takes place in accordance with internationally recognised standards (voluntary and safe return).

The EU, both through its development cooperation and humanitarian aid, has been funding a number of projects with UNHCR.

In 2012, the EU's Aid to Uprooted People Programme will once again be directly aimed at funding the implementation of similar projects. This is complemented by humanitarian assistance to ensure basic health services, food security and protection in the camps. To prepare the refugees for future return to Myanmar, EU support in 2011-2012 has also focused on livelihood activities and training.

([1]) UNHCR = United Nations Refugee Agency.

The EU is also supporting synergies and cooperation between agencies working in the camps and those working in the South-eastern regions of Burma/Myanmar, the place of origin of the majority of the refugees.

In total, the EU has provided camps with over EUR 150 million and is together with other donors, advocating for a more sustainable approach to the refugee situation in Thailand. This is even more important given the changing context in Burma/Myanmar.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-008847/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 de Outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Novas medidas acordadas entre a Troika e o Governo Português

Foi ontem anunciado pelo porta-voz dos Assuntos Económicos da Comissão Europeia que teriam sido acordadas com a Troika no final da semana passada «medidas alternativas introduzidas no programa de ajustamento português para compensar o recuo na Taxa Social Única (TSU)». Durão Barroso, Presidente da Comissão Europeia, revelou que essas medidas apresentadas pelo Governo Português teriam sido já aprovadas pela Comissão Europeia. Tais medidas não são, todavia, do conhecimento público.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que responda às seguintes perguntas:

— Qual o conteúdo destas «novas» medidas que aprovou no quadro do «memorando de entendimento» entre o Governo Português e a Troika?

— Qual a legitimidade da Comissão Europeia para aprovar medidas de uma instituição soberana de um Estado-Membro (Governo Português) que não são ainda do conhecimento do povo e dos trabalhadores portugueses e que não foram ainda discutidas pelo Parlamento Português?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(9 de novembro de 2012)

No contexto da 5.ª revisão do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal, a Comissão, juntamente com o FMI e o BCE, debateu com o Governo português um novo pacote de medidas de consolidação correspondentes a cerca de 3 % do PIB. Estas medidas refletem a nova estratégia de consolidação orçamental e visam a realização do objetivo de défice revisto de 4,5 % do PIB em 2013, ao mesmo tempo que dão resposta ao acórdão do Tribunal Constitucional que determinou a inconstitucionalidade da suspensão do subsídio de férias e de natal dos funcionários públicos e pensionistas a partir de 2013.

As novas medidas visam uma repartição mais justa do esforço orçamental entre os setores público e privado e entre tributação do trabalho, do capital e das mais-valias. Incluem, designadamente, do lado das despesas, a instituição de uma sobretaxa para os funcionários públicos ([1]), uma redução dos seus efetivos, uma redução do consumo intermédio e das transferências sociais e uma maior racionalização no setor da saúde. Do lado das receitas, as medidas em questão incluem uma reforma estrutural do imposto sobre os rendimentos das pessoas singulares através de uma redução do número de escalões de imposto e a introdução de uma sobretaxa especial, bem como aumentos dos impostos sobre os rendimentos de capital. Também haverá aumentos dos impostos especiais de consumo e sobre os bens imobiliários.

O ME ([2]) foi revisto, a fim de ter em conta os recentes desenvolvimentos, nomeadamente as novas medidas orçamentais. Tal como sempre acontece, todas as medidas incluídas no ME são adotadas depois de reunidos os devidos requisitos jurídicos e constitucionais. Em 15 de outubro, no quadro do orçamento para 2013, o Governo português apresentou à Assembleia da República, para análise e aprovação, o novo pacote de medidas de consolidação.

([1]) 1.1 Pagamentos aos reformados.
([2]) Memorando de Entendimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008847/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: New measures agreed between the Troika and the Portuguese Government

The Commission's spokesperson on economic affairs yesterday announced that 'alternative measures to be included in the Portuguese austerity programme to offset the fall in the single social tax (TSU)' had been agreed with the Troika in the past week. The Commission President José Manuel Barroso has revealed that these measures put forward by the Portuguese Government had already been approved by the Commission. Nevertheless, these measures have not yet been publicly announced.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— What is the substance of these 'new' measures that it has approved within the framework of the 'memorandum of understanding' between the Portuguese Government and the Troika?

— On what basis is the Commission taking it upon itself to approve measures to be taken by the sovereign body of a Member State (the Portuguese Government) which have not yet been announced to the Portuguese people and Portuguese workers and which have not yet been debated by the Portuguese Parliament?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 November 2012)

In the context of the 5th Review of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal, the Commission, together with IMF and ECB, discussed with the Portuguese Government a new package of consolidation measures amounting to about 3% of GDP. These measures reflect the new fiscal consolidation strategy and aim at achieving the revised deficit target of 4.5% of GDP in 2013 while responding to the Constitutional Court ruling annulling on equity grounds the suspension of the holiday and Christmas bonuses for public sector employees and pensioners from 2013 on.

The new measures seek a fairer sharing of the fiscal effort between the public and private sectors and between labour, capital and wealth taxation. They include, *inter alia*, on the expenditure side, the reinstatement of one extra payment for public sector employees ([1]), a reduction in number of public employees, cuts in intermediate consumption and in social transfers and a further rationalisation in the health sector. On the revenue side, the measures include a structural reform of the personal income tax through a reduction in the number of tax brackets and the introduction of a special surcharge, as well as increases in capital income taxation. Excise duties and property taxation are also set to rise.

The MoU ([2]) has been revised to take account of new developments, including the new fiscal measures. As is always the case, all measures included in the MoU are subject to adoption following the necessary legal and constitutional requirements. The new package of consolidation measures was presented by the Portuguese Government to Parliament on 15 October, in the context of the 2013 budget proposal, for its Parliamentary scrutiny and approval.

([1]) 1.1 payments for pensioners.
([2]) Memorandum of Understanding.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-008848/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(2. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Haushaltslinie 22 02 07 03 für 2013

Die Kommission hat eine „finanzielle Unterstützung der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung der türkisch-zypriotischen Gemeinschaft" für 2013 in Höhe von 28 Millionen EUR vorgesehen.

Welchen Betrag gedenkt die Kommission dem Ausschuss für die Vermissten in Zypern und dem Technischen Ausschuss für das kulturelle Erbe, in dem beide Volksgruppen vertreten sind, tatsächlich zuzuweisen?

Wie sehen die künftigen Pläne der Kommission in den oben genannten Bereichen im Einzelnen aus?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(30. Oktober 2012)

Dank des starken Interesses und der großen Unterstützung des Europäischen Parlaments für Vertrauensbildungsmaßnahmen, die die beiden zyprischen Gemeinschaften einander näherbringen sollen, ist die EU inzwischen der größte einzelne Geber für den Ausschuss für die Vermissten, dem sie insgesamt 7,5 Mio. EUR zur Verfügung gestellt hat (Betrag für 2012 eingerechnet).

Im Rahmen des Hilfsprogramms für die türkisch-zyprische Gemeinschaft 2011 und 2012 hat die Kommission für die Unterstützung des unter UN-Schirmherrschaft tätigen Technischen Ausschusses für das kulturelle Erbe, in dem beide Volksgruppen vertreten sind, weitere EU-Mittel im Umfang von 4 Mio. EUR bereitgestellt.

Die Kommission begrüßt die kontinuierliche Unterstützung des Europäischen Parlaments für Maßnahmen zur Aussöhnung und Vertrauensbildung und ist sehr erfreut über den Vorschlag des Parlaments, dafür 2013 weitere 3 Mio. EUR zur Verfügung zu stellen. Die Programmierungsphase für 2013 kann erst nach endgültiger Feststellung des Haushalts für 2013 beginnen. Die genaue Mittelzuweisung wird sich nach den Wünschen der Gemeinschaften und dem Bedarf im Rahmen der jeweiligen Projekte richten.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008848/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Budget line 22 02 07 03 for 2013

The Commission has allocated EUR 28 million in commitments for 2013 for 'financial support for encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community'.

How much does the Commission intend to actually allocate to the Committee on Missing Persons and the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage?

Please give a detailed outline of future plans in the abovementioned areas.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(30 October 2012)

With the strong interest and support from the European Parliament for confidence building measures aiming at bringing the two Cypriot communities closer together, the EU has become the single biggest donor to the activities of the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) with a total of EUR 7.5 million funding, including the 2012 allocation.

Under the 2011 and 2012 Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community, the Commission also allocated EUR 4 million in EU funding to support the activities of the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage operating under UN auspices.

The Commission appreciates the European Parliament's continuing support for the reconciliation and confidence building measures and is very pleased that the EP has proposed an additional EUR 3 million for this in 2013. The programming phase for 2013 will only be able to begin after the final decision on the 2013 budget. The detailed allocation will be agreed according to the wishes of the communities and the needs of the respective projects.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-008849/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(2 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σχολιασμός ανυπόστατης είδησης που μετέδωσαν τα κρατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης της πΓΔΜ από τον αρμόδιο για θέματα διεύρυνσης Επίτροπο

Στις 30 Σεπτεμβρίου, η κρατική τηλεόραση της πΓΔΜ μετέδωσε ως πραγματικό γεγονός ανυπόστατη είδηση περί δήθεν δολοφονίας πολίτη της πΓΔΜ από εξτρεμιστική οργάνωση στη Θεσσαλονίκη. Αυτήν τη δήθεν είδηση αναπαρήγαγε το σχεδόν σύνολο των ΜΜΕ και του Τύπου στην πΓΔΜ, με αποτέλεσμα να δημιουργηθεί ιδιαίτερα αρνητική ατμόσφαιρα για ένα εξαιρετικά ευαίσθητο θέμα. Ο εκπρόσωπος Τύπου του Ελληνικού Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών προχώρησε αμέσως σε κατηγορηματική διάψευση, καλώντας την κυβέρνηση της γειτονικής χώρας να μην αφήνει περιθώρια καλλιέργειας και ενίσχυσης εθνικισμού και μισαλλοδοξίας. Όμως, την ίδια ημέρα, ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος για τη διεύρυνση, υιοθετώντας απολύτως την αβάσιμη πληροφορία που μετέδιδαν τα μέσα ενημέρωσης της πΓΔΜ, σχολίασε ο ίδιος σε μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης (twitter) το ανύπαρκτο περιστατικό, παραπέμποντας μάλιστα και στην ιστοσελίδα του ημι-κρατικού ειδησεογραφικού πρακτορείου ειδήσεων της πΓΔΜ το οποίο ανέφερε την «είδηση».

Κατόπιν αυτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Η δημόσια αντίδραση του Επιτρόπου βασίστηκε σε πληροφόρηση που του παρείχαν οι αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής; Προηγήθηκε διασταύρωση και εξακρίβωση των πληροφοριών που μετέδιδαν τα μέσα ενημέρωσης της πΓΔΜ;

2. Αν πράγματι η πληροφόρηση προέρχεται από τις αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής, εγείρεται σοβαρό ζήτημα αξιοπιστίας του τρόπου που γίνεται η αξιολόγηση και επεξεργασία των πληροφοριών καθώς και των πηγών που οι υπηρεσίες αυτές χρησιμοποιούν για τη συλλογή τους. Υπογραμμίζεται ότι στη βάση, μεταξύ άλλων, και τέτοιων πληροφοριών συντάσσονται οι εκθέσεις προόδου των σχέσεων ΕΕ με την πΓΔΜ. Τί μέτρα πρέπει να ληφθούν και ποιές αλλαγές θα πρέπει να γίνουν ώστε να αποφευχθεί ανάλογο πρόβλημα στο μέλλον;

3. Θα γίνεται μνεία στην επόμενη έκθεση προόδου της απαράδεκτης πρακτικής μέσων ενημέρωσης της πΓΔΜ να διαστρεβλώνουν ή και να προβάλουν και να αναπαράγουν ανύπαρκτα γεγονότα, με αποτέλεσμα την παραπληροφόρηση της κοινής γνώμης ή ακόμα και του ίδιου του αρμοδίου για τα θέματα διεύρυνσης Επιτρόπου;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Ο σκοπός του tweet του αρμόδιου Επιτρόπου για τη Διεύρυνση και την Ευρωπαϊκή Πολιτική Γειτονίας ήταν να συστήσει συγκράτηση μετά από διάφορα δημοσιεύματα όσον αφορά υποτιθέμενο γεγονός και σχόλια σε τόπους κοινωνικής δικτύωσης.

Οι πληροφορίες και τα συμπεράσματα στις εκθέσεις προόδου της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τις χώρες διεύρυνσης βασίζονται σε πληροφορίες από πολλαπλές πηγές. Η αντιπροσωπεία της ΕΕ στην ενδιαφερόμενη χώρα παρακολουθεί στενά τις εξελίξεις και παρέχει στοιχεία για τις εκθέσεις. Εκτεταμένες διαβουλεύσεις διεξάγονται με μεγάλο αριθμό διεθνών οργανισμών, ΜΚΟ και άλλων ενδιαφερόμενων φορέων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των κρατών μελών, με σκοπό την επαλήθευση των πληροφοριών.

Στην έκθεση προόδου που δημοσιεύθηκε στις 10 Οκτωβρίου 2012, η Επιτροπή αξιολογεί τις εξελίξεις που σημειώθηκαν στον τομέα της ελευθερίας έκφρασης, αναφέρει τις επιφυλάξεις όσον αφορά την αυτολογοκρισία και την έλλειψη πολυφωνίας στα μέσα ενημέρωσης και τονίζει την ανάγκη ενίσχυσης των επαγγελματικών προτύπων στον δημοσιογραφικό τομέα.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008849/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Comments by the Commissioner responsible for enlargement concerning an unfounded media report circulating in FYROM

On 30 September, the FYROM State television reported as a fact an unfounded allegation that a FYROM citizen had been murdered by an extremist organisation in Thessaloniki. Almost all the mass media and newspapers in FYROM picked up on this highly sensitive story, greatly exacerbating the situation. The Greek Foreign Ministry Press Officer hastened to issue a disclaimer, calling on the neighbouring government to allow no room for chauvinism and intolerance to take root. However, on the same day, the Commissioner responsible for enlargement himself lent credibility to this unfounded allegation by posting his own comments on the social network (Twitter) and referring to the 'news report' on the webpage of the semi-State FYROM news agency.

1. Was the public response of the Commissioner prompted by the Commission's own information? Was the FYROM media report cross-checked and verified?

2. If in fact the information came from the Commission, this gives rise to serious questions regarding the assessment and processing of data and the reliability of its sources. It is partly on the basis of such information that progress reports are drawn up regarding relations between the EU and FYROM. What measures must be taken and what changes made in order to prevent such a situation arising in future?

3. Will the next progress report refer to this inadmissible distortion of the facts and the propagation of unfounded allegations by the FYROM media, thereby misleading the public and also the Commissioner responsible for enlargement?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2012)

The purpose of the tweet by the Member of the Commission for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy was to urge restraint following several reports of an alleged incident and comments on social network sites.

The information and conclusions in the Commission's Progress Reports on the enlargement countries are based on information from multiple sources. The EU Delegation in the country closely follows developments and provides input for the reports. Extensive consultations are held with a large number of international organisations, NGOs and other stakeholders, including Members States, to verify information.

In the progress report published on 10 October 2012, the Commission assesses developments in the area of freedom of expression and refers to concerns about self-censorship and lack of pluralism in the media and stresses the need to strengthen professional standards in journalism.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008850/12
à la Commission
Tokia Saïfi (PPE) et Nora Berra (PPE)
(2 octobre 2012)

Objet: Accord UE-Chine sur les indications géographiques

Conformément à la volonté exprimée conjointement par l'UE et la Chine lors du sommet bilatéral de 2009, le Conseil a autorisé la Commission à ouvrir des négociations en vue d'un accord sur la protection des indications géographiques des vins, spiritueux, produits agricoles et denrées alimentaires.

Le projet pilote «10 + 10» prévoit déjà la protection de dix produits agricoles européens et de dix produits agricoles chinois, les négociations de l'accord bilatéral se poursuivant en parallèle.

Comment les produits concernés par le projet pilote «10 + 10» ont-ils été sélectionnés?

Compte tenu de la forte exposition des indications géographiques de vins et spiritueux à la contrefaçon et des risques sanitaires inhérents, ainsi que de l'objectif d'aboutir à un accord sur la protection des indications géographiques des produits agricoles et des denrées alimentaires, y compris les vins et spiritueux, la Commission compte-t-elle intégrer des vins et spiritueux à cette phase pilote avant la conclusion d'un éventuel accord?

Quelles ont été les avancées réalisées au cours du dernier cycle de négociations sur l'accord bilatéral et dans quel délai la Commission pense-t-elle pouvoir les finaliser?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(20 novembre 2012)

Le projet pilote 10 + 10 est aujourd'hui en voie d'achèvement. Pour suivre les progrès, sélectionner «Chine» dans la base de données DOOR de la DG Agriculture et développement rural:
(http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.html).

Les dix indications géographiques de l'Union européenne (IG) sont en attente de signature avant de pouvoir être officiellement enregistrées. Ces dix IG ont été proposées par les États membres en 2007 dans le cadre du comité AOP/IGP. Les vins et les spiritueux ne figuraient pas parmi elles.

Les Honorables Parlementaires soulèvent à juste titre la question de la contrefaçon. Dans le cadre de l'accord bilatéral actuellement en cours de négociation, les deux parties cherchent à atteindre un niveau de protection et de contrôle du respect des règles qui assurerait à l'une et l'autre la protection d'office des IG.

En outre, la question de la contrefaçon des vins et spiritueux a été abordée séparément avec la Chine lors de la visite que le membre de la Commission en charge de l'agriculture et du développement rural a effectuée à Pékin en juin. En effet, le récent communiqué du sommet Union européenne-Chine invite les deux parties à intensifier leur action contre la contrefaçon.

Un cinquième cycle de négociations visant à la conclusion d'un accord bilatéral relatif à la protection des IG s'est tenu les 13 et 14 septembre à Bruxelles. Le 26 septembre, la Commission a transmis au Parlement un rapport sur cette question. Le prochain cycle de négociations devrait avoir lieu début 2013. Les deux parties ont réaffirmé leur engagement à œuvrer en faveur d'un accord avantageux pour l'une et l'autre dans le courant de l'année 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008850/12
to the Commission
Tokia Saïfi (PPE) and Nora Berra (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: EU-China agreement on geographical indications

In accordance with the wish expressed jointly by the EU and China at the 2009 bilateral summit, the Council has authorised the Commission to open negotiations on an agreement on the protection of geographical indications for wines, spirits, agricultural products and foodstuffs.

The '10+10' pilot project already provides for the protection of 10 European agricultural products and 10 Chinese agricultural products, and negotiations on the bilateral agreement are continuing in parallel.

How were the products covered by the '10+10' pilot project selected?

Given that geographical indications for wines and spirits are highly vulnerable to counterfeiting, and given the health risks this poses, and in the light of the objective of reaching an agreement on the protection of geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs, including wines and spirits, does the Commission intend to include wines and spirits in the pilot phase prior to the possible conclusion of an agreement?

What progress has been made in the latest round of negotiations on the bilateral agreement, and when does the Commission expect to be able to complete the negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(20 November 2012)

The 10+10 pilot project is currently nearing its completion. Progress can be tracked by selecting 'China' on DG Agriculture and Rural Development's DOOR database: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.html

The ten EU geographical indications (GI's) are awaiting signature before official registration. The ten GI's were proposed by Member States in the framework of the PDO/PGI Committee in 2007. Wines and spirits did not feature among the ten.

The Honourable Members justly raise the issue of counterfeiting. Under the bilateral agreement currently being negotiated, a level of protection and enforcement is being sought that would ensure ex officio protection for both sides' GI's.

In addition, the issue of counterfeiting in wines and spirits has been raised separately with China during the visit of the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development to Beijing in June. Indeed, the recent EU-China Summit Communique calls on the two sides to step up action against counterfeiting.

A fifth round of negotiations towards a bilateral agreement on the protection of GI's was held on 13 and 14 September in Brussels. The Commission has on 26 September forwarded to the Parliament a report thereon. The next round is likely to take place early in 2013. Both Parties reaffirmed their continued commitment to work towards a mutually beneficial agreement in the course of 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008851/12
aan de Commissie
Marietje Schaake (ALDE) en Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(2 oktober 2012)

Betreft: Het project Clean IT

Het project Clean IT is een publiek-privaat initiatief gericht op het reduceren van de impact van het gebruik van het internet voor terroristische doeleinden. Het project wordt medegefinancierd met middelen van het programma betreffende het voorkomen en bestrijden van criminaliteit van het directoraat-generaal Justitie.

Op de website van het project Clean IT staat dat de belangrijkste doelstelling van het project het ontwikkelen van een niet-wetgevingskader is en dat het niet de bedoeling is te tornen aan de onlinevrijheid. De eerste voorlopige aanbevelingen van het project hebben echter wel degelijk betrekking op de tenuitvoerlegging van wetgeving, waarbij ook de onlinevrijheid zou worden beïnvloed.

1. Wat is het standpunt van de Commissie ten aanzien van het monitoren en in de gaten houden van het internet voor wethandhavings- en veiligheidsdoeleinden door tussenpersonen, zoals privé-ondernemingen, namens overheden?

2. Zijn de maatregelen die in de conclusies van het project Clean IT worden voorgesteld in de optiek van de Commissie in overeenstemming met de grondrechten van de EU, de vrijheid van meningsuiting de onlinevrijheid en de wetgeving inzake het recht op privacy en inzake gegevensbescherming?

3. Is de Commissie voornemens voorstellen voor wetgeving te presenteren op basis van de uitkomsten van het project Clean IT en zo ja, wanneer?

4. Hoe controleert de Commissie dat door de EU (mede)gefinancierde projecten in overeenstemming zijn met de grondrechten en de wetgeving van de EU? Welke mechanismen zijn er voor het monitoren en beoordelen van de onderzoekprogramma's van het directoraat-generaal Justitie, met name het programma betreffende het voorkomen en bestrijden van criminaliteit?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(29 november 2012)

De Commissie is bezorgd over terroristische propaganda op het internet. De lidstaten hebben er bij de Commissie al vaker op aangedrongen om dit probleem aan te pakken ([1]). Bovendien legt artikel 16 van de Richtlijn inzake elektronische handel ([2]) de lidstaten en de Commissie op te stimuleren dat bedrijfsorganisaties, beroepsverenigingen en consumentenverenigingen gedragscodes opstellen die bijdragen tot de goede toepassing van de Richtlijn, bv. illegale activiteit of informatie verwijderen of de toegang daartoe onmogelijk maken (artikel 14). Om misdaden aan te pakken op het internet, een infrastructuur die voornamelijk privaat is, is een dialoog tussen publieke en particuliere partners essentieel.

Het project Clean IT heeft geen wetgevingsdoelstellingen en de Commissie plant geen wetsvoorstellen op basis van het resultaat.

Aanvragen die zijn ingediend in het kader van ISEC ([3]) worden beoordeeld aan de hand van gunningscriteria die gespecificeerd zijn in haar jaarlijks werkprogramma en zijn aangenomen na beraadslaging met de lidstaten. Een van de gunningscriteria is de mate waarin aanvragen overeenkomen met de prioritaire gebieden die worden genoemd in de oproep tot het indienen van voorstellen en in de toepasselijke strategie documenten/actieplannen van de EU. De aanvragen worden beoordeeld door externe en/of interne deskundigen; de resultaten worden dan nauwkeurig geanalyseerd door een evaluatiecomité van ambtenaren van de Commissie dat een ontwerp voor een gunningslijst opstelt. Het comité van het ISEC(bestaande uit vertegenwoordigers van de lidstaten) wordt geraadpleegd inzake dit ontwerp voordat het wordt afgerond. Dit mechanisme garandeert dat de projecten overeenkomstig de ISEC-prioriteiten en de EU-wetgeving zijn.

Verder worden de geachte Parlementsleden verwezen naar het gezamenlijke antwoord van de Commissie op de schriftelijke vragen 8738/12, P-9024/12 en P-8386/12, P-8569/12 en P-8906/12 ([4]).

([1]) Conclusies van de Raad, 15-16.06.2006 en conclusies van de Raad, 27.11.2008.
([2]) Richtlijn 2000/31/EG van 8 juni 2000 betreffende bepaalde juridische aspecten van de diensten van de informatiemaatschappij, met name de elektronische handel, in de interne markt (Richtlijn inzake elektronische handel).
([3]) Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme, beheerd door het DG Binnenlandse zaken: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/prevention-of-and-fight-against-crime/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008851/12
to the Commission
Marietje Schaake (ALDE) and Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: The Clean IT project

The Clean IT project is a public-private initiative that aims to reduce the impact of terrorist use of the Internet. The project is funded in part by the Commission's EU Programme on Prevention of and Fight against Crime spearheaded by the Directorate-General for Justice.

The Clean IT website states that the project's main objective is to develop a non-legislative framework and that online freedom should not be affected. However, the project's preliminary recommendations do concern the implementation of legislation, which would also affect online freedom.

1. What is the Commission's position with regard to the monitoring and policing of the Internet for law enforcement and security purposes, by intermediaries such as private companies, on behalf of public authorities?

2. Does the Commission consider that the measures proposed in the Clean IT conclusions are in line with EU fundamental rights, the freedom of speech, online freedom and legislation with regard to privacy and data protection?

3. Does the Commission intend to propose legislation on the basis of the outcome of the Clean IT project, and if so, when?

4. How does the Commission verify that EU (co-)funded research projects are in line with EU fundamental rights and legislation? What mechanisms are in place to scrutinise and evaluate the research programmes in DG Justice, in particularly the 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme'?

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

The Commission is concerned about terrorist propaganda on the Internet. Member States on numerous occasions have called upon the Commission to address this issue ([1]). Furthermore, Article 16 of the E-Commerce Directive ([2]) mandates Member States and the Commission to encourage drawing up codes of conduct by trade, professional and consumer associations or organisations designed to contribute to the proper implementation of the directive, e.g. removing or disabling access to illegal activity or information (Article 14). To tackle crimes committed using the Internet, the infrastructure of which is overwhelmingly private, public-private dialogue is essential.

The Clean IT project has no legislative aims and the Commission does not plan any legislative proposals on the basis of its outcome.

Applications submitted under the ISEC ([3]) are assessed against award criteria specified in its Annual Work Programme, adopted following consultations with Member States. One award criterion is the extent to which applications match priority areas identified in the call for proposals and in the relevant EU strategic documents/action plans. Applications are assessed by external and/or internal experts; the results are then scrutinised by an Evaluation Committee of Commission officials, which draws up a draft award list. The ISECcommittee, (of Member States' representatives) is consulted on this draft before it is finalised. This mechanism ensures that projects are in line with ISECpriorities and EU legislation.

Furthermore, the Honourable Members are referred to the Commission's joint reply to written questions P-8738/12, P-9024/12 as well as P-8386/12, P-8569/12, and P-8906/12 ([4]).

([1]) Council Conclusions, 15-16.06.2006 and Council Conclusions, 27.11.2008.
([2]) Directive 2000/31/EC of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the internal market (Directive on electronic commerce).
([3]) Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme, managed by DG Home Affairs: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/prevention-of-and-fight-against-crime/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008852/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(2. oktober 2012)

Om: Bakterier i importeret frugt og grønt i Danmark

Vi har i Danmark set en stigning i antallet af danskere, der bliver syge af at spise frugt og grønt fra udlandet på grund af bakterier med mere. I Danmark har vi i øvrigt også set et generelt forhøjet niveau af pesticider i importeret frugt og grønt sammenlignet dansk frugt og grønt. Det danske dagblad Berlingske Tidende har igennem den sidste uge dokumenteret dette ganske klart.

Efter min mening er det ikke kun op til myndighederne i importørernes og distributørernes hjemland. Forbrugerne i EU skal kunne stole på, at kvaliteten og sundheden af frugt og grønt er i orden — ellers er der ingen pointe i at have et indre marked. Den tryghed har borgerne desværre ikke i dag.

Mit spørgsmål er derfor: Hvornår vil Kommissionen kunne garantere danske forbrugere, at de trygt kan spise frugt og grønt fra hele EU? Hvordan vil Kommissionen sikre, at producenterne af frugt og grønt i hele EU overholder helt almindelige hygiejneregler og i øvrigt overholder reglerne om pesticider med mere?

Såfremt Kommissionen ikke kan garantere EU-borgerne, at sundheden er i orden, vil den så tillade, at Danmarks fødevaremyndigheder for eksempel laver kampagner, der anbefaler danske forbrugere kun at købe danskproduceret frugt og grønt, idet forekomsten af bakterier og pesticider er betydeligt mindre i de danske produkter?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Maroš Šefčovič
(26. november 2012)

EU's fødevarelovgivning fastlægger en harmoniseret retlig ramme, som sikrer et højt beskyttelsesniveau for alle forbrugere i EU. Desuden er det hensigten med lovgivningen at sikre fri bevægelighed for fødevarer i hele EU. De samme regler finder derfor anvendelse i alle medlemsstater og på fødevarer, som importeres til EU.

Hvis de danske myndigheder udpeger en sundhedsrisiko for forbrugerne, som er forbundet med tilstedeværelsen af visse bakterier eller tilstedeværelsen af pesticidrester, som overstiger det tilladte niveau, der er fastlagt i EU-lovgivningen, bør de omgående underrette Kommissionen om disse risici og træffe passende foranstaltninger til at underrette offentligheden. Alle krav til fødevaresikkerheden fremgår tydeligt af artikel 14 i forordning (EF) nr. 178/2002 ([1]), og i den specifikke lovgivning om pesticidrester (forordning (EF) nr. 396/2005 ([2])) og om mikrobiologiske kriterier for fødevarer (Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 2073/2005 ([3])) fastlægges de specifikke grænseværdier, som er tilladte i EU.

Ved udpegning af en fødevaresikkerhedsrisiko skal der træffes passende risikostyringsforanstaltninger og foranstaltninger, som mindsker risikoen, med henblik på at beskytte alle forbrugere i EU. Kampagner, som anbefaler fødevarer af en bestemt oprindelse, er ikke en hensigtsmæssig reaktion på en fødevaresikkerhedsrisiko, og de ville være i strid med artikel 34 i traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde og anerkendt retspraksis (se især sag 249/81, Kommissionen mod Irland, Sml. 1982, 4005).

([1]) EFT L 31 af 1.2.2002.
([2]) EUT L 70 af 16.3.2005.
([3]) EUT L 338 af 22.12.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008852/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Bacteria in fruits and vegetables imported into Denmark

Denmark has seen an increase in the number of citizens falling ill after eating fruit and vegetables imported from abroad, due to bacteria and suchlike. It has also been noted that there is generally a higher level of pesticides in imported fruit and vegetables than in Danish fruit and vegetables. The Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* has documented this quite clearly over the last week.

In my opinion, this is not just a matter for the authorities in the importer or distributor's home country. EU consumers must have confidence in the quality and health of fruit and vegetables — otherwise there is no point in having a single market. Unfortunately, citizens do not have that confidence at the moment.

When will the Commission be able to guarantee Danish consumers that they can safely eat fruit and vegetables from all across the EU? How will the Commission ensure that producers of fruit and vegetables throughout the EU comply with general rules on hygiene and those on pesticides etc.?

If the Commission cannot guarantee EU citizens that there are no health problems with fruit and vegetables, will it allow the Danish food authorities, for example, to run campaigns recommending that Danish consumers only buy Danish-produced fruits and vegetables, since the presence of bacteria and pesticides is significantly lower in Danish products?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2012)

European food legislation establishes a harmonised legal framework which provides a high level of protection to all EU consumers. Its aims also at ensuring the free movement of foodstuffs throughout the EU. The same rules are therefore applicable in all Member States as well as to food imported into the EU.

Should the Danish authorities identify a health risk for consumers linked to the presence of certain bacteria or to the presence of pesticide residues above the permitted levels set in EU legislation, they should immediately alert the Commission of such risk and take the appropriate steps to inform the public. Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) clearly states all the food safety requirements and specific legislation on pesticide residues (Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 ([2])) and on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs (Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 ([3])) set the respective specific limits allowed in the EU.

The identification of a food safety risk requires taking the appropriate risk control and risk mitigating measures to protect all EU consumers. Campaigns promoting foodstuffs of a specific origin would not be an appropriate answer to a food safety risk and not be in compliance with Article 34 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and with the well-established Court cases (see notably Case 249/81, Commission / Ireland, ECR 1982, 4005).

([1]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.
([2]) OJ L 70, 16.3.2005.
([3]) OJ L 338, 22.12.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008853/12
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione dei diritti umani presso il Centro di identificazione ed espulsione di Lamezia Terme

Il 24 settembre 2012, l'organizzazione non governativa «Medici per i diritti umani» (MEDU) ha pubblicato un reportage fotografico che restituisce un quadro piuttosto preoccupante della situazione del Centro di identificazione ed espulsione di Lamezia Terme.

L'organizzazione ha rilevato l'utilizzo di metodi lesivi della dignità umana e irrispettosi della vita privata — principi garantiti all'articolo 1 e all'articolo 7 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea — quale l'uso di gabbie metalliche atte ad accogliere i detenuti durante le operazioni di rasatura.

Le testimonianze raccolte dagli operatori MEDU destano altresì preoccupazione quanto all'effettiva tutela del diritto alla salute. L'organizzazione riporta il caso di un trattenuto cui sono negate sedute fisioterapiche e controlli ortopedici, nonostante sia affetto da una grave forma di osteomielite che lo costringe a vivere con una protesi all'anca: una situazione che nega di fatto la garanzia di quel «livello elevato di protezione della salute umana», evocato all'articolo 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'UE, nonché la garanzia di un «trattamento essenziale delle malattie», prevista dall'articolo 16, paragrafo 3 della direttiva 2008/115 CE.

Gli operatori MEDU hanno, inoltre, costatato che i trattenuti non hanno ricevuto alcuna informazione per quanto riguarda i loro diritti e doveri, le modalità per presentare richiesta d'asilo e la possibilità di accesso al servizio di orientamento, contrariamente a quanto stabilito dall'articolo 16, paragrafo 5 della direttiva 2008/115 CE. Un tale scenario implicherebbe il non rispetto del principio di non-refoulement, sancito dalla Convenzione di Ginevra e difeso dai cataloghi giuridici europei, cfr. articolo 18 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea sul diritto d'asilo.

Può dire la Commissione se è a conoscenza di questi fatti? Quali sono le misure concrete che intende adottare affinché centri come quello di Lamezia Terme chiudano definitivamente? Non ritiene la Commissione che sia necessario stabilire norme minime che obblighino i gestori di tali centri a sottostare a regole chiare volte a tutelare la dignità umana e i diritti sanciti dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea? Qual è il piano di azione che intende predisporre per perseguire tali obiettivi?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(31 ottobre 2012)

La direttiva 2008/115/CE recante norme e procedure comuni applicabili negli Stati membri al rimpatrio di cittadini di paesi terzi il cui soggiorno è irregolare prevede importanti garanzie direttamente applicabili in materia di condizioni di trattenimento umane e dignitose negli Stati membri, tra cui l'obbligo di assicurare prestazioni sanitarie d'urgenza e il trattamento essenziale delle malattie. La Commissione si aspetta che tutti gli Stati membri, inclusa l'Italia, rispettino gli impegni presi nell'ambito di detta direttiva e garantiscano condizioni umane e dignitose in tutti i centri di permanenza presenti sul loro territorio.

L'Italia ha notificato il completo recepimento della direttiva rimpatri nel 2011. Sulla base dei risultati di uno studio sul corretto recepimento della direttiva nelle legislazioni nazionali, la Commissione sta portando avanti un programma di lavoro strutturato in quest'ambito. Nel 2013 la Commissione prevede inoltre di far realizzare uno studio sull'attuazione pratica della direttiva rimpatri negli Stati membri che si concentri in particolar modo sulla situazione reale nei centri di permanenza, incluso il centro di identificazione ed espulsione di Lamezia Terme cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008853/12
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Infringement of human rights at the centre for identification and expulsion of Lamezia Terme

On 24 September 2012, the Italian non-governmental organisation 'Doctors for Human Rights' (MEDU) published a photographic reportage that paints a rather worrying picture of the situation in the Centre for Identification and Expulsion of Lamezia Terme.

The organisation noted the use of methods that were offensive to human dignity and failed to respect privacy — principles that are enshrined in Article 1 and Article 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union — such as the use of metal cages in which to hold inmates during shaving.

The evidence collected by the MEDU operators also arouses concern as to whether or not the right to health is actually being protected. The organisation reports the case of a detainee who was denied physiotherapy sessions and orthopaedic check-ups, despite suffering from a severe form of osteomyelitis that forces him to live with a hip replacement — a situation which, in actual fact, negates the guarantee of a 'high level of human health protection' set out in Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the assurance of 'essential treatment of illness' provided for in Article 16(3) of Directive 2008/115/EC.

MEDU operators have also found that the detainees have not received any information regarding their rights and responsibilities, how to submit an application for asylum and the possibility of access to guidance, contrary to the provisions of Article 16(5) of Directive 2008/115/EC. This would appear to run counter to the principle of non-refoulement, as enshrined in the Geneva Convention and upheld by European law, for instance in Article 18 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union on the right of asylum.

Is the Commission aware of these facts? What specific measures does it intend to take to ensure that centres such as that of Lamezia Terme close down permanently? Should the Commission not establish minimum standards that require the operators of such centres to comply with clear rules in order to protect the human dignity and human rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union? What plan of action does it intend to draw up in order to achieve these objectives?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 October 2012)

Directive 2008/115/EC on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals contains important directly applicable safeguards relating to humane and dignified detention conditions in Member States, including the obligation to provide for emergency healthcare and essential treatment of illness. The Commission expects all Member States, including Italy, to live up to the commitments under this directive and to ensure humane and dignified conditions in all detention facilities on their territory.

Italy notified the full transposition of the Return Directive in 2011. The Commission is currently carrying out an organised programme of work on the transposition of this directive, based on the results of a study concerning its correct legal transposition. In addition, a study relating to the practical application of the Return Directive in Member States will be carried out in 2013. The Commission will ask the contractor who will carry out this study to pay specific attention to the practical situation in detention centres, including the Lamezia Terme identification and expulsion centre referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008854/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Finanziamenti europei diretti a favore dell'Italia

Circa il 22 % dei contributi finanziari europei viene gestito a livello centrale, cioè direttamente dalla Commissione europea o dalle agenzie esecutive. I fondi diretti sono un altro mezzo con cui l'UE distribuisce risorse finanziarie agli Stati membri per la realizzazione di progetti innovativi che contribuiscano allo sviluppo europeo.

Per quanto riguarda la totalità dei fondi diretti che gestisce centralmente, si chiede alla Commissione di fornire le seguenti informazioni:

— quanti progetti con partner italiani sono stati ritenuti idonei a ricevere un finanziamento nel periodo 2007-2013? Può la Commissione fornire questo dato scorporandolo su base regionale?

— Quali sono i programmi diretti per i quali i progetti con partner italiani hanno ottenuto il maggior numero di finanziamenti?

— Qual è la somma totale, in euro, versata dalla Commissione europea o dalle agenzie esecutive a favore di progetti con partner italiani ritenuti idonei a ricevere finanziamenti europei nel periodo 2007-2013? Può fornire, anche in questo caso, un dato scorporato su base regionale?

— Rispetto agli altri Stati membri, come si colloca l'Italia nell'utilizzo dei fondi diretti nel periodo 2007-2013, tanto nella partecipazione ai bandi quanto nell'assegnazione dei finanziamenti?

Risposta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(26 novembre 2012)

La Commissione rimanda l'on. parlamentare alle seguenti fonti:

— l'allegato 2c «Expenditure and revenue by Member State 2011» (Spese e entrate per Stato membro nel 2011) della relazione finanziaria sul bilancio 2011 dell'UE ([1]), per i dati sulla spesa dell'UE in ciascuno Stato membro nell'ambito delle diverse rubriche di bilancio;

— il sistema di trasparenza finanziaria ([2]), per informazioni sulle sovvenzioni assegnate dalla Commissione a singoli beneficiari.

Tranne che per la politica regionale, non sono facilmente disponibili dati scorporati relativi alla spesa per progetto e per regione. La preparazione della serie completa dei dati richiesti comporterebbe un lavoro di ricerca lungo e oneroso. La Commissione è tuttavia pronta a rispondere a domande più mirate relative ad esempio a uno specifico programma dell'UE.

In termini generali, i fondi gestiti direttamente dalla Commissione non vengono assegnati ai singoli Stati membri nello stesso modo dei fondi nell'ambito della gestione concorrente. Infatti, questi ultimi vengono assegnati ai progetti risultati migliori in esito a inviti competitivi a presentare proposte. L'allegato 3 della summenzionata relazione «Operating budgetary balances, 2000-11» (Saldi finanziari operativi 2000-11) riporta i dati relativi alla spesa del bilancio 2011 scorporati per Stato membro e per rubrica del quadro finanziario pluriennale e consente di vedere come l'Italia si rapporta agli altri Stati membri.

([1]) Pubblicamente disponibile al seguente indirizzo internet: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/publications/2011/fin_report/fin_report_11_en.pdf

([2]) Pubblicamente disponibile al seguente indirizzo internet: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008854/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Direct EU financing allocated to Italy

Around 22% of all European tax contributions are managed centrally — or in other words directly by the Commission or its executive agencies. Direct financing is just one way in which the EU allocates financial resources to Member States for innovative projects that contribute to European development.

Can the Commission supply the following information in respect of the overall financing it manages centrally:

— How many projects involving Italian partners were considered eligible for financing in the period 2007-2013? Can the Commission give a region-by-region breakdown for this?

— Under which direct financing programmes did projects involving Italian partners receive the most financing?

— What was the total amount, in euros, disbursed by the Commission or its executive agencies for projects involving Italian partners considered eligible for EU financing in the period 2007-2013? Can the Commission give a region-by-region breakdown for this also?

— How does Italy compare with other Member States in terms of the take-up of direct financing for the period 2007-2013, both with respect to participation in invitations to tender, and with respect to the actual allocation of financing?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to:

— Annex Ac 'Expenditure and revenue by Member State 2011' to the Financial Report on the EU budget 2011 ([1]) for information on EU spending under different budgetary headings in each Member State, and

— Financial Transparency System ([2]) for information on grants awarded by the Commission to individual beneficiaries.

Apart from cohesion policy, there is no easily available breakdown of expenditure by project and region. Preparing a full set of requested data would entail a lengthy and costly research. However, the Commission would be willing to answer more focused questions relating for instance to a specific EU programme.

Broadly speaking, funds directly managed by the Commission are not allocated to individual Member States in the way funds under shared management are. Instead, the Commission awards them to the best projects selected through competitive calls for proposals. Annex A in the abovementioned report, 'Operating budgetary balances, 2000-11', provides a breakdown of expenditure by Member States and by heading of the multiannual financial framework for the budget 2011 and allows to see how Italy compares with other Member States.

([1]) Publically available at: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/publications/2011/fin_report/fin_report_11_en.pdf
([2]) Publically available at: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008856/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(2 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Prazo médio de pagamentos das empresas públicas e privadas

Considerando que:

— Portugal atravessa uma situação económica e financeira extremamente difícil que é agravada pela dificuldade das empresas públicas ou privadas pagarem a tempo aos seus fornecedores. O mesmo sucede com autarquias ou instituições sociais, acabando assim por agravar a situação financeira de muitas pequenas e médias empresas que se deparam com uma falta de liquidez crónica;

— Segundo o jornal Público, «Os prazos de pagamento do Sector Empresarial do Estado (SEE) voltaram a derrapar no primeiro semestre deste ano. No final de junho, as empresas públicas e os hospitais EPE estavam a saldar dívidas aos fornecedores com uma média de 189 dias de atraso, mais 40 % do que no mesmo período de 2011»;

— No entanto, o caso mais grave ocorre no Centro Hospitalar de Setúbal onde o prazo médio de pagamento é de 679 dias. No que diz respeito às empresas públicas, o Metro de Lisboa demora 165 dias a pagar aos seus fornecedores, enquanto o Porto de Lisboa apenas demora menos um dia;

— Caso os pagamentos sejam efectuados num tempo médio aceitável de 30 dias, as pequenas e médias empresas terão maior sustentabilidade financeira e poderão salvaguardar-se de outros serviços que demoram a cobrar.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento do prazo médio de pagamentos do Sector Empresarial do Estado dos vários países da União Europeia?

2. Quais as medidas que podem ser adoptadas pelos Estados-Membros com vista a diminuírem este prazo de pagamentos?

3. Está a Comissão a preparar algum manual de boas práticas relativamente a este assunto?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(28 de novembro de 2012)

A Comissão está plenamente consciente dos problemas causados pelos atrasos de pagamento que enfrentam os operadores económicos, especialmente as pequenas e médias empresas (PME), a que o Senhor Deputado se refere. Apesar da transposição correcta da Directiva 2000/35/CE que estabelece medidas de luta contra os atrasos de pagamento nas transacções comerciais, os atrasos de pagamento continuam, infelizmente, a constituir uma prática comum em toda a Europa. Este é o caso, em particular, das autoridades públicas e afecta principalmente os Estados-Membros do Sul.

De acordo com as informações disponíveis ([1]), ao nível da UE, o prazo médio de pagamento de uma factura em transacções comerciais entre autoridades públicas e empresas é de 65 dias. Entre empresas, a média é de 52 dias. Porém, a situação varia bastante de país para país.

Para resolver este fenómeno, a Comissão apresentou uma proposta de reformulação da Directiva 2000/35/CE. A nova Directiva 2011/7/UE foi adoptada pelo Conselho e pelo Parlamento em fevereiro de 2011 e deve ser transposta pelos Estados-Membros no máximo até 16 de março de 2013.

As novas regras mais rigorosas da Directiva 2011/7/UE (isto é, a harmonização do período de pagamento para as autoridades públicas) devem motivar as autoridades públicas a melhorar os seus sistemas de gestão.

Os Estados-Membros estão actualmente a trabalhar na transposição da directiva para a sua legislação nacional. Nesta fase ainda é demasiado cedo para avaliar o impacto da sua aplicação.

A Comissão acompanhará a transposição e a aplicação da directiva nos Estados-Membros e, consoante o seu desenvolvimento, irá considerar a necessidade ou a utilidade de mais acções para abordar a questão.

([1]) http://www.intrum.com/Press-and-publications/European-Payment-Index/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008856/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(2 October 2012)

Subject: Average payment delays by public and private companies

Portugal is in the midst of an extremely difficult economic and financial situation which is made worse by the fact that public and private businesses are finding it hard to pay their suppliers on time. Local authorities and social institutions find themselves in the same situation. This has exacerbated the financial problems facing many small and medium-sized enterprises, as they must deal with a chronic shortage of cash-flow.

According to the newspaper *Publico*, 'payment delays by the State enterprise sector surged again in the first half of this year. By the end of June, state enterprises and public sector hospitals were settling suppliers' invoices with an average delay of 189 days, a 40% increase on the same period in 2011'.

The most serious case is that of Setúbal Hospital, where the average delay in payment is 679 days. As far as public enterprises are concerned, Lisbon Metro takes 165 days to pay its suppliers, whereas the Porto Port Authority does so within 24 hours.

If payments could be made within an acceptable 30-day period, small and medium-scale enterprises could become more financially sustainable and be better able to protect their own position vis-à-vis other services and payments.

1. Does the Commission know what the average invoice settlement time is in the State business sector of the different EU countries?

2. What measures can be adopted by the Member States to cut this delay in payment?

3. Is the Commission preparing a guide to best practices with which to address this issue?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 November 2012)

The Commission is very much aware of the problems caused by late payments that face economic operators, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to which the Honourable Member refers. Despite the correct transposition of Directive 2000/35/EC on combating late payment in commercial transactions, late payment is unfortunately still a common practice across Europe. In particular this is the case for public authorities and mainly affects southern Member States.

According to the information available ([1]), at EU level the average amount of days for payment of an invoice in commercial transactions between public authorities and businesses is 65. Between businesses the average amounts to 52 days. However, the situation varies heavily from country to country.

In order to tackle this phenomenon, the Commission made a proposal for the recast of Directive 2000/35/EC. The new Directive 2011/7/EU was adopted by the Council and the Parliament in February 2011 and has to be transposed by Member States by 16 March 2013 at the latest.

The new more stringent rules of Directive 2011/7/EU (i.e. harmonisation of payment period for public authorities) should motivate public authorities to upgrade their management systems.

The Member States are now working on the transposition of the directive into their national law. At this stage it is too early to assess the impact of its implementation.

The Commission will monitor the transposition and implementation of the directive in the Member States and, depending on the development, will consider whether any further actions will be necessary or useful to address the issue.

([1]) http://www.intrum.com/Press-and-publications/European-Payment-Index/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008857/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Dichiarazioni del Presidente egiziano

Omar Abdel Rahman è il leader spirituale del movimento Gama'a al-Islamiyya. Tale movimento è riconosciuto come terrorista dal regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 542/2012 del Consiglio, del 25 giugno 2012, che attua l'articolo 2, paragrafo 3, del regolamento (CE) n. 2580/2001, relativo a misure restrittive specifiche, contro determinate persone e entità, destinate a combattere il terrorismo.

Il movimento è ritenuto responsabile di centinaia di morti mietuti nella campagna terroristica che ha imperversato in Egitto per tutti gli anni Novanta, tra cui il massacro di 56 turisti nella Valle dei Re nel 1997.

Omar Abdel Rahman è attualmente detenuto in un carcere degli Stati Uniti d'America, dove è stato condannato all'ergastolo come organizzatore degli attentati del 1993 al World Trade Center.

Il 29 giugno 2012 Muhammad Morsi, attuale Presidente dell'Egitto, ha dichiarato pubblicamente che farà il possibile affinché Omar Abdel Rahman venga liberato.

1. Può la Commissione far sapere come valuta la presa di posizione del Presidente egiziano nei confronti di Omar Abdel Rahman, riconosciuto terrorista e leader spirituale di un altrettanto noto gruppo terroristico?

2. Ritiene che con essa il nuovo Presidente egiziano violi gli impegni internazionali assunti dell'Egitto in materia di terrorismo, inclusi quelli contratti con l'UE all'articolo 59 dell'Accordo di associazione?

3. In che modo ritiene che questi sviluppi influiranno sulle future relazioni tra l'UE e l'Egitto?

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

In un discorso davanti ai suoi sostenitori, Mohamed Morsi ha fatto brevemente riferimento alla sua intenzione di adoperarsi per liberare lo sceicco Omar Abdel-Rahman e i numerosi altri egiziani arrestati durante la rivoluzione. Successivamente, a margine dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite, il presidente Morsi ha precisato che la sua dichiarazione era stata dettata esclusivamente da motivi umanitari e che non era sua intenzione interferire con una sentenza del tribunale né tantomeno rovesciare le condanne a carico di Abdel Rahman. Il presidente si riferiva infatti alla possibilità di riavvicinare Abdel Rahman alla sua famiglia permettendogli di scontare la pena in Egitto, nell'ambito di uno scambio di prigionieri con gli Stati Uniti. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente non ritiene pertanto che tale richiesta violi gli impegni dell'Egitto in materia di lotta al terrorismo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008857/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Statements by the Egyptian President

Omar Abdel Rahman is the spiritual leader of the movement al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya. This movement has been recognised as a terrorist movement by Implementing Regulation (EU) No 542/2012 of the Council of 25 June 2012 implementing Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001 on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism.

The movement is held responsible for hundreds of deaths in the terror campaign that raged in Egypt throughout the Nineties, including the massacre of 56 tourists in the Valley of the Kings in 1997.

Omar Abdel Rahman is currently being held in a prison in the United States of America, where he has been sentenced to life imprisonment as an organiser of the 1993 attacks on the World Trade Center.

On 29 June 2012, Muhammad Morsi, current President of Egypt, publicly stated that he would do his utmost to ensure that Omar Abdel Rahman was released.

1. Can the Commission give its view of the stance taken by the Egyptian President with regard to Omar Abdel Rahman, a recognised terrorist and spiritual leader of an equally notorious terrorist group?

2. Does it not consider that in issuing this statement the new Egyptian President is violating the international commitments made by Egypt in relation to terrorism, including those agreed with the EU under Article 59 of the Association Agreement?

3. How does it think these developments will affect future relations between the EU and Egypt?

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

In a speech to supporters, Mohamed Morsi briefly mentioned that he would work to free Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman along with the countless other Egyptians who were arrested during the revolution. Later on, in the margins of the UN General Assembly, President Morsi explained that his call was solely motivated by humanitarian reasons and that he was not seeking to interfere with a court ruling and trying to overturn Mr Abdel Rahman's criminal convictions. The President said that his intention was to allow the Sheikh to serve his sentence in Egypt as part of a prisoner swap with the United States in order to bring him closer to his family. Accordingly, the HR/VP does not consider that this request violates Egypt's commitments with respect to the fight against terrorism.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008858/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(3. oktober 2012)

Om: Håndtering af BSE (bovin spongiform encephalopati)

Risikoen for BSE, også kendt som kogalskab, anses på grund af effektiv overvågning og kontrol i dag for at være ubetydelig i Belgien, Danmark, Finland, Sverige og Østrig. Et antal ikke-EU-lande, herunder store oksekødsproducenter som Brasilien og Argentina, anerkendes også som lande med ubetydelig BSE-risiko af Verdensorganisationen for Dyresundhed (OIE).

Ifølge Lis Alban, chefforsker inden for risikoanalyse og epidemiologi ved Landbrug & Fødevarer samt professor ved Københavns Universitet, er der ingen grund til at operere med SRM (specificeret risikomateriale) i lande med ubetydelig BSE-risiko ([1]).

I henhold til den gældende EU-forordning gælder SRM-reglerne imidlertid stadig for EU-medlemsstater med ubetydelig BSE-risiko. Ifølge bilag V til forordning (EF) nr. 999/2001 skal SRM-væv, som stammer fra en medlemsstat med ubetydelig BSE-risiko stadig klassificeres som SRM. Dette er overraskende nok kun tilfældet for EU's medlemsstater. Tredjelande med samme status, såsom Brasilien, kan frit producere og eksportere eksempelvis oksetarme til EU's marked, forudsat at andre EU-krav til import af tarme også opfyldes (f.eks. at tarme skal fremstilles af EU-godkendte virksomheder).

1. Kan Kommissionen set i lyset heraf bekræfte sit svar på forespørgsel E-004360/2012: »Fjernelsen af SRM gælder derfor også for alle former for importeret oksekød«?

2. Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at tredjelande i kraft af den nuværende EU-lovgivning kan drage fordel af deres status som lande med ubetydelig BSE-risiko (og endog eksportere produkter som f.eks. tarme, som ville blive betragtet som SRM, hvis de var blevet fremstillet i en EU-medlemsstat, til EU), hvorimod EU-medlemsstater med samme status vil være nødt til at destruere spiselige dele af slagtede dyr med betydelige omkostninger til følge?

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008859/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(3. oktober 2012)

Om: Revisionsklausul for TSE-køreplan 2

Kommissionen har udsat evalueringen af definitionen og håndteringen af specificeret risikomateriale (SRM) for medlemsstater med en ubetydelig BSE-risiko. Kommissionen fastslog i TSE-køreplan 2 fra juli 2010 imidlertid, at medlemsstater, hvis BSE-risiko er ubetydelig i henhold til OIE's kodeks for øjeblikket er forpligtet til at fjerne SRM fra fødevare- og foderkæden, men at dette kunne tages op til fornyet overvejelse, hvis et stigende antal medlemsstater opnår den status for ubetydelig BSE-risiko, hvor der ikke er udarbejdet nogen SRM-liste ([2]).

1. Har Kommissionen derfor til hensigt at træffe foranstaltninger, der kan sikre, at EU's industri i medlemsstater med ubetydelig BSE-risko i det mindste kan konkurrere på lige fod med tredjelande med samme BSE-status, eksempelvis ved at revidere definitionen og håndteringen af SRM for medlemsstater med denne status?

2. Såfremt Kommissionen ikke har til hensigt at iværksætte en sådan revision, kan den da meddele, hvor mange medlemsstater, der yderligere skal opnå denne status, inden den har til hensigt at reagere? I juli 2010 var det kun Finland og Sverige, som havde ubetydelig BSE-risiko. Siden juli 2010 har yderligere tre medlemsstater opnået denne status: Belgien, Danmark og Østrig.

3. I en periode med økonomisk krise, hvor EU's kvægsektor også står over for alvorlige vanskeligheder, er det yderst vigtigt, at branchen i det mindste opererer på lige fod med konkurrenter fra tredjelande. Er Kommissionen enig i, at den nuværende EU-lovgivning ser ud til at være konkurrenceforvridende, eftersom den tilgodeser producenter fra tredjelande på bekostning af producenter, der opererer i EU?

([1]) http://www.lf.dk/Aktuelt/Publikationer/Oksekod.aspx
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/tse_bse/docs/roadmap_2_en.pdf

Samlet svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Maroš Šefčovič
(15. november 2012)

Inden for EU er Belgien, Danmark, Finland, Sverige og Østrig officielt klassificeret som lande med en ubetydelig BSE-risiko, mens de øvrige medlemsstater har en kontrolleret BSE-risiko. For at sikre et velfungerende indre marked og strømline gennemførelsen af offentlig kontrol af medlemsstaterne i denne uensartede forbindelse er EU-reglerne om bortskaffelse af specificeret risikomateriale (SRM) fuldt harmoniserede. De medlemsstater, der er klassificeret som lande med en ubetydelig BSE-risiko, skal derfor stadig bortskaffe og destruere af SRM på deres eget område og må ikke eksportere SRM til tredjelande.

Når der er tale om import fra tredjelande, som har tilladelse til at eksportere kødprodukter til EU, gælder tilbagetrækning af SRM for lande med en kontrolleret BSE-risiko og med en ikke-fastsat BSE-risiko, men ikke for lande med en ubetydelig BSE-risiko i overensstemmelse med den internationale standard, der er fastsat i de terrestriske dyrs sundhedskodeks fra Verdensorganisationen for Dyresundhed (OIE).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008858/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Management of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy)

As a result of effective monitoring and control, the risk of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), also known as mad-cow disease, is today considered negligible in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden. A number of non-EU countries, including major beef producers such as Brazil and Argentina, have also been recognised as having 'negligible BSE risk' status by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

According to Lis Alban, chief researcher in risk assessment and epidemiology at the Danish Agriculture & Food Council and professor at the University of Copenhagen, 'there is no reason to operate with SRM [Specified Risk Material] in countries with the status of negligible BSE risk' ([1]).

However, according to the current EU regulation, SRM rules still apply to EU Member States with negligible risk of BSE. According to Annex V to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, SRM tissues which originate from a Member State with a negligible BSE risk remain classified as Specified Risk Material. Surprisingly, this is only the case for EU Member States. Third countries with the same status, such as Brazil, are freely able to produce and export, for example, beef casings for the EU market, providing that other EU requirements for casings imports are also met (e.g. the casings must be produced in EU-approved establishments).

1. In light of this, is the Commission able to confirm its reply to Question E-004360/2012: 'The removal of SRM therefore applies also to any imported beef'?

2. Is the Commission able to confirm that, as a result of current EU legislation, third countries can profit from their status as 'BSE-negligible risk countries' (and even export products such as casings to the EU that would have been considered SRM if produced in any EU Member State), whereas EU Member States with the same status still have to destroy edible parts of slaughtered animals at considerable cost?

Question for written answer E-008859/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Review clause for 'TSE roadmap 2'

The Commission has put on hold the evaluation of the definition and handling of specified risk material (SRM) for Member States with a negligible BSE risk status. However, in the 'TSE Roadmap 2' of July 2010, the Commission stated that 'Member States benefiting from a negligible risk status according to the OIE Code to remove SRM from the food and feed chain could be reviewed if an increasing number of Member States reaches the negligible status for which no SRM list has been established' ([2]).

1. Does the Commission therefore intend to take measures to ensure that EU industry in those Member States with a negligible BSE risk status is able to compete at least on an equal footing with third countries with the same BSE status, for instance by reviewing the definition and handling of SRM for Member States with this status?

2. If the Commission does not intend to launch such a review, can it state how many additional Member States must achieve this status before it intends to act? In July 2010 only Finland and Sweden had the status of negligible risk. Since July 2010 an additional three Member States have achieved this status: Austria, Belgium and Denmark.

3. In a time of economic crisis in which the EU cattle sector is also facing severe difficulties, it is very important that the industry is at least on an equal footing with third-country competitors. Does the Commission agree that current EU legislation seems to distort competition, since it favours third-country producers at the expense of those operating in the EU?

([1]) http://www.lf.dk/Aktuelt/Publikationer/Oksekod.aspx
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/tse_bse/docs/roadmap_2_en.pdf

Joint answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2012)

In the EU, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden are officially classified as negligible BSE risk countries, the other Member States are controlled BSE risk. In order to allow the functioning of the internal market and to streamline the implementation of official controls by Member States in this heterogeneous context, the Union rules regarding the removal of specific risk material (SRM) are fully harmonised. Consequently, Member States classified as negligible BSE risk countries are still required to continue to remove and destroy SRM on their own territory and cannot export SRM to third countries.

When it comes to imports from third countries authorised to export meat products to the Union, in accordance with the international standard laid down in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the withdrawal of SRM does apply to the countries with a controlled BSE risk and with an undetermined BSE risk, but not to the countries with a negligible BSE risk.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008860/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(3 oktober 2012)

Betreft: Kopen van een EU-paspoort

In het artikel „How to buy EU citizenship" van 2 oktober 2012, uit de "State of the union", een nieuwsbrief van ALDE, wordt beschreven hoe valse Roemeense paspoorten worden gekocht in Moldavië. Ik citeer officier van justitie Marian Gherman: „Everybody knows it" „They ask for Romanian citizenship only because it gives them freedom to travel and work within the EU". De prijs van een Roemeens paspoort varieert van EUR 700 tot EUR 1500, afhankelijk van de snelheid waarin een aanvraag wordt behandeld. Opmerkelijk is dat het artikel is geschreven met steun van het Europees Fonds voor Onderzoeksjournalistiek ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de in het artikel beschreven illegale immigratie uit Moldavië?

2. Op 28 maart 2012 heb ik de Commissie vragen gesteld over illegale immigratie van Turkije naar Griekenland (E-001507/2012). De Commissie heeft daarbij als antwoord gegeven dat zij een allesomvattende strategie heeft geformuleerd om de illegale immigratiestroom aan te pakken. Omvat deze allesomvattende strategie ook de illegale immigratie van Moldavië naar Roemenië?

3. Zo neen, waarom niet? Een allesomvattend strategie betreft immers alle illegale immigranten. Zo neen, ontwikkelt de commissie nu ook een strategie tegen de illegale immigratie van Moldaviërs?

4. Zo ja, Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat bovengenoemd artikel aangeeft dat de allesomvattende strategie niet blijkt te werken?

5. Welke maatregelen neemt de Commissie om de hierboven beschreven illegale immigratie uit Moldavië een halt toe te roepen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(22 november 2012)

De Commissie behandelt onregelmatige migratie met Moldavië in verschillende kaders, zoals de visumdialoog, het partnerschap voor mobiliteit tussen de EU en Moldavië, het Gemengd Comité Visumversoepeling en het Gemengd Comité Overname.

In het kader van de visumdialoog werd in januari 2011 een actieplan voor visumliberalisering voorgesteld aan de autoriteiten van Moldavië met benchmarks op verschillende vlakken inzake binnenlandse zaken en justitie, waaronder documentbeveiliging, grensbeheer, onregelmatige migratie en overname, alsook corruptiebestrijding. Drie verslagen inzake de uitvoering zijn in september 2011, februari 2012 en juni 2012 voorgelegd aan het Europees Parlement en de Raad. Het derde verslag van de Commissie werd aangenomen op 22 juni 2012 en concludeerde dat de benchmarks van de eerste fase (het wetgevings- en beleidskader) van het actieplan voor visumliberalisering waren bereikt ([2]). De Commissie nam op 3 augustus 2012 ook een verslag aan het Europees Parlement en de Raad aan over de mogelijke effecten van toekomstige visumliberalisering voor de republiek Moldavië ([3]) op de Europese Unie inzake migratie en veiligheid. Dit verslag behandelde gedetailleerd de mogelijke gevolgen van migratie, met inbegrip van onregelmatige migratie en gaf aan welke maatregelen door de republiek Moldavië, de EU dienden te worden overwogen.

Wat betreft de algemene strategie nam de Raad op 26 april 2012 het „EU-optreden inzake de migratiedruk — een strategische reactie" aan, een routekaart die concrete activiteiten bevat om migratiedruk op EU-niveau tegen te gaan en om onregelmatige migratie te bestrijden.

([1]) www.jounalismfund.eu
([2]) Zie COM(2012) 348 final. Voor documentbeveiliging, zie blok 1, pagina 3, voor grensbeheer, zie blok 2, thema 1, pagina 4-6, voor migratie en overname, zie blok 2, thema 2, pagina 6-8 en voor corruptiebestrijding, zie blok 3, thema 1, pagina 12-15.
([3]) Zie COM(2012) 443 final. Voor kwesties inzake overname, zie pagina 5-6, voor kwesties inzake mogelijke gevolgen voor migratie, met inbegrip van documentbeveiliging, grensbeheer, onregelmatige migratie, alsook corruptiebestrijding, zie pagina 6-15.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008860/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Buying an EU passport

The article 'How to buy EU citizenship' published on 2 October 2012 in the 'State of the union', an ALDE newsletter, describes how false Romanian passports are being sold in Moldova. To quote Public Prosecutor Marian Gherman, 'Everybody knows it'. 'They ask for Romanian citizenship only because it gives them freedom to travel and work within the EU'. The price of a Romanian passport ranges from EUR 700 to EUR 1 500, depending how fast a request is handled. It is worth noting that the article was written with the support of the European Fund for Investigative Journalism ([1]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the illegal immigration from Moldova which is described in the article?

2. On 28 March 2012, I put questions to the Commission concerning illegal immigration from Turkey to Greece (E-001507/2012). The Commission answered that it had formulated a comprehensive strategy for combating illegal immigration. Does this comprehensive strategy also deal with illegal immigration from Moldova into Romania?

3. If not, why not? A comprehensive strategy must by its nature cover all illegal immigrants. If not, will the Commission now also devise a strategy against illegal immigration by Moldovans?

4. If so, does the Commission agree that the abovementioned article shows that the comprehensive strategy is not working?

5. What measures will the Commission take to put a stop to the illegal immigration from Moldova described above?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2012)

The Commission addresses irregular migration with Moldova in various frameworks, such as the visa dialogue, the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership, the Joint Visa Facilitation Committee and the Joint Readmission Committee.

In the context of the visa dialogue, an Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation was presented to the Moldovan authorities in January 2011, containing benchmarks in many home affairs and justice areas, including document security, border management, irregular migration and readmission as well as the fight against corruption. Three reports on its implementation were presented to the European Parliament and to the Council, in September 2011, February 2012 and June 2012. The Commission's Third Report adopted on 22 June 2012 concluded that the benchmarks of the first phase (legislative and policy framework) of the action plan on Visa Liberalisation were met ([2]). The Commission also adopted on 3 August 2012 a Report to the European Parliament and to the Council on possible migratory and security impacts on the European Union of future visa liberalisation for the Republic of Moldova ([3]). This Report addressed in detail possible migratory impacts, including irregular migration, and identified several measures to be considered by the Republic of Moldova, by the EU and its Member States.

Regarding the comprehensive strategy, on 26 April 2012 the Council adopted the 'EU Action on Migratory Pressures — A strategic Response', a Roadmap containing concrete activities to combat migratory pressure at EU level and fight against irregular migration.

([1]) www.jounalismfund.eu

([2]) See COM(2012) 348 final. For document security see Block 1 page 3, for border management see Block 2 topic 1 pages 4-6, for migration and readmission see Block 2 topic 2 pages 6-8 and for fight against corruption see Block 3 topic 1 pages 12-15.

([3]) See COM(2012) 443 final. For readmission issues see pages 5-6, for possible migratory impacts, including document security, border management, irregular migration as well as fight against corruption issues see pages 6-15.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008861/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Jihâd in Siria

Il 28 settembre 2012 il quotidiano britannico *The Times* ha riportato la notizia dell'arrivo di uomini dal Golfo Persico e dal Caucaso in città della Siria, fra cui Aleppo, per combattere una jihâd o guerra santa. Secondo The Times, il conflitto sta assumendo sempre più una connotazione islamica tra gli oppositori del regime. Elementi jihadisti provenienti da altri paesi si stanno unendo a gruppi come Jabhat al-Nusra, considerato il ramo siriano di Al-Qaida. L'organizzazione ha impegnato centinaia di militanti ad Aleppo.

L'Esercito siriano libero dispone attualmente di un consiglio formato da 15 anziani di religione sunnita, che consigliano i membri al comando su tematiche quali questioni operative, la distribuzione delle armi e il trattamento dei prigionieri. L'esercito possiede anche un proprio tribunale shariatico che ha il compito di verificare il rispetto dei principi islamici. I lealisti di Assad, conosciuti come shabiha, possono essere giustiziati se giudicati colpevoli di stupro o di omicidio. La tendenza islamica si sta rafforzando e anche il precedente capo del Consiglio nazionale siriano, Burhan Ghalioun, afferma che si profila un fenomeno di «jihâd internazionale» a Damasco e nella Siria settentrionale. Inoltre, il 1º ottobre 2012 la rivista *Foreign Policy* ha riferito che nel 2008 sia il generale David Patraeus sia il generale Stanley McChrystal avevano avvertito il presidente Assad del rischio a cui il suo paese era esposto a causa dei militanti di Al-Qaida provenienti dall'Iraq. Nel 2007 Abu Amar al-Baghadi, un leader iracheno di Al-Quaida, aveva addirittura definito la Siria come un «regime apostata». Attualmente, alcuni funzionari negli Stati Uniti e in Iraq ritengono che una cellula irachena di Al-Qaida sia attiva in Siria.

1. Alla luce delle relazioni secondo le quali la Siria sta diventando un punto d'incontro per jihadisti e militanti di Al-Qaida provenienti da altri paesi, prevede la Vicepresidente/Alto rappresentante di discutere la questione con il Segretario generale delle Nazioni Unite Ban Ki-moon e con il Segretario di Stato USA Hillary Clinton?

2. Come valuta la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante l'estensione del movimento jihadista e di Al-Qaida dall'Iraq? Era al corrente dei moniti lanciati cinque anni fa relativi ai piani di Al-Qaida di incrementare le operazioni jihadiste all'interno della Siria?

3. Intende la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante contattare i funzionari di Stati Uniti e Iraq per valutare la natura delle cellule irachene di Al-Qaida all'interno della Siria?

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

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza della presenza di gruppi salafiti e jihadisti in Siria. Attualmente, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente mantiene regolari contatti in merito alla Siria con i principali partner internazionali, compresi il Segretario generale delle Nazioni Unite Ban Ki Moon e il Segretario di Stato USA Hillary Clinton, per valutare la natura, l'impatto e i rischi della presenza di elementi jihadisti nel paese, inclusa l'eventuale presenza di cellule irachene di Al Qaeda.

L'intensificarsi delle violenze e la recente serie di attentati terroristici dimostrano quanto sia necessaria una transizione politica che risponda alle aspirazioni democratiche del popolo siriano e porti stabilità nel paese. A questo proposito, l'Unione europea invita tutte le parti ad adoperarsi per trovare una soluzione politica al conflitto e mette in guardia contro un'ulteriore militarizzazione e radicalizzazione del conflitto e contro la violenza settaria, che possono soltanto procurare altre sofferenze in Siria e rischiano di avere ripercussioni catastrofiche sulla regione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008861/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Jihad in Syria

On 28 September 2012, the UK's The Times reported that men from the Persian Gulf and the Caucasus were coming to Syrian towns, including Aleppo, to fight a jihad, or holy war. According to *The Times*, the conflict is becoming increasingly Islamicised among anti-regime fighters. Foreign Jihadist elements are linking up with groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra, which is alleged to be the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda. The organisation has hundreds of fighters deployed in Aleppo.

The Free Syrian Army now has a council of 15 Sunni religious elders, who advise its leadership on issues such as operational matters, distribution of weapons and the treatment of prisoners. It even has its own sharia court to ascertain compliance with Islamic principles. Assad loyalists known as *shabiha* can be executed if found guilty of rape or murder. The Islamist trend is growing, and even the former head of the Syrian National Council, Burhan Ghalioun, says that an 'international jihadist' phenomenon is emerging in Damascus and northern Syria. Furthermore, on 1 October 2012 Foreign Policy magazine reported that in 2008 both General David Petraeus and General Stanley McChrystal warned President Assad about the risk his country faced at the hands of al-Qaeda operatives from Iraq. In 2007, an al-Qaeda leader in Iraq named Abu Amar al-Baghdadi had even singled out Syria as an 'apostate regime'. Now, officials in the US and in Iraq believe that al-Qaeda's Iraq franchise is active in Syria.

1. In view of the reports that Syria is becoming a haven for foreign jihadists and al-Qaeda operatives, does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to discuss this issue with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton?

2. What is the assessment of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the spillover of jihadists and al-Qaeda from Iraq? Was the Vice-President/High Representative aware of warnings made five years ago that al-Qaeda had plans to foment Jihadist operations inside Syria?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to liaise with US and Iraqi officials in order to assess the nature of Iraq's al-Qaeda franchise inside Syria?

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

The EU is aware of the presence of salafists and jihadists groups in Syria. Currently, the HR/VP is in regular contact with key international partners on Syria, including UNSG Ban Ki Moon and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in order to assess the nature, impact and risks of the presence of Jihadist elements in Syria including a possible presence of al-Qaeda's Iraq franchise.

The intensification of violence and the recent series of terrorist attacks demonstrate the urgent need for a political transition that would meet the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people and bring stability to Syria. In this regard, the EU calls on all parties to work towards a political settlement to the conflict and is warning against further militarisation and radicalisation of the conflict and sectarian violence which can only bring further suffering to Syria and risks having a tragic impact in the region.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-008863/12
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(3 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Propuesta para eliminar las ayudas a las regiones en transición

En el pasado Consejo de Asuntos Generales celebrado el pasado 24 de septiembre, la Presidencia chipriota presentó una propuesta para el Marco Financiero Plurianual que concentra gran parte del esfuerzo de reducción del nivel de gasto propuesto por la Comisión en las partidas destinadas a la Política de Cohesión. Esto supondría eliminar la red de seguridad para todas las regiones que abandonan en el período 2014-2020 el objetivo de convergencia, con un mínimo de 2/3 de los fondos recibidos en el anterior Marco Financiero Plurianual 2007-2013.

La Presidencia Chipriota apuesta por un porcentaje degresivo con un intervalo a la baja, lo que va en contra de la propuesta inicial de la Comisión. ¿Qué opinión le merece la nueva propuesta? ¿No cree la Comisión que la nueva propuesta es inaceptable y pone, además, en peligro el nivel actual de competitividad de las regiones afectadas? ¿Considera oportuna la Comisión la propuesta de la Presidencia chipriota de reducir la prima por desempleo en las regiones en transición, atendiendo a los alarmantes índices de desempleo existentes en algunos Estados miembros como España?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de noviembre de 2012)

El 24 de septiembre de 2012, el Consejo de Asuntos Generales prosiguió su debate sobre el marco financiero plurianual (MFP) 2014-2020. La Comisión acoge con satisfacción los esfuerzos de la Presidencia chipriota para avanzar en ese debate a fin de llegar a un acuerdo sobre el próximo marco financiero plurianual en el Consejo Europeo de los días 22 y 23 de noviembre de 2012.

Por lo que se refiere al marco de negociación del MFP presentado por la Presidencia chipriota, cabe señalar que en él hay una serie de elementos que la Comisión acoge con satisfacción y apoya, pero hay otros que no puede aceptar, ya que son contrarios a la propuesta de MFP presentado por la Comisión. En particular, cualquier sugerencia de ajustar a la baja el nivel de gastos debe examinarse con gran cautela. Si fuera necesario, la Comisión seguirá defendiendo el nivel global del MFP que ha propuesto.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008863/12
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Proposal to remove aid for transition regions

At the most recent General Affairs Council, held on 24 September 2012, the Cyprus Presidency presented a draft multiannual financial framework that aimed to make savings chiefly by cutting Commission spending allocated to the Cohesion Policy . This would entail doing away with the safety net for all regions no longer eligible for aid under the convergence objective for 2014-2020, thus depriving them of at least two-thirds of such aid provided under the previous multiannual financial framework (2007-2013).

The Cyprus Presidency advocated a gradual reduction in the proportion of spending on such aid, which contradicted the Commission's original proposal. What view does the Commission take of the new proposal? Does the Commission not think that it is unacceptable and risks causing further harm to the affected regions' competitiveness? Does the Commission think the Cyprus Presidency's proposal to reduce unemployment benefit in the transition regions to be appropriate in view of the alarming rate of unemployment in some Member States such as Spain?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 November 2012)

On 24 September 2012 the General Affairs Council continued its discussion on the 2014-20 Mutltiannual Financial Framework (MFF). The Commission welcomes the efforts of the Cyprus Presidency to advance this discussion with a view to reach an agreement on the next MFF at the European Council on 22/23 November 2012.

With regard to the MFF negotiating box tabled by the Cyprus Presidency, there are a number of elements that the Commission welcomes and supports, but there are other elements that it cannot accept as they go against the MFF proposal that the Commission has tabled. In particular, any suggestion to adjust the level of expenditure downwards must be considered very cautiously. The Commission will continue to defend the overall level of the MFF that it has proposed as necessary.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-008864/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Reati d'opinione e pene detentive per chi esercita la professione di giornalista

La Corte di Cassazione italiana ha recentemente confermato la condanna a 14 mesi di reclusione, per diffamazione aggravata, nei confronti di Alessandro Sallusti, attuale direttore de «*il Giornale*», un quotidiano a diffusione nazionale.

La sentenza, pronunciata dalla Corte d'Appello di Milano il 17 giugno 2011, e che diede torto al giornalista, è stata, infatti, confermata dalla V Sezione Penale della Corte di Cassazione.

Alessandro Sallusti è stato, perciò, condannato in via definitiva alla pena detentiva di mesi 14 di reclusione, oltre al risarcimento di 4 500 euro alla controparte, e alle spese del giudizio.

È stato contestato al giornalista di aver pubblicato, nel giornale in cui all'epoca dei fatti era direttore responsabile («Libero»), due articoli relativi alla vicenda di una giovane tredicenne che, in stato di gravidanza, era stata costretta ad abortire. Il contenuto di questi articoli è stato ritenuto diffamatorio dal giudice che prese, su questo caso, una decisione molto contestata. Da qui nacque la vicenda giudiziaria a carico di Sallusti.

In democrazia manifestare un'opinione non dovrebbe essere considerato un crimine, bensì espressione di quella libertà di pensiero e di azione che solo le dittature non riconoscono.

Ed infatti, la legge che impone il processo penale e la pena della reclusione per la diffamazione a mezzo stampa è stata introdotta in Italia da un regime dittatoriale ed è ancora, incredibilmente, in vigore.

Inoltre, l'Italia è l'unico Paese occidentale in cui la diffamazione a mezzo stampa è giudicata con sanzioni di tipo penale, anziché secondo il diritto civile, impedendo, di fatto, l'esercizio di una libertà d'opinione piena e consapevole.

Ciò considerato, si intende chiedere alla Commissione in quali Stati membri, attualmente, sono previste sanzioni di tipo penale per i reati d'opinione; inoltre, se le pene detentive, previste in Italia per chi esercita la professione di giornalista, siano conformi con i principi inseriti nei Trattati e con la Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(16 novembre 2012)

La libertà di espressione, uno dei cardini delle società democratiche, è sancita dall'articolo 11 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'UE. A tal proposito, la libertà dei media e il loro pluralismo godono di particolare considerazione e sono menzionati in modo specifico all'articolo 11, paragrafo 1, della Carta. La Commissione si adopera per garantire che gli Stati membri rispettino pienamente questa libertà quando attuano il diritto dell'Unione.

La Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea si applica agli Stati membri esclusivamente nell'attuazione del diritto dell'Unione. Per quanto concerne la questione menzionata dall'onorevole parlamentare, lo Stato membro interessato non ha agito in fase di attuazione del diritto dell'Unione.

Laddove gli Stati membri agiscano al di fuori dell'attuazione del diritto dell'UE, spetta unicamente allo autorità nazionali garantire il rispetto dei propri obblighi in materia di diritti fondamentali derivanti da accordi internazionali e dalla legislazione nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-008864/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Crimes of opinion and imprisonment of journalists

The Italian Supreme Court has recently confirmed the sentence of 14 months' imprisonment for aggravated defamation, against Alessandro Sallusti, current editor of Il Giornale, a national daily newspaper.

The initial judgment, delivered by the Court of Appeal of Milan on 17 June 2011, which had ruled against the journalist, was, in fact, confirmed by the Fifth Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court.

Alessandro Sallusti was, therefore, definitively sentenced to 14 months' imprisonment, and was ordered to pay compensation of EUR 4 500 to the opposing party, in addition to legal costs.

The journalist was charged with having published — in the newspaper *Libero* of which he was editorial director at the time — two articles concerning the story of a thirteen-year-old pregnant girl who had been forced to have an abortion. The content of these articles was considered to be defamatory by the judge, who delivered a hotly contested judgment, giving rise to the court case against Sallusti.

In a democracy, expressing an opinion should not be considered a crime, but rather an expression of the freedom of thought and action that only dictatorships do not recognise.

Indeed, the law that imposes criminal prosecution and a prison sentence for libel by a newspaper article was introduced by a dictatorial regime in Italy. That law is still, incredibly, in force.

Moreover, Italy is the only Western country in which libel by a newspaper article is punished as a criminal offence, rather than under civil law. This, in actual fact, prevents a full and aware freedom of opinion from being exercised.

That being the case, can the Commission say which Member States currently provide for criminal penalties for crimes of opinion? Can it also say whether the sentence of imprisonment provided for in Italy for journalists complies with the principles enshrined in the Treaties and with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(16 November 2012)

The freedom of expression constitutes one of the essential foundations of democratic societies, enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. The freedom of the press and the pluralism of the media hold a special place in this respect and are specifically mentioned in Article 11(2) of the Charter. The Commission is committed to ensure that this freedom is fully respected by Member States when they implement Union law.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union only applies to Member States when they are implementing Union law. In the matter referred to by the Honourable Member, the Member State concerned did not act in the course of implementation of Union law.

Where Member States act outside the implementation of Union law, it is for the national authorities to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from internal legislation — are respected.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008865/12
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE) e Marco Scurria (PPE)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Problemi occupazionali tra gli ex-atleti e sostegno alla «dual career» (dopo carriera)

Una ricerca effettuata recentemente in Italia ha dimostrato che su 3 mila calciatori italiani a fine carriera, oltre il 60 % non riesce a trovare un nuovo impiego: ciò dipenderebbe in gran parte da una scarsa preparazione culturale e scolastica.

Secondo la ricerca il 50,2 % dei calciatori della stagione '88-'89 ha conseguito solo la licenza media; il 45,6 % una maturità; il 3 % ha frequentato l'Isef e solamente 1,1 % si è laureato. E negli ultimi anni la situazione è solo parzialmente migliorata. Tra i problemi che molti ex calciatori si trovano ad affrontare vi sarebbero la mancanza di soldi dovuta ad una cattiva amministrazione del proprio patrimonio, la depressione postritiro e la mancanza di opportunità per «riciclarsi» in una nuova dimensione professionale.

Se si guarda in particolare alla terza divisione, meno pagata e prestigiosa delle Serie A e B, emergono altri dati impressionanti: il 25 % dei calciatori dopo un anno dal ritiro finisce in bancarotta; il 50 % dei divorzi di ex giocatori professionisti avviene proprio nell'anno del ritiro; il 65 % non ha un background universitario o una qualsiasi nozione economica o di marketing.

Per ovviare a questa situazione l'Associazione Italiana Calciatori ha avviato dei corsi di formazione rivolti agli ex-calciatori con l'obiettivo di approfondire diverse materie (dalla comunicazione al marketing, dalla psicologia alla gestione delle risorse, dall'economia all'organizzazione di eventi) e sviluppare eventuali competenze manageriali che diano la possibilità di ricollocarsi anche in un'altra sfera professionale.

La situazione analizzata in Italia è purtroppo comune a molti altri paesi dell'Unione e non riguarda solamente il calcio ma il mondo dello sport in generale. Infatti, per intraprendere uno sport a livello agonistico molto spesso si abbandonano gli studi e si arriva a fine carriera senza altre competenze al di fuori di quelle legate alla propria attività sportiva.

Alla luce di quanto suddetto, quali azioni intende intraprendere la Commissione, già attenta in passato allo sviluppo della cosiddetta «dual career» per valorizzare le capacità professionali degli atleti al di fuori del campo di gioco e garantire loro maggiori possibilità lavorative una volta conclusa l'attività agonistica?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(3 dicembre 2012)

La situazione descritta dagli onorevoli parlamentari è seguita con preoccupazione dall'UE in riferimento non solo al calcio ma allo sport in generale. Per questo motivo la comunicazione della Commissione intitolata «Sviluppare la dimensione europea dello sport» del gennaio 2011 sottolineava l'importanza di garantire che ai giovani atleti di alto livello fosse offerta un'istruzione di qualità parallelamente all'allenamento sportivo.

Su iniziativa della Commissione la problematica «dual careers» («carriere duplici» o «dopo carriera») è stata inclusa nel piano di lavoro per lo sport 2010-2013 del Consiglio. In base al lavoro del gruppo d'esperti ad hoc su «dual careers» è in corso la formulazione di linee guida in merito per gli atleti, che saranno presentate al Consiglio a dicembre 2012.

Tali linee guida terranno in debito conto i risultati di quattro progetti pilota su «dual careers» finanziati dalle Azioni preparatorie 2009 sullo sport. Uno dei progetti, sotto l'egida della Federazione internazionale dei calciatori professionisti (Fifpro), ha avuto come esito l'istituzione di una «Accademia on line» per calciatori professionisti, che consente di seguire un percorso di formazione anche in caso di trasferimento in un altro paese. Altri progetti in fatto di «dual careers» hanno ispirato la formulazione di raccomandazioni concrete rivolte alle organizzazioni sportive, agli istituti di istruzione e al mondo economico. La Commissione ha inoltre inserito la problematica «dual careers» nel capitolo dedicato allo sport della proposta di nuovo programma per l'istruzione, la gioventù e lo sport «Erasmus per tutti» (2014-2020).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008865/12
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE) and Marco Scurria (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Former athletes' employment problems: support for 'dual career' training

Research carried out recently in Italy indicates that 60% of 3 000 Italian footballers included in the study failed to find a new job on reaching the end of their career, apparently mainly due to low levels of educational achievement.

According to the research, 50.2% of footballers playing in the 1988-89 season had only the *'licenza media'* (certificate awarded on completion of three years' secondary school education); 45.6% had the '*maturità*' (awarded on completion of eight years' secondary school education); 3% had attended physical education colleges and only 1.1% had a bachelor's degree. The situation has improved only to a limited extent in recent years. The problems faced by many former footballers reportedly include lack of money due to failure to manage their finances properly, post-retirement depression and the lack of opportunities for players to switch to a new field of employment.

Closer inspection of the third division, which is less well-paid and prestigious than 'Serie A' and 'Serie B' football, yields the following startling figures: 25% of former players go bankrupt within a year of retiring; 50% of former professional footballers' divorces occur in the year in which they retire; 65% have not studied at university level and have no knowledge of economics or marketing.

To remedy this situation, the Italian Football Association has introduced training courses for retired footballers covering a number of subjects (communications, marketing, psychology, money management, economics, events management) and aimed at developing managerial skills to give former players the possibility of finding employment in another field.

The situation studied in Italy is, unfortunately, the same in many other Union countries, and applies not only to football but to sport in general. Young people often abandon their studies in order to be able to take part in competitive sport, so when the time comes to retire they have no qualifications apart from their athletic skills.

This being so, what action does the Commission intend to take, given that it has previously taken an interest in the development of 'dual career' training with a view to enhancing athletes' professional skills off the pitch and improving their prospects of employment after they have retired from competitive sport?

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

The situation described by the Honourable Members is a matter of concern at the EU level not only for football specifically but for sport in general. For this reason, the Commission Communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' of January 2001 emphasised the importance of ensuring that young high-level athletes are offered quality education in parallel to their sport training.

On the iniative of the Commission, the topic of dual careers was included in the Council Work Plan for Sport 2010-2013. Based on the work of the ad-hoc Group of Experts on Dual Careers, guidelines on dual careers for athletes are currently under preparation and will be submitted to the Council in December 2012.

These guidelines will take into due account the results of four pilot projects on dual careers which were financed under the 2009 Preparatory Actions in Sport. One of the projects led by the International Federation of Professional Footballers (FIFPro) has resulted in the set-up of an Online Academy for professional football players allowing them to follow an educational path even if they move to another country. Other projects on the subject of dual careers have resulted in concrete recommendations for sport organisations, educational institutes and the bussiness world. Furthermore, the Commission has included Dual Careers in the Sport chapter of its proposal for the new programme for Education, Youth and Sport 'Erasmus for All' (2014-2020).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008866/12
al Consiglio
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Brevetto unico europeo

La Commissione Affari giuridici del Parlamento europeo ha approvato lo scorso 20 dicembre il compromesso sul regime linguistico del brevetto unico europeo che esclude italiano e spagnolo a vantaggio di inglese, francese e tedesco.

Una tale soluzione discriminatoria nei confronti della lingua italiana risulterebbe dannosa per le piccole e medie imprese, incompatibile con i principi del mercato interno e contraddittoria rispetto all'obiettivo generale di una riduzione dei costi.

Inoltre, la decisione del Consiglio del 10 marzo 2011 con cui sono stati autorizzati a proseguire sulla strada di un brevetto unico trilingue 25 Stati membri su 27, è stata avallata dal Consiglio al di fuori dei limiti previsti dal trattato di Lisbona, in quanto la cooperazione rafforzata è ammessa unicamente nel quadro delle competenze non esclusive dell'Unione mentre la competenza a creare un titolo europeo di proprietà intellettuale appartiene esclusivamente all'Unione.

Ciò considerato e visto l'articolo 118 del TFUE, può il Consiglio far sapere se le procedure con le quali si è giunti alla creazione di un titolo europeo di proprietà intellettuale, garantiscono una protezione uniforme in tutto il territorio dell'Unione europea?

Risposta
(7 gennaio 2013)

Il Consiglio attira l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sul fatto che due Stati membri hanno adito la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea contestando la validità della decisione del Consiglio che autorizza una cooperazione rafforzata nel settore dell'istituzione di una tutela brevettuale unitaria ([1]). I suddetti due Stati membri non partecipano alla cooperazione rafforzata.

Spetta adesso alla Corte di giustizia statuire sulla validità della decisione del Consiglio.

([1]) Decisione del Consiglio del 10 marzo 2011, che autorizza una cooperazione rafforzata nel settore dell'istituzione di una tutela brevettuale unitaria (2011/167/UE) (GU L 76 del 10.3.2011, pag. 53).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008866/12
to the Council
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Single European patent

On 20 December 2011 the European Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs adopted a compromise on the language regime for the single European patent which excludes Italian and Spanish in favour of English, French and German.

Such a discriminatory solution in respect of the Italian language would be detrimental to small and medium-sized enterprises, is incompatible with the principles of the internal market and runs counter to the general objective of reducing costs.

In addition, the Council Decision of 10 March 2011 authorising 25 out of 27 Member States to continue along the path of a single trilingual patent, was endorsed by the Council over and beyond the limits laid down by the Treaty of Lisbon, as enhanced cooperation is only permitted within the framework of the Union's non-exclusive competences while the Union has exclusive competence for establishing a European intellectual property act.

Accordingly, having regard to Article 118 of the TFEU, can the Council say whether the procedures that led to the establishment of a European intellectual property act ensure that there is uniform protection throughout the European Union?

Reply
(7 January 2013)

The Council draws the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that the validity of the Council's decision authorising enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection ([1]) has been challenged by two Member States before the Court of Justice of the European Union. These two Member States do not participate in the enhanced cooperation.

It is now up to the Court of Justice to rule on the validity of the Council's Decision.

([1]) Council Decision of 10 March 2011 authorising enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection (2011/167/EU), OJ L 76, 10.3.2011, p. 53.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008868/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Incidenti domestici in Gran Bretagna

Negli ultimi mesi, in Gran Bretagna, si sono susseguiti una serie di incidenti domestici in cui sono scoppiate decine di lavatrici. Le macchine coinvolte sono delle marche più disparate e tutte considerate ugualmente affidabili. La Gran Bretagna ha aperto un'inchiesta per chiarire la causa di tutti gli incidenti domestici legati alle lavatrici, in seguito alla quale le lavatrici causa degli incidenti sono state esaminate e non sono state registrate anomalie.

Il caso è ancora senza soluzione, l'unica ipotesi avanzata finora è stata quella legata allo spessore del vetro dell'oblò, più sottile del dovuto.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione comunicare quanto segue:

1. È essa a conoscenza degli episodi descritti?

2. Intende aprire un'inchiesta al fine di verificare il rispetto della direttiva macchine 2006/42/CE da parte delle case produttrici?

3. Ritiene opportuno procedere all'emanazione di norme più incisive al fine di prevenire simili incidenti?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(21 novembre 2012)

La sicurezza delle lavatrici per uso domestico è disciplinata dalla direttiva «Basse tensioni» 2006/95/CE ([1]). Per tale motivo, a livello unionale esiste una legislazione che copre pienamente gli aspetti di sicurezza delle lavatrici per uso domestico e, in generale, delle apparecchiature elettriche destinate a essere usate entro certi limiti di voltaggio.

Gli Stati membri devono assicurare che tali apparecchiature siano conformi, vale a dire sicure, allorché sono immesse sul mercato.

La Commissione entra in gioco soltanto laddove vi siano prove sostanziali del fatto che gli Stati membri non hanno svolto tale ruolo o qualora si riceva la notifica che un prodotto è stato ritirato dal mercato.

La questione delle lavatrici «che scoppiano» è stata sollevata il 17 ottobre 2011 in una riunione dei punti di contatti nazionali di RAPEX (il sistema unionale di scambio rapido di informazioni sui pericoli connessi con l'uso di prodotti di consumo). A tutt'oggi gli Stati membri non hanno inoltrato nessuna notifica RAPEX.

La Commissione ha inoltre l'intenzione di discutere la questione, di far opera di sensibilizzazione e, se del caso, di decidere un'azione di follow-up nella prossima riunione consacrata alla direttiva «Basse tensioni» del gruppo di cooperazione amministrativa composto dalle autorità preposte alla sorveglianza del mercato, nonché nella prossima riunione del gruppo di lavoro cui partecipano gli Stati membri, gli organismi di normazione, gli organismi notificati, i rappresentanti dell'industria e altre parti interessate.

([1]) GU L 374 del 27.12.2006, pag. 10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008868/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Household accidents in Great Britain

In recent months, in Great Britain, there has been a series of household accidents in which dozens of washing machines have exploded. The machines involved are of many different brands and were all considered to be equally reliable. Britain has opened an investigation to clarify the cause of all these washing-machines-related domestic accidents, following which the machines in question were examined, without any abnormality being detected.

The case is still unsolved, the only theory so far being that it is due to the thickness of the glass of the washing machine doors, which is thinner than it should be.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the events described?

2. Will it open an investigation in order to verify whether manufacturers are complying with the Machinery Directive (2006/42/EC)?

3. Should it not frame more effective laws in order to prevent such accidents from occurring?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2012)

The safety of washing machines for domestic use is regulated by the Low Voltage Directive 2006/95/EC [1] (LVD). Therefore, at EU level there is legislation covering, fully, the safety aspects of domestic washing machines and, in general, of electrical equipment destined to be used within certain voltage limits.

Member States shall ensure that this equipment is compliant, i.e. safe, when it is placed on the market.

The Commission is only involved where there is substantive evidence to the effect that this role is not being fulfilled, or when a notification is received that a product has been removed from the market.

The issue of 'exploding' washing machines was raised at a meeting of the national contact points for RAPEX (the EU rapid alert system for dangerous products) on 17 October 2011. To date, no RAPEX notifications have been submitted by the Member States.

Furthermore, the Commission has the intention to discuss the issue, raise awareness and if needed decide for follow up action in the next Low Voltage Directive meeting of the Administrative Cooperation group, composed of market surveillance authorities, as well as in the next meeting of the Working Party, involving Member States, Standardisers, Notified Bodies, Industry and other interested parties.

[1] OJ L No 374/10, 27.12.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008869/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Scooter elettrici ad Amsterdam

Amsterdam, a partire da questo autunno, dà il via all'ultima svolta ecologica attraverso la promozione di un nuovo servizio di taxi cittadino costituito da scooter elettrici. Questo nuovo mezzo di trasporto, che mira a sostituire, il bike sharing è ecologico e a basso consumo. Il nuovo trasporto alternativo è pronto per essere esportato in altre città, infatti dal 2013 sarà attivo anche all'Aia.

Si tratta di un servizio economico che consente di conciliare le esigenze degli abitanti delle grandi città con la coscienza ambientale.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza di questo progetto;

2. se intende attuare politiche mirate a sollecitare l'adozione di questo nuovo mezzo di trasporto anche negli altri paesi europei?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(27 novembre 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'iniziativa in corso ad Amsterdam. Secondo quanto dichiarato dall'amministrazione cittadina si tratta di un'iniziativa privata.

Il progetto *Green eMotion*, che rientra nell'iniziativa *Green Cars* del 7° programma quadro di ricerca, è un progetto europeo di dimostrazione dell'elettromobilità inteso a facilitare la diffusione sul mercato europeo dei veicoli elettrici. Nel quadro del progetto verrà organizzata una dimostrazione di scooter elettrici a Barcellona.

L'iniziativa Civitas, rientrante anch'essa nel 7° programma quadro di ricerca, consente alle città europee di effettuare test e dimostrazioni di misure di mobilità urbana sostenibile. Le dimostrazioni di veicoli puliti, tra cui gli scooter elettrici, rientrano tra le misure ammissibili.

La Commissione rinvia inoltre l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte date alle interrogazioni scritte E-008744/2011, E-000021/2012, E-000671/2012, E-000870/2012, E-004505/2012 e E-006724/2012, rispettivamente degli onorevoli Jim Higgins (PPE), Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), Andreas Mölzer (NI), Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D), Graham Watson (ALDE), Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) e Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE) ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008869/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Electric scooters in Amsterdam

This autumn, Amsterdam is breaking new ground by promoting a 'green' taxi service using electric scooters. This new form of transport aims to provide an environmentally sustainable and low-energy alternative to bike-sharing. This new transport option is ready to be exported to other cities, and in fact will be in operation in The Hague as of 2013.

This low-cost transport service is designed to meet the needs of people living in big cities in an environmentally sustainable way.

In view of the foregoing:

1. Is the Commission aware of this project?

2. Does the Commission intend to adopt policies aimed at encouraging the adoption of this new form of transport in other European countries too?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2012)

The Commission is aware of this initiative in Amsterdam. According to the city of Amsterdam this is a private initiative not a public one.

The Green eMotion project, part of the Green Car Initiative of the 7th Research Framework programme, is a European electromobility demonstration project which will facilitate market uptake of electric vehicles in Europe. Electric motorcycles will be demonstrated in Barcelona within this project.

The Civitas initiative, part also of the 7th Research framework programme, is helping European cities to test and demonstrate sustainable urban mobility measures. Clean vehicles demonstrations, including electric scooters are amoung the eligible measures.

In addition, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-008744/2011, E-000021/2012, E-000671/2012, E-000870/2012, E-004505/2012 and E-006724/2012 by respectively Mr Jim Higgins (PPE), Ms Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), Mr Andreas Mölzer (NI) , Mr Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D), Sir Graham Watson (ALDE) , Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) and Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE) ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008871/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Desemprego em Portugal e na Europa

O Eurostat divulgou hoje os dados do desemprego nos países da UE. Estes dados confirmam o agravamento do desemprego na esmagadora maioria dos países, atingindo hoje, em sentido restrito, na UE os 25 466 milhões de trabalhadores, dos quais 18 196 milhões se encontram em países da zona euro. Só no último ano, mais de 2,1 milhões de trabalhadores foram para o desemprego em toda a UE.

Portugal é um dos países da UE onde a taxa de desemprego mais cresceu nos últimos 12 meses (de 12,7 % para 15,9 %), sendo, igualmente, um dos países em que a taxa de desemprego jovem é mais elevada, ou seja, 35,9 %.

Perante esta dramática situação, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera que a aplicação dos programas de assistência económica e financeira está a contribuir para o crescimento económico nos países onde estão a ser aplicados?

2. Considera que a aplicação dos programas de assistência económica e financeira está a ter um impacto direto na aceleração do ritmo de crescimento do desemprego e, em especial, no desemprego jovem?

3. Considera que a aplicação dos programas de assistência económica e financeira está a contribuir para atingir os objetivos da estratégia Europa 2020: uma economia «inteligente, sustentável e inclusiva», conduzindo os Estados-Membros a níveis elevados de emprego, de produtividade e de coesão social?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(18 de dezembro de 2012)

Um objetivo fundamental do programa de assistência económica e financeira a Portugal é aumentar a competitividade e o potencial de crescimento do país. O programa contempla, por isso, uma vasta gama de reformas estruturais destinadas a aumentar a concorrência nos mercados dos produtos e dos serviços, a flexibilizar o mercado de trabalho, a eliminar as rendas excessivas nos setores protegidos, a melhorar o funcionamento do sistema judicial e a reduzir a burocracia e os custos de transação da economia.

Ao evitar o colapso financeiro em Portugal, o programa deu um contributo da maior importância para evitar que o desemprego aumentasse muito mais rapidamente do que está a aumentar. É possível que algumas medidas do programa, necessárias para que possam voltar a ser colocados no mercado financeiro títulos de dívida pública, façam diminuir o consumo interno e, em consequência disso, o emprego. Todavia, essas medidas são essenciais para corrigir os desequilíbrios económicos e para criar as condições adequadas para que Portugal possa entrar numa fase de crescimento sustentável do produto e do emprego.

O crescimento económico sustentável é, provavelmente, a principal condição para a consecução dos objetivos Europa 2020. Para isso, são essenciais a consolidação orçamental e a correção dos desequilíbrios com o exterior, metas fundamentais do programa.

Concomitantemente, o programa tenta proteger os grupos mais vulneráveis da sociedade. Foram concebidas várias medidas destinadas a limitar as consequências da consolidação orçamental nos grupos com menores rendimentos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008871/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Unemployment in Portugal and in Europe

Eurostat has today published the unemployment figures for the Member States, which show that unemployment has worsened almost everywhere. There are now 25 466 million workers in the EU who are unemployed in the narrow sense of the word; out of that total, 18 196 million are in euro area countries. The increase in the EU as a whole within the last year alone is as much as 2.1 million.

Portugal is one of the Member States where unemployment has risen most sharply in the last 12 months (from 12.7% to 15.9%) and also has one of the highest youth unemployment rates (35.9%).

Given this emergency:

1. Does the Commission consider that the economic and financial assistance programmes are helping to promote economic growth in the countries where they are being implemented?

2. Does it believe that the programmes are serving directly to speed up the rate of increase in unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular?

3. Does it consider that the programmes are helping to achieve the aims of the Europe 2020 strategy, in other words a 'smart, sustainable, and inclusive' economy enabling Member States to deliver high levels of employment, productivity, and social cohesion?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2012)

An overreaching objective of the economic and financial assistance programme for Portugal is to raise competitiveness and the potential growth of the country. This is why the Programme contains a wide set of structural reforms aimed at increasing competition in product and services markets, increasing flexibility of the labour market, eliminating excessive rents in sheltered sectors, improving the functioning of the judiciary system and reducing the administrative burden and the transaction costs of the economy.

Insofar as the programme has been instrumental in avoiding a financial meltdown in Portugal, it has greatly helped to avoid unemployment from rising at a much higher speed than what is currently the case. Arguably, some of the measures in the programme that are necessary for the sovereign to regain financial market access act to dampen domestic demand and hence employment. However, these measures are essential to correct the economic imbalances and to set the right conditions to make the country able to achieve sustainable output and employment growth.

Sustainable economic growth is probably the major condition for the achievement of the Europe 2020 targets. Fiscal consolidation and the correction of the external imbalances, which are major goals of the programme, are essential to reach that objective.

At the same time the programme tries to protect the most vulnerable groups in the society. Several measures have been designed in a way so as to limit the impact of fiscal consolidation on the lower income groups.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008872/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Desenvolver o crescimento e o emprego no setor da cultura

O atual panorama da cultura é de destruição e perversão do princípio de serviço público através do estrangulamento financeiro, desmantelamento, redução e desqualificação de serviços, centralização e agregação burocrática de instituições e mercantilização, como se tem vindo a verificar em Portugal, onde o Orçamento de Estado para a cultura tem vindo a diminuir em resultado das medidas impostas a Portugal pela Troika FMI/BCE/CE. De referir que mais de 33 mil milhões de euros é o valor correspondente aos juros que Portugal terá que pagar pelo «empréstimo» concedido pela Troika e que este valor corresponde ao orçamento de 241 anos de política cultural em Portugal.

Tendo tido conhecimento da comunicação da Comissão sobre «Promover os setores da cultura e da criatividade para favorecer o crescimento e emprego na UE», nomeadamente nas artes do espetáculo, audiovisuais, arquitetura, artesanato, património cultural, design, festivais de cinema e música e também rádio, setor cujo peso no PIB da UE representa 4,5 %, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Considera que a via da extorsão dos recursos públicos dos Estados-Membros é a forma de incentivar e desenvolver o setor da cultura, nomeadamente a criação de emprego?

2. Que verbas e medidas concretas para a promoção do emprego, criação e fruição culturais estão ser tomadas no sentido de inverter as profundas dificuldades que o setor atravessa?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(9 de novembro de 2012)

Nos termos do artigo 167.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, a ação da União no domínio da cultura está limitada a «incentivar a cooperação entre Estados-Membros e, se necessário, apoiar e completar a sua ação» em certos domínios.

A Comunicação da Comissão sobre os setores culturais e criativos (COM(2012) 537) convida os Estados-Membros da UE e as regiões a avaliar exaustivamente o potencial dos setores culturais e criativos para o crescimento económico e a criação de emprego e a tirar partido das enormes oportunidades apresentadas, nomeadamente através dos fundos da política de coesão. É de sublinhar que, entre 2007 e 2013, foram atribuídos às regiões europeias mais de 6 mil milhões de euros para infraestruturas culturais, património cultural e serviços culturais, através dos fundos estruturais da UE.

A Comunicação convida a comunidade cultural a tirar o máximo partido de um vasto conjunto de programas e instrumentos da UE que estão à sua disposição para suprir algumas das suas necessidades, por exemplo, em termos de reforço de capacidades, desenvolvimento de competências ou presença nos mercados estrangeiros.

Não existe um orçamento anexo à Comunicação. No entanto, apresenta uma síntese coerente de todas as iniciativas políticas e todos os instrumentos a nível da UE — já em execução ou em preparação para o período de 2014-2020 — que contribuem para uma estratégia da UE para os setores cultural e criativo. A título de exemplo, o novo programa Europa Criativa, que substituirá os atuais programas MEDIA e Cultura, prevê um aumento significativo do financiamento para os artistas, as atividades culturais e o cinema europeus. Em caso de adoção pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho de Ministros, o programa irá afetar um montante de 1,8 mil milhões de euros para estes setores entre 2014 e 2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008872/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Creating growth and employment in the cultural sector

The current outlook in the cultural sector is one of destruction and distortion of the principle of public service through financial strangulation, dismantling, reduction and disqualification of services, centralisation and increased bureaucratisation of institutions and the commodification of culture. This is particularly so in Portugal, where the national budget for culture has been reduced as a result of the measures imposed by the IMF/ECB/Commission Troika. It is worth noting that Portugal will have to pay over EUR 33 billion in interest on the loan granted by the Troika, and that this is equivalent to the country's budget for cultural policy for the next 241 years.

In light of the Commission communication 'Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU', and with particular reference to the performing and audiovisual arts, architecture, crafts, cultural heritage, design, cinema and music festivals and radio, which account for 4.5% of the European Union's GDP, could the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it consider that the extortion from the Member States of their public resources is the best way to promote and develop the cultural sector, particularly in terms of job creation?

2. What amounts and specific measures to promote cultural creativity, fruition and employment are being used to remedy the serious difficulties currently faced by the sector?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(9 November 2012)

In accordance with Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Union action in the field of culture is limited to 'encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action' in certain areas.

The Commission Communication on cultural and creative sectors (COM(2012) 527) calls on EU Member States and regions to fully assess the potential of the cultural and creative sectors for economic growth and job creation, and to harness the ample opportunities provided in particular by the Cohesion Policy Funds. It is to be noted that between 2007 and 2013 more than EUR 6 billion has been given to European regions for cultural infrastructure, cultural heritage and cultural services through the EU Structural Funds.

The communication invites the cultural community to make the most of a wide range of EU programmes and instruments that are at their disposal to cover some of their needs, for example, in terms of capacity building, skills development or presence on foreign markets.

There is no budget attached to the communication. However, it provides a coherent summary of all the policy initiatives and instruments at EU level — already ongoing or in the pipeline for the period 2014-2020 — that contribute to an EU strategy for the cultural and creative sectors. By way of illustration, the new Creative Europe programme, which will replace the current MEDIA and Culture Programmes, envisages a significant increase in funding for artists, cultural activities and European cinema. If adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers, the programme would allocate EUR 1.8 billion for the sectors between 2014 and 2020.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008873/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Despedimentos de trabalhadores na Edifer

Tomei conhecimento que o Grupo Edifer, uma das maiores empresas de construção nacionais, com sede em Alfragide, Amadora, avançou com o processo de despedimento coletivo de 200 trabalhadores, medida que a construtora justifica com a quebra nas encomendas.

Os problemas financeiros, de atrasos nos pagamentos a fornecedores e a subempreiteiros, já eram habituais, tendo-se acentuado na última década. No entanto, o cancelamento de grandes investimentos, como é exemplo o projeto da Alta Velocidade entre Lisboa e Porto, precipitou a crise da Edifer, tendo sido neste quadro que os bancos tomaram conta da empresa e a passaram para o Fundo Vallis, que está a praticar a atual política de despedimentos.

A suspensão da ligação Lisboa-Porto do TGV, tal como outros projetos de infraestruturas de obras públicas em regime de parcerias público-privadas (PPP), ocorreu no âmbito do acordo do Governo com a «troika», tendo como consequência o aumento dos despedimentos coletivos no setor da construção, estando em eminência o desaparecimento de 40 mil postos de trabalho no setor.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação?

2. Considera que são estas políticas de desinvestimento público que irão criar postos de trabalho?

3. Que medidas pensa tomar para apoiar o setor da construção em Portugal?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(28 de novembro de 2012)

A sobredependência da economia portuguesa relativamente aos setores dos bens não-transacionáveis ([1]) foi uma das causas profundas do elevado défice da balança de transações correntes, considerado insustentável. O sobreinvestimento em obras públicas ([2]) também contribuiu para a dívida excessiva que forçou Portugal a solicitar assistência financeira internacional. A utilização reduzida da capacidade de algumas infraestruturas de transporte dificulta agora o financiamento dos operadores dessas infraestruturas. Por esse motivo, foi necessário rever diversos projetos de infraestruturas, sobretudo aqueles cuja probabilidade de atingirem níveis elevados de utilização da capacidade e de serem viáveis do ponto de vista financeiro era reduzida.

Está a fazer-se uma reforma do quadro do investimento público. Em especial, só se constituirão novas parcerias público-privadas depois de o novo regime estar plenamente operacional, para pôr cobro às más práticas e à incerteza jurídica nos convénios destas parcerias, que redundaram em encargos financeiros substanciais para os contribuintes. Elaborar-se-á um plano estratégico pormenorizado de renegociação, cujos objetivos são obter ganhos apreciáveis em termos orçamentais, minimizar os encargos da dívida e garantir uma redução substancial dos passivos das administrações públicas ([3]).

Os objetivos centrais do programa são a melhoria da competitividade da economia portuguesa e a criação de emprego com sustentabilidade. O Memorando de Entendimento subordina o desembolso da assistência financeira à realização de muitas reformas estruturais orientadas para o fomento do crescimento. Os primeiros resultados dessas reformas já são visíveis, pois o défice da balança de transações correntes está a diminuir mais rapidamente do que previsto (será cerca de 3 % do PIB em 2012, quando atingia quase 10 % do PIB há apenas dois anos). Este ajustamento também se deve às exportações, cuja evolução tem sido melhor do que o esperado.

([1]) Como o da construção.
([2]) Nomeadamente na rede de autoestradas.
([3]) Baseado num estudo aprofundado de 36 contratos de parcerias público-privadas elaborado por uma empresa de auditoria internacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008873/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Lay-offs at Edifer

I recently learned that the Edifer Group, which is one of Portugal's largest construction companies and is located in Alfragide (Amadora), has decided to lay off 200 employees on the grounds that orders have plummeted.

The company's chronic financial problems, involving late payments to suppliers and subcontractors, have gone from bad to worse over the last decade. However, the cancellation of major projects such as the high-speed link between Lisbon and Oporto has plunged Edifer into crisis, resulting in its takeover by the banks and subsequent handover to the Vallis holding company, which is now carrying out the lay-off policy.

The suspension of the Lisbon-Oporto high-speed train link, and of other public-private partnership (PPP) infrastructure projects for public works, is a consequence of the Portuguese Government's agreement with the Troika and has led to an increase in lay-offs in the construction sector, in which 40 000 jobs are at risk or have already been lost.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does is consider these public disinvestment policies conducive to job creation?

3. What steps does it intend to take to support the construction sector in Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 November 2012)

Overreliance of the PT economy on non-tradable sectors ([1]) was one of the root causes of unsustainably high current account deficit. Overinvestment in public construction infrastructure ([2]), has also contributed to the current debt overhang which forced Portugal to seek external financial assistance. The low capacity utilisation of some the existing transport infrastructure now causes financing difficulties for the existing infrastructures operators. For this reason, it was necessary to review a number of infrastructure projects, especially when they had little chance of reaching high capacity utilisation and becoming financially viable.

The framework for the public investment is being reformed. Particularly, any new PPPs will only be launched after the new regime is fully effective in order to end malpractices and legal uncertainties in PPP arrangements which have led to a substantial financial burden for the taxpayer. A detailed strategic plan for renegotiations will be developed, aiming to obtain substantial fiscal gains, while minimising the debt burden, and ensuring a sustainable reduction in government liabilities ([3]).

Improvement of the competitiveness of the Portuguese economy and long-term job creation is the key objective of the Programme. The MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) makes the disbursement of financial assistance conditional on the implementation of many structural reforms geared towards boosting growth. The first outcomes of these reforms are already visible as the current account deficit is declining more rapidly than anticipated, falling to around 3% of GDP in 2012 from nearly 10% just two years ago. This adjustment is due also to exports that have consistently outperformed projections.

([1]) Such as constructions.
([2]) In particular motorway infrastructure.
([3]) Based on the comprehensive study for 36 PPP contracts prepared by an international auditing firm.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008874/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Direito dos trabalhadores portugueses nas plataformas petrolíferas no Mar do Norte

Na sequência da resposta enviada pela Comissão à pergunta escrita do deputado Nuno Melo (E-4362/2010), fomos informados, pelos trabalhadores portugueses que trabalham nas plataformas petrolíferas no Mar do Norte, na área holandesa, que já se encontra regularizada a situação relacionada com o alargamento à proteção social a estes trabalhadores.

No entanto, a entidade patronal só começou a efetuar os pagamentos à Segurança Social aquando da entrada em vigor da nova legislação.

Sabemos que há longo tempo estes trabalhadores reivindicam os seus direitos à Segurança Social e que muitos destes trabalhadores trabalham há cerca de 30 anos nas plataformas petrolíferas no Mar do Norte e se encontram a poucos anos de entrada na reforma. Assim, em muitos casos, vários destes trabalhadores poderão ter direito a não mais do que 5 anos de contribuições, sinónimo de uma reforma baixa, que não reflete as décadas de trabalho.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe que medidas já foram ou vão ser tomadas para resolver este problema, tendo em conta que os trabalhadores referidos irão ser prejudicados em relação à reforma que auferirão.

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(26 de novembro de 2012)

A Comissão intentou uma ação por incumprimento contra os Países Baixos ([1]) em que solicitava ao Tribunal que constatasse que, ao recusar conceder certas prestações de segurança social a cidadãos de outros Estados-Membros da União Europeia que trabalhavam em plataformas petrolíferas nos Países Baixos, este último Estado não cumpria as obrigações que lhe incumbem por força das disposições relativas à livre circulação dos trabalhadores e à coordenação dos regimes de segurança social. No seu acórdão de 19 de abril de 2012, o Tribunal de Justiça considerou esta ação inadmissível, uma vez que a Comissão não precisou quais as prestações de segurança social exatamente visadas e não forneceu nenhuma informação sobre o enquadramento jurídico nacional que regula essas prestações.

Contudo, num acórdão ([2]) de 17 de janeiro de 2012, Tribunal de Justiça decidiu que o direito da União Europeia relativo à livre circulação dos trabalhadores e à segurança social dos trabalhadores migrantes é aplicável a um trabalhador empregado numa plataforma de extração de gás situada na plataforma continental adjacente aos Países Baixos.

Na sequência desse acórdão, a Comissão incentiva os interessados que reúnam as condições em matéria de seguro a prosseguir a sua ação, em conformidade com os procedimentos e prazos previstos pelo direito nacional, perante as autoridades administrativas e judiciárias dos Países Baixos. Essas autoridades devem respeitar o direito da União, tal como interpretado pelo Tribunal de Justiça. Além disso, a Comissão tem a intenção de solicitar às autoridades neerlandesas informações sobre o tratamento dos pedidos eventualmente apresentados para uma inscrição retroativa das pessoas que trabalharam no passado nas plataformas do Mar do Norte.

([1]) Processo C-141/10.
([2]) Processo C-347/10, Salemink.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008874/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Rights of Portuguese workers employed on North Sea oil rigs

Following up on the Commission's answer to Written Question E-4362/2010, by Nuno Melo, we have been informed by Portuguese nationals employed on oil rigs in the Dutch area of the North Sea that the situation has now been corrected, with the extension of social protection rights to these workers.

However, their employer only began paying their social security contributions from the date when the new law came into force.

These workers have been campaigning for their rights to social security for many years, and many of them are close to retirement, after having spent almost 30 years on North Sea oil rigs. As a result, a number of these workers could find they have a right to no more than five years of contributions, giving them only a minimum pension despite having spent decades in the job

Can the Commission tell me what steps will be or have already been taken to address this problem, bearing in mind the prejudice to the pension rights of the workers involved?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(26 novembre 2012)

La Commission a introduit un recours en manquement contre les Pays-Bas ([1]) par lequel elle demandait à la Cour de constater qu'en refusant d'octroyer certaines prestations de sécurité sociale à des ressortissants d'autres États membres de l'Union européenne employés sur des plateformes pétrolières aux Pays-Bas, cet État-membre a manqué aux obligations qui lui incombent en vertu des dispositions relatives à la libre circulation des travailleurs et à la coordination des régimes de sécurité sociale. Dans son arrêt du 19 avril 2012, la Cour de justice a rejeté ce recours comme irrecevable au motif que la Commission ne précise pas quelles prestations de sécurité sociale elle vise exactement et ne fournit aucun renseignement au sujet du cadre juridique national régissant ces prestations.

Néanmoins, dans un arrêt ([2]), du 17 janvier 2012, la Cour de justice a dit que le droit de l'Union européenne relatif à la libre circulation des travailleurs et à la sécurité sociale des travailleurs migrants s'applique à un travailleur employé sur une plateforme gazière située sur le plateau continental adjacent aux Pays-Bas.

Suite à cet arrêt, la Commission encourage les intéressés qui remplissent les conditions pour être assurés à poursuivre leur action, conformément aux procédures et aux délais prévus par le droit national, devant les autorités administratives et judiciaires des Pays-Bas. Ces autorités sont tenues de respecter le droit de l'Union, tel qu'interprété par la Cour. En outre, la Commission a l'intention de demander aux autorités néerlandaises des renseignements sur le traitement des demandes qui seront éventuellement présentées pour une affiliation rétroactive des personnes qui ont travaillé dans le passé sur les plateformes de la mer du Nord.

([1]) Affaire C-141/10.
([2]) Affaire C-347/10, Salemink.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008875/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Cortes nos apoios à Fenacerci

Os alunos com deficiências e incapacidades várias que frequentam as escolas de Lisboa e Vale do Tejo estão sem apoio dos técnicos dos Centros de Recursos para a Inclusão, desde o início do ano letivo. A suspensão do apoio, que afeta centenas de alunos, foi decidida pela Federação Nacional de Cooperativas de Solidariedade Nacional (Fenacerci) tendo em conta os cortes impostos pelo Ministério da Educação e Ciência, cortes que decorrem da aplicação das medidas impostas a Portugal pela troika FMI/BCE/CE.

Solicito à Comissão as seguintes informações:

1. Que medidas estão previstas para apoiar e dar estabilidade a Instituições que cuidam de cidadãos deficientes?

2. Que tipo de apoios financeiros comunitários foram atribuídos às Instituições que intervêm nesta área, nos diferentes Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(27 de novembro de 2012)

O Memorando de Entendimento estabelece que Portugal tem de dar seguimento às suas ações para superar os baixos níveis de escolaridade e o abandono escolar precoce, assim como melhorar a qualidade da educação secundária e do ensino e da formação profissional de forma a aumentar a eficácia do setor da educação, promover a qualidade do capital humano e facilitar a adaptação do mercado de trabalho. Não são feitas recomendações em relação aos cortes orçamentais neste domínio.

A Comissão gostaria de salientar que os fundos estruturais, o FEADER e o FEAMP são fontes importantes de apoio para instituições que trabalham com pessoas portadoras de deficiência e incapacidades. Os fundos não podem cobrir as despesas de manutenção, mas podem ser usados para financiar atividades de formação ou a construção/melhoramento de infraestruturas, incluindo infraestruturas dos setores da educação e da saúde, a acessibilidade dessas pessoas e a criação de serviços baseados nas comunidades em conformidade com as obrigações da Convenção da ONU sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência.

Em conformidade com o princípio de gestão partilhada, a decisão acerca das medidas que devem ser apoiadas no âmbito da educação e da inclusão social, é da responsabilidade do Estado-Membro competente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008875/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Cuts in funding for FENACERCI

Since the beginning of this academic year, pupils with a range of disabilities and learning difficulties who attend schools in the Lisbon and Tagus Valley area have been unable to receive support from the specialised staff of the Inclusion Resource Centres. The suspension of this service, which affects hundreds of pupils, was decided by the Portuguese National Federation of Social Solidarity Cooperatives (FENACERCI) as a result of cuts imposed by the Ministry of Education and Science. These cuts stem from the application of measures imposed on Portugal by the Troika (IMF/ECB/Commission).

Can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What measures are in place to support and provide stability to institutions caring for people with disabilities?

2. What types of financial assistance has the EU allocated to institutions working in this field in the various Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2012)

The Memorandum of Understanding establishes that Portugal needs to continue action to tackle low education attainment and early school leaving and to improve the quality of secondary education and vocational education and training, with a view to increase efficiency in the education sector, raise the quality of human capital and facilitate labour market matching. No recommendation is made regarding budget cuts in this area.

The Commission would like to point out that Structural Funds, EAFRD and EMFF are important sources to support institutions working with people with disabilities. The funds cannot cover the running costs, but they can be used to funding training activities or the construction/improvement of infrastructure, including education and health infrastructure, accessibility for persons with disabilities and the establishment of community-based services in line with the obligations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In accordance with the principle of shared management, the decision on what measures to support addressing education and social inclusion issues are a Member State competence.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008876/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Despedimentos no Grupo Têxtil Manuel Gonçalves

A TMG SA, (Grupo Têxtil Manuel Gonçalves), em Vila Nova de Famalicão, procedeu ao despedimento coletivo de cerca de meia centena de trabalhadores.

Com mais este despedimento na região do Vale do Ave, distrito de Braga, aumenta vertiginosamente o desemprego nesta região, na qual milhares de trabalhadores se encontram numa situação de incerteza e de falta de perspetivas. Só no distrito de Braga, entre julho de 2011 e julho de 2012, o desemprego registado nos Centros de Emprego aumentou 23,3 %, registando o concelho de Vila Nova de Famalicão o número dramático de cerca de 11 mil trabalhadores no desemprego.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. A referida empresa recebeu quaisquer apoios comunitários nos últimos 10 anos? Com que fins foram concedidos e que compromissos assumiu aquando da concessão dos apoios?

2. Que medidas pensa tomar, tendo em conta os graves problemas sociais e económicos existentes em Portugal, com especial incidência no Norte, onde o desemprego não cessa de aumentar?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(21 de novembro de 2012)

Segundo informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, o grupo TMG, SA recebeu 1 712 603,88 euros de apoio financeiro do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) nos períodos de programação de 1994-1999 e 2000-2006. Este financiamento teve como objetivo a realização de ações de formação para desenvolver o potencial dos trabalhadores.

Além disso, o grupo TMG, SA juntamente com uma dezena de entidades da área da tecnologia médica e centros de saúde recebeu apoios do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) no âmbito de um projeto de mobilização de I&D com um investimento total de 7,8 mil milhões de euros e um investimento do FEDER de 5 milhões de euros.

Em conformidade com o princípio da subsidiariedade, a política de emprego, incluindo as medidas destinadas a lutar contra o desemprego, é da competência dos Estados-Membros. No entanto, o Memorando de Entendimento assinado pelo Governo português prevê reformas estruturais para melhorar as condições sociais e a taxa de emprego em todo o país, a médio e longo prazo, o que significa que todas as regiões são abrangidas pelas reformas. Portugal recebeu igualmente apoio financeiro da União Europeia e do Fundo Monetário Internacional para combater a crise económica. Além disso, a Comissão está a ultimar a análise do pedido de reprogramação do QREN enviado pelas autoridades portuguesas que confere especial atenção à reafetação de fundos para medidas contra o desemprego e fomento da atividade económica das PME.

A Comissão salienta que os trabalhadores suscetíveis de serem afetados pela reestruturação podem candidatar-se ao apoio do FSE e, se reunirem as condições necessárias para tal, do Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008876/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Lay-offs in the Manuel Gonçalves Textile Group

The textile company TMG SA (Grupo Têxtil Manuel Gonçalves), located in Vila Nova de Famalicão, has laid off around 50 of its employees.

This new round of lay-offs dramatically increases unemployment in the Vale do Ave region (Braga district), where thousands of workers face an uncertain situation with few opportunities on the horizon. In the district of Braga alone, the number of people registered at unemployment centres increased by 23% between July 2011 and July 2012, with the municipality of Vila Nova de Famalicão recording the alarming figure of 11 000 unemployed workers.

1. What Community funding has the abovementioned company received in the last 10 years? For what purposes was the funding granted and what commitments did the firm make on receiving it?

2. What steps does the Commission intend to take in response to the serious social and economic problems prevailing in Portugal, and particularly in northern Portugal, where unemployment is constantly increasing?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 November 2012)

According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, TMG, SA has received financial support amounting to EUR 1 712 603.88 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming periods 1994-1999 and 2000-2006. The funding concerned training activities which aim to enhance the employees' potential.

Furthermore the TMG, SA together with a dozen entities in the area of Medical Technology and Health Centers has received funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the framework of a project mobilising R & D involving a total investment of EUR 7.8 billion EUR and an ERDF investment of EUR 5 million.

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, employment policy, including measures to combat unemployment, is a Member State competence. However, the memorandum of understanding signed by the Portuguese Government provides for structural reforms to improve social conditions and the employment rate across the country in the medium-to-long term, which means that all regions are covered by the reforms. Portugal has also received financial support to tackle the economic crisis from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund. In addition, the Commission is finalising the analysis of the request for reprogramming of the NSRF submitted by the Portuguese authorities that gives particular attention to the reallocation of funding for measures addressing unemployment and economic activity of SMEs.

The Commission would point out that workers likely to be affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-008877/12
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: Possível despedimento na FITOR

A FITOR, Companhia Portuguesa de Têxteis, SA, em Vila Nova de Famalicão, notificou 51 dos seus trabalhadores da intenção de proceder ao despedimento coletivo, por necessidade de encerramento de algumas secções.

Com mais este despedimento, a região do Vale do Ave, no distrito de Braga, continua a aumentar vertiginosamente o desemprego, atirando trabalhadores, alguns com mais de três dezenas de anos de trabalho nesta empresa, para uma situação de incerteza e de falta de perspetivas. Só no concelho de Vila Nova de Famalicão, o número de desempregados é de cerca de 11 mil trabalhadores.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. A referida empresa recebeu quaisquer apoios comunitários nos últimos 5 anos? Com que fins foram concedidos e que compromissos assumiu aquando da concessão dos apoios?

2. Que tipo de apoios pode esta empresa ou o governo português solicitar para evitar que estes trabalhadores fiquem desempregados?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(27 de novembro de 2012)

De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a FITOR — Companhia Portuguesa de Têxteis, SA — recebeu um apoio financeiro no valor total de 27 685,74 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) no anterior e no atual período de programação. Este financiamento teve como objetivo a realização de ações de formação para desenvolver o potencial dos trabalhadores. As operações selecionadas para financiamento cumpriram as regras da UE e nacionais durante o período de implementação.

Em conformidade com o princípio da subsidiariedade, a política de emprego, incluindo as medidas destinadas a lutar contra o desemprego, constitui um domínio principalmente da competência dos Estados-Membros.

Porém, gostaríamos de sublinhar que os fundos da Política de Coesão, assim como o Feader e o FEAMP são fontes importantes de investimento que estimulam o crescimento sustentável e o emprego. O FSE e o FEDER podem ser utilizados para apoiar políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho e para financiar mecanismos de apoio às PME com vista à manutenção e à criação de emprego.

A Comissão também salienta que os trabalhadores suscetíveis de serem afetados pela reestruturação podem candidatar-se ao apoio do FSE e, se reunirem as condições necessárias para tal, do Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008877/12
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Possible lay-offs at FITOR

The textile company FITOR-Companhia Portuguesa de Têxteis, SA, which is based in Vila Nova de Famalicão, has informed 51 of its employees that they are to be laid off as a result of the closure of several sections of the company.

These new lay-offs exacerbate the already dramatic and continuous increase in unemployment in the Vale do Ave region (Braga district), and casts these workers, some of whom have spent over 30 years working for this company, into an uncertain situation with few opportunities in sight. In the municipality of Vila Nova de Famalicão alone, some 11 000 workers are currently unemployed.

Could the Commission provide the following information:

1. How much Community funding has the abovementioned company received in the last five years? For what purposes was the funding granted and what commitments did the firm make on receiving it?

2. What types of support can this company, or the Portuguese Government, request in order to avoid laying off these workers?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2012)

According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, FITOR — Companhia Portuguesa de Têxteis, SA has received a total financial support amounting to EUR 27 685.74 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the previous and the current programming period. The funding concerned training activities which aim to enhance the employees' potential. The operations selected for funding complied with EU and national rules throughout the implementation period.

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, employment policy, including measures to combat unemployment, is primarily a Member State competence.

However, we would like to underline that the funds of the Cohesion Policy as well as EAFRD and EMFF are important sources of investment stimulating sustainable growth and employment. ESF and ERDF can be used to support active labour market policy and to fund SME support mechanisms aiming at maintaining and creating jobs.

The Commission would also point out that workers likely to be affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008878/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Attacco a templi buddisti in Bangladesh

Il 30 settembre 2012 svariati media hanno riferito la notizia secondo cui un gruppo di musulmani bangladesi avrebbe dato alle fiamme dieci templi buddisti e quaranta abitazioni, dopo la pubblicazione della foto di una copia del Corano bruciata sul profilo Facebook di un uomo buddista. Resta da chiarire se a pubblicare la foto sia stato l'uomo in questione. Almeno venti persone sono rimaste ferite. I fatti hanno avuto luogo nel distretto di Cox's Bazar, nel Bangladesh meridionale. Un gruppo di buddisti ha organizzato una protesta contenuta nella capitale Dacca, mentre nel sud del paese centinaia di buddisti sono fuggiti dalle proprie case.

Le tensioni religiose si sono acuite a seguito delle recenti proteste provocate dall'uscita di un film considerato offensivo nei confronti del Profeta Maometto. Il ministro bangladese dell'Interno ha descritto gli attacchi ai templi come «un tentativo premeditato e deliberato» di perturbare l'armonia comune. Almeno 166 persone sono state arrestate nell'area di Cox's Bazar e si è reso necessario l'intervento di soldati, agenti di frontiera paramilitari e agenti di polizia. Stando al Washington Post, il primo ministro Sheikh Hasina attribuirebbe la responsabilità degli attacchi ai radicali islamici e agli attivisti dell'opposizione. In Bangladesh i buddisti rappresentano l'uno per cento della popolazione e vivono in prossimità del confine con la Birmania/Myanmar.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente degli attacchi orchestrati contro i templi buddisti e le abitazioni in Bangladesh?

2. Qual è la valutazione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in merito alle azioni promosse dalle autorità bangladesi per offrire protezione ai buddisti nel distretto di Cox's Bazar?

3. Secondo i funzionari del SEAE a Dacca, quali sforzi sta compiendo il governo del Bangladesh per garantire la libertà e il pluralismo religiosi?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è al corrente degli attacchi che hanno avuto luogo il 29 e il 30 settembre nei sottodistretti di Ramu e Ukhia (Cox's Bazar). Rappresentanti della delegazione dell'UE e degli Stati membri dell'UE si sono messi tra l'altro in contatto con il Ministro degli affari esteri, i dirigenti dell'opposizione e le organizzazioni della società civile al fine di ottenere maggiori informazioni sugli incidenti. Per quanto differiscano su diversi punti le indagini iniziali finora condotte hanno tutte rivelato che gli attacchi siano stati orchestrati piuttosto che condotti sull'impulso del momento.

La HR/VP incoraggia la visita del Primo ministro alla zona colpita e la distribuzione di materiali di soccorso alle vittime. Approva inoltre l'avvio di un'indagine ufficiale e l'impegno assunto dal Governo di ricostruire i templi buddisti, risarcire le vittime le cui case sono state distrutte e consegnare i responsabili alla giustizia. Gli sforzi compiuti dall'opposizione e dalle organizzazioni della società civile per avviare una loro indagine approfondita dimostrano la preoccupazione che gli incidenti hanno generato in Bangladesh.

Il SEAE presterà particolare attenzione ai risultati dell'indagine ufficiale relativi alla risposta delle forze di sicurezza. Il SEAE prende nota dell'ordinanza della Corte suprema del Bangladesh riguardante le responsabilità delle forze dell'ordine di proteggere le vittime coinvolte negli attacchi e la sospensione di un funzionario superiore di polizia della zona.

Il Governo ha ribadito il proprio impegno di garantire libertà di religione e pluralismo nel paese e trattare tali avvenimenti «in maniera esemplare, nel rispetto della sua politica di tolleranza zero in risposta ad ogni tentativo di perturbare l'armonia della vita di comunità in Bangladesh».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008878/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Buddhist temples attacked in Bangladesh

On 30 September 2012, various media sources reported that Bangladeshi Muslims burnt down 10 Buddhist temples and forty homes, after a photo of a burned copy of the Koran appeared on Facebook tagged beside a local Buddhist man; however it is not clear whether this man posted the picture. At least twenty people were injured. The incidents took place in the Cox's Bazar area of southern Bangladesh. A group of Buddhists held a small protest in the capital Dhaka, and hundreds of Buddhists have fled their homes in the south of the country.

Religious tensions have been high due to the recent protests stemming from the release of a film which was deemed offensive to the Prophet Muhammad. The country's home affairs minister described the attacks on the temple as a 'premeditated and deliberate attempt' to disrupt communal harmony. At least 166 people were detained in Cox Bazar and soldiers, paramilitary border guards and police have been deployed. According to the Washington Post, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is blaming Islamic radicals and opposition activists for the attacks. In Bangladesh Buddhists make up one per cent of the population and they live close to the Burmese border.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of attacks orchestrated against Buddhist temples and homes in Bangladesh?

2. What is the assessment of the VP/HR regarding the response of the Bangladeshi authorities in providing protection to Buddhists in Cox's Bazar?

3. In the view of EEAS officials in Dhaka, what efforts is the Bangladeshi Government making to ensure religious freedom and pluralism?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the attacks that took place on 29-30 September in the Ramu and Ukhia sub-districts (Cox's Bazar). Representatives of the EU Delegation as well as of EU Member States have held contacts with *inter alia*, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, opposition leaders and civil society organisations with a view to gathering more information about the incidents. While differing on other points, all the initial inquiries conducted so far suggest that the attacks were orchestrated rather than spontaneous.

The HR/VP welcomes the Prime Minister's visit to the affected area and the distribution of relief materials to the victims. It also welcomes the opening of an official investigation and the commitment made by the Government to rebuild the Buddhist monasteries, compensate the victims whose houses were destroyed and bring those responsible to justice. The efforts made by the opposition and by civil society organisations to undertake their own detailed inquiries demonstrate the seriousness with which the incidents are taken in Bangladesh.

The EEAS will pay particular attention to the official investigation's findings concerning the response by security forces. The EEAS notes the order of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh regarding the responsibility of law-enforcement agencies to protect the victims of the attacks, and the withdrawal of a senior police officer in the area from his post.

The Government has reiterated its commitment to ensuring religious freedom and pluralism in the country and to dealing with such incidents 'in an exemplary manner, in keeping with its "zero tolerance" policy towards any attempt to destabilise Bangladesh's communal harmony'.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-008879/12
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2012 m. spalio 3 d.)

Tema: Tuniso konstitucijos projektas

2012 m. rugpjūčio 8 d. pateiktas svarstyti Tuniso nacionalinės steigiamosios asamblėjos komitetų parengtas konstitucijos projektas. Žmogaus teisių grupės, JT darbo grupė moterų diskriminacijos klausimais ir Tuniso moterų teisių gynėjai atkreipia dėmesį į kai kuriuos konstitucijos projekto straipsnius ir reiškia susirūpinimą dėl žodžio laisvės, lygybės, moterų teisių ir tarptautinių žmogaus teisių konvencijų, kurias Tunisas yra pasirašęs, vykdymo užtikrinimo. Pavyzdžiui, 17 straipsnio projekte nustatyta, kad „privalu laikytis tarptautinių konvencijų, jei jos nepažeidžia šios konstitucijos“, 28 straipsnio projekte nurodoma, kad moters vaidmuo „papildo vyrų vaidmenį šeimoje“ (nesilaikoma abipusiškumo principo), 27 straipsnio projekte bet koks santykių su sionizmu ir sionistais normalizavimas laikomas nusikaltimu, už kurį baudžiama pagal įstatymą.

Tunisas buvo Arabų pavasario lyderis. Svarbu pasinaudoti šia galimybe ir sukurti perspektyvius teisinius demokratinės ir taikios valstybės, atitinkančios gyventojų lūkesčius, pamatus. ES yra įsipareigojusi teikti paramą šiuo pereinamuoju laikotarpiu pagal Europos ir Vidužemio jūros regiono valstybių partnerystę, programą SPRING (Paramos partnerystei, reformoms ir integraciniam augimui programa) ir atskiras programas, laikydamasi požiūrio „parama pagal pažangą“.

Jeigu būtų priimta konstitucija, neatitinkanti tarptautinių įsipareigojimų ir visuotinių vertybių, kaip tai paveiktų ES paramą?

Sąjungos vyriausiosios įgaliotinės ir Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotojos Catherine Ashton atsakymas
Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. lapkričio 20 d.)

Šiuo metu Tunise ir Tuniso Steigiamajame Susirinkime vyksta viešos diskusijos dėl Tuniso Konstitucijos projekto.

Vyriausioji įgaliotinė ir Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotoja yra susipažinusi su įvairiais gerbiamosios EP narės minėtais Konstitucijos projekto straipsniais ir žino, kokių nuogąstavimų dėl jų kyla. Dėl šių nuostatų vis dar diskutuojama ir kol kas nenuspręsta, už kokią galutinę projekto redakciją bus siūloma balsuoti Steigiamajam Susirinkimui.

Besąlygiškai pripažindama Tuniso teisę savarankiškai spręsti šį klausimą, Vyriausioji įgaliotinė ir Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotoja viliasi, kad Tunisas priims Konstituciją, puoselėjančią Tuniso revoliucijos įkvėpimo šaltiniu tapusias vertybes, kaip antai teisingumas, tolerancija ir pagarba žmogaus teisėms. Visi šie klausimai aptarti nuolatiniame ES ir Tuniso politiniame dialoge. Vis dėlto kol kas per anksti svarstyti, kaip ES turėtų reaguoti į naująją Tuniso Konstituciją, nes galime remtis tik projektu, dėl kurio tebevyksta vidaus diskusijos.

Komisija Tunisui teikia didelę finansinę ir techninę paramą. Parama daugiausiai skiriama Tuniso Vyriausybės vykdomoms politinėms ir socialinėms bei ekonominės reformoms.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008879/12
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Draft Tunisian Constitution

On 8 August 2012, a draft Constitution prepared by the committees of the Tunisian National Constituent Assembly was made public. Human rights groups, the UN Working Group on discrimination against women, and Tunisian women's rights activists have drawn attention to some articles of the draft Constitution that raise concerns regarding the freedom of expression, equality, women's rights and the enforcement of international conventions on human rights signed by Tunisia. By way of example, draft Article 17 stipulates that 'respect for international conventions is compulsory if they do not contravene this constitution', draft Article 28 delineates the role of women as 'complementary to the one of the men in the family' without reciprocity, whereas draft Article 27 considers all forms of normalisation with Zionism and 'the Zionist entity' a crime punishable by law.

Tunisia stood at the forefront of the Arab Spring. It is important to build on this momentum and to create viable legal foundations for a democratic and peaceful state that meets the expectations of its people. The EU has committed itself to supporting this transition by means of assistance, under the 'more for more' principle, channelled through EuroMed, SPRING and other programmes.

How would the adoption of a Constitution that does not correspond to international obligations and universal values affect the EU's support?

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

The draft Tunisian constitution is currently the subject of extensive public debate in Tunisia and in the Tunisian Constituent Assembly.

The HR/VP is aware of the various articles in the draft of the Constitution mentioned by the Honourable Member and the concerns that they raise. These provisions are still being discussed and the final form of the draft to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly for vote has yet to be determined.

While fully respecting Tunisian sovereignty on this issue, the HR/VP looks to Tunisia to adopt a Constitution which reflects the commitment to values that inspired the Tunisian Revolution including justice, tolerance and respect for human rights. All of these issues have been discussed in the course of the regular political dialogue between the EU and Tunisia. Nonetheless, it is premature at this stage to discuss possible reactions by the EU to a new Tunisian Constitution on the basis of a draft which is still the subject of internal debate.

The Commission is providing extensive financial and technical assistance to Tunisia. Support is focused on political and socioeconomic reforms undertaken by the Tunisian government.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-008880/12
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2012 m. spalio 3 d.)

Tema: Situacija Nemuno upėje ir tarpvalstybinio susitarimo eiga

Pasak Baltarusijos žiniasklaidos, apie 2012 m. liepos 18 d. Baltarusijoje Nemuno upės vandeniu buvo pradėtas pildyti 45 km ilgio, 2 km pločio Gardino hidroelektrinės vandens rezervuaras. Liepos 29 d.–rugpjūčio 14 d. upės debitas Lietuvos teritorijoje krito žemiau gamtosauginės ribos. Kilo pavojus ekosistemoms, florai ir faunai ir laivybai Nemuno upe.

Lietuvos institucijos nedelsdamos kreipėsi į Baltarusijos institucijas dėl vandens lygio kritimo Nemune stabilizavimo, informacijos apie susidariusios situacijos priežastis ir Lietuvos ekspertų vizito į Baltarusiją. O Baltarusija ne tik iš anksto neinformavo Lietuvos apie Gardino HE vykstančius darbus, bet, atsakydama į oficialią Lietuvos notą, nepripažino jų įtakos Nemuno debitui. Tai kelia didžiulį susirūpinimą, nes pastačius atomines elektrines šalia Lietuvos sienos Baltarusijoje ir RF Kaliningrado srityje jų reaktoriams aušinti taip pat ketinama naudoti abiejų didžiausių Lietuvos upių (Nemuno ir Neries) vandenį.

2003 m. Lietuva, Rusija ir Baltarusija pradėjo derybas dėl Nemuno upės apsaugos susitarimo pasirašymo. Nuo 2006 metų Europos Komisija yra įpareigota įsitraukti į susitarimą, tačiau iki šios dienos šis susitarimas dar nepasirašytas.

Ar Komisija yra išsiuntusi pritarimo susitarimo tekstui raštus Baltarusijos užsienio reikalų ir aplinkos ministerijoms?

Ar svarstoma galimybė perkelti šio klausimo sprendimą į aukštesnį politinį lygmenį, atsižvelgiant į sunkią dabartinę derybų dėl susitarimo eigą ir kylantį nerimą dėl tarpvalstybinių vandens išteklių apsaugos?

J. Potočniko atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. lapkričio 9 d.)

Remdamasi Tarybos įgaliojimais, Komisija nuo 2006 m. siekia užtikrinti, kad būtų pritarta ES dalyvavimui tarptautiniuose Nemuno ir Dauguvos upių baseinų valdymo susitarimuose; su tuo turi sutikti visos susijusios šalys (Rusija, Baltarusija, Latvija ir Lietuva).

Komisija siekia gauti Rusijos valdžios pritarimą šiuo klausimu; be kita ko, Rusijai buvo nusiųstas buvusio Komisijos nario S. Dimaso raštas. Atsakydama į tai Rusija neseniai paprašė, kad visos šalys raštu patvirtintų, kad jos pritaria ES dalyvavimui. Lietuva ir Latvija pritarimo raštus Rusijai jau nusiuntė. Neseniai Komisija paprašė, kad tokį pat raštišką patvirtinimą pateiktų ir Baltarusija.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008880/12
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Situation of the River Nemunas and the cross-border agreement process

According to the Belarus media, filling of a reservoir, 45 km long and 2 km wide, belonging to the Grodno hydroelectric power station in Belarus with water from the River Nemunas began around 18 July 2012. From 29 July to 14 August, the discharge from the river in Lithuania fell below the stipulated minimum. Ecosystems, flora and fauna, and navigation on the River Nemunas were threatened.

The Lithuanian authorities immediately asked their Belarus counterparts to stabilise the falling water level of the river, provide information on the reasons behind the situation and agree to a visit by Lithuanian experts to Belarus. Belarus did not inform Lithuania in advance about the work being done at the Grodno hydroelectric power station, nor did it recognise its impact on the Nemunas discharge in its response to the formal letter from Lithuania. This is a source of serious concern as, after the construction of nuclear power plants close to the Lithuanian border in Belarus and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, their reactors are planned to be cooled with water from the two largest Lithuanian rivers (the Nemunas and the Neris).

In 2003 Lithuania, Russia and Belarus began negotiations to sign an agreement on the protection of the River Nemunas. Since 2006, the European Commission has been committed to this agreement, but it has yet not been signed.

Has the Commission sent a letter endorsing the text of the agreement to the Belarus Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection?

Is any consideration being given to the possibility of settling the issue at a higher political level, given the slow progress of negotiations on the agreement and a growing sense of unease at the protection of cross-border water resources?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 November 2012)

Since 2006, on the basis of a mandate from the Council, the Commission has been working on the endorsement of EU participation in the international river basin management agreements for the Nemunas and Daugava rivers, for which all parties involved (Russia, Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania) need to agree.

The Commission has sought the agreement of the Russian authorities on this matter, including through a letter by former Commissioner Dimas. In response, Russia has recently requested a written confirmation by all Parties that they agree to the participation of the EU. Lithuania and Latvia have already sent to Russia letters to express their support. Recently, the Commission has requested the same written confirmation from Belarus.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008881/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Crisi del settore termale euganeo (Padova)

Le Terme Euganee sono la più grande stazione termale d'Europa specializzata in fango-balneo-terapia, grazie alle loro acque meteoriche, che sono le più calde al mondo (sgorgano ad una temperatura costante di 87°C) e sono cariche di energia geotermica. Le Terme di Abano e Montegrotto (entrambi in provincia di Padova) sono la più grande stazione specializzata in fangoterapia: ad esse è stato, infatti, assegnato il marchio «Fango DOC», e grazie ad un brevetto esclusivo viene tutelato il processo di produzione di questo composto naturale. Agli stabilimenti del Bacino Termale Euganeo è stato riconosciuto dal Ministero della Sanità italiano il livello di qualificazione «I° Super» che indica il rispetto delle risorse naturali del bacino. Inoltre, le stazioni termali euganee si avvalgono del Centro Studi Termali Veneto, «Pietro d'Abano» quale centro di ricerca all'avanguardia per gli studi sui componenti primi della risorsa termale e di monitoraggio della qualità di tutti i trattamenti e terapie offerti dalle numerosissime sedi nel Padovano. L'attività costante di ricerca del Centro padovano (cui partecipano diversi enti pubblici e privati) garantisce la valenza scientifica e terapeutica delle cure termali, riconosciute presidi medici a livello internazionale. A causa dell'aumento del costo del lavoro per gli operatori termali, della concorrenza straniera e del venir meno della copertura dei costi delle cure termali da parte dei sistemi sanitari europei, questo settore di eccellenza veneta, che conta 120 aziende e 4 mila addetti, sta attraversando una pesante crisi occupazionale dovuta allo spostamento dei flussi del turismo termale verso paesi dove i costi sono inferiori.

È la Commissione a conoscenza della situazione delle terme padovane? Può far sapere se sono stati destinati fondi UE a favore di strutture termali in Italia o negli altri paesi membri che versano in situazione di crisi, come nel caso delle Terme Euganee? Quali azioni prevede di avviare per sostenere il settore termale veneto, eccellenza a livello UE e da sempre fonte di sviluppo turistico e commerciale per tutto il territorio padovano?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(14 novembre 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione del settore termale padovano.

Anche se non vi sono programmi di finanziamento UE specificamente indirizzati ai centri termali, un sostegno può essere disponibile per il tramite dei programmi della politica di coesione, a condizione che le azioni da sostenersi siano in linea con lo sviluppo economico di lungo periodo della regione interessata, possano dimostrare di contribuire a promuovere la crescita e l'occupazione e siano in linea con le priorità stabilite nel pertinente programma della politica di coesione.

Nel contesto della Regione Veneto, e poiché gli Stati membri sono responsabili per l'attuazione dei programmi della politica di coesione, La invito a chiedere ulteriori dettagli direttamente all'autorità di gestione del programma in questione, al seguente indirizzo:

Direzione Programmi Comunitari
Dorsoduro 3494/A
30123 Venezia
+39 041 279 1469
programmazione@regione.veneto.it
www.regione.veneto.it/Economia/Programmi+Comunitari/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008881/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Crisis in the Terme Euganee spa sector (Padua)

Terme Euganee is the biggest spa resort in Europe specialising in fango-balneotherapy, thanks to its meteoric waters which are the hottest in the world (at a constant temperature of 87°C) and loaded with geothermal energy. The Abano and Montegrotto spas (both in Padua province) together make up the biggest resort specialising in fangotherapy and have been granted 'Fango DOC' protected denomination of origin status, while the production process for the mud is protected by an exclusive patent licence. The Italian Ministry of Health has placed establishments in the Bacino Termale Euganeo area in the 'I° Super' category, in recognition of their care of the area's natural resources. Terme Euganee resorts also benefit from the presence of the 'Pietro d'Abano' Centro Studi Termali Veneto, which is at the cutting edge of research into the raw components of spa resources and monitors the quality of all treatments and therapies on offer at the many establishments in the Padua area. The tireless research conducted by the Pietro d'Abano Centre (which both public and private bodies are involved in) guarantees the scientific and therapeutic value of the spa treatments, which are recognised internationally for their medical qualities. The spa operators' rising labour costs, foreign competition and cuts by European health authorities to the amount that can be claimed for spa treatments under social security cover all mean that this sector of excellence in Veneto province, with its 120 businesses and 4 000 employees, is suffering a serious employment crisis as spa tourism moves away towards countries where costs are lower.

Is the Commission aware of the situation in the Paduan spa resorts? Are any EU funds being directed to spa facilities in Italy, or in other Member States, which like Terme Euganee are experiencing a crisis? What steps will the Commission take to support the Veneto's spa sector, a sector of excellence in the EU which has always been a source of tourism and business for the whole of the Padua region?

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

The Commission is aware of the situation in the Paduan spa resorts.

While there are no EU funding programmes specifically targeted at spa facilities, support may be available through cohesion policy programmes, provided that the actions being supported are in line with the longer-term economic development of the region concerned, can demonstrate a contribution to boosting growth and jobs and are in line with the priorities established in the relevant cohesion policy programme.

In the context of Veneto, and as Member States are responsible for the implementation of cohesion policy programmes, further details should be obtained directly from the managing authority of the relevant programme, at the following address:

Direzione Programmi Comunitari
Dorsoduro 3494/A
30123 Venezia
+39 041 279 1469
programmazione@regione.veneto.it
www.regione.veneto.it/Economia/Programmi+Comunitari/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008882/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Literarische Übersetzungsprojekte im Rahmen des Programms „Kultur 2007-2013" je Sprache

Eine wichtige Zielsetzung des Förderbereiches 1 des EU-Kulturförderprogramms „Kultur 2007-2013" ist die Förderung von literarischen Übersetzungen. Im Jahr 2012 wurde die Übersetzung von 531 Werken genehmigt.

1. Kann die Kommission eine Übersicht darüber geben, wie viele literarische Übersetzungsprojekte seit 2007 pro Ausgangssprache gefördert wurden?

2. Kann die Kommission eine Übersicht darüber geben, wie viele literarische Übersetzungsprojekte seit 2007 pro Zielsprache gefördert wurden?

3. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, aus welchen Ursprungsländern die literarischen Werke jeweils stammen? Wenn ja, kann die Kommission eine Übersicht darüber geben, wie viele Übersetzungsprojekte seit 2007 pro Ursprungsland gefördert wurden?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008934/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(4. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Erfolg literarischer Übersetzungsprojekte in „Kultur 2007-2013"

Eine wichtige Zielsetzung des Förderbereiches 1 des EU-Kulturförderungsprogramms „Kultur 2007-2013" ist die Förderung von literarischen Übersetzungen. Allein im Jahr 2012 wurde die Übersetzung von 531 Werken genehmigt ([1]).

Die Förderprojekte werden von Verlegern und Verlagshäusern beantragt.

1. Erhält der Projektantragsteller nach erfolgter Übersetzung die vollständigen Veröffentlichungs- und Weiterverbreitungsrechte?

2. Verfügt die Kommission über Kenntnisse darüber, in wie vielen Fällen die geförderte Übersetzung tatsächlich in mindestens einer Druckversion veröffentlicht wurde?

3. Kann die Kommission Auskunft darüber geben, in wie vielen Fällen das Verlagshaus durch die Vermarktung der Übersetzung einen Gewinn machte, der die Fördersumme übertraf?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008964/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(5. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Förderung von Sachbuchübersetzungen in „Kultur 2007-2013"

Eine wichtige Zielsetzung des Förderbereiches 1 des EU-Kulturförderungsprogramms „Kultur 2007-2013" ist die Förderung von literarischen Übersetzungen.

Dem Programmleitfaden für „Kultur 2007-2013" zufolge ist ausschließlich die Übersetzung belletristischer Werke förderfähig. Sachbücher wie Biografien oder Werke der Human- und Naturwissenschaften sind explizit von der Förderung ausgenommen.

Aus welchem Grund sind Sachbücher, zum Beispiel solche, die das kulturelle Denken, das politische System oder geistige Entwicklungen in der EU beeinflussten, von der Förderung ausgenommen?

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/funding/2012/selection/documents/strand_1-2-2/books_proposed_for_selection_2012_sorted_by_organisation_and_language.pdf

Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(26. November 2012)

Das Programm „Kultur“ soll eine möglichst weite Verbreitung der Literatur innerhalb Europas auf unterschiedliche Art und Weise fördern und den Zugang zu Kulturen anderer Länder erleichtern, u. a. durch die Förderung der literarischen Übersetzung. Das für diese Form der Unterstützung bereitgestellte Jahresbudget beläuft sich auf etwa 3 Mio. EUR.

Die Vergabe von Fördermitteln für Literaturübersetzungen ist unter anderem an die Bedingung geknüpft, dass die Verlagshäuser, die eine Finanzhilfe beantragen, Inhaber der Rechte an den für die Übersetzung vorgeschlagenen literarischen Werken sind bzw. diese Rechte vor Unterzeichnung der Finanzhilfevereinbarung erwerben. Die Antragsteller, deren Projekte ausgewählt worden sind, müssen einen diesbezüglichen Nachweis erbringen. Verlagshäuser, die finanziell unterstützt werden, sind außerdem dazu verpflichtet, ihrem Abschlussbericht eine Kopie der veröffentlichten Übersetzung unter Angabe der ISBN beizulegen.

Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen über Projekte vor, für die ein Herausgeber einen über den Betrag der Finanzhilfe hinausgehenden Gewinn erzielte. Die Finanzhilfebeträge werden nach einer umfassenden Kostenanalyse in einer Höhe festgelegt, die die Möglichkeit der Gewinnerzielung von vornherein ausschließt. Sie unterscheiden sich je nach Zielsprache, um besonderen Umständen Rechnung zu tragen, und werden gemäß den Bestimmungen der EU-Haushaltsordnung alle zwei Jahre aktualisiert.

Der relativ geringe Finanzrahmen für das Programm „Kultur“ im Allgemeinen und für diesen Zweig im Besonderen lässt keine breit gefächerte Ausrichtung der Unterstützung zu. Finanzhilfen werden daher ausschließlich für belletristische Werke vergeben.

Die angeforderten Informationen zu den Literaturübersetzungsprojekten, die seit 2007 eine Förderung erhielten, sind dem Anhang zu entnehmen, der dem Herrn Abgeordneten und dem Sekretariat des Parlaments direkt übermittelt wurde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008882/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Literary translation projects supported by the Culture programme 2007-13, broken down by language

An important objective of the first strand of the Culture programme 2007-13 is to provide financial support for literary translations. In 2012, approval was given for the translation of 531 works.

1. Can the Commission provide an overview of how many literary translation projects per source language have received support since 2007?

2. Can the Commission provide an overview of how many literary translation projects per target language have received support since 2007?

3. Can the Commission supply information about the countries of origin of the literary works in question? If so, can it provide an overview of how many literary translation projects per country of origin have received support since 2007?

Question for written answer E-008934/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: Success of literary translation projects supported by the Culture programme 2007-13

An important objective of the first strand of the Culture programme 2007-13 is to provide financial support for literary translations. In 2012 alone, approval was given for the translation of 531 works ([1]).

Applications for support for literary translation projects are submitted by publishers and publishing firms.

1. Does the project applicant receive the full publishing and distribution rights after translation of the work in question?

2. Does the Commission have any information about the number of translations that received support which were in fact published in at least one edition?

3. Can the Commission supply any information about the number of projects in which a publishing firm made a profit from marketing the translation that exceeded the amount paid as a grant?

Question for written answer E-008964/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(5 October 2012)

Subject: Promotion of non-fiction translations under the Culture programme 2007-2013

An important objective of the first strand of the Culture 2007-2013 programme is to provide financial support for literary translations.

The Culture 2007-2013 programme guide makes it clear that grants can be given only for the translation of literary works. Non-fiction texts such as biographies or scientific works are explicitly excluded from the programme of support.

Why are works of non-fiction, including works which have influenced cultural thought, the political system or intellectual developments in the EU, not eligible for support under this programme?

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/funding/2012/selection/documents/strand_1-2-2/books_proposed_for_selection_2012_sorted_by_organisation_and_language.pdf

Joint answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2012)

The Culture Programme seeks to stimulate the widest possible circulation of literature across Europe in many ways and to facilitate the access to cultures from other countries, including through support to literary translation. The annual budget earmarked for this kind of support is around EUR 3 million.

One of the funding preconditions for literary translations is that the publishing house applying for a grant owns the rights to the literary work(s) proposed for translation or will own them before the signature of the grant agreement. Selected applicants are requested to provide a proof. Publishing houses which receive funding are also obliged to include in their final reports published copies of the translation produced with ISBN.

The Commission has no information regarding projects in which a publisher made a profit exceeding the grant amount. Further to an extensive cost-analysis such amounts are fixed at a level that excludes, a priori, the possibility of generating profit. The amounts differ per target language in order to accommodate specific situations and are updated every two years as stipulated in the EU Financial Regulation.

The relatively limited budget available for the Culture Programme, in general, and for this strand in particular, does not allow for a wide scope of support. Funding is therefore restricted to works of fiction.

The requested information regarding literary translation projects which have received support since 2007 cab be found in annex, sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008883/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Gravi irregolarità nel parco-zoo «Le dune del Delta» di Ravenna, in palese violazione della direttiva 1999/22/CE relativa alla custodia degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici

L'11 maggio 2012 ha aperto al pubblico il parco «Le dune del Delta» di Ravenna, un giardino zoologico esplorabile con la modalità del safari, cioè permettendo ai visitatori di avvicinarsi agli animali senza barriere, fatta eccezione per alcune specie. Il 2 agosto 2006 il Ministero dell'Ambiente comunicava che la documentazione fornita dalla struttura non era sufficiente a dimostrare l'esistenza dei requisiti previsti dalla direttiva 1999/22/CE. Il parco risultava sprovvisto di licenza almeno fino al 4 luglio 2012, come confermato da lettera del Ministero dell'Ambiente all'associazione Ravenna Punto a Capo ([1]) . Si aggiungano a ciò le precarie condizioni degli animali, che sarebbero detenuti in numero di gran lunga superiore a quello concesso dalla VIA (Valutazione di Impatto Ambientale) del comune. Fra gli animali presenti, inoltre, alcuni apparterrebbero a specie pericolose non concesse dalla VIA. Tali irregolarità sono state denunciate da numerose associazioni ([2]) attraverso un ricorso al TAR, un ricorso al Tribunale di Ravenna e varie denunce. Nel ricorso al TAR le associazioni hanno evidenziato l'assenza della valutazione di incidenza ambientale, necessaria per la presenza a 15 metri dallo zoo dell'area SIC e ZPS IT4070010 «Pineta di Classe». L'associazione Ravenna Punto a Capo ha realizzato un video che documenta le condizioni di detenzione degli animali nello zoo-safari ([3]) . Nella struttura, infatti, pare non esserci spazio sufficiente affinché tutte le specie possano svolgere i loro propri modelli comportamentali (difesa del territorio, corteggiamento e riproduzione) e si suppone che ad alcuni uccelli, come ibis e fenicotteri, siano state tarpate le ali ([4]) . Inoltre, le numerose specie selvatiche che vivono nel confinante delta del Po potrebbero entrare a contatto con i volatili dello zoo, rendendo reale il rischio di contagio di malattie, sia per gli animali del parco che per l'uomo ([5]) . Il pericolo del contagio è confermato da un recente divieto della Regione Veneto a svolgere fiere, mostre e mercati avicoli (Comunicazione del 21/09/2012, Prot. n. 424939). Infine, a riprova delle carenze della struttura anche dal punto di vista della sicurezza, va ricordato che a giugno un operatore del parco-zoo è rimasto schiacciato da una giraffa, finendo all'ospedale con un serio trauma toracico ([6]).

Alla luce di quanto esposto si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Non ritiene opportuno aprire un'indagine al fine di accertare le violazioni delle direttive 1999/22/CE, 1992/43/CEE e 2009/147/CE?

2. Non ritiene necessaria una revisione della direttiva al fine di chiudere definitivamente tutti i centri che si trovano nelle medesime condizioni?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 novembre 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte delle interrogazioni: E-3677/11 presentata da Richard Ashworth, E-5760/11 presentata da Oreste Rossi, E-6006/11 presentata da Marina Yannakoudakis e E-4837/12 presentata da Oreste Rossi, sullo stesso argomento ([7]).

La Commissione rileva che il giardino zoologico «Le Dune del Delta» di Ravenna ha recentemente ottenuto una licenza dalle autorità competenti conformemente alla direttiva sui giardini zoologici. Le informazioni di cui la Commissione dispone attualmente non giustificano un'indagine.

Secondo la Commissione, non occorre modificare la direttiva sui giardini zoologici (direttiva 1999/22/CE del Consiglio ([8])) per affrontare le questioni sollevate dall'onorevole parlamentare.

([1]) Lettera del 04/07/2012 del dott. Renato Grimaldi, Direttore Generale del Ministero dell'Ambiente, all'Ass. Punto a Capo.
([2]) Animal Liberation, Animal Freedom, Collettivo Byzatium, Cruelty Free, L'Occhio Verde, Ravenna Punto a Capo, Ravenna Viva.
([3]) Cfr. documento video http://youtu.be/GerbzPg-KdM a partire da 1'30".
([4]) Fonte: relazione del 14 aprile 2012 del prof. Carlo Consiglio, docente di zoologia a Roma.
([5]) Fonte: relazione del 14 aprile 2012 del dott. Massimo Franceschetti Picard, medico veterinario.
([6]) Articolo: http://ravennanotizie.it/main/index.php?id_pag=23&id_blog_post=55812.
([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([8]) Direttiva 1999/22/CE del Consiglio, del 29 marzo 1999, relativa alla custodia degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici — GU L 94 del 9.4.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008883/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Serious irregularities at the 'Le dune del Delta' zoo park in Ravenna, in clear breach of Directive 1999/22/EC relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos

The 'Le dune del Delta' zoo park in Ravenna opened to the public on 11 May 2012. This is a zoo run on safari park lines, allowing visitors to be near to all the animals except a few species, without any barriers between them. On 2 August 2006 the Ministry of the Environment reported that the documentation provided by the zoo did not suffice to demonstrate that all the requirements of Directive 1999/22/EC had been met. The zoo did not receive its licence therefore until 4 July 2012 at least, as confirmed by the letter from the Ministry of the Environment to the Ravenna Punto a Capo Association ([1]). To this can be added the poor conditions the animals are kept in, and their numbers seem far higher than agreed in the environmental impact assessment (EIA) carried out by the municipality. Furthermore the animals apparently include dangerous species not agreed to in the EIA. These irregularities have been reported by a number of associations ([2]) through an appeal lodged with the regional administrative court (the TAR), an appeal to the Court in Ravenna and various other means of complaint. In their appeal to the TAR the associations highlighted the fact that the environmental impact assessment required because the zoo is 15 metres from the SCI and SPA IT4070010 'Pineta di Classe' area had not been carried out. The Ravenna Punto a Capo Association has made a video documenting the animals' living conditions at the zoo-safari ([3]) . There does not appear to be enough space there for all the species to follow their natural behavioural instincts (defence of territory, courtship and breeding) and it seems likely that the wings of some birds, such as the ibis and the flamingos, have been clipped ([4]). What is more, the many species of wild birds living in the neighbouring Po Delta could come into contact with the birds in the zoo, creating a real risk of disease being spread to both animals in the park and humans ([5]). The danger of disease being spread was confirmed by a recent ban by the Veneto Region on bird fairs, shows and markets (Notice of 21.9.2012, Ref. No 424939). Finally, and to confirm the zoo's lack of safety precautions, in June an employee was crushed by a giraffe, ending up in hospital with serious chest injuries ([6]).

1. Does the Commission consider that an inquiry should be opened to determine whether Directives 1999/22/EC, 1992/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC have been breached?

2. Does it agree that the directive needs to be revised so as to close permanently all animal centres run under conditions like these?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-3677/11 by Mr Ashworth, E-5760/11 by Mr Rossi, E-6006/11 by Mrs Yannakoudakis and E-4837/12 by Mr Rossi ([7]) on the same issue.

The Commission notes that 'Le Dune del Delta' Zoo Park in Ravenna has recently been granted a licence by the competent authorities as required by the Zoos Directive. The information currently available to the Commission does not warrant an inquiry.

The Commission considers that there is no need to amend the Zoos Directive (Council Directive 1999/22/EC) ([8]) to address the issues raised by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Letter of 4.7.2012 from Dr Renato Grimaldi, Director-General of the Ministry of the Environment, to the Punto a Capo Association.
([2]) Animal Liberation, Animal Freedom, Collettivo Byzatium, Cruelty Free, L'Occhio Verde, Ravenna Punto a Capo, Ravenna Viva.
([3]) Cfr. video on http://youtu.be/GerbzPg-KdM from 1' 30"
([4]) *Source:* report of 14 April 2012 by Prof. Carlo Consiglio, zoology lecturer in Rome.
([5]) *Source:* report of 14 April 2012 by Dr Massimo Franceschetti Picard, veterinary surgeon.
([6]) Article: http://ravennanotizie.it/main/index.php?id_pag=23&id_blog_post=55812
([7]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([8]) Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos, OJ L 94, 9.4.1999.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008884/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) και Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνος για την υγεία των καταναλωτών από γενετικά τροποποιημένο καλαμπόκι

Σύμφωνα με διετή μελέτη που πραγματοποιήθηκε στο πανεπιστήμιο της Caen στη Γαλλία, τα αποτελέσματα της οποίας δημοσιεύθηκαν στις 19 Σεπτεμβρίου στην Food and Chemical Toxicology Journal, το γενετικά τροποποιημένο καλαμπόκι NK 603 και το φυτοφάρμακο RoundUp κρίθηκαν καρκινογόνα, προκαλώντας μέχρι και πρόωρο θάνατο σε πειραματόζωα. Τα αποτελέσματα των ερευνών είναι άκρως ανησυχητικά αφού τα πειραματόζωα υπέστησαν πολλαπλούς καρκινικούς όγκους και βλάβες σε ζωτικά όργανα, ενώ οι επιπτώσεις ήταν εμφανώς δυσμενέστερες για τα θηλυκά ζώα.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για τα αποτελέσματα της εν λόγω έρευνας; Προτίθεται η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή για την Ασφάλεια των Τροφίμων (EFSA) να επαναξιολογήσει το εν λόγω προϊόν σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο δεδομένου ότι το 2003 είχε γνωμοδοτήσει ότι ο γενετικά τροποποιημένος αραβόσιτος NK 603 είναι ασφαλής και ότι η διάθεσή του στην αγορά, ως τροφίμου ή ζωοτροφής ή προϊόντος προς επεξεργασία, δεν αναμένεται να έχει αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στην υγεία των ανθρώπων, των ζώων και στο περιβάλλον;

2. Σε ποιες άμεσες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί, προκειμένου να διαφυλάξει την υγεία των ευρωπαίων καταναλωτών;

3. Δεδομένου ότι στην ΕΕ καλλιεργούνται δύο είδη γενετικά τροποποιημένων τροφίμων, πρόκειται να προχωρήσει σε άμεση αναστολή των αδειών για την καλλιέργεια και παραγωγή αυτών των προϊόντων; Κρίνει σκόπιμο να προβεί σε επαναξιολόγηση των μελετών βάσει των οποίων έχει επιτραπεί η καλλιέργεια και η εισαγωγή από τρίτες χώρες γενετικά τροποποιημένων προϊόντων που κυκλοφορούν στην ευρωπαϊκή αγορά;

Απάντηση του κ. Šefčovič εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τους κυρίους βουλευτές στην απάντηση στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις P-008278/2012 και P-008334/2012 ([1]), οι οποίες αναφέρονται στα αποτελέσματα της μελέτης του Seralini *et al* καθώς και στα μετέπειτα μέτρα που έλαβε η Επιτροπή.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008884/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) and Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Genetically modified maize — a risk to consumer health

According to a two-year study by the University of Caen in France, the results of which were published on 19 September in the Food and Chemical Toxicology Journal, NK603 genetically modified maize and the herbicide RoundUp were found to be carcinogenic, leading to premature death in laboratory animals. These findings are extremely worrying, given that the animals, in particular the females, developed numerous cancerous tumours and suffered damage to their vital organs.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above findings? Will the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) reassess GM maize at European level, given that in 2003 NK603 genetically modified maize was ruled to be safe and the marketing thereof as food, fodder or raw material for processing was not expected to have any adverse effects on human health, animal health or the environment?

2. What immediate measures will it take to protect the health of European consumers?

3. Given that two types of genetically modified foods are being cultivated in the EU, will immediate action be taken to suspend authorisation for their cultivation and production? Does the Commission consider it necessary to reassess the findings of the studies on the basis of which the cultivation and import from third countries of genetically modified products now being marketed in Europe was authorised?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(9 November 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to written questions P-008278/2012 and P-008334/2012 ([1]), which addresses the results of the study by Seralini et al. and follow-up measures by the Commission.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008885/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Accesos definitivos al Puerto de Barcelona

El pasado jueves 26 de setiembre se dio luz verde a los Presupuestos Generales del Estado español para 2013 (PGE-2013) ([1]), presupuestos que se enviarán en breve a Bruselas para su visto bueno.

Dio la casualidad de que el mismo día se inauguró, en el Puerto de Barcelona, la terminal de contenedores más avanzada del Mediterráneo, la terminal BEST, financiada y operada por la empresa Hutchinson Port Holdings ([2]). Aunque el Gobierno español se comprometió en el año 2002 a construir nuevos accesos al puerto, la realidad es que la nueva terminal se inauguró sin estos accesos definitivos ([3]).

En los PGE-2013 hay prevista una partida de 60 millones de euros para empezar a ejecutar los accesos definitivos al Puerto de Barcelona. Está previsto que las obras finalicen en 2016, con un coste total de 100 millones de euros. Está previsto que en los PGE-2014 haya una partida de 25 millones de euros, y en los PGE-2015, una partida final de 15 millones de euros ([4]).

En vista de la importancia de esta infraestructura y del retraso acumulado (ya que el inicio del expediente es de 2002), ¿no cree la Comisión que esta infraestructura podría estar construida para 2015?

En el PGE-2013, la inversión en infraestructuras en Cataluña es aproximadamente del 12 % del PIB estatal. En cambio, la Ley del Estatuto de Cataluña señala que tiene que ser del 18 % del PIB ([5]).

¿Tiene la Comisión previsto proponer algún cambio en este sentido en los PGE-2013 a fin de que se cumpla el Estatuto de Cataluña?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008893/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Corredor mediterráneo en Cataluña

El pasado jueves 26 de setiembre se dio luz verde a los Presupuestos Generales del Estado español para 2013 (PGE-2013) ([6]), presupuestos que se enviarán en breve a Bruselas para su visto bueno.

Según afirma el Ministro catalán de Infraestructuras, el Sr. D. Lluis Recoder, el Estado español ejecutó solamente el 35 % de las partidas previstas para infraestructuras en Cataluña en los Presupuestos Generales del Estado de 2012 ([7]). Cataluña, que genera el 20 % del PIB español y el 25 % de las exportaciones españolas ([8]), necesita de importantes infraestructuras para salir definitivamente de la crisis económica, pero el Estado español ejecuta las obras del corredor mediterráneo, así como los accesos al puerto de Barcelona y Tarragona, muy lentamente. No hay ninguna partida prevista para el acceso ferroviario a la Terminal 1 del Aeropuerto del Prat para 2013. En cambio, en los PGE-2013 se invierten más millones de euros en el tren de alta velocidad a Galicia que en el corredor mediterráneo, considerado prioritario por la CE ([9]).

¿Tiene la Comisión previsto proponer algún cambio en este sentido en los PGE-2013 a fin de que el Estado español invierta el dinero necesario para que las infraestructuras consideradas prioritarias por la CE, como el corredor mediterráneo, se ejecuten en el menor tiempo posible?

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20120927/54351923453/barcelona-terminal-contenedores-mediterraneo.html
([3]) http://www.economiadigital.es/es/notices/2012/09/hutchinson_consigue_su_via_de_mercancias_provisional_en_el_puerto_de_bcn_33282.php
([4]) http://www.sepg.pap.minhap.gob.es/Presup/PGE2013Proyecto/MaestroDocumentos/PGE-ROM/doc/2/3/1/3/1/N_13_A_V_2_O_2_0_1195_INVROOT_17010.PDF
([5]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/09/29/catalunya/1348916783_426772.html
([6]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([7]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20121003/54352219840/gobierno-ejecuto-catalunya-35-presupuestado-frente-111-madrid.html
([8]) http://www.acc10.cat/es/catalonia-barcelona/economia.jsp
([9]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20121002/54351495006/ave-gallego-supera-inversion-corredor-mediterraneo.html

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008894/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: Inversión del Reino de España en ferrocarriles en 2013

El pasado jueves 26 de setiembre se dio luz verde a los Presupuestos Generales del Estado español para 2013 (PGE-2013) ([10]), presupuestos que se enviarán en breve a Bruselas para su visto bueno.

En estos presupuestos, los ferrocarriles seguirán siendo los que dispongan de más recursos: 4 705 millones de euros, el 47 % del total. De ellos, el 71 %, 3 302 millones, serán para la alta velocidad ([11]). Los corredores noroeste —el AVE a Galicia— y norte —País Vasco, así como la línea Venta de Baños-Asturias— se llevarán 1 755 millones. El estratégico corredor mediterráneo contará con 1 019 millones de euros, 270 de ellos para adaptar el ancho de vía a los estándares europeos.

¿Cree la Comisión que estas inversiones van en la dirección correcta para salir de la crisis económica lo antes posible?

¿No sería mejor para el Estado español invertir el 71 % del presupuesto de ferrocarril en la ejecución de los corredores ferroviarios prioritarios? ¿Tiene la Comisión previsto proponer algún cambio en este sentido en los PGE-2013 a fin de que el Estado español invierta el dinero necesario para que las infraestructuras consideradas prioritarias por la CE, como el corredor mediterráneo, se ejecuten en el menor tiempo posible?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-008933/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 de octubre de 2012)

Asunto: El Corredor Mediterráneo entre la frontera francesa y Valencia

El pasado jueves 26 de septiembre se dio luz verde a los Presupuestos Generales del Estado español para 2013 (PGE-2013) ([12]), presupuestos que se enviarán en breve a Bruselas para su visto bueno.

En estos presupuestos hay varias inversiones parciales previstas en la ejecución del Corredor Mediterráneo en el Reino de España; parciales porque el conjunto de la obra finalizada, desde la frontera francesa hasta Valencia, está previsto para el año 2017.

Actualmente se están ejecutando obras parciales del Corredor Mediterráneo desde la frontera francesa hasta Valencia, y este tramo entero está previsto que entre en servicio el 2017 ([13]).

¿No cree la Comisión que el Corredor Mediterráneo se debería estar construyendo de norte a sur, para que los tramos finalizados entren en servicio de forma inmediata y den salida a las mercancías que llegan por el mar Mediterráneo mediante el ferrocarril, dirección norte? De este modo, por ejemplo, el tramo en la demarcación de Girona y Barcelona podría entrar en servicio antes del 2017, hecho que ayudaría a la reactivación económica de esta zona. Si no, el tramo entero entre la frontera francesa y Valencia estará económicamente paralizado hasta el año 2017.

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de diciembre de 2012)

La inclusión del corredor mediterráneo en los corredores de la red principal, que enlaza muchos puertos principales como Barcelona, Tarragona, Valencia y Cartagena, fija una clara prioridad de cara al futuro de la política europea de transportes y al apoyo en forma de financiación por parte de la UE ([14]).

([10]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([11]) http://www.larazon.es/noticia/6490-fomento-destinara-1-194-millones-al-pago-de-deudas
([12]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([13]) http://www.sepg.pap.minhap.gob.es/Presup/PGE2013Proyecto/MaestroDocumentos/PGE-ROM/doc/2/3/1/3/1/N_13_A_V_2_O_2_0_1195_INVROOT_17010.PDF
([14]) Véase la respuesta a la pregunta E-8663/12 en http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

El corredor actuará como instrumento de ejecución para iniciar el desarrollo de la infraestructura y la prestación de servicios a lo largo de su recorrido a través de su organismo de despliegue, la plataforma del corredor, que preside un coordinador europeo con un mandato sólido derivado de la propuesta de Reglamento sobre las orientaciones relativas a la red transeuropea de transporte.

Además, el tramo entre Valencia y la frontera francesa pertenece tanto al actual corredor D del sistema ERTMS ([15]), cuyo despliegue está previsto para 2015, como del corredor ferroviario de mercancías 6, cuyo plan de inversión, incluidos los aspectos de interoperabilidad, ha de presentarse a más tardar el 10 de mayo de 2013.

Los puertos principales mencionados deberán estar conectados al corredor mediterráneo tanto por ferrocarril como por carretera de forma interoperable como requisito obligatorio.

Por lo que se refiere a las necesidades de financiación para la conexión del puerto de Barcelona y el despliegue de la interoperabilidad a lo largo del corredor, la Comisión señala que la próxima convocatoria de la RTE-T, que se pondrá en marcha antes de finales de año, aportará más financiación a los proyectos fundamentales de infraestructura de la RTE-T, igual que la política de cohesión ([16]), la cual todavía dispone de financiación no asignada aún a los proyectos.

En lo que respecta a la evaluación por la Comisión de los presupuestos de los Estados miembros, la Comisión recuerda que, al ser su referencia jurídica el Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, su control se limita a comprobar que el presupuesto adoptado por los Estados miembros no ponga en peligro su estabilidad macroeconómica.

([15]) Sistema europeo de gestión del tráfico ferroviario.

([16]) Incluidos los fondos de cohesión asignados a la RTE-T en España.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008885/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Final access routes to the Port of Barcelona

On 26 September 2012, Spain's General State Budget for 2013 (PGE-2013) ([1]) was given the go-ahead; the budget will soon be sent to Brussels for approval.

This coincided with the inauguration, in the Port of Barcelona, of the most advanced container terminal in the Mediterranean, the BEST terminal, which is funded and operated by Hutchinson Port Holdings ([2]). Even though the Spanish Government committed itself in 2002 to construct new access routes to the port, the new terminal was actually inaugurated without these final access routes ([3]).

In the PGE-2013 there is a planned budget item of EUR 60 million to start work on constructing the final access routes to the Port of Barcelona. The work is expected to be finished in 2016, with a total cost of EUR 100 million. It is expected that there will be a budget item of EUR 25 million in the PGE-2014, and a final budget item of EUR 15 million in the PGE-2015 ([4]).

In view of the importance of this infrastructure and of the delay caused (given that proceedings began in 2002), does the Commission not think that this infrastructure could be constructed by 2015?

In the PGE-2013, investment in infrastructure in Catalonia is approximately 12% of State GDP. However, the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia states that this investment has to be 18% of GDP ([5]).

Does the Commission plan to propose a change in this respect to the PGE-2013 to ensure compliance with the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia?

Question for written answer E-008893/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Mediterranean corridor in Catalonia

On 26 September 2012, Spain's General State Budget for 2013 (PGE-2013) ([6]) was given the go-ahead; this budget will soon be sent to Brussels for approval.

According to the Catalonian Minister for Infrastructure, Lluis Recoder, Spain implemented only 35% of the budget items planned for infrastructure in Catalonia from the General State Budget for 2012 ([7]). Catalonia, which generates 20% of Spanish GDP and 25% of Spanish exports ([8]), needs substantial infrastructure in order to emerge conclusively from the economic crisis, but Spain is implementing the Mediterranean corridor works, as well as the work on access routes to the ports of Barcelona and Tarragona, very slowly. There is no planned budget item for rail access to El Prat Airport Terminal One for 2013. However, in the PGE-2013 a higher amount of investment is allocated to the high-speed train to Galicia than to the Mediterranean corridor, which is seen as a priority by the European Commission ([9]).

Does the Commission plan to propose a change to the PGE-2013 to the effect that Spain will invest the necessary money so that the infrastructure regarded as a priority by the European Commission, such as the Mediterranean corridor, is implemented as soon as possible?

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20120927/54351923453/barcelona-terminal-contenedores-mediterraneo.html
([3]) http://www.economiadigital.es/es/notices/2012/09/hutchinson_consigue_su_via_de_mercancias_provisional_en_el_puerto_de_bcn_33282.php
([4]) http://www.sepg.pap.minhap.gob.es/Presup/PGE2013Proyecto/MaestroDocumentos/PGE-ROM/doc/2/3/1/3/1/N_13_A_V_2_O_2_0_1195_INVROOT_17010.PDF
([5]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/09/29/catalunya/1348916783_426772.html
([6]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([7]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20121003/54352219840/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-35.html
([8]) http://www.acc10.cat/es/catalonia-barcelona/economia.jsp
([9]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20121002/54351495006/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html

Question for written answer E-008894/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Investment by the Kingdom of Spain in railways in 2013

On Thursday, 26 September, the go-ahead was given to the Spanish national budget for 2013 (PGE-2013) ([10]), and this budget will shortly be forwarded to Brussels for approval.

Under this budget, railways will continue to receive the most funding: EUR 4 705 million, equal to 47% of the total. Of that, 71% — EUR 3 302 million — will be spent on high-speed railway projects ([11]). The north-western corridor (the high-speed rail link to Galicia) and the northern corridor (the Basque country and the Venta de Baños-Asturias rail link) will receive EUR 1 755 million. The strategic Mediterranean corridor will receive EUR 1 019 million, 270 million of which is earmarked for adapting the Spanish gauge in line with European models.

Does the Commission believe that these investments are being made in the right areas for ensuring that Spain emerges from the economic crisis as soon as possible?

Would it not be better for Spain to invest 71% of the railway budget in completing priority rail corridors? Does the Commission have any plans to propose changes in this area to the PGE-2013 so that Spain invests the money needed in order to ensure that infrastructure classed as a priority by the Commission, such as the Mediterranean corridor, is completed in the shortest possible time period?

Question for written answer E-008933/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: The Mediterranean corridor between the French border and Valencia

On Thursday, 26 September, the go-ahead was given to the Spanish national budget for 2013 (PGE-2013) ([12]), and this budget will shortly be forwarded to Brussels for approval.

Under this budget, several partial investments in the completion of the Mediterranean corridor in Spain are planned; they are partial investments because the entire construction project, from the French border to Valencia, is scheduled for completion in 2017.

Partial works are currently being carried out on the Mediterranean corridor from the French border to Valencia, and this entire stretch is due to become operational in 2017 ([13]).

Does the Commission not think that the Mediterranean corridor should be built from north to south, so that completed sections can become operational immediately and goods arriving via the Mediterranean can be transported north by rail? Accordingly, for instance, the section of track between Girona and Barcelona could become operational before 2017, which would help the economic recovery of this area. Otherwise, the entire stretch between the French border and Valencia will be economically paralysed until 2017.

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2012)

The inclusion of the Mediterranean Corridor within the Core Network Corridors, connecting many core ports such as Barcelona, Tarragona, Valencia and Cartagena, sets a clear priority for future European Transport Policy and for the support in funding and financing by the EU ([14]).

([10]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([11]) http://www.larazon.es/noticia/6490-fomento-destinara-1-194-millones-al-pago-de-deudas
([12]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120927/54351197368/ajustes-presupuestos-generales-del-estado-2013.html
([13]) http://www.sepg.pap.minhap.gob.es/Presup/PGE2013Proyecto/MaestroDocumentos/PGE-ROM/doc/2/3/1/3/1/N_13_A_V_2_O_2_0_1195_INVROOT_17010.PDF
([14]) See answer to Question E-8663/12 available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

The corridor will act as an implementing tool to trigger the development of the infrastructure and the provision of services along its alignment, through its deployment body, the Corridor platform, chaired by a European Coordinator, with a robust mandate stemming from the proposal for a regulation on the Guidelines for the Trans-European Transport Network.

Furthermore, the section between Valencia and the French border belongs to both the current ERTMS Corridor D, for which deployment of ERTMS ([15]) is foreseen by 2015, and to rail freight corridor 6 for which an investment plan, including interoperability issues, has to be provided by 10 May 2013.

The abovementioned core ports have to be connected to the Mediterranean Corridor both by interoperable rail and road, as a mandatory requirement.

With regards to the funding needed for the connection to the port of Barcelona, and deploying interoperability along the Corridor, the Commission stresses that the next TEN-T call, which will be launched before the end of the year, will make further funding available for key TEN-T infrastructure projects, as well as the Cohesion policy ([16]) which still disposes of funding not yet allocated to projects.

With regard to the Commission's appraisal of Member States' budgets, the Commission stresses, that its control is limited to ascertain that the budget adopted by Member States does not endanger its macroeconomic stability, having as a legal reference the Stability and Growth Pact.

([15]) European Rail Traffic Management System.

([16]) Including the Cohesion Fund earmarked for TEN-T in Spain.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008886/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ακρίβεια στην Ελλάδα και μεγάλες αποκλίσεις από τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο στις τιμές βασικών προϊόντων

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκή Στατιστικής Υπηρεσίας (Eurostat), η Ελλάδα παραμένει μία από τις ακριβότερες χώρες της Ευρώπης σε ό,τι αφορά τις τιμές βασικών προϊόντων, παρά την παρατεταμένη ύφεση στη χώρα για έκτη συνεχόμενη χρονιά και τη δραματική μείωση των εισοδημάτων.

Αναλυτικότερα, η Ελλάδα στη διάρκεια του 2011 βρίσκεται στην πρώτη θέση της ΕΕ σε ό,τι αφορά τις τιμές σε γαλακτοκομικά και αυγά με απόκλιση τιμών μέχρι και 31,5 % σε σχέση με το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ, ενώ το 2010 ήταν στη δεύτερη. Παράλληλα, σε κατηγορίες βασικών προϊόντων καθημερινής διατροφής όπως: λίπη-έλαια, ψωμί-δημητριακά και ψάρια, οι τιμές στην Ελλάδα φαίνεται να ξεπερνούν κατά πολύ τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο, παρότι η χώρα έχει σημαντική παραγωγή στα εν λόγω προϊόντα. Επιπλέον, πρόσφατη μελέτη του οικονομικού πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών πιστοποιεί πως η Ελλάδα βρίσκεται στην κορυφή της λίστας των χωρών μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης με τις ακριβότερες τιμές προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών, με τις αποκλίσεις μάλιστα να ξεπερνούν ακόμη και το 20 % σε σχέση με τον μέσο όρο των 27.

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σε ποιους παράγοντες ή παθογένειες οφείλονται οι μεγάλες διαφορές στις τιμές βασικών προϊόντων στην Ελλάδα και οι μεγάλες αποκλίσεις από τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο των 27 κρατών μελών (σε όλα τα βασικά είδη διατροφής, ειδικότερα όμως σε εκείνα όπου η χώρα διαθέτει σημαντική παραγωγή);

2. Με ποιές μεθόδους η χώρα θα μπορούσε να οδηγηθεί σε αποκλιμάκωση των τιμών σε τέτοιου είδους προϊόντα; Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμες καλές πρακτικές κρατών μελών και ρυθμίσεις που αποδείχτηκαν αποτελεσματικές στην αποκλιμάκωση των τιμών;

3. Ποια τα βασικά συμπεράσματα της Επιτροπής από την επεξεργασία των στοιχείων της Eurostat για το πραγματικό προσαρμοσμένο ακαθάριστο διαθέσιμο εισόδημα των νοικοκυριών και τι έδειξε η σύγκριση της αγοραστικής δύναμης των νοικοκυριών για το 2010 και 2011 σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη; Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα και τα στοιχεία του 2012 και αν ναι, πότε προβλέπεται η δημοσίευσή τους;

4. Έχουν προκύψει μέχρι σήμερα κάποια απτά αποτελέσματα από τις πρωτοβουλίες της Επιτροπής όπως: από το ευρωπαϊκό σχέδιο δράσης για τον τομέα του λιανικού εμπορίου, από την ανακοίνωση σχετικά με τις αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές και από το φόρουμ υψηλού επιπέδου με στόχο τη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας της αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού τροφίμων;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει διεξαγάγει ειδική έρευνα σχετικά με τους λόγους των αποκλίσεων μεταξύ των τιμών στην Ελλάδα και του μέσου όρου της ΕΕ στον τομέα των τροφίμων. Εντούτοις, το φόρουμ υψηλού επιπέδου (HLF) για την καλύτερη λειτουργία της αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού τροφίμων περιλαμβάνει μία ομάδα εμπειρογνωμόνων σχετικά με το μέσο παρακολούθησης των ευρωπαϊκών τιμών τροφίμων, το οποίο αποσκοπεί στη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης σε στατιστικά δεδομένα περί των τιμών κατά τα διαδοχικά στάδια ορισμένων αλυσίδων εφοδιασμού τροφίμων. Με τη χρήση του εν λόγω μέσου καθίσταται αποτελεσματικότερη η διερεύνηση των λόγων εμφάνισης αυτών των αποκλίσεων.

2. οκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστούν αποτελεσματικά οι αποκλίσεις μεταξύ των τιμών των τροφίμων στην Ελλάδα και του ευρωπαϊκού μέσου όρου, πρέπει πρώτα να διευκρινιστούν οι λόγοι που τις προκαλούν. Από την άποψη των βέλτιστων πρακτικών, μπορεί να αναφερθεί η περίπτωση του Βελγίου ([1]). Η παροχή περισσότερων πληροφοριών στον τελικό καταναλωτή σχετικά με τις τιμές μπορεί έμμεσα να αποδειχτεί χρήσιμη για την άσκηση πίεσης με στόχο τη μείωσή τους ([2]).

([1]) Το Υπουργείο Οικονομίας κατήρτισε έκθεση προκειμένου να γίνει κατανοητό γιατί οι τιμές για τα ίδια προϊόντα είναι υψηλότερες στο Βέλγιο σε σύγκριση με τα γειτονικά κράτη μέλη.
http://economie.fgov.be/fr/binaries/etude_niveaux_prix_supermarches_tcm326-163021.pdf

([2]) Σύμφωνα με τη Σλοβενική Ένωση Καταναλωτών (ZPS), ένα παρατηρητήριο τιμών το οποίο λειτουργούσε στη Σλοβενία τα έτη 2008-2009 συνέβαλε στη συγκράτηση της αύξησης των τιμών των τροφίμων. Η πρωτοβουλία αυτή συντονίστηκε από τη ZPS και στηρίχτηκε χρηματοδοτικά από το Υπουργείο Οικονομίας της Σλοβενίας. Τέτοιου είδους παρατηρητήρια τιμών λειτουργούν σε αρκετά κράτη μέλη.

3. Η Επιτροπή (Eurostat) συλλέγει ετήσια στοιχεία για το προσαρμοσμένο ακαθάριστο διαθέσιμο εισόδημα ([3]). Βάσει των στοιχείων αυτών, η Eurostat δημοσίευσε το 2010 ([4]) στατιστική ανάλυση για το κατά κεφαλήν προσαρμοσμένο διαθέσιμο εισόδημα των νοικοκυριών, διορθωμένο κατά τις διαφορές τιμών μεταξύ των χωρών της ΕΕ. Η μελέτη κατέδειξε τη σημαντική διαφοροποίηση του κατά κεφαλήν προσαρμοσμένου διαθέσιμου εισοδήματος των νοικοκυριών στην Ευρώπη ([5]). Τα αντίστοιχα στοιχεία για το 2011 θα είναι διαθέσιμα τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 και για το 2012 τον Δεκέμβριο του 2013 ([6]).

4. Στο πλαίσιο του HLF η ομάδα εμπειρογνωμόνων για τις σχέσεις μεταξύ επιχειρήσεων (B2B) έχει υιοθετήσει αρχές καλής πρακτικής στις κάθετες σχέσεις και, επί του παρόντος, επεξεργάζεται τον σχεδιασμό ενός μηχανισμού επιβολής ([7]). Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή σκοπεύει να εγκρίνει, τους προσεχείς μήνες, ένα σχέδιο δράσης για τον ευρωπαϊκό τομέα λιανικού εμπορίου και μία πρωτοβουλία σχετικά με τις αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές.

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει επίσης στην απάντησή της στην ερώτηση E-8887/2012 ([8]).

([3]) Η συλλογή δεδομένων επιτυγχάνεται μέσω του προγράμματος διαβίβασης στοιχείων του ΕΣΛ: βλ. κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 2223/1996 του Συμβουλίου της 25ης Ιουνίου 1996 περί του ευρωπαϊκού συστήματος εθνικών και περιφερειακών λογαριασμών της Κοινότητας, ΕΕ L 310 της 30.11.1996.

([4]) Eurostat — Statistics in focus 35/2012.

([5]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-SF-12-035

([6]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database
πίνακας Non-financial transactions (nasa_nf_tr) (μη χρηματοπιστωτικές συναλλαγές).

([7]) Η Eurostat δημοσιεύει επίσης το διαθέσιμο εισόδημα των νοικοκυριών σε ευρώ και σε εθνικό νόμισμα
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/food/competitiveness/forum_food/index_en.htm

([8]) Διαθέσιμη στη διεύθυνση http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008886/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Cost of living in Greece and major disparities in the price of European staples compared with European average

According to recent data from the European Statistics Office (Eurostat), Greece remains one of the most expensive countries for the purchase of consumer staples, notwithstanding the protracted recession, which is now in its sixth successive year and the dramatic fall in incomes.

In 2011 Greece was the country with the highest dairy and egg prices, 31.5% higher than the EU average, while in 2010 it had been in second place. At the same time, the price of basis everyday foodstuffs such as fats, oil, bread, cereals and fish remain well above the European average, notwithstanding the large-scale production thereof in Greece. Furthermore, a recent study by the Athens Economics University shows that Greece is the European Union Member State where the price of goods and services is highest, 20% more than the EU 27 average.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission indicate the underlying reasons for the major disparities between Greece and the EU-27 average regarding the price of consumer staples, including those produced in significant quantities in Greece?

2. What action could be taken by Greece to bring down the price of such products? Have any good practices and measures by Member States proved effective in achieving this?

3. What were the basic findings of the Commission from Eurostat data concerning the gross disposable income of households and the comparative purchasing power of households for 2010 and 2011 in all of the Member States? Is data available for 2012 and, if so, when will it be made available?

4. Have any tangible results been achieved by Commission initiatives to date, such as the European programme of action in the retail sector, the communication regarding unfair trade practices and the high-level forum to improve the functioning of the food supply chain?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2012)

1. The Commission has not conducted any specific investigation on reasons explaining the disparities between Greece and the EU average regarding prices in the food sector. However the High Level Forum (HLF) for a better functioning of the food supply chain includes an Expert Platform on the European Food Prices Monitoring Tool that aims at improving the accessibility of statistical data on prices in successive stages of a number of food supply chains. Using this tool could help investigate the reasons explaining the price disparities.

2. To act effectively on the disparities between Greece and the EU average regarding prices in the food sector, the underlying reasons should first be clarified. In terms of best practice, the case of Belgium could be quoted ([1]). Indirectly, providing more price information to the end consumer can be helpful in creating a pressure to bring prices down ([2]).

([1]) A report was prepared by the Ministry of Economy to understand why the prices for identical products in Belgium are higher than in neighbouring Member States: http://economie.fgov.be/fr/binaries/etude_niveaux_prix_supermarches_tcm326-163021.pdf

([2]) According to the Slovene Consumers' Association (ZPS), a price observatory that functioned in Slovenia in the years 2008-2009 contributed to reducing the increase in food prices. The initiative has been operated by the ZPS and supported financially by the Ministry of Economy in Slovenia. Similar price observatories function in a number of Member States.

3. The Commission (Eurostat) collects annual data on gross adjusted disposable income ([3]). Based on this data Eurostat published for 2010 ([4]) a statistical analysis on household adjusted disposable income per capita corrected for price differentials among EU countries. This study showed that household adjusted disposable income per capita varied substantially in Europe ([5]). Similar data will be available for 2011 in December 2012 and for 2012 in December 2013 ([6]).

4. In the context of the HLF, the Expert Platform on B2B Relationships has adopted principles of good practice in vertical relations and is currently working on the design of a enforcement mechanism ([7]). In addition the Commission intends to adopt a European Retail Action Plan and an initiative on unfair trading practices in the coming months.

The Commission would also refer to its answer to Written Question E-8887/2012 ([8]).

([3]) This is done through the ESA Transmission Programme: see Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 of 25 June 1996 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community, OJ L310, 30.11.1996.

([4]) Eurostat — Statistics in focus 35/2012.

([5]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-SF-12-035

([6]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/sector_accounts/data/database — table: Non-financial transactions (nasa_nf_tr)

([7]) Eurostat also publishes household disposable income in euros and in national currencies: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/food/competitiveness/forum_food/index_en.htm

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008887/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στα ύψη παραμένουν οι τιμές στην ελληνική αγορά

Τη στιγμή που το εισόδημα των Ελλήνων καταναλωτών έχει συρρικνωθεί δραματικά, μια θλιβερή πραγματικότητα αποτελούν στην Ελλάδα η ακρίβεια και οι ανατιμήσεις στα βασικά είδη διατροφής. Πολλά μάλιστα βασικά προϊόντα διατροφής ίδιων πολυεθνικών εταιρειών καταλήγουν να πωλούνται ακριβότερα στην Ελλάδα από ό,τι σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες.

Σύμφωνα με το Ελληνικό Παρατηρητήριο Τιμών, καταγράφονται αυξήσεις τιμών στα 23 από τα 38 βασικά προϊόντα που είναι αναγκαία στο καθημερινό τραπέζι μιας οικογένειας. Χαρακτηριστικά στην Ελλάδα, σε σύγκριση με πέρυσι 10 % είναι ακριβότερα τα νωπά λαχανικά, 4,8 % τα νωπά φρούτα, 2 % τα γαλακτοκομικά, τα αβγά, και τα ψάρια, 9,4 % τα αναψυκτικά, 6,3 % οι χυμοί. Παράλληλα, τόσο τα πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Στατιστικής Υπηρεσίας, όσο και μελέτη του Κέντρου Προγραμματισμού και Οικονομικών Ερευνών και του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών, καταδεικνύουν ότι η Ελλάδα είναι πρωταθλήτρια στην ακρίβεια, καθώς η χώρα μας είναι από τις ακριβότερες ανάμεσα στα μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης σε προϊόντα και υπηρεσίες, με τεράστιες αποκλίσεις από τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο των 27. Δεδομένου ότι:

— 9 στους 10 καταναλωτές έχουν αλλάξει καταναλωτικές συνήθειες, ενώ 4 στους 10 αδυνατούν να αγοράσουν τα απαραίτητα είδη πρώτης ανάγκης, ιδιαίτερα τα τρόφιμα (σύμφωνα με την Εθνική Συνομοσπονδία Ελληνικού Εμπορίου) και ότι

— τα ολιγοπώλια, τα μονοπώλια, τα καρτέλ των πολυεθνικών, καθώς και η ύπαρξη εμποδίων σε τομείς της αγοράς όπως το λιανεμπόριο, έχουν μεγάλο μερίδιο ευθύνης για την αύξηση και τη διατήρηση των τιμών σε υψηλά επίπεδα.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή, σε συνεργασία με τις εθνικές αρχές ανταγωνισμού (ΕΑΑ), να προχωρήσει σε από κοινού δράσεις για τη διερεύνηση των πρακτικών που νοθεύουν τον ανταγωνισμό στην ελληνική αγορά;

2. Πρόκειται να προβεί σε άμεσες συστάσεις και να αναλάβει δράσεις για τον εξορθολογισμό των τιμών στην ελληνική αγορά;

3. Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή επίσημα στατιστικά στοιχεία για την υλική υστέρηση βασικών ειδών διατροφής στην Ελλάδα σε σύγκριση με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

1. Η Επιτροπή φροντίζει επιμελώς να ελέγχει την αλυσίδα εφοδιασμού τροφίμων στον ΕΟΧ. Στο πλαίσιο αυτών των προσπαθειών της, η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε τον Μάιο του 2012 μια έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικτύου Ανταγωνισμού (ΕΔΑ) με τον τίτλο «Δραστηριότητες στον τομέα των τροφίμων» ([1]). Όπως αναφέρεται εκεί, η ελληνική εθνική αρχή ανταγωνισμού έχει προβεί σε σειρά ερευνών στις περισσότερες αγορές τροφίμων και βρίσκεται πράγματι σε ιδανική θέση για τη λήψη των ενδεδειγμένων μέτρων παρακολούθησης ([2]).

2. Η Επιτροπή είναι διατεθειμένη να εξετάσει οποιαδήποτε ένδειξη αντιανταγωνιστικής συμπεριφοράς που καταλήγει, για παράδειγμα, σε τεχνητή στο εσωτερικό της ΕΕ διάκριση στην τιμολόγηση ή τμηματοποίηση της αγοράς και να λάβει τα απαραίτητα μέτρα σε περίπτωση που διαπιστωθεί παράβαση. Η Επιτροπή, όμως, δεν μπορεί να προβεί σε «συστάσεις όσον αφορά τις τιμές» ούτε να αναλάβει «δράσεις για τον εξορθολογισμό των τιμών στην ελληνική αγορά», εκτός από τις εξουσίες που διαθέτει όσον αφορά την οικονομική πολιτική ([3]).

Στο πλαίσιο της τεχνικής βοήθειας που παρέχεται από την Ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα της Επιτροπής, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ζήτησε από τον ΟΟΣΑ να εντοπίσει — σε στενή συνεργασία με την ελληνική εθνική αρχή ανταγωνισμού — ρυθμιστικής φύσεως εμπόδια στον ανταγωνισμό, μεταξύ άλλων, στους τομείς των τροφίμων και της λιανικής πώλησης. Αυτό αναμένεται να οδηγήσει στη διατύπωση συστάσεων για συγκεκριμένα μέτρα πολιτικής για την άρση ή τον περιορισμό των εμποδίων στην ευελιξία ως προς τις τιμές.

([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») http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/food_report_en.pdf

([2]) Για παράδειγμα, ξεκίνησε το 2011 έρευνα στον τομέα των οπωροκηπευτικών και συνεχίζει σειρά ερευνών στον εν λόγω τομέα.

([3]) Όπως ορίζεται στα άρθρα 120 και 121 ΣΛΕΕ.

3. Οι παράγοντες που επηρεάζουν τη διαμόρφωση των τιμών εξετάζονται από τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής και από ενδιαφερόμενους παράγοντες στο φόρουμ υψηλού επιπέδου για τη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας της αλυσίδας εφοδιασμού τροφίμων, που δημιουργήθηκε το 2010 Για να αυξηθεί η διαφάνεια και η προβλεψιμότητα των τιμών, η Eurostat εξακολουθεί να αναπτύσσει το μέσο παρακολούθησης των τιμών τροφίμων ([4]) που τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή το 2009 με σκοπό να συμπεριλάβει, μεταξύ άλλων, πιο λεπτομερή στοιχεία για τις τιμές και μεγαλύτερο αριθμό αλυσίδων εφοδιασμού τροφίμων. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει άλλα ειδικά δεδομένα που να αποδεικνύουν υλική στέρηση σε σχέση με τρόφιμα στην Ελλάδα σε σύγκριση με άλλα κράτη μέλη.

([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/hicp/methodology/prices_data_for_market_monitoring

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008887/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Continuing high cost of living in Greece

The dramatic fall in the incomes of Greek consumers is being greatly aggravated by the high cost of living and the increasing price of staple foodstuffs, many of which are more expensive in Greece than in other European countries, despite the fact that they may be sold by the same multinational retailers.

According to the Greek Price Observatory, price increases have affected 23 out of 38 staple household foodstuffs. Price increases in Greece since last year have been as follows: 10% for fresh vegetables, 4.8% for fresh fruit, 2% for dairy products, eggs and fish, 9.4% for soft drinks and 6.3% for juices. At the same time, according to recent information from the European Statistical Office, the Centre for Economic Planning and Research and the University of Athens, Greece is leading the field with regard to the cost of living, goods and services being among the most expensive in the European Union and way above the EU-27 average.

Given that:

— nine out of ten consumers have changed their purchasing habits while four out of ten are unable to afford basic necessities, including food (according to the National Confederation of Greek Commerce), and

— oligopolies, monopolies, multinational cartels and market restrictions in the retail sector are largely responsible for increased prices and the continuing high cost of living,

1. Will the Commission, together with the national competition authorities, investigate practices undermining competition on the Greek market?

2. Will it make immediate recommendations and take the necessary measures to rationalise Greek market prices?

3. Does the Commission have any reliable data regarding material deprivation in respect of foodstuffs in Greece compared with other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2012)

1. The Commission takes great care in monitoring the food supply chain in the EEA. As part of its work, the Commission published in May 2012 a European Competition Network (ECN) Report on 'Activities in the Food sector' ([1]). As therein mentioned, the Greek NCA has done a series of investigations in most of the food markets, and it is indeed well-placed to carry out any follow-up actions ([2]).

2. The Commission is ready to examine any indications of anti-competitive behaviour resulting, for example, in artificial intra-EU price discrimination or market segmentation, and take appropriate measures in case of finding of an infringement. The Commission cannot, however, make any 'price recommendations' or take any 'measure to rationalise Greek market prices', besides the Commission powers in Economic Policy ([3]).

Within the framework of the technical assistance provided by the Commission's Task Force for Greece, the Greek Government has asked the OECD to identify — in close collaboration with the Greek NCA — regulatory obstacles to competition in amongst others the food and retail sector. This should lead to recommendations for concrete policy actions to remove or lower obstacles to price flexibility.

3. Factors affecting price formation are being examined by the Commission services and stakeholders in the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain set up in 2010. To increase price transparency and predictability Eurostat is continuing to develop the Food Price Monitoring Tool ([4]) launched in 2009 to include e.g. more detailed price information and a greater number of food chains. The Commission does not have any other specific data regarding material deprivation in respect of foodstuffs in Greece compared with other Member States.

([1]) Report on competition law enforcement and market monitoring activities by European competition authorities in the food sector; http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/food_report_en.pdf
([2]) For example it launched in 2011 a sector inquiry in the fruit and vegetables sector, and still has a series of ongoing investigations in the sector.
([3]) As set out in Articles 120 and 121 TFEU.
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/hicp/methodology/prices_data_for_market_monitoring

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008888/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Direttiva 79/409/CEE e caccia in deroga

La direttiva 79/409/CEE, all'articolo 9 in tema di regolamentazione «caccia in deroga», al paragrafo 1, lettera C richiede che tali deroghe siano accordate per «consentire in condizioni rigidamente controllate e in modo selettivo la cattura, la detenzione o altri impieghi misurati di determinati uccelli in piccole quantità». La Commissione nel documento del 24/11/93 «Seconda relazione sull'esecuzione della direttiva 79/409/CEE concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici» definisce con «piccole quantità» «qualsiasi prelievo inferiore all'1 % della mortalità annua totale della popolazione interessata (valore medio) per le specie che non possono essere cacciate e dell'ordine dell'1 % per le specie che possono essere oggetto di azioni di caccia […] è inoltre possibile ipotizzare un prelievo superiore alla soglia dell'1 % — vale a dire fino al 5 % della mortalità annua — per le specie abbondanti con uno stato di conservazione soddisfacente, previa approfondita analisi scientifica dell'autorità competente a rilasciare la deroga» . In Italia sono le regioni che definiscono le specie cacciabili in deroga, le quantità e calendario. L'ISPRA a sua volta fornisce pareri obbligatori e non vincolanti rispetto alle scelte regionali. La discordanza tra scelte regionali e pareri dell'ISPRA non denota una illegalità delle prime, ma un'evidente incertezza generale sul patrimonio ambientale migratorio. Poiché occorre tutelare non solo la biodiversità, ma anche la libertà di esercizio dell'attività venatoria, nonché la sua immagine e il suo ruolo positivo nella gestione di un bene collettivo quale la fauna.

Può pertanto la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

— È essa in grado di fornire dati scientifici attendibili e univoci, con i quali sia possibile calcolare le quantità cacciabili in deroga delle singole specie nel rispetto dei criteri da essa stabiliti?

— Se non è in grado di fornire questi dati, ha previsto uno studio ad hoc tenendo conto delle specificità faunistiche e territoriali che caratterizzano ciascuno Stato membro, piuttosto che il finanziamento di studi bipartisan che coinvolgano associazioni ambientaliste e venatorie degli Stati membri?

— Intende aprire un tavolo di dialogo anche con le associazioni venatorie presenti in Europa per definire una collaborazione, onde pervenire a una più efficiente regolamentazione della materia?

— Può riferire in merito al funzionamento della caccia in deroga negli altri Stati membri, evidenziando se si riscontrano problemi simili a quelli imputati all'Italia?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(10 dicembre 2012)

Non compete alla Commissione fornire dati scientifici agli Stati membri per l'esercizio del potere di deroga. Se lo Stato membro intende avvalersi delle possibilità di deroga, queste devono rispettare in toto i requisiti della direttiva «uccelli selvatici» (2009/147/CE ([1])). La Commissione, tuttavia, non ha fornito orientamenti sulle disposizioni pertinenti, anche per quanto riguarda la definizione del concetto di «piccole quantità», nel suo documento orientativo sulla caccia sostenibile ([2]). Per quanto concerne il ruolo svolto dall'Istituto scientifico nazionale italiano (ISPRA), la sua guida scientifica e i suoi pareri alle autorità italiane, la Commissione ritiene che ciò sia pienamente conforme ai principi e alle prescrizioni della direttiva «uccelli selvatici».

La Commissione ha svolto per molti anni un dialogo con le ONG delle associazioni venatorie e di conservazione della natura europee, segnatamente nel quadro delle iniziative per la caccia sostenibile ([3]) nell'UE.

L'Italia è l'unico Stato membro che si è avvalso della deroga per consentire la continuazione della caccia ricreativa di specie protette non elencate nell'allegato II della direttiva. Ciò ha portato a varie sentenze della Corte di giustizia europea che hanno dichiarato il mancato ottemperamento da parte dell'Italia di tale obbligo della direttiva «uccelli selvatici» ([4]).

([1]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/hunting/docs/hunting_guide_it.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/hunting/index_en.htm
([4]) Cause C-573/08, C-164/09, C-503/06.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008888/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Directive 2009/147/EC and derogations from the prohibition on hunting

Paragraph 1(c) of Article 9 of Directive 2009/147/EC, which deals with derogations from the articles on hunting, stipulates that such derogations may be granted 'to permit, under strictly supervised conditions and on a selective basis, the capture, keeping or other judicious use of certain birds in small numbers'. The Commission's Second report on the implementation of Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, of 24 November 1993 (COM(93) 572), states that "small numbers' should be considered as being any taking of less than 1% of the total annual mortality of the population concerned (average value) for species which may not be hunted and any taking of around 1% for species which may be hunted', and that it is also possible to envisage a taking of more than 1% — or up to 5% of total annual mortality — for abundant species with a satisfactory level of conservation, subject to in-depth scientific research by the authority competent to issue the derogation . In Italy it is the Regions which determine which species may be hunted by way of derogation, in what numbers, and when. ISPRA provides mandatory but non-binding opinions concerning the regions' decisions. Discrepancies between regional choices and ISPRA decisions do not indicate that the former are unlawful, but that there is clearly a general lack of certainty about migrant bird species. It is necessary to protect not only biodiversity but also the freedom to hunt, the image of hunting and the positive role it plays in the management of the collective asset which is a country's fauna.

In view of the foregoing,

— Can the Commission provide reliable and unequivocal scientific data as a basis for calculating the number of birds which may be hunted by way of derogation for each of the species which meet the criteria it has laid down?

— If the Commission is unable to provide this data, has it any plans for an ad hoc study taking account of the specific features of the fauna and territory of each Member State, rather than funding bipartisan studies which involve the Member States' environmental and hunting associations?

— Does the Commission intend to start a dialogue with the hunting associations in Europe to establish a form of cooperation aimed at regulating this sector more effectively?

— Can the Commission report on the way derogations from the prohibition on hunting are applied in the other Member States, indicating whether similar problems arise to those allegedly encountered in Italy?

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

It is not the role of the Commission to provide scientific data for Member States to exercise derogations. If a Member State wants to avail of the derogation possibilities, these must be fully in line with the requirements of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC ([1])). The Commission has, however, provided guidance on relevant provisions, including in relation to determination of the concept of 'small numbers', in its guidance document on sustainable hunting ([2]). As regards the role being played by the Italian national scientific institute (ISPRA), its scientific guidance and opinions to the Italian authorities would appear to the Commission to be fully in line with the principles and the requirements of the Birds Directive.

The Commission has for many years been engaged in dialogue with European hunting organisations and nature conservation NGOs, namely in the framework of the EU Sustainable Hunting Initiatives ([3]).

Italy is the only Member State that has used the derogations to allow the continuation of recreational hunting of protected species not listed in Annex II of the directive. This has led to several rulings of the European Court of Justice that have concluded that Italy has failed to comply with this obligation of the Birds Directive ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/hunting/docs/hunting_guide_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/hunting/index_en.htm
([4]) Cases C-573/08, C-164/09, C-503/06.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008889/12
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(3. oktober 2012)

Om: Tyrkisk støtte til akvakulturprodukter

Sammenslutningen af europæiske fiskeopdrættere, European Fish Farmers Association (EFFA), hævder, at den tyrkiske støtteordning for akvakultur påfører akvakulturvirksomheder i EU's medlemsstater alvorlig skade. Eksporten af akvakulturprodukter fra Tyrkiet til EU er de facto steget betragteligt i de seneste år. Støtten kan virke konkurrenceforvridende ved at gøre støttede varer kunstigt konkurrencedygtige, hvilket har en negativ virkning på konkurrencen. EFFA hævder, at den tyrkiske støtteordning for akvakultur sætter tyrkiske fiskeopdrættere i stand til at sænke deres eksportpriser til EU's marked, og at dette er til skade for vores egen akvakulturbranche.

Kommissionen kan under sådanne omstændigheder gribe ind ved at iværksætte udligningsforanstaltninger for at genskabe rimelige konkurrencevilkår i EU.

Kommissionen har i en nylig meddelelse til Parlamentet (KOM(2012)0494) identificeret akvakultur som et af fem fokusområder for blå vækst. Akvakultur bør derfor med yderligere bestræbelser på EU-niveau stimulere langsigtet vækst og beskæftigelse i den blå økonomi i overensstemmelse med målene for Europa 2020-strategien.

Vil der blive truffet foranstaltninger for at modvirke den tyrkiske støtteordning for akvakultur? I benægtende fald, hvorfor ikke? I givet fald, hvornår og hvordan?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Karel De Gucht
(30. november 2012)

Kommissionen henviser det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-005876/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-005876&language=DA

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008889/12
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Turkish subsidy for aquaculture products

The European Fish Farmers Association — EFFA — claims that the Turkish subsidy scheme for aquaculture is causing severe harm to aquaculture enterprises in EU Member States. The export of aquaculture products from Turkey to the EU has de facto increased significantly in recent years. Subsidies may distort competition by making subsidised goods artificially competitive, thus negatively affecting competition. EFFA claims that the Turkish subsidy scheme for aquaculture enables Turkish fish farmers to reduce their export prices to the EU market, and that this is causing injury to our own aquaculture industry.

The Commission may in such circumstances intervene by levying countervailing measures to restore fair competition in the EU.

In a recent communication to Parliament (COM(2012) 0494), the Commission identified aquaculture as one of five blue-growth focus areas. Aquaculture could therefore, with additional effort at EU level, stimulate long-term growth and jobs in the blue economy, in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Will any action be taken against the Turkish subsidy scheme for aquaculture? If not, why not? If so, when and how?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 November 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Written Question E-005876/2012 ([1]).

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-008890/12
an die Kommission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(3. Oktober 2012)

Betrifft: Änderung des Übereinkommens über die Informationstechnologie (ITA)

Das WTO-Übereinkommen über die Informationstechnologie (ITA), das für bestimmte IT-Produkte den Wegfall von Einfuhrzöllen vorsieht, soll geändert werden. Dabei sollen künftig auch Video-Monitore (852849) und Monitore (852859) ebenso wie Geräte mit Fernsehtunern (852871, 852872, 852873) von der Zollfreistellung erfasst werden.

Gleichzeitig bleiben die Einfuhrzölle auf Bauteile bestehen. Damit ergeben sich für die europäischen Hersteller Wettbewerbsnachteile gegenüber Herstellern aus Drittländern, die vermeintlich günstiger produzieren können (geringere Lohnkosten, weniger Umwelt-/Sicherheitsstandards etc. als in der EU).

Kann die Kommission daher Antwort auf folgende Fragen erteilen:

1. Für wann ist eine Änderung des Übereinkommens über die Informationstechnologie geplant?

2. Wer nimmt an den Verhandlungen darüber teil?

3. Welches ist der jeweilige Standpunkt der Mitgliedstaaten?

4. Werden die Flachbild-Fernseher mit der Zolltarifnummer 852872 künftig als zollfreie Geräte auf der Liste des ITA stehen?

5. Besteht die Möglichkeit, Flachbild-Fernseher aus Drittstaaten, die nach Deutschland eingeführt werden, mit einem gesonderten Zoll zu belegen? Wenn ja, wie ist dies vorzubereiten?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(27. November 2012)

1. Die Verhandlungen zur Überarbeitung des Übereinkommens über die Informationstechnologie (ITA) im Rahmen der WTO nehmen Form an. Es gibt zwar keinen genauen Zeitplan für den Abschluss der Verhandlungen, doch ist zu hoffen, dass sie rechtzeitig vor der WTO-Ministerkonferenz im Dezember 2013 zum Ende kommen.

2. Alle derzeit 48 ITA-Vertragspartner (die EU wird als Einheit betrachtet) wurden aufgefordert, an diesen Verhandlungen in Genf teilzunehmen. Ein Kern von etwa 14 ITA-Vertragspartnern, auf die 90-95 % des Welthandels mit IT-Produkten entfallen, sind beteiligt und haben Vorschläge eingereicht, die derzeit erörtert werden. Die Kerngruppe dürfte bald durch weitere ITA-Vertragspartner vergrößert werden.

3. Die EU-Mitgliedstaaten haben die Initiative der Kommission zur Erweiterung der ITA-Warendefinition und zur Abschaffung von nichttarifären Hemmnissen unterstützt. Hinsichtlich der allgemeinen Bestrebungen zur Erweiterung der Warendefinition besteht in hohem Maße Konsens. Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission die Zusammensetzung ihrer ursprünglichen Produktliste unter Berücksichtigung der von den EU-Mitgliedstaaten geäußerten Meinungen angepasst.

4. Die Kommission schlägt nicht vor, Flachbild-Fernseher in die erweiterte ITA-Produktliste aufzunehmen; dieser Vorschlag wurde jedoch von anderen ITA-Vertragspartnern gemacht. Auch hier dauern die Diskussionen noch an.

5. Der derzeit gültige Einfuhrzoll (14 %) auf Flachbild-Fernseher ist in allen EU-Mitgliedstaaten innerhalb der EU-Zollunion gleich; dies ist der höchste Satz, der nach unseren internationalen Verpflichtungen als WTO-Mitglied zulässig ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008890/12
to the Commission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Amending the Information Technology Agreement (ITA)

The World Trade Organisation ITA, which provides for import tariffs on particular IT products to be eliminated, is to be amended. In future, tariff exemption would also apply to video monitors (852849), monitors (852859) and apparatuses incorporating video tuners (852871, 852872 and 852873).

At the same time, there would still be import tariffs on components. That would put EU manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis manufacturers in non-EU countries, which supposedly can produce more cheaply (because, for example, of lower wage costs and fewer environment/safety standards than in the EU).

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. when the ITA is planned to be amended?

2. who is taking part in the relevant negotiations?

3. what the Member States' respective positions are?

4. whether flat-screen televisions — coming under tariff code 852872 — will be included on the ITA list as duty-free devices?

5. whether a special duty can be imposed on flat-screen televisions imported into Germany from third countries and, if so, what preparatory arrangements are necessary for this?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2012)

1. Negotiations to review the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) in the WTO are accelerating . Although there is no specific timeframe for their conclusion it is hoped that they could be concluded in time before WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2013.

2. All current 48 ITA participants (the EU is counted as one) have been invited to participate in these negotiations in Geneva. A core of some 14 ITA participants, representing 90-95% of world trade of IT products, are actively engaged and have submitted proposals on which discussions are taking place. The core group is expected to be enlarged soon with other ITA participants.

3. EU Member States have supported the Commission's initiative to enlarge the ITA product scope and to eliminate Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs). There is a high degree of consensus on the overall product expansion ambition. Moreover, the Commission has adjusted the composition of its initial product list taking into account the views expressed by EU Member States.

4. The Commission is not proposing to include flat panel televisions in the expanded product list of the ITA but this has been proposed by other ITA participants. Also, in this regard, discussions are still ongoing.

5. The current import duty (*ad valorem* 14%) imposed on flat panel televisions are the same for all EU Member States in the EU customs union and the level is set at the maximum allowed according to our international obligations as an WTO member.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008891/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(3. oktober 2012)

Om: Indsamling af sparepærer

Sparepærer (lavenergipærer) indeholder oftest elementer af kviksølv. Indholdet af kviksølv er typisk mellem en til fem milligram kviksølv. Det anslås, at salget af sparepærer er steget betragteligt, efter at EU har forbudt salget af glødepærer.

Det øgede forbrug af sparepærer har dog betydelige miljømæssige konsekvenser. I Danmark er det blevet anslået, at 50 procent af de sparepærer, som danskerne køber, ikke bliver indsamlet korrekt. De ender dermed som en del af den normale husholdningsrenovation.

I andre lande er der erfaringer med informationskampagner om nødvendigheden af at aflevere sparepærer ved genbrugsstationer, ligesom der også er erfaringer med kommunale afleveringssteder.

Derfor vil jeg spørge Kommissionen om følgende:

— Mener Kommissionen, at der med indførslen af forbuddet mod salg af glødepærer, er sket en stigning i salget af sparepærer?

— Anerkender Kommissionen, at der er et problem med manglende indsamling af sparepærer grundet deres kviksølvsindhold?

— Bør lavenergipærer med kviksølv mærkes tydeligt på emballagen om, at de skal indsamles via genbrugsstationer?

— WEEE-forordningen pålægger elektronikproducenterne at stå for indsamlingen. Mener Kommissionen, at man i betragtning af den lave indsamlede andel af kviksølvholdige sparepærer, bør evaluere ordningen på EU-plan?

— Frit kviksølv er farligt ved indånding, og der er intet teknisk til hinder for, at kviksølv i sparepærer skal være bundet i form af kviksølvsamalgam. Mener Kommissionen, at sparepærer med frit kviksølv skal forbydes?

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

Markedsandelene for forskellige typer lyskilder vil være genstand for en undersøgelse, der gennemføres i forbindelse med revisionen af forordning (EF) 244/2009 om lyskilder i boliger ([1]). I den forbindelse henviser Kommissionen det ærede medlem til svaret på skriftlig forespørgsel nr. 4763/2012 fra David Martin. Som alternativ til kompaktlysstofrør (CFL) kan forbrugerne vælge lysemitterende dioder (LED), der er blevet billigere, eller »forbedrede glødepærer«, der er energibesparende og ikke indeholder kviksølv.

Direktiv 2012/19/EU ([2]) fastsætter højere indsamlingsmål og styrker detailhandlernes tilbagetagningsforpligtelser. Det forventes således, at indsamlingsraterne for kompaktlysstofrør vil stige.

Hvad angår emballeringen af kompaktlysstofrør fastsætter artikel 14, stk. 4, i direktiv 2012/19/EU, at hvis det som følge af kompaktlysstofrørets størrelse eller funktion ikke er muligt at mærke selve produktet, bør emballagen mærkes på passende vis med et særligt symbol, der betyder, at udstyret bør indsamles særskilt og ikke må bortskaffes sammen med usorteret husholdningsaffald.

Den Videnskabelige Komité for Sundheds- og Miljørisici (VKSM) har udtalt, at ordentlig rengøring og udluftning af rummet, hvis et kompaktlysstofrør går i stykker, mindsker udsættelsen for kviksølv ([3]).

([1]) Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 244/2009 af 18. marts 2009 om gennemførelse af Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2005/32/EF for så vidt angår krav til miljøvenligt design af ikke-retningsbestemte lyskilder i boliger, EUT L 76 af 24.3.2009.
([2]) Direktiv om affald af elektrisk og elektronisk udstyr (WEEE), omarbejdning, EUT L 197 af 24.7.2012.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_159.pdf
VKSM's første udtalelse findes på: http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_124.pdf

I henhold til direktiv 2011/65/EU om begrænsning af anvendelsen af visse farlige stoffer i elektrisk og elektronisk udstyr ([4]) er det begrænset, hvor meget kviksølv, der er tilladt i kompaktlysstofrør, og den tilladte mængde vil blive reduceret yderligere. Eftersom kompaktlysstofrør forbruger meget mindre elektricitet end konventionelle lyskilder, reduceres kviksølvudledningen fra kulkraftværker betydeligt. Overordnet set udledes der mindre kviksølv fra kompaktlysstofrør til naturen, selv om de ikke indsamles eller genbruges. Dette gælder også for det nuværende mix af kraftværker i EU, der leverer vores elektricitet ([5]).

([4]) EUT L 174 af 1.7.2011.

([5]) »Test« September 2011, http://www.test.de/themen/haus-garten/test/Sparlampen-Testsieg-fuer-LEDs-4269907-4269941

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008891/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Collecting energy saving bulbs

Energy saving bulbs usually contain elements of mercury. The mercury content is typically between 1 and 5 mg. It is estimated that sales of energy saving bulbs have increased considerably since the EU's ban on the sale of incandescent bulbs.

The increased use of energy saving bulbs has significant environmental consequences, however. An estimated 50% of energy saving bulbs bought in Denmark are not properly collected. They end up as ordinary household refuse.

Other countries have experience of information campaigns on the need to hand in energy saving bulbs at recycling points, as well as experience with local authority collection centres.

I would therefore put the following questions to the Commission:

— Does the Commission believe that the introduction of the ban on selling incandescent bulbs has resulted in an increase in sales of energy saving bulbs?

— Does the Commission acknowledge that there is a problem because of inadequate collection of energy saving bulbs on account of their mercury content?

— Should packaging for energy saving bulbs clearly state that they should be collected via recycling points?

— The WEEE Regulation requires electronic equipment producers to be responsible for collection. Does the Commission believe that, in view of low collection volumes for energy saving bulbs containing mercury, there should be an evaluation of the relevant provisions at EU level?

— Free mercury is dangerous if inhaled, and there is no technical means of preventing mercury in energy saving bulbs from combining to form a mercury amalgam. Does the Commission believe that energy saving bulbs containing free mercury should be banned?

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

The market shares of different types of lamps will be subject to an analysis to be carried out under the review of Regulation (EC) No 244/2009 on household lamps ([1]). In this regard, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question 4763/2012 by Mr Martin. As alternatives to Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs), consumers can choose LEDs which become more affordable or 'improved incandescent light bulbs' which save electricity and do not contain mercury.

Directive 2012/19/EU ([2]) set out higher collection targets and strengthen the retailers' take back obligations. In this framework, it is expected that collection rates of CFLs will increase.

Concerning the packaging for CFLs, according to Article 14(4) of Directive 2012/19/EU, where the size or the function of the CFL does not allow marking the product, the packaging should display an appropriate mark with a special symbol meaning that this equipment should be collected separately and not disposed as unsorted municipal waste.

The Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) noted that in case of breakage of a CFL, proper clean up and ventilation of the room reduces the exposure to mercury ([3]).

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 244/2009 of 18 March 2009 implementing Directive 2005/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to ecodesign requirements for non-directional household lamps, OJ L 76, 24.3.2009.
([2]) Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment, WEEE recast, OJ L 197, 24.7.2012.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_159.pdf
SCHER's first opinion is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/environmental_risks/docs/scher_o_124.pdf

Pursuant to Directive 2011/65/EU on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment ([4]), the mercury content allowed in CFLs is limited and will be further decreased. Since CFLs consume much less electricity than conventional lamps, the mercury emissions from coal power plants are considerably reduced. Overall, less mercury is entering the environment even if the CLF is not collected or recycled. This is still valid when considering electricity production from the current mix of power plants in the EU ([5]).

([4]) OJ L 174, 1.7.2011.
([5]) 'Test' September 2011, http://www.test.de/themen/haus-garten/test/Sparlampen-Testsieg-fuer-LEDs-4269907-4269941

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008892/12
adresată Comisiei
Iosif Matula (PPE)
(3 octombrie 2012)

Subiect: Bacalaureatul profesional, ca alternativă la Bacalaureatul clasic

Una dintre cele mai mari provocări ale momentului o reprezintă modul în care îi pregătim pe tineri pentru piața muncii. Pe de o parte, Strategia Europa 2020 prevede o creștere a procentului absolvenților de învățământ superior. Pe de altă parte, este important să asigurăm o bună pregătire într-o largă varietate de meserii, astfel încât calificările profesionale să nu mai fie văzute precum opțiuni de mâna a doua.

Pe lângă Bacalaureatul clasic — cel mai important examen care îi califică pe tineri pentru învățământul superior — unele state membre au prevăzut și alte tipuri de bacalaureat, spre exemplu cel profesional. Acesta ar avea menirea să le confere tinerilor o diplomă la finalizarea studiilor, pentru a le facilita accesul pe piața muncii, ca meseriași.

Cu toate acestea, introducerea acestui nou tip de bacalaureat este doar una dintre componentele reformei, trebuind adaptată și programa aferentă anilor de studii, care să cuprindă cursuri de meserii de o înaltă calitate, în funcție de un număr extins de specializări. Pentru o relevanță mai mare, examenul de bacalaureat profesional ar trebui să includă probe specifice meseriilor aprofundate pe parcursul anilor de studiu și nu doar un test formal.

În acest sens, cum vede Comisia corelarea dintre tipurile de bacalaureat în cadrul sistemelor educaționale naționale? De asemenea, care ar fi pașii spre o mai mare interoperabilitate a sistemelor naționale de învățământ în cadrul UE, din punctul de vedere al calificărilor profesionale? Care este, în opinia Comisiei, rolul pe care mediul de afaceri trebuie să-l joace în pregătirea elevilor care urmează parcursul finalizat cu Bacalaureat profesional?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(26 noiembrie 2012)

Strategia Europa 2020 include obiective ambițioase în ceea ce privește îmbunătățirea relevanței sistemelor de educație și de formare profesională pe piața muncii și facilitarea trecerii tinerilor de la sistemul de învățământ la activitatea profesională. Atractivitatea și calitatea educației și formării profesionale (EFP) sunt esențiale în acest context. Integrarea reușită a EFP în cadrul sistemelor de educație naționale reprezintă unul din elementele cheie în vederea transformării EFP într-o opțiune mai atractivă.

Bacalaureatul profesional este una dintre modalitățile de promovare a competențelor profesionale, abordând, în același timp, problema permeabilității sau a interoperabilității sistemelor de învățământ. Cursanților care aleg EFP trebuie să li se ofere oportunități reale de a obține calificări la cele mai înalte niveluri. După adoptarea în 2008 a recomandării privind cadrul european al calificărilor (EQF — *European Qualifications Framework*) pentru învățarea pe tot parcursul vieții, majoritatea statelor membre au instituit Cadre naționale ale calificărilor (CNC) și sunt în curs de a le corela cu Cadrul european al calificărilor (CEC). Din punctul de vedere al Comisiei, cadrele naționale ale calificărilor cuprinzătoare, bazate pe principiul rezultatelor învățării, reprezintă un instrument puternic pentru a sprijini permeabilitatea și transparența în cadrul sistemelor naționale de învățământ.

De asemenea, bacalaureatul profesional recunoaște faptul că activitatea profesională necesită atât abilități specifice postului, cât și un set amplu de abilități transversale și capacitate de învățare pe tot parcursul vieții. Comisia consideră că elaborarea și punerea în aplicare cu succes a cursurilor din sfera EFP, inclusiv elementele de învățare bazată pe muncă, necesită implicarea puternică a mediului de afaceri. Din acest motiv, Comisia promovează implicarea sistematică a partenerilor sociali în conceperea și implementarea cursurilor din sfera EFP, precum și cooperarea directă între instituțiile de educație și formare profesională și întreprinderi. Aceasta se aplică și bacalaureatului profesional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008892/12
to the Commission
Iosif Matula (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Vocational baccalaureate as an alternative to the classical baccalaureate

One of the biggest challenges facing us today is the way in which we prepare young people for the labour market. Whilst the Europe 2020 strategy aims to increase the percentage of young people completing higher education, it is also important to prepare young people for a wide variety of vocations, ensuring that vocational qualifications are no longer seen as a second choice.

Some Member States offer other types of baccalaureate, such as the vocational baccalaureate, alongside the classical baccalaureate, which is the main exam that young people must pass in order to enter higher education. The aim is to provide young people with a diploma certifying that they have completed their education and facilitating their access to trade occupations on the labour market.

However, the introduction of this new type of baccalaureate is only one component of the reform, and programmes also need to be adapted in relation to the time spent in education, including high-quality vocational courses in a wide range of areas. The vocational baccalaureate exam should include specific in-depth vocational tests throughout the course, rather than being based only on a final test.

In the Commission's view, how might this type of baccalaureate be integrated into national education systems? What steps would need to be taken to guarantee greater interoperability among national education systems in the EU in relation to vocational qualifications? What role should the business world play in preparing students who are following courses that will lead to the vocational baccalaureate?

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

The Europe 2020 strategy includes ambitious goals for improving the labour market relevance of education and training systems and to facilitate young people's transition from education to work. The attractiveness and quality of vocational education and training (VET) is crucial in this context. The good integration of VET in national education systems is one of the key elements to making VET more attractive.

The vocational baccalaureate is one of the means to promote vocational skills while addressing at the same time the issue of permeability or interoperability of education systems. Learners who engage in VET need to be provided with real opportunities to achieve qualifications at the highest levels. Following the adoption of the recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning in 2008, most Member States have established National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) and are in the process of referencing them to the EQF. The Commission considers that comprehensive NQFs, based on the principle of learning outcomes, are a powerful tool to advance permeability and transparency within national education systems.

The vocational baccalaureate also recognises that working life requires both job-specific skills and a broad set of transversal skills, as well as a capacity for lifelong learning. The Commission considers that successful design and implementation of VET courses, including appropriate work-based learning elements, requires the close involvement of business. For this reason, the Commission promotes systematic involvement of social partners in VET design and provision as well as direct cooperation between VET institutes and companies. This applies also to the vocational baccalaureate.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008896/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Σιδηροδρομική γραμμή Ικόνιο-Θριάσιο

Στην απάντηση E-4367/2010, η Επιτροπή είχε δώσει στοιχεία σχετικά με την πρόοδο του έργου «κατασκευή της σιδηροδρομικής γραμμής Ικόνιο-Θριάσιο» και είχε αναφερθεί στο άρθρο 1, σημείο 2 της απόφασης E-1357/2010 σχετικά με την «επιλεξιμότητα των δαπανών για σιδηροδρομικές και άλλες υποδομές».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποια είναι μέχρι σήμερα η απορρόφηση κονδυλίων του έργου (απάντηση E-4367/2010, «80 % της συνδρομής της ΕΕ, ήτοι 57 196 568,00 ευρώ»);

— Έχει ολοκληρωθεί το φυσικό αντικείμενο του έργου; Μπορεί να χρησιμοποιηθεί; Αν όχι, γιατί; Τι απομένει να γίνει για να τεθεί σε λειτουργία; Υπάρχουν δαπάνες που δεν θεωρούνται επιλέξιμες με βάση την απόφαση E-1357/2010, που αναφέρεται στην απάντηση που μας έδωσε η Ευρωπαική Επιτροπή E-4367/2010;

— με δεδομένο ότι μέχρι πρόσφατα τουλάχιστον, όσοι διαγωνισμοί έγιναν για την κατασκευή εμπορευματικού κέντρου στο Θριάσιο πεδίο, απέβησαν άκαρποι, πώς σχολιάζει η Επιτροπή την κατάσταση που έχει δημιουργηθεί;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

1. Το έργο για την κατασκευή της σιδηροδρομικής γραμμής Ικόνιο-Θριάσιο συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ταμείο Συνοχής, όπως ορίζεται στην απόφαση C(2001)1252 της Επιτροπής, της 20ής Ιουνίου 2001, όπως τροποποιήθηκε από τις αποφάσεις C(2006)3785, της 16ης Αυγούστου 2006 και C(2009)1619, της 4ης Μαρτίου 2009. Το συνολικό επιλέξιμο κόστος του έργου είναι 143 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, με τη συνεισφορά του Ταμείου Συνοχής να ανέρχεται στα 71 εκατομμύρια ευρώ και με τελική ημερομηνία επιλεξιμότητας των δαπανών τις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2010. Μέχρι σήμερα, έχει απορροφηθεί το 80% της συνεισφοράς της ΕΕ για την υλοποίηση του έργου, δηλαδή 57 196 568 εκατομμύρια ευρώ. Σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις του κανονισμού αριθ. 1164/1994 του Συμβουλίου, οποιαδήποτε επιπλέον πληρωμή μπορεί να καταβληθεί μόνο κατά την περάτωση του έργου, ύστερα από εξέταση όλων των σχετικών εγγράφων που αφορούν την ολοκλήρωσή του.

2. Σύμφωνα με την τελευταία έκθεση του κράτους μέλους (την οποία η Επιτροπή έλαβε τον Ιούλιο του 2012) το έργο δεν έχει ολοκληρωθεί. Η Επιτροπή εξέτασε τα έγγραφα περάτωσης και ζήτησε από την Ελλάδα περαιτέρω διευκρινήσεις. Μερικές δαπάνες έχουν καταγραφεί από την Ελλάδα ως μη επιλέξιμες· εάν αυτό επιβεβαιωθεί ύστερα από την εξέταση του φακέλου από την Επιτροπή, τότε η συνεισφορά του Ταμείου Συνοχής θα μειωθεί. Το βασικό τμήμα του έργου το οποίο δεν έχει ολοκληρωθεί, σχετίζεται με τη σιδηροδρομική γραμμή μεταξύ του λιμένα Νέου Ικονίου και του υπόλοιπου σιδηροδρομικού δικτύου, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της γέφυρας Δαφνίου.

3. Το κράτος μέλος φέρει την ευθύνη για την οργάνωση των διαδικασιών για τη σύναψη δημόσιων συμβάσεων με τέτοιο τρόπο ώστε να διασφαλίζεται η έγκαιρη εκτέλεση των έργων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το Ταμείο Συνοχής. Σε περίπτωση μη ολοκλήρωσης των σχετικών διαδικασιών εντός της περιόδου επιλεξιμότητας, γεγονός που θα πρέπει να επιβεβαιωθεί από την εξέταση των εγγράφων από την Επιτροπή, οι σχετικές δαπάνες δεν θα θεωρηθούν επιλέξιμες για τη συγχρηματοδότηση από το Ταμείο Συνοχής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008896/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Rail link between Ikonio and Thriasio

In answer E-4367/2010, the Commission provided information on the progress of the 'construction of the rail link between Ikonio and Thriasio' project and referred to Article 1(2) of Decision C(2010) 1357 on the 'eligibility of expenditure for rail and other infrastructure'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— What is the project's take up of funds to date (answer E-4367/2010, '80% of EU contribution or EUR 57 196 568.00')?

— Has the structural part of the project been completed? Can it be used? If not, why? What remains to be completed in order for it to become operational? Are there any expenses which are not considered eligible in accordance with Decision C(2010) 1357 which is referred to in the answer given by the European Commission (E-4367/2010)?

— Given that, until recently, all tender procedures published for the construction of the commercial centre on the Thriasian plain were unsuccessful, what comments does the Commission have on the situation which has been created?

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

1. The construction of the rail line Ikonion — Thriassio complex is co-financed by the Cohesion Fund, as set out in Commission Decision C(2001) 1252 of 20 June 2001, modified by decisions C(2006) 3785 of 16 August 2006 and C(2009) 1619 of 4 March 2009. The total eligible cost of the project is EUR 143 million, with a Cohesion Fund contribution of EUR 71 million and an end date of eligibility of expenditure of 31 December 2010. To date, the project has absorbed 80% of the EU contribution, namely EUR 57 196 568. According to the provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 1164/1994, any further payment can only be made at project closure, after examination of all relevant documents for project completion.

2. According to the final report from the Member State (received by the Commission in July 2012), the project has not been completed. The Commission has examined the closure documents and has requested further clarifications from Greece. Some expenditure has been identified as non-eligible by Greece; if this is confirmed by the examination of the file by the Commission, then the contribution from the Cohesion Fund would be reduced. The main part of the project that has not been completed relates to the rail line between Neo Ikonio port and the rest of the rail network, including the Dafni bridge.

3. It is the responsibility of the Member State to organise its public procurement procedures in such a way so as to ensure the timely execution of projects that are co-financed from the Cohesion Fund. In case of non-completion of the relevant procedures within the eligibility period, and should this be confirmed by the Commission's examination of the documentation, the relevant costs would not be considered eligible for co-financing from the Cohesion Fund.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008897/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πώληση Τράπεζας του Δημοσίου σε ιδιωτική Τράπεζα. Ζητούμενο η διαφάνεια

Για την πώληση της ΑΤΕ στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς, εφαρμόσθηκε, εξ όσων γνωρίζουμε, ο Ν. 4021/2011. Η γνωμοδότησή της ΕΚΤ (CON/2011/107) της 22/12/2011 σχετικά με τον ανωτέρω νόμο, επεσήμανε ότι: α) «ούτε το σχέδιο διάταξης ούτε η αιτιολογική του έκθεση προσδιορίζει τις προϋποθέσεις ή τα κριτήρια ενεργοποίησης της προβλεπόμενης στο σχέδιο διάταξης διαδικασίας», β) «σε περίπτωση που η ΤτΕ ενεργοποιήσει την προβλεπόμενη στο σχέδιο διάταξης επείγουσα διαδικασία, χωρίς, επομένως, να προηγηθεί αποτίμηση από εξωτερικούς ελεγκτές, ενδέχεται να ανακύψει κίνδυνος αποκλίσεων …» και ότι γ) «η προβλεπόμενη στο σχέδιο διάταξη θα πρέπει να ενεργοποιείται μόνο σε επείγουσες περιπτώσεις, ως ύστατο μέτρο».

Ανεξάρτητα από την άποψη που μπορεί να έχει κάποιος για την συγκεκριμένη πώληση, και με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, μπορεί η Επιτροπή να με πληροφορήσει:

— ποια ήταν τα κριτήρια και οι προϋποθέσεις που κατέστησαν επείγουσα τη διαδικασία πώλησης της ΑΤΕ στην Τράπεζα Πειραιώς;

— υπάρχουν τα αποτελέσματα αποτιμήσεων από ανεξάρτητους εκτιμητές; Ποια είναι αυτά; Πώς διενεργήθηκαν οι αποτιμήσεις;

— Γιατί εξακολουθεί η Επιτροπή να αρνείται να δώσει στη δημοσιότητα την έκθεση της BlackRock;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Οι ελληνικές αρχές ήταν αρμόδιες να λάβουν την απόφαση για την εξυγίανση της ΑΤΕ αφότου η τράπεζα κρίθηκε πλήρως αφερέγγυα από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδας και, ως εκ τούτου, η εξυγίανσή της ήταν επιβεβλημένη προκειμένου να αποφευχθούν προβλήματα χρηματοδότησης και συστημικές επιπτώσεις. Οι αρχές έχουν αναθέσει σε εταιρείες εξωτερικών συμβούλων να αξιολογήσουν τις κεφαλαιακές ανάγκες του τραπεζικού τομέα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008897/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Sale of state-owned bank to a private bank: a call for transparency

To our knowledge, Law 4021/2011 was applied in the sale of ATEbank to Piraeus Bank. The opinion of the ECB (CON/2011/107) of 22 December 2011 concerning the above law indicated that: (a) 'neither the draft provision nor its explanatory memorandum specify the conditions or criteria for activating the procedure laid down in the draft provision', (b) 'if the BoG activates the emergency procedure under the draft provision, thus dispensing with the external auditors' *ex ante* valuation, a risk of discrepancies could arise' and that (c) 'the procedure provided for in the draft provision will only be activated as a measure of last recourse in emergency situations only'.

Regardless of any personal opinions concerning this sale and in view of the above, will the Commission answer the following:

— What were the criteria and conditions which made the sale of ATE to Piraeus Bank an emergency?

— Are there any valuations from independent experts? What are these valuations? How were the valuations carried out?

— Why is the Commission still refusing to publish the BlackRock report?

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

The decision to resolve ATE Bank was the responsibility of the Greek authorities after the bank was deemed deeply insolvent by the Bank of Greece and, as such, had to be resolved in order to avoid funding problems and systemic spill-overs. The authorities have engaged several external consulting companies to assess banking sector capital needs.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008898/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αποχωρήσεις και απολύσεις στο ελληνικό Δημόσιο

Στην Ελλάδα ο αριθμός των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων από το 2009 ως σήμερα έχει μειωθεί δραματικά. Κύρια αιτία αποτελεί το γεγονός ότι οι δημόσιοι υπάλληλοι σπεύδουν να παραιτηθούν, έστω και με μειωμένη σύνταξη, διότι πιστεύουν ότι με τα συνεχή μέτρα περικοπών μισθών και συντάξεων που επιβάλλονται, η ενδεχόμενη παραμονή τους στην εργασία θα τους κοστίσει ακριβότερα από την πρόωρη συνταξιοδότησή τους. Στη μείωση αυτή συμβάλλουν και μέτρα όπως η λεγόμενη εφεδρεία των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων.

Σημειώνεται ότι ο στόχος της τρόικας για μείωση των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων κατά 15 000 έως το τέλος του 2012, έχει επιτευχθεί με το παραπάνω, αφού, μόνο μέχρι τον Αύγουστο, ο αριθμός τους είχε μειωθεί κατά 19 000. Ωστόσο, ενώ οι αρχικοί υπολογισμοί ανέφεραν αποχώρηση πλέον των 30 000 μέχρι το τέλος του 2012, τα επικείμενα μέτρα έχουν αυξήσει τους υπολογισμούς των αποχωρήσεων σε άνω των 40 000.

Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες η Γαλλική Ομάδα Εργασίας, που έχει αναλάβει το συμβουλευτικό ρόλο στην αναδιοργάνωση του δημόσιου τομέα, έχει ήδη επισημάνει στην τρόικα ότι οι ρυθμοί αυτοί «αποχωρήσεων» εντείνουν τον κίνδυνο κατάρρευσης των υπαρχουσών δομών του δημοσίου.

Βάσει των παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τον αριθμό «αποχωρήσεων» από το Δημόσιο το 2012; Σε κάθε περίπτωση, πώς σχολιάζει η Γαλλική Ομάδα Εργασίας την πίεση που ασκείται για νέες απολύσεις, δεδομένου ότι η μείωση αυτή, ειδικά αν πραγματοποιηθούν και οι απολύσεις που απαιτεί η τρόικα, θα επιταχύνει έτι περαιτέρω τη διάλυση που ήδη υπάρχει στη Δημόσια Διοίκηση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Στο Πρόγραμμα Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής, το οποίο συμφωνήθηκε μεταξύ της Επιτροπής, της ΕΚΤ, του ΔΝΤ και της Ελλάδας τον Μάρτιο 2012 ([1]), προβλέπεται συρρίκνωση του τομέα δημόσιας διοίκησης κατά 150 000 άτομα έως το τέλος του 2015 (σε σύγκριση με τα επίπεδα στο τέλος του 2010). Επιπλέον, προέβλεπε ότι 15 000 πλεονάζοντες εργαζόμενοι θα ετίθεντο, έως το τέλος του 2012, σε εργασιακή εφεδρεία (όπως ήταν τότε γνωστή), ανάλογα με τους φορείς ή τις μονάδες οι οποίες επρόκειτο να καταργηθούν ή να συρρικνωθούν.

Ο προσδιορισμός της διαδικασίας για τη μείωση κατά 150 000 υπαλλήλους εναπόκειται στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση. Η Επιτροπή, η ΕΚΤ και το ΔΝΤ έχουν εκφράσει την άποψη ότι η μείωση προσωπικού πρέπει να είναι στοχευμένη και όχι οριζόντια. Η μείωση αυτή θα βασίζεται στην τρέχουσα κατάρτιση των οργανογραμμάτων και θα διευκολυνθεί από την πρόσφατη νομοθεσία η οποία επιτρέπει τις υποχρεωτικές απολύσεις. Οι ελληνικές αρχές θα προχωρήσουν σε περαιτέρω περικοπές στο Δημόσιο, σύμφωνα με την αναλογία 1 διορισμού ανά 5 αποχωρήσεις, βάσει της οποίας έχει ήδη επιτευχθεί συρρίκνωση της γενικής κυβέρνησης περίπου κατά 80 000 άτομα.

Εξ όσων γνωρίζουμε, πολύ λίγοι εργαζόμενοι (λιγότεροι από εκατό) έχουν τεθεί σε εργασιακή εφεδρεία (όπως ήταν γνωστή) και μικρός αριθμός προσωπικού από καταργηθέντες/συγχωνευμένους δημόσιους φορείς έχει μεταφερθεί σε άλλους φορείς του Δημοσίου. Επί του παρόντος, οι ελληνικές αρχές συνεργάζονται στενά με την Επιτροπή, την ΕΚΤ και το ΔΝΤ, ώστε να προσδιοριστεί η βέλτιστη διαδικασία επιβολής του νεοεκπονηθέντος σχεδίου κινητικότητας και αποχωρήσεων, βάσει του υπάρχοντος Δημοσιοϋπαλληλικού Κώδικα, λαμβάνοντας επίσης υπόψη τις πτυχές που αφορούν την κινητικότητα και την αξιοποίηση δεξιοτήτων.

([1]) Βλ. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008898/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Departures and layoffs in the Greek public service

In Greece, the number of civil servants has fallen dramatically from 2009 up to the present, mainly because they are hastening to take early retirement, even on reduced pensions, in the belief that constant pay and pension cuts would actually cause them to lose more by staying in their jobs and because some of them are being placed in reserve.

As a result, the Troika's objective of cutting the public sector payroll by 15 000 before the end of 2012 has already been achieved with room to spare, 19 000 having left by the end of August. An initial estimate of over 30 000 leaving by the end of 2012 has now been revised upward to over 40 000 as a result of the projected measures.

It appears that a French working party with an advisory role in public sector reorganisation has already informed the Troika that such cuts are increasing the danger of a public sector collapse.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission have any information concerning the numbers leaving in 2012? What view does the French working party take of pressure for fresh departures, given that this will further erode the already weakened public sector, particularly view of the cuts being sought by the Troika?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2012)

The Economic Adjustment Programme, agreed by the Commission/ECB/IMF and Greece last March 2012 ([1]) provided for a downsizing of the public administration by 150 000 people by the end of 2015 (compared to end-2010 level). In addition, it established that 15 000 redundant staff were transferred to (what was known then as) the labour reserve by end-2012, in connection with the identification of entities or units that would be closed or downsized.

The procedure to be followed for the reduction of 150 000 is a decision of the Greek Government. The Commission /ECB/IMF has expressed the opinion that the reduction in staff should not take place across-the-board but should be targeted. Such reduction will be based on the ongoing preparation of the staffing plans and will be facilitated by the recent law allowing mandatory redundancies. The Greek authorities will proceed with further downsizing, in compliance with the 1 to 5 attrition rule, which has already delivered a downsizing of the general government administration by almost 80 000.

To our knowledge, a very small transfer of personnel (less than one hundred) has been made to the (what was known as) labour reserve and personnel from closed/merged public entities have been transferred to other public administration bodies. The Greek authorities are currently in close cooperation with the Commission /ECB/IMF team in identifying the best procedure to be followed on the implementation of a newly identified mobility and exit scheme, based on the existing Civil Servants Code, also taking into account relevant aspects regarding mobility and use of competences.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op94_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008899/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διαχείριση απορριμμάτων στην Αττική

Την υλοποίηση του έργου «Μελέτη, χρηματοδότηση, κατασκευή, συντήρηση, τεχνική διαχείριση και λειτουργία 4 Μονάδων Επεξεργασίας Απορριμμάτων στην Αττική» αποφάσισε ο ΕΣΔΝΑ ([1]) υποβάλλοντας αίτημα προς την Ειδική Γραμματεία ΣΔΙΤ ([2]). Πρόκειται για 4 έργα διαχείρισης 1 350 000 τόνων σύμμεικτων ΑΣΑ ([3]) ετησίως για 23-27 χρόνια, με κόστος μελέτης και κατασκευής 430 εκατ. ευρώ και συνολική αξία σύμβασης 1-1,5 δισ. ευρώ. Πρόκειται για τεχνολογίες που οδηγούν σε παραγωγή 600 000 τόνων RDF και SRF ετησίως, χωρίς όμως να έχει ανακοινωθεί τι θα γίνεται αυτό. Σε κανένα σημείο του σχεδιασμού των 4 έργων δεν εξηγείται πως οι επιλογές αυτές θα συμβάλλουν στην επίτευξη των δεσμευτικών για τη χώρα στόχων της Οδηγίας 98/2008, ενώ δεν έχει ληφθεί υπόψη η δυναμική μείωσης των παραγόμενων απορριμμάτων λόγω οικονομικής κρίσης ([4]) και η αύξηση της ανακύκλωσης. Δεν τίθενται ποσοτικοί στόχοι πρόληψης ή εκτροπής υλικών πριν την τελική επεξεργασία. Δεν έχει αξιολογηθεί, συγκριτικά, η «πράσινη πρόταση» που έχουν καταθέσει περιβαλλοντικές οργανώσεις, με μικρότερο κόστος κατασκευής και λειτουργίας, μεγαλύτερη κοινωνική αποδοχή και μικρότερο χρόνο υλοποίησης ([5]), ενώ η δέσμευση των δήμων για 25 χρόνια εμποδίζει την ανάπτυξη πρωτοβουλιών για κοινωνικοποίηση της διαχείρισης που εμφανίζουν τον τελευταίο καιρό δυναμική στη χώρα ([6]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Έχει ζητήσει αναλυτική ενημέρωση από το Κ-Μ για τα εν λόγω έργα και ειδικότερα για τον τρόπο διάθεσης των ποσοτήτων του παραγόμενου RDF και SRF;

— Εκτιμά ότι τα έργα συνάδουν με το πνεύμα και τους στόχους της Οδηγίας 98/2008;

— Εκτιμά ότι τεκμηριώνεται επαρκώς πως η χρήση δημοσίων πόρων για τη διαχείριση των ΑΣΑ της Αττικής μέσω των συγκεκριμένων έργων είναι καλύτερη σε σύγκριση με εναλλακτικές προτάσεις;

— Δεδομένης της απόφασης της διυπουργικής επιτροπής να ενισχύσει τον Άξονα 4 του ΕΠΠΕΡΑΑ ([7]) για τη χρηματοδότηση έργων διαχείρισης ΑΣΑ ([8]), σκοπεύει να συνεργαστεί με το Κ-Μ για τη διαμόρφωση ενός πιο ορθολογικού σχεδίου διαχείρισης που ελαχιστοποιεί το κόστος υλοποίησης και διαχείρισης, ενώ επιτυγχάνει τους στόχους της Οδηγίας 98/2008;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Στις 27 Σεπτεμβρίου 2012, η Επιτροπή ζήτησε από αρκετά κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ελλάδας, να υποβάλουν σχέδια διαχείρισης αποβλήτων, σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις των άρθρων 28, 31 και 33 της οδηγίας 2008/98/ΕΚ (οδηγία πλαίσιο για τα απόβλητα/ΟΠΑ) ([9]). Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ζητήσει ειδικές πληροφορίες όσον αφορά τη διάθεση καυσίμων από απορρίμματα (Refuse-derived fuel/RDF) και στερεών ανακτώμενων καυσίμων/συγκεκριμένων ανακτώμενων καυσίμων (specified recovered fuel/SRF) από μονάδες επεξεργασίας απορριμμάτων.

Η ΟΠΥ δεν αφορά άμεσα τα έργα αυτά και η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις πηγές χρηματοδότησής τους. Τα κράτη μέλη δεν είναι υποχρεωμένα να αποστέλλουν στην Επιτροπή πληροφορίες σχετικά με ζητήματα σχεδιασμού και ανάπτυξης έργων, αν δεν πρόκειται για συγχρηματοδοτούμενα μεγάλα έργα, για τα οποία προβλέπεται, στον κανονισμό 1083/2006 (άρθρα 39-41) του Συμβουλίου ([10]) η υποβολή πληροφοριών.

Η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε πρόσφατα κατευθυντήριες γραμμές σχετικά με τη μεθοδολογία για την εκπόνηση των προγραμμάτων διαχείρισης αποβλήτων ([11]).

([1]) Ενιαίος Διαβαθμικός Σύνδεσμος Νομού Αττικής.
([2]) Σύμπραξη Δημοσίου και Ιδιωτικού Τομέα.
([3]) Αστικών Στερεών Αποβλήτων.
([4]) Εκτιμάται ότι η παραγωγή ΑΣΑ θα επανέλθει στα επίπεδα του 2009 μετά από μια δεκαετία.
([5]) http://www.ecorec.gr/econew/images/stories/PDF/Prasini_Protasi_PESDA_Attikis.pdf
([6]) http://www.bioenergeiaki.gr
([7]) Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα Περιβάλλον και Αειφόρος Ανάπτυξη.
([8]) http://www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=785&sni(524)=2032&language=el-GR
([9]) ΕΕ L 312 της 22.11.2008.
([10]) ΕΕ L 49 της 31.7.2007.
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/plans/pdf/2012_guidance_note.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008899/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Waste management in Attica

The ESDNA ([1]) has decided to go ahead with the projected planning, funding, construction, maintenance, technical management and operation of four waste processing units in Attica and has accordingly made an application to the PPP secretariat. 1 350 000 tonnes of mixed USW ([2]) will be processed there annually over a period of between 23 and 27 years, with planning and construction costs of EUR 430 million and a total contract value of between EUR 1 billion and EUR 1.5 billion. The technologies in question will generate 600 000 tonnes of RDF and SRF annually and no indication has been given as to what will be done with it. Furthermore, no explanation is to be given as to how the four projected waste processing units will help achieve the binding objectives under Directive 2008/98/EC and no account has been taken of possible reductions in waste volumes resulting from the economic crisis ([3]) and increased recycling. No quantitative objectives have been set regarding waste prevention or diversion prior to final processing. No comparative assessment has been made of the 'green proposal' of environmental bodies involving lower construction and operation costs, greater social benefits and shorter completion time ([4]), while the fact that municipalities are bound by the contract for 25 years prevents the development of initiatives for the socialisation of waste management, which has recently presented itself as a possible solution for Greece ([5]).

In view of this:

— Has the Commission sought analytical information from the Member States regarding these projects and, in particular, the disposal of the RDF and SRF produced?

— Does it consider that the project is in accordance with the spirit and objectives of Directive 2008/98/EC?

— Is there sufficient evidence that the use of public funds for this USW management project in Attica is preferable to other proposals?

— Given the decision by the Interministerial Committee to strengthen Pillar 4 of the OPESD ([6]) for the funding of USW management projects, will it cooperate with the Member States in drawing up a more rational waste management programme, minimalising completion and management costs while achieving the objectives of Directive 2008/98/EC?

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

On 27 September 2012, the Commission asked several Member States, including Greece, to submit waste management plans, in accordance with Articles 28, 31 and 33 of Directive 2008/98/EC ([7]) (Waste Framework Directive — WFD). The Commission has not sought specific information regarding the disposal of the Refuse-derived fuel (RDF) and solid recovered fuel/ specified recovered fuel (SRF) produced from waste processing units.

The WFD is not directly relevant for these projects and the Commission has no information on their sources of funding. Member States are not obliged to send information concerning planning and development issues of projects to the Commission, unless these are co-funded Major Projects as foreseen under Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([8]) (Articles 39-41).

The Commission has recently published a methodological guidance on the preparation of waste management plans ([9]).

([1]) Attica association of municipalities.
([2]) Public-Private Partnerships.
([3]) Urban solid waste. It is estimated that USW volumes will return to 2009 levels after a decade.
([4]) http://www.ecorec.gr/econew/images/stories/PDF/Prasini_Protasi_PESDA_Attikis.pdf
([5]) http://www.bioenergeiaki.gr
([6]) Operational Programme for the Environment and Sustainable Development.
([7]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([8]) OJ L 49, 31.7.2007.
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/plans/pdf/2012_guidance_note.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008900/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Έσοδα για τη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση μέσω της αντιμετώπισης της φοροδιαφυγής

Η μείωση των ελληνικών ελλειμμάτων επιδιώκεται μέσω της βίαιης περικοπής μισθών, συντάξεων και κοινωνικών παροχών, που έχει οδηγήσει σε πρωτοφανή ύφεση, μείωση του ΑΕΠ κατά 17,5%, ανεργία 24%, μεγάλα ελλείμματα των ασφαλιστικών ταμείων, δραματική υποβάθμιση του συστήματος υγείας και κοινωνικών παροχών, χωρίς να έχουν επιτευχθεί οι δημοσιονομικοί στόχοι που είχαν τεθεί.

Από την άλλη, δεν προωθήθηκε η φορολογική μεταρρύθμιση, η διαφάνεια του τραπεζικού συστήματος και η αναδιοργάνωση των φορολογικών μηχανισμών ώστε να εντοπισθούν γκρίζες περιουσίες και μαύρο χρήμα, να μειωθεί η φοροδιαφυγή, να αποκατασταθεί η φορολογική δικαιοσύνη και να μοιραστούν δίκαια τα βάρη. Στον ελληνικό προϋπολογισμό του 2011 είχαν υπολογιστεί έσοδα ύψους 1,1 δισ. ευρώ από την περιστολή της φοροδιαφυγής, κάτι που δεν έγινε. Παρ' όλα αυτά, η τρόικα ελάχιστα επέμεινε σε αύξηση των δημοσίων εσόδων μέσω της φορολογικής δικαιοσύνης. Οι καταθέσεις ελλήνων πολιτών σε ελβετικές, γερμανικές, βρετανικές, κυπριακές και άλλες τράπεζες ξεπερνούν τα 180-220 δισ. Δεν είναι φυσικά στο σύνολό τους προϊόν εγκληματικής πράξης, φοροδιαφυγής ή φοροαποφυγής, η παροχή, όμως, αναλυτικών στοιχείων και ο έλεγχός τους θα εντόπιζε τυχόν γκρίζο ή μαύρο χρήμα, αδήλωτες περιουσίες και δικαιούχους που δεν έχουν καταβάλει τον προβλεπόμενο φόρο. Από τον έλεγχο της φοροδιαφυγής θα μπορούσαν να προκύψουν δημόσια έσοδα ύψους 6-45 δισ. ευρώ ([1]) ([2]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι διατεθειμένη να παρέμβει και να ζητήσει από την ελβετική κυβέρνηση να παράσχει αναλυτικά στοιχεία για τις καταθέσεις Ελλήνων πολιτών στις ελβετικές τράπεζες, ώστε να γίνει εκτενής έλεγχος των καταθέσεων αυτών, όπως έχει ζητήσει από τον πρόεδρο της Επιτροπής κ. Μπαρόζο η Ομάδα των Πρασίνων στο Ευρωκοινοβούλιο;

— Γιατί δεν προβλέπονται στο νέο «πακέτο» έσοδα από έλεγχο περιουσιών και καταθέσεων, ώστε να μειωθεί η πίεση για βίαιη περικοπή μισθών, συντάξεων και κοινωνικών δαπανών;

— Έχει ο εκπρόσωπός της στην τρόικα εντολή να επιμείνει σε μέτρα φορολογικής διαφάνειας, δικαιοσύνης και αντιμετώπισης της φοροαποφυγής και της φοροαπάτης;

— Υπάρχουν χώρες που εμπόδισαν μέχρι σήμερα παρέμβαση της Επιτροπής για διαφάνεια στο τραπεζικό σύστημα και παροχή στοιχείων από τις ελβετικές και άλλες τράπεζες;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Δεν έχουν δοθεί στην Επιτροπή εξουσίες για να διενεργεί το είδος των φορολογικών διερευνήσεων στις οποίες αναφέρεται η ερώτηση του Αξιότιμου Μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου. Μόνο οι ελληνικές αρχές είναι αρμόδιες να ενεργούν για τη φορολόγηση των επενδύσεων στο εξωτερικό, τις οποίες έχουν στην κατοχή τους Έλληνες υπήκοοι.

Για να διευκολύνει την ενέργεια αυτή, η Επιτροπή έχει αποδώσει πολιτική προτεραιότητα στην ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών για φορολογικούς σκοπούς. Ωστόσο, οι προτάσεις για διεύρυνση και ενίσχυση της οδηγίας της ΕΕ για τις αποταμιεύσεις και των σχετικών συμφωνιών με την Ελβετία και άλλες γειτονικές με την Ένωση χώρες με αντικείμενο τις καταθέσεις έχουν ανασταλεί στο Συμβούλιο επί υπερβολικά μεγάλο χρονικό διάστημα για λόγους που έχουν εξηγηθεί εκτενώς.

Θα ήταν προς το συμφέρον όλων των κρατών μελών, εάν μπορούσαν να συμφωνήσουν στο Συμβούλιο να εξουσιοδοτήσουν την Επιτροπή να διαπραγματευθεί την προσαρμογή των υφιστάμενων συμφωνιών με την Ελβετία και άλλες γειτονικές με την Ένωση χώρες. Η προσαρμογή αυτή θα ενισχύσει οπωσδήποτε τη θέση όλων των κρατών μελών σε σχέση με την ορθή φορολόγηση των επενδύσεων που διατηρούνται στο εξωτερικό.

([1]) Μελέτη Ν. Αρταβάνη (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) και Adair Morse και Μαργ. Τσούτσουρα (University of Chicago) http://www.euro2day.gr/news/economy/124/articles/723273/Article.aspx

([2]) Συνέντευξη του διευθυντή ελέγχων του ΣΔΟΕ κ. Λέκκα στην ηλεκτρονική έκδοση της γερμανικής εφημερίδας «Die Welt» http://www.iefimerida.gr/news/54560

Ο ρόλος της ομάδας δράσης της Επιτροπής για την Ελλάδα είναι η παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας προς τις ελληνικές αρχές. Οι συζητήσεις της τρόικας με τις ελληνικές αρχές έχουν επικεντρωθεί ιδιαίτερα στις μεταρρυθμίσεις της φορολογικής πολιτικής και της φορολογικής διοίκησης. Στη Μεσοπρόθεσμη Δημοσιονομική Στρατηγική της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης εξαγγέλθηκε μεταρρύθμιση της φορολογίας εισοδήματος με στόχο να διευρυνθεί η φορολογική βάση και να γίνει πλέον ισότιμος επιμερισμός του φορολογικού βάρους. Η μεταρρύθμιση αναμένεται να τεθεί σε ισχύ το 2013 και θα αποφέρει σημαντικά επιπρόσθετα έσοδα.

Η διαφάνεια του φορολογικού συστήματος και του φόρτου για τις επιχειρήσεις έχει ήδη βελτιωθεί, μέσω της μεταρρύθμισης του Κώδικα Βιβλίων και Στοιχείων, στο πλαίσιο του Πολυνομοσχεδίου. Τέλος, εκσυγχρονίζεται η φορολογική διοίκηση με πρόσθετα μέτρα που εφαρμόζονται για την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς, της φοροδιαφυγής και της φορολογικής απάτης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008900/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Generating revenue and balancing the budget by combating tax evasion

In a bid to reduce Greek deficits, savage cuts have been made in pay, pensions and social services, which have led to an unprecedented recession, a 17.5% fall in GDP, 24% unemployment, massive pension fund deficits and a massive deterioration in the quality of health and social services, without achieving the financial objectives set.

On the other hand, nothing has been done to promote tax reform, transparency of the banking system and fiscal rationalisation or the identification of grey areas and illicit funds, with a view to reducing tax evasion and ensuring that everybody pays their fair share.

In the 2011 Greek budget it was estimated that the prevention of tax evasion would generate revenue of around EUR 1.1 billion. However, this did not materialise. Despite that, the Troika placed little emphasis on increasing public revenues by ensuring fair taxation. Deposits by Greek citizens into banks in Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Cyprus and elsewhere are around EUR 180-220 billion or more. While not all of it comes from crime, tax evasion or tax avoidance, close scrutiny would make it possible to identify illicit funds, undeclared assets and unpaid tax. Investigation of tax evasion could generate public revenue of between EUR 6 billion and EUR 45 billion ([1]) ([2]).

In view of this:

— Is the Commission prepared to request from the Greek Government detailed information concerning deposits by Greek citizens into Swiss banks with a view to investigating them closely in accordance to the request from the Green Group in the European Parliament to Commissioner Barroso?

— Why does the new package not provide for revenue generated by the investigation of assets and deposits, thereby easing the pressure for swingeing cuts in pay, pensions and social services?

— Does the Commission representative in the Troika have the necessary remit to insist on fiscal transparency and fairness and measures to combat tax evasion and tax fraud?

— Have any countries to date sought to hamper efforts by the Commission to ensure the transparency of the banking system and obtain information from Swiss and other banks?

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

The Commission does not have the powers to carry out the type of tax investigations referred to in the Honourable Member's question. It is the Greek authorities who act in relation to taxing investments held abroad by Greek nationals.

To facilitate this, the Commission puts exchange of information for tax purposes high on its agenda. However, proposals to broaden and strengthen the EU Savings Directive and the related Savings Agreements with Switzerland and other countries neighbouring the Union have been blocked in the Council for too long, for reasons well reported.

It would be in the interest of all Member States if they could agree in Council to authorise the Commission to negotiate the adaptation of the existing agreements with Switzerland and other countries neighbouring the Union. Such adaptation would definitely strengthen the position of all Member States in relation to properly taxing investments held abroad.

The role of the Commission Task Force on Greece is to provide technical assistance to the Greek authorities. The Troika discussions with the Greek authorities have particularly focused on reforms to tax policy and tax administration. An income tax reform was announced in the Greek Government's Medium Term Fiscal Strategy with the aim to broaden the tax base and share more equally the tax burden. The reform is expected to enter into force in 2013 and will raise substantial additional revenue.

([1]) Study by N. Artavani (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) and Adair Morse and Marge Tsoutsoura (University of Chicago), http://www.euro2day.gr/news/economy/124/articles/723273/Article.aspx

([2]) Interview with the chief auditor of the SDOE (Financial Crime Investigation Unit), Mr Lekka in the online edition of the German *De Welt* newspaper, http://www.iefimerida.gr/node/54560#ixzz28EQaPev8

The transparency of the tax system and its burdens on businesses has already been improved through the reform of the Code of Books and Records, part of the Omnibus Act. Finally, the tax administration is being modernised with additional measures implemented to combat corruption, tax evasion and tax fraud.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-008901/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 Οκτωβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ελλιπές νομοθετικό πλαίσιο για υπεράκτιες εξορύξεις υδρογονανθράκων

Σύμφωνα με τη Γενική Διεύθυνση Περιβάλλοντος, η υπάρχουσα ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία δεν προστατεύει επαρκώς από τους σοβαρούς κινδύνους που σχετίζονται με τις υπεράκτιες εξορύξεις πετρελαίου και φυσικού αερίου ([1]).

Υπάρχει μόνο μία απόφαση για ένταξη των χωρών της ΕΕ στο «Υπεράκτιο Πρωτόκολλο» της Σύμβασης της Βαρκελώνης ([2]) το οποίο χρειάζεται να τροποποιηθεί από τα κράτη μέλη σε ζητήματα παρακολούθησης και ιδιαίτερα αποκατάστασης ζημιών που προκαλούνται από υπεράκτιες εξορύξεις. Επίσης, δεν έχει ακόμα διευθετηθεί το ζήτημα της ευθύνης της περιβαλλοντικής αποκατάστασης σε περίπτωση ατυχήματος που έχει προταθεί να βαρύνει αποκλειστικά τον κάτοχο της άδειας εξόρυξης ([3]) καθώς και το ζήτημα της προέκτασης της περιοχής ευθύνης από τα 22 χλμ. που είναι σήμερα, στα 370 χλμ. από την ακτή. Προσφάτως μάλιστα οι ευρωβουλευτές της Επιτροπής Περιβάλλοντος, Δημόσιας Υγείας και Ασφάλειας Τροφίμων τοποθετήθηκαν υπέρ της θέσπισης ξεκάθαρης νομοθεσίας που να απαιτεί από την ανάδοχο εταιρεία χρηματοοικονομικές εγγυήσεις για την κάλυψη ενδεχόμενων κινδύνων από ένα ατύχημα ([4]). Παρά τα προαναφερόμενα κενά, η Ελληνική κυβέρνηση, μετά από εσπευσμένες διαδικασίες, ξεκινά αυτή την περίοδο την αξιολόγηση των οκτώ προσφορών που κατέθεσαν εταιρείες για τις έρευνες πετρελαίου σε τρεις περιοχές της Δυτικής Ελλάδας ενώ προχωρά σε διαγωνισμό για την πραγματοποίηση μη αποκλειστικών σεισμικών ερευνών και στις θαλάσσιες περιοχές της Νότιας Κρήτης ([5]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Έως ότου το νέο νομοθετικό πλαίσιο καταστεί ενεργό, εκτιμά ότι το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον των εν λόγω περιοχών της Μεσογείου προστατεύεται επαρκώς από τον κίνδυνο ατυχήματος, σύμφωνα με τα προβλεπόμενα από την Οδηγία-Πλαίσιο για το Θαλάσσιο Περιβάλλον (2008/56/ΕΚ);

— Τι επιπλέον έκτακτα μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να ελαχιστοποιήσει τον κίνδυνο ατυχήματος στις περιοχές αυτές;

— Δεδομένου ότι ο οικονομικός σχεδιασμός των υποψηφίων επενδυτών ενδεχομένως να επηρεαστεί καθοριστικά από τη θέσπιση νομοθεσίας η οποία θα τους υποχρεώνει α) να επενδύσουν σε υψηλότερες προδιαγραφές ασφαλείας, β) να εξασφαλίσουν τη δυνατότητα εκτενούς αποζημίωσης σε περίπτωση ατυχήματος, και γ) να παράσχουν χρηματοοικονομικές εγγυήσεις· δεδομένου ότι οι συμφωνίες που θα συναφθούν ανάμεσα στην Ελληνική κυβέρνηση και τις εταιρείες εξορύξεων θα διαρκέσουν 25 χρόνια, σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί ώστε οι παραπάνω παράμετροι να ληφθούν υπόψη στην περίπτωση των επικείμενων γεωτρήσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Στην οδηγία-πλαίσιο για τη θαλάσσια στρατηγική ([6]) προβλέπεται η εκπόνηση προγραμμάτων εκ μέρους των κρατών μελών, το αργότερο έως το 2015, για τη λήψη μέτρων με στόχο την επίτευξη ή τη διατήρηση καλής περιβαλλοντικής κατάστασης για τα θαλάσσια ύδατά τους. Η οδηγία 94/22/ΕΚ ([7]) θεσπίζει τους όρους χορήγησης και χρήσης των αδειών αναζήτησης, εξερεύνησης και παραγωγής υδρογονανθράκων και η οδηγία 2011/92/ΕΕ ([8]) επικεντρώνεται στην εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων ορισμένων σχεδίων δημοσίων και ιδιωτικών έργων στο περιβάλλον.

([1]) «Off shore Exploration and Exploitation in the Mediterranean — Impacts on Marine and Coastal Environments» DG Environment, News Alert Service, Issue no 3, April 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/FB3.pdf
([2]) Proposal for a Council Desicion on the accession of the European Union to the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf and the seabed and its subsoil, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/%20LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0690:FIN:EN:PDF
([3]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0688:FIN:EN:PDF
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120917IPR51502/html/Licence-todrill-Only-if-films-can-pay-for-spills-say-environment-MEPs
([5]) http://www.euro2day.gr/news/economy/124/articles/72648/Article.aspx
([6]) Οδηγία 2008/56/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 17ης Ιουνίου 2008, περί πλαισίου κοινοτικής δράσης στο πεδίο της πολιτικής για το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον, ΕΕ L 164 της 25.6.2008.
([7]) ΕΕ L 164 της 30.6.1994.
([8]) ΕΕ L 26 της 28.1.2012.

Επιπλέον, τον Οκτώβριο του 2011, μετά την καταστροφή στον Κόλπο του Μεξικού, η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε, στο Συμβούλιο και στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, πρόταση κανονισμού για την ασφάλεια των υπεράκτιων δραστηριοτήτων αναζήτησης, εξερεύνησης και παραγωγής πετρελαίου και φυσικού αερίου ([9]). Παράλληλα, υποβλήθηκε πρόταση απόφασης για την ένταξη της ΕΕ στο Πρωτόκολλο Υπεράκτιων Δραστηριοτήτων της Σύμβασης της Βαρκελώνης ([10]). Επί του παρόντος, για την πρώτη πρόταση βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη διαδικασία συναπόφασης, ενώ η δεύτερη πρόταση εγκρίθηκε από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο τον Νοέμβριο, επιτρέποντας στο Συμβούλιο να εκδώσει την απόφαση πριν το τέλος του 2012.

Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η έναρξη ισχύος και εφαρμογής των δύο αυτών προτάσεων, σε συνδυασμό με την οδηγία πλαίσιο για τη θαλάσσια στρατηγική, και, ιδιαίτερα, η εφαρμογή εκ μέρους των κρατών μελών των προγραμμάτων μέτρων που διαθέτει το κάθε κράτος, θα εξασφαλίσουν επαρκή προστασία και, ως εκ τούτου, επί του παρόντος δεν προβλέπει περαιτέρω μέτρα.

([9]) Πρόταση κανονισμού για την ασφάλεια των υπεράκτιων δραστηριοτήτων αναζήτησης, εξερεύνησης και παραγωγής πετρελαίου και φυσικού αερίου, COM(2011) 688 τελικό.

([10]) Πρόταση για απόφαση του Συμβουλίου για την προσχώρηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στο πρωτόκολλο για την προστασία της Μεσογείου Θαλάσσης από τη ρύπανση που προκαλείται από την εξερεύνηση και την εκμετάλλευση του θαλάσσιου βυθού και του υπεδάφους του COM(2011) 690 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008901/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Inadequate legal framework provisions regarding offshore drilling for hydrocarbons

According to the Directorate-General for the Environment, existing European legislation fails to provide adequate protection against the serious risks arising from offshore drilling for oil and natural gas ([1]).

The only step in this direction is a decision regarding the accession of the EU Member States to the 'Offshore Protocol' of the Barcelona Convention ([2]), requiring modification by the Member States with regard to monitoring and special compensation for damage caused by offshore drilling activities. Furthermore, nothing has yet been done to address the issue of responsibility for making good environmental damage caused by accidents, the proposal being that this be borne solely by the holder of the drilling licence ([3]), or the question of extending the area of responsibility from 22 km at present to 370 km from the shore. The members of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety recently called for clear legislation requiring the contracting company to provide financial guarantees against accident risks ([4]). Despite these lacunae, the Greek Government has hastily proceeded to evaluate eight tenders for oil prospecting in three areas in western Greece and is organising a competitive tendering procedure for non-exclusive seismic surveys in the sea areas off southern Crete ([5]).

In view of this:

— Pending the entry into force of the new legal framework provisions, does the Commission consider that this area of the Mediterranean is being sufficiently protected from the danger of accidents, in accordance with Directive 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy?

— What other urgent measures will it take to minimise the danger of accidents in these areas?

— Given that the financial planning of prospective investors will probably be decisively influenced by legislation requiring them (a) to invest in higher safety standards, (b) to make provision for comprehensive damages should an accident occur and (c) provide financial guarantees, and given that agreements concluded between the Greek Government and drilling companies will be valid for 25 years, what action will it take to ensure that the above factors are taken into account with regard to the projected drilling operations?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2012)

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([6]) provides for the development by the Member States by 2015 at the latest of programmes of measures necessary to achieve or maintain good environmental status in their marine waters. Directive 94/22/EC ([7]) sets the conditions for authorisations for prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons and Directive 2011/92/EU ([8]) deals with the assessment of certain public and private projects in the environment.

([1]) Off shore Exploration and Exploitation in the Mediterranean — Impacts on Marine and Coastal Environments DG Environment, News Alert Service, Issue no 3, April 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/FB3.pdf
([2]) Proposal for a Council decision on the accession of the European Union to the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf and the seabed and its subsoil, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/%20LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0690:FIN:EN:PDF
([3]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0688:FIN:EN:PDF
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120917IPR51502/html/Licence-to-drill-Only-if-firms-can-pay-for-spills-say-environment-MEPs
([5]) http://www.euro2day.gr/news/economy/124/articles/724648/Article.aspx
([6]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environment policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([7]) OJ L 164, 30.6.1994.
([8]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

Furthermore, responding to the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities ([9]) to the Council and the European Parliament in October 2011. A proposal for a decision on the accession of the EU to the Offshore Protocol of the Barcelona Convention ([10]) was submitted in parallel. The first proposal is currently undergoing co-decision, while the second received the consent of the European Parliament in November, allowing the Council to adopt the decision before end 2012.

The Commission believes that the entry into force and implementation of these two proposals, added to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and especially the implementation by Member States of their respective programmes of measures, will ensure an adequate level of protection and therefore does not currently envisage any additional action.

([9]) Proposal for a regulation on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities, COM(2011) 688 final.

([10]) Proposal for a Council Decision on the accession of the European Union to the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf and the seabed and its subsoil, COM(2011) 690 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008902/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(3 oktober 2012)

Betreft: Universele lader iPhone 5

Op 21 september lanceerde Apple de nieuwe iPhone 5. In tegenstelling tot wat het bedrijf overeengekomen was in het (vrijwillig) memorandum van overeenstemming (MVO), is dit toestel niet uitgerust met de universele lader maar met de zogenaamde „Lighting" oplader. Het bedrijf zal wel een Micro USB-adapter op de markt brengen die op deze Lighting oplader kan worden aangesloten. Deze adapter zal echter moeten worden aangekocht door de consument.

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat de Micro USB-adapter gratis ter beschikking moet worden gesteld aan de consument om in overeenstemming te zijn met het MVO?

2. Indien deze praktijk niet in overeenstemming zou zijn met het MVO, over welke mogelijkheden beschikt de Commissie om Apple te dwingen zich te houden aan de afspraken?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat dit duidelijk aantoont dat zelfregulering van de sector wat betreft universele laders ontoereikend is en dat bindende Europese regels nodig zijn om de fabrikanten aan te zetten tot meer harmonisering op dit vlak?

4. Welke lessen trekt de Commissie uit dit voorval met betrekking tot universele laders voor andere digitale apparaten, zoals camera's, laptops, draagbare mediaspelers, etc.?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(16 november 2012)

De ondertekenaars van het memorandum van overeenstemming over de harmonisatie van laders voor mobiele telefoons die geschikt zijn voor dataverkeer — waaronder Apple — zijn de invoering overeengekomen van een enkele, op micro-USBtechnologie gebaseerde oplossing voor het laden van mobiele telefoons. Het memorandum staat echter ook het gebruik van een adapter toe. Het memorandum schrijft niet voor hoe adapters verstrekt moeten worden. Verder wil ik u erop wijzen dat de Commissie niet intervenieert in de marketingstrategieën van fabrikanten.

De Commissie heeft geen bewijs dat Apple zich niet aan de overeenkomst heeft gehouden: volgens de door Apple verstrekte informatie kan de iPhone 5 met een adapter worden gebruikt die op de gemeenschappelijke lader kan worden aangesloten.

Uit een recent voortgangsverslag van de partijen bij het memorandum blijkt dat meer dan 95 % van de nieuwe, voor dataverkeer geschikte mobiele telefoons die door de ondertekenaars in de eerste helft van 2012 op de EU-markt zijn gebracht deze gemeenschappelijke laadmogelijkheid bieden. Dit wijst erop dat de vrijwillige overeenkomst vruchten voor de burgers heeft afgeworpen.

De Commissie houdt verder toezicht op de ontwikkelingen binnen de mobiele-telefoonmarkt en op het effect van het memorandum van overeenstemming op de markt voor andere kleine draagbare elektronische apparatuur zoals digitale camera's, tablet-pc's en muziekspelers. Aangezien het memorandum van overeenstemming eind 2012 afloopt, zal de Commissie mogelijke follow-upmaatregelen verkennen, en de mogelijkheid onderzoeken de overeenkomst te verlengen. In dit verband is de Commissie voornemens een studie te laten uitvoeren om de resultaten van het memorandum te beoordelen en de opties voor follow-upinitiatieven te analyseren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008902/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Universal charger for iPhone 5

On 21 September, Apple launched the new iPhone 5. Contrary to what had been agreed with the company in the (voluntary) memorandum of understanding (MOU), the device is not equipped with a universal charger but with a 'Lighting' charger. The company does intend to market a Micro USB adapter which can be connected to the Lighting charger. However, consumers will have to buy this adapter.

1. Does the Commission consider that the Micro USB adapter ought to be supplied to consumers free of charge in order to comply with the MOU?

2. If this practice does not accord with the MOU, what can the Commission do to compel Apple to abide by the agreements?

3. Does the Commission agree that this clearly indicates that self-regulation of the industry is inadequate in the case of universal chargers and that binding European rules are needed to persuade manufacturers to bring about greater harmonisation in this field?

4. What lessons does the Commission draw from this incident with regard to universal chargers for other digital equipment, such as cameras, laptops, portable media players, etc.?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 November 2012)

The signatories of the memorandum of understanding on the harmonisation of chargers for data-enabled mobile phones (MoU) , including Apple, agreed to introduce a common charging solution for mobile phones based on the Micro-USB technology. It should be noted that the MoU also allows for the use of an adaptor. The MoU does not prescribe the conditions for the provision of an adaptor. Moreover it is worth noting that the Commission does not interfere on the marketing strategies of the manufacturers.

The Commission does not have any evidence that Apple has breached the agreement as, according to the information received from Apple, the iPhone 5 can be used with an adapter allowing it to be connected to the common charger.

A recent progress report provided by the MoU signatories has shown that more than 95% of the new models of data enabled mobile phones placed on the EU market by the signatories during the 1st half of 2012 offer the common charging capability. This indicates that the voluntary agreement has been successful in delivering benefits for citizens.

The Commission continues to monitor mobile phone market developments as well as the impact of the MoU on the market for other small portable electronic devices such as digital cameras, tablets and music players. In view of the expiry of the MoU at the end of 2012 the Commission will examine appropriate follow-up measures as well as the possibility of extending the agreement. In this respect, the Commission intends to launch a study to assess the results achieved by the MoU and to analyse options for follow-up initiatives.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008903/12
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Situazione dell'esposto presentato alla Commissione da varie associazioni di Pescara sul sistema TPL elettrificato tra Pescara e Montesilvano (EU Pilot 2590/111/ENVI)

Nel mese di aprile 2011 varie associazioni e comitati della società civile di Pescara hanno presentato un esposto alla Commissione europea per evidenziare il mancato rispetto della procedura di assoggettabilità a V.I.A. (Valutazione Impatto Ambientale) del sistema TPL elettrificato a tecnologia innovativa tra Pescara e Montesilvano.

Ad oggi i cittadini di Pescara sono ancora in attesa di una risposta al suddetto esposto.

Considerato che:

— la procura di Pescara ha di recente prodotto una perizia con la quale si conferma che l'opera in oggetto non è stata assoggetta alla procedura di screening e che, considerate le caratteristiche dell'opera e la normativa vigente, tale procedura è obbligatoria;

— il Comitato di coordinamento regionale V.I.A., invece di procedere all'immediata e totale sospensione precauzionale dei lavori, come richiesto dalla procura, si è limitato ad imporre soltanto la sospensione dell'installazione degli apparati collegati alla guida vincolata;

— appare evidente che più i lavori vanno avanti più sarà difficile e dispendioso ottemperare alle norme comunitarie sulla V.I.A;

— è palese, nonché accertata dalla perizia della procura, la violazione delle norme previste dalla direttiva 85/337/EEC;

può la Commissione esplicitare il suo orientamento sul suddetto esposto (EU Pilot 2590/11/ENVI)?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 novembre 2012)

Nel mese di ottobre 2011 la Commissione ha aperto un'inchiesta sulla presunta violazione della direttiva VIA ([1]) in merito ad un progetto di costruzione di un sistema di trasporto fra Pescara e Montesilvano.

Al momento la Commissione sta valutando le informazioni trasmesse dalle autorità italiane e dai denuncianti negli ultimi due mesi. In base alle risultanze di tale valutazione, la Commissione deciderà in merito e comunicherà la propria decisione sia alle autorità italiane sia ai denuncianti.

([1]) Direttiva 85/337/CEE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati, GU L 175 del 5.7.1985, ora sostituita dalla direttiva 2011/92/UE, GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008903/12
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Situation regarding complaint to the Commission by various associations in Pescara concerning the electrified local public transport system between Pescara and Montesilvano (EU Pilot 2590/111/ENVI)

Various civil society associations and committees in Pescara filed a complaint with the Commission in April 2011 concerning the failure to carry out an environmental impact assessment (EIA) screening process for the electrified local public transport system (LPT), fitted with innovative technology, being installed between Pescara and Montesilvano.

To date the public in Pescara is still awaiting a response to their complaint.

The public prosecutor in Pescara recently produced a report confirming that the LPT works had not been subjected to the screening procedure which, for work of this kind, is mandatory under current legislation.

The EIA regional coordination committee, instead of immediately suspending all the works as a precautionary measure, as required by the public prosecutor, merely suspended installation of the apparatus connected to the guidance system.

It seems obvious that the further the works advance, the harder it will be and more costly to comply with EU legislation on the EIA.

Directive 85/337/EEC has clearly been infringed, as confirmed by the public prosecutor's report.

Can the Commission explain therefore its position on said complaint (EU Pilot 2590/11/ENVI)?

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

In October 2011, the Commission launched an investigation about the alleged breach of the EIA Directive ([1]) in relation to a project for the construction of a transport system between Pescara and Montesilvano.

The Commission is currently assessing information provided by the Italian authorities and complainants in the last two months. Based on the result of this assessment, the Commission will take a position and communicate it to both the Italian authorities and the complainants.

([1]) Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 175, 5.7.1985, now replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU, OJ L 026, 28.1.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008904/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(3 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Fracking in Toscana

Nei mesi scorsi pare siano stati effettuati dei test di fratturazione idraulica nella Maremma Grossetana, in Toscana.

Tale tecnica, comunemente nota col nome di fracking, consiste nell'estrarre il gas intrappolato in profondità nelle rocce, che vengono appunto fratturate con l'iniezione di enormi quantità d'acqua ad alta pressione. Parte di quest'acqua, pesantemente inquinata, viene poi recuperata e solitamente smaltita iniettandola in pozzi a grande profondità.

Questa tecnica di trivellazione presenta numerose problematiche, tra cui ad esempio il fatto di produrre un notevole numero di scosse sismiche, per lo più a bassa densità, che possono però destabilizzare l'intero sottosuolo; inoltre vi è il rischio concreto di avere una pesante contaminazione delle falde acquifere.

Si è parlato anche di fracking come possibile causa del terremoto che ha recentemente colpito l'Emilia Romagna: tale ipotesi appare tuttavia non comprovata, in quanto non risulta che in Emilia siano stati avviati test di questo genere, come invece già avvenuto in Toscana.

Diversi paesi hanno inoltre vietato l'utilizzo di questo tipo di perforazione, a causa dei pesanti rischi ad essa associati.

Alla luce di tutto questo, può la Commissione indicare se possiede particolari ricerche o studi scientifici riguardanti questo settore? Quali sono i rischi correlati all'utilizzo di tale tecnica?

Può indicare qual è attualmente la situazione nei diversi Stati europei, con particolare riferimento anche alla realtà Italia?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 novembre 2012)

Insieme ad altri due studi sui gas non convenzionali, il 7 settembre 2012 la Commissione ha pubblicato uno studio sui potenziali rischi per l'ambiente provocati dalle operazioni di estrazione d'idrocarburi attraverso la fratturazione idraulica in Europa ([1]), dal quale emerge tra l'altro che l'estrazione di gas di scisto comporta in genere rischi ambientali maggiori rispetto allo sfruttamento di gas convenzionale. La Commissione sta conducendo una valutazione d'impatto sulla necessità di un quadro di valutazione sotto il profilo ambientale, climatico ed energetico che consenta l'estrazione sicura degli idrocarburi (ad es. gas di scisto) in Europa. Saranno passate al vaglio tutte le opzioni strategiche sul tavolo e l'iniziativa si concluderà entro al fine del 2013.

In Europa la fratturazione idraulica ha avuto luogo in particolare nel contesto della produzione di gas da sabbie compatte (*tight gas*) e nei progetti *offshore*, soprattutto nei pozzi verticali e nell'ambito dei progetti di esplorazione del gas di scisto in alcuni Stati membri. Due Stati membri, Bulgaria e Francia, hanno vietato il ricorso alle attività di fratturazione idraulica per l'esplorazione e lo sfruttamento degli idrocarburi, altri, come i Paesi Bassi, hanno istituito una moratoria; alcuni Stati membri, come la Danimarca, hanno avviato o stanno avviando analisi sull'adeguatezza delle rispettive legislazioni nazionali.

La Commissione ha istituito un gruppo di lavoro tecnico composto da rappresentanti degli Stati membri per analizzare gli aspetti ambientali dei combustibili fossili non convenzionali ([2]), ai fini dello scambio d'informazioni sui progetti di sviluppo, sui potenziali rischi ambientali e sulle pratiche normative e tecniche applicabili. Alla Commissione non sono ancora pervenute informazioni sugli sviluppi in Italia.

([1]) Per ulteriori informazioni e per consultare i suddetti studi, cfr. il sito della Commissione europea sugli aspetti ambientali dei combustibili fossili non convenzionali (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/unconventional_en.htm).

([2]) Cfr. il registro dei gruppi di esperti della Commissione: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2671&Lang=IT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008904/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: Fracking in Tuscany

It seems that hydraulic fracturing tests have been carried out in recent months in Maremma Grossetana in Tuscany.

Hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking, consists in extracting gas trapped deep down in rocks. The rocks are injected with enormous quantities of water at high pressure to fracture them precisely. Part of the water used, now heavily polluted, is then recovered and usually disposed of by pumping it into extremely deep wells.

There are many problems associated with this drilling technique, one being the fact that it produces a considerable number of seismic shocks, mainly low density ones, which may however destabilise the whole of the subsoil. There is also a definite risk of the water-bearing strata being seriously polluted.

Fracking has also been cited as a possible cause of the earthquake that hit Emilia Romagna recently. However this hypothesis appears unfounded as no tests of this kind had been carried out in Emilia Romagna, unlike in Tuscany.

Furthermore, various countries have banned this form of drilling, owing to the serious risks associated with it.

In light of the above, could the Commission say whether it has obtained any special research or scientific studies on this industry? What are the risks associated with this technique?

What is the situation at present in the various Member States, with particular reference to Italy?

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

Together with two other studies on unconventional gas, the Commission on 7 September 2012 published a study on potential risks for the environment arising from hydrocarbons operations involving hydraulic fracturing in Europe ([1]) which *inter alia* finds that extracting shale gas generally entails higher environmental risks than conventional gas development. The Commission is conducting an impact assessment on the need for an environmental, climate and energy assessment framework to enable safe and secure unconventional hydrocarbons (e.g. shale gas) extraction in Europe. This exercise will look at all relevant policy options; the initiative will be concluded by the end of 2013.

Hydraulic fracturing has taken place in Europe, especially in the context of tight gas production and in offshore projects, mostly in vertical wells as well as in the framework of shale gas exploration projects in a few Member States. Two Member States have prohibited the use of hydraulic fracturing practices for hydrocarbons exploration and exploitation (Bulgaria, France) and some have set up temporary moratoria (e.g. the Netherlands). A number of Member States have initiated, or are about to initiate reviews of the appropriateness of their national legislation (e.g. Denmark).

The Commission has set up a technical working group of Member States on environmental aspects of unconventional fossil fuels ([2]) to exchange information about project developments, potential environmental risks and applicable technical and regulatory practices. The Commission has not yet received information about developments in Italy.

([1]) Please refer to the European Commission's page on environmental aspects of unconventional fossil fuels: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/unconventional_en.htm) for further information and to retrieve these studies

([2]) Please refer to the Commission's Registry of Expert Groups: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2671

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008905/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(3 ta' Ottubru 2012)

Suġġett: Kriterju ta' tqassim tal-UE għall-migrazzjoni

Fir-rapport tiegħu dwar it-titjib tas-solidarjetà fl-UE fil-qasam tal-asil (2012/2032(INI)), il-Parlament Ewropew appella biex is-solidarjetà u l-qsim tar-responsabbiltà jissarrfu f'miżuri konkreti.

Bl-aktar mod notevoli, appella wkoll għall-introduzzjoni ta' Kriterju ta' Tqassim tal-UE għar-rilokazzjoni tal-benefiċjarji tal-protezzjoni internazzjonali, ibbażat fuq indikaturi adegwati rigward il-kapaċitajiet tal-Istati Membri għall-ilqigħ u l-integrazzjoni.

B'segwitu ma' dan ir-rapport u mal-komunikazzjni tal-Kummissjoni:

1. Il-Kummissjoni meta bihsiebha tressaq proposta leġiżlattiva li ssarraf is-solidarjetà f'miżuri konkreti?

2. Il-Kummissjoni x'qed tagħmel biex tieħu kont tat-talba tal-Parlament għal Kriterju ta' Tqassim tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Novembru 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni ħabbret l-istrateġija tagħha għall-iżvilupp ulterjuri tal-Komunikazzjoni dwar is-solidarjietà intra-UE fil-qasam tal-asil ([1]) ta' Diċembru 2011. F'din il-Komunikazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni pprevediet proposta għal skema volontarja permanenti ta' rilokazzjoni bbażata fuq il-konsiderazzjoni tar-riżultati ta' evalwazzjoni tal-proġett pilota EUREMA dwar ir-rilokazzjoni minn Malta.

Fir-rigward ta' Formula ta' Distribuzzjoni tal-UE, il-Kummissjoni tfakkar li ħafna formuli bħal dawn ġew proposti, pereżempju bħala parti minn studju ta' Lulju 2010 dwar ir-rilokazzjoni ([2]). Il-Kummissjoni hi tal-fehma li filwaqt li dawn il-formuli jistgħu jkunu għodda utli biex jiġu apprezzati d-differenzi fis-sitwazzjonijiet individwali tal-Istati Membri, kull waħda minnhom għandha vantaġġi u żvantaġġi u ebda waħda ma tista' tiġbor b'mod perfett il-parametri rilevanti kollha. Barra minn hekk, xi whud mill-kriterji proposti mill-Parlament, bħall-aħjar interess tal-persuna kkonċernata, mhumiex kwantifikabbli.

Minħabba n-natura volontarja tar-rilokazzjoni bħala parti minn skema futura possibbli, tista' tiġi integrata fl-iskema Formula ta' Distribuzzjoni tal-UE bħala element mhux vinkolanti u illustrattiv biss.

([1]) COM(2011) 835.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/asylum/docs/final_report_relocation_of_refugees.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008905/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(3 October 2012)

Subject: EU Distribution Key for migration

In its resolution on enhanced intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum (2012/2032 (INI)), Parliament called for the translation of solidarity and responsibility-sharing into concrete measures.

Most notably it also called for the introduction of an EU Distribution Key for the relocation of beneficiaries of international protection, based on appropriate indicators relating to Member States' reception and integration capacities.

Further to this resolution and to the Commission's communication:

1. When does the Commission intend to come up with a legislative proposal which translates solidarity into concrete measures?

2. What follow-up is the Commission now considering in order to take into account Parliament's request for an EU Distribution Key?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2012)

The Commission announced its strategy for further development of intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum Communication ([1]) of December 2011. In this communication the Commission foresaw a proposal for a permanent voluntary relocation scheme based on consideration of the results of an evaluation of the EUREMA pilot project on relocation from Malta.

As concerns an EU Distribution Key, the Commission recalls that many such formulae have been proposed, for example as part of a July 2010 study on relocation ([2]). The Commission considers that while such formulae can be a useful tool to appreciate the differences in Member States' individual situations, each of them has advantages and disadvantages and none could perfectly capture all relevant parameters. In addition, some of the criteria proposed by the Parliament, such as the best interest of the person concerned, are not quantifiable.

Given the voluntary nature of relocation as part of a possible future scheme, an EU Distribution Key could be integrated into the scheme only as a non-binding, illustrative element.

([1]) COM(2011) 835.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/asylum/docs/final_report_relocation_of_refugees.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-008907/12
aan de Commissie
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(4 oktober 2012)

Betreft: Speciaal verslag nr. 13/2012 van de Europese Rekenkamer

De Europese Rekenkamer heeft op 28 september 2012 een speciaal verslag gepresenteerd (Speciaal verslag nr. 13/2012) over de ontwikkelingshulp van de Europese Unie voor drinkwatervoorziening en sanitaire basisvoorzieningen in land bezuiden de Sahara.

Voor dit verslag heeft de Europese Rekenkamer bezoeken gebracht aan 23 projecten (in zes landen) waaraan steun met middelen van het zevende, achtste en negende Europese Ontwikkelingsfonds is toegekend. In totaal ging het bij deze projecten om een bedrag van 400 miljoen EUR, waarvan 49 % is betaald door de Commissie.

De Europese Rekenkamer doet een aantal constateringen, waaronder de volgende:

— slechts bij twee van de 23 gecontroleerde projecten werd duidelijk voldaan aan de in de projecten beschreven behoeften;

— bij 19 van de gecontroleerde projecten was de prijs van een liter water vastgesteld op een niveau dat de exploitatiekosten niet dekte;

— bij zeven van de gecontroleerde projecten waren de plaatselijke autoriteiten niet in staat ervoor te zorgen dat de installaties goed werden geëxploiteerd;

— bij elf van de gecontroleerde projecten schoot de financieel-economische analyse tekort;

— in zes gevallen hadden de armste en meest kwetsbare bevolkingsgroepen geen toegang tot de desbetreffende voorzieningen.

Wat gaat de Commissie doen om ervoor te zorgen dat de plaatselijke autoriteiten in staat zijn te garanderen dat de installaties in de toekomst goed worden geëxploiteerd?

Hoe denkt de Commissie de economische levensvatbaarheid van de projecten op de lange termijn te gaan garanderen?

Op welke wijze gaat de Commissie er — samen met de betrokken plaatselijke autoriteiten — voor zorgen dat de armste en meest kwetsbare bevolkingsgroepen toegang krijgen tot de desbetreffende voorzieningen?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(22 november 2012)

De Commissie is ingenomen met het verslag van de Rekenkamer over drinkwatervoorziening en sanitaire basisvoorzieningen in landen bezuiden de Sahara en is tevreden dat de onderzochte projecten hebben geleid tot een betere toegang tot drinkwater en sanitaire basisvoorzieningen voor de hulpbehoevende mensen in Afrika.

Hoewel in het verslag van de Rekenkamer staat dat minder dan de helft van de onderzochte projecten de behoeften van de begunstigden tegemoet kwam, is de Commissie van mening dat hoewel de meeste projecten ambitieus waren, de elementaire levensbehoeften wel werden vervuld.

Sub-Saharisch Afrika is een uitdaging, in het bijzonder aangezien ons doel is om mensen te bereiken die echt hulp behoeven, wat vaak betekent dat de projecten worden georganiseerd in afgelegen gebieden en in moeilijke omstandigheden. In deze context is financiële en institutionele duurzaamheid aanpakken een moeilijke opdracht die vereist dat lokale belanghebbenden eigen verantwoordelijkheid kunnen opnemen terwijl het nationale sectorale beleid en de institutionele kaders worden aangepast aan de lokale realiteit (zie bijlage).

Om de dienstenbehoeften beter aan te passen aan deze moeilijke situaties voert de Commissie sociaal-economische analyses uit, voornamelijk in achtergestelde landelijke en peri-urbane gebieden, om te garanderen dat de behoeften van de armen naar behoren worden aangepakt bij het vaststellen en uitvoeren van projecten en om zodoende de duurzaamheid te verbeteren.

Bovendien heeft de Commissie belangrijke stappen gezet om de kwaliteit van haar projecten te verbeteren door de oprichting van interne kwaliteitsmechanismen (groepen voor kwaliteitsondersteuning) die onder andere dienen om mogelijke problemen met duurzaamheid overeenkomstig de aanbevelingen van het verslag op te lossen.

De Commissie zal de aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer verder volgen opdat de impact van haar projecten en hun bijdrage aan een meer duurzame ontwikkeling worden gemaximaliseerd.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-009448/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(17 de outubro de 2012)

Assunto: África subsaariana — Projetos de água e saneamento em risco

Um relatório do Tribunal de Contas constatou que projetos de desenvolvimento relacionados com água e saneamento apoiados pela União Europeia na África subsaariana são, ou poderão tornar-se, insustentáveis por carências nos domínios técnico e financeiro.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apreciação faz do relatório do Tribunal de Contas?

2. Confirma as dificuldades e problemas detetados?

3. Existe efetivamente o risco de rutura nos projetos de desenvolvimento identificados pelo Tribunal?

4. Que medidas tomou ou prevê tomar de modo a fazer face às dificuldades encontradas?

5. Que resultados espera obter com a sua aplicação?

Resposta conjunta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(22 de novembro de 2012)

A Comissão congratula-se com receber o relatório do Tribunal de Contas sobre o abastecimento de água potável e o saneamento básico nos países da África Subsariana e é com agrado que verifica que os projetos examinados aumentaram o acesso das pessoas necessitadas à água potável e ao saneamento básico em África.

Embora o Tribunal reporte que menos de metade dos projetos examinados terá resultado numa resposta às necessidades dos beneficiários, a Comissão considera que as necessidades primordiais foram no entanto satisfeitas, mesmo sendo a maioria dos projetos muito ambiciosa.

O caso da África Subsariana é particularmente desafiante, em especial por o nosso objetivo ser chegar às pessoas que realmente necessitam de assistência, o que frequentemente significa que os projetos são desenvolvidos em áreas remotas e em situações difíceis. Neste contexto, abordar a sustentabilidade institucional e financeira constitui um exercício complexo, que exige a capacitação dos intervenientes locais ao mesmo tempo que se adaptam as políticas nacionais nos vários setores e os quadros institucionais às realidades locais (ver anexo).

A fim de adaptar melhor as necessidades dos serviços a estes desafios, a Comissão está a realizar, especialmente nas zonas rurais e periurbanas mais desfavorecidas, análises socioeconómicas para garantir que as necessidades dos mais pobres são devidamente tidas em conta no momento de identificar e executar os projetos e, por conseguinte, que há uma melhoria da sustentabilidade.

Além disso, a Comissão tomou importantes medidas para melhorar a qualidade dos seus projetos, estabelecendo mecanismos de qualidade internos (grupos de apoio à qualidade), que servem, nomeadamente, para a resolução de potenciais problemas de sustentabilidade, em conformidade com as recomendações do relatório.

A Comissão continuará a dar seguimento às recomendações do Tribunal de Contas a fim de maximizar o impacto dos seus projetos e a sua contribuição para um desenvolvimento mais sustentável.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008907/12
to the Commission
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: ECA Special Report No 13/2012

On 28 September 2012, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) released a special report on European Union development assistance for drinking water supply and basic sanitation in Sub-Saharan countries.

In drawing up the report the ECA visited 23 projects (in 6 countries) financed under the 7th, 8th and 9th EDF. These projects totalled EUR 400 million, of which 49% was paid by the Commission.

The ECA's comments included the following:

— Only 2 of the projects met the needs of the beneficiaries as defined in the projects themselves.

— In 19 of the projects the price per litre of water was set at a level which did not cover the running costs of the projects.

— In 7 of the projects the local authorities were unable to ensure that the installations operated properly.

— In 11 of the projects the economic and financial analysis was insufficient.

— In 6 cases the poorest and most vulnerable people did not have access to the services concerned.

What is the Commission intending to do to ensure that the local authorities are capable of maintaining the installations in future?

How is the Commission intending to ensure financial feasibility in the long term?

How will the Commission, together with the local authorities concerned, ensure that the poorest and the most vulnerable people will have access to the services?

Question for written answer E-009448/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(17 October 2012)

Subject: Sub-Saharan Africa — Water and sanitation projects at risk

A report by the Court of Auditors found that development projects relating to water and sanitation supported by the European Union in Sub-Saharan Africa are, or could become, unsustainable due to technical and financial weaknesses.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the Court of Auditors' report?

2. Does the Commission confirm the problems and difficulties encountered?

3. Do the development projects identified by the Court effectively risk being discontinued?

4. What measures have been taken or will be taken in order to tackle the difficulties encountered?

5. What results does the Commission hope to achieve via their implementation?

Joint answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2012)

The Commission welcomes the report by the Court of Auditors on Drinking Water Supply and Basic Sanitation in sub-Saharan countries and is pleased to see that the examined projects were found to have 'increased access to drinking water and basic sanitation' to the people in need in Africa.

While the Court reports that fewer than half of the projects examined delivered results meeting the beneficiaries' needs, the Commission considers that, although most projects were ambitious, primary needs were however met.

Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly challenging especially since our goal is to reach people who really need assistance, which often means the projects are run in remote areas and difficult circumstances. In this context, addressing financial and institutional sustainability is a complex exercise, that requires empowering local stakeholders while adapting national sector policies and institutional frameworks to local realities (see annex).

In order to adapt service needs better to these challenging situations, the Commission is conducting, especially in underprivileged rural and peri-urban areas, socioeconomic analyses in order to ensure that the needs of the poor are duly addressed when identifying and implementing projects and hence that sustainability is improved.

Moreover, the Commission has taken important steps to improve the quality of its projects via the establishment of internal quality mechanisms (Quality Support Groups), which serve *inter alia* to address potential sustainability issues, in line with the report's recommendations.

The Commission will further follow up on the Court's recommendations in order to maximise the impact of its projects and their contribution to a more sustainable development.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008908/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE)
(4 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Revisione del regolamento per lo sfruttamento sostenibile delle risorse della pesca nel Mediterraneo

In seguito alle proteste dei pescatori di tutta Italia, la città di Mola di Bari (una delle più importanti flotte pescherecce del Mare Adriatico, la cui economia si basa principalmente sul settore della pesca) ha predisposto un tavolo tecnico al fine di valutare le basi su cui si fonda il regolamento comunitario (CE) n. 1967/2006 ed evidenziarne gli aspetti più dannosi.

Dal momento in cui il regolamento è stato messo in atto è infatti emersa una pluralità di problematiche da cui scaturiscono effetti devastanti per il comparto.

Il nodo da sciogliere è quello relativo al pesce azzurro. Le prescrizioni della relativa misura mettono a rischio lo svolgimento delle attività dei pescatori. Ciò che si ritiene inaccettabile è che il regolamento consenta la commercializzazione del merluzzo con taglia minima 20 centimetri e della triglia con taglia minima 11 centimetri, in quanto al di sotto di tali limiti il pesce è considerato novellame. Altro problema sollevato è quello della grandezza delle reti: nell'Adriatico vi è una rilevante presenza di specie che allo stato adulto risultano di modeste dimensioni. Sono 59 quelle censite e commercialmente valide, e solo 6 di queste sono inserite nella tabella «taglie minime» del regolamento comunitario; di conseguenza, le altre 53 non potrebbero essere pescate utilizzando il sacco della rete prevista dalla normativa.

Anche la Regione Puglia aveva sottoposto il problema all'attenzione della Commissaria europea Damanaki, che in precedenza si era impegnata ad analizzare gli effetti del regolamento e si era detta eventualmente pronta a intervenire con proposte integrative.

Considerato che l'Adriatico è ricco di esemplari di modeste dimensioni che rientrano perciò nel divieto di pesca predisposto dal regolamento, può la Commissione rispondere al seguente quesito:

— intende provvedere a una revisione del regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 come preannunciato, prendendo in considerazione anche le conclusioni a cui sono giunti alcuni studi scientifici, come quello dell'Istituto di biologia marina della Provincia di Bari oppure quello del Centro di ricerca e studi sui problemi del lavoro, dell'economia e dello sviluppo (CLES)?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(6 dicembre 2012)

Il regolamento Mediterraneo ([1]) stabilisce le prescrizioni minime per lo sfruttamento sostenibile delle risorse della pesca e tutela l'ambiente marino e il carattere artigianale dell'attività di pesca nel Mar Mediterraneo. La fondatezza della base scientifica su cui esso poggia è corroborata da vari studi scientifici: per citarne solo due, quelli finanziati dal Parlamento europeo ([2]) e dall'amministrazione italiana ([3]) (a quest'ultimo ha partecipato proprio l'Istituto di biologia marina della Provincia di Bari citato dagli onorevoli parlamentari).

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di relazioni scientificamente fondate in grado di confutare la base tecnico-scientifica sulla quale si fonda il regolamento Mediterraneo.

Tenendo conto dello stato degli stock del Mediterraneo (circa il 90 % degli stock valutati è sovrasfruttato), sono necessari ulteriori progressi per adeguare lo sforzo di pesca e per migliorare la selettività della pesca nel Mediterraneo in termini di specie e di taglia. La riduzione e la prevenzione delle catture accessorie indesiderate di esemplari di dimensioni inferiori alle taglie minime per la conservazione rimangono obiettivi fondamentali della PCP.

La piena applicazione del regolamento Mediterraneo resta una priorità per garantire a lungo termine la sostenibilità ambientale e sociale nella regione.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 del Consiglio.
([2]) Ad esempio «Impact of the trawl fishery on the stocks and the environment in the Mediterranean», un progetto STOA per il Parlamento europeo EP/IV/A/STOA/2002/11/03.
([3]) Selettività di una rete a strascico con sacchi armati a losanga ed a maglia quadrata (cod. 6-B-4).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008908/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: Revision of the regulation on the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea

Following protests by fishermen throughout Italy, the town of Mola di Bari (one of the largest fishing fleets in the Adriatic Sea, whose economy is based mainly on the fishing industry) has set up a technical committee to assess the basis underpinning Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 and highlight its most damaging aspects.

Since the regulation has been implemented, in fact, a number of problems that are having devastating effects on the sector have come to light.

The main problem is that of blue fish. The requirements of the relevant provision are jeopardising the fishermen's activities. It is considered unacceptable that the regulation permits the marketing of cod with a minimum size of 20 cm and red mullet with a minimum size of 11 cm, as below these limits, fish are regarded as juveniles. Another problem raised is that of the size of nets: in the Adriatic Sea there is a significant number of small adult species. 59 of these have been registered and are commercially viable, and only six of these species are included in the 'minimum size' table of the EU regulation; as a result, the other 53 species are not supposed to be caught using the net bag provided for in the regulation.

Even the Puglia Region itself had brought this problem to the attention of Commissioner Damanaki, who had previously undertaken to examine the effects of the regulation and had said that she was prepared to take action, if necessary, by submitting additional proposals.

Given that the Adriatic Sea is full of small fish which, therefore, fall under the fishing ban provided for by the regulation, can the Commission answer the following question:

— Will it review Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 as announced, taking into account also the conclusions reached by a number of scientific studies, such as that of the Institute of Marine Biology of the Province of Bari, or the study by CLES (Centre for Research and Studies on Labour, Economic and Development issues)?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(6 December 2012)

The Mediterranean Regulation ([1]) stipulates the minimum requirements for sustainable exploitation while protecting the marine environment and the small-scale nature of the Mediterranean fisheries. Its basis is supported by scientific studies including, to mention but two among several others, those funded by the European Parliament ([2]) and by the Italian Administration ([3]); the latter study involved the Institute of Marine Biology of Bari quoted by the Honourable Members.

The Commission is not aware of scientifically sound reports that undermine the scientific and technical basis of the Mediterranean Regulation.

Taking into account the state of the Mediterranean stocks, where around 90% of the assessed stocks are overexploited, further progress is essential to adjust the fishing effort and to improve the species and size selectivity of the Mediterranean fisheries. The reduction and prevention of unwanted by-catches of specimens below the minimum conservation size remain fundamental objectives of the CFP.

Ensuring the full implementation of the Mediterranean Regulation remains a priority to guarantee long term environmental and social sustainability in the region.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006.
([2]) E.g. 'Impact of the trawl fishery on the stocks and the environment in the Mediterranean'. A STOA project for the European Parliament EP/IV/A/STOA/2002/11/03.
([3]) Selettività di una rete a strascico con sacchi armati a losanga ed a maglia quadrata (cod. 6-B-4).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008910/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Tunisia prossima a diventare un «hub del terrorismo»

Il 2 ottobre 2012, il quotidiano panarabo al-Hayat ha pubblicato un'intervista al Presidente tunisino Moncef Marzouki, il quale ha sottolineato il «grande pericolo» rappresentato dai jihadisti nella regione del Maghreb che, stando a quanto riferito, starebbe diventando un «hub del terrorismo». Nel corso della sua visita alle Nazioni Unite, a New York, Marzouki ha dichiarato al quotidiano quanto segue: «Possiamo affermare che il centro di comando di un gruppo di jihadisti (il cosiddetto movimento terroristico) si sta attualmente spostando dall'Afghanistan e dal Pakistan verso la regione del Maghreb arabo; alle nostre porte incombe pertanto un grave pericolo».

Marzouki ha affermato che in Tunisia vi sono all'incirca tremila militanti: «Secondo le stime della polizia, il numero di [jihadisti] attivi e pericolosi ammonta a circa tremila unità. Sono tutti noti e identificati». Il Presidente tunisino ha inoltre menzionato l'incapacità delle autorità di catturare il leader salafita Seif Allah ibn Hussein, a capo del gruppo radicale Ansar al-Sharia. Stando all'emittente al-Arabiya, il partito Ennahda, attualmente al potere in Tunisia, si è rivelato incapace di prendere misure rigorose contro gli estremisti musulmani all'interno del paese. Nel mese di maggio, Reuters ha riferito che alcuni islamisti provenienti dalla Tunisia si sono recati in Siria per lottare contro il regime di Assad e che cinque di essi sono rimasti uccisi. Dopo la rivoluzione in Tunisia, diversi giovani provenienti dalla città di Ben Guerdane hanno deciso di recarsi in Siria per rovesciare il regime di Assad.

Può la Commissione dire:

1. Quali misure sono attualmente in corso per determinare il livello di pericolo rappresentato dagli estremisti islamici operanti nella regione del Maghreb;

2. se il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ha discusso degli sforzi compiuti dal governo tunisino per catturare il leader salafita Seif Allah ibn Hussein;

3. qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'UE in Tunisia in merito all'impatto del fenomeno del «turismo jihadista» su paesi quali la Siria?

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

1. L'Unione europea segue da vicino le questioni di sicurezza in Maghreb e a questo proposito intrattiene un dialogo costante con le autorità della regione e con gli Stati membri.

2. Per quanto concerne l'impegno del governo tunisino di catturare Seif Allah ibn Hussein, la questione non è stata discussa in seno all'UE o con i partner esterni, sebbene dopo gli attacchi sferrati a settembre contro l'ambasciata USA e la scuola americana a Tunisi, le autorità abbiano tenuto informati i partner internazionali al riguardo.

3. Il SEAE è a conoscenza della presenza di numerosi jihadisti in Siria. Pur ritenendo che il regime siriano sia il principale responsabile della crisi in corso, l'UE ha messo in guardia contro una militarizzazione e radicalizzazione ulteriori del conflitto, che possono arrecare gravissime sofferenze al paese e alla regione nel suo insieme. L'UE ha espresso profonda preoccupazione per il crescente afflusso di armi verso la Siria e ha invitato tutti gli Stati ad astenersi dal fornire armi al paese. I recenti sviluppi in Siria dimostrano che occorre trovare urgentemente una soluzione politica al conflitto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008910/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Tunisia becoming a 'terrorist hub'

On 2 October 2012, the pan-Arab newspaper al-Hayat published an interview with Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki, in which he noted that jihadists pose a 'great danger' to the Maghreb region, which, he said, is turning into a 'terrorist hub'. During his visit to the UN in New York, he told the newspaper: 'We can say that the centre for a group of jihadists — the so-called terrorist movement — is moving right now from Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Arab Maghreb region and there is great danger on our doorstep'.

Mr Marzouki said that in his country, Tunisia, there are around 3 000 militants: 'the number of active [jihadists] who pose a danger is estimated by the police at around three thousand. They are all known and identified'. He also mentioned the failure of the authorities to capture the Salafist leader Seif Allah ibn Hussein, who heads the radical group Ansar al-Sharia. According to the news agency al-Arabiya, the currently ruling Ennahda party in Tunisia has failed to clamp down on the country's Muslim extremists. In May, Reuters reported that Tunisian Islamists have travelled to Syria to fight against the Assad regime, and that five have been killed. The town of Ben Guerdane has been home to many young men who, after Tunisia's own revolution, have chosen to travel to Syria to overthrow the Assad regime.

1. What measures are currently under way to determine the threat level posed by Islamists operating throughout the Maghreb region?

2. Has the Vice-President/High Representative discussed the efforts made by the Tunisian Government to capture the Salafist leader Seif Allah ibn Hussein?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in Tunisia regarding the impact of the phenomenon of 'jihad tourism' on countries such as Syria?

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

1. The EU is following security issues in the countries of the Maghreb closely and is in regular dialogue with the authorities on these matters as well as with EU Member States.

2. The issue of the Tunisian Government's efforts to capture Seif Allah ibn Hussein has not been discussed within the EU or with external partners, although the authorities did provide briefings to international partners on the issue following the attacks on the US Embassy and the American School in Tunis in September.

3. The EEAS is aware of the presence of a number of jihadists in Syria. While it considers that the prime responsibility for the ongoing crisis lies with the Syrian regime, the EU has warned against further militarisation and radicalisation of the conflict which can bring enormous suffering to the country and to the region as a whole. The EU has expressed deep concerned about the increasing influx of weapons into Syria and has called on all States to refrain from delivering arms to the country. The ongoing developments in Syria demonstrate the urgent need for a political settlement to the Syrian conflict.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-008911/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(4 ottobre 2012)

Oggetto: Assorbimento dei fondi delle politica di coesione 2007-2013 in Campania

Secondo i recenti dati sull'andamento del Programma operativo regionale (POR) 2007-2013, aggiornati a giugno 2012 e pubblicati ad agosto a cura del Dipartimento della Ragioneria generale dello Stato, la Regione Campania è all'ultimo posto tra le regioni dell'obiettivo Convergenza, con il 14,42 % di pagamenti sul FESR e con il 16,07 % di pagamenti sul FSE.

Dal 2010 in Campania si investono mediamente meno di 300 milioni all'anno di fondi strutturali, a fronte del miliardo annuo investito nel periodo 2000-2009 e necessario per conseguire il totale assorbimento dei fondi disponibili per la programmazione 2007-2013.

La scelta compiuta dalla Regione Campania di impegnare percentuali consistenti delle risorse europee disponibili nella realizzazione di «grandi progetti» appare discutibile e rischia di aggravare ulteriormente una situazione di per sé difficile, considerato che i tempi medi di valutazione e realizzazione di una grande opera non paiono compatibili con la scadenza del giugno 2015, data ultima stimata di erogazione delle risorse per il 2007-2013.

Inoltre, a distanza di quasi un anno il Piano di Azione Coesione, avviato il 15 novembre 2011, non sembra avere ancora fornito l'impulso necessario a colmare il grave ritardo e, soprattutto, non sembra aver indotto in Campania l'auspicata accelerazione della programmazione regionale, che al contrario è ferma al palo.

1. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza del reale stadio di avanzamento della realizzazione dei «grandi progetti» e quali misure straordinarie e urgenti intende eventualmente adottare per impedire che detti «grandi progetti» restino inattuati e che le risorse in essi impegnate vadano in disimpegno?

2. Quale strategia intende perseguire la Commissione per fare in modo che la Campania e le altre regioni italiane dell'obiettivo Convergenza realizzino gli obiettivi posti in essere con il ciclo di programmazione 2007-2013?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(4 dicembre 2012)

Fino alla metà del 2010 il programma FESR per la Campania ha realizzato sul terreno e ha certificato 260 milioni di EUR di spesa, pari a una media annuale di 1 % del bilancio. Nel biennio successivo alla metà del 2010 sono stati dichiarati 760 milioni di EUR di spesa pari a una media annuale di 5,5 % con una chiara accelerazione da metà 2011 (tasso di assorbimento del 17 %). Grazie a ciò il programma ha soddisfatto le condizioni fissate dal governo italiano in merito agli obiettivi di pagamento da raggiungersi entro la fine di ottobre.

Ciò dimostra che il programma sta migliorando il suo tasso di rendimento. Occorrono però sforzi addizionali per risolvere i problemi che ancora rimangono e accrescere il ritmo di attuazione in modo da evitare una perdita di risorse.

Questo miglioramento è anche il risultato della Task Force posta in atto nel contesto del Piano d'azione per la coesione e copresieduta dal governo italiano e dalla Commissione, che ha operato di concerto con le autorità regionali dall'inizio del 2012. Una prima modifica del programma è stata adottata di recente e un'altra è in corso di discussione.

La Task Force ha esaminato con le autorità regionali i principali progetti in sospeso per fare un quadro del loro grado di attuazione. Alcuni di essi non saranno completati entro il 2015: questi progetti dovranno essere completati dopo il 2015 con risorse nazionali o dovranno essere parzialmente trasferiti al futuro programma FESR. Entro la fine del 2012 la Commissione sarà in grado di fornire un quadro chiaro della situazione.

Gli importanti ritardi accumulati dall'inizio del periodo da questo e da altri programmi non consentiranno di raggiungere gli obiettivi iniziali. Nella revisione in corso la Commissione starà particolarmente attenta a che si pervenga a un riesame equilibrato degli obiettivi e si assicuri che ciò che non è stato possibile raggiungere nel 2007-2013 venga realizzato nel 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008911/12
to the Commission
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: Rate of absorption of 2007-13 cohesion funds in Campania

According to recent figures on the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2007-13, updated to June 2012 and published in August by the State Department of General Accounting, the Campania Region is in last place among the Convergence Objective regions, with an absorption rate of 14.42% from the ERDF and 16.07% from the ESF.

Since 2010, on average, less than EUR 300 million per year of structural funds have been invested in Campania, compared to the EUR one billion invested annually in the period 2000-09, a figure that is necessary in order to achieve the total absorption of the funds available for the 2007-13 programming period.

The Campania Region's decision to commit substantial percentages of available EU resources to the implementation of 'major projects' is questionable and likely to further aggravate a situation which, in itself, is difficult, given that the average time frame for assessing and completing a 'major work' does not appear to be compatible with the deadline of June 2015, the estimated final date of disbursement of the 2007-13 resources.

In addition, after almost a year, the Cohesion Action Plan, launched on 15 November 2011, still does not appear to have provided the necessary impetus to make up for the significant lost time and, above all, does not seem to have prompted Campania, as would have been desirable, to speed up its regional programming which, on the contrary, is at a standstill.

1. Can the Commission therefore say whether it is aware of the real state of progress of the implementation of these 'major projects' and what extraordinary and urgent measures it could take to prevent such projects from remaining unachieved and prevent the resources from being decommitted?

2. What strategy will the Commission pursue to ensure that Campania and the other Italian Convergence Objective regions achieve the objectives set out in the 2007-13 programming cycle?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2012)

Up to mid-2010, the ERDF programme for Campania realised on the ground and certified EUR 260 million in expenditure, i.e. a yearly average of 1% of the budget. In the two years since mid-2010, EUR 760 million in expenditure has been declared, equivalent to a yearly average of 5.5% with a clear acceleration since mid-2011 (absorption rate 17%). Thanks to this, the programme fulfilled the conditions set by the Italian Government on payment targets to be achieved by end October.

This proves that the programme is improving its performance. Yet, additional efforts are needed to solve remaining problems and increase the pace of implementation so to avoid losses of resources.

This improvement is also the result of the Task Force set up in the context of the action plan on Cohesion and co-chaired by the Italian Government and the Commission, which has been working with the regional authority since beginning 2012. A first modification of the programme was recently adopted and another is currently being discussed.

The Task Force has examined with the regional authorities the pending major projects to obtain an overview of their implementation. Some of them will not be completed by 2015: these projects have to be completed after 2015 with national resources or have to be partially transferred to the future ERDF programme. By end 2012, the Commission will be able to provide a clear picture of the situation.

The significant delays accumulated since the beginning of the period by this and other programmes will not allow reaching the initial objectives. In the ongoing revision, the Commission will pay particular attention to obtaining a balanced review of objectives and targets and to ensure that what could not be achieved in 2007-2013, will be reached in 2014-2020.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-008912/12
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(4 octombrie 2012)

Subiect: Noul virus respirator

În statele din Orientul Mijlociu a apărut un nou virus respirator, asociat cu o insuficiență renală.

Se cunosc foarte puține detalii despre noul virus, laboratoarele încercând să determine severitatea sa și modul de transmitere, nefiind clar dacă se transmite de la om la om sau de la animal la om.

Având în vedere faptul că virusul SARS, care provine din aceeași familie ca și noul virus respirator, a ucis în China câteva sute de persoane în anul 2003,

1. Ce măsuri prevede Comisia pentru a preveni răspândirea acestui virus în Europa?

2. Care sunt acțiunile prevăzute de Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor în legătură cu acest nou virus?

Răspuns dat de dl Šefčovič în numele Comisiei
(15 noiembrie 2012)

Comisia este informată cu privire la noul virus menționat de distinsul membru. Noul coronavirus aparține aceleiași familii ca virusul SARS, deși este foarte diferit de acesta din urmă. Boala cauzată de acest nou virus este, de asemenea, foarte diferită de SARS, în ceea ce privește tabloul clinic și capacitatea sa de a se transmite de la om la om.

Regatul Unit a notificat fără întârziere evenimentul prin intermediul sistemului de alertă al UE pentru bolile transmisibile, și anume Sistemul de alertă precoce și de reacție. Imediat după notificarea bolii de către Regatul Unit în data de 23 septembrie 2012, la 24 septembrie și în zilele următoare Comisia a organizat o serie de reuniuni de coordonare cu statele membre, cu Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor (ECDC) și cu Organizația Mondială a Sănătății (OMS) pentru a face schimb de informații. ECDC a pregătit o evaluare rapidă a riscurilor, care a constituit baza discuției referitoare la măsurile care pot fi adoptate pentru a controla răspândirea bolii. Comisia a transmis această evaluare autorităților din domeniul sănătății publice din statele membre prin intermediul Sistemului de alertă precoce și de reacție privind bolile transmisibile și a organizat reuniuni de coordonare zilnice cu statele membre, cu ECDC și cu OMS, pentru a face schimb de orice informații care ar putea contribui la o reacție rapidă și eficientă, în scopul de a reduce la minimum orice risc eventual de răspândire transfrontalieră a noului virus. Supravegherea activă este, în prezent, în curs de desfășurare la nivelul UE și, până în prezent, nu au fost identificate noi cazuri.

Pe site-ul internet al ECDC ([1]) și al OMS ([2]) sunt disponibile informații suplimentare.

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/RRA-Novel-coronavirus-final20120924.pdf
([2]) http://www.who.int/csr/don/2012_10_10/en/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008912/12
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: New respiratory tract virus

A new respiratory tract virus associated with renal insufficiency has appeared in the Middle East.

Very little is know about this new virus, and researchers are trying to ascertain its severity and mode of transmission as it is unclear whether this is from person to person or from animals to man.

Since several hundred people died in 2003 from the SARS virus, which came from the same family as this new respiratory tract virus, can the Commission state:

1. What steps it is planning to take to stop this virus spreading to Europe?

2. What steps the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control is planning to take with regard to this new virus?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(15 November 2012)

The Commission is aware of the new virus mentioned by the honourable Member. The new coronavirus belongs to the same family as the SARS virus although it is very different from it. The disease caused by this new virus is also very different from SARS, in terms of clinical presentation and of its capacity to spread from human to human.

The United Kingdom promptly notified the event through the EU alert system for communicable diseases, namely the Early Warning and Response System. Immediately after the UK notified the disease on 23 September 2012, on 24 September and the following days the Commission held several coordination meetings with the Member States, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to share information. The ECDC has prepared a rapid risk assessment that has been the base for the discussion of possible measures to undertake to control the spread of the disease. The Commission shared this assessment with the Public Health Authorities in Member States through the Early Warning and Alert System for communicable diseases and has called daily coordination meetings with the Member States, the ECDC and the WHO in order to share any possible information to respond quickly and efficiently to minimise any possible risk of cross-border spread of the new virus. The active surveillance is currently ongoing at EU level and so far no new cases have been identified.

Additional information is available on the websites of the ECDC ([1]) and of the WHO ([2]).

([1]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/RRA-Novel-coronavirus-final20120924.pdf
([2]) http://www.who.int/csr/don/2012_10_10/en/index.html

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-008913/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(4 ta' Ottubru 2012)

Suġġett: Ir-rekwiżiti tal-immarkar tal-armi tan-nar storiċi

Wara d-dħul fis-seħħ tad-Direttiva tal-UE dwar l-immarkar tal-armi tan-nar (2008/51/KE), diversi Stati Membri aġġornaw il-leġiżlazzjoni tagħhom biex jikkonformaw mar-rekwiżiti l-ġodda li hija introduċiet. Madankollu, mill-introduzzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni l-ġdida, il-kollezzjonisti tal-armi tan-nar storiċi f'żewġ Stati Membri (Spanja u l-Pajjiżi l-Baxxi) irrappurtaw problemi li jaffettwaw il-moviment ħieles fl-UE ta' dawn l-armi tan-nar li nħolqu minħabba rekwiżiti tal-immarkar bla bżonn.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma jekk id-direttivi relevanti tal-UE humiex maħsuba biex jipprevjenu l-moviment ħieles tal-armi tan-nar storiċi fl-Unjoni, u jekk din il-prevenzjoni tal-moviment ħieles tistax titqies bħala vjolazzjoni tal-ispirtu tat-Trattati?

2. Il-leġiżlazzjoni relevanti tal-UE timplika l-intenzjoni li r-rekwiżiti tal-immarkar għandhom jiġu applikati retroattivament, u r-rekwiżiti tal-immarkar tad-Direttiva 2008/51/KE għandhom ikunu applikati wkoll għall-armi u l-munizzjon ta' valur kulturali u storiku?

3. Il-liġi tal-UE tipprevedi kumpens jew sanzjonijiet fir-rigward ta' ħsara materjali jew telf fil-valur ta' armi u munizzjon ta' valur kulturali u storiku li jirriżultaw mir-rekwiżiti tal-immarkar introdotti minn ċerti amministrazzjonijiet nazzjonali biex jissodisfaw ir-rekwiżiti tad-Direttiva 2008/51/KE?

4. Jista' l-immarkar retroattiv jitqies li jmur kontra l-ispirtu tal-eżenzjonijiet imniżżla fid-Direttiva, fil-każ tal-armi u l-munizzjon li huma proprjetà ta' kollezzjonisti jew entitajiet li għandhom x'jaqsmu mal-aspetti kulturali u storiċi ta' dawn l-armi?

5. Minħabba li ġew iffaċċjati għadd ta' problemi bis-sistemi l-ġodda ta' reġistrazzjoni b'segwitu tal-immarkar mill-ġdid tal-armi tan-nar li diġà kienu ġew irreġistrati fl-imgħoddi, tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma jekk ittiħditx xi azzjoni biex jiġu evitati dawn l-iżbalji?

6. Il-Kummissjoni se tipprovdi gwida lill-amministrazzjonijiet nazzjonali sabiex tiżgura li r-rekwiżiti tal-immarkar jiġu interpretati b'mod uniformi madwar l-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Novembru 2012)

1. Id-Direttiva 91/477/KEE kif emendata bid-Direttiva 2008/51/KE ma għandhiex l-għan li tillimita l-moviment ħieles tal-armi tan-nar antiki fl-Unjoni Ewropea.

2. Huwa importanti li wieħed jenfasizza li d-direttiva msemmija mhijiex direttiva ta' armonizzazzjoni sħiħa u hija limitata biex tagħmel kundizzjonijiet li jistgħu jsiru aktar ibsin fil-liġi interna tal-Istati Membri (ara l-Artikolu 3).

3. Għal għanijiet ta' traċċabilità, id-Direttiva 2008/51/KE tobbliga l-immarkar ta' armi tan-nar fil-kamp ta' applikazzjoni tagħha, iżda fl-ebda każ ma tipprevedi, pieni jew kumpensi wara operazzjonijiet ta' markar.

4. L-obbligu tal-immarkar tal-armi tan-nar kif inhu fid-direttiva ma għandux effett retroattiv. Dan l-istrument leġiżlattiv ma jostakolax lill-Istati Membri milli jimponu immarkar fuq l-armi tan-nar antiki, differenti skont il-periklu tal-arma jew saħansitra l-fattibilità teknika ta' dan l-immarkar.

5. Madankollu, l-immarkar ma għandux ikun ta' ostaklu għall-moviment ħieles tal-merkanzija, attwalment dedikat mit-Trattat, li madankollu jirrikonoxxi li l-Istati Membri jistgħu, f'ċerti każijiet, jinvokaw raġunijiet ta' sigurta pubblika (l-Artikolu 36 tat-TFUE).

6. L-opportunità ta' gwida fit-tekniki tal-immarkar tal-armi antiki se tkun ivvalutata fil-kuntest tar-rapport dwar l-implimentazzjoni tad-Direttiva 2008/51/KE li l-Kummissjoni se tippreżenta fit-28 ta' Lulju 2015 lill-Parlament Ewropew u lill-Kunsill.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008913/12
to the Commission
Simon Busuttil (PPE)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: Marking requirements for historic firearms

Following the entry into force of the EU directive on the marking of firearms (2008/51/EC), several Member States have updated their legislation to comply with the new requirements it introduces. However, since the introduction of new legislation in two Member States (Spain and the Netherlands), collectors of historic firearms have cited problems affecting the free movement of such firearms within the EU arising from unnecessary marking requirements.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether the relevant EU directives are intended to prevent the free movement of historic firearms within the Union, and whether such prevention of free movement could be considered to be in violation of the spirit of the Treaties?

2. Does the relevant EU legislation imply the intention that marking requirements should be applied retroactively, and should the marking requirements of Directive 2008/51/EC also be applied to weapons and ammunition of cultural and historical value?

3. Does EC law provide for compensation or penalisation in respect of material damage to or loss of value of weapons and ammunition of cultural and historical value arising from the marking requirements introduced by certain national administrations in fulfilment of the requirements of Directive 2008/51/EC?

4. Could retroactive marking be considered to be against the spirit of the exemptions contained in the directive, in the case of weapons or ammunition owned by collectors or bodies concerned with the cultural and historical aspects of such weapons?

5. Given that a number of problems have been encountered with new registration systems following the re-marking of firearms which had already been registered in the past, can the Commission confirm whether any action is being undertaken to prevent such errors?

6. Will the Commission provide national administrations with guidance to ensure that marking requirements are interpreted in a uniform manner across the EU?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(28 novembre 2012)

1. La directive 91/477/CEE telle qu'amendée par la directive 2008/51/CE n'a pas pour but la restriction de la circulation des armes antiques au sein de l'Union européenne.

2. Il est important de souligner que ladite directive n'est pas une directive d'harmonisation complète et se limite à poser des prescriptions qui peuvent être rendues plus sévères dans le droit interne des États membres (cf. article 3).

3. Dans un souci de traçabilité, la directive 2008/51/CE pose une obligation de marquage des armes à feu dans son champ d'application, mais ne prévoit en aucun cas des pénalisations ou des compensations suite à des opérations de marquage.

4. L'obligation de marquage des armes à feu telle que posée par la directive n'a pas d'effet rétroactif. Cet instrument législatif ne fait pas obstacle à ce que les États membres n'imposent un marquage sur des armes à feu antiques, variable selon la dangerosité de l'arme ou encore la faisabilité technique dudit marquage.

5. Le marquage ne doit cependant pas constituer un obstacle à la libre circulation des marchandises, effectivement consacré par le Traité, qui admet cependant que les États membres puissent, dans certains cas, invoquer des motifs de sécurité publique (article 36 TUE).

6. L'opportunité d'une guidance dans les techniques de marquage des armes antiques sera évaluée dans le contexte du rapport sur l'application de la directive 2008/51/CE que la Commission présentera pour le 28 juillet 2015 au Parlement européen et au Conseil.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-008914/12
au Conseil
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 octobre 2012)

Objet: Remboursement des frais de déplacement

De nombreuses réunions au Conseil européen rassemblent des experts nationaux. Ces experts envoyés par les États membres bénéficient d'un remboursement de leurs frais de mission. Ces frais sont payés par le Conseil et non pas par les États membres.

À quel interlocuteur dans les États membres l'argent du Conseil européen destiné au remboursement des frais de mission est-il adressé?

Le Conseil est-il sûr de la bonne destination du remboursement des frais de déplacements?

Réponse
(10 décembre 2012)

Depuis 2011, la responsabilité des frais de voyage des délégués a été décentralisée vers les États membres. Il appartient dès lors à chaque État membre de décider quel est le ministère ou l'organisme chargé de la gestion de ces fonds. Certains ont désigné le ministère des affaires étrangères, d'autres le ministère des finances ou encore la chancellerie du premier ministre.

Le remboursement des frais de voyage des délégués est soumis à un cadre général qui détermine pour quelles réunions un remboursement peut intervenir. En outre, la présence des délégués est contrôlée lors des réunions se déroulant dans les locaux du Conseil. À l'issue de l'exercice budgétaire, chaque État membre fournit un décompte détaillé précisant comment l'enveloppe attribuée a été dépensée, en y joignant les documents justificatifs. Le Secrétariat général du Conseil procède sur cette base à une vérification ex post. Le Secrétariat général du Conseil effectue également chaque année des audits dans plusieurs États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008914/12
to the Council
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(4 October 2012)

Subject: Reimbursement of travel expenses

Several meetings of national experts are held at the Council. These experts, who are sent by the Member States, have their mission expenses reimbursed. Such costs are paid by the Council, rather than by the Member States.

To which contact in the Member States are Council funds for the reimbursement of mission expenses sent?

Can the Council be sure that the travel expenses reimbursed reach the persons for whom they are intended?

Reply
(10 December 2012)

Since 2011, responsibility for delegates' travel expenses has been decentralised to the Member States. It is therefore for individual Member States to decide which ministry/entity is in charge of management of the allocated funds. Some have chosen the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whilst others have chosen the Ministry of Finance or the Office of the Prime Minister (Chancellery).

A general framework is defined for the use of delegates' travel expenses, setting out which meetings are eligible for reimbursement. Furthermore, a check on the presence of delegates is made during meetings held on the Council premises. At the end of the budget year, each Member State provides a detailed statement showing how the envelope has been used, together with the supporting documents. The General Secretariat of the Council conducts an *ex-post* verification on this basis. In addition, each year the General Secretariat of the Council conducts a number of audits in Member States.