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 321 E/01)

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(English version)

Question for written answer E-011190/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Sale of tobacco at airports

Can the Commission outline whether or not it would consider banning the sale of tobacco at EU airports?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2013)

The Commission does not envisage to propose a ban of the sale of tobacco products at EU airports.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011191/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Package Travel Directive

Can the Commission explain what the timeline for the revision of the Package Travel Directive is?

Does the Commission agree that the directive, which entered into force in 1990, is completely out of date?

Travel agents who sell 'dynamic package holidays' are subject to stringent conditions, which protect the consumer, but other entities, such as airlines, who also sell 'dynamic packages' are not subject to the same conditions. Does the Commission acknowledge that this is distorting the market?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

The Commission acknowledges that the travel market and consumer behaviour in this market has developed significantly since the Package Travel Directive ([1]) (the directive) was adopted in 1990. The Commission is also aware that certain market players have complained about an uneven market playing field, where some players incur compliance costs stemming from the rules of the directive, while others selling competing travel products do not. The Honourable Member should be made aware that the Commission is currently assessing its response to the mentioned developments in the travel market.

([1]) Council Directive 90/314/EEC of 13 June 1990 on package travel, package holidays and package tours, OJ L 158, 23.6.1990.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011193/12
to the Commission
Mary Honeyball (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Parental consent for the handing over of personally identifiable information

What laws and regulations of each Member State affect the age at which a person no longer needs parental consent to hand over personally identifiable information to third parties? Is it the same in both the online and the offline environment?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The determination of the age when a person no longer needs parental consent for the processing of his/her personal data is usually provided by national legislation of EU Member States and is often linked — without making a distinction between the online and the offline environment — to the capacity of the subject to enter into contractual obligations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011195/12
to the Commission
Mary Honeyball (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Age verification

What is the current situation in each Member State with regard to the laws and regulations governing the age at which young people are able to buy alcohol/tobacco, participate in gambling, or purchase materials with adult content, i.e. films, magazines and video games?

Secondly, in each Member State, are these laws the same online and offline?

Lastly, is there a requirement in every Member State to do any kind of age verification in either environment?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

Member States alone are responsible for regulating minimum age limits and its enforcement.

As regards alcohol, the '2012 alcohol in the European Union' report ([1]) provides an overview of national minimum age legislation. The report shows, for example, that the minimum age for on-premise sale of spirits is 18 years old in all but four Member States and that nine States allow 16 years old to buy beer or wine on premises. The Commission has recently launched a study to map the enforcement of legal age limits for selling and serving alcoholic beverages in all EU Member States. The results will be available later in 2013.

As regards tobacco, age limits between 16 and 18 years for purchasing of tobacco are in place in all Member States. In all but five States the legal age is 18. Information is available in the impact assessment Report ([2]) on the revision of the tobacco products directive.

As regards gambling, Member States set limits to preclude underage gambling as well as the verification procedures to be followed. As announced in the communication ([3]) regarding online gambling, the Commission intends to adopt two recommendations with the aim of providing a high level of protection of consumers of gambling services. With regard to video games, the self-regulatory Pan European Game Information (PEGI) age rating system is now used throughout most of Europe and some Member States have made it legally enforceable.

As regards audiovisual content on-demand, the Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([4]) states that programmes which 'might seriously impair' the development of minors may only be made available by using PIN codes or other age verification systems. The directive further states that audiovisual commercial communications for alcohol cannot target specifically minors.

([1]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf, page 123
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/com_2012_788_ia_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/gambling_en.htm
([4]) Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011196/12
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: EU funding to Montenegro and Zambia

Could the Commission state how much EU funding Montenegro and Zambia receive, how the money is allocated and what it is spent on?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

For the period 2007-2013 the total amount of EU funding for Montenegro under the IPA ([1]) is EUR 235 715 039. Until 2011 the funds were used to finance programmes under the component I 'Transition Assistance and Institution Building', and II 'Cross-Border Cooperation'. From June 2012, as a candidate country, Montenegro has also access to component III 'Regional Development', IV 'Human Resources Development' and V 'Rural Development', and will implement programmes under these components once conferral received of management powers to directly manage EU financial assistance. Montenegro also benefits from the multi-beneficiary programmes under component I. The EU assistance to Montenegro focuses on these sectors: Justice and Home Affairs, Public Administration, Environment and Climate Change, Transport, Social Development and Agriculture and Rural Development.

For the period 2007-2013 the total amount of EU funding for Zambia under the 10th EDF ([2]) is EUR 556 330 000. In line with the Zambian National Development Plans, the EU national assistance to Zambia focuses on the following: Regional Integration and Transport Infrastructure (roads); Health (including the EU MDG ([3])-initiative); Macro-Economic, National Development and Poverty Reduction policy through general budget support; Food Security and Agricultural Diversification; Governance; Non-State Actors and EPA ([4])/Trade-related support. Apart from this funding, Zambia also benefits from financial support through other EU funding sources (regional and intra-ACP ([5]) programmes and the Water and Energy Facilities, Thematic budget lines, Food Facility and the accompanying measures for sugar producing countries).

([1]) IPA = Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance.
([2]) EDF = European Development Fund.
([3]) MDG = Millennium Development Goal.
([4]) EPA = Economic Partnership Agreement.
([5]) ACP = African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011197/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7. december 2012)

Om: Ændringer i aktionærers rettigheder i Tyrkiet

Er Kommissionen enig i, at de seneste ændringer i aktionærernes rettigheder i Tyrkiet — som bl.a. betyder, at uafhængige bestyrelsesmedlemmer (i modsætning til aktionærerne) tildeles en afgørende stemme i vigtige beslutningsprocesser, og at det tyrkiske Capital Markets Board har fået magt til at afskedige en direktør, der var behørigt udpeget af aktionærerne — fortjener større opmærksomhed end den enkelte linje i 2012-statusrapporten om Tyrkiets tiltrædelse?

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011198/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7. december 2012)

Om: Selskabsdirektører og diskrimination i Tyrkiet

EU-lovgivningen forbyder diskrimination for så vidt angår tjenesteydelser baseret på nationalitet og eller opholdssted. Tyrkiet har for nylig fastsat krav om, at uafhængige direktører, der sidder i bestyrelsen for selskaber, der er opført på Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE) National 30 Index, skal være bosiddende i Tyrkiet. Er dette i overensstemmelse med kravene i forbindelse med EU-medlemskab?

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011199/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7. december 2012)

Om: Kapitalmarkedsprotektionisme i Tyrkiet

Har Kommissionen foretaget analyser af, om der med de nye, udvidede beføjelser, som det tyrkiske Capital Markets Board har fået over virksomheder, der er opført på Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE) National 30 Index, er tale om protektionisme?

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011200/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7. december 2012)

Om: Det tyrkiske Capital Markets Boards magt og EU

Er Kommissionen enig i, at det tyrkiske Capital Markets Boards nye, omfattende beføjelser i selskaber, der er noteret på Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE) National 30 Indeks er indgribende, og at de fremmer politisk indblanding i driften af selvstændige virksomheder i en sådan grad, at de er i modstrid med kravet til EU-medlemsstaterne om at have en velfungerende markedsøkonomi?

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011201/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7. december 2012)

Om: Tyrkiets nye principper for selskabsstyring og Tyrkiets tiltrædelse af EU

Er Kommissionen på baggrund af Tyrkiets nyligt indførte principper for selskabsstyring enig i, at beskrivelsen af Tyrkiet som et land, der har gjort gode fremskridt inden for selskabsret og er nået langt på dette område, ikke er korrekt, og at de nye principper faktisk måske vil kunne udgøre en betydelig ny hindring for et tyrkisk EU-medlemskab?

Samlet svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Štefan Füle
(8. februar 2013)

I statusrapporten 2012 for Tyrkiet ([1]) vurderes udviklingen inden for kapitel 6 — Selskabsret, idet der tages hensyn til alle EU-rettens bestemmelser på dette område. Tyrkiet gjorde bl.a. markante fremskridt inden for regnskabsrevision. Samtidig understreges det i rapporten, at de nye principper for virksomhedsledelse (vedtaget i december 2011 og ændret i februar 2012) øger statens indflydelse, idet kapitalmarkedskommissionen har fået øget beføjelse til at kontrollere virksomheder.

I rapporten vurderes Tyrkiets evne til at påtage sig forpligtelserne ved medlemskab, bl.a. dets evne til at tilpasse, gennemføre og håndhæve lovgivning.

Kommissionen er ved at foretage en grundig analyse af konsekvenserne af kapitalmarkedskommissionens indflydelse på børsnoterede virksomheder. Kommissionen og Tyrkiet har nedsat en arbejdsgruppe for at drøfte den tyrkiske lovgivning på det selskabsretlige område. Kapitalmarkedskommissionens indflydelse på virksomhedsledelse samt aktionærrettigheder vil blive drøftet inden for rammerne af denne arbejdsgruppe. Tyrkiet skal tilpasse sin lovgivning fuldt ud på området selskabsret, før landet kan tiltræde Unionen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011197/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Changes to shareholder rights in Turkey

Does the Commission accept that recent changes to shareholder rights in Turkey — which include granting independent directors (as opposed to shareholders) a casting vote on important decisions, and giving the Turkish Capital Markets Board the power to dismiss a director who was duly appointed by shareholders — merit more consideration than the single line they received in the 2012 progress report on Turkish accession?

Question for written answer E-011198/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Company directors and discrimination in Turkey

As EC law prohibits discrimination in the provision of services based on nationality or residence, is Turkey's recent stipulation that independent directors sitting on the board of companies on the Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE) National 30 Index must be Turkish residents in line with the requirements for EU membership?

Question for written answer E-011199/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Capital market protectionism in Turkey

Has the Commission undertaken any analysis of whether the new, extensive powers of the Capital Markets Board of Turkey over companies listed on the Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE) National 30 Index amount to protectionism?

Question for written answer E-011200/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: The powers of the Capital Markets Board of Turkey and the EU

Would the Commission agree that the new, extensive powers of the Capital Markets Board of Turkey over companies listed on the Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE) National 30 Index are intrusive, and that they encourage political interference in the running of independent businesses to the point where they conflict with the requirement for EU Member States to have a functioning market economy?

Question for written answer E-011201/12
to the Commission
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Turkey's new Corporate Governance Principles and accession to the EU

Given Turkey's recently introduced Corporate Governance Principles, would the Commission agree that describing Turkey as having made 'good progress […] on company law' and as being 'advanced in this area' was inappropriate and that the new principles may, in fact, constitute a significant new barrier to Turkey's accession to the EU?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The 2012 Progress Report on Turkey ([1]) evaluates developments in Chapter 6 — Company law taking into account the whole *acquis* in this area, including the significant progress Turkey made in auditing. At the same time, the report clearly points out that the new corporate governance principles (adopted in December 2011 and amended in February 2012) increase the state involvement in the corporate governance by giving more power to the Capital Markets Board to control companies.

The report reviews Turkey's capacity to take on the obligations of membership, including legislative alignment, implementation and enforcement capacities.

The Commission is working on a thorough analysis of the influence of the powers of the Capital Markets Board over listed companies. The Commission and Turkey have established a working group to discuss the Turkish legislation in the area of company law. The corporate governance, prerogatives of the Capital Markets Board as well as shareholders' rights will be discussed in the framework of this working group. Turkey needs to fully align its legislation in the area of company law by the date of accession.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011202/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Sito di importanza comunitaria a Vittorio Veneto (TV) attraversato da un'opera stradale priva di VINCA e con una VIA incoerente

La società ANAS Spa sta per realizzare a Vittorio Veneto, in provincia di Treviso, un progetto di strada statale noto localmente come «Traforo di Sant'Augusta» ([1]) che interesserà direttamente l'alveo del fiume Meschio.

Il fiume Meschio fa parte della rete Natura 2000 essendo tutelato come sito di importanza comunitaria ai sensi della direttiva Habitat grazie ad una delibera della Regione Veneto dell'agosto del 2004 ([2]) .

Il progetto di questa strada prevede, proprio in questo SIC, la costruzione di importanti opere con evidenti ripercussioni sull'ambiente, come la realizzazione di ben due ponti e una rotatoria.

Il progetto, approvato nel maggio 2009 dall'ANAS, è stato oggetto di una VIA (valutazione di impatto ambientale) nel luglio 2004 e pertanto non ha tenuto conto dell'esistenza del SIC istituito ufficialmente solo nel mese successivo e dei conseguenti effetti su detta area naturale.

A causa della mancata presa in considerazione del SIC «IT 3240032 Fiume Meschio», il progetto «Traforo di Sant'Augusta» risulta privo di VINCA (valutazione di incidenza ambientale).

Di conseguenza non si è tenuto conto neanche delle diverse aree della rete Natura 2000 che si trovano nel raggio di circa 10 chilometri dalla zona interessata dall'opera, quali: la ZPS IT3240024 «Dorsale prealpina tra Valdobbiadene e Serravalle», il SIC IT3240005 «Perdonanze e corso del Monticano», il SIC IT3240014 «Laghi di Revine» e infine il SIC IT3230077 «Foresta del Cansiglio».

Il 4 giugno 2012 il portavoce del Comitato «No traforo ANAS, sì alternative» ha trasmesso a nome dell'associazione «Salviamo il paesaggio» — Sezione di Vittorio Veneto, una dettagliata denuncia alla Commissione europea, comprensiva di dieci documenti allegati, per violazione delle norme delle direttive Habitat ed Uccelli.

Ritiene la Commissione di essere di fronte ad un caso di violazione del diritto comunitario con particolare riferimento alle direttive Habitat (93/43/CEE), VIA (2011/92/UE) ed Uccelli (2009/147/CE)? Come intende procedere in merito ai fatti esposti?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(1º febbraio 2013)

Nel giugno 2012 la Commissione ha ricevuto una lettera contenente la stessa denuncia; protocollata con il codice CHAP(2012)01705, è attualmente all'esame. Una volta terminato l'esame, la Commissione ne comunicherà i risultati agli autori della denuncia.

([1]) denominata ufficialmente S.S. n. 51 di «Alemagna» Variante di Vittorio Veneto (Tangenziale EST) — Collegamento LA SEGA-OSPEDALE— 1° stralcio «La Sega-Rindola».

([2]) SIC— IT 3240032 Fiume Meschio approvato con DGR Veneto n. 2673 del 6.8.2004 pubblicata sul BUR il 28.9.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011202/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Site of Community importance (SCI) in Vittorio Veneto (Treviso) crossed by road works, with no environmental implications assessment and an inconsistent EIA

The company ANAS SpA is about to carry out a highway building project, known locally as the Sant'Augusta tunnel ([1]), in Vittorio Veneto, province of Treviso, that will directly affect the bed of the River Meschio.

The River Meschio is part of the Natura 2000 network and is protected as a site of Community importance under the Habitats Directive, following a resolution of the Veneto Region in August 2004 ([2]).

According to the plan for this road, precisely in this SCI, there will be major road works which will have obvious repercussions on the environment, such as the construction of two bridges and a roundabout.

The project was approved by ANAS in May 2009 and was the subject of an EIA (environmental impact assessment) in July 2004. The EIA did not, therefore, take into account the existence of the SCI, which was formally established only in the following month, and the subsequent impact on that nature area.

Because of the failure to take into account the SCI 'IT 3240032 River Meschio', the Sant'Augusta tunnel does not have the necessary environmental implications assessment (known in Italy as VINCA).

Accordingly, the various Natura 2000 network areas that are within about 10 km of the area of the road works have not even been taken into account. These areas include: the SPA IT3240024 'Pre-alpine ridge between Valdobbiadene and Serravalle', the SCI IT3240005 *'Perdonanze e corso del Monticano'*, SCI IT3240014 'Revine Lakes' and the SCI IT3230077 'Cansiglio Forest'.

On 4 June 2012, the spokesperson for the 'No ANAS tunnel' Committee sent, on behalf of the 'Save the Landscape' association — Vittorio Veneto branch — a detailed complaint to the Commission, including ten attached documents, regarding the infringement of the provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives.

Does the Commission not agree that this is a case of infringement of Community law, with specific reference to the Habitats Directive (93/43/EEC), the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)? What action does it intend to take?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

In June 2012 the Commission received a letter containing the same complaint. The complaint has been registered as CHAP(2012)01705 and is under assessment. Once this has been completed, the Commission will communicate its conclusions to the complainants.

([1]) Its official name is: 'S.S. Highway No 51 "Alemagna", Vittorio Veneto bypass (Eastern bypass) — LA SEGA-OSPEDALE link — 1st section "La Sega-Rindola"'.

([2]) SCI IT 3240032 River Meschio, adopted by DGR Veneto No 2673 of 6.8.2004, published in the BUR on 28.9.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011203/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Il European Food Import Safety Regime: quale armonizzazione per i controlli delle importazioni con i Paesi terzi?

Circa 120 tonnellate di pompelmi provenienti dalla Turchia sono state distrutte in Romania dopo che le autorità hanno rilevato la presenza di residui di antiparassitari in dosi superiori a quelle consentite dalla normativa comunitaria. I rilievi effettuati su alcune partite hanno evidenziato la presenza di Imazalil, un potente fungicida utilizzato per combattere le fitopatie e i parassiti, che in quantità elevate può essere molto nocivo per la salute degli uomini e degli animali. In seguito alla vicenda le autorità rumene hanno dichiarato che d'ora in poi tutte le importazioni di agrumi e frutta dalla Turchia saranno sottoposte a un regime di controlli più scrupoloso. Questi gli obiettivi che la Commissione europea si prefiggeva nel suo Rapporto, proponendo inoltre di migliorare l'operatività del *Rapid Alert System on Food and Feed* (RASFF): migliorare l'uniformità dell'applicazione dei controlli tra gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, su alimenti di origine animale, vegetale ma anche sui mangimi; adottare un sistema di controlli onnicomprensivo ed integrato, in grado di garantire una maggiore coerenza, e uniforme per gli Stati membri. L'efficacia del RASFF, di fatto, viene però messa in discussione dall'inadeguatezza dei controlli, soprattutto con i paesi extra UE, come dimostrato dai recenti fatti di cronaca. La stessa relazione evidenziava che «se da un lato tale normativa gestisce in modo efficace i rischi effettivi e potenziali, dall'altro essa risulta talvolta complessa e priva di coerenza generale. Di conseguenza può rivelarsi onerosa e la sua attuazione può risultare difficoltosa sia per gli Stati membri sia per gli operatori economici.»

Considerato che:

— non è la prima volta che la Commissione europea si trova davanti al dilemma tra dispendiosità dei controlli e tutela della sicurezza alimentare;

— l'Unione europea è l'area geografica più importante in termini di import alimentare e di mangimi e nello stesso tempo il settore alimentare è il primo in termini di fatturato,

può dire la Commissione se l'attuale sistema europeo di monitoraggio in realtà non debba essere considerato «fallimentare» soprattutto rispetto alle importazioni dai Paesi terzi, e se, di conseguenza, la sicurezza delle importazioni di prodotti alimentari in Europa non possa essere perseguita attraverso l'applicazione di condizioni economiche particolari e restrittive per l'importazione dei prodotti alle frontiere esterne?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

La responsabilità di far rispettare la legislazione relativa alla filiera alimentare incombe agli Stati membri che sono tenuti a stabilire un sistema di controlli ufficiali per verificare l'ottemperanza, da parte degli operatori, ai requisiti regolamentari. La Commissione verifica se gli Stati membri fanno fronte ai loro obblighi di controllo, anche per il tramite di audit in loco. Nel caso menzionato dall'onorevole deputato il sistema di controlli ufficiali posto in atto dalla Romania risulta averle consentito di identificare casi di violazione delle normative applicabili. La Commissione ritiene pertanto che esso non possa essere considerato fallimentare.

Per quanto concerne le regole che si applicano agli alimenti importati nell'UE, l'articolo 11 del regolamento 178/2002 ([1]) richiede che essi rispettino le pertinenti disposizioni della legislazione alimentare o le condizioni riconosciute almeno equivalenti dall'UE. Gli Stati membri verificano questa conformità mediante controlli documentali, d'identità e fisici, a seconda dei casi.

Inoltre, per certi prodotti, i controlli devono essere effettuati al momento dell'ingresso nell'UE in strutture specificamente designate a tal fine e l'immissione in libera pratica avviene soltanto se i risultati sono soddisfacenti. I peperoni e pomodori provenienti dalla Turchia sono ad esempio oggetto di tali controlli a norma del regolamento 669/2009 ([2]).

([1]) GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002.
([2]) GU L 194 del 25.7.2009.

Le regole unionali vigenti sono di ampia portata e consentono un livello elevato di protezione nell'interesse dell'UE. Pertanto, piuttosto di passare a un sistema di condizioni economiche restrittive, la Commissione sottopone a revisione il regolamento 882/2004 ([3]) al fine di snellire e consolidare le regole che si applicano ai controlli ufficiali degli animali e dei prodotti provenienti da paesi terzi.

([3]) GU L 165 del 30.04.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011203/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: The European Food Import Safety Regime: what harmonisation for controls on imports from third countries?

Approximately 120 tonnes of grapefruit from Turkey were destroyed in Romania after authorities detected the presence of pesticide residues in amounts exceeding those permitted under EC law. The tests carried out on several batches showed the presence of imazalil, a powerful fungicide used to combat plant diseases and pests, which in large amounts can be very harmful to human and animal health.

In the wake of this event, the Romanian authorities declared that from now on all imports of citrus fruits and fruit from Turkey would be subject to a more thorough system of inspections. The Commission set out the following aims in its report, proposing also to improve the operation of the Rapid Alert System on Food and Feed (RASFF): to improve the harmonised implementation of controls among EU Member States on food of animal or vegetable origin, but also on animal feed, and to adopt a comprehensive and integrated system that is standardised among the Member States and that ensures greater consistency. The effectiveness of the RASFF, however, is called into question by the inadequacy of controls, especially with non-EU countries, as has been demonstrated by recent events. The report shows that 'while this legislation effectively manages potential and actual risks, it is at times rather complex and lacking in overall coherence. This means it can be burdensome and lead to difficulties with implementation for Member States and business operators alike'.

Given that:

— this is not the first time that the Commission is faced with the dilemma between the expense of controls and the protection of food safety;

— the European Union is the most important geographical region in terms of food and feed imports and, at the same time, its food sector is the largest in terms of turnover;

does the Commission not agree that the current European monitoring system could actually be deemed a 'failure', especially with regard to imports from non-EU countries? Could the safety of food imports in Europe not be achieved by applying specific restrictive economic conditions for the import of products at the EU's external borders?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2013)

The responsibility for enforcing food chain legislation lies with Member States, which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving therefrom. The Commission monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties, including through on-the-spot audits. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the official controls system established by Romania seems to have allowed it to identify violations of applicable rules. The Commission believes this cannot therefore be interpreted as a failure in the system of official controls.

As regards the rules applicable to food imported into the EU, Article 11 of Regulation 178/2002 ([1]) requires it to comply with EU requirements or conditions recognised by the EU to be at least equivalent thereto. Member States verify such compliance through documentary, identity and physical checks as appropriate.

Moreover, for certain goods, checks must be carried out upon entry into the EU in facilities specifically designated for this purpose and release for free circulation must only occur if the results are satisfactory. Sweet peppers and tomatoes from Turkey are, for example, subject to such checks under Regulation 669/2009 ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.
([2]) OJ L 194, 25.7.2009.

Existing Union rules are comprehensive and afford a high level of protection to the EU. Therefore, rather than moving towards a system of restrictive economic conditions, the Commission is reviewing Regulation 882/2004 ([3]) with a view to streamlining and consolidating the rules which apply to official controls on animals and goods from third countries.

([3]) OJ L 165, 30.04.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011204/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: capillari campagne di prevenzione

La *Sudden Infant Death Syndrome* (SIDS) è la sindrome mortale che colpisce improvvisamente nel sonno i bambini tra un mese e un anno di età. Viene diagnosticata quando, in seguito ad autopsia, si possono escludere tutte le altre cause note per spiegare il decesso di un neonato, come malformazioni o eventi dolosi. Alcuni studi stanno ricercando la presenza di predisposizioni genetiche che, in concomitanza di alcuni fattori ambientali, possono portare al decesso; infatti, sebbene le statistiche dimostrino che il trend negli ultimi anni è decrescente in modo statisticamente significativo, l'incidenza a livello internazionale è di uno per mille nati vivi; si è osservato che in Italia, nel periodo 1990-2009, i casi di mortalità per SIDS sono diminuiti di circa il 60 % e ora oscillano tra 0,04 e 0,11 per mille nati vivi. Nell'ultimo ventennio c'è stata una netta riduzione dei decessi dovuti alla sindrome, eppure questa rimane la principale causa singola di morte dopo il primo mese di vita. La diminuzione è riconducibile alla maggiore sensibilità sviluppata da medici e ostetriche nel diffondere le informazioni sulla sindrome e i consigli per evitarla, sia tra operatori del settore sia tra genitori e parenti; lo scorso anno l'*American Academy of Pediatrics* ha prodotto «Raccomandazioni su tutte le norme in materia di sicurezza del sonno»: un bambino apparentemente sano e normale può, in realtà, soffrire di una piccola anomalia del sistema di regolazione dei ritmi cardiaci, respiratori o generali del proprio organismo, ma è fondamentale affrontare i cambiamenti fisiologici connessi alla crescita nel primo anno di vita e soprattutto prevenire gli eventi ambientali, quali l'esposizione al fumo passivo e piccole infezioni respiratorie, ed evitare che il bambino dorma in posizione prona.

Considerato che:

— un'informazione univoca e precoce è fondamentale, ed è necessario sviluppare in modo costante e capillare, a livello europeo e internazionale, campagne di formazione e informazione rivolte a medici e familiari;

— la morte di un neonato provoca effetti devastanti sulle famiglie, a livello sia psichico che informativo, ed è importante per i genitori avere delle risposte riguardo a quanto è capitato;

può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Intende supportare programmi di ricerca medico-genetica per indagare la SIDS e programmi di supporto a livello psichico dei familiari colpiti dagli effetti disastrosi di questa sindrome?

2. Prevede di sviluppare in maniere capillare in tutti gli Stati membri campagne di informazione preventiva, sensibilizzando così i medici di base e i pediatri, nonché gli operatori del settore nei punti nascita e negli ambulatori pediatrici?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole deputato in relazione a questa sindrome e alle sue tragiche conseguenze per i bambini.

Questo è il motivo per cui la Commissione ha sostenuto in passato diversi progetti che interessavano tale problematica, segnatamente un'azione concertata «Co-ordinated case-control studies to determine ways of reducing sudden infant death syndrome rates in Europe» (Studi di casi coordinati per determinare le modalità di riduzione della Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in Europa) ([1]), nell'ambito del programma BIOMED1, integrata da un progetto di follow-up ([2]), nel contesto del programma PECO-Copernicus.

I lavori condotti nell'ambito del Sesto programma quadro, segnatamente con il progetto Newmood ([3]), hanno portato a conclusioni sulla Sudden Infant Death Syndrome pubblicate sulla rivista Science per quanto concerne il comportamento di certi neuroni associati con questa sindrome ([4]). Le informazioni ricavate dai progetti di ricerca sono pubblicate e accessibili alle persone interessate.

([1]) European Union, The Biomedical and Health Research, The Biomed 1 Programme, IOS Press, 1995, p. 185.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/29085_en.html
([3]) Contratto LSHM-CT-2004.
([4]) http://www.sciencemag.org/content/321/5885/130.abstract.

La realizzazione di programmi di sostegno psicologico per le famiglie rientra nella responsabilità esclusiva degli Stati membri che sono i soli competenti per l'organizzazione e l'erogazione dei servizi sanitari. La Commissione non prevede di predisporre una campagna di informazione su scala UE in questo ambito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011204/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: widespread prevention campaigns

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the deadly syndrome that strikes children suddenly in their sleep between the ages of one month and one year. It is diagnosed when, after an autopsy, all other known causes to explain the death of a baby can be excluded, such as malformations or malicious events. Some studies are researching the presence of genetic predisposition which, in conjunction with environmental factors, can lead to death. Indeed, although statistics show that the trend in recent years is decreasing in a statistically significant manner, the international incidence is one per thousand live births. It has been noted that in Italy, in the period 1990-2009, the mortality rate for SIDS declined by about 60% and now ranges between 0.04 and 0.11 per thousand live births.

Over the last twenty years there has been a sharp reduction in the number of deaths due to the syndrome, and yet it remains the biggest single cause of death after the first month of life. The decline is due to the greater awareness of doctors and midwives of the need to disseminate information about the syndrome and recommendations on how to avoid it, among both operators in the sector and parents and relatives. Last year, the American Academy of Pediatrics produced the 'Expansion of Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment': a child that is seemingly normal and healthy may, in fact, suffer from a minor abnormality of the system which regulates the heart rate, breathing rate or general bodily functions, but it is vital to deal with the physiological changes associated with growth in the first year of life and, above all, to prevent environmental events, such as exposure to second-hand smoke and minor respiratory infections, and to prevent the child from sleeping in the prone position.

Given that:

— timely and straightforward information is essential, and training and information campaigns for doctors and families need to be developed, on an ongoing, widespread basis, at the EU and international level;

— the death of an infant has a devastating effect on families, from both a psychological and information-related point of view, and it is important for parents to have answers as to what happened;

can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Will it support medical genetics research programmes in order to research SIDS and psychological support programmes for families affected by the disastrous impact of this syndrome?

2. Does it plan to develop, throughout the Member States, information campaigns for prevention, to raise awareness among general practitioners and paediatricians, as well as among those working in birth centres and paediatric clinics?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern about this syndrome and its tragic consequences for infants.

This is why the Commission in the past supported several research projects on this topic notably a concerted action 'Coordinated case-control studies to determine ways of reducing sudden infant death syndrome rates in Europe' ([1]), under the BIOMED1 programme, completed by a follow up project ([2]), under the PECO-Copernicus scheme.

Work undertaken under Sixth Framework Programme under project Newmood ([3]) led to conclusions relevant to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, published in journal Science, as regards behaviour of certain neurons associated with this syndrome ([4]). Information obtained through research projects is published and accessible to interested parties.

([1]) European Union, The Biomedical and Health Research, The Biomed 1 Programme, IOS Press, 1995, p. 185.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/29085_en.html
([3]) contract LSHM-CT-2004.
([4]) http://www.sciencemag.org/content/321/5885/130.abstract.

Implementing psychological support programmes for the families falls under the exclusive responsibility of Member States for the organisation and delivery of health services. The Commission in not planning to develop an EU-wide information campaign in this area.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011205/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Educazione a una corretta alimentazione: nuove azioni e misure per la tutela dei consumatori

La prevenzione di comportamenti errati in campo alimentare si basa su un percorso formativo in grado di istruire il soggetto sin dall'età scolare su modelli e criteri di nutrizione-alimentazione sana ed equilibrata. L'informazione alimentare consente di acquisire conoscenze sull'interazione «cibo-individuo» e di maturare una crescente consapevolezza sulle conseguenze di scelte alimentari errate sulla salute: assumere alimenti sani, osservare corretti ritmi di consumazione del cibo e distribuzione dei pasti, evitare squilibri dannosi per lo sviluppo metabolico (riducendo, in caso di sovrappeso, la quota calorica totale, l'apporto di lipidi, zuccheri, proteine animali, cloruro di sodio, favorendo il consumo di alimenti ricchi di fibre vegetali, ecc.). Recenti studi condotti dall'Università del North Carolina dimostrano che l'obesità derivante dall'assunzione di cibo «spazzatura» si sta diffondendo al pari di un'epidemia a livello globale e sta mietendo sempre più vittime tra i giovanissimi. I risultati ottenuti dimostrano che un'alimentazione scorretta è in grado di alterare anche gli ormoni deputati alla regolazione delle funzioni sessuali. Si registrano, infatti, sempre più casi di bambine, non ancora adolescenti, che in media all'età di 10 anni hanno il loro primo menarca.

Considerato che:

— l'educazione alla salute, investendo gli aspetti fisici, identitari e relazionali della formazione della personalità, implica un percorso motivazionale in grado di orientare le future scelte dell'individuo;

— la formazione passa attraverso la rimozione-minimizzazione dei fattori responsabili dei comportamenti alimentari errati, attraverso la comunicazione, l'attenzione dei mass media e dei produttori di cibo alla salute dei consumatori piuttosto che alle logiche di mercato, la promozione di una cultura della salute intesa quale equilibrio somato-psichico,

può la Commissione far sapere se intende:

1. rinnovare e ridefinire le strategie per lo studio della nutrizione e dell'impatto sulla salute umana relativi ai temi del cibo, dell'alimentazione, della prevenzione;

2. migliorare i processi di comunicazione ai fini dell'adozione di stili di vita e comportamenti in linea con le conoscenze scientifiche disponibili;

3. privilegiare un approccio centrato sui vantaggi per la salute e lo sviluppo psico-motorio di una sana alimentazione, piuttosto che su dinamiche intimidatorie (la paura dell'obesità o delle malattie cardiovascolari rischia di incrementare atteggiamenti nevrotici, l'enfatizzazione della «forma» o dell'immagine può sviluppare dinamiche fobiche)?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione attribuisce la massima importanza al fatto che la politica sanitaria sia basata sulle migliori prove scientifiche tratte da dati e da ricerche validi.

La Strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([1]) indica che un elemento chiave dell'approccio della Commissione consiste nello sviluppare la base probatoria che servirà per impostare le politiche future. Oltre alle iniziative di ricerca della Commissione, è in atto una rigorosa cooperazione con WHO Europe per monitorare le politiche in tema di alimentazione e attività fisica nell'Unione europea.

La Commissione ha avviato un processo di valutazione di questa strategia UE e la relazione valutativa finale sarà disponibile nel primo semestre del 2013. Essa costituirà la base per eventuali azioni di follow-up.

([1]) Una Strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità, COM(2007)279.

La Commissione patrocina la ricerca sulla nutrizione e sugli stili di vita sani in cui rientra la Strategia UE summenzionata per il tramite del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico: sinora 250 milioni di euro ([2]), ([3]) sono stati consacrati a questo ambito. ([4]) La proposta della Commissione in merito alla strategia Orizzonte 2020 — il Programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([5]) identifica in «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere» una delle sei sfide per la società che si devono affrontare e che probabilmente presenteranno anche opportunità di ricerca in materia di diabete. È ancora prematuro indicare quali potrebbero essere le tematiche specifiche di ricerca da affrontare.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/index_en.html#.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/about-kbbe_en.html
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/about-kbbe_en.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011205/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Education in healthy eating — new measures to protect consumers

The prevention of unhealthy eating is based on education that can teach people from school age onwards about how to eat a healthy and balanced diet. Nutritional information provides people with knowledge on the interaction between food and the individual, allowing them to gain awareness of the impact wrong food choices have on their health. This information should relate to: eating healthy foods, consuming food at the right pace and ensuring that meals are properly distributed throughout the day, and avoiding harmful metabolic imbalances (by reducing, in the case of excess weight, total calorie intake in addition to that of fat, sugar, animal protein and sodium chloride, and by promoting the consumption of foods rich in vegetable fibre, etc.).

Recent studies conducted by the University of North Carolina show that obesity due to the consumption of 'junk' food is spreading like an epidemic worldwide and is claiming more and more victims among the young. The results of the studies show that poor nutrition can also alter hormones which regulate sexual function. Indeed, we are seeing ever more cases of young girls, who are not yet teenagers, having their menarche at the average age of 10.

Given that:

— health education, which concerns the physical, identity-related and relational aspects of personality formation, calls for a motivational pathway which is able to guide the future choices of the individual;

— such education should involve the removal or minimisation of the factors responsible for bad eating habits, through communication, more interest by the mass media and food producers in consumer health rather than in the market alone, and the promotion of health culture as a somatopsychological balance;

1. Will the Commission renew and redefine its strategies for the study of nutrition and of the impact on human health of issues such as food, nutrition and prevention?

2. Will it improve its communication processes to encourage the adoption of lifestyles and behaviours that are in line with available scientific knowledge?

3. Will it favour an approach that focuses on the benefits of healthy eating for health reasons and for psycho-motor development, rather than on intimidation (the fear of obesity or cardiovascular diseases is likely to increase neurotic attitudes and emphasis on 'form' or on image can lead to the development of phobias)?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2013)

The Commission finds it of great importance that health policy is based on the best scientific evidence, derived from sound data and relevant research.

The strategy for Europe on nutrition, overweight and obesity related issues ([1]) outlines that a key part of the Commission's approach is to develop the evidence base to help steer future policies. In addition to the Commission's research initiatives, strong cooperation with WHO Europe is in place to monitor food, nutrition and physical activity policies in the European Union.

The Commission has launched an evaluation process of this EU Strategy and the final evaluation report will be available in the first half of 2013. It will form the basis for possible follow-up action.

([1]) A Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues, COM(2007) 279.

The Commission supports research on nutrition and healthy lifestyles encompassing the abovementioned EU Strategy through the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, with so far EUR 250 million ([2]) ([3]) devoted to this area ([4]). The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([5]) identifies 'Health, demographic change and well-being' as one of the six societal challenges to be tackled, likely to provide also opportunities for research on diabetes. It is yet premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues to be addressed.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/index_en.html#.
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/about-kbbe_en.html
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/about-kbbe_en.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011206/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Diritto alla verità per i malati terminali: tecniche di comunicazione empatica

Un tumore in stadio avanzato difficilmente è curabile, il più delle volte le uniche terapie possibili sono cure palliative per prolungare la sopravvivenza e alleviare il dolore della persona malata. Spesso queste terapie prevedono anche trattamenti chemioterapici che possono far sperare il paziente in una guarigione.

Questa realtà è stata dimostrata intervistando, a quattro mesi dalla diagnosi, 1200 pazienti con carcinoma polmonare o colon-rettale metastatico, sottoposti a chemioterapia con fini palliativi, poiché la malattia era troppo diffusa. Dallo studio condotto dal Dana-Faber Cancer Institute di Boston è emerso che il 69 % delle persone affette da neoplasia al polmone e l'81 % di coloro che erano affetti da cancro al colon retto non avevano compreso che la cura chemioterapica, nel loro caso, non avrebbe potuto guarirli. I ricercatori ritengono che la speranza di guarire sia alimentata da un radicale problema di comunicazione tra medico e paziente. Infatti, se per un medico è complesso comunicare una cattiva notizia, anche per il paziente è difficile accettarla.

Negli ultimi anni sono migliorate le tecniche di comunicazione, ma i margini di progresso sono ampi, soprattutto se ci si deve confrontare con patologie oncologiche diagnosticate in stadio terminale, per le quali non c'è cura. La comunicazione deve essere incentrata sull'empatia e sulla conoscenza del paziente, essere graduale e rassicurare il paziente che non sarà solo, bensì si cercherà di controllare i sintomi e lo staff medico gli sarà accanto nel miglior modo possibile. La ricerca ha individuato che tra i pazienti curati in ospedale solamente l'11 % è a conoscenza della prognosi, mentre il 42 % non è consapevole della terapia farmacologica che sta seguendo e la metà di questi vorrebbe essere informato. Nel caso in cui il paziente non sia informato della sua reale situazione, sarà per lui molto più difficile accettare la malattia e organizzare il tempo a lui rimasto per vivere.

Considerato che:

— è di primaria importanza pensare al bene del malato rispettando il suo diritto ad essere informato in modo empatico sulla propria condizione, il che implica che i medici siano adeguatamente formati per gestire i sentimenti del paziente e le situazioni che possono scaturirne;

— il paziente ha bisogno di essere ascoltato e aiutato nel capire la condizione nella quale si trova, piuttosto che mantenere viva l'erronea idea che una terapia chemioterapica possa consentirgli di guarire;

può la Commissione far sapere se ha l'intenzione di promuovere corsi di aggiornamento sulle tecniche di comunicazione per gli addetti del settore oncologico e se prevede di sviluppare un programma mirato alla salute psichica non solo dei pazienti e dei loro familiari, ma soprattutto degli operatori che quotidianamente si confrontano con persone condannate a morire?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

Nel quadro dell'azione congiunta Partenariato europeo per l'azione contro il cancro ([1]) (EPAAC), supportata dal programma Salute dell'UE, i lavori legati alle cure psicosociali del cancro comprendono l'organizzazione di un seminario pilota di formazione in abilità della comunicazione per l'assistenza ai malati di cancro in un paese dell'UE che ha estremo bisogno di una simile iniziativa. A tal fine la riunione preparatoria si è tenuta l'8 e il 9 novembre 2012 e in tale occasione si è discusso lo sviluppo di un programma di formazione in tema di abilità di comunicazione e di assistenza psicosociale per i paesi europei che dispongono di scarse risorse in questo ambito. La relazione è disponibile sul sito del EPAAC ([2]).

Nel 2011 la Commissione ha inoltre pubblicato una guida per la prevenzione e le buone pratiche nell'assistenza sanitaria che fornisce informazioni chiare sulle buone pratiche volte a prevenire i rischi psicosociali. Essa fornisce informazioni sulla natura dei rischi psicosociali, sui metodi di valutazione dei rischio e raccomandazioni sulle misure e sulle opzioni di formazione atte a prevenire questi effetti sanitari avversi.

([1]) http://www.epaac.eu/home.
([2]) http://www.epaac.eu/news/261-agenda-and-meeting-report-on-psychosocial-oncology-action.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011206/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Right to the truth for terminally ill patients — empathetic communication techniques

Cancer at an advanced stage is rarely curable; most of the time the only possible treatments are palliative care to prolong survival and alleviate the patient's pain. Often these therapies also include chemotherapy treatments that can give hope to patients that they might recover.

This has been demonstrated by interviews with 1200 patients with metastatic lung cancer or colorectal cancer, four months after diagnosis, who had been given chemotherapy for palliative purposes, as the disease was too widespread. The study, conducted by the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, showed that 69% of people with lung cancer and 81% of those suffering from colorectal cancer had not understood that the chemotherapy, in their case, could not heal them. The researchers believe that the hope of recovery is kindled by a radical problem of communication between doctor and patient, because while it may be difficult for a doctor to communicate bad news, it is also difficult for the patient to accept it.

In recent years communication techniques have improved, but there is a lot of room for progress, especially in the face of oncological diseases that are diagnosed at the terminal stage, for which there is no cure. Communication should be based on empathy and on knowledge of the patient; it should be gradual and should reassure the patient that he or she is not alone, but that medical staff will try to control the symptoms and will be close to the patient in the best possible way. The research found that among patients treated in hospital, only 11% were aware of their prognosis, while 42% were unaware of what medication they were receiving and half of those would have liked to have been informed. If patients are not informed of their true situation, it will be much harder for them to accept their disease and to organise the time they have left to live.

It is of the utmost importance to consider the good of patients, respecting their right to be informed about their condition in an empathetic way, which means that doctors should be appropriately trained to manage patients' feelings and any situations that might ensue.

Patients need to be listened to and helped to understand the condition they are in, rather than be kept under the illusion that chemotherapy might help them to get better.

In the light of the above, will the Commission promote refresher courses in communication techniques for those working with cancer patients? Will it also develop a specific programme to protect the mental health not only of patients and their families, but above all, of the medical operators who every day have to face those who are condemned to die?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2013)

In the framework of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer Joint Action ([1]) (EPAAC), which is supported by the EU Health Programme, work related to psychosocial cancer care includes the organisation of a pilot training workshop in communication skills for cancer care in an EU country with high need. To this aim the preparatory meeting took place on 8 and 9 November 2012 that discussed the development of a training programme on communication skills and psychosocial care for European countries with low resources in this area. The report is available on EPAAC website ([2]).

In addition, in 2011, the Commission published a guide to prevention and good practice in healthcare which gives health clear information about good practices aimed at preventing psychosocial risks. It provides information on the nature of psychosocial risks, methods of risk assessment, and recommendations on measures and training options to prevent such adverse health effects.

([1]) http://www.epaac.eu/home
([2]) http://www.epaac.eu/news/261-agenda-and-meeting-report-on-psychosocial-oncology-action

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011207/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Benessere psicologico a rischio a causa dell'instabilità delle condizioni di lavoro ed economiche

Un recente studio pubblicato sul CHE Research Paper ha dimostrato che il lavoro a tempo determinato riduce il benessere psicologico e la felicità di persone con un'età compresa tra i 15 e i 30 anni. L'analisi è stata condotta su un campione di 8280 individui attivi nel mercato del lavoro italiano. Attraverso test psicologici scientifici sono state indagate la salute percepita e la felicità, e attraverso misure oggettive, il benessere fisico e la salute mentale. L'ipotesi è che in due soggetti simili tra loro per caratteristiche osservabili, eventuali differenze nello stato di salute fisico e psicologico sarebbero imputabili all'effetto del lavoro a tempo determinato. I risultati hanno dimostrato la presenza di un effetto negativo del contratto di lavoro a tempo determinato sulla salute psicologica dei lavoratori: essi dichiarano di sentirsi infelici e poco interessati alla vita, un dato, questo, statisticamente significativo. A soffrire maggiormente delle condizioni flessibili di lavoro sono in particolare gli uomini, i cosiddetti «bread winner», che sono socialmente visti come i principali sostenitori del reddito familiare e sono, inoltre, maggiormente soggetti a condizioni di precarietà. Tutti i partecipanti allo studio che hanno dichiarato di avere il supporto della famiglia di origine, avevano livelli di stress lavorativo inferiori rispetto ai «bread winner».

Considerato che: la recente letteratura empirica evidenzia l'influenza delle condizioni contrattuali del lavoro temporaneo sul benessere psicologico dei lavoratori;

può la Commissione far sapere se intende promuovere campagne di approfondimento e di sensibilizzazione sia tra i lavoratori che tra i datori di lavoro ai fini del riconoscimento di tutte quelle situazioni di disagio psicologico correlate all'ambiente di lavoro e in particolare se intende effettuare una ricerca multidimensionale in diversi Paesi d'Europa per indagare in quale misura il benessere psicologico delle persone sia influenzato dall'instabilità del contesto lavorativo ed economico europeo?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione ha pubblicato di recente un bando di gara relativo a uno studio sulla salute mentale sul posto di lavoro al fine di valutare la situazione nell'ottica della legislazione sulla salute e sicurezza sul lavoro, delineare scenari di intervento e elaborare documenti d'orientamento per i lavoratori e i datori di lavoro. Le risultanze dello studio contribuiranno a meglio valutare il problema della salute mentale nel luogo di lavoro nell'UE.

Nel 2012 il comitato degli alti responsabili dell'ispettorato del lavoro della Commissione ha condotto una serie di ispezioni aventi specificamente per oggetto i rischi psicosociali con un'attenzione particolare per tre settori ([1]):

(a) salute, compresa l'assistenza sociale (privata e pubblica);

(b) servizi (ad esempio, alberghi e ristoranti);

(c) trasporti.

Nel 2014-15 l'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza e la salute sul lavoro condurrà una campagna su scala Europea in tema di soluzioni pratiche ai rischi psicosociali al fine di far opera di sensibilizzazione nel merito. La Commissione incoraggerà l'Agenzia, che ha già iniziato i preparativi della campagna, a fornire ai datori di lavoro e ai lavoratori strumenti pratici per affrontare tali rischi.

Nell'ambito del programma Salute dell'UE la Commissione sta organizzando con gli Stati membri un'azione congiunta sulla salute e il benessere mentale. Uno dei suoi pacchetti operativi identificherà le possibilità che il settore sanitario ha di sostenere la promozione della salute mentale sul posto di lavoro. L'implementazione dell'azione congiunta prende il via all'inizio del 2013.

([1]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=148&newsId=1158&furtherNews=yes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011207/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Psychological well-being at risk because of unstable working and economic conditions

A recent study published in the CHE Research Paper has shown that temporary employment reduces the psychological well-being and happiness of people between the ages of 15 and 30. The study was conducted on a sample of 8280 individuals employed in the Italian labour market. Through scientific psychological tests, self-assessed health and happiness were investigated and physical well-being and mental health were assessed by objective measures. The theory is that in two individuals with similar observable characteristics, any differences in the state of physical and psychological health can be attributed to the effect of temporary employment. The results showed that in a statistically significant number of workers, temporary contracts have a negative effect on their psychological health and they claim to feel unhappy and uninterested in life. It is men, in particular, the so-called 'breadwinners', who suffer the most from these flexible working conditions, since it is they who are seen by society as the main earners of household income and it is they, too who are more liable to be employed on temporary contracts. All the study participants who claimed to receive support from their family of origin had lower levels of work stress than the breadwinners.

Given that recent empirical literature has highlighted the influence of the contractual conditions of temporary work on the psychological well-being of workers, will the Commission launch in-depth awareness-raising campaigns among both workers and employers to ensure that all situations of psychological distress relating to the working environment are recognised? Will it, in particular, carry out multi-dimensional research in various European countries to see to what extent the psychological welfare of individuals is affected by the instability of the economic and working environment in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The Commission recently published a call for tenders for a study of mental health in the workplace with a view to evaluating the situation from the viewpoint of health and safety at work legislation, outlining scenarios for action and drafting a guidance document for workers and employers. The findings will contribute to a better assessment of the problem of mental health at the workplace in the EU.

In 2012 the Commission's Senior Labour Inspectors Committee carried out a series of joint inspections targeted specifically at psychosocial risks and focusing on three sectors ([1]):

(a) health, including (private and public) social care;

(b) services (e.g. hotels and restaurants);

(c) transport.

In 2014-15 the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work will carry out a pan-European campaign on practical solutions to psychosocial risks to raise awareness of the issue. The Commission will encourage the Agency, which has already started preparing the campaign, to provide employers and workers with practical tools for dealing with such risks.

Under the EU-Health Programme, the Commission is setting up a Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being with Member States. One of its work packages will identify possibilities for the health sector to support the promotion of mental health at workplaces. The implementation of the Joint Action is beginning in early 2013.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=148&newsId=1158&furtherNews=yes.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011208/12
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(7 december 2012)

Betreft: Amicus curiae brief van de Europese Commissie aan het hogergerechtshof van de VS inzake Kiobel vs Shell

De Europese Commissie heeft in juni 2012 een „amicus curiae" brief gestuurd aan het hoger gerechtshof van de Verenigde Staten en zich daarmee gemengd in de zaak Kiobel versus Royal Dutch Petroleum Shell ([1]). De Commissie neemt een standpunt in over de reikwijdte van de Amerikaanse Alien Tort Statue (ATS). Ook de Nederlandse en Britse overheid stuurden een „amicus curiae" brief, gevolgd door een brief van rechtsgeleerde professor Castermans cs over het zelfde thema. ([2])

1. Waarom heeft de Commissie gemeend te moeten interveniëren in de zaak Kiobel vs Shell zoals zij deed en waar en wanneer is deze beslissing gevallen?

2. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de brief van professor Castermans cs en zo ja, wat vindt de Commissie van het argument dat de ATS wel degelijk kan worden toegepast op situaties zonder directe nexus met de Verenigde Staten, omdat vergelijkbare gevallen in Nederland en andere Europese landen ook ontvankelijk zouden worden verklaard?

3. Is de Commissie het met vragensteller eens dat internationale bedrijven zich voor het gerecht moeten verantwoorden als zij mensenrechten schendingen begaan, en dat internationale wetgeving nog steeds onvoldoende is om zulks mogelijk te maken? Kan zij haar antwoord beargumenteren?

4. Welke mogelijkheid ziet de Commissie om Europese bedrijven in vergelijkbare gevallen voor een gerechtshof in een Europese lidstaat te dagen?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(12 februari 2013)

1) Toen het Hooggerechtshof van de VS zich in juni 2004 uitsprak in de zaak Sosa/Alvarez-Machain, deed het geen uitspraak over de extraterritorialiteit van het ATS maar nam het uitdrukkelijk kennis van het standpunt van de Europese Commissie. De Commissie kwam in de zaak Kiobel dan ook onpartijdig tussen om het standpunt van de EU over extraterritorialiteit te herhalen.

2) De Europese Commissie heeft geen commentaar op de standpunten van de betrokken partijen en hun amici, zoals professor Castermans en anderen.

3) Het amicus curiae-advies is een weergave van de ruime consensus in het internationale recht over het relatieve belang van de soevereiniteit van staten en de fundamentele rechten van de mens: (a) Om harmonieuze internationale betrekkingen te bewaren, moeten staten en internationale organisaties de materieelrechtelijke en procedurele beperkingen respecteren die door het internationale recht worden opgelegd aan de bevoegdheid van een individuele staat om zijn wetten toe te passen buiten zijn eigen grondgebied; en (b) de VS moet in zijn uitoefening van universele civiele jurisdictie worden beperkt door de procedurele beperkingen van het internationale recht, in het bijzonder door een uitputtingsvereiste, om te „garanderen dat die jurisdictie in overeenstemming is met de internationale rechtsbeginselen van wederzijds respect en gelijkheid van soevereiniteit".

4) Veel EU-landen oefenen in strafprocessen universele civiele jurisdictie uit door middel van civiele vorderingen. Bovendien wordt in de nationale wetgeving van verscheidene landen universele civiele jurisdictie mogelijk gemaakt. Door de tenuitvoerlegging van de „Brussel I"-verordening en het Verdrag van Lugano van 2007 kan van landen worden geëist dat ze een rechterlijke beslissing ten uitvoer leggen die op grond van universele civiele jurisdictie is genomen in een andere lidstaat of een derde land dat door de regeling is gebonden, ook al erkennen ze zelf universele civiele jurisdictie niet.

([1]) http://www.sdshhlaw.com/pdfs/European%20Commission%20on%20Behalf%20of%20the%20European%20Union%20(Revised).pdf
([2]) http://www.sdshhlaw.com/pdfs/Professors%20Castermans.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011208/12
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Amicus curiae brief from the Commission to the US Supreme Court concerning Kiobel vs Shell

In June 2012, the Commission sent an *amicus curiae* brief to the United States Supreme Court, thereby intervening in the case of Kiobel versus Royal Dutch Petroleum Shell ([1]). The Commission adopts a position on the scope of the US Alien Tort Statute (ATS). The Netherlands and British Governments have likewise sent *amicus curiae* briefs, followed by a brief from law professor Castermans and others on the same subject ([2]).

1. Why did the Commission feel that it should intervene in the case of Kiobel vs Shell as it did, and where and when was this decision taken?

2. Is the Commission aware of the brief submitted by Professor Castermans and others and if so, what view does the Commission take of the argument that the ATS can indeed be applied to situations which have no direct link with the United States, because comparable cases are also ruled admissible in the Netherlands and other European countries?

3. Does the Commission agree that international businesses should be held to account before the courts if they breach human rights, and that international law is still inadequate to permit this? Can it give arguments in support of its reply?

4. How does the Commission believe that European businesses can be summonsed before a court in a European Member State in similar cases?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

1. In June 2004, when ruling in *Sosa* v *Alvarez-Machain*, the US Supreme Court did not decide on the extraterritoriality of the ATS but took note explicitly of the position of the European Commission. The Commission thus intervened in Kiobel in support of neither party to restate the EU's views on extraterritoriality.

2. The European Commission has no comment to offer with respect to the positions taken by the parties in the dispute and their amici, such as Professor Castermans et al.

3. The amicus brief reflects the broad consensus under international law on the relative importance of State sovereignty and fundamental human rights: (a) to preserve harmonious international relations, States and international organisations must respect the substantive and procedural limits imposed by international law on the authority of any individual State to apply its laws beyond its own territory; and (b) that the US's exercise of universal civil jurisdiction must be constrained by the procedural limits imposed by international law, in particular by an exhaustion requirement, in order to 'ensure that such jurisdiction comports with the international law principles of comity and equality of sovereignty'.

4. Many EU Member States exercise universal civil jurisdiction through *actions civiles* when brought within criminal proceedings. In addition, the national legislation of several States allows for universal civil jurisdiction. As a result of the implementation of the 'Brussels I' Regulation and the 2007 Lugano Convention, even those States that do not recognise universal civil jurisdiction on a national basis can be required to enforce a judgment on such basis by courts of another Member State or other State bound by the regime.

([1]) http://www.sdshhlaw.com/pdfs/European%20Commission%20on%20Behalf%20of%20the%20European%20Union%20(Revised).pdf
([2]) http://www.sdshhlaw.com/pdfs/Professors%20Castermans.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011209/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(7 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Política estrutural 2014-2020

No que respeita à política estrutural 2014-2020, a Comissão Europeia decidiu que a política de coesão, o desenvolvimento rural e a política marítima e das pescas são cruciais para a aplicação da estratégia UE 2020, tendo proposto que os fundos estruturais se centrem num número mais limitado de prioridades diretamente associadas a esta estratégia.

Numa altura em que se perspetivam cortes gravosos no orçamento da UE para o período 2014-2020, torna-se pertinente voltar a colocar algumas velhas questões:

1. Por que razão se insiste numa articulação exclusiva das políticas de coesão com os objetivos da neoliberal estratégia UE2020? Está a Comissão na disposição de propor que seja possível diversificar prioridades, atendendo à situação e necessidades específicas de cada Estado-Membro?

2. Quanto à simplificação de procedimentos, e apesar do reiterado esforço neste sentido, continuam a existir enormes e insuperáveis dificuldades em certos programas destinados a algumas regiões e populações, como é o caso da pequena agricultura de natureza familiar. Que pretende fazer em concreto a Comissão para mitigar este obstáculo?

3. Por que razão são cada vez mais introduzidos na política de coesão da União alguns objetivos de cooperação com países terceiros, que deveriam ser financiados com meios de outras origens e outros programas comunitários, inclusive quando esses países terceiros são nossos vizinhos (não sendo candidatos à adesão à UE)?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(4 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. A intenção da Comissão é garantir que uma parte substancial do orçamento da UE seja utilizada para atingir os objetivos fixados na estratégia Europa 2020. Foi criado um conjunto claro de objetivos temáticos a nível da UE para o período de 2014-2020, com vista a garantir uma devida atenção à política de coesão. Todavia, os Estados-Membros dispõem de uma flexibilidade considerável na determinação da forma como devem prosseguir estes objetivos na sua situação específica e decidir quais as ações necessárias para abordar as necessidades de desenvolvimento regional específicas.

2. Nas novas propostas legislativas apresentadas pela Comissão em 2011, verifica-se uma abordagem mais concreta, que permite aos Estados-Membros estabelecer prioridades específicas por zona do programa e definir subprogramas temáticos ([1]). A Comissão introduziu igualmente uma abordagem harmonizada no que respeita à aplicação estratégica das políticas da UE no âmbito da gestão partilhada, incluindo um certo número de medidas de simplificação que reduzem a carga administrativa dos beneficiários, como pagamentos de montantes fixos, financiamentos a taxa fixa e auxílios ao arranque. Os Estados-Membros têm o direito de introduzir regras específicas, que reflitam a legislação nacional e/ou regional, bem como as prioridades políticas do Estado-Membro.

3. A cooperação com países terceiros é um elemento incontornável do Interreg desde 1990, dado que a cooperação com países vizinhos é parte integrante do desenvolvimento regional das regiões fronteiriças. A política de coesão da UE apenas financia a participação dos Estados-Membros da UE. Em 2014-2020, o Instrumento Europeu de Vizinhança irá financiar a participação dos países vizinhos e o Instrumento de Pré-Adesão irá financiar a participação dos países candidatos e pré-candidatos.

([1]) A proposta do novo Feader pode ser consultada no seguinte sítio: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/com627/627_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011209/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Structural policy 2014-2020

In its structural policy 2014-2020, the Commission has decided that cohesion policy, rural development and maritime and fisheries policy are essential for implementing the EU 2020 strategy and has proposed that the structural funds focus on fewer priorities directly linked with this strategy.

At a time when heavy EU budget cuts are envisaged for the period 2014-2020, it is worth readdressing some old questions:

1. Why does the Commission insist on exclusively linking cohesion policies to the objectives of the neoliberal EU 2020 strategy? Is it prepared to propose that there can be different priorities, adapted to the situation and specific needs of each Member State?

2. Despite repeated efforts to simplify procedures, there remain huge and insurmountable difficulties in certain programmes targeting some regions and populations, as in the case of small-scale family farming. What precisely will the Commission do to overcome this obstacle?

3. Can it explain why certain objectives of cooperation with third countries are becoming increasingly established in EU cohesion policy, when they should be financed with resources from other sources and other EU programmes, even when these countries are our neighbours (and are not candidates for EU accession)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

1. The intention of the Commission is to ensure that a substantial share of the EU budget is used towards the objectives set out in the Europe 2020 strategy. A clear set of thematic objectives is set out at EU level for 2014-2020 to ensure an appropriate focus for cohesion policy. However, Member States have considerable flexibility in determining how they pursue these objectives in their specific context and in deciding which actions to support to best address specific regional development needs.

2. In the new legal proposals tabled by the Commission in 2011, an improved targeting approach allows Member States to set specific priorities per programme area and define thematic sub-programmes ([1]). The Commission also introduced a harmonised approach for the strategic implementation of the EU policies under shared management, including a number of simplifications for beneficiaries that reduce the administrative burden such as lump-sum payments, flat-rate financing and start-up aid. Member States have the right to introduce specific rules, which reflect the national and/or regional legislation as well as the policy priorities of the Member State.

3. Cooperation with third countries has been an established part of the framework of Interreg since 1990 as cooperation with neighbours is an integral part of the regional development of border regions. EU cohesion policy only finances the participation of EU Member States. In 2014-2020, the European Neighbourhood Instrument will finance the participation of neighbourhood countries and the Instrument for Pre-Accession will finance participation of candidate and pre-candidate countries.

([1]) The new EAFRD proposal can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/com627/627_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011210/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(7 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Metodele inovatoare de finanțare la nivel european și mondial

În ultimii ani, criza economică și financiară a evidențiat deficiențe majore în cadrul de reglementare și supraveghere a sistemului financiar global. Tranzacțiile financiare se caracterizează printr-o creștere substanțială a volumului și printr-o discrepanță remarcabilă între volumul tranzacțiilor financiare și necesitățile economiei reale. Investițiile pe termen scurt, care sunt predominante, au condus la o volatilitate și o asumare excesivă a riscurilor.

Sectorul financiar și-a îndreptat atenția în favoarea unor profituri pe termen scurt, prin operațiuni care au afectat grav prețurile pieței și astfel, tranzacțiile speculative pe termen scurt au fost în centrul crizei financiare, subliniind legătura clară dintre supravegherea financiară ineficientă și sustenabilitatea finanțelor publice.

Având în vedere că problemele cauzate de acest comportament al piețelor au avut un impact major asupra finanțelor publice și, în plus, se estimează că evaziunea și frauda fiscală sunt de aproximativ 250 miliarde de euro pe an la nivelul UE, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri propune pentru crearea unor instrumente menite să reducă speculațiile, să garanteze o distribuire echitabilă a poverii între actorii financiari principali și să creeze resurse suplimentare noi pentru a răspunde provocărilor majore?

Răspuns dat de dl Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(5 februarie 2013)

Comisia ar dori să atragă atenția distinsului membru asupra propunerii sale de introducere a unui sistem comun al taxei pe tranzacțiile financiare (TTF) în UE [COM(2011) 594]. Deși Consiliul nu a reușit să ajungă la un acord privind un astfel de sistem comun pentru toate cele 27 de state membre, Comisia a propus o decizie de autorizare a unei cooperări consolidate în acest domeniu [COM(2012) 631]. După aprobarea Parlamentului European la 12 decembrie 2012, în prezent, Consiliul a adoptat decizia de autorizare propusă. În momentul de față, Comisia este cea care trebuie să prezinte o propunere privind fondul unei astfel de cooperări. Legislația în acest domeniu ar completa reformele pertinente în materie de reglementare și, în afară de beneficiile sale pentru piața internă, răspunde chiar preocupărilor exprimate de distinsul membru.

În plus, Comisia va publica în săptămânile următoare o carte verde cu privire la finanțarea pe termen lung a economiei europene, în care se vor examina stimulentele și constrângerile la adresa finanțării pe termen lung, precum și idei de acțiuni și posibile noi instrumente/inițiative.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011210/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Innovative financing at European and world level

In recent years, the economic and financial crisis has brought to light major shortcomings with regard to the regulation and monitoring of the international financial system. There is a striking disparity between the volume of financial transactions, which has substantially increased, and the needs of the real economy, short-term investment having become the norm, resulting in financial market volatility and excessive risk taking.

Indeed, a central factor in the financial crisis is the fact that the financial sector has been geared towards short-term speculative transactions for immediate profit, which have seriously affected market prices. This highlights the connection between the problem of inadequate financial oversight and the sustainability of public finances.

Given the major impact of resulting market behaviour on public finances, coupled with the loss of an estimated EUR 250 billion annually to the EU from tax evasion and tax fraud, what measures are being envisaged by the Commission with a view to creating an instrument designed to reduce speculation, ensuring that the principal financial operators each bear a fair share of the burden and generating new additional resources in response to the major challenges arising?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to its proposal for introducing a common system of financial transaction tax (FTT) in the EU [COM(2011)594]. While the Council was unable to agree on such common system for all 27 Member States, the Commission proposed a decision authorising enhanced cooperation in this area [COM(2012)631]. Following the consent of the European Parliament on 12 December 2012, the Council has now adopted the authorisation decision proposed. It is now up to the Commission to make a proposal on the substance of such cooperation. Legislation in this area would complement relevant regulatory reforms and, quite apart notably from its benefits for the internal market, precisely addresses the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member.

In addition, the Commission will publish in the coming weeks a green paper on long-term financing of the European economy where the drivers and constraints to long term financing as well as ideas for action and possible new instruments/initiatives will be examined.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011211/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(7 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Standardizarea vehiculelor electrice

Utilizarea vehiculelor electrice oferă o serie de avantaje majore pentru o mobilitate durabilă, printre care reducerea emisiilor de dioxid de carbon și îmbunătățirea calității aerului, scăderea dependenței de combustibilii fosili importați și eficientă crescută a mașinilor electrice în comparație cu celelalte tehnologii de transport.

Având în vedere că pe plan mondial competitorii UE investesc în cercetarea și dezvoltarea noilor tehnologii cu emisii de carbon scăzute și lansează programe pentru trecerea la transportul rutier ecologic, aș dori să întreb ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru crearea unui cadru adecvat unic la nivelul UE, pentru promovarea tehnologiilor inovative, pentru încurajarea cercetării și pentru dezvoltarea infrastructurii necesare pentru sprijinirea tranziției către o economie eficientă a resurselor și emisiilor reduse de carbon?

De asemenea, aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul planului care vizează înființarea la nivel european a unei rețele de stații de reîncărcare rapidă pentru mașinile electrice și stabilirea unor standarde tehnice și de siguranță comune aplicabile acesteia?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(29 ianuarie 2013)

În comunicarea sa intitulată „O strategie europeană privind vehiculele ecologice și eficiente din punct de vedere energetic ([1])", Comisia a propus peste 40 de acțiuni vizând o gamă largă de domenii de politică precum cercetarea și inovarea în domeniul tehnologiilor ecologice și acțiuni specifice privind standardizarea, infrastructura de încărcare și de realimentare pentru vehiculele electrice. Pentru informații privind situația actuală a strategiei, Comisia îl invită pe domnul deputat să consulte cel mai recent raport pe această temă ([2]).

În plus, Comisia a adoptat Planul de acțiune CARS 2020 pentru o industrie a autovehiculelor competitivă și durabilă în Europa ([3]), care se sprijină pe patru piloni, dintre care unul se concentrează pe investițiile în tehnologii avansate și pe finanțarea inovării. Sunt propuse mai multe acțiuni în cadrul acestui pilon pentru a sprijini dezvoltarea vehiculelor ecologice.

În ceea ce privește infrastructurile de reîncărcare, planul de acțiune CARS 2020 anunță un pachet „Energie nepoluantă pentru transport" pentru a oferi un cadru pentru orientarea investițiilor și a dezvoltării tehnologice în acest domeniu. Propunerea legislativă privind infrastructurile adaptate combustibililor alternativi a fost adoptată la 24 ianuarie 2013 și vizează utilizarea unei infrastructuri minimale de realimentare/reîncărcare și elaborarea de norme comune pentru anumiți combustibili, inclusiv pentru vehiculele electrice. În acest context este vitală găsirea unei soluții satisfăcătoare în ceea ce privește infrastructura interfeței de reîncărcare pentru vehiculele electrice, care să fie pusă în aplicare în întreaga UE.

([1]) COM/2010/0186.
([2]) SEC(2011) 1617.
([3]) COM/2012/0636.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011211/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Standardisation of electric vehicles

The use of electric vehicles has a number of major advantages in terms of sustainable mobility, including reduced carbon dioxide emissions, improved air quality and lesser dependence on imported fossil fuels, not to mention the fact that such vehicles are more efficient than other transport technologies.

Given that the EU's international competitors are investing in research and development for new low-carbon technologies and launching programmes for a move towards ecological road transport, what measures are being envisaged by the Commission for the adoption of appropriate standard EU framework provisions for promotion of the innovative technologies, research and infrastructural development necessary to underpin the transition towards a resource-efficient and low carbon economy?

Can the Commission also say what progress has been made regarding plans to create a fast recharge network for electric vehicles in Europe and the adoption of common technical and safety standards applicable in this respect?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2013)

With its communication on a European strategy on clean and energy efficient vehicles ([1]) the Commission has proposed over 40 actions on a wide range of policy fields such as research and innovation in green technologies and specific actions on standardisation, charging and refuelling infrastructure for electric vehicles. For the state of play of this strategy the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the latest report on this issue ([2]).

Moreover, the Commission adopted the CARS 2020 Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable automotive industry in Europe ([3]), which is articulated around four pillars, one of which focuses on investing in advanced technologies and financing innovation. Several actions are proposed under this pillar to support the development of green vehicles.

As for the recharging infrastructure, the CARS 2020 Action Plan announces a Clean Power for Transport package to provide a framework for guiding investments and technological development in this area. The legislative proposal on alternative fuel infrastructure was adopted on 24 January 2013 and addresses the deployment of a minimum refuelling/recharging infrastructure and common standards for certain fuels, including electric vehicles. In this context a satisfactory solution for the infrastructure side of the recharging interface for electric vehicles to be implemented throughout the EU is vital.

([1]) COM/2010/0186.
([2]) SEC(2011) 1617.
([3]) COM/2012/0636.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011212/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(7 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Statisticile europene privind turismul

În momentul actual se vorbește tot mai mult despre creșterea competitivității globale a UE, iar turismul reprezintă una dintre cele mai importante activități socio-economice, generând aproximativ 5% din PIB-ul Uniunii Europene.

Astfel, trebuie să depunem toate eforturile pentru a rămâne prima destinație turistică din lume, iar pentru aceasta este necesar să valorificăm la maximum toate posibilitățile de finanțare posibile. În acest sens, dezvoltarea și mobilizarea instrumentelor și programelor de susținere comunitară special croite pentru dezvoltarea turismului european capătă o importantă deosebită pentru atingerea obiectivelor Strategiei Europa 2020.

Pentru dezvoltarea unui turism durabil, responsabil și de calitate, o altă necesitate stringentă o reprezintă actualizarea și optimizarea cadrului juridic referitor la statisticile europene din acest domeniu. În acest sens, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce planuri are pentru a realiza o mai bună calitate a raportării statistice, bazate pe date comparative și fiabile, pentru a dezvolta o bază solidă în procesul decizional de elaborare a politicilor și instrumentelor financiare comunitare.

Răspuns dat de dl Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(31 ianuarie 2013)

Comisia îi mulțumește Distinsului Membru al Parlamentului European pentru recunoașterea importanței unor statistici de mare calitate pentru asigurarea unui proces eficient de elaborare a politicilor.

În ultimul deceniu, Sistemul Statistic European și-a asumat responsabilitatea de a actualiza și de a ameliora cadrul juridic existent la acea dată pentru statisticile în domeniul turismului, și anume Directiva 95/57/CE. Ca urmare a acestui proces, în martie 2010, Comisia a prezentat legiuitorului o propunere legislativă în acest sens. În iulie 2011, Parlamentul European și Consiliul au adoptat Regulamentul (UE) 692/2011 privind statisticile europene referitoare la turism. Acest nou cadru juridic are un dublu obiectiv: creșterea atât a relevanței pentru utilizatori, cât și a calității datelor (comparabilitate, exhaustivitate și actualitate). Prin urmare, principalele schimbări includ:

1. noi date referitoare la ocuparea camerelor, la vizitele de o zi și la motivele neparticipării la turism;

2. noi clasificări pentru a face distincție între zonele costiere și cele necostiere și o mai bună respectare a clasificărilor existente pentru ca statisticile referitoare la turism să devină mai comparabile cu statisticile economice conexe;

3. noi termene de transmitere pentru autoritățile statistice naționale (de exemplu, cifrele privind cazarea lunară sunt acum disponibile după 8 săptămâni).

Anul 2012 fiind primul an de referință pentru noul regulament, Comisia (Eurostat) și statele membre implementează în prezent noile cerințe.

Pe lângă statisticile oficiale publicate de Eurostat, Comisia are în lucru și alte inițiative, al căror scop este consolidarea bazei de cunoștințe socioeconomice pentru sectorul turismului, în conformitate cu Comunicarea 352(COM)2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011212/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: European tourism statistics

One of the main topics of current discussion is the need to boost the EU's global competitiveness, and tourism is a key socioeconomic activity, generating around 5% of the European Union's GDP.

We must therefore do our utmost to remain the number one tourist destination in the world. To achieve this, we need to make maximum use of every possible funding option and develop and mobilise instruments and programmes providing Community support which are specially tailored to the development of tourism in Europe, in keeping with objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

To ensure the development of a sustainable, responsible, high-quality tourism sector, it is vital to update and improve the legal framework for European statistics in this area. How does the Commission plan to improve the quality of statistical reporting, based on reliable, comparative data, in order to provide a solid foundation for decisions on Community financial policies and instruments?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member of the EP for acknowledging the importance of high quality statistics in ensuring efficient policy making.

Over the past decade, the European Statistical System took the responsibility to update and improve the then existing legal framework for tourism statistics, Directive 95/57. As a result of this process, the Commission submitted a legislative proposal to the legislator in March 2010. In July 2011, the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation 692/2011 concerning European statistics on tourism. The goal of this new legal framework is twofold: increased user relevance and increased data quality (comparability, completeness and timeliness). Consequently, the main changes include:

1. new data on bedroom occupancy, on same-day visits and on reasons for not taking part in tourism,

2. new classifications to distinguish coastal from non-coastal areas and better adherence to existing classifications in order to make tourism statistics more comparable with related business statistics,

3. new transmission deadlines for the national statistical authorities (e.g. monthly accommodation figures are now available after 8 weeks).

The first reference year for the new Regulation being 2012, the Commission (Eurostat) and the Member States are currently implementing the new requirements.

Besides the official statistics published by Eurostat, the Commission is working on other initiatives aiming at consolidating the socioeconomic knowledge base for the tourism sector as set out in Communication 352(COM)2010.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-011213/12
a Bizottság számára
Herczog Edit (S&D)
(2012. december 7.)

Tárgy: A magyarországi szénipari szerkezetátalakítási támogatás két éve húzódó jóváhagyása

Az elmúlt két évben, a Tanács 1407/2002/EK rendelete hatályának kibővítése óta, a magyar hatóságok és a Bizottság számos egyeztetést folytattak a szénipari szerkezetátalakítási támogatási kérelem vonatkozásában, amelybe a Vértesi Erőmű Zrt-t és az MVM Zrt-t is folyamatosan bevonták, ám a végleges döntés és a támogatások jóváhagyása még nem történt meg. A Bizottság és a magyar hatóságok vitája a bányabevétel-számítási módszertan átalakításáról túlságosan elhúzódott.

Mivel a márkushegyi bánya Magyarország egyetlen mélyművelésű szénbányája, a tét nagy. A szénipari szerkezetátalakítással kapcsolatos rendkívüli költségek fedezésére fordítható több mint 40 milliárd forintnyi támogatás jóváhagyásáról van szó.

Lát-e arra lehetőséget a Bizottság, hogy gyorsított eljárással jóváhagyja ezen összegek felhasználását, amennyiben a környezetvédelmi követelmények, a számítási módszertan és a költségelemek tisztázása tekintetében a magyar hatóságok is eredményeket mutatnak fel? Megismerhetőek-e azok az okok, amelyek a folyamat elhúzódásához vezettek? Biztosak lehetünk-e abban, hogy a magyar kormány mindent megtett a szénipari szerkezetátalakítási támogatás jóváhagyásával kapcsolatban?

Joaquín Almunia válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. január 31.)

2012. november 20-án a bejelentést megelőző kapcsolatfelvételt követően, amely 2011. november 4-én kezdődött, a magyar hatóságok bejelentették, hogy működési termelési támogatást („üzembezárási támogatás") és „rendkívüli költségek" (környezeti, társadalmi) fedezésére nyújtott támogatást is adnak, a rendkívüli költségek a Vértes Erőmű Zrt. márkushegyi bányájának 2014 végén lezáruló bezárásából erednek.

A bejelentés a versenyképtelen szénbányák bezárását elősegítő állami támogatásokról szóló 2010/787/EU tanácsi határozaton alapul (a továbbiakban: a tanácsi határozat ([1])), amely értelmében a működési támogatás összege nem haladhatja meg a termelési költségek és a bányának a bejelentésben szereplő, szénévenkénti ([2]) bevétele közötti különbséget.

A Bizottság felismeri a magyarországi szénipar strukturális reformjának jelentőségét.

A Bizottságnak ugyanakkor biztosítania kell, hogy a bejelentett támogatás eleget tesz a tanácsi határozatban megállapított feltételeknek. Különösen annak a ténynek köszönhetően, hogy a bányát együtt működtetik egy erőművel, a Bizottság további információkat kért a magyar hatóságoktól annak biztosítása érdekében, hogy csak a bányából származó bevételeket (az erőműből származó bevétel nélkül) veszik figyelembe a támogatás összegének kiszámításakor.

A magyar hatóságok szorosan együttműködnek a Bizottsággal az előzetes értesítés óta, és kellő időben hasznos és releváns pontosításokat, valamint további információkat biztosítanak.

2012. január 23-án ([3]) a Bizottság elfogadott egy határozatot, amely értelmében nem emel kifogást a jelzett támogatással szemben, és ez alapján a magyar hatóságok ki tudják fizetni a támogatást.

([1]) HL L 336., 2010.12.21., 24. o.
([2]) A szénév naptári évet vagy a szénipari szerződésekben alkalmazott egyéb 12 hónapos referenciaidőszakot jelent (lásd a 2010/787/EU tanácsi határozatot).
([3]) IP/13/35 sajtóközlemény.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011213/12
to the Commission
Edit Herczog (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Two-year wait for approval for funding for structural reform of the Hungarian coal industry

In the past two years — since the scope of Council Regulation 1407/2002/EC was broadened — the Hungarian authorities and the Commission have held discussions, in which the Vértesi Erőmű Zrt and MVM Zrt companies have been constantly involved, on the issue of the structural reform of the coal industry on a number of occasions, yet there has not yet been a final decision or approval of funding. The discussion on reforming the calculating methodology for mining revenue has gone on for too long.

Since the Márkushegy mine is Hungary's only underground coal mine, the stakes are high. Funding to the tune of over HUF 40 billion needs to be approved in order to cover the exceptional cost of structural reform of the coal industry.

Is there a chance, in the Commission's view, of this amount being approved in an accelerated procedure if the Hungarian authorities can deliver results in terms of the environmental requirements, calculation methodology and clarification of cost components? Is it possible to identify the reasons why the procedure has been prolonged? Can we be certain that the Hungarian government has done all in its power to ensure that approval is obtained for funding for structural reform of the coal industry?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

On 20 November 2012, following pre-notification contacts which had taken place since 4 November 2011, the Hungarian authorities notified aid covering both operating production aid ('closure aid') and aid for 'exceptional costs' (environment, social) arising from the closure of the Márkushegy Mine of Vértes Plant Ltd by the end of 2014.

The notification is based on Council Decision 2010/787/EU on state aid to facilitate the closure of uncompetitive coal mines ('the Council decision') ([1]), according to which the operating aid must not exceed the difference between the production costs and the revenues of the mine to be paid each coal year ([2]) covered in the notification.

The Commission understands the importance of the structural reform of the coal industry in Hungary.

However, the Commission must ensure that the notified aid fulfills the conditions set out in the Council decision. In particular, due to the fact that the mine is operated together with a power plant, the Commission has requested additional information from the Hungarian authorities in order to ensure that only the revenues of the mine (excluding the revenues of the power plant) are taken into account for the calculation of the aid.

The Hungarian authorities have closely cooperated with the Commission since the pre-notification took place and have provided useful and pertinent clarification and additional information in due time.

On 23 January 2012 ([3]), the Commission has adopted a decision not to raise objections to the notified aid, on the basis of which the Hungarian authorities will be able to pay out the aid.

([1]) OJ L 336, 21.12.2010, p. 24.
([2]) Coal year means calendar year or another 12-month period used as a reference for contracts in the coal industry (see Council Decision 2010/787/EU).
([3]) Press release IP/13/35.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011214/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 7 d.)

Tema: Dujų jungties tarp Lenkijos ir Lietuvos įrengimas

Europos Komisijos patvirtintu Baltijos šalių energijos rinkos jungčių planu siekiama sukurti reikalingą dujų ir elektros infrastruktūrą, kuri padėtų išspręsti trijų Baltijos valstybių ir Suomijos atskyrimo ir jų priklausomumo nuo vieno tiekėjo klausimą ir įvairinti tiekimo šaltinius Baltijos jūros regione. Komisija yra įsipareigojusi užtikrinti, jog po 2015 m. ES neliktų energetiškai izoliuotų valstybių narių ir regionų.

Lietuvos energetiniam nepriklausomumui didinti numatyti svarbūs elektros jungčių projektai su Lenkija ir Švedija, taip pat numatyta regioninio suskystintų dujų terminalo statyba. Tačiau vienas svarbiausių Lietuvos energetinės izoliacijos klausimų lieka dujų tiekimas, o Lietuva išlieka visiškai priklausoma nuo monopolinio išorės dujų tiekėjo. Lenkija šių metų pabaigoje pasirašė susitarimą su Vokietija dėl reversinio dujų tiekimo iš Vokietijos teritorijos į Lenkijos teritoriją dujotiekiu Jamalas-Europa. Šis susitarimas suteiks galimybę Lenkijai importuoti pigesnes dujas, kurias Rusija eksportuoja į Vokietijos teritoriją dujotekiu „Nordstream“, kuris buvo pastatytas apeinant energetiškai nuo išorės tiekėjų priklausančias ES valstybes nares. Todėl Lenkija nėra suinteresuota dujotiekio tarp Lietuvos ir Lenkijos tiesimu, nes tai sumažintų jos turimą konkurencinį pranašumą.

Nors minėtame Baltijos šalių energijos rinkos jungčių plane numatoma galimybė nutiesti dujotiekį tarp Lietuvos ir Lenkijos (tai suteiktų Lietuvai reikalingą infrastruktūrą importuoti dujas iš kitų šaltinių ir sumažintų jos priklausomybę nuo vienintelio išorės tiekėjo), tačiau, atsižvelgiant į šių valstybių narių didelę energetinę priklausomybę nuo monopolinio išorės tiekėjo, dujotiekio statybos yra vilkinamos dėl politinių priežasčių.

Ar Komisija, atsižvelgdama į tai, jog be šios dujų jungties bus neįmanoma sumažinti ne tik Lietuvos ir viso Baltijos regiono, bet ir visos ES energetinės priklausomybės ir sukurti bendros vidaus energijos rinkos, nemano, kad šios jungties tiesimo klausimas neturi būti paliktas kiekvienos iš šių valstybių narių politinei valiai?

Tik ES lygmeniu koordinuojant ir prižiūrint numatytų energetikos srities projektų įgyvendinimą gali būti sukurta bendroji energijos rinka ir užtikrintas tiekimo saugumas.

Ar, turint minty šios dujų jungties svarbą visos ES energetinio saugumo didinimui, Komisija nemano, kad būtent ji turi imtis veiksmų ir užtikrinti, kad šis projektas būtų kuo skubiau įgyvendintas?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 1 d.)

Komisija sutinka, kad svarbu neatidėliojant nutraukti Baltijos valstybių izoliaciją ir sudaryti sąlygas sukurti dujų vidaus rinką. Baltijos energijos rinkos jungčių plano (BEMIP) ([1]) įgyvendinimas jau atnešė apčiuopiamų rezultatų, nes buvo paspartintas kai kurių svarbių infrastruktūros projektų įgyvendinimas. Tikimasi, kad BEMIP aukšto lygio darbo grupė netrukus susitars dėl regioninio suskystintų dujų terminalo ir papildomų dujotiekių. Jungtis tarp Lenkijos ir Lietuvos taip pat yra tarp svarstomų projektų.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/bemip_en.htm .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011214/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Installation of a gas interconnection between Poland and Lithuania

The Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan approved by the European Commission is aimed at establishing the necessary gas and electricity infrastructure to help address the issue of the separation of the three Baltic States and Finland and their dependence on one supplier, and also at varying sources of supply in the Baltic Sea region. The Commission is committed to ensuring that by 2015 no Member States and regions in the EU are isolated in terms of energy.

Important electricity interconnection projects with Poland and Sweden are being envisaged to increase Lithuania's energy independence, as is the construction of a regional liquefied gas terminal. However, the supply of gas remains one of the most important issues of Lithuania's energy isolation, with Lithuania remaining completely dependent on an external monopoly supplier of gas. At the end of this year, Poland signed an agreement with Germany on the reverse flow of gas from Germany to Poland through the Yamal-Europe gas pipeline. This agreement will enable Poland to import cheaper gas, which Russia exports to Germany via the Nordstream gas pipeline (which was built bypassing EU Member States that are dependent on external suppliers). The construction of a gas pipeline between Lithuania and Poland is therefore not in Poland's interest because it would reduce its existing competitive advantage.

Although the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan mentioned provides for the opportunity to build a gas pipeline between Lithuania and Poland (this would give Lithuania the required infrastructure to import gas from other sources and would reduce its dependence on a single external supplier), given these Member States' great energy dependence on an external monopoly suppler, the construction of the gas pipeline is being delayed on political grounds.

Given the fact that without this gas interconnection it will be impossible to reduce the energy dependence of not just Lithuania and the whole of the Baltic region, but of the entire EU — and also be impossible to establish a single internal energy market — does the Commission not feel that the issue of the building of this interconnection should not be left to the political will of each of these Member States?

Only by coordinating and monitoring the implementation of energy projects at the EU level can we establish a single energy market and guarantee energy security.

Bearing in mind the importance of this gas interconnection for increasing the energy security of the entire EU, does the Commission not feel that it must take action and ensure that this project is implemented as a matter of urgency?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Commission agrees on the importance and urgency of ending the isolation of the Baltic States and of allowing for a functioning internal gas market. The Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP ([1])) has already delivered tangible results by speeding up the implementation of a number of important infrastructure projects. The BEMIP high level group is expected to agree shortly on the location of the regional LNG terminal and complementary gas pipelines. The interconnection between Poland and Lithuania is also among the projects being considered.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/bemip_en.htm .

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011215/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 7 d.)

Tema: Planuojamas elektros energijos importas iš Kaliningrado srityje statomos Baltijos atominės elektrinės

Komisija yra pateikusi nemažai pasiūlymų, kaip iki 2020 m. sukurti veiksmingą, nepriklausomą ir saugią vidaus energijos rinką. Esminis vidaus energetikos rinkos tikslas – sumažinti energetinę priklausomybę nuo trečiųjų šalių monopolinių energijos tiekėjų. Tačiau ES vidaus energetikos rinkos vystymasis priklausys ir nuo ES kaimyninių šalių energetikos politikos.

Rusija Kaliningrado srityje stato Baltijos atominę elektrinę, o Rusijos bendrovė „Inter RAO JES“ jau paskelbė planus nuo 2017 m. pradėti tiekti elektros energiją į Lenkiją ir kitas Baltijos valstybes. Kad būtų užtikrintas Rusijoje pagamintos elektros energijos tiekimas į Europą iš Lietuvos ir (ar) Lenkijos, turi būti nutiestos galingos elektros tiekimo linijos. Lietuva, būdama energetiškai izoliuota nuo likusios Europos dalies ir visiškai priklausoma nuo Rusijos tiekiamų dujų, iki šiol neplanavo tiesti galingų elektros tiltų į Kaliningradą ir taip dar labiau didinti energetinės priklausomybės nuo Rusijos. Tačiau, Lietuvai nesutikus tiesti elektros energijos tiltų, Rusija gali apeiti Lietuvą nutiesdama tiesiogines jungtis su Lenkija.

Ar Komisija nemano, jog susiklosčiusi situacija ir Rusijos planai pasinaudoti Lietuva ir Lenkija kaip tranzito šalimis tiekiant į ES elektros energiją gali iškreipti ES vidaus energijos rinką ir padidinti ES energetinę priklausomybę nuo esamo išorės tiekėjo?

Gerbiamasis Komisijos nary, praėjusią savaitę ITRE komitete pristatydamas Komisijos komunikatą dėl ES energijos vidaus rinkos Jūs paminėjote, kad kuriant bendrąją energetikos rinką labai svarbu teisingai išspręsti energetinių išteklių importo į ES klausimą – tai nuimtų didžiulę politinę įtampą, kurią jaučia labiausiai energetiškai izoliuotos ES valstybės narės ir regionai. ES skiria finansavimą regioninių suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalų, kurie prisideda prie energetinės priklausomybės mažinimo visoje ES, statyboms.

Ar nemanote, kad Komisija turi vadovautis šiuo požiūriu ir dar kartą išnagrinėti ir įvertinti Baltijos šalių energetinę situaciją politiniu požiūriu ir taip prisidėti prie Lietuvoje planuojamos statyti branduolinės jėgainės finansavimo? Tai leistų užtikrinti šio svarbaus objekto komercinį patrauklumą investuotojams ir jo atsiperkamumą ir užtikrintų Baltijos regiono, o kartu ir visos ES energetinės priklausomybės sumažininimą nuo išorės energijos tiekėjo.

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 5 d.)

1. 2011 m. ES iš Rusijos importavo maždaug 15 teravatvalandžių (TWh) elektros energijos. Tais pačiais metais Europos Sąjungoje iš viso pagaminta 3 224,5 TWh elektros energijos, taigi importas iš Rusijos sudaro 0,5 % ES pagaminamos elektros energijos. Todėl importą iš Rusijos galima padidinti be apčiuopiamo poveikio ES priklausomybei nuo išorės energijos tiekėjų. Tokia prekyba turi atitikti taikomas PPO ir ES taisykles, visų pirma susijusias su energijos vidaus rinka.

2. Atsižvelgdama į Baltijos energijos rinkos jungčių planą (BEMIP) ir kitus veiksmus, Komisija atidžiai vertina Baltijos šalių energetinę situaciją. Dujų ir elektros energijos tinklų plėtrai Baltijos regione ES jau skyrė daugiau nei 260 mln. EUR. Šiuo metu svarstomi kiti regiono projektai, kurie būtų naudingi ir Lietuvai, kaip antai regioninio suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalo finansavimas ES lėšomis. O naujų branduolinių elektrinių statybai Baltijos šalyse ES finansavimas neskiriamas, potencialiai galėtų būti teikiamos nebent ribotos Euratomo ir (arba) EIB paskolos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011215/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Planned imports of electricity from the Baltic Nuclear Power Plant in the Kaliningrad region

The Commission has presented numerous proposals on how to establish an effective, independent and secure internal energy market by 2020. The basic aim of the internal energy market is to reduce energy dependence on monopoly suppliers of energy in third countries. However, the development of the EU's internal energy market will also depend on the energy policies of the EU's neighbouring countries.

Russia is building the Baltic Nuclear Power Plant in the Kaliningrad region and the Russian company Inter RAO UES has already announced plans to begin supplying Poland and the other Baltic States with electricity from 2017. A powerful electricity supply line needs to be built in order to ensure the supply of electricity produced in Russia to Europe via Lithuania and/or Poland. As it is isolated from the rest of Europe in terms of energy and completely dependent on gas supplied by Russia, until now Lithuania did not have plans to build powerful electricity bridges to Kaliningrad, thereby increasing energy dependence on Russia even more. However, if Lithuania does not agree to build electricity bridges, Russia may bypass Lithuania by building direct interconnections with Poland.

Does the Commission believe that the situation and Russia's plans to use Lithuania and Poland as transit countries when supplying the EU with electricity may distort the EU's internal energy market and increase the EU's energy dependence on its existing external supplier?

Commissioner, when you presented the Commission Communication on the EU's internal energy market in the ITRE Committee last week you mentioned that when establishing a single energy market it is very important to find an equitable solution to the issue of importing energy resources to the EU — this would remove huge political tension felt by the EU Member States and regions that are most isolated in terms of energy. The EU is providing funding for the construction of regional liquefied natural gas terminals, which would contribute to reducing energy dependence throughout the EU.

Do you believe that the Commission should follow this approach and once again examine and assess the energy situation of the Baltic countries from a political point of view and thus contribute to the funding of the nuclear power plant that is due to be constructed in Lithuania? This would help guarantee the commercial attractiveness of this important object for investors and its recoverability, and would also ensure a reduction in the energy dependence of the Baltic region as well as the whole of the EU on an external energy supplier.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

1. In 2011 imports of electricity from Russia into the EU amounted to around 15 terawatt hours (TWh) whereas the total generation of electricity in the EU in 2011 reached 3224.5 TWh, i.e. Russian imports represent 0.5% of electricity generation in the EU. Imports from Russia could thus be increased further without having tangible impact upon the dependency of the EU on external energy suppliers. Such trade needs to comply with the applicable WTO and EU rules, in particular those on the Internal Energy Market.

2. Within the context of the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP) and beyond, the Commission is carefully assessing the energy situation of the Baltic countries. The EU has already contributed more than EUR 260 million to the development of gas and electricity grids in the Baltic region. Further projects in the region, also benefitting Lithuania, such as financing a regional LNG terminal with EU Funds, are currently under discussion. The construction of new nuclear power plants in the Baltics are however not subject to EU funding and only limited Euratom/EIB loans would potentially be available.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011216/12
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Lavori in corso nel parco naturale dei monti Simbruini

Nel 2004 fu aperto un cantiere nel parco naturale dei monti Simbruini (zona di protezione speciale, ZPS, cod. IT6050008) per costruire una pista per lo sci di fondo agonistico larga sei metri e lunga oltre 15 chilometri. Le denunce di irregolarità e danni ambientali da parte dei comitati cittadini e delle associazioni ambientali portarono al sequestro dei lavori.

Le denunce riguardavano:

— l'assenza della valutazione di incidenza ambientale, che deve essere effettuata per garantire la tutela dei più rilevanti biotopi europei, in conformità con le direttive 92/43/CEE e 74/409/CEE (poi sostituita con la direttiva 147/2009/CE);

— il mancato visto della Soprintendenza regionale ai Beni ambientali al nullaosta ai lavori dato dall'Ente parco dei monti Simbruini;

— il danno ambientale (interramento di doline e taglio di faggi) non in conformità con il piano di assetto del parco.

Il termine di sequestro dell'area era di 5 anni. Ora che tale termine è scaduto, i lavori sono ripresi.

Considerato che finora non risulta evidente che le irregolarità sopra citate rilevate nel 2004 siano state risolte e che secondo la direttiva 92/43/CEE, gli interventi o le opere da realizzare che ricadono all'interno dei confini dell'area protetta e della ZPS devono essere sottoposti a preventiva valutazione d'incidenza, può la Commissione far sapere se può accertarsi che i lavori in corso nel parco naturale dei monti Simbruini siano in conformità con le norme europee per la tutela dell'ambiente nelle zone protette?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a prendere visione della risposta data all'interrogazione scritta E-011582/2012 ([1]) sottoposta dall'onorevole Raul Romeva I Rueda sul medesimo argomento.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011216/12
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Work under way in the Monti Simbruini Nature Park

In 2004 a building site was opened in the Monti Simbruini Nature Park (Special Protection Area, SPA, code IT6050008) to build a track for cross-country ski racing, measuring six metres wide and over 15 kilometres long. However, complaints from committees of citizens and environmental groups regarding irregularities and environmental damage led to the seizure of the building site.

The complaints concerned:

— the absence of an environmental impact assessment, which has to be carried out to ensure that the most important biotopes in Europe are protected, in accordance with Directives 92/43/EEC and 74/409/EEC (superseded by Directive 147/2009/EC);

— the failure of the regional environmental heritage board to stamp the authorisation for the work given by the Monti Simbruini park authority;

— environmental damage (burial of sinkholes and cutting down of beech trees), which did not comply with the park's planning programme.

The site was seized for five years. Now that this term has elapsed, the work has resumed.

Given that, so far, it is not clear whether the abovementioned irregularities, reported in 2004, have been resolved and given that, under Directive 92/43/EEC, any building work that falls within the boundaries of an SPA must be subject to prior impact assessment, can the Commission check that the work being done in the Monti Simbruini nature park is in compliance with EU legislation on environmental protection in protected areas?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-011582/2012 ([1]) by Raul Romeva I Rueda on the same issue.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011217/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(7 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Stanowisko ONZ w sprawie „okien życia"

Oenzetowski Komitet Praw Dziecka forsuje objęcie krajów UE zakazem działalności tzw. okien życia – prowadzonych przez instytucje kościelne i charytatywne placówek ratujących życie niechcianych noworodków. Są to miejsca, w których matka może anonimowo i bez konsekwencji pozostawić swoje nowo narodzone dziecko, jeżeli – z różnych przyczyn – nie jest w stanie wziąć na siebie ciężaru opieki i wychowania. Okna życia działają w wielu krajach Europy, a poza Unią Europejską m.in. w Rosji i Szwajcarii. W Polsce uratowano dzięki nim już kilkadziesiąt noworodków i niemowląt.

Wyrażając stanowisko zdecydowanie sprzeczne z inicjatywą Komitetu Praw Dziecka ONZ, pragnę zwrócić się do Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel Unii do spraw polityki zagranicznej i bezpieczeństwa Catherine Ashton z prośbą o interwencję dyplomatyczną w tej budzącej kontrowersje i problematycznej kwestii. Liczę, że, mając na względzie przede wszystkim interesy obywateli państw członkowskich, instytucje europejskie podejmą działania zmierzające do przeciwstawienia się i zablokowania ww. inicjatywy Narodów Zjednoczonych w Europie.

W oparciu o powyższe proszę o informacje dotyczące stanowiska i aktywności ESDZ w zakresie omawianego problemu.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(12 marca 2013 r.)

Kwestia funkcjonowania okien życia, w których rodzice mogą zostawić niechcianego noworodka, pozostaje w gestii państw członkowskich i Komisja nie przewiduje stanowienia prawa w tej dziedzinie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011217/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Opinion of the UN on 'windows of life'

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is forcing EU Member States to submit to a ban on the use of so-called 'windows of life', which are facilities run by church and charity organisations in order to save the lives of unwanted newborns. They are places where mothers may, anonymously and without fear of consequences, leave their newborn child in the event that, for whatever reason, they are unable to bear the burden of caring for and raising a child. Windows of life exist in many Member States, as well as outside the EU in countries such as Russia and Switzerland. In Poland, they have saved the lives of several dozen newborns and babies.

I should like to make it clear that I hold a completely different position to that set out in the initiative of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and I ask the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, to make diplomatic representations with regard to this controversial and difficult issue. I trust that the European institutions, being guided primarily by the interests of the Member States' citizens, will take steps to oppose and block the aforementioned UN initiative in Europe.

In this connection, I should be grateful if information could be provided concerning the EEAS's position and the steps that it is taking with regard to this matter.

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

The question of the use of baby boxes or baby hatches, where parents can leave an unwanted baby, is a matter of individual Member State competence and Commission has no plans to legislate in this area.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011218/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Esportazzjoni ta' tagħmir għall-monitoraġġ tat-telekomunikazzjonijiet

F'Jannar 2012, l-UE adottat ir-Regolament Nru 36/2012 li pprojbixxa "l-esportazzjoni ta' tagħmir għall-monitoraġġ tat-telekomunikazzjonijiet" lis-Sirja. Dan l-aħħar, però, tkattru l-appelli biex jiżdiedu l-projbizzjonijiet fuq l-esportazzjoni tat-teknoloġija tal-informazzjoni lir-reġimi awtoritarji li jiċċensuraw l-informazzjoni u jwettqu sorveljanza tal-massa.

Sa liema punt kellu effett dan ir-Regolament reċenti kontra s-Sirja, u bisħsiebha l-Kummissjoni tittratta t-tħassib rigward il-Bjelorussja f'mod analogu?

Tweġiba mogħtija mingħand ir-Rappreżentant Għoli/Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Frar 2013)

Il-projbizzjoni ta' bejgħ, forniment, trasferiment jew esportazzjoni ta' tagħmir jew softwer primarjament użati fil-monitoraġġ jew l-interċettazzjoni ta' komunikazzjonijiet bl-internet u dawk telefoniċi hija parti mill-miżuri restrittivi tal-UE kontra s-Sirja fil-kuntest tat-tħassib kbir tal-UE dwar ir-ripressjoni vjolenti kontinwa mir-reġim Sirjan. Għal dan il-għan ir-Regolament tal-Kunsill Nru 36/2012 tat-18 ta' Jannar 2012 jistabbilixxi sistema ta' awtorizzazzjoni fejn l-awtoritajiet kompetenti tal-Istati Membri ma jagħtu l-ebda awtorizzazzjoni jekk huma jkollhom raġunijiet raġonevoli biex jiddeterminaw li t-tagħmir, it-teknoloġija jew is-softwer identifikati fl-Anness V tar-Regolament imsemmi jkunu użati għall-monitoraġġ jew l-interċettazzjoni komunikazzjonijiet bl-internet u dawk telefoniċi fis-Sirja mir-reġim Sirjan jew għan-nom tiegħu.

Peress illi l-projbizzjoni hija direttament immirata biex taffettwa l-mezzi tar-reġim Sirjan biex iwettaq din ir-ripressjoni, l-effettività tiegħu trid tkun ivvalutata f'dak il-kuntest. L-intenzjoni primarja ta' din il-miżura mhijiex li tindirizza kwistjonijiet aktar ġenerali ta' ċensura, kif jista' jkun li qed iseħħ f'pajjiżi oħra.

L-adozzjoni ta' Deċiżjoni tal-Kunsill tal-PESK li tintroduċi miżuri simili fil-konfront tal-Belarus tkun teħtieġ li tkun deċiża b'mod unanimu mill-Istati Membri u r-Regolament tal-UE li jippromulgaha jkun jeħtieġ maġġoranza kwalifikata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011218/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Export of telecommunications monitoring equipment

In January 2012, the EU passed Regulation No 36/2012, which prohibited 'the export of telecommunications monitoring equipment' to Syria. Recently, however, there have been more calls to increase bans on exporting information technology to authoritarian regimes that censor information and conduct mass surveillance.

To what extent has the most recent regulation against Syria been effective, and does the Commission intend to address concerns regarding Belarus in a similar manner?

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

The prohibition of sale, supply, transfer or export of equipment or software primarily used in the monitoring or interception of the Internet and telephone communications is part of the EU's restrictive measures against Syria in the context of the EU's great concerns over the ongoing violent repression by the Syrian regime. To this end the Council Regulation No 36/2012 of 18 January 2012 establishes an authorisation regime whereby the competent authorities of Member States shall not grant any authorisation if they have reasonable grounds to determine that the equipment, technology or software identified in Annex V of the said Regulation would be used for monitoring or interception by the Syrian regime or on its behalf, of the Internet or telephone communications in Syria.

Given that the prohibition is directly targeted at affecting the means of the Syrian regime to conduct this repression, its effectiveness must be assessed in that context. The primary intention of this measure is not to address more general issues of censorship, as may be taking place in other countries.

The adoption of a Council CFSP Decision introducing similar measures in relation to Belarus would need to be decided at unanimity by the Member States and the enacting EU Regulation by qualified majority.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011219/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Nefqa għall-assistenza sanitarja

F'din l-aħħar sena, in-nefqa għas-saħħa fl-Unjoni Ewropea għall-ewwel darba f'40 sena naqset. B'aktar minn nofs iċ-ċittadini Ewropej f'piż żejjed jew bi problemi ta' obeżità, bil-għan li l-esiġenzi mediċi taċ-ċittadini jiġu sodisfatti, kien hemm tensjoni addizzjonali fuq il-baġits għall-assistenza sanitarja li kulma jmur qegħdin jitnaqqsu. Attwalment 3 % biss tal-baġits għas-saħħa huwa allokat għall-programmi ta' prevenzjoni tal-obeżità u għaldaqstant il-kost reali ta' din is-sitwazzjoni huwa ġġenerat mit-trattament tagħha.

Uħud affermaw li jeħtieġ li jkun hemm żieda fin-nefqa għall-assistenza sanitarja favur il-programmi ta' prevenzjoni tal-obeżità, billi l-prevenzjoni titqies bħala iktar effiċjenti f'termini ta' kostijiet milli t-trattament. Fid-dawl tat-tnaqqis fin-nefqa globali għall-assistenza sanitarja fl-UE, il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha tagħmel enfasi aktar b'saħħitha fuq il-programmi ta' prevenzjoni b'potenzjal li jiġu evitati kostijiet tat-trattament futuri?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Jannar 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni tirrikonoxxi l-importanza tal-programmi preventivi dwar l-obeżità, u għal din ir-raġuni, sa mill-2007, ippromwoviet azzjoni hekk kif stabbilita fl-Istrateġija għall-Ewropa dwar in-Nutrizzjoni, Piż żejjed u problemi tas-saħħa relatati mal-Obeżità ([1]). Dan ifisser li għandha ssir ħidma mal-Istati Membri dwar kwistjonijiet bħar-riformulazzjoni tal-ikel u sabiex il-partijiet interessati jiġu mħeġġa jikkommettu lilhom infushom biex jieħdu azzjonijiet konkreti dwar id-dieta u l-attività fiżika.

L-Istrateġija qiegħda tiġi evalwata u r-riżultati mistennija għall-ewwel nofs tal-2013.

L-UE qiegħda wkoll tiffinanzja proġetti bil-għan li jiġu indirizzati l-piż żejjed u l-obeżità, u jinkludu inizjattivi ta' riċerka li espliċitament iqisu l-implikazzjonijiet ekonomiċi fuq żmien twil tal-programmi ta' prevenzjoni. Għotja ta' flus ġiet mgħoddija għal proġett tal-OECD ([2]) dwar "L-Obeżità u l-Ekonomija tal-Prevenzjoni" li pprovda informazzjoni dwar liema strateġiji ta' prevenzjoni huma l-iktar effettivi u kosteffettivi.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni għandha ppjanat ([3]) li fl-2013 tagħmel sejħa għall-offerti għal "Analiżi tat-Tabella tal-Ħajja (Life-table): valutazzjoni tal-kosteffettività tas-sistema tas-saħħa fl-Istati Membri", hekk kif imbassar fil-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni tat-28 ta' Novembru 2012 dwar il-pjan ta' ħidma tal-Programm tas-Saħħa għall-2013. Din l-analiżi għandha tgħin biex jiġi mtejjeb l-għarfien dwar l-ispejjeż u l-benefiċċji tal-investimenti fil-promozzjoni tas-saħħa u l-prevenzjoni tal-mard, li jinkludu azzjoni meħuda biex tiġi evitata l-obeżità.

([1]) Strateġija għall-Ewropa dwar kwistjonijiet ta' saħħa marbuta man-Nutriment, il-Piż Żejjed u l-Obeżità, COM(2007) 279.
([2]) Ara http://www.oecd.org/els/healthpoliciesanddata/obesityandtheeconomicsofpreventionfitnotfat.htm
([3]) Ara http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/docs/wp2013_mt.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011219/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Healthcare spending

This past year, health spending in the European Union was down for the first time in 40 years. With more than half of European citizens overweight or obese, there has been additional strain on the shrinking healthcare budgets to meet the medical needs of citizens. Currently only 3% of health budgets are allocated to prevention programmes for obesity and therefore the true cost of this condition is generated by its treatment.

Some have said that there needs to be an increase in healthcare spending on prevention programmes for obesity, as prevention is considered to be more cost-effective than treatment. In light of the decrease in overall healthcare spending in the EU, does the Commission intend to put a stronger focus on preventative programmes that have the potential to avert future treatment costs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The Commission recognises the importance of the preventative programmes on obesity, which is why, since 2007, it has promoted action as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues ([1]). This implies to work with the Member States on issues such as food reformulation and to encourage stakeholders to commit themselves to taking concrete actions on diet and physical activity.

The strategy is currently being evaluated and the results are expected in the first half of 2013.

The EU is also financing projects on tackling overweight and obesity, including research initiatives that explicitly take account of the long-term economic implications of prevention programmes. A research grant was attributed to an OECD project ([2]) on 'Obesity and the Economics of Prevention' which has provided information on which prevention strategies are most effective and cost-effective.

Further, the Commission plans ([3]) to launch a call for tender in 2013 for a 'Life-table analysis: health system cost-effectiveness assessment across Member States' as foreseen in the Commission Communication of 28 November 2012 on the 2013 work plan of the Health Programme. This analysis will help improve the understanding of long-term costs and benefits of investments in health promotion and disease prevention, including action to prevent obesity.

([1]) A Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues, COM(2007) 279.
([2]) See http://www.oecd.org/els/healthpoliciesanddata/obesityandtheeconomicsofpreventionfitnotfat.htm
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/docs/wp2013_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011220/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Faċilità Nikkollegaw l-Ewropa

F'Ottubru 2012, ġew diskussi l-pjanijiet għall-baġit tal-Faċilità Nikkollegaw l-Ewropa (CEF) għall-qafas finanzjarju li jmiss 2014-2020. Ġie stmat li EUR 50 biljun se jiġu allokati għat-trasport, l-enerġija u servizzi tal-broadband u diġitali. It-tama hi li dan l-investiment fl-infrastruttura se jagħmel l-Ewropa aktar kompetittiva u se jikkontribwixxi għall-ħolqien tal-impjiegi.

Fid-dawl tal-istaġnar tan-negozjati fis-samit baġitarju riċenti u t-theddid ta' tnaqqis serju fil-baġit, il-Kummissjoni kif qed tistenna li s-CEF se tkun affettwata?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Lewandowskion f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Jannar 2013)

Il-Kunsill Ewropew tat-22-23 ta' Novembru 2012 temm mingħajr ftehim dwar il-Qafas Finanzjarju Multiannwali 2014-2020 u d-diskussjonijiet huma mistennija jerġgħu jibdew fil-bidu tal-2013.

Il-Kummissjoni se tkompli tiddefendi d-daqs u l-bilanċ ġenerali tal-proposti tagħha matul dawn in-negozjati. Iż-żamma ta' livell suffiċjenti ta' finanzjament għal Faċilità Nikkollegaw l-Ewropa tibqa' għan politiku importanti għall-Kummissjoni u toqgħod ħafna fuq l-għajnuna tal-Parlament Ewropew biex jintlaħaq dan l-għan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011220/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Connecting Europe Facility

In October 2012, plans were discussed for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) budget for the upcoming 2014-2020 financial framework. It was estimated that EUR 50 billion would be allocated to transport, energy and broadband and digital services. The hope is that this investment in infrastructure will make Europe more competitive and will contribute towards job creation.

In light of the stalemate at the recent budget summit and threats of serious budget cuts, how does the Commission expect the CEF to be affected?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2013)

The European Council of 22-23 November 2012 ended without an agreement on the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework and the discussions are expected to resume early 2013.

The Commission will continue to defend the overall size and balance of its proposals throughout these negotiations. Maintaining a sufficient level of funding for the Connecting Europe Facility remains an important political objective for the Commission and it very much counts on the help of the European Parliament to achieve this aim.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011221/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Dokument ta' strateġija għall-pajjiż għall-Mali

Fid-19 ta' Novembru 2012, l-Unjoni Ewropea approvat, fil-prinċipju, l-iskjerament ta' missjoni fl-2013 biex tħarreġ lit-truppi tal-Mali fi sforz li titrażżan il-ġlieda għall-poter fit-Tramuntana tal-Mali. L-UE tinkoraġġixxi sostenn reġjonali u internazzjonali għall-Mali, u tirrikonoxxi l-importanza tal-istabilità fir-reġjun.

Id-Dokument ta' strateġija għall-pajjiż għall-Mali 2008-2013 jirrappreżenta element importanti fir-relazzjonijiet Mali-UE. Hekk kif dehlin fl-aħħar sena ta' din l-inizjattiva, x'bidliet bihsiebha tagħmel il-Kummissjoni fil-konfront ta' kwalunkwe strateġija ta' segwitu fid-dawl tal-kunflitt u tal-iżvilupp matul dawn l-aħħar snin?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Piebalgs f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Frar 2013)

L-UE ħadet miżuri prekawzjonarji immedjatament wara l-kolp ta' Stat tat-22 ta' Marzu 2012 u waqqfet temporanjament il-programmi ta' kooperazzjoni għall-iżvilupp tagħha. L-għajnuna umanitarja u l-programmi ta' żvilupp b'appoġġ għall-popolazzjoni u għat-tranżizzjoni demokratika għadhom għaddejjin.

Skont il-Konklużjonijiet tal-Kunsill Affarijiet Barranin (KAB) tas-17 ta' Jannar 2013, l-UE se tkompli l-kooperazzjoni għall-iżvilupp tagħha gradwalment. Il-Kummissjoni se tipprepara d-deċiżjonijiet rilevanti sabiex il-fondi għall-iżvilupp jistgħu jintużaw minnufih hekk kif il-kundizzjonijiet jiġu ssodisfati.

F'dik il-perspettiva, il-portafoll tal-għajnuna tal-UE lejn Mali bħalissa qed jiġi rivedut fil-qafas tar-Reviżjoni ta' tmiem il-perjodu tal-10 Fond Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp (FEŻ) biex jiġu kkunsidrati żviluppi ġodda u li qed jevolvu fuq il-linji politiċi u tas-sigurtà. L-UE hija lesta li tappoġġja lill-Gvern ta' Mali fl-isforzi tiegħu sabiex jimplimenta pjan ta' direzzjoni għal tranżizzjoni politika u ritorn għall-ordni kostituzzjonali.

Id-daqs u l-modalità ta' twassil tal-pakkett tal-iżvilupp se jkollhom kompletament iqisu l-ħtiġijiet ta' Mali fiċ-ċirkostanzi il-ġodda maħluqa mill-kunflitt u b'mod partikolari l-bżonn urġenti li jassistu lill-Gvern tiegħu fiż-żamma tas-servizzi bażiċi għall-popolazzjoni f'kuntest ta' tbatija baġitarja estrema.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011221/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Country Strategy Paper for Mali

On 19 November 2012, the EU approved in principle the deployment of a mission in 2013 to train Malian troops in an effort to quell the intense power struggle in northern Mali. The EU encourages regional and international support for Mali, and it recognises the importance of stability in the region.

The Country Strategy Paper for Mali 2008-2013 is an important element in Mali-EU relations. As we enter the final year of this initiative, what changes does the Commission intend to make to any follow-up strategies in light of the conflict and the developments over the past five years?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The EU took precautionary measures immediately after the coup of 22 March 2012 and has put on hold its development cooperation programmes. Humanitarian assistance, development programmes in support to population and to democratic transition are continuing.

In line with the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) Conclusions of 17 January 2013, the EU will resume gradually its development cooperation. The Commission will prepare the relevant decisions so that the development funds can be rapidly disbursed as soon as the conditions are met.

In that perspective, the EU aid portfolio to Mali is currently being reviewed in the framework of the end of term Review of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) to take into consideration the new and evolving developments on the political and security tracks. The EU is willing to support the Government of Mali in its efforts to implement a road-map for the political transition and return to constitutional order.

The size and mode of delivery of the development package will have to fully take into consideration the needs of Mali in the new circumstances created by the conflict and in particular the urgent necessity to assist its Government in maintaining basic services to the population in a context of extreme budgetary hardship.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011222/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Reati ta' mibegħda

Rapport reċenti tal-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali (FRA) afferma li r-reati ta' mibegħda huma episodji komuni, iżda li dawn ir-reati spiss jispiċċaw ma jiġux irrapportati. Ġie suġġerit li għandha tkun adottata leġiżlazzjoni li teħtieġ lill-Istati Membri jiġbru u jippubblikaw id-data dwar l-inċidenza tar-reati ta' mibegħda.

Fid-dawl ta' dan is-suġġeriment, kif biħsiebha l-Kummissjoni tittratta l-problema tar-reati ta' mibegħda, u tipprevedi li tibda leġiżlazzjoni konformi ma' tali suġġeriment?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Redingon f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(8 ta' Frar 2013)

It-Trattati ma jagħtux setgħa lill-Kummissjoni biex tagħti bidu għal leġiżlazzjoni li tobbliga lill-Istati Membri biex jiġbru u jippubblikaw dejta dwar l-inċidenza ta' delitti ta' mibegħda. Il-Kummissjoni tissorvelja l-implimentazzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE, tipprovdi appoġġ għal attivitajiet tal-partijiet interessati u tappoġġja l-ġbir tad-dejta mill-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali ([1]).

Id-Deċiżjoni Qafas 2008/913/ĠAI ([2]) tobbliga lill-Istati Membri biex jippenalizzaw it-tixwix pubbliku intenzjonali għal vjolenza jew mibegħda kontra gruppi jew individwi definiti b'referenza għar-razza, il-kulur, ir-reliġjon, id-dixxendenza jew l-oriġini nazzjonali jew etnika tagħhom. Il-Kummissjoni se tippreżenta rapport dwar dan sal-aħħar tal-2013.

Id-Direttiva 2012/29/UE tal-25 ta' Ottubru 2012 ([3]) li tistabbilixxi standards minimi dwar id-drittijiet, l-appoġġ u l-protezzjoni tal-vittmi tal-kriminalità tindirizza l-kwalità ta' trattament li jirċievu l-vittmi wara d-delitt u matul il-proċedimenti kriminali li jiġu wara. L-Artikolu 22 tagħha jsemmi speċifikament vittmi ta' delitti ta' mibegħda u jobbliga lill-Istati Membri li jiżguraw li l-vittmi ssirilhom valutazzjoni individwali u f'waqtha bl-għan li tiddentifika l-ħtiġijiet ta' protezzjoni speċifiċi u tiddetermina jekk u sa liema punt għandhom jibbenefikaw minn miżuri speċjali minħabba l-vulnerabbiltà partikolari tagħhom għall-vittimizzazzjoni sekondarja u ripetuta, għall-intimidazzjoni u għar-ritaljazzjoni.

Fit-18 ta' Jannar 2013, il-Ministri tal-Ġustizzja tal-UE ddiskutew il-ħtieġa li jieħdu "azzjoni biex jiġġieldu kontra delitti ta' mibegħda u intolleranza, inkluż ir-razziżmu u l-anti-semitiżmu" fil-Kunsill ĠAI informali. Il-Presidenza Irlandiża kkonkludiet li tistieden lill-Kummissjoni biex tniedi dibattitu pubbliku wiesa' li jikkunsidra r-Rapport Annwali tal-Kummissjoni dwar il-Karta tad-Drittijiet Fundamentali tal-UE mal-gvernijiet u l-istituzzjonijiet pubbliċi fl-Istati Membri.

([1]) Għal aktar tagħrif dwar l-attivitajiet tal-Kummissjoni f'dan il-qasam, jekk jogħġbok ara il-websajt tad-Direttorat Ġenerali għall-Ġustizzja fuq http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm
([3]) Ġ.U. 315 tal-14.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011222/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Hate crimes

A recent report by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) stated that hate crimes are a common occurrence, but that these crimes often go unreported. It has been suggested that legislation should be passed to require Member States to collect and publish data on the incidence of hate crimes.

In light of this suggestion, how does the Commission intend to address the issue of hate crimes, and does it anticipate initiating legislation in line with this suggestion?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Treaties do not empower the Commission to initiate legislation obliging Member States to collect and publish data on the incidence of hate crimes. The Commission monitors the implementation of EU legislation provides support to stakeholders' activities and supports the data collection by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency ([1]).

Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA ([2]) obliges Member States to penalise the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred against groups or individuals defined by reference to their race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. The Commission will present a report on it by the end of 2013.

Directive 2012/29/EU of 25 October 2012 ([3]) establishing minimum standards on the rights support and protection of victims of crime addresses the quality of treatment that victims receive in the aftermath of crime and during the criminal proceedings that follow. Its Article 22 specifically mentions victims of hate crimes and obliges Member States to ensure that victims receive a timely and individual assessment with the aim to identify specific protection needs and determine whether and to what extent they would benefit from special measures due to their particular vulnerability to secondary and repeat victimisation, to intimidation and to retaliation.

On 18 January 2013 the EU Justice Ministers discussed the need to take 'action to counter hate crime and intolerance, including racism and anti-semitism' at the informal JHA Council. The Irish Presidency concluded inviting the Commission to initiate a broad public debate taking account of the Commission's Annual Report on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights with governments and public institutions in the Member States.

([1]) For further information about the Commission's activities in this field, please see the website of the Directorate-General Justice at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm
([3]) OJ 315 of 14.11.2012.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011223/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Sanzjonijiet kontra l-Iran

Id-Dr Shirin Ebadi, rebbieħa Iranjana tal-Premju Nobel għall-Paċi, dan l-aħħar issemmiet minħabba li argumentat li l-UE jmissha timponi "sanzjonijiet intelliġenti" kontra l-Iran li ma jippenalizzawx liċ-ċittadini Iranjani. L-UE ilha timponi, minn Lulju 2012, sanzjonijiet fuq iż-żejt, il-gass naturali u t-tranżazzjonijiet finanzjarji kontra l-Iran fi sforz biex jiġu intensifikati u aċċelerati n-negozjati.

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tirrapporta dwar il-progress li sar minn dak iż-żmien "l hawn, u tista" l-Kummissjoni tirrapporta dwar kwalunkwe riperkussjoni negattiva li tali sanzjonijiet ħallew fuq iċ-ċittadini? Fil-każ affermattiv, x'possibilitajiet tipprevedi l-Kummissjoni fir-rigward tas-sanzjonijiet "aktar intelliġenti" kontra l-Iran?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Frar 2013)

Is-sanzjonijiet tal-UE huma mmirati lejn il-programm nukleari tal-Iran u lejn dawk li qed jappoġġjaw dan il-programm, kif ukoll lejn id-dħul użat mill-Iran biex jiffinanzja dan il-programm. Fl-istess waqt, qed isir kull sforz possibbli biex jiġi kemm jista' jkun minimizzat kwalunkwe effett mhux intenzjonat tas-sanzjonijiet . Is-sanzjonijiet mhumiex immirati lejn il-poplu Iranjan.

Sabiex jiġi żgurat li jkunu minimizzati l-effetti fuq iċ-ċittadini, is-sanzjonijiet tal-UE kontra l-Iran jinkludu, pereżempju, dispożizzjonijiet biex jiggarantixxu li t-tranżazzjonijiet għal raġunijiet umanitarji jibqgħu bl-inqas ammont ta' restrizzjonijiet possibbli. Għal dak il-għan, il-miżuri finanzjarji li jikkonċernaw it-trasferimenti ta' fondi lejn u mill-Iran, inklużi dawk permezz ta' banek Iranjani, jinkludu dispożizzjonijiet speċifiċi fir-rigward tar-raġunijiet umanitarji f'termini ta' limiti, proċeduri u skambju ta' informazzjoni, li jneħħu ostakli li nkella kienu jkunu applikabbli. Minbarra dan, ir-raġunijiet umanitarji huma eżentati mill-projbizzjoni fuq l-għoti ta' appoġġ finanzjarju pubbliku għall-kummerċ mal-Iran (kreditu għall-esportazzjoni). Filwaqt li t-trasferiment ta' flus lejn u mill-Iran sar tassew aktar diffiċli billi ġew dežinjati banek Iranjani importanti, xorta għad fadal għadd ta' kanali għat-tranżazzjonijiet finanzjarji li għadhom miftuħa u li jiżguraw li jistgħu jkomplu jsiru tranżazzjonijiet leġittimi mal-Iran.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011223/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Iran sanctions

Dr Shirin Ebadi, Iranian Nobel Peace Prize laureate, has been cited lately for arguing that the EU should impose 'smart sanctions' against Iran that do not punish Iranian citizens. Since July 2012, the EU has imposed oil, natural gas and financial transaction sanctions against Iran in an effort to intensify and speed up negotiations.

Can the Commission report on the progress made since then, and can the Commission report on any negative repercussions that these sanctions have had for citizens? If so, what possibilities does the Commission see for 'smarter' sanctions against Iran?

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

The EU's sanctions are targeted at Iran's nuclear programme and at those supporting this programme, and at revenues Iran is using to fund this programme. At the same time, every effort possible is made to ensure that any unintended effects of the sanctions are minimised as much as possible. The sanctions do not target the Iranian people.

To ensure that the effects on citizens are minimised, the EU's sanctions against Iran include for instance provisions to guarantee that transactions for humanitarian purposes remain possible with as few restrictions as possible. For that purpose, the financial measures concerning the transfer of funds to and from Iran, including through Iranian banks, include specific provisions with regard to humanitarian purposes in terms of thresholds, procedures and exchange of information, removing obstacles that would otherwise be applicable. In addition, humanitarian purposes are exempted from the prohibition on the provision of public financial support for trade with Iran (export credit). And while transfer of money to and from Iran has indeed become more difficult as important Iranian banks have been designated, there are still a number of channels for financial transactions which remain open and which ensure that legitimate transactions with Iran can continue.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011224/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Kriterji ta' sostenibbiltà għall-bijomassa

Ġie rappurtat li fl-2010, 49 % tal-enerġija rinovabbli tal-UE ġiet mill-injam u l-iskart tal-injam. Madankollu, xi whud jargumentaw li dan jista' jżid l-emissjonijiet tas-CO_2. Din is-sena l-Kummissjoni suppost kellha tistabbilixxi kriterji tas-sostenibbiltà ġodda għall-użu tal-bijomassa għall-enerġija, bħall-injam u l-iskart tal-injam; madankollu, dan fl-aħħar nett ma sarx.

Fid-dawl ta' din is-sitwazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni għandha xi pjan biex tistabbilixxi kriterji ta' sostenibbiltà ġodda għall-użu tal-bijomassa fil-futur qrib?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Oettinger f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Jannar 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għat-tweġiba tagħha għall-mistoqsija bil-miktub E-011113/2012 minn Ivo Belet dwar l-istess kwistjoni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011224/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Sustainability criteria for biomass

It has been reported that 49% of EU renewable energy came from wood and wood waste in 2010. However, some argue that this may actually drive up CO_2 emissions. This year the Commission was supposed to establish new sustainability criteria for the use of biomass — such as wood and wood waste — for energy, however, this ultimately failed to happen.

In light of this situation, does the Commission have any plans to establish new sustainability criteria for the use of biomass in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011113/2012 by Ivo Belet on the same issue.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011225/12
lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli)
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — Armi kimiċi fis-Sirja

Reċentement tqajjem tħassib dwar l-użu potenzjali tal-armi kimiċi mill-Gvern Sirjan kontra ċ-ċittadini tiegħu.

X'possibbiltajiet tipprevedi l-Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli għall-Unjoni Ewropea biex tipprevjeni lill-Gvern Sirjan milli jirrikorri għall-armi kimiċi, u x'tip ta' miżuri punittivi jistgħu jiġu previsti fil-każ ta' attakk li jinvolvi armi kimiċi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Frar 2013)

L-UE tinsab imħassba serjament dwar l-użu potenzjali tal-armi kimiċi tas-Sirja, sew mir-reġim u sew fil-każ li jaqgħu f'idejn ir-ribelli jew il-gruppi terroristiċi, kif ukoll dwar il-possibbiltà ta' tixrid inċidentali ta' armi kimiċi.

Kwalunkwe użu ta' armi kimiċi huwa għal kollox inaċċettabbli u r-reġim Sirjan u atturi oħra ma għandhom qatt jirrikorru għal dik l-għażla. L-UE ilha konsistentement tenfasizza dan il-messaġġ permezz tal-mezzi ta' diplomazija kemm pubblika kif ukoll privata.

L-UE tissorvelja mill-qrib l-iżviluppi relatati f'kooperazzjoni ma' sħab internazzjonali. Saru wkoll kuntatti ma' xi pajjiżi ġirien tas-Sirja bl-iskop li jiġu vvalutati l-possibilitajiet li l-UE tgħin fl-oqsma tal-ippjanar ta' kontinġenza u miżuri ta' reazzjoni għall-użu ta' armi kimiċi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011225/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Chemical weapons in Syria

Concerns have recently been raised over the possible use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Government against its citizens.

What possibilities does the Vice-President/High Representative see for the European Union to prevent the Syrian Government from resorting to chemical weapons, and what kind of punitive measures could be envisaged in the event of an attack involving chemical weapons?

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

The EU is gravely concerned about the potential use of Syria's chemical weapons, whether by the regime or in case they fall into the hands of the rebels or terrorist groups, as well as about the possibility of incidental dissemination of chemical weapons.

Any use of chemical weapons is completely unacceptable and the Syrian regime and other actors must never resort to that option. The EU has been consistently emphasising this message through the channels of public and private diplomacy.

The EU monitors closely the related developments in cooperation with international partners. Contacts have also been made with some of Syria's neighbouring countries with a view to assess the EU's possibilities to assist in the areas of chemical contingency planning and response measures.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011226/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Il-faqar

Skont rapport riċenti mill-Eurostat, fl-2011, 24.2 % taċ-ċittadini tal-UE kienu fir-riskju tal-faqar. Hekk kif il-kriżi ekonomika qed tkompli tħalli l-effetti tagħha fuq l-Istati Membri tal-UE, in-numru dejjem jiżdied ta' ċittadini li jinsabu fir-riskju tal-faqar jista' jkun marbut mal-problemi ekonomiċi attwali fir-reġjun.

Peress li l-istrateġija Ewropa 2020 għandha l-għan li tnaqqas in-numru ta' persuni fir-riskju tal-faqar, il-Kummissjoni b'liema mod tista' tiżgura li t-taqlib ekonomiku attwali ma jipperikolax l-ambizzjonijiet stabbiliti fl-ambitu ta'din l-istrateġija, u hija beħsiebha tieħu xi miżuri bħala reazzjoni għaċ-ċifri ppubblikati mill-Eurostat?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andoron f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(7 ta' Frar 2013)

Il-kriżi ekonomika qiegħda tassew tpoġġi sfidi addizzjonali għall-UE u l-Istati Membri tagħha biex jilħqu l-miri tal-istrateġija Ewropa 2020 u b'mod partikulari dawk relatati mat-tnaqqis tal-faqar. Madanakollu, il-Kummissjoni u l-Istati Membri rreaġixxew b'modi differenti: L-Inizjattiva għall-Impjiegi fost iż-Żgħażagħ biex jitnaqqas il-qgħad fost iż-żgħażagħ, il-Pakkett għall-Impjiegi, sett ta' miżuri konkreti biex jiżdiedu l-impjiegi kif ukoll ir-Rakkomandazzjoni dwar il-faqar fost it-tfal li għandha tiġi adottata bħala parti mill-Pakkett għall-Investiment Soċjali ([1]). Is-SIP se jifformula aġenda ġdida għall-politiki soċjali, b'hekk jgħin lill-Istati Membri jagħmlu r-riformi strutturali meħtieġa biex jinvestu f'politiki soċjali li jagħtu l-poter lin-nies minn età żgħira, isaħħu l-kapaċitajiet tagħhom biex ikampaw mar-riskji u jtejbu l-opportunitajiet tagħhom biex jipparteċipaw fis-soċjetà tul il-ħajja. Fondi tal-UE bħall-FSE ([2]) u l-PSCI ([3]) jistgħu jwettqu rwol importanti biex isostnu dawn l-isforzi. Huwa għaldaqstant kritiku li l-Parlament Ewropew jagħti s-sostenn tiegħu għal FSE b'saħħtu.

Ir-Rakkomandazzjonijiet Speċifiċi skont il-Pajjiż tal-2012 bħala parti mis-"Semestru Ewropew" iffukaw fost l-oħrajn lejn il-bżonn li tissaħħaħ il-ġlieda kontra l-qgħad u l-faqar u sejħet għal riformi fis-swieq tax-xogħol u fis-sistemi tal-pensjonijiet. L-Istħarriġ Annwali dwar it-Tkabbir għall-2013 saħaq dwar il-bżonn li l-Istati Membri jindirizzaw il-konsegwenzi soċjali tal-kriżi.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni qed issegwi mill-qrib l-iżviluppi soċjali fl-Istati Membri permezz ta' konsultazzjoni kontinwa mal-partijiet interessati fil-Konvenzjoni Annwali tal-Pjattaforma Ewropea Kontra l-Faqar u l-Esklużjoni Soċjali tal-2012 u rapporti bħat-Tieni (2) Rapport dwar l-Impjieg u l-Iżviluppi Soċjali fl-Ewropa ([4]) u r-Rapport Soċjali Annwali ppreżentat mill-Kumitat tal-Protezzjoni Soċjali.

([1]) SIP.
([2]) Fond Soċjali Ewropew.
([3]) Programm għall-Bidla u l-Innovazzjoni Soċjali.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=mt&pubId=7315.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011226/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Poverty

A recent report by Eurostat found that 24.2% of EU citizens were at risk of poverty in 2011. As the economic crisis continues to take its toll on EU Member States, the increasing number of citizens who are at risk of poverty could be linked to the current economic woes in the region.

Given that Europe's 2020 strategy is aimed at reducing the number of those at risk of poverty, in what way can the Commission ensure that the current economic turmoil does not jeopardise the ambitions set out under this strategy, and does the Commission intend to take any measures in reaction to the figures published by Eurostat?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The economic crisis is indeed putting additional challenges for the EU and its Member States in achieving the Europe 2020 strategy's targets and particularly those related to the reduction of poverty. However, the Commission and the Member States have reacted via various means: The Youth Employment Initiative to drive down youth unemployment, the Employment Package, a set of concrete measures to boost jobs as well as the recommendation on child poverty to be adopted as part of the Social Investment Package ([1]) . The SIP will set out a new agenda for social policies, helping Member States make the structural reforms needed to invest in social policies that empower people from an early age, strengthen their capabilities to cope with risks and enhance their opportunities to participate in society across the life course. EU Funds such as the ESF ([2]) and the PSCI ([3]) can play an important role in supporting these efforts. It is therefore critical that the European Parliament gives its support to a strong ESF.

The 2012 Country Specific Recommendations as part of the 'European Semester' pointed among others to the need to enhance the fight against unemployment and poverty and called for reforms in the labour markets and pension systems. The 2013 Annual Growth Survey reiterated the need for Member States to address the social consequences of the crisis.

Furthermore, the Commission closely follows social developments in Member States through ongoing consultation with stakeholders in the 2012 Annual Convention of the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion and reports such as the 2nd Employment and Social Developments in Europe Review ([4]) and the Annual Social Report presented by the social protection committee.

([1]) SIP.
([2]) European Social Fund.
([3]) Programme for Social Change and Innovation.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7315.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011227/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Servizzi tal-Gvern online

Il-Kummissjoni reċentement ipproponiet regoli biex is-siti tal-Gvern isiru aktar aċċessibbli għaċ-ċittadini. Dan mistenni jkollu benefiċċji partikolari għal 80 miljun ċittadin tal-UE b'diżabilitajiet u 87 miljun ċittadin tal-UE li għandhom "il fuq minn 65 sena.

1. Bl-għan li jkun żgurat aċċess aktar ugwali għaċ-ċittadini kollha, il-Kummissjoni tista" tipprovdi xi dejta dwar x'persentaġġ ta' ċittadini b'diżabilitajiet jew li għandhom "il fuq minn 65 jużaw l-internet ta" spiss, u x'persentaġġ minn dawn iċ-ċittadini jagħżlu l-internet biex jiksbu aċċess għas-servizzi tal-gvern?

2. Il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li tieħu xi inizjattivi biex tindirizza l-ostakoli potenzjali għall-użu tal-internet fost dawn iċ-ċittadini, bħal kompetenza insuffiċjenti fl-użu tal-kompjuter fost il-popolazzjoni aktar anzjana?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Jannar 2013)

Abbażi tad-dejta disponibbli, in-nies aktar anzjani u dawk b'diżabbiltajiet jużaw l-internet inqas ta' spiss minn gruppi ta' utenti oħra ([1]). Fl-2011, 28% biss tal-persuni bejn il-65 u l-74 sena użaw l-internet mill-inqas darba fil-ġimgħa mqabbel ma' 76% tal-persuni bejn il-25 u l-54 sena. 16% biss min-nies ta' bejn l-etajiet ta' 65 u 74 użaw l-internet biex jaċċessaw is-servizzi tal-gvern, imqabbel mad-49% min-nies ta' bejn il-25 u l-54 sena ([2]). Fl-2011, fost il-persuni li kienu użaw l-internet u ma ressqu ebda formola elettronika, 17% minn dawk li għandhom bejn il-65 u l-74 sena jaħsbu li l-proċeduri elettroniċi huma wisq ikkumplikati, jew iqisu li ma jafux jużaw l-internet biżżejjed, b' kuntrast maċ-ċifra ta' 8% biss minn dawk ta' bejn il-25 u l-54 sena li jaħsbuha l-istess. Hemm id-dejta disponibbli għall-2012 dwar dawk li għandhom bejn il-55 u l-74 . Turi li l-użu regolari tal-internet (mill-inqas darba fis-sena) żdied fl-2012 b'mod kostanti minn 28% għal 42%. Ġie nnutat li hemm żieda fil-persentaġġ ta' dawk li għandhom bejn il-55 u l-74 sena li jużaw l-internet b'mod regolari u jidħlu onlajn kuljum ([3]).

Ma hemmx statistika disponibbli dwar in-nies b'diżabbiltajiet u l-użu tagħhom tal-internet. L-uniku indikatur disponibbli ([4]) jirreferi għall-unitajiet domestiċi li m'għandhomx aċċess għall-internet fid-dar. 2% tal-każi ta' familji li m'għandhomx internet fid-dar huma marbuta mal-preżenza ta' diżabbiltà fiżika ([5]).

L-ADE għandha l-mira li ġġib lil "kull Ewropew Diġitali", billi tneħħi kull tfixkil għall-aċċess għal kulħadd. Il-Kummissjoni pproponiet Direttiva dwar l-Aċċessibbiltà għall-Web li bħalissa qiegħda tiġi diskussa fil-Kunsill u fil-Parlament Ewropew.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf;
Sors: Stħarriġ tal-Eurostat dwar l-użu tal-ICT minn individwi u fil-familji.

([2]) Għal aktar analiżi dwar il-livell speċifiku tal-ħiliet fl-ICT u l-ostakoli għan-nies anzjani, ara r-rapport ta' Scoreboard disponibbli fuq http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf

([3]) Iċ-ċifri ddettaljati kollha mill-istħarriġ tal-2012 se jiġu ppubblikati mill-Eurostat fi Frar 2013.

([4]) Żviluppat mill-istħarriġ dwar l-użu tal-ICT minn individwi u unitajiet domestiċi kkoordinat mill-Eurostat 2012.

([5]) Ibbażat fuq ċifri tal-2011 għall-UE27; wieħed irid joqgħod attent kif jinterpreta dawn iċ-ċifri billi l-għadd ta' min wieġeb kien żgħir.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011227/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Government services online

The Commission recently proposed rules to make government websites more accessible to citizens. This is expected to have particular benefits for the 80 million EU citizens with disabilities and the 87 million EU citizens over 65.

1. With the aim of ensuring more equal access for all citizens, can the Commission provide any data as to what percentage of citizens with disabilities or aged over 65 use the Internet frequently, and what percentage of these citizens would choose the Internet to access government services?

2. Does the Commission plan to take any initiatives to address potential obstacles to Internet use among these citizens, such as insufficient computer literacy amongst the older population?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2013)

Based on available data, older people and those with disabilities use the Internet less frequently than other groups of users ([1]). In 2011 only 28% of persons aged 65-74 went online at least once a week compared to 76% of persons aged 25-54. Only 16% of 65-74 year olds used the Internet to access government services, compared to 49% of 25-54 year olds ([2]). In 2011, among persons who had used the Internet and did not submit any electronic forms 17% of those aged 65 to 74 years considered electronic procedures as being too complicated or not having enough knowledge as opposed to only 8% of person aged 25 to 54 years. For 2012, data is available concerning the age group 55-74. The data shows that the regular use of Internet (at least once a week) has constantly progressed from 28% in 2008 up to 42% in 2012. A constant increase has been observed in the percentage of these regular Internet users aged 55-74 going online on a daily basis ([3]).

There are no statistics available on people with disabilities and their Internet use. The only available indicator ([4]) refers to the households without access to Internet at home. 2% of cases out of all households without Internet connection at home are related to the existence of a physical disability ([5]).

The DAE aims at getting 'every European Digital', removing barriers to access for all. The Commission proposed a directive on Web Accessibililty which is now being discussed in the Council and European Parliament.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf
Source: Eurostat survey on ICT usage by individuals and in households.

([2]) For more analysis about the specific ICT skills level and barriers of older people, see the Scoreboard report available at http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf

([3]) All detailed figures from the 2012 survey will be published by Eurostat in February 2013.

([4]) Developed by the survey on ICT usage of individuals and households coordinated by Eurostat 2012.

([5]) Based on 2011 figures for EU-27; the figures should be interpreted cautiously because of the low number of respondents.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011228/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Il-Premju Access City

Il-Premju Access City huwa parti mill-isforzi tal-UE taħt l-Istrateġija Ewropea tad-Diżabilità biex iqajjem l-għarfien dwar l-isfidi li jikkonfrontaw in-nies b'diżabilitajiet u jħeġġeġ il-miżuri li ttieħdu f'ambjenti urbani biex itejbu l-aċċessibbiltà tal-bliet. Intqal li l-bliet Ewropej jistgħu jibbenefikaw minn dan il-premju hekk kif ir-rebbieħa u l-finalisti jaqsmu l-esperjenzi u l-ideat tagħhom dwar it-titjib fl-aċċessibbiltà għal persuni b'diżabilitajiet.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi xi eżempji fejn il-bliet li rebħu dan il-premju ispiraw titjib fl-aċċessibbiltà permezz ta' skambju tal-aħjar prattiki ma' bliet oħrajn fl-Unjoni Ewropea?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Frar 2013)

L-Access City Award inbeda fl-2010 u sal-lum diġà kien hemm tliet edizzjonijiet ta' din il-kompetizzjoni. Wieħed mill-għanijiet ewlenin huwa li tinġabar prassi tajba li tista' sservi ta' eżempju għal bliet oħrajn. Minn kull edizzjoni tal-Award, il-Kummissjoni ġabret eżempji ta' attivitajiet bħal dawn li saru fl-ibliet magħżula biex tittejjeb l-aċċessibbiltà ([1]). Din il-prassi tajba ġiet imqassma fost l-ibliet kollha fl-UE li huma potenzjalment interessati. Dan iffaċilita l-istabbiliment ta' kuntatti bejn l-ibliet li jixtiequ jitgħallmu minn xulxin biex l-ambjent urban jagħmluh aċċessibbli u għaldaqstant verament inklużiv. Minkejja li l-ibliet rebbieħa ċertament mhumiex l-uniku sors ta' eżempji tajbin, bis-saħħa ta' dan l-Award, dawn ibbenefikaw minn aktar viżibbiltà tal-inizjattivi tagħhom tal-aċċessibbiltà.

Avila, il-belt rebbieħa tal-ewwel edizzjoni fl-2010, qed tieħu sehem fil-Lega tal-Ibliet Storiċi u Aċċessibbli, proġett li ġie stabbilit fl-2010 fi ħdan il-Konsorzju Ewropew tal-Fondazzjonijiet dwar id-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem u d-Diżabbiltà mmexxi miċ-Ċentru Ewropew tal-Fondazzjonijiet, u li għandu l-għan li jirrikonċilja l-aċċessibbiltà mal-wirt kulturali ([2]). Salzburg, il-belt rebbieħa tat-tieni edizzjoni, irċeviet żjarat speċifiċi minn amministraturi ta' bliet barranin inkarigati mill-aċċessibbiltà.

Berlin, l-aktar belt rebbieħa reċenti, tippresiedi l-Grupp ta' Ħidma tal-Eurocities għall-ibliet mingħajr ostakoli għal kulħadd, fejn bliet kbar Ewropej jippromwovu l-iskambju ta' esperjenzi fl-iżvilupp u fit-tfassil ta' bliet mingħajr ostakoli ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/access_city_award_2012_brochure_en.pdf u http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/access-city-the-european-award-for-accessible-cities-pbDS3211693/.
([2]) http://www.efc.be/programmes_services/thematic-networks/disability/Pages/League-of-Historical-and-Accessible-Cities.aspx.
([3]) http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/activities/working_groups/Barrier-free-city-for-all&tpl=home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011228/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Access City Award

The Access City Award forms part of EU efforts under the European Disability Strategy to raise awareness about the challenges that people with disabilities face and encourage measures taken in urban settings to improve accessibility in cities. It has been said that European cities can benefit from this award as winners and finalists share their experiences and ideas in improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

Can the Commission provide any examples where cities that won this award have inspired improvements in accessibility through best practice exchange with other cities in the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Access City Award was started in 2010 and there have been now three editions of this competition. One of the main goals is to collect good practices that can serve as an example for other cities. From each Award's edition, the Commission has collected such examples of activities carried out by the shortlisted cities to improve accessibility ([1]). These good practices have been distributed among all potentially interested cities in the EU. This has facilitated the establishment of contacts between cities that want to learn from one another to make the urban environment accessible and thus truly inclusive. Although they are certainly not the only source of good examples, the winning cities have benefited from increased visibility of their accessibility initiatives thanks to the Award.

Avila, the winner of the first edition in 2010, participates in the League of Historical and Accessible Cities, a project established in 2010 within the European Consortium of Foundations on Human Rights and Disability led by the European Foundation Centre, and aiming to reconcile accessibility with cultural heritage ([2]). Salzburg, the winner of the second edition, received specific visits from foreign cities' administrators in charge of accessibility.

Berlin, the most recent winner, chairs the Eurocities' Barrier-free cities for all Working Group in which large European cities promote the exchange of experiences of developing and designing cities without barriers ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/access_city_award_2012_brochure_en.pdf and http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/access-city-the-european-award-for-accessible-cities-pbDS3211693/
([2]) http://www.efc.be/programmes_services/thematic-networks/disability/Pages/League-of-Historical-and-Accessible-Cities.aspx
([3]) http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/activities/working_groups/Barrier-free-city-for-all&tpl=home

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011229/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Il-monitoraġġ tal-applikazzjoni tal-liġi tal-UE

Id-29 Rapport Annwali dwar il-Monitoraġġ tal-Applikazzjoni tal-Liġi tal-UE (2011), li ġie ppubblikat reċentement mill-Kummissjoni, jindika l-għadd kbir ta' każijiet ta' ksur. Filwaqt li ħafna mill-każijiet ta' dewmien fl-implimentazzjoni ġie indirizzat permezz tal-proġett EU Pilot tal-Kummissjoni, disa' każijiet tressqu quddiem il-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-UE b'talbiet għal pieni finanzjarji.

Hemm differenzi sinifikanti bejn l-Istati Membri fir-rigward tal-ksur b'rabta mal-implimentazzjoni. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi raġunijiet konkreti għal ksur min-naħa ta' dawk l-Istati Membri b'riżultati partikolarment baxxi?

Peress li xi Stati Membri jiksbu riżultati pjuttost aħjar minn oħrajn, hemm xi eżempji tal-aħjar prattiki li jistgħu jiġu replikati sabiex titjieb l-implimentazzjoni fi Stati Membri oħrajn?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barroso f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(7 ta' Frar 2013)

Hemm differenzi sinifikanti bejn l-Istati Membri dwar il-ksur. Hemm diversi raġunijiet għal dan, inkluża l-istruttura amministrattiva tal-Istat Membru u l-organizzazzjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni taħdem b'kooperazzjoni mill-qrib mal-Istati Membri dwar kwistjonijiet relatati mal-applikazzjoni u l-implimentazzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE. Dan jinkludi l-iskambju tal-aħjar prassi bejn l-Istati Membri. Pereżempju, fil-qafas tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi u d-Direttiva dwar ir-Rikonoxximent tal-Kwalifiki Professjonali, il-Kummissjoni stabbiliet applikazzjoni multilingwa bbażata fuq il-web, is-Sistema ta' Informazzjoni tas-Suq Intern (IMI), li tiffaċilita l-iskambju ta' informazzjoni bejn l-amministrazzjonijiet pubbliċi li huma involuti fl-implimentazzjoni prattika tal-liġi tal-UE. Eżempji oħra tal--aħjar prassi tal-organizzazzjoni interna tal-Istati Membri li għandhom impatt fuq l-implimentazzjoni jistgħu jinstabu regolarment fit-Tabelli ta' Valutazzjoni Biannwali tas-Suq Intern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011229/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Monitoring the application of EC law

The 29th Annual Report on Monitoring the Application of EC law (2011), recently published by the Commission, points out the high number of infringement cases. Whilst many of the cases of late implementation have been addressed using the Commission's EU Pilot project, nine cases have been referred to the EU's Court of Justice with requests for financial penalties.

There are significant differences between Member States when it comes to implementation infringements. Can the Commission provide concrete reasons for infringements on the part of those Member States with particularly poor results?

Given that some Member States score significantly better than others, are there any examples of best practice that could be replicated in order to improve implementation in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

There are significant differences between Member States concerning infringements. There are various reasons for this, including the Member State's administrative structure and organisation.

The Commission works in close cooperation with Member States on issues related to the application and implementation of EU legislation. This includes the exchange of best practice between Member States. For example, in the framework of the Services Directive and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive, the Commission has set up a multi-lingual web based application, Internal Market Information System (IMI), facilitating the exchange of information between public administrations that are involved in the practical implementation of EC law. Other examples of best practices in the Member States' internal organisation having an impact on implementation can be found regularly in the biannual Internal Market Scoreboards.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011230/12
an die Kommission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Begrenzte wirtschaftliche Begründung für Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten im umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen EU-Kanada

Bei der Unterrichtung des Ausschusses für internationalen Handel über das Kapitel zum Investitionsschutz im umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen EU-Kanada (CETA) erklärte ein Vertreter der Kommission, dass die Aufnahme eines Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten (ISDS) in das CETA nur „begrenzten wirtschaftlichen Wert“ ([1]) hat. Stattdessen besteht dem Vertreter der Kommission zufolge der tatsächliche Grund für die Aufnahme eines ISDS-Mechanismus in den Vertrag in seinem „politischen Wert“. Könnte die Kommission dies durch Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen näher erläutern:

1. Warum werden Kapitel mit begrenztem wirtschaftlichem Wert in Handelsabkommen aufgenommen?

2. Was bedeutet „politischer Wert“ in diesem Zusammenhang?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(29. Januar 2013)

Aus mehreren Gründen hat sich die Europäische Union entschieden, ein Kapitel zur Beilegung von Streitigkeiten zwischen Investor und Staat (Investor-State Dispute Settlement, ISDS) in das umfassende Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen EU-Kanada (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, CETA) aufzunehmen. Zunächst gab es in der Vergangenheit einige Fälle, in denen ausländische Investoren in Kanada enteignet wurden, keine Entschädigung erhielten und ihnen der Weg vor die kanadischen Gerichte versperrt blieb. Durch ein ISDS-Kapitel im Rahmen des CETA könnten europäische Investoren ein internationales Gericht anrufen und wären so besser geschützt. Die Aufnahme des Investitionsschutzes und der Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten sind daher von großer Wichtigkeit, um mehr Rechtssicherheit für Investoren zu schaffen, was wiederum zur Stabilisierung der (beidseitigen) Handels- und Investitionsströme zwischen der Union und Kanada beitragen würde. Folglich ist diese Frage von beträchtlichem wirtschaftlichem Wert und Interesse.

Darüber hinaus kommt dem Investitionsschutz und dem ISDS-Kapitel aus Sicht der Europäischen Kommission ein hoher politischer Wert zu. Den Investitionsschutz in einer internationalen Vereinbarung festzuschreiben, ohne sich auch auf ein Verfahren zur Beilegung von Streitigkeiten zwischen Investor und Staat zu einigen, wäre wenig effektiv. Um den Investoren einen angemessenen Schutz bieten zu können, sollte in dem Abkommen auch ein Mechanismus zur Durchsetzung der gemachten Zusagen vorgesehen sein, der die effektive Umsetzung der Bestimmungen gewährleistet. Dies ist der Zweck des ISDS-Kapitels.

Die CETA-Verhandlungen sind die ersten in einer Serie von Verhandlungen zwischen der Europäischen Union und Drittstaaten, in denen Investitionsfragen aufgegriffen werden. Gemeinsam mit dem Abkommen EU-Singapur wird das CETA eine der ersten internationalen Übereinkünfte der Union seit Inkrafttreten des Vertrags von Lissabon sein, die ein Kapitel zu Investitionsschutz und ISDS enthalten. Für die EU ist es politisch gesehen wichtig, die ihr übertragenen Zuständigkeiten aktiv wahrzunehmen und diese Politik künftig auch mit anderen wichtigen Partnern fortzusetzen. Die ersten Abkommen haben hier natürlich einen politisch richtungsweisenden Charakter.

([1]) Technische Anhörung vor dem Ausschuss für internationalen Handel zum Kapitel über Investitionsschutz im umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen EU-Kanada (CETA), 12. November 2012.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011230/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) och Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(7 december 2012)

Angående: Begränsad ekonomisk grund för en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada

Vid utfrågningen inför utskottet för internationell handel om kapitlet om skydd för investeringar i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada uppgav en företrädare för kommissionen att införandet av en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat i det övergripande avtalet bara var av ”visst ekonomiskt värde” ([1]). Enligt kommissionens företrädare var den faktiska orsaken till att en sådan mekanism skulle tas med i avtalet i stället dess ”politiska värde”. Kommissionen uppmanas att klargöra detta genom att besvara följande frågor:

1. Varför ingår kapitel med begränsat ekonomiskt värde i handelsavtal?

2. Vad menas med ”politiskt värde” i detta sammanhang?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(29 januari 2013)

Europeiska unionen har flera motiv för att innefatta ett kapitel om regler för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stater i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada. Vid flera tillfällen har utländska investerare drabbats av expropriation i Kanada och nekats kompensation och tillgång till kanadensiska domstolar. Kapitlet om regler för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stater i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel skulle skydda europeiska investerare i Kanada genom att ge dem tillträde till en internationell domstol. Att innefatta investeringsskydd och regler för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stater är en viktig fråga eftersom det skulle tillgodose investerarnas behov av rättssäkerhet, vilket i sin tur skulle säkra handel och investeringar mellan EU och Kanada. Följaktligen är det av avsevärt ekonomiskt värde och betydelse.

Dessutom anser Europeiska kommissionen att investeringsskydd och kapitlet om tvistlösning mellan investerare och stater i avtalet har ett politiskt värde. Att ha ett investeringsskydd i ett avtal utan förfaranden för tvistlösning skulle vara av begränsat värde. För att ge tillräckligt skydd för investerare ska avtalet också erbjuda en mekanism för att garantera att åtagandena genomförs och bestämmelserna implementeras effektivt, vilket är syftet med kapitlet i fråga.

Förhandlingarna om det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel är de första i en rad förhandlingar som kommer att ske mellan Europeiska unionen och tredjeländer angående investeringsfrågor. Med Singapore är det troligt att det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel blir det första EU-avtalet som innehåller investeringsskydd och tvistlösning mellan investerare och stater sedan Lissabonfördragets ikraftträdande. Det är politiskt viktigt för unionen att utöva den befogenheten och att i framtiden fortsätta med denna politik med andra viktiga samarbetspartner. Självklart kommer de första avtalen att vara viktiga genom att bana väg för den politiken.

([1]) Teknisk utfrågning inför utskottet för internationell handel om kapitlet om skydd för investeringar i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada den 12 november 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011230/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Limited economic motivation for investor-state dispute settlement mechanism in EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

When informing the INTA Committee on the investment protection chapter in the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), a Commission representative stated that including an investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism in the CETA was only of 'some economic value' ([1]). Instead, according to the Commission representative, the actual reason for including an ISDS mechanism in the treaty is its 'political value'. Could the Commission please clarify this by answering the following:

1. Why are chapters with limited economic value included in trade agreements?

2. What is the meaning of 'political value' in this context?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2013)

The European Union has several motives for including an investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) chapter in the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). There have been several instances in the past of foreign investors being expropriated in Canada and who have been denied compensation and access to the Canadian courts. The ISDS chapter in CETA would protect European investors in Canada by granting them access to an international tribunal. Including investment protection and ISDS is key as it would provide more legal certainty to investors, which in turn helps secure trade and investment flows between the Union and Canada and vice-versa. Consequently, it is of significant economic value and importance.

In addition, the European Commission believes that an investment protection and ISDS chapter in CETA has a political value. Having investment protection in an agreement without an investor state dispute settlement procedure, would be of little value. To provide adequate protection to investors, the agreement should also provide for a mechanism for enforcement of the commitments ensuring effective implementation of the provisions, which is the purpose of the ISDS chapter.

The CETA negotiations are the first in a series of negotiations that will take place between the European Union and third countries addressing investment issues. With Singapore, CETA is likely to be the first EU agreement including investment protection and ISDS since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. It is politically important for the Union to exercise this competence, and in the future to pursue this policy with other key partners. Evidently, the first agreements will be important in setting the path for this policy.

([1]) Technical hearing to the INTA Committee on the investment protection chapter in the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade agreement (CETA), 12 November 2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011231/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 décembre 2012)

Objet: Protection des animaux pendant le transport

La Commission a rédigé un rapport sur l'état de mise en œuvre du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil. Dans sa conclusion, la Commission estime que ce règlement a eu une incidence positive sur le bien-être des animaux pendant le transport, mais constate qu'il subsiste de graves problèmes au cours des transports d'animaux, en raison principalement de déficiences de conformité et de mise en œuvre par les États membres.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle engager des actions visant à assurer un contrôle complet et homogène du respect des conditions de transport, et ce plus encore compte tenu du fait que le degré d'exécution des dispositions légales relatives au transport d'animaux est très variable dans les divers États membres?

2. Quelles sont les mesures que compte prendre la Commission afin de renforcer la coopération et la communication entre les autorités compétentes de différents États membres?

3. La Commission suit-elle le Parlement dans sa volonté de lancer une vaste campagne de communication vers le consommateur sur le thème de la législation européenne relative au bien-être animal, en apportant en permanence des informations sur les changements qu'elle exige des producteurs européens, afin d'améliorer la visibilité de leurs efforts et d'augmenter la valeur ajoutée de leurs produits?

4. Quand la Commission compte-t-elle actualiser les règles en matière de transport d'animaux en ce qui concerne les écarts entre la législation et les plus récentes données scientifiques relevées par l'EFSA?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(13 février 2013)

1. Il appartient aux États membres de veiller au respect du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport ([1]). Cependant, comme l'application de la législation est insuffisante, la Commission prend des mesures pour améliorer la situation et prévoit ainsi un certain nombre d'actions, décrites dans le rapport de la Commission sur le bien-être des animaux pendant le transport ([2]). Certaines de ces actions ont déjà été lancées, comme la structure de compte rendu harmonisée pour les contrôles des États membres relatifs aux règles régissant le transport des animaux, pour laquelle la Commission finalise une décision d'exécution, dont l'adoption est prévue début 2013.

2. La Commission organise régulièrement des réunions avec les États membres afin de renforcer la coopération entre les autorités compétentes. En 2013, parallèlement à ses audits habituels, la Commission organisera une série de visites d'étude, lors desquelles des experts des États membres examineront les meilleures pratiques en matière de contrôles du bien-être animal.

3. Dans le cadre de la stratégie de l'UE pour la protection et le bien-être des animaux (2012-2015) ([3]), une étude sur la sensibilisation au bien-être des animaux et sur les activités d'information à l'intention du grand public et des consommateurs devrait être lancée. À la lumière de ses résultats, la Commission examinera si d'autres actions devraient être menées au niveau de l'UE.

4. Comme la Commission l'a conclu dans son rapport sur le transport des animaux, le meilleur moyen de combler l'écart entre les exigences de la législation et les preuves scientifiques disponibles est actuellement d'adopter des guides de bonnes pratiques plutôt que de modifier le règlement (CE) n° 1/2005.

([1]) JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([2]) Rapport de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil sur l'incidence du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport. COM(2011)700 final.
([3]) COM(2012)6 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011231/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: The protection of animals during transport

The Commission has drawn up a report on the state of play with regard to the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. In its conclusion, the Commission expresses the view that the regulation has had a positive impact on the welfare of animals during transport, but notes that there are still serious problems when it comes to animal transport, principally as a result of compliance and implementation failures by the Member States.

1. Is the Commission intending to take steps to ensure that compliance with transport rules is monitored fully and uniformly, bearing in mind in particular the fact that the extent to which the legislation on animal transport is implemented varies significantly from one Member State to another?

2. What steps does the Commission intend to take to step up cooperation and communication between the authorities in the various Member States?

3. Does the Commission share Parliament's wish to mount an extensive consumer information campaign on the subject of European animal welfare legislation, providing continuous information on the changes required of European producers for the purposes of raising the profile of their work and improving the added value of their products?

4. When does the Commission intend to update the rules on animal transport in relation to the gaps between the legislation and the latest scientific evidence presented by the European Food Safety Authority?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

1. It is the responsibility of Member States to ensure that regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([1]) is enforced. However, as enforcement of the legislation is poor, the Commission is taking steps to improve the situation. This is done through a number of actions as described in the Commission Report on animal welfare during transport ([2]). Some of these actions are already initiated. One example is the harmonised reporting structure of the Member States' controls of the rules on animal transport for which the Commission is currently finalising an implementing decision, planned for adoption in the beginning of 2013.

2. The Commission organises regular meetings with the Member States to increase cooperation between competent authorities. In 2013, and in parallel with its normal audits, the Commission will organise a series of study visits, where experts from Member States would study best practices in relation to controls on animal welfare.

3. In the framework of the EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals (2012-2015) ([3]), a study on animal welfare education and on information activities directed at the general public and consumers should be launched. In the light of the outcomes of the study, the Commission will consider whether further action at EU level is appropriate.

4. As concluded in the Commission report on animal transport, the gap between the requirements of the legislation and available scientific evidence is for the time being best addressed by the adoption of guides to good practices, and not by amendments to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([2]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. COM(2011) 700 final.
([3]) COM(2012)6 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011232/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 décembre 2012)

Objet: Stratégie de l'Union européenne en matière de Droits de l'homme

L'Union repose sur le principe du respect des Droits de l'homme. Elle a l'obligation légale, énoncée dans ses traités, de placer les Droits de l'homme au centre de toutes les politiques de l'Union et des États membres sans exception, ainsi qu'au centre de tous les accords internationaux.

1. Dès lors, la Commission compte-t-elle publier une communication sur le plan d'action en matière de Droits de l'homme afin de promouvoir les valeurs de l'Union dans la dimension extérieure de la justice et des affaires intérieures, comme l'annonçait le plan d'action mettant en œuvre le programme de Stockholm en 2010 et conformément au plan d'action de l'Union en faveur des Droits de l'homme et de la démocratie?

2. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur la création d'une législation imposant aux entreprises de l'Union de veiller à ce que leurs achats ne soutiennent pas les responsables de conflits et de graves violations des Droits de l'homme, notamment en effectuant des contrôles et des audits de leurs chaînes d'approvisionnement en ressources minérales et en publiant leurs conclusions?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(18 février 2013)

La Commission a adopté en 2010 une stratégie pour la mise en œuvre effective de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne ([1]). Cette stratégie préconise une approche garantissant la prise en compte systématique des droits fondamentaux dans l'ensemble des politiques extérieures et intérieures de l'UE, y compris dans le domaine de la justice et des affaires intérieures. Plus particulièrement, l'approche globale de la question des migrations et de la mobilité, qui constitue le cadre d'ensemble de la politique migratoire extérieure de l'UE, souligne que le respect de la Charte des droits fondamentaux et des Droits de l'homme est à la base de la politique de l'UE en matière de migrations et de ses relations avec les pays tiers.

En outre, le Conseil a reconnu qu'il avait un rôle essentiel à jouer dans le respect de la mise en œuvre effective de la Charte dans le cadre de ses travaux législatifs ([2]). En juin 2012, il a adopté un cadre stratégique et un plan d'action en faveur des Droits de l'homme dans les relations avec les pays tiers, qui prévoient des actions veillant à ce que les Droits de l'homme sous-tendent la dimension extérieure des travaux accomplis dans le domaine de la justice et des affaires intérieures ([3]). La Commission estime par conséquent que le plan d'action en matière de Droits de l'homme dans l'espace de liberté, de sécurité et de justice, tel qu'envisagé dans le programme de Stockholm, n'est plus nécessaire.

Le cadre stratégique et le plan d'action en faveur des Droits de l'homme dans les relations avec les pays tiers contiennent également un engagement pris en faveur de la mise en œuvre de la Communication de la Commission sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises et de la promotion des principes directeurs des Nations unies relatifs aux entreprises et aux Droits de l'homme. À cet égard, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux questions 9735/2012 et 11460/2012 ([4]).

([1]) Stratégie pour la mise en œuvre effective de la Charte des droits fondamentaux par l'Union européenne, COM(2010)573 final, Bruxelles, 19.10.2010.

([2]) Conclusions du Conseil sur le rôle du Conseil de l'Union européenne pour assurer la mise en œuvre effective de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne, du 25 février 2011, disponibles à l'adresse suivante:. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/119464.pdf

([3]) Cadre stratégique de l'UE en matière de Droits de l'homme et de démocratie et plan d'action de l'UE en faveur des Droits de l'homme et de la démocratie, 11855/12, Luxembourg, 25 juin 2012.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011232/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: EU's human rights strategy

Respect for human rights is a founding principle of the European Union. The EU has a legal obligation, stated in the Treaties, to place human rights at the heart of all its policies and those of the Member States, without exception, and at the heart of all international agreements.

1. This being so, is the Commission planning to issue a communication on the human rights action plan in order to promote the EU's values in the external dimension of justice and home affairs policy, as announced in the action plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme in 2010 and in line with the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy?

2. What is the Commission's position on the creation of legislation requiring EU companies to ensure that their purchases do not support perpetrators of conflicts and grave human rights violations, namely by carrying out checks and audits on their mineral supply chains and publishing the findings?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Commission has adopted in 2010 a strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([1]). The Charter strategy provides for an approach to ensure that fundamental rights are systematically taken into account in all external as well as internal EU policies, including in the area of justice and home affairs policies. In particular, the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, the EU overarching framework of the EU external migration policy, emphasises that respect for the Charter of Fundamental Rights and human rights lie at the basis of the EU migration policy and its relations with third countries.

Furthermore, the Council has recognised that it has a key role in ensuring the effective implementation of the Charter in its legislative work ([2]). In June 2012, the Council has adopted a strategy and action plan for human rights in relations with third countries, which provides for actions to ensure that human rights underpin the external dimension of work in the area of justice and home affairs ([3]). As a result, the Commission is of the view that the action plan on human rights in the area of freedom, security and justice, as envisaged in the Stockholm programme, is not any more needed.

The strategy and action plan for human rights in relations with third countries contains also a commitment to implement the Commission Communication on Corporate Social Responsibility and promote UN Guiding Principles on Business and human rights. In this regard, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to replies to questions 9735/2012 and 11460/2012 ([4]).

([1]) Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union, COM(2010) 573 final, Brussels, 19.10.2010.

([2]) Council conclusions on the role of the Council of the European Union in ensuring the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 25.2.2011, available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/119464.pdf

([3]) EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, 11855/12, Luxembourg, 25 June 2012.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011233/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 décembre 2012)

Objet: Négociation de l'accord Russie-Union européenne

La Commission est sur le point de négocier un nouvel accord approfondi et ambitieux avec la Russie. Pour rappel, l'Union européenne est le premier partenaire commercial de la Russie et à l'origine de 75 % des investissements étrangers directs en Russie.

1. Quels outils de contrôle la Commission compte-t-elle mettre en place concernant les transferts de haute technologie et de savoir-faire de l'Union afin de prévenir le piratage, la contrefaçon et la concurrence déloyale?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle demander à la Russie de ratifier l'accord commercial anti-contrefaçon, ce qui contribuerait largement à la coordination de la lutte internationale contre le piratage et la contrefaçon?

3. La Commission, dans le cadre de ses négociations avec la Russie, compte-t-elle l'influencer vers une réforme de son régime douanier très lourd et onéreux, afin notamment de garantir aux petites et moyennes entreprises un meilleur accès au marché?

4. La Commission s'engage-t-elle à obtenir un accord juridiquement contraignant sur le commerce et l'investissement, qui soit signé par la Russie dès qu'elle s'engagera à respecter les règles du commerce international en adhérant à l'OMC, et qui établira les bases d'un mécanisme de règlement des différends?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(5 février 2013)

La Commission a l'intention d'introduire dans le nouvel accord avec la Russie des dispositions détaillées concernant l'application des droits de propriété intellectuelle afin d'éviter le détournement de connaissances et de technologies de détenteurs de droits européens, ce qui est conforme avec l'engagement historique de la Russie d'adopter un niveau de protection de la propriété intellectuelle similaire à celui de l'UE.

Pour les raisons indiquées dans la réponse à la question écrite antérieure de l'Honorable Parlementaire (P-006906/2012 ([1])), la Commission n'a pas l'intention de demander à la Russie de ratifier l'accord commercial anti-contrefaçon.

La Commission a proposé aux négociateurs russes d'inclure dans le nouvel accord des dispositions portant entre autres sur la coopération douanière, y compris la possibilité d'échanges d'informations entre les services douaniers, sur la législation et les procédures douanières, y compris la suppression du recours obligatoire aux représentants en douane et aux inspections avant expédition, sur le transit douanier ainsi que sur la détermination de la valeur en douane et l'élimination des droits de douane.

La Russie a déjà signé un engagement contraignant de respecter les règles du commerce international. Cet engagement est entré en vigueur le 22 août 2012, soit dès l'adhésion de la Russie à l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC). Toutefois, la Russie n'a pas rempli un certain nombre d'obligations importantes qui lui incombent dans le cadre de l'OMC et qui ont fait l'objet de discussions bilatérales à tous les niveaux, y compris à l'occasion du sommet UE-Russie qui a eu lieu à Bruxelles le 21 décembre 2012. La solution privilégiée pour résoudre ces problèmes est une négociation bilatérale, mais faute de résultats dans un délai raisonnable, la Commission n'hésitera pas à faire usage de tous les autres instruments à sa disposition, y compris le mécanisme multilatéral de règlement des différends.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011233/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Negotiations towards a trade agreement between the EU and Russia

The Commission is about to agree a comprehensive and ambitious new trade agreement with Russia. The EU is Russia's largest trading partner, and provides 75% of foreign direct investment into the country.

1. What instruments does the Commission intend to introduce to monitor transfers of high technology and expertise from the EU with a view to combating piracy, counterfeiting and unfair competition?

2. Will the Commission ask Russia to ratify the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement, which would greatly help coordinate efforts to combat piracy and counterfeiting worldwide?

3. In its negotiations with Russia, will the Commission urge it to reform its unwieldy and punitive customs system with a view to making it easier for SMEs to access the Russian market?

4. Will the Commission make Russia sign a binding commitment to abide by the rules of international trade by joining the WTO, which would pave the way for a mechanism for the resolution of trade disputes?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission intends to introduce in the New Agreement with Russia detailed provisions concerning the enforcement of intellectual property rights to avoid the misappropriation of European rightholders' knowledge and technologies which is in line with Russia's historic commitment to introduce a similar level of intellectual property (IP) protection in Russia as in the EU.

For the reasons stated in the reply to the Honourable Member's previous Written Question P-006906/2012 ([1]), the Commission has no intention of asking Russia to ratify the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement.

The Commission has proposed to the Russian negotiators to include in the New Agreement provisions *inter alia* on customs cooperation including possible exchanges of information between the customs services, on customs legislation and procedures, including the abolition of mandatory use of customs representatives and pre-shipment inspections, customs transit, as well as on customs valuation and on the elimination of customs fees.

Russia has already signed a binding commitment to abide by the rules of international trade. This binding commitment entered into force on 22 August 2012, i.e. upon Russia`s accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). However, Russia failed to fulfil a number of its important WTO obligations which have been subject to bilateral discussions at all levels including at the EU-Russia Summit held in Brussels on 21 December 2012. Although the preferred way to solve such issues is a bilateral negotiation, if no result can be achieved within a reasonable time period, the Commission will not refrain from using all other means at its disposal including the multilateral dispute settlement mechanism.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011234/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 décembre 2012)

Objet: Transport de chevaux

La Commission a émis un rapport sur l'état de la mise en œuvre du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil. Cependant, concernant le transfert des chevaux, et en dépit des nouveaux éléments de preuve scientifiques soumis par l'AESA (Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments), aucune recommandation de modification législative n'a été intégrée à ce rapport.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle se rallier à l'avis du Parlement et proposer une réduction considérable de la durée maximale de tous les transports de chevaux destinés à l'abattage, en accord avec la directive 2009/156/CE du Conseil?

2. Dans l'affirmative, quelles sont les pistes de réflexion de la Commission sur ce sujet?

3. Quand et comment la Commission compte-t-elle procéder à un réexamen approfondi et scientifique des normes de bien-être pour les chevaux, y compris un nouvel examen des normes relatives à la conception des véhicules, à l'espace disponible et à l'approvisionnement en eau?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(22 janvier 2013)

Dans son rapport sur le bien-être des animaux pendant le transport ([1]), la Commission conclut que le contrôle de l'application du règlement demeure un défi important et que le maintien de la situation juridique actuelle permettra aux États membres et aux parties prenantes de se concentrer sur le contrôle de l'application des dispositions dans un cadre juridique stable. La Commission n'envisage par conséquent aucune modification du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport ([2]), et donc aucune modification de la durée maximale des trajets pour les chevaux destinés à l'abattage.

La Commission n'entend pas procéder à un réexamen scientifique des normes pour le transport des chevaux. À la demande de la Commission, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a adopté, le 2 décembre 2010, un avis scientifique concernant le bien-être des animaux lors du transport («Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport») ([3]). Cet avis comprend les données scientifiques les plus récentes sur le transport des chevaux et il appartient aux États membres de garantir la bonne application des exigences prévues par la législation.

([1]) Rapport de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil sur l'incidence du règlement (CE) n° 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport (COM(2011)700 final.
([2]) JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([3]) EFSA Journal 2011; 9(1):1966 [125 p.].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011234/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Transport of horses

The Commission has published a progress report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005. However, despite the fact that the EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) has provided new scientific evidence, the report contained no recommendations on the transport of horses.

1. Does the Commission intend to heed Parliament's advice and propose, in accordance with Council Directive 95/29/EC, a substantial reduction to maximum journey times for all movements of horses for slaughter?

2. If so, what avenues is the Commission exploring?

3. When will the Commission conduct a thoroughgoing scientific review of standards for horse welfare, including a reassessment of standards for vehicle design and space and water requirements? What form would such a review take?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2013)

The Commission Report on animal welfare during transport ([1]) concluded that enforcement remains a major challenge and a steady legal situation will allow Member States and stakeholders to focus on enforcement within a stable legal framework. The Commission is therefore not considering any amendment to Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]), including the maximum journey time for horses for slaughter.

The Commission will not be conducting a scientific review of standards for the transport of horses. At the request of the Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on 2 December 2010 adopted the 'Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport' ([3]). The opinion included updated scientific data on the transport of horses and it is up to Member States to ensure the proper enforcement of the requirements provided for in the legislation.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. COM(2011) 700 final.
([2]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([3]) EFSA Journal 2011;9(1):1966 [125 pp.].

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011235/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 décembre 2012)

Objet: Transport de volailles

La Commission a émis un rapport sur l'état de la mise en œuvre du règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 du Conseil.

Il est demandé, au considérant 9 du règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 du Conseil, que des dispositions adaptées soient proposées pour les volailles dès que les évaluations de l'AESA (Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments) seront disponibles.

1. Pourquoi le rapport de la Commission ne prend-il nullement en compte le transport des volailles, en dépit du fait qu'il s'agit de la principale catégorie animale transportée en Europe?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle réexaminer, sur la base scientifique la plus récente, la législation européenne en vigueur en matière de transport de volailles?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(25 janvier 2013)

1. Le rapport de la Commission sur le bien-être des animaux durant leur transport ([1]) fait suite à l'obligation énoncée à l'article 32 du règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport ([2]). Comme ce rapport l'explique, le règlement s'applique au transport d'animaux vertébrés transportés dans le cadre d'une activité économique. Cependant, du fait que les modalités du règlement concernent surtout les bovins, les porcins et les équidés, le rapport se concentre principalement sur le transport de ces animaux. Il ne prend pas en considération le transport d'autres espèces, telles que les chiens et les chats, les volailles, les animaux détenus à des fins scientifiques ou les espèces exotiques.

2. La Commission n'envisage pas de réexaminer le règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 pour le moment, y compris en ce qui concerne le transport de volailles.

([1]) Rapport de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil sur l'incidence du règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 du Conseil relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport (COM(2011) 700 final.
([2]) JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011235/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Transport of poultry

The Commission has published a progress report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

Recital 9 of that regulation requests that specific provisions for poultry be set out when the relevant evaluations have been conducted by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

1. Why does the Commission's report not take the transport of poultry into account, despite the fact that poultry constitute the main category of animals transported in Europe?

2. Will the Commission review existing EU legislation on the transport of poultry on the basis of the latest scientific evidence?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

1. The Commission Report on animal welfare during transport ([1]) was a response to the request of Article 32 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]). As is explained in the report, the regulation applies to the transport of vertebrate animals transported in connection with an economic activity. However, since the details of the regulation mainly concern cattle, pigs and horses, the content of this report mainly focuses on the transport of these animals. It does not take the transport of other species, such as dogs and cats, poultry, animals kept for scientific purposes, and exotic species, into account.

2. The Commission does not consider reviewing Regulation 1/2005 for the time being, including for the transport of poultry.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. COM(2011) 700 final.

([2]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011236/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(7 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Włączanie dzieci romskich do systemu szkół publicznych

Do opinii publicznej coraz częściej trafiają informacje o problemach w aktywnym włączaniu dzieci romskich do systemu szkół publicznych. Obowiązujące systemy edukacji nie są wystarczająco przygotowane na odmienność kulturową Romów.

Coraz częstszym zjawiskiem jest wydawanie orzeczeń o niepełnosprawności intelektualnej dzieci romskich. Jak podają źródła statystyczne w Polsce 52 % z nich wykazuje się pełną sprawnością intelektualną, a ewentualne problemy wynikają z mniejszego zasobu słów lub odmienności kulturalnej. O takie orzeczenia zabiegają czasem sami rodzice, ponieważ umożliwia im to otrzymywanie renty na dziecko niepełnosprawne. Dzieci z orzeczeniem o niepełnosprawności intelektualnej są wysyłane najczęściej do szkół specjalnych.

Zwracam się z zapytaniem:

czy Komisja przewiduje wprowadzenie programów przedszkolnych, które umożliwiłyby dzieciom romskim płynne włączanie w system nauczania szkolnego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(8 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma problemu wykluczenia dzieci romskich z ogólnego programu nauczania, a w szczególności niewłaściwego klasyfikowania w pewnych państwach członkowskich niektórych dzieci romskich jako niepełnosprawnych intelektualnie.

Należy podkreślić, że art. 165 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej stanowi, że państwa członkowskie ponoszą pełną odpowiedzialność za treść nauczania i organizację systemów edukacyjnych. Komisja Europejska nie jest zatem uprawniona do wprowadzania programów przedszkolnych adresowanych do dzieci romskich; państwa członkowskie, których to dotyczy, muszą same podjąć niezbędne działania.

W komunikacie „Unijne ramy dotyczące krajowych strategii integracji Romów do 2020 r." z dnia 5 kwietnia 2011 r. Komisja wezwała wszystkie państwa członkowskie do opracowania krajowych strategii integracji Romów. Komunikat propaguje edukację przedszkolną i wczesną edukację jako istotny pierwszy krok na drodze do lepszego wykształcenia i integracji ze społeczeństwem.

W 2012 r. Komisja dokonała oceny krajowych strategii państw członkowskich. Oczekuje się, że Polska wraz z innymi państwami członkowskimi weźmie pod uwagę wyniki tej oceny. Komisja podsumuje postępy w tym zakresie wiosną 2013 r.

Ponadto razem z Radą Europy Komisja współfinansuje program ROMED. Celem tego programu jest zniesienie barier językowych oraz odbudowanie zaufania i nawiązanie dialogu między rodzinami romskimi a miejscowymi szkołami. Służyć ma temu szkolenie mediatorów, z których większość jest romskiego pochodzenia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011236/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Inclusion of Roma children in the public education system

Problems in the active inclusion of Roma children in the public education system are becoming a topic of increasing public debate. Compulsory education systems are not sufficiently prepared for the cultural differences that Roma display.

An increasingly common occurrence is for Roma children to be classified as mentally handicapped. According to statistics, 52% of Roma children in Poland are fully mentally capable, but problems can arise as a result of their limited vocabulary or cultural differences. Sometimes the parents themselves try to have their children classified as handicapped, as it enables them to obtain benefits for their disabled child. Children who are classified in such a way are most often sent to special schools.

Does the Commission plan to introduce pre-school programmes in order to enable Roma children to be fully included in the school system?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the problem of exclusion of Roma children from mainstream education and in particular the inappropriate classification of some Roma children as mentally handicapped in some Member States.

It must be underlined that Article 165 of the Treaty states that Member States are solely responsible for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems. Therefore, the European Commission does not have the competence to introduce pre-school programmes aimed at Roma children; the Member States concerned have to take the necessary steps.

In the communication 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020' dated 5 April 2011, the Commission invited all Member States to elaborate National Roma Integration Strategies. The communication promotes pre-school and early childhood education as a vital first step towards a more successful educational path and better integration into society.

In 2012 the Commission assessed the National Strategies of Member States. Poland, amongst other Member States, is expected to take the results of this assessment into account. The Commission will report on progress made in spring 2013.

In addition, together with the Council of Europe, the Commission is co-funding the ROMED Programme. This programme aims at alleviating linguistic barriers and restoring trust and dialogue between Roma families and local schools by training mediators, most of whom have a Roma background themselves.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011237/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(7 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Konfiskata niebezpiecznych zabawek we Włoszech

Według doniesień medialnych Gwardia Finansowa w środkowych Włoszech skonfiskowała blisko 300 tys. chińskich zabawek, które zawierają bardzo szkodliwe dla zdrowia substancje. Zabawki mogą powodować wady rozwojowe i wybuchać w rękach w razie podniesienia temperatury. Ponadto chemikalia zawarte w zabawkach mogą odpowiadać za zakłócanie rozwoju narządów płciowych u chłopców oraz powodować hamowanie wzrostu u niemowląt.

Istnieją obawy, że tego typu produkty będą szerzej dystrybuowane na rynku europejskim. Przed taką możliwością powinien chronić system RAPEX, który utworzono dla zapewnienia wysokiego poziomu ochrony zdrowia i bezpieczeństwa konsumentów na obszarze jednolitego rynku Unii Europejskiej.

Głównym i bezpośrednim celem funkcjonowania systemu jest zapewnienie szybkiej wymiany informacji między państwami członkowskimi i Komisją Europejską na temat produktów stwarzających zagrożenie oraz środków podjętych w danym kraju, by wykluczyć lub ograniczyć ich wprowadzanie na rynek, a także ewentualnie użytkowanie. Informacje o znalezionych we Włoszech szkodliwych zabawkach nie trafiły jednak do systemu RAPEX zaraz po przeprowadzonych kontrolach w sklepach w rejonie miasta Macerata w środkowych Włoszech, ani po ich skonfiskowaniu w ramach ogólnokrajowej akcji w Włoszech.

Zwracam się z zapytaniem: czy rynek europejski jest odpowiednio zabezpieczony przed importem szkodliwych zabawek?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącego Antonia Tajaniego w imieniu Komisji
(25 stycznia 2013 r.)

Bezpieczeństwo zabawek jest zapewniane dyrektywą 2009/48/WE ([1]). Wszystkie zabawki wprowadzane do obrotu w UE muszą spełniać wymogi powyższej dyrektywy, której przepisy w zakresie bezpieczeństwa należą do najbardziej restrykcyjnych, w szczególności odnośnie do substancji chemicznych.

Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę z zagrożeń dla zdrowia, które stwarzają niektóre zabawki produkowane w Chinach. Zgodnie z informacjami zawartymi w najnowszym corocznym sprawozdaniu dotyczącym funkcjonowania systemu RAPEX ([2]) 54 % produktów niebezpiecznych zgłoszonych w 2011 r. pochodzi z Chin. Jest to liczba nieco niższa niż dane za lata 2009 i 2010 – odpowiednio 60 % i 58 %.

Współpraca w zakresie bezpieczeństwa zabawek, którą w ostatnich latach Komisja prowadzi z władzami Chin, obejmuje regularną wymianę informacji pomiędzy europejskimi i chińskimi ekspertami ds. bezpieczeństwa produktów na temat obowiązujących wymogów w zakresie bezpieczeństwa, niebezpiecznych zabawek pochodzących z Chin zidentyfikowanych na unijnym rynku, a także ukierunkowane działania zewnętrzne na rzecz producentów w Chinach oraz szkolenia dla urzędników władz Chin prowadzących aktywne działania zapobiegawcze w ramach obowiązkowej kontroli wywozu ze strony władz Chin.

W celu ułatwienia unijnych granicznych kontroli celnych przywożonych produktów w ostatnim okresie opracowano wytyczne dotyczące bezpieczeństwa produktów, w tym zabawek. Ma również miejsce ścisła współpraca pomiędzy unijnymi organami ds. nadzoru rynku i organami celnymi.

Komisja kontaktuje się z władzami Włoch w sprawie wzmiankowanej w przedmiotowym pytaniu wymagającym pisemnej odpowiedzi.

([1]) Dz.U. L 170 z 30.6.2009, s. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/stats_reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011237/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Confiscation of hazardous toys in Italy

According to media reports, the *Guardia di Finanza* in central Italy confiscated almost 300 000 Chinese toys containing extremely harmful substances. These toys could cause developmental defects or explode in a child's hands at increased temperatures. Furthermore, the chemicals contained in the toys could be responsible for disrupting male sexual development and stunting growth in babies.

There are concerns that such products will be distributed more widely on the European market. The RAPEX system, which was established to provide a high level of protection of consumers' health and safety on the EU single market, should act to prevent this from occurring.

The primary objective of the system is to assure the rapid exchange of information between the Member States and the European Commission with regard to products posing a risk and measures taken by a Member State to exclude or limit their placing on the market or use. However, information on the hazardous toys found in Italy did not make its way to the RAPEX system after checks were carried out in shops in the Macerata city area in central Italy, nor after the toys were confiscated as part of a national operation.

Is the European market sufficiently well protected against imports of hazardous toys?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

The safety of toys is assured by Directive 2009/48/EC ([1]). All toys placed on the EU market have to comply with this directive, whose safety rules are amongst the strictest worldwide, in particular for chemicals.

The Commission is aware of the health risks posed by some toys manufactured in China. According to the last annual report on the functioning of RAPEX ([2]), 54% of the dangerous products notified in 2011 originate from China. This number is slightly lower than the 60% recorded in 2009 and the 58% recorded in 2010.

The Commission's cooperation in recent years with the Chinese authorities on the safety of toys involves regular exchanges of information between European and Chinese product safety experts about applicable safety requirements, about unsafe toys of Chinese origin found on the EU market, and targeted outreach activities for manufacturers in China as well as training of Chinese government officials active in preventive enforcement as part of China's mandatory export controls.

To facilitate EU customs' border controls on imported products, guidelines on product safety, including for toys, have recently been developed. Furthermore, close cooperation between EU market surveillance and customs authorities is taking place.

The Commission is in contact with the Italian authorities regarding the case referred to in the Written Question.

([1]) OJEU, 30.6.209, L170,p.1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/stats_reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011238/12
to the Commission
Martin Callanan (ECR)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Free movement of individuals and goods in the European Union — follow-up

Thank you for your response to my Written Question P-009796/2012. I asked you to confirm that the stated policy of the Belgian police to treat travelling British citizens visiting Bruges in a manner different to travelling EU citizens of other nationalities constituted systematic discrimination on the grounds of nationality and, as such, was in breach of EC law.

In your answer, you stated that the right to move and reside freely may be restricted on grounds of public policy, but that

a) 'restrictive measures must comply with the principle of proportionality and be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual concerned which must represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat',

and that

b) 'territorial restrictions must not discriminate on the grounds of nationality'.

1. Can you confirm unequivocally and without qualification that systematic discrimination and territorial restrictions imposed upon a particular group of EU citizens — in this case, EU citizens of a certain nationality — without any consideration of 'the personal conduct of the individual concerned' (your phrase) constitute a breach of EC law?

2. As regards my question concerning the intended policy of the Belgian police to confiscate at the border alcoholic drinks in the possession of visiting British citizens, you referred me to Article 36 TFEU which permits prohibitions or restrictions on the import of goods on the grounds of public morality, public policy or public security. Article 36 TFEU also states, however, that 'such prohibitions or restrictions shall not, however, constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination'. Since the Belgian police stated that they intended to confiscate at the border alcohol in the possession of British tourists but made no such threats against French tourists bringing in wine, German tourists bringing in beer or Dutch tourists bringing in spirits, such intentions were without doubt arbitrary discrimination against a certain group of EU citizens. Can you confirm that treating one group of EU citizens transporting a certain good across an internal border in a different manner to other EU citizens transporting the same good constitutes arbitrary discrimination?

3. I submitted Written Question P-009796/2012 as a priority question on 25 October 2012. Under Rule 117 of the Rules of Procedure, 'questions which require an immediate answer but not detailed research (priority questions) shall be answered within three weeks of being forwarded to the addressees'. I received a response on 4 December 2012. Since this question did not require detailed research but was a simple clarification of EC law, I would like you to explain why you took five weeks to respond to the question.

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

As regard the first question, the Commission would like to reiterate that measures which restrict the right of EU citizens to enter an EU country and to reside there and which are not based on the personal conduct of the individual concerned are contrary to EC law on free movement of EU citizens. Territorial restrictions may be allowed provided they are not based on the grounds of nationality but on public policy or public security considerations.

According to the information available to the Commission, the statement by the Belgian Police to which the Honourable Member referred in his Written Question P-009796/2012 was given by Mr Rudy Saron of Bruges Police. The statement was given to provide advice to travelling supporters and is related to the measures the Belgian Police was envisaging taking to maintain law and order in the vicinity of the Jan Breydel stadium before, during and after the match between Club Brugge and Newcastle United FC. It does not seem to affect the right of travelling supporters under EC law on free movement of EU citizens to enter Belgium and to reside there.

Concerning the delay in answering the previous question by the Honourable Member, the Commission would be grateful if the Honourable Member could accept its apologies for the delay which was due to the legal complexity of the question.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011239/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Demokratisierungsprozess in Myanmar

Seit 2010 wurden im Zuge einer vorsichtigen Öffnung des Landes politische Reformen in Myanmar eingeleitet. Ende April 2012 besuchte die Hohe Vertreterin der EU für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik Myanmar.

Wie die Hohe Vertreterin in ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-003463/2012 von Hans-Peter Martin angibt, sei es das Ziel der Reise gewesen, „die bisherigen politischen Reformen anzuerkennen und die Regierung Myanmars aufzufordern, die Reformen fortzusetzen". In Gesprächen sei erörtert worden, „wie die positiven Veränderungen im Land vorangetrieben werden können und wie die EU diesen Prozess unterstützen kann".

1. Zu welchen Ergebnissen kam die Hohe Vertreterin in den Unterredungen mit ihren Gesprächspartnern in Myanmar, betreffend der Art und Weise, wie die positiven Veränderungen im Rahmen des Reformprozesses effizient vorangetrieben werden können?

2. Baten die myanmarischen Gesprächspartner bei dem Besuch der Hohen Vertreterin um konkrete Unterstützung bei politischen Reformen?

3. In welcher Form hat die EU seit dem Besuch der Hohen Vertreterin den Demokratisierungsprozess in Myanmar weiter unterstützt? Welche Vorschläge der myanmarischen Gesprächspartner wurden im Rahmen der Unterstützung berücksichtigt beziehungsweise umgesetzt?

4. Wie beurteilt die Hohe Vertreterin die Entwicklungen in Myanmar seit April 2012?

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

Während ihres Myanmar-Besuchs im April traf die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin mit dem Präsidenten, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, dem Sprecher des Unterhauses des Parlaments, einer Reihe von Ministern sowie mit ehemaligen politischen Gefangenen zusammen.

Die HV/VP forderte Myanmar auf, die politischen Reformen fortzusetzen, unter anderem durch die Freilassung der noch inhaftierten politischen Gefangenen, und auf den Frieden in den ethnischen Gebieten hinzuarbeiten. Bei dem Besuch des Kommissionspräsidenten im November 2012 wurden diese Aufforderungen bekräftigt.

Seit April 2011 wurden eine Reihe begrüßenswerter Schritte unternommen. Die große Mehrzahl der politischen Gefangenen wurde mittlerweile freigelassen. Das Parlament ist dabei, seine Rolle aktiv auszubauen und Daw Aung San Suu Kyi ist Vorsitzende des Unterausschusses für Rechtsstaatlichkeit. Die Kontrolle der Medien wurde erheblich gelockert. Mittlerweile wurden neue Vorschriften im Arbeitsrecht erlassen und mehr als 120 Gewerkschaften genehmigt und eingerichtet. Zudem wurde ein neues Investitionsgesetz verabschiedet. Dies sind nur einige Beispiele für den Wandel, der sich derzeit in dem Land vollzieht.

Allerdings gibt es weiterhin eine Reihe von Herausforderungen, insbesondere bei der Suche nach einer dauerhaften Lösung für die Rohingya im Rakhine-Staat und dem Konflikt in Kachin, der in jüngster Zeit eskaliert ist.

Die EU sollte ihre Politik des Engagements, der Fürsprache und der Unterstützung für den Reformprozess fortsetzen. Daher leistet die EU auf Ersuchen der Regierung von Myanmar derzeit Unterstützung bei deren Bemühungen, die Friedensverhandlungen mit bewaffneten ethnischen Gruppen voranzubringen. Der Kapazitätsaufbau wurde als ein Bereich ermittelt, in dem die EU zusätzlich zu einer verstärkten Hilfe in den Bereichen Bildung, Gesundheitsversorgung und Existenzgrundlagen, in denen sie bereits tätig ist, einen sinnvollen Beitrag leisten kann. Darüber hinaus wird weitere Unterstützung für die nationale Menschenrechtskommission, den Wahlausschuss und die Zivilgesellschaft in die Wege geleitet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011239/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Democratisation process in Myanmar

Political reforms have been introduced in Myanmar since 2010 as part of a cautious opening- up of the country. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy visited Myanmar at the end of April 2012.

As the High Representative explains in her answer to Question E-003463/2012 from Hans-Peter Martin, the purpose of the trip was 'to acknowledge political reform so far and to encourage the Government of Myanmar to continue'. The answer to the written question states that discussions included 'how to bring forward the positive changes in the country and how the EU could support that process'.

1. What were the results of the High Representative's meetings with her interlocutors in Myanmar concerning the way in which the positive changes can be promoted efficiently as part of the reform process?

2. Did the interlocutors from Myanmar ask for specific support with political reforms during the High Representative's visit?

3. How has the EU further supported the democratisation process in Myanmar since the High Representative's visit? What proposals made by the interlocutors from Myanmar have been taken into account or implemented as part of support?

4. How does the High Representative assess developments in Myanmar since April 2012?

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

During her April visit to Myanmar, the HR/VP met the President, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, a number of ministers and former political prisoners.

The HR/VP urged Myanmar to continue political reforms, including by freeing remaining political prisoners, and to work towards peace in the ethnic areas. The visit of the President of the Commission in November 2012 reinforced these messages.

Since April 2011, a number of encouraging steps have been taken. The great majority of political prisoners are now freed. Parliament is developing its role actively and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi chairs the Rule of Law subcommittee. Control of the media has been substantially relaxed. New labour laws have been introduced and more than 120 trade unions are approved and established. A new investment law has been issued. These are only some examples of the country's ongoing transformation.

Challenges though remain, particularly with regards to finding durable solutions for the Rohingyas in Rakhine State and with regards to the conflict in Kachin, which has recently escalated.

The EU should continue its policy of engagement, advocacy and support to the reform process. Thus, at the request of the Government of Myanmar, the EU is assisting its efforts to advance peace negotiations with the ethnic armed groups. Capacity-building has been identified as one area where the EU could usefully contribute, in addition to an increased assistance effort in education, health and livelihoods where it is already engaged. Further support to the National Human Rights Commission, the Electoral Commission and to civil society is also underway.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011240/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Sonnenkraftwerke auf ungenutzten Kraftwerks-Geländen

Im November 2012 wurde ein Sonnenkraftwerk wurde ein auf dem Gelände des nie ans Netz gegangenen Atomkraftwerks Zwentendorf in Österreich installiertes Solarkraftwerk in Betrieb genommen. Die 2 300 installierten Solarpaneele wurden über ein Bürgerbeteiligungsmodell, bei dem Bürger über Anteilsscheine das Projekt unterstützen konnten, finanziert.

1. Sieht die Kommission die Installation eines Sonnenkraftwerks auf dem Gelände eines nicht in Betrieb befindlichen Atomkraftwerkes als vorbildliches Modell für die Nutzung von weiteren nicht oder nicht mehr in Betrieb befindlichen Kraftwerken?

2. Sind der Kommission weitere Beispiele von Installationen zur Gewinnung erneuerbarer Energien auf nicht oder nicht mehr genutzten Kraftwerksgeländen bekannt?

3. Wird die Kommission sich für die Förderung der Installation von Sonnenkraftwerken auf nicht in Betrieb befindlichen Kraftwerksgeländen einsetzen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(24. Januar 2013)

1. Strategien zur Förderung erneuerbarer Energien müssen viele Faktoren berücksichtigen, u. a. Klimabedingungen, Umweltanliegen, den Netzzugang, die Kostenwirksamkeit und natürlich die Nachfrage nach Energie. Gemäß dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip liegt die Entscheidung über konkrete Maßnahmen zur Förderung erneuerbarer Energien bei den Mitgliedstaaten.

2. Zurzeit liegen keine spezifischen statistischen Informationen über die Produktion von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen am Standort von nicht mehr genutzten Kraftwerken vor.

3. Ob nicht mehr genutzte Kraftwerke in allen Fällen geeignete Standorte für die Errichtung von Solarkraftwerken sind, lässt sich schwer beurteilen. Eine Beurteilung müsste in jedem einzelnen Fall erfolgen. Wenngleich einiges für die Nutzung solcher Standorte für die Energiegewinnung aus erneuerbaren Energiequellen spricht, ist eine detaillierte Analyse erforderlich, um jeweils für einen bestimmten Standort zu einer endgültigen Schlussfolgerung zu gelangen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011240/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Solar power stations on disused power plant sites

In November 2012, a solar power plant went into operation on the site of Austria's Zwentendorf nuclear power plant, which never went online. The 2 300 installed solar panels were financed through a civic partnership, which allowed members of the public to support the project by buying share certificates.

1. Does the Commission consider the installation of a solar power plant on the site of a disused nuclear power plant as an exemplary model for the use of other disused power plants?

2. Is the Commission aware of any other examples of installations for producing renewable energy on disused power plant sites?

3. Will the Commission promote the installation of solar power plants on disused power station sites?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2013)

1. Strategies to promote renewable energy must take many factors into account, including climatic conditions, environmental concerns, grid access, cost effectiveness and of course energy demand. In conformity with the principle of subsidiarity, the choice on concrete measures to support renewables is left to Member States.

2. Currently, no specific statistical information is available on the production of renewable energy on disused power plant sites.

3. It is difficult to assess whether disused power plants are in all cases suitable locations for installing solar power plants; assessment is case-specific. Although some elements speak in favour of using such areas for the production of renewable energy, a detailed analysis is necessary to come to a definite conclusion for a specific site.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011241/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δύο νεκροί νέοι σε εργατικό ατύχημα στο εργοτάξιο της Εγνατίας Οδού

Ακόμα δύο εργαζόμενοι ηλικίας 32 και 33 ετών, που δούλευαν για την κατασκευαστική «ΙΟΝΙΟΣ ΑΕ» που κατασκευάζει τον κάθετο άξονα της «ΕΓΝΑΤΙΑΣ ΟΔΟΥ» από την Κομοτηνή μέχρι τα σύνορα με την Βουλγαρία, σκοτώθηκαν το Σάββατο 17/11, κατά την διάρκεια μετακίνησης τους με φορτηγό, το οποίο κουβαλούσε οικοδομικά υλικά στο χώρο εργασίας τους, και το οποίο ξέφυγε από την πορεία του.

Οι απλήρωτοι μήνες εργασίας, η αύξηση των ωρών εργασίας, η εντατικοποίηση της εργασίας, η πίεση για την ολοκλήρωση των έργων ή της παραγωγής, η ελλιπής συντήρηση των μηχανημάτων και των εργαλείων, καθώς και τα μηδαμινά μέτρα προστασίας και πρόληψης, αποτελούν τους πραγματικούς λόγους που προκαλούνται τα εργατικά ατυχήματα.

Στην περίπτωση της κατασκευαστικής «ΙΟΝΙΟΣ ΑΕ», η εταιρία έχει αναλάβει με χρηματοδότηση του ΕΣΠΑ το έργο «Ανισόπεδος κόμβος Βιομηχανικής περιοχής Κομοτηνής (ΒΙΠΕ)» στην κατηγορία πράξεων «Κατασκευή/ολοκλήρωση/συμπλήρωση οδικών αξόνων ΤΕΝ/Τ» με κωδικό: 03.21.02.03 παίρνοντας μόνο για αυτό το κομμάτι 4 εκατ. ευρώ. Ωστόσο οι εργάτες βρίσκονται 6-7 μήνες απλήρωτοι, ενώ από την άλλη τα χρονοδιαγράμματα πιέζουν για άμεση ολοκλήρωση του έργου, γεγονός που οδηγεί σε εκπτώσεις στην ασφάλεια των εργατών και σε εργατικά ατυχήματα.

Αυτό είναι αποτέλεσμα της καπιταλιστικής ανάπτυξης στην Ελλάδα, της έλλειψης ουσιαστικών μέτρων προστασίας των εργαζομένων και των πολιτικών των ελληνικών κυβερνήσεων στο όνομα της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της διασφάλισης της κερδοφορίας του κεφαλαίου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Καταδικάζει τις πρακτικές της εταιρίας ΙΟΝΙΟΣ ΑΕ που άφηνε για μήνες απλήρωτους τους εργαζόμενους και τους εκθέτει σε σοβαρούς κινδύνους για την ζωή τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή εκφράζει τη βαθύτατη λύπη της για τις απώλειες ανθρώπινων ζωών σε τέτοιες τραγικές περιπτώσεις.

Η Επιτροπή αποδίδει εξαιρετική σημασία στην τήρηση των συνθηκών εργασίας από τους εργοδότες, ιδιαίτερα όσον αφορά την υγεία και την ασφάλεια στο χώρο εργασίας.

Τα έργα που διεξάγονται με την υποστήριξη των κονδυλίων της ΕΕ πρέπει να συμμορφώνονται με την ευρωπαϊκή και την εθνική νομοθεσία. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να αξιολογήσει τα γεγονότα ή να εκφράσει την άποψή της σχετικά με το εάν μια ιδιωτική εταιρεία έχει ή δεν έχει συμμορφωθεί με την ισχύουσα νομοθεσία. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια να διασφαλίσουν την ορθή και αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή της εθνικής νομοθεσίας από τον ενδιαφερόμενο εργοδότη, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις συγκεκριμένες συνθήκες για κάθε περίπτωση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011241/12
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Death of two young workers in an industrial accident at the Egnatia motorway construction site

Two more workers employed by the 'IONIOS Ltd' construction company that is building the vertical axis of the Egnatia motorway from Komotini to the Bulgarian border were killed on Saturday 17 November, when their lorry which was transporting building materials to their workplace left the road. They were, respectively, only 32 and 33 years old.

Unpaid months of work, increased work hours, an intensification of work, pressure to complete projects or production work, poor maintenance of equipment and tools, and minimal protection and prevention measures are the real reasons for industrial accidents.

In the case of the 'IONIOS Ltd' construction company, the company has been contracted to carry out, with NSRF funding, the project ' Komotini Industrial Zone Flyover' in the category of actions 'construction/integration/completion of road axes TEN/T', code: 03.21.02.03; for this section alone, it will be receiving EUR 4 million. However, its workers have not been paid for 6 or 7 months, while tight schedules mean that pressure is mounting for an immediate completion of the project, leading to skimping over worker safety and to industrial accidents.

This is the result of capitalist development in Greece, the lack of effective measures to protect workers and the policies of successive Greek governments in the name of competitiveness and ensuring the profitability of capital.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Will it condemn the practices of the 'IONIOS Ltd' construction company which has not paid workers for months and is putting their lives at serious risk?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Commission deeply regrets the loss of human life in such tragic circumstances.

The Commission attaches great importance to the respect of working conditions by the employers, in particularly as regards health and safety at work.

Projects carried out with support of EU funds have to comply with EU and national law. However, the Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with the applicable law. It is for the national authorities to ensure that the national legislation is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011242/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Να σταματήσουν οι απολύσεις στην εταιρία Aegean Airlines

Σε μαζική απόλυση 40 εργαζομένων από το ιπτάμενο προσωπικό καμπίνας (αεροσυνοδοί-φροντιστές), οι οποίοι εργάζονταν με συμβάσεις αορίστου χρόνου, προχώρησε η εταιρία Aegean Airlines από τον Σεπτέμβρη ενώ ταυτόχρονα απειλεί να απολύσει ακόμα περισσότερους.

Με αυτήν την απειλή εξαναγκάζει τους εργαζόμενους σε άδεια άνευ αποδοχών και, όπως έχει ανακοινώσει, θα είναι 25 εργαζόμενοι κάθε μήνα. Την ίδια όμως στιγμή ανανεώνει συμβάσεις εργαζομένων που εργάζονται με συμβάσεις ορισμένου χρόνου.

Ωστόσο η εταιρία από το 2011 έχει διπλασιάσει το δίκτυο της, πραγματοποιώντας όλους τους προορισμούς εξωτερικού της Ολυμπιακής Αεροπορίας. Αγόρασε το SLOT του Λονδίνου καταβάλλοντας 52 εκατ. ευρώ. Προχωρά σε εξαγορά της Ολυμπιακής Αεροπορίας έναντι 72 εκατ. ευρώ. Με λίγα λόγια, αυξάνει τις διαδρομές και τα κέρδη της ενώ ταυτόχρονα μειώνει τους εργαζόμενους αορίστου χρόνου και αυξάνει τους εργαζόμενους ορισμένου χρόνου.

Αποδεικνύεται λοιπόν ότι ο πραγματικός στόχος της εταιρίας, που είναι η κατάργηση των δικαιωμάτων των εργαζομένων με την αλλαγή των εργασιακών σχέσεων, θα έχει σαν αποτέλεσμα την παραπέρα μείωση των απολαβών τους. Ενώ, ταυτόχρονα, η εταιρεία αξιοποιεί την οδηγία Μπολγκενστάιν της ΕΕ για την πρόσληψη εργαζομένων από άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ, με διαφορετικά εργασιακά δικαιώματα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Τι σκοπεύει να πει στους απολυμένους για το μέλλον τους, όταν η ανεργία έχει φτάσει στο 25%;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Μαρτίου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ από κοινού με το ΔΝΤ παρέχουν άνευ προηγουμένου συνδρομή προς την Ελλάδα μέσω του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής. Αυτό βοηθά την Ελλάδα να διορθώσει τις δημοσιονομικές, οικονομικές και εξωτερικές ανισορροπίες, να εκσυγχρονίσει τις αγορές προϊόντων και εργασίας, να καταστήσει τον δημόσιο τομέα πιο αποδοτικό και πιο αποτελεσματικό και να βελτιώσει το επιχειρηματικό περιβάλλον, με στόχο να προωθήσει την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση.

Μια προσαρμογή τέτοιας έκτασης συνεπάγεται αναπόφευκτα μια βραχυπρόθεσμη αύξηση της ανεργίας. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή καταβάλλει κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια να βοηθήσει τις ελληνικές αρχές στην προσπάθειά τους να ξεπεράσουν την τρέχουσα δυσχερή κατάσταση και να μετριάσουν το βραχυπρόθεσμο κόστος, ιδίως μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου. Το επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» ενισχύει την ικανότητα των επιχειρήσεων και των εργαζομένων να προσαρμόζονται στον διεθνή ανταγωνισμό, υποστηρίζει την πρόσβαση στην αγορά εργασίας για τις υποεκπροσωπούμενες και ευάλωτες ομάδες, και μειώνει τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό. Το πρόγραμμα εθνικού αποθεματικού για απρόβλεπτα υποστηρίζει με πιο στοχοθετημένο τρόπο ανθρώπους που πλήττονται από τις συνέπειες των απρόβλεπτων κρίσεων, π.χ. βοηθώντας τους να δημιουργήσουν μια επιχείρηση. Οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν αφιερώσει ένα συνδυασμένο σύνολο που ανέρχεται σε 3 δισ. ευρώ περίπου στο πλαίσιο των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων για την ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού (ΕΠ ΑΝΑΔ) και το εθνικό αποθεματικό για απρόβλεπτα (ΕΠ ΕΑΑ), το 85 % των οποίων χρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ), ενώ το υπόλοιπο προέρχεται από εθνικούς πόρους.

Στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας «Ευκαιρίες για τους νέους» που δρομολόγησε η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, η Ελλάδα έλαβε μέτρα για να αντιμετωπίσει τα δραματικά επίπεδα ανεργίας των νέων με προϋπολογισμό ύψους 608 εκατ. ευρώ (85 % των οποίων χρηματοδοτείται από την ΕΕ) τα οποία προβλέπεται να βοηθήσουν περίπου 350 000 νέους. Παράλληλα, σχεδιάζονται μέτρα για να ενισχυθούν τα δίκτυα κοινωνικής προστασίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011242/12
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: An end to layoffs by Aegean Airlines

Since September 2012, Aegean Airlines has dismissed en masse 40 members of the cabin crew (flight attendants-stewardesses) who were employed on permanent contracts and is threatening to lay off even more.

With this threat, it is compelling workers to take unpaid leave and it has announced that 25 employees each month will be affected. At the same time, it is renewing the contracts of fixed-term contract staff.

However, since 2011 the company has doubled its network, serving all Olympic Airways' foreign destinations. It bought the London SLOT for EUR 52 million and is now buying out OA for EUR 72 million. In short, it is increasing scheduled flights and profits, while reducing the number of permanent staff and increasing the number of fixed-term contract staff.

It seems then that the company's real objective, which is to abrogate workers' rights by changing labour relations, will result in a further reduction in their salaries. At the same time, the company is using the EU Bolkestein Directive to recruit workers from other EU countries with different labour rights.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What future prospects can it offer redundant workers, given that unemployment is running at 25%?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The European Commission and the euro area Member States together with the IMF, are providing unprecedented support to Greece through the Economic Adjustment Programme. This helps Greece to correct the fiscal, financial and external imbalances, modernise the product and labour markets, make the public sector more efficient and more effective, and improve the business environment, with a view to spur growth and employment.

An adjustment of this magnitude inevitably entails a short term spike of unemployment. The Commission does it utmost to help the Greek authorities in overcoming the current difficult situation and alleviating the short term costs, in particular through the European Social Fund. The Human Resources Development operational programme reinforces the ability of firms and workers to adapt to international competition, suppports access to the labour market for under-represented and vulnerable groups, and reduces social exclusion. The National Contingency Reserve programme supports in a more targeted way people affected by the consequences of unforeseen crises, for example by helping them to set up a business. The Greek authorities have earmarked a combined total of almost EUR 3 billion under the HRD OP and the NCR OP, 85% of which is financed by the ESF with the rest coming from national resources.

Under the Youth Opportunities Initiative launched by the European Commission, Greece has taken steps to tackle the dramatic levels of youth unemployment with a budget of EUR 608 million (85% of which EU contribution) envisaged to help approximately 350.000 youngsters. In parallel, measures are being designed to strengthen social safety nets.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011243/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αδιάθετοι πόροι από το ΕΚΤ για τη στήριξη της απασχόλησης των νέων

Είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει για το ύψος των πόρων από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για τη στήριξη της απασχόλησης των νέων, τους οποίους δεν έχουν αξιοποιήσει έως σήμερα τα κράτη μέλη; Ποιες οι επιδόσεις της Ελλάδας στον συγκεκριμένο τομέα και σε τι ύψος ανέρχονται οι πόροι του ΕΚΤ για τη χώρα, που παραμένουν ακόμα διαθέσιμοι, για την αντιμετώπιση του τεράστιου προβλήματος της ανεργίας των νέων;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Τα κράτη μέλη έχουν διαθέσει ένα σημαντικό ποσοστό των πόρων από το ΕΚΤ για την υποστήριξη των δεξιοτήτων των νέων και της απασχόλησής τους από την έναρξη της τρέχουσας περιόδου προγραμματισμού 2007-2013.

Επιπλέον, τα κράτη μέλη έχουν τη δυνατότητα να εξετάσουν τυχόν ανακατανομές σε μέτρα κατά της ανεργίας των νέων στο πλαίσιο των εθνικών κονδυλίων τους από το ΕΚΤ, σύμφωνα με τους ισχύοντες κανόνες και σε συνεργασία με την Επιτροπή. Ειδικά για τις ομάδες δράσης, οι οποίες ορίστηκαν βάσει της πρωτοβουλίας Barroso σχετικά με την ανεργία των νέων τον Ιανουάριο του 2012, οι πόροι του ΕΚΤ που ανακατανεμήθηκαν ή πρόκειται να ανακατανεμηθούν από τα κράτη μέλη σε μέτρα υπέρ των νέων ανέρχονται σε 3,1 εκατομμύρια ευρώ (630 000 συμμετέχοντες).

Στην Ελλάδα, σύμφωνα με το σχέδιο δράσης που εγκρίθηκε πρόσφατα και το οποίο στοχεύει να προωθήσει την απασχόληση και την επιχειρηματικότητα των νέων, 450 εκατομμύρια ευρώ από τους πόρους του ΕΚΤ έχουν δεσμευτεί μέχρι σήμερα (καλύπτοντας 167 000 συμμετέχοντες), τα οποία θα κινητοποιηθούν για την προώθηση παρεμβάσεων που αφορούν τους νέους. Ένα επιπρόσθετο κονδύλιο 547 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ (το οποίο προβλέπει 348 000 συμμετέχοντες) από τους πόρους του ΕΚΤ προορίζεται για τη χρηματοδότηση νέων δράσεων που απευθύνονται σε νέους ή για την ενίσχυση των ήδη υπαρχουσών δράσεων από το 2013 και μετά.

Τα κράτη μέλη έπρεπε να είχαν υποβάλει έως τις 31/12/2012 τις εθνικές στρατηγικές εκθέσεις τους σχετικά με την πρόοδο που έχει σημειωθεί μέχρι στιγμής, αναφορικά με την επίτευξη των στόχων των εθνικών και περιφερειακών προγραμμάτων της περιόδου 2007-2013, τα οποία χρηματοδοτήθηκαν από το ΕΤΠΑ, το ΕΚΤ και το Ταμείο Συνοχής. Οι εν λόγω εκθέσεις θα δώσουν μια εικόνα του τρόπου με τον οποίο εξελίσσονται τα εν λόγω προγράμματα και του αντικτύπου τους, καθώς και μια εικόνα σχετικά με το πώς αντιμετωπίζεται η κρίση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011243/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Unused ESF resources to address youth employment

Can the Commission state how much of the European Social Fund resources earmarked for addressing youth employment has not so far been used by Member States? How has Greece performed in this area and what amount of ESF resources for the country is still available to address the huge problem of youth unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

Member States have been dedicating significant ESF resources to support young people's skills and employment since the beginning of the current programming period 2007-2013.

In addition, Member States have the possibility to consider reallocations towards measures against youth unemployment within their national ESF envelopes, under existing rules and in cooperation with the Commission. Specifically for the action teams set up by the Barroso initiative on youth unemployment in January 2012, the ESF funds re-allocated or planned to be reallocated by Member States towards youth measures amounted to a total of EUR 3.1 billion (630 000 participants).

In Greece, under the recently adopted Action Plan aiming to stimulate employment and entrepreneurship of young people, to date around EUR 450 million of ESF funds (covering 167 000 participants) have been committed and are being mobilised to promote youth-related interventions. An additional envelope of EUR 547 million (projected 348 000 participants) of ESF resources is earmarked for funding of new actions targeting youth or reinforcement of existing ones from 2013 onwards.

Member States should have reported by 31.12.2012 on progress to date in achieving the objectives of the 2007-2013 national and regional programmes funded by the ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund in their National Strategic Reports. These reports will provide a picture of how the programmes are progressing, their impact and how the crisis is being addressed.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011244/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Βοήθειας των πλέον φτωχών στην ΕΕ

Στα τέλη Οκτωβρίου 2012 η Επιτροπή πρότεινε την δημιουργία ενός νέου Ταμείου για τη στήριξη των πλέον φτωχών συνανθρώπων μας. Στο πλαίσιο του νέου Πολυετούς Δημοσιονομικού Πλαισίου (2014-2020), μάλιστα, αρχικά προτάθηκε να ενισχυθεί με 2,5 δις ευρώ. Ωστόσο, σύμφωνα με την ίδια, κάποια κράτη μέλη εμφανίζονται επιφυλακτικά.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια κράτη μέλη δεν αντιμετωπίζουν θετικά τη σύσταση του συγκεκριμένου ταμείου;

2. Είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει για την πορεία των διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ της ίδιας και των κυβερνήσεων όσον αφορά την επίτευξη συμφωνίας επί του συγκεκριμένου ταμείου; Αναμένεται η χρηματοδότηση να παραμείνει στο ύψος που αρχικά προτάθηκε από την Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής υποβλήθηκε στο Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο στο τέλος του Οκτωβρίου 2012. Σύμφωνα με την Συνθήκη, θα εξεταστεί βάσει της συνήθους νομοθετικής διαδικασίας, δηλ. σε συναπόφαση μεταξύ του Συμβουλίου και του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου.

Η διαδικασία έγκρισης βρίσκεται σε πολύ αρχικό στάδιο και συνεπώς, πέρα από τις δημόσιες δηλώσεις των αντιπροσωπειών τους, οι επίσημες θέσεις των κρατών μελών δεν είναι γνωστές.

Ο προϋπολογισμός του Ταμείου θα καθοριστεί στις συζητήσεις που διεξάγονται στο πλαίσιο του πολυετούς χρηματοδοτικού πλαισίου 2014-2020, οι οποίες περιλαμβάνονται στην ημερήσια διάταξη στις 7-8 Φεβρουαρίου του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011244/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

In late October 2012, the Commission proposed setting up a new Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. Under the new Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020) it was originally proposed to endow EUR 2.5 billion for this purpose. However, according to the Commission, some Member States now appear to harbour reservations about this proposal.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Which Member States do not welcome the establishment of this Fund?

2. Can it provide information about the state of negotiations between itself and national governments as regards achieving an agreement on this Fund? Is it expected that funding will remain at the level originally proposed by the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission proposal was submitted to Parliament and the Council at the end of October 2012. In accordance with the Treaty, it will be examined under the ordinary legislative procedure, i.e. in co-decision between the Council and European Parliament.

The adoption procedure is at a very early stage and therefore official positions of Member States are not known beyond public statements of their representations.

The budget for the Fund will be determined in the discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, which are on the agenda of the 7-8 February European Council.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011245/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ενιαίο καθεστώς προστασίας των ευρεσιτεχνιών

Με δύο προτάσεις Κανονισμού της Επιτροπής COM(2011)0215 για την δημιουργία ενιαίου καθεστώτος προστασίας των ευρεσιτεχνιών και COM(2011)0216 για τις εφαρμοστέες μεταφραστικές ρυθμίσεις, καθώς και με μία Διεθνή Συμφωνία μεταξύ κρατών μελών στα πλαίσια μια «ενισχυμένης συνεργασίας», προωθείται η δημιουργία ενός Ευρωπαϊκού/Ενιαίου Δικαστηρίου Διπλωμάτων Ευρεσιτεχνίας με τρεις έδρες (Παρίσι, Λονδίνο, Μόναχο). Με δεδομένα ότι α) η κατοχύρωση διπλωμάτων ευρεσιτεχνίας είναι μια διαδικασία με πολύ σημαντικές προεκτάσεις, οικονομικές και κοινωνικές, και έχει εφαρμογή σε πολύ κρίσιμους τομείς όπως έρευνα, υγεία, φάρμακα, τεχνολογία κ.α. β) Με βάση το γεγονός ότι με την μέχρι τώρα εμπειρία του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Πιστοποίησης (EPO), πιστοποιήσεις λαμβάνουν σε συντριπτικό βαθμό οι μεγάλες πολυεθνικές εταιρίες (ενδεικτικά οι τρεις πρώτες: Siemens, Philips, Samsung, οι δύο εκ των οποίων καταδικάστηκαν πρόσφατα από την Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού γιατί με καρτέλ κατάφεραν να καθυστερήσουν την επικράτηση νέων τεχνολογιών στις οθόνες τηλεοράσεων) αλλά και ότι οι «ιθαγένειες» που κυριαρχούν στις πιστοποιήσεις είναι αυτές των ισχυρών οικονομικών χωρών (ενδεικτικά οι τρεις πρώτες Γερμανία, Γαλλία, Μ. Βρετανία) και γ) ότι η Ιταλία και η Ισπανία, έχουν προσφύγει κατά του Συμβουλίου στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο και η απόφαση δεν έχει εκδοθεί ακόμα

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς θα διασφαλίζεται πως δεν θα υπάρξουν δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις από την λειτουργία του νέου δικαστηρίου για τις Μικρομεσαίες Επιχειρήσεις των μικρών και λιγότερο αναπτυγμένων χωρών;

2. Το γεγονός ότι η γλώσσες λειτουργίας του Δικαστηρίου θα είναι μόνο γερμανικά, αγγλικά και γαλλικά δεν συνιστά εμπόδιο κατά την Επιτροπή για τις επιχειρήσεις και εφευρέτες των λοιπών κρατών μελών και, ειδικά, για τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις αυτών;

3. Πώς δικαιολογείται με βάση το Κοινοτικό Δίκαιο ο περιορισμός στις τρεις αυτές γλώσσες;

4. Πώς, λοιπόν είναι ποτέ δυνατόν να υπάρχουν κοινά «Ευρωπαϊκά» επίπεδα εφευρετικότητας (patentability thresholds), δεδομένου ότι ο καθορισμός αυτών των επιπέδων είναι υποκειμενικός και επηρεάζεται, έμμεσα ή άμεσα, τόσο από τις συγκεκριμένες ανάγκες τεχνολογικής και οικονομικής ανάπτυξης της εκάστοτε χώρας όσο και από εκείνες του εν λόγω εμπορικού και τεχνολογικού κλάδου; Δεν ευνοεί την δημιουργία πρακτικών καρτέλ, όπως αυτές που καταδικάστηκαν από την Επιτροπή Ανταγωνισμού (IP/12/1317);

5. Έχουν και ποιες χώρες ετοιμάσει τη δική τους μελέτη σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις (impact assessment study) ενός τέτοιου εγχειρήματος;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Το Ενιαίο Δικαστήριο Διπλωμάτων Ευρεσιτεχνίας θα συσταθεί με διεθνή συμφωνία μεταξύ των κρατών μελών. Η ΕΕ δεν θα είναι μέρος της συμφωνίας και η Επιτροπή δεν είναι αρμόδια να ερμηνεύει το περιεχόμενό της. Ο βασικός στόχος πάντως του Ενιαίου Δικαστηρίου Διπλωμάτων Ευρεσιτεχνίας είναι η κατοχύρωση της ασφάλειας δικαίου και η αποφυγή των πολλών προσφυγών ενώπιον των εθνικών δικαστηρίων σε διάφορα κράτη μέλη όσον αφορά το ίδιο θέμα (με την πιθανότητα αποκλινουσών αποφάσεων). Αυτό θα ωφελήσει ιδίως τις ΜΜΕ. Επιπλέον, από το τρέχον σχέδιο προκύπτει σαφώς ότι, κατά τον καθορισμό των δικαστικών εξόδων, η Διοικητική Επιτροπή πρέπει να σέβεται την αρχή της ισότιμης πρόσβασης στη δικαιοσύνη, ειδικά όσον αφορά τις ΜΜΕ.

2-3. Οι γλώσσες της διαδικασίας δεν περιορίζονται στην αγγλική, τη γαλλική και τη γερμανική. Στην πραγματικότητα, η γλώσσα της διαδικασίας ενώπιον ενός τοπικού/περιφερειακού τμήματος θα είναι η (μία από) επίσημη γλώσσα (τις επίσημες γλώσσες) του συμβαλλόμενου κράτους μέλους στο έδαφος του οποίου βρίσκεται το σχετικό τμήμα ή η επίσημη(ες) γλώσσα(ες) που ορίζουν τα συμβαλλόμενα κράτη μέλη με κοινό περιφερειακό τμήμα ή γλώσσα στην οποία χορηγήθηκε το δίπλωμα ευρεσιτεχνίας.

4. Τα κριτήρια των δυνατοτήτων κατοχύρωσης με δίπλωμα ευρεσιτεχνίας (π.χ. εφεύρεση, νέα, επινόηση, δυνατότητα βιομηχανικής εφαρμογής, μη αποκλεισμός από τη δυνατότητα κατοχύρωσης με δίπλωμα ευρεσιτεχνίας) προβλέπονται στα άρθρα 52και 53 της ΣΕΔΕ (Σύμβασης για το Ευρωπαϊκό Δίπλωμα Ευρεσιτεχνίας). Τα κριτήρια αυτά θα τα ερμηνεύει κατά τρόπο ενιαίο το νέο δικαστήριο.

5. Η Επιτροπή έχει υπόψη της την πρόσφατη μελέτη που πραγματοποίησε η Πολωνία αλλά δεν έχει ελέγξει συστηματικά τις εκτιμήσεις/μελέτες των επιπτώσεων στα διάφορα κράτη μέλη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011245/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Unitary patent protection regime

The creation of a European Unitary Patent Court with three seats (Paris, London and Munich) is proceeding apace thanks to two proposals for regulations put forward by the Commission — COM(2011) 0215 on the creation of unitary patent protection and COM(2011) 0216 on the applicable translation arrangements — and an international agreement between the Member States under 'enhanced cooperation'. Given that a) the patenting process has very important economic and social implications and has applications in key areas such as research, health, medicine, technology etc.; b) the experience of the European Patent Office (EPO) to date suggests that patents are obtained overwhelmingly by large multinational companies (significantly, the first three are: Siemens, Philips and Samsung, two of which were sanctioned recently by the Commission's Competition DG because, by forming a cartel, they had managed to delay the dominance of new television screen technologies) and most of these patents are obtained by nationals of Europe's main economic powers (Germany, France and the United Kingdom account for the largest number of patents, in that order); and c) Italy and Spain have initiated legal action against the Council before the Court of Justice; its judgment is still pending.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What measures can be taken to ensure that the new Court will have no adverse consequences for SMEs from small and less developed countries?

2. Does it not agree that the decision to restrict the Court's working languages to German, English and French will be an obstacle to businesses and inventors from Member States where other languages are spoken and, especially, their SMEs?

3. How can the decision to have only these three working languages be justified under EC law?

4. How can there ever be common 'European' patentability thresholds, since the process of setting these thresholds is subjective and influenced, directly or indirectly, both by the specific technological and economic development requirements of each country and by the specific needs of particular commercial and technology sectors? Does it not favour cartel practices, such as those condemned by the Commission's DG Competition (IP/12/1317)?

5. Which countries have prepared their own impact assessment studies of such an enterprise?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

1. The Unified Patent Court will be set up by an international agreement between Member States. The EU will not be a party to the Agreement and the Commission has no authority to interpret its content. Yet the main aim of the Unified Patent Court is to ensure legal certainty and avoid multiple cases before national courts in different Member States concerning the same issue (with potentially diverging decisions). This will in particular benefit SMEs. In addition, on the basis of the current draft, it is clear that, when setting the court fees, the Administrative Committee must respect the principle of fair access to justice, in particular for SMEs.

2-3. The language of proceedings is not restricted to German, English and French. In fact, the language of proceedings before a local/regional division will be (one of) the official language(s) of the Contracting Member State hosting the relevant division, or the official language(s) designated by Contracting Member States sharing a regional division or the language in which the patent was granted.

4. The criteria for patentability (e.g. invention, new, inventive step, industrial applicability, no exclusion from patentability) are set out in Articles 52/53 EPC. They will be interpreted in a uniform way by the new court.

5. The Commission is aware of a recent study carried out in Poland but has not systematically reviewed impact assessments/studies in the different Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011246/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόσθετο Πρωτόκολλο στη Σύμβαση της Βέρνης για αποφυγή της Διπλής Φορολογίας μεταξύ Ελλάδας και Ελβετίας

Στις 15.11.2012, κατατέθηκε στην Ελληνική Βουλή προς κύρωση, πρόσθετο πρωτόκολλο στη Σύμβαση της Βέρνης για αποφυγή της διπλής φορολογίας που υπογράφηκε μεταξύ Ελλάδας και Ελβετίας. Σύμφωνα με την αιτιολογική έκθεση που κατατέθηκε στην Βουλή «Η υπογραφή του Πρόσθετου Πρωτοκόλλου, ζητήθηκε από την Ελβετική Συνομοσπονδία, καθώς το κείμενο του Πρωτοκόλλου περιείχε ορισμένα σημεία που εκρίθη ότι χρήζουν περαιτέρω διευκρίνισης, από την Ευρωπαϊκή Κοινότητα σύμφωνα με τη Συμφωνία των δυο πλευρών για τη φορολογία των τόκων των καταθέσεων». Το πρόσθετο πρωτόκολλο τροποποιεί τα άρθρα που σχετίζονται με την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών και διευκρινίζει, μεταξύ άλλων, ότι για την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών «τα συμβαλλόμενα κράτη δεν είναι ελεύθερα να επιδίδονται σε «αλίευση αποδείξεων»». Τέλος, το κείμενο προβλέπει ότι, αφού κυρωθεί το πρωτόκολλο από τις δύο πλευρές, αυτό έχει εφαρμογή αναδρομικά από 1.1.2012.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι γνωρίζει σχετικά;

2. Πώς σχολιάζει τα περί αλίευσης αποδείξεων «ενός συγκεκριμένου φορολογουμένου»; Υπάρχει αντίστοιχη πρόβλεψη σε σχετικές συμφωνίες που έχουν συνάψει άλλα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ με την Ελβετία;

3. Τα περί «αλίευσης αποδείξεων» και η προβλεπόμενη αναδρομικότητα εφαρμογής του πρωτοκόλλου από 1.1.2012 μπορεί να έχει επίπτωση στη διερεύνηση φορολογικών υποθέσεων, όπως πχ αυτών που εξετάζουν σήμερα οι αρχές στην Ελλάδα και οι οποίες σχετίζονται π.χ. με την λίστα Falciani;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Εφόσον συμμορφώνονται με τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ, τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να υπογράφουν και να επικυρώνουν συμβάσεις για την αποφυγή της διπλής φορολογίας και των πρόσθετων πρωτοκόλλων.

Συνήθως, οι εν λόγω συμβάσεις και τα πρωτόκολλα βασίζονται στο Υπόδειγμα Σύμβασης Φορολογίας Εισοδήματος και Κεφαλαίων του ΟΟΣΑ ([1]), το άρθρο 26 του οποίου ενσωματώνει τους κανόνες σχετικά με την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών. Το άρθρο αυτό προβλέπει την ευρύτερη δυνατή ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών σε φορολογικά θέματα, αλλά ταυτόχρονα διευκρινίζει ότι τα συμβαλλόμενα κράτη δεν είναι ελεύθερα να πραγματοποιούν «επιδρομές αλίευσης» ή να ζητούν πληροφορίες που είναι απίθανο να αφορούν φορολογικές υποθέσεις ενός συγκεκριμένου φορολογούμενου.

Οι επιπτώσεις των υφιστάμενων ή νέων συμβάσεων και πρωτοκόλλων για ειδικές έρευνες θα πρέπει να αξιολογούνται κατά περίπτωση.

([1]) http://www.oecd.org/ctp/exchangeofinformation/120718_Article%2026-ENG_no%20cover%20(2).pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011246/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Additional Protocol to the Berne Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation between Greece and Switzerland

On 15.11.2012, an additional Protocol to the Berne Convention for the avoidance of double taxation signed between Greece and Switzerland was submitted to the Hellenic Parliament for ratification. According to the explanatory report tabled in Parliament, 'the signing of the Additional Protocol has been requested by the Swiss Confederation, as the text of the Protocol contains some points that have been deemed to need further clarification by the European Community in accordance with the agreement of both parties on the taxation of interest on deposits'. The Additional Protocol amends the articles relating to information exchanges and specifies, inter alia, that in this connection 'the Contracting States are forbidden from launching fishing expeditions.' Finally, the text provides that, after the ratification of the Protocol by both sides, the provisions thereof shall apply retrospectively from 1.1.2012.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What does it know about this matter?

2. How does it view the provisions on 'fishing expeditions' in respect of 'individual taxpayers'? Is there any corresponding provision in similar agreements concluded between Switzerland and other EU Member States?

3. Could so-called 'fishing expeditions' and the provision regarding the retroactive application of the protocol from 1.1.2012 have an impact the investigation of tax cases, including for example, those which the Greek authorities are currently examining relating to the Falciani list?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

As long as they comply with EC law, Member States may sign and ratify conventions for the avoidance of double taxation and additional protocols thereto.

Usually, these conventions and protocols are based on the OECD Model Tax Convention on Income and on Capital ([1]), Article 26 of which embodies the rules concerning the exchange of information. This article is intended to provide for exchange of information in tax matters to the widest possible extent but it clarifies at the same time that Contracting States are not at liberty to engage in 'fishing expeditions' or to request information that is unlikely to be relevant to the tax affairs of a given taxpayer.

The impact of existing or new conventions and protocols on specific investigations would have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

([1]) http://www.oecd.org/ctp/exchangeofinformation/120718_Article%2026-ENG_no%20cover%20(2).pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011247/12
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Access to European airports for persons with disabilities

Wide discrepancies exist within the European Union between airports with respect to their accessibility to persons with disabilities, in particular in terms of number of reserved parking places and accessible help points.

Can the Commission answer the following in light of this:

1. Are there any European legal requirements for airports to meet minimum standards in terms of accessibility for persons with disabilities?

2. Will the European Accessibility Act, still expected in 2012, include harmonisation measures and minimum infrastructure standards for airports in this respect?

3. Is any EU funding available for projects at airports improving accessibility for persons with disabilities?

4. Does the Commission have any plans to develop a Disability Travel Accessibility Review of European airports? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air ([1]), obliges airports and air carriers to provide assistance to persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility and has already considerably facilitated air travel for these persons.

To improve the application of the regulation and to address unclear issues for assistance providers and national authorities, the Commission has recently published comprehensive guidelines ([2]).

In accordance with the abovementioned Regulation, in particular its Article 5, European airports shall designate points of arrival and departure where all the basic information about the airport, namely regarding its accessibility, should be available to all passengers in accessible formats. Member States must designate bodies to ensure the correct application of the regulation and to check airports' conformity with quality standards for assistance according to Article 9 of the regulation. In the first half of 2013 the Commission will be collecting statistics on complaint handling and enforcement with regard to the regulation. These will be published.

The preparatory work for the European Accessibility Act is progressing. The Commission is carefully examining a range of options in view of both the accessibility requirements of different stakeholders, including businesses, persons with disabilities and public authorities and of the legal instruments at its disposal. The final scope of the proposal is not yet decided.

EU structural funds (European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund) are available for improving transport accessibility.

([1]) OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p.1.
([2]) SWD(2012)171 final of 14 June 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011248/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) y Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — La estrategia de la UE sobre la cuestión nuclear iraní

En los últimos años, el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos, respaldado plenamente por la UE, ha aplicado una política que prevé la imposición de sanciones cada vez más estrictas contra Irán, puesto que considera que es el único modo de evitar que el Gobierno iraní adquiera armas nucleares. Algunas iniciativas alternativas, como la propuesta de compromiso promovida por los Gobiernos de Turquía y Brasil a fin de limitar el programa de enriquecimiento nuclear de Irán y exportar los excedentes de uranio enriquecido, o la propuesta de Rusia en la misma dirección fueron rechazadas tanto por los Estados Unidos como por la UE. Como resultado, Irán ha podido continuar con sus presuntas actividades de enriquecimiento. Por consiguiente, todo acuerdo diplomático que se alcance deberá prever un sistema de vigilancia cada vez más incisivo del programa nuclear iraní y una lista detallada de todas las medidas que Irán deberá adoptar para que se levanten de forma progresiva las sanciones. Hay indicios de que Irán podría mostrarse más flexible en las inspecciones del Organismo Internacional de Energía Atómica (OIEA) a través de la limitación del enriquecimiento al 5 % y, de este modo, evitar la acumulación de los excedentes de uranio enriquecido en suelo iraní. A cambio, los Estados Unidos y sus aliados deberían reconocer el derecho de Irán al enriquecimiento tecnológico, que es un punto clave en el Tratado sobre la no proliferación de las armas nucleares, y levantar las sanciones paulatinamente.

Habida cuenta del contexto:

1. ¿Estaría dispuesta la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante a ofrecer a Irán unos incentivos significativos con objeto de hacer pleno uso de la diplomacia de la UE y de su enfoque dual hacia Irán, a la luz de los recientes indicios de flexibilidad que ha mostrado dicho país? En caso afirmativo, ¿qué tipo de incentivos ha considerado?

2. ¿Estaría dispuesta la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante a proponer la retirada paulatina de las sanciones que la UE ha impuesto a Irán a cambio de que este país adopte unas medidas claramente definidas y verificables con el fin de atender a las preocupaciones de la comunidad internacional en lo que respecta a su programa nuclear?

3. ¿Consideraría la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante entablar negociaciones paralelas con Irán en las que se aborden cuestiones de seguridad regional, que es motivo de preocupación tanto para la UE como para Irán, como, por ejemplo, la situación en Siria, el Golfo Pérsico, Irak y Afganistán, con objeto de crear confianza entre las partes?

4. ¿Está al corriente la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de la degradación progresiva que las sanciones estrictas están infligiendo en el tejido social de la comunidad iraní, ya que condenan a la pobreza y a la emigración a muchas familias de clase media que podrían considerarse agentes potenciales de laicismo y reforma democrática? ¿Cree que redunda en beneficio de la UE mantener una política que debilita a la clase media iraní y favorece a los grupos iraníes extremistas?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2013)

La UE está decidida a trabajar en pro de una solución diplomática sobre la base de un planteamiento doble que combine presión y diálogo. El objetivo sigue siendo que Irán se comprometa a realizar un gran esfuerzo por ganarse la confianza, guiándose por los principios de reciprocidad y avances graduales, lo que lleve a unas negociaciones serias sobre el programa nuclear de Irán.

Desde comienzos de 2012 la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta se ha esforzado por convencer a Irán para que entablase negociaciones serias. Aunque la cuestión nuclear constituye el asunto principal, el grupo E3 + 3 está dispuesto a debatir también otros temas. Durante las negociaciones de 2012 se presentó una propuesta de refuerzo de la confianza de cara a unas negociaciones encaminadas a lograr una solución global a largo plazo a la cuestión nuclear iraní. Irán no ha dado ninguna señal hasta ahora de que esté dispuesto a abordar las reservas acuciantes que suscita su programa nuclear. El último informe del Organismo Internacional de Energía Atómica (OIEA) confirmó la expansión del programa nuclear iraní y, en particular, de sus actividades de enriquecimiento.

Las sanciones no son un fin en sí mismas y son reversibles. Si Irán cumple las resoluciones pertinentes del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas (CSNU) y de la Junta de Gobernadores del OIEA, se suspenderían y eliminarían todas las sanciones en su contra. Está en manos de Irán actuar con responsabilidad y restablecer la confianza internacional en el carácter exclusivamente pacífico de su programa nuclear de modo que se pueda poner fin a las sanciones.

La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta actúa en nombre de los seis países y su mandato, tal como se establece en varias resoluciones del CSNU, consiste en persuadir a Irán a recuperar la confianza internacional en el carácter exclusivamente pacífico del programa nuclear de ese país.

Las medidas restrictivas acordadas por la UE tienen por objetivo que resulten afectados el programa nuclear de Irán y los ingresos del régimen iraní utilizados para financiar tal programa, y no se dirigen contra la población iraní.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011248/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) und Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — EU-Strategie in der iranischen Nuklearfrage

In den letzten Jahren hat die US-Regierung mit vorbehaltloser Unterstützung der EU eine Politik verfolgt, die in der Verhängung von immer strengeren Sanktionen gegen Iran besteht, da dies als einziges Mittel erachtet wird, die iranische Regierung vom Erwerb von Kernwaffen abzuhalten. Alternative Vorstöße, wie beispielsweise der 2010 von der Türkei und Brasilien ausgearbeitete Plan zur Einschränkung des iranischen Anreicherungsprogramms und zur Ausfuhr der Überschüsse an angereichertem Uran sowie ein ähnlich gearteter Vorschlag Russlands stießen in den Vereinigten Staaten und in der EU auf Ablehnung. In der Folge konnte Iran seine Verdacht erregenden Anreicherungsaktivitäten fortsetzen. Vor diesem Hintergrund müsste jede neue diplomatische Vereinbarung eine noch strengere Überwachung des iranischen Nuklearprogramms und eine sorgfältig überprüfte Liste von Maßnahmen vorsehen, die Iran für eine schrittweise Aufhebung der Sanktionen zu ergreifen hat. Es liegen Anzeichen vor, dass sich Iran bei Inspektionen der Internationalen Atomenergiebehörde flexibler zeigen und die Anreicherung auf 5 % begrenzen könnte, so dass es auf diese Weise nicht zu einer Anhäufung von Überschüssen des angereicherten Urans auf iranischem Territorium käme. Im Gegenzug müssten die Vereinigten Staaten und ihre Verbündeten das Recht Irans auf eine Anreicherungstechnologie, das einer der Schlüsselpunkte des Nichtverbreitungsvertrags ist, anerkennen und die auferlegten Sanktionen schrittweise abbauen.

1. Ist die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin in Anbetracht dieser Tatsachen bereit, Iran starke Anreize anzubieten, um die Diplomatie, die Teil des zweigleisigen Ansatzes der EU gegenüber Iran ist, in vollem Umfang einzusetzen, und damit den jüngsten Anzeichen für ein Einlenken auf iranischer Seite Rechnung zutragen wird? Wenn ja, um welche Anreize handelt es sich dabei?

2. Ist die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin bereit, eine allmähliche Lockerung der EU-Sanktionen vorzuschlagen, wenn Iran im Gegenzug genau festgelegte und nachvollziehbare Schritte unternimmt, mit denen Bedenken der internationalen Gemeinschaft hinsichtlich seines Atomprogramms ausgeräumt werden?

3. Prüft die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin die Möglichkeit, Parallelverhandlungen mit Iran in die Wege zu leiten, bei denen Themen der regionalen Sicherheit, die sowohl für die EU als auch für Iran von Belang sind, behandelt werden, wie beispielsweise die Lage in Syrien, am Persischen Golf, in Irak und Afghanistan, um auf diese Weise Vertrauen zwischen den Parteien aufzubauen?

4. Ist sich die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin der zunehmenden Erosion bewusst, von der das soziale Gefüge der iranischen Gesellschaft infolge der lähmenden Sanktionen befallen wird, so dass viele Familien aus der Mittelschicht — potenzielle Multiplikatoren des Laizismus und demokratischer Reformen — in Armut und Emigration getrieben werden? Ist sie der Ansicht, dass die Fortsetzung einer Politik, die die iranische Mittelklasse schwächt und den iranischen Fundamentalisten Auftrieb gibt, im Interesse der EU liegt?

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

Die EU ist entschlossen, weiterhin auf eine diplomatische Lösung nach dem zweigleisigen Ansatz, der Druck mit Dialog verbindet, hinzuarbeiten. Ziel bleibt die Einbindung Irans in einen echten Vertrauensbildungsprozess, der von den Grundsätzen der Gegenseitigkeit geleitet wird und schrittweise zu ernsthaften Verhandlungen über das Nuklearprogramm führt.

Seit Anfang 2012 bemüht sich die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin bereits, Iran in ernsthafte Verhandlungen einzubinden. Der Schwerpunkt liegt zwar auf der Nuklearfrage, doch sind die E3+3 bereit, auch andere Fragen zu erörtern. Während der Gespräche im Jahr 2012 wurde ein Vorschlag zur Vertrauensbildung im Hinblick auf Verhandlungen über eine langfristige umfassende Lösung des iranischen Nuklearproblems unterbreitet.

Bisher hat Iran keinerlei Bereitschaft erkennen lassen, ernsthaft auf die vordringlichen Bedenken in Bezug auf sein Nuklearprogramm einzugehen. Dem jüngsten IAEO-Bericht zufolge werden das iranische Nuklearprogramm und insbesondere die Tätigkeiten zur Urananreicherung weiter ausgedehnt.

Sanktionen sind kein Selbstzweck und sind auch nicht irreversibel. Wenn Iran den Resolutionen des VN-Sicherheitsrates und des Gouverneursrates der IAEO nachkommt, so wird dies die Aussetzung oder Beendigung aller einschlägigen Sanktionen gegen Iran nach sich ziehen. Iran hat es in der Hand, verantwortlich zu handeln und das internationale Vertrauen in ein zu ausschließlich friedlichen Zwecken genutztes Nuklearprogramm wiederherzustellen, so dass die Sanktionen aufgehoben werden können.

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin handelt im Namen der sechs Länder, und ihr Mandat besteht, wie in mehreren Resolutionen des VN-Sicherheitsrates dargelegt, darin, Iran davon zu überzeugen, das internationale Vertrauen in den ausschließlich friedlichen Charakter des iranischen Nuklearprogramms wiederherzustellen.

Die von der EU vereinbarten restriktiven Maßnahmen sollen das Nuklearprogramm Irans und die Einnahmen des iranischen Regimes zur Finanzierung des Programms beeinträchtigen und sind nicht gegen die iranische Bevölkerung gerichtet.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011248/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) e Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Strategia dell'Unione europea sulla questione nucleare iraniana

Negli ultimi anni, il governo degli Stati Uniti, con il pieno sostegno dell'UE, ha attuato una politica di sanzioni sempre più paralizzanti contro l'Iran, nella convinzione che questo sia l'unico modo per evitare che il governo iraniano si doti di armi nucleari. Iniziative alternative, come il piano di Turchia e Brasile 2010 per limitare il programma iraniano di arricchimento e di esportazione dell'uranio arricchito in eccesso, e una proposta russa nella stessa direzione sono state respinte dagli Stati Uniti e dall'Unione europea, con il risultato che l'Iran ha potuto continuare le attività di arricchimento sospette. Parallelamente, ogni nuovo accordo diplomatico dovrebbe comprendere una sorveglianza sempre più invadente del programma nucleare iraniano e un elenco molto dettagliato dei passi che l'Iran deve effettuare per ottenere una progressiva revoca delle sanzioni. Ci sono segnali che indicano che l'Iran potrebbe essere più flessibile sulle ispezioni dell'Agenzia internazionale dell'energia atomica, sul limite dell'arricchimento al 5 % e sulla rinuncia a detenere l'eccesso di uranio arricchito sul suolo iraniano. In cambio, gli Stati Uniti e i loro alleati dovrebbero riconoscere il diritto dell'Iran alla tecnologia di arricchimento, un diritto che è uno dei punti chiave del trattato di non proliferazione e smantellare progressivamente le sanzioni imposte.

Alla luce di quanto sopra:

1. la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sarebbe disposta a offrire incentivi significativi all'Iran, onde utilizzare appieno la parte diplomatica del duplice approccio dell'UE nei confronti dell'Iran, tenendo conto dei recenti segnali di flessibilità inviati dall'Iran? In caso affermativo, che genere di incentivi?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sarebbe disposta a proporre una qualche forma di graduale allentamento delle sanzioni UE in cambio di passi molto ben definiti e verificabili da parte dell'Iran che rispondano alle preoccupazioni della comunità internazionale riguardo al suo programma nucleare?

3. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sarebbe disposta a esaminare l'opportunità di istituire un binario parallelo di negoziati con l'Iran, che comprenda le questioni di sicurezza regionale che preoccupano sia l'UE che l'Iran, quali la situazione in Siria, in Golfo Persico, in Iraq e Afghanistan, onde costruire la fiducia tra le parti?

4. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è consapevole del progressivo degrado che le sanzioni paralizzanti stanno infliggendo al tessuto sociale della società iraniana, che spinge molte famiglie della classe media — potenziali agenti di laicità e di riforme democratiche — alla povertà o all'emigrazione? È convinta che sia nell'interesse dell'UE continuare una politica che sta indebolendo la classe media iraniana facendo il gioco dei estremisti iraniani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

L'Unione europea è determinata a trovare una soluzione diplomatica per mezzo di un duplice approccio che combina pressione e dialogo. L'obiettivo resta quello di coinvolgere l'Iran in un serio processo di rafforzamento della fiducia, guidato dal principio di reciprocità e costruito passo dopo passo, che porti a negoziati significativi sul programma nucleare.

Dall'inizio del 2012, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente si adopera per impegnare l'Iran in negoziati costruttivi. Mentre l'accento è posto sulla questione nucleare, il Gruppo E3+3 è disposto a esaminare anche altre problematiche. In occasione delle trattative del 2012 è stata avanzata una proposta volta ad aumentare la fiducia per raggiungere una soluzione globale a lungo termine sulla questione nucleare iraniana.

Finora l'Iran non ha mostrato alcuna intenzione di rispondere seriamente alle preoccupazioni pressanti che riguardano il suo programma nucleare. L'ultima relazione AIEA conferma che il programma nucleare iraniano è in espansione, in particolare per quanto riguarda le attività di arricchimento.

Le sanzioni contro l'Iran non sono fini a sé stesse e sono revocabili. Se l'Iran si atterrà alle risoluzioni pertinenti del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite e del Consiglio dei governatori dell'AIEA, tutte le sanzioni pertinenti contro l'Iran saranno sospese e successivamente soppresse. Sta all'Iran comportarsi in modo responsabile e ripristinare la fiducia a livello internazionale nella natura esclusivamente pacifica del suo programma nucleare al fine di portare a una sospensione delle sanzioni.

L'AR/VP agisce per conto dei sei paesi e, come è precisato da numerose risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni unite, il suo compito consiste nel ripristinare la fiducia nella natura esclusivamente pacifica del programma nucleare iraniano.

Le misure restrittive concordate dall'UE mirano a colpire il programma nucleare iraniano e le entrate del regime iraniano utilizzate per finanziarlo e non sono rivolte contro il popolo iraniano.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011248/12
za Komisijo (VP/HR)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) in Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10. december 2012)

Zadeva: VP/HR – Strategija EU za iransko jedrsko vprašanje

V zadnjih letih je vlada ZDA s polno podporo EU izvajala politiko uvajanja vse strožjih sankcij proti Iranu, saj se smatra, da se lahko samo tako prepreči, da bi iranska vlada pridobila jedrsko orožje. Druge pobude, kot sta turško-brazilski načrt iz leta 2010 za omejitev iranskega programa za bogatenje urana in izvoz presežnega obogatenega urana ter ruski predlog s podobnimi rešitvami, sta ZDA in EU zavrnili. Tako lahko Iran še naprej izvaja svoje sumljive dejavnosti bogatenja urana. Zato bi moral vsak nov diplomatski dogovor vključevati vse temeljitejše spremljanje iranskega jedrskega programa in zelo podrobno določen seznam ukrepov, ki bi jih moral Iran sprejeti za postopno odpravo sankcij. Na iranski strani je zaznati morebitno večjo prilagodljivost glede inšpekcijskih pregledov Mednarodne agencije za atomsko energijo ter glede omejitve bogatenja na 5 % brez skladiščenja presežkov obogatenega urana na iranskem ozemlju. ZDA in njene zaveznice bi morale v zameno priznati pravico Irana do tehnologije za bogatenje, saj je ta pravica ena od bistvenih točk Pogodbe o neširjenju jedrskega orožja, in postopoma odpraviti uvedene sankcije.

Zato sprašujemo:

1. Ali bi bila podpredsednica/visoka predstavnica Iranu pripravljena ponuditi smiselne spodbude, da bi v celoti izkoristila diplomatski del dvotirnega pristopa EU do Irana, ob upoštevanju nedavnih znakov pripravljenosti na iranski strani? Če je temu tako, kakšne spodbude?

2. Ali bi bila podpredsednica/visoka predstavnica pripravljena predlagati postopno odpravo sankcij EU v zameno, da Iran sprejme podrobno določene in preverljive ukrepe in tako pomiri pomisleke mednarodne skupnosti glede iranskega jedrskega programa?

3. Ali bi podpredsednica/visoka predstavnica kot priložnost za krepitev zaupanja med stranema preučila možnost uvedbe vzporednih pogajanj z Iranom, ki bi vključevala vprašanja regionalne varnosti, ki zadevajo EU in Iran, kot so razmere v Siriji, Perzijskem zalivu, Iraku in Afganistanu?

4. Ali se podpredsednica/visoka predstavnica zaveda, da stroge sankcije povzročajo postopen razpad socialne strukture iranske družbe, saj so zaradi njih številne družine iz srednjega razreda, ki bi lahko bile akterji posvetnosti in demokratičnih reform, obsojene na revščino ali izseljevanje? Je po njenem mnenju nadaljevanje politike, ki slabi iranski srednji razred in koristi iranskim skrajnežem, v interesu EU?

Odgovor visoke predstavnice in podpredsednice Komisije Catherine Ashton v imenu Komisije
(11. februar 2013)

EU si odločno prizadeva za diplomatsko rešitev na podlagi dvotirnega pristopa, ki hkrati združuje pritisk in dialog. Namen prizadevanj je, da EU in Iran okrepita vzajemno zaupanje, ki bo postopoma privedlo do resnih pogajanj o jedrskem programu.

Visoka predstavnica/podpredsednica si že od začetka leta 2012 prizadeva, da bi Iran pokazal pripravljenost za resna pogajanja. Čeprav je glavni poudarek na jedrskem vprašanju, so E3+3 pripravljene razpravljati tudi o drugih vprašanjih. Predlog krepitve zaupanja za pogajanja, katerih cilj je doseči dolgoročno celovito rešitev iranskega jedrskega vprašanja, je bil izražen med pogajanji leta 2012. Iran do zdaj še ni pokazal pripravljenosti, da bi resno obravnaval nujna vprašanja glede svojega jedrskega programa. Mednarodna agencija za atomsko energijo (MAAE) je v poročilu potrdila širjenje iranskega jedrskega programa, zlasti njegovih dejavnosti bogatenja urana.

Sankcije niso same sebi namen in se jih da odpraviti. Če bo Iran izpolnil zadevne resolucije VS ZN in Sveta guvernerjev MAAE, bodo vse zadevne sankcije proti Iranu začasno in nato dokončno odpravljene. Na potezi je Iran, ki mora zdaj ravnati odgovorno in obnoviti mednarodno zaupanje v izključno miroljubno naravo svojega jedrskega programa, da bi se sankcije lahko odpravile.

Visoka predstavnica/podpredsednica zastopa šest držav in, kot je navedeno v številnih resolucijah VS ZN, njena naloga je Iran pripraviti do tega, da bo mednarodno skupnost ponovno prepričal o izključno miroljubni naravi svojega jedrskega programa.

Omejevalni ukrepi, ki jih je sprejela EU, so uperjeni proti iranskemu jedrskemu programu in prihodkom iranskega režima, s katerimi se ta program financira, in ne proti iranskemu ljudstvu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011248/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D), Alexandra Thein (ALDE), Emilio Menéndez del Valle (S&D), Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) and Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EU strategy on the Iranian nuclear issue

Over the last few years, the US Government, with the full support of the EU, has implemented a policy of imposing increasingly crippling sanctions against Iran, since this is considered to be the only way of preventing the Iranian Government from acquiring nuclear weapons. Alternative initiatives, such as the 2010 Turkey-Brazil plan to limit Iran's enrichment programme and export the excess enriched uranium, and a Russian proposal in the same direction were rejected by the US and the EU. As a result, Iran has been able to continue its suspicious enrichment activities. Accordingly, any new diplomatic agreement would have to include ever more intrusive monitoring of Iran's nuclear programme and a very well-defined list of steps that Iran must take in order to obtain a progressive lifting of sanctions. There are signs that Iran may be more flexible on International Atomic Energy Agency inspections, as well as limiting enrichment to 5% and not stocking any excess enriched uranium on Iranian soil. In exchange, the US and its allies would have to acknowledge Iran's right to enrichment technology, a right that is one of the key points of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and to gradually dismantle the sanctions imposed.

In the light of the above:

1. Would the Vice-President/High Representative be willing to offer meaningful incentives to Iran in order to make full use of the diplomacy part of the EU double-track approach towards Iran, taking into account the recent signs of flexibility from Iran? If so, what kind of incentives?

2. Would the Vice-President/High Representative be willing to propose some form of gradual EU sanctions relief in exchange for very well-defined and verifiable steps by Iran which would address the international community's concerns regarding its nuclear programme?

3. Would the Vice-President/High Representative consider instituting a parallel track of negotiations with Iran, which would include regional security issues of concern to both the EU and Iran, such as the situation in Syria, the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan, as a way of building confidence between the parties?

4. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the progressive degradation that the crippling sanctions are inflicting on the social fabric of Iranian society, pushing many middle-class families — potential agents of secularism and democratic reform — into poverty or emigration? Does she believe it is in the EU's interests to continue with a policy that is weakening the Iranian middle class and playing into the hands of the Iranian hardliners?

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

The EU is determined to work towards a diplomatic solution on the basis of the double-track approach which combines pressure with dialogue. The objective remains to engage Iran in a serious effort of confidence building, guided by the principles of reciprocity and step by step, leading to meaningful negotiations on the nuclear programme.

Since the beginning of 2012 the HR/VP has made efforts to move Iran into meaningful negotiations. While the main focus is on the nuclear issue, the E3+3 is ready to discuss also other issues. A confidence building proposal for negotiations aiming to achieve a long-term comprehensive settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue has been put forward during 2012 talks.

So far Iran has failed to give any signal that it is ready to seriously address the urgent concerns regarding its nuclear programme. The latest IAEA report confirmed that the Iranian nuclear programme and particularly its enrichment activities are expanding.

Sanctions are not an end in itself and they are reversible. If Iran complies with relevant UNSC and IAEA Board of Governors resolutions the suspension and termination of all relevant sanctions against Iran would follow. It is in Iran's hands to act responsibly and restore the international confidence in exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme so that sanctions could be brought to an end.

The HR/VP acts on behalf of the six countries and her mandate as described in several UNSC resolutions is to convince Iran to restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

The restrictive measures agreed by the EU are aimed at affecting Iran's nuclear programme and revenues of the Iranian regime used to fund the programme and are not aimed at the Iranian people.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011249/12
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Azione dell'UE in materia di cambiamenti climatici mondiali

Il 4 dicembre 2012, l'Organizzazione per la cooperazione e lo sviluppo economici (OCSE) ha pubblicato la sua relazione annuale in materia di aiuto internazionale. Quanto allo sviluppo sostenibile, le conclusioni che essa formula sono preoccupanti: il mercato globale si sta sviluppando in una maniera che causerà inevitabilmente cambiamenti climatici, generando effetti devastanti sia per l'ambiente sia per la società nel suo complesso. È sempre più chiaro che occorre adottare e attuare politiche in materia di cambiamenti climatici che siano complete e ampie, in particolare facendo seguito alla ricerca scientifica pubblicata una settimana prima della relazione dell'OCSE, ricerca che ritiene sempre più probabile un aumento della temperatura globale di 5°C.

L'UE sta attualmente perseguendo diverse politiche in materia di cambiamenti climatici e ha espresso l'impegno di mantenere l'aumento della temperatura globale a un valore massimo di 2°C. Tuttavia, la relazione dell'OCSE rileva che non è abbastanza per i paesi sviluppati esprimere un impegno volto a rallentare il cambiamento climatico. I paesi terzi in via di sviluppo, che tentano di fondare le proprie economie su solide industrie, devono altresì adoperarsi per raggiungere ciò che l'OCSE chiama «crescita verde», ovvero una crescita sostenibile da un punto di vista ambientale. Un problema emergente nei paesi terzi in via di sviluppo è costituito dal disinteresse dilagante per le pratiche ecocompatibili a favore di una crescita industriale incontrollata, il che sta avendo gravi ripercussioni sul clima mondiale.

Tutti i settori della società mondiale stanno risentendo dell'impatto provocato dai cambiamenti climatici, a prescindere dal loro status socioeconomico, eppure i paesi più poveri e svantaggiati saranno quelli a esserne colpiti più duramente. I cambiamenti climatici incontrollati, alimentati dagli attuali livelli di emissioni di gas serra, metteranno in moto una catena di eventi dannosi che degraderà in ultima analisi la qualità della vita. Dato che fenomeni quali l'inquinamento atmosferico e la contaminazione delle acque stanno diventando più frequenti, in particolare nei paesi terzi, il numero di patologie e di morti ad essi associate crescerà. Si prevede anche un aumento della scarsità di cibo e di acqua, e con esso dei casi di malnutrizione.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Dispone l'UE di politiche volte a garantire che gli Stati membri perseguano pratiche commerciali sostenibili e si adoperino per limitare l'impatto ambientale dell'UE?

2. Dispone l'UE di programmi specifici per assistere i paesi terzi a svilupparsi in maniera sostenibile? E in caso contrario, esistono dei piani volti ad attuare tali programmi?

3. Dispone l'UE di piani a lungo termine per affrontare eventuali crisi umanitariescatenate dai cambiamenti climatici?

Risposta di Connie Hedegaard a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

1. Il pacchetto «Energia e clima» prevede una serie di misure per permettere il raggiungimento dell'obiettivo, fissato dall'UE, di ridurre le emissioni di gas a effetto serra del 20 % entro il 2020. La Commissione continua a sostenere gli Stati membri in questo processo grazie a svariati interventi: la direttiva sull'efficienza energetica, la proposta di aumentare la spesa europea relativa al clima fino ad arrivare ad almeno il 20 % dell'intero bilancio UE 2014-2020, le norme 2020 di efficienza dei veicoli, il programma di dimostrazione «NER 300», l'attuazione di misure per la prevenzione e la gestione del rischio di catastrofi, e la strategia di adattamento dell'UE.

2. L'UE ha integrato lo sviluppo sostenibile nella sua strategia di sviluppo e rappresenta il donatore principale per quanto riguarda i finanziamenti relativi al clima. Ad esempio, l'UE ha destinato 7,2 miliardi di euro nel biennio 2010-2012 all'adattamento ai cambiamenti climatici e al loro contenimento nei paesi in via di sviluppo. L'UE ritiene inoltre necessario integrare l'adattamento e la riduzione del rischio di catastrofi nel suo programma di cooperazione allo sviluppo e all'assistenza umanitaria. Il 2013 vedrà altre attività importanti volte a realizzare gli obiettivi del programma «Energia sostenibile per tutti». La Commissione ha infine proposto che nel prossimo quadro finanziario pluriennale almeno il 20 % dei fondi sia investito nei progetti di adattamento a basse emissioni di carbonio.

3. Anche i programmi di aiuti umanitari e assistenza allo sviluppo dell'UE forniscono un sostegno finanziario per superare le crisi provocate da catastrofi climatiche, con particolare attenzione alla resilienza. Basandosi sulla recente comunicazione «L'approccio dell'Unione alla resilienza: imparare dalle crisi della sicurezza alimentare», la Commissione adotterà un piano d'azione a sostegno delle strategia di resilienza nazionali affinché tengano in grande considerazione gli aspetti dell'adattamento, della sicurezza alimentare e della riduzione del rischio di catastrofi. Questo piano è collegato al processo dei piani di adattamento nazionali istituito dalla convenzione quadro delle Nazioni Unite sui cambiamenti climatici (UNFCCC) che mira ad aiutare i paesi meno sviluppati ad integrare nella pianificazione dello sviluppo le strategie di adattamento .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011249/12
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: EU action on global climate change

On 4 December 2012, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released its annual report on international aid. Focusing on sustainable development, the conclusions it presents are alarming: the global market is developing in a way that will inevitably lead to climate change, with devastating results both for the environment and for society as a whole. It has become increasingly clear that broad-sweeping and comprehensive climate change policies must be adopted and implemented, particularly following scientific research published the week before release of the OECD report and indicating that a rise in global temperature of 5°C is becoming increasingly likely.

The EU is currently pursuing a number of policies with regard to climate change, and has expressed a commitment to keeping the global temperature increase to a maximum of 2°C. However, the OECD report points out that it is not enough for developed countries to express a commitment to slowing climate change. Developing third countries trying to establish their economies by building strong industries must also work towards what the OECD calls 'green growth', that is, environmentally sustainable growth. An emerging issue in developing third countries is the rampant disregard for environmentally friendly practices in favour of unrestrained industrial growth, which is having a significant negative impact on the global climate.

All sectors of global society are feeling the impact of climate change regardless of their socio-economic status, but the poorest and most disadvantaged countries will be hit the hardest. Unrestrained climate change, fuelled by current levels of greenhouse gas emissions, will set in motion a damaging chain of events that will ultimately degrade the quality of life. As air pollution and water contamination become more prevalent, particularly in third countries, the level of disease and death associated with these two issues will increase. Food and water scarcity is expected to rise as well, increasing the risk of malnourishment.

In light of this, I ask the Commission to answer the following:

1. Does the EU have policies in place to ensure that the Member States are pursuing sustainable business practices and working towards limiting the EU's environmental impact?

2. Does the EU have specific programmes in place to assist third countries to develop in a sustainable way? If not, are there plans in place to implement such programmes?

3. Does the EU have long-term plans to address potential humanitarian crises caused by climate change?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

1. The climate and energy package is a comprehensive set of measures to enable the EU's 20% greenhouse gas reduction target for 2020. The Commission continues to support Member States to reach their targets through the Energy Efficiency Directive, the proposal to increase EU climate-related expenditure to at least 20% of the 2014-2020 EU budget, the 2020 vehicles efficiency standards, the 'NER 300' demonstration programme, the implementation of disaster risk prevention and management measures, and the EU Adaptation Strategy.

2. The EU has mainstreamed sustainable development into its development policy and is the world's most generous donor in climate finance. The EU has for example provided EUR 7.2 billion in 2010-2012 for climate change mitigation and adaptation to developing countries. The EU also identified the need to integrate disaster risk reduction and adaptation into development cooperation and humanitarian response. 2013 will witness even more important activity with a view to realising the objectives of Sustainable Energy for All. The Commission has finally proposed that in the next MFF period at least 20% of funds be used to finance low carbon and adaptation projects.

3. EU Humanitarian Aid and Development Assistance are also providing financial support to overcoming crises caused by extreme climatic events, with emphasis on resilience. Based on the recent Communication 'The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crises' the Commission will adopt an Action Plan to support national resilience strategies integrate adaptation, food security and DRR, linked to the UNFCCC National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process which aims to support least developed countries mainstream adaptation into development planning.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011250/12
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(10 décembre 2012)

Objet: Gazage des oies aux Pays Bas

La Commission peut-elle confirmer que le gouvernement des Pays Bas tue par gazage des oies sur son territoire depuis le mois d'avril, avec la contribution de subventions de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(4 février 2013)

L'abattage d'oiseaux aquatiques et d'autres oiseaux sauvages aux Pays-Bas est soumis à l'obtention d'une autorisation en vertu de la loi néerlandaise de 2002 sur la faune et la flore, conformément au régime dérogatoire prévu à l'article 9 de la directive 2009/147/CE concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages ([1]) Par le passé, les autorités néerlandaises ont régulièrement accordé des permis pour la capture et l'abattage des oies afin d'éviter de graves dommages aux cultures ou pour des raisons de sécurité et de santé publique. Les autorités n'ont pas encore informé la Commission, conformément à l'article 9, paragraphe 3, de la directive 2009/147/CE, des dérogations accordées en 2012 pour l'abattage des oies, ainsi que des méthodes autorisées. La Commission ne peut donc pas confirmer que des oies ont été tuées par gazage depuis avril 2012.

Les mesures visant à limiter les populations d'oies ne sont pas cofinancées par l'Union. En revanche, les dommages causés aux cultures et les frais supplémentaires occasionnés par les cultures spécifiques destinées au nourrissage hivernal des oies peuvent faire l'objet d'une indemnisation au titre d'un régime agro-environnemental spécial cofinancé dans le cadre du programme néerlandais de développement rural pour la période 2007-20013.

([1]) JO L 20 du 26.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011250/12
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Gassing geese in the Netherlands

Can the Commission confirm that the Dutch Government has been using gas to kill geese on its land since April, with the help of EU subsidies?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

Killing of waterfowls and other wild birds in the Netherlands is subject to licensing under the Dutch Flora and Fauna Act of 2002, according to the derogation regime of Article 9 of Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds ([1]). In the past the Dutch authorities have granted permits on a regular basis for capturing and killing geese in order to prevent serious damages to crops or in the interest of public health and safety. The authorities have not yet informed the Commission according to Article 9.3 of Directive 2009/147/EC about the derogations granted in 2012 for killing geese, including the authorised methods. The Commission cannot therefore confirm that gas has been used to kill geese since April 2012.

Measures to control geese populations are not subject to Community co-financing. On the other hand, damage caused to crops or extra costs for the cultivation of specific crops for the winter feeding of geese can be compensated under a specific agri-environmental scheme co-financed under the Dutch rural development programme for the period 2007-2013.

([1]) OJ L 20 of 26.01.2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011251/12
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(10 december 2012)

Betreft: Hangende dossiers met ernstige implicaties voor grensarbeiders

De Europese interne markt met o.a. vrij verkeer van personen, vormt zonder twijfel een van de fundamenten van de Europese samenwerking. In de praktijk merken we echter dat nog steeds tal van grenzen en hindernissen bestaan die het dagelijkse leven van o.a. grensarbeiders ernstig bemoeilijken. De meeste problemen situeren zich op vlak van pensioenen, fiscaliteit en sociale zekerheid. De bevoegdheden terzake liggen bij de lidstaten, de EU heeft via verordening 883/2004 de taak deze verschillende nationale systemen te coördineren. We kunnen echter constateren dat de oplossing voor tal van problemen wel bijzonder lang uitblijft.

De voorbije jaren interpelleerde ik de Commissie herhaaldelijk over verschillende kwesties. Nu wil ik in het bijzonder aandacht vragen voor de volgende drie kwesties die al enige tijd voor problemen zorgen, en waarop de Commissie en de betrokken lidstaten het antwoord aan de gedupeerde burgers voorlopig schuldig blijven.

1. Over de wet koopkrachttegemoetkoming oudere belastingplichtigen (zie mijn vragen E-008620/2011 en E-006539/2011 en correspondentie Ares (2012)1353404), kondigde de Europese Commissie op 31 mei 2012 een inbreukprocedure tegen Nederland aan. Volgens de meest recente informatie finaliseert de Commissie momenteel haar positie en wordt een formele beslissing verwacht begin 2013. Voor de naar schatting 282.000 mensen die recht hebben op een Nederlands pensioen maar niet in Nederland wonen, betekent dit echter dat een oplossing voor het verlies van 400 euro op jaarbasis al anderhalf jaar op zich laat wachten.

2. Inzake de solidariteitsbijdrage (zie mijn vragen E-001107/2012, E-009599/2011, E-8689/2010 en correspondentie Ares (2012)788406) onderzoekt de Commissie volgens de laatste informatie het antwoord van de Belgische autoriteiten.

3. Tenslotte in verband met de 30 %-regel (zie mijn vragen E-000979/2012 en E-009620/2011 en correspondentie Ares (2012)788406 en Ares (2012)1353404), is het overleg met de Nederlandse autoriteiten nog steeds gaande. Voor heel wat grensarbeiders houdt dit een netto maandverlies van enkele honderden euro's in.

Ik vraag de Commissie met klem om voor elk van de drie bovenvermelde zaken uitvoerig aan te geven wat de stand van zaken is, welke maatregelen werden genomen, welke concrete oplossing op welke termijn mogelijk is en wat eventuele hinderpalen zijn.

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2013)

De diensten van de Commissie leggen momenteel de laatste hand aan hun beoordeling van de drie gevallen waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst. Begin 2013 dient een formeel besluit te worden genomen inzake verdere maatregelen voor de aanpak ervan.

De Commissie wijst erop dat zij bij de beoordeling van situaties die mogelijk niet verenigbaar met de wetgeving van de Europese Unie zouden kunnen zijn, de feitelijke en juridische omstandigheden grondig moet onderzoeken en alle relevante aspecten van de zaak uitvoerig moet evalueren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011251/12
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Unresolved issues with serious implications for frontier workers

The European internal market, with, *inter alia*, free movement of persons, is undoubtedly one of the foundations of European cooperation. In practice, however, we observe that numerous borders and obstacles still exist which seriously hamper the everyday life of frontier workers, among other people. The most problems relate to pensions, taxation and social security. Powers in this field are vested in the Member States, while, pursuant to Regulation No 883/2004, the EU has the task of coordinating these various national systems. However, we observe that solutions to many problems are taking a remarkably long time to materialise.

In recent years I have repeatedly tabled questions to the Commission concerning various issues. Now I would particularly like to draw attention to the following three, which have already been causing problems for some time and with regard to which the Commission and the Member States concerned have yet to give answers to the citizens whose interests are suffering.

1. With regard to the Law on a purchasing power supplement for elderly taxpayers (cf. my questions E-008620/2011 and E-006539/2011 and correspondence Ares (2012)1353404), the European Commission announced infringement proceedings against the Netherlands on 31 May 2012. According to the most recent information, the Commission is currently finalising its position and a formal decision is expected at the beginning of 2013. However, for the estimated 282 000 people who are entitled to a Dutch pension but do not live in the Netherlands, this means that a solution for the loss of EUR 400 per annum has already been awaited for a year and a half.

2. With regard to the solidarity contribution (cf. my questions E-001107/2012, E-009599/2011, E-8689/2010 and correspondence Ares (2012)788406), the latest information indicates that the Commission is examining the reply from the Belgian authorities.

3. Lastly, in connection with the 30% rule (cf. my questions E-000979/2012 and E-009620/2011 and correspondence Ares (2012)788406 and Ares (2012)1353404), the talks with the Dutch authorities are still going on. For a good many frontier workers, this entails a net loss of several hundred euros per month.

I would urge the Commission to state in detail, with regard to each of the above three issues, what the state of play is, what measures have been taken, what specific solution will be possible, how soon, and what possible obstacles there are.

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission services are currently finalising their assessment of the three cases referred to by the Honourable Member. A formal decision on further action to deal with them should be taken in early 2013.

The Commission would point out that, when it examines situations the compatibility of which with the law of the European Union may be in doubt, it needs to investigate the factual and legal circumstances thoroughly and carry out a comprehensive assessment of all relevant aspects of the case.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011252/12
aan de Commissie
Jan Mulder (ALDE)
(10 december 2012)

Betreft: Spanje geeft Russen verblijfsvergunning

De Spaanse staatssecretaris van handel Jaime García-Legaz heeft aangekondigd verblijfsvergunningen te willen verlenen aan buitenlanders die een woning kopen van meer dan 160 000 euro. Zo wil Spanje de verkoop van duizenden leegstaande nieuwbouwwoningen bevorderen. De Spaanse overheid richt zich voornamelijk op kopers met de Chinese of Russische nationaliteit.

1. Kan de Commissie zeggen of Spanje helemaal vrij is om dit te doen?

2. Mogen personen met een dergelijke verblijfsvergunning zich ook buiten Spanje vestigen?

3. Is het onder EU-recht toegestaan om verblijfsvergunningen op die manier uit te vaardigen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(6 februari 2013)

De voorwaarden voor het verblijfsrecht van onderdanen van derde landen die willen investeren in de EU-lidstaten zijn niet geharmoniseerd door de EU-wetgeving. De lidstaten bepalen de voorwaarden voor binnenkomst en verblijf voor onderdanen van derde landen die willen investeren in het land en er langer dan drie maanden willen verblijven.

Spanje is gerechtigd alleen te beslissen over het aantal toe te kennen nationale verblijfstitels en de voorwaarden voor het toekennen van Spaanse nationale verblijfstitels aan onderdanen van derde landen. Deze nationale verblijfstitels laten onderdanen van derde landen niet toe buiten Spanje te verblijven, maar overeenkomstig artikel 21 van de Overeenkomst ter uitvoering van het akkoord van Schengen mogen houders van een geldige verblijfstitel toegekend door een van de Schengenlanden zich gedurende een periode van ten hoogste drie maanden binnen een periode van zes maanden op grond van deze titel en van een geldig reisdocument vrij verplaatsen op het grondgebied van de overige Schengenlanden.

Richtlijn 2003/109/EG van de Raad van 25 november 2003 betreffende de status van langdurig ingezeten onderdanen van derde landen geeft houders van een verblijfsvergunning voor langdurig ingezetenen (onder bepaalde voorwaarden) rechten in een andere lidstaat. Deze EU-verblijfsvergunningen voor langdurig ingezetenen worden enkel toegekend wanneer aan de in de richtlijn vastgestelde voorwaarden is voldaan. Deze voorwaarden bepalen onder andere dat de onderdanen van derde landen minstens vijf jaar wettelijk en doorlopend op het grondgebied van de betreffende lidstaat moeten hebben gewoond. Zij moeten ook beschikken over een ziekteverzekering en voldoende middelen om zichzelf te onderhouden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011252/12
to the Commission
Jan Mulder (ALDE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Spain's decision to issue residence permits to Russians

Spain's State Secretary for Trade, Jaime García-Legaz, has announced that he is willing to issue residence permits to foreign nationals who buy a home for more than EUR 160 000. In this way, Spain hopes to promote the sale of thousands of unoccupied new homes. The Spanish authorities are mainly hoping that Chinese or Russian nationals will buy them.

1. Can the Commission say whether Spain is entirely free to do this?

2. May people who are issued with such residence permits also settle outside Spain?

3. Under EC law, is it permitted to issue residence permits in this way?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

Conditions for residence of third-country national investors into the EU Member States are not harmonised under EC law. Member States determine the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals who wish to invest in the country and stay for longer than three months.

Spain is entitled to decide alone on the number of national residence permits and on the conditions that apply when granting Spanish national residence permits to third-country nationals. These national permits do not entitle the third-country nationals to reside outside Spain, but according to Article 21 of the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement, holders of valid residence permits issued by one of the Schengen Member States may, in principle, on the basis of that permit and a valid passport, move freely for up to 3 months in any 6-month period within the territories of the other Schengen Member States.

Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents entitles holders of a long-term permit to residence rights (under certain conditions) in another Member State. Those EU long-term residence permits are issued only when these conditions set out in the directive are fulfilled. These conditions include that the third-country nationals must have legally and continuously lived in the territory of the Member State concerned for at least 5 years; they also have to have sufficient resources to maintain themselves and health insurance.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011253/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(10 december 2012)

Betreft: Turkije verbiedt soap over sultan

Turkije heeft de mediawet aangepast. Daarmee wordt het verboden om in tv-series „met historische gebeurtenissen en personen die door de samenleving worden gerespecteerd de spot te drijven, ze te kleineren of vertekend weer te geven".

Zo wordt met de nieuwe mediawet de populaire tv-serie „Muhtesem Yüzyi" verboden. In de serie komt sultan Suleiman de Grote voor, die zich daar vooral met het vrouwelijk schoon bezighoudt. Volgens de Turkse premier Erdoğan zou dat een „verdraaiing van historische feiten" zijn.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Turkije gaat soap over sultan verbieden" ([1])?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de nieuwe Turkse mediawet die ervoor zorgt dat tv-series verboden worden? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie deze inperking van de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de persvrijheid? Beseft de Commissie dat dit in strijd is met artikel 11 van het EU-handvest voor de grondrechten?

3. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het dat Turkije — vooral wat betreft de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de persvrijheid — almaar verder afglijdt? Is de Commissie ertoe bereid zich hier luid en duidelijk tegen uit te spreken en daarbij de conclusie te trekken dat Turkije niet in de EU thuishoort?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte parlementslid vermelde kwestie.

De vrijheid van meningsuiting, die volgens de jurisprudentie van het Europees Hof voor de Rechten van de Mens ook de vrijheid van kunstzinnige expressie omvat, is een grondrecht waarop de Commissie toezicht houdt in het kader van haar beoordeling van de vooruitgang die Turkije boekt bij het voldoen aan de politieke criteria. De Commissie heeft er bij diverse gelegenheden op gewezen dat Turkije tekortkomingen in dit verband moet aanpakken. Daarenboven heeft zij haar bezorgdheid geuit over de bestaande regels in verband met het verbieden van uitzendingen en de sancties die omroeporganisaties kunnen worden opgelegd.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/buitenland/21140669/__Verbod_op_soap_over_sultan__.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011253/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Turkey's ban on a soap opera about the Sultan

Turkey has amended its Media Law. As a result, it is prohibited for TV serials to 'mock, belittle or depict in a distorted manner historical events and people who are respected by society'.

Thus the new Media Law bans the popular TV serial 'Muhtesem Yüzyi'. The characters in this serial include Sultan Suleiman the Great, whose main interest is depicted as being beautiful women. According to Turkey's Prime Minister Erdoğan, this constitutes a 'distortion of historical facts'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Turkije gaat soap over sultan verbieden' [Turkey intends to ban a soap opera about the Sultan]? ([1])

2. What view does the Commission take of the new Turkish Media Law, under which TV serials are banned? What view does the Commission take of this restriction of freedom of expression and freedom of the press? Does the Commission realise that it breaches Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights?

3. What view does the Commission take of the fact that Turkey is constantly regressing, particularly as regards freedom of expression and of the press? Will the Commission speak out loud and clearly against this and conclude that Turkey has no place in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issue referred to by the Honourable Member.

Freedom of expression, which in line with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights includes freedom of artistic expression, is a fundamental right monitored by the Commission in its assessment of Turkey's progress towards meeting the political criteria. The Commission has on various occasions underlined the urgent need for Turkey to address shortcomings in this regard. Moreover, the Commission has expressed its concern over the existing rules on broadcasting bans and sanctions imposable on broadcasters.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/buitenland/21140669/__Verbod_op_soap_over_sultan__.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011254/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Informação estatística sobre a dívida portuguesa

Tendo em conta que:

— O Serviço de Estatística da União Europeia (Eurostat) é a organização responsável por produzir dados estatísticos para a União Europeia, promovendo a harmonização dos métodos estatísticos entre os diversos Estados-Membros;

— O Eurostat assume particular relevância na produção de dados macroeconómicos e informação estatística, permitindo estabelecer uma sólida comparação à escala regional sobre os mais diversos indicadores;

— A Direção-Geral do Tesouro e Finanças do Ministério das Finanças de Portugal publicou o Relatório do Setor Empresarial do Estado, com informação relativa ao primeiro semestre de 2011, sendo possível aferir uma dívida pública indireta de 32,388 mil milhões de euros. A mesma Direção-Geral publicou na altura o Relatório das Parcerias Público-Privadas, onde foi possível apurar uma dívida pública indireta de 1,127 mil milhões de euros;

— No entanto, seria importante conhecer a mais recente informação estatística sobre as dívidas da administração pública portuguesa, diretas e indiretas.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. O Eurostat possui informação recente sobre o valor total da dívida pública de Portugal, nomeadamente a que se refere à totalidade da administração central, regional e local, bem como ao Setor Empresarial do Estado, Parcerias Público-Privadas e Setor Empresarial Local?

2. O Eurostat conhece o valor total da dívida pública direta de Portugal? Qual o valor da dívida das autarquias portuguesas?

3. O Eurostat conhece o valor total da dívida pública indireta de Portugal?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em resposta às questões suscitadas pelo Senhor Deputado, importa sublinhar que:

1) A Comissão (Eurostat) recebe das autoridades estatísticas portuguesas informações sobre a dívida global bruta do setor da administração pública, que inclui a dívida da administração central, regional e local e da segurança social. O Eurostat recebe também das autoridades estatísticas portuguesas informações anuais regulares sobre as parcerias público-privadas classificadas no setor da administração pública. No entanto, não estão disponíveis informações sobre as parcerias público-privadas classificadas como elementos extrapatrimoniais da administração pública. A Comissão (Eurostat) não dispõe de informações completas sobre a dívida das empresas públicas (detidas pela administração pública, central ou local).

2) O montante total de dívida direta de Portugal era de 198 136 milhões de euros no final do segundo trimestre de 2012. O valor da dívida aumentou em 13 437 milhões de euros em relação ao final de 2011.

3) A Comissão (Eurostat) entende a expressão «dívida pública indireta» como a dívida das empresas públicas. Embora a Comissão tenha conhecimento da existência desses dados e acolhe favoravelmente a sua publicação, tais dados não são, por agora, recolhidos nem validados pela Comissão. No futuro, e impreterivelmente a partir de janeiro de 2015, a Comissão (Eurostat) estará em condições de publicar a dívida de empresas públicas (bem como as garantias governamentais e as parcerias público-privadas extrapatrimoniais) por força da Diretiva 2011/85/UE sobre requisitos aplicáveis aos quadros orçamentais dos Estados-Membros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011254/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Statistical information on Portuguese debt

Taking into account that:

— the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) is the body responsible for producing statistical data for the European Union, thus promoting a harmonisation of the statistical methods used by the different Member States;

— Eurostat plays a particularly important role in producing macroeconomic data and statistical information, allowing sound comparisons to be made at regional level of a wide range of indicators;

— the Directorate-General for Treasury and Finances of the Portuguese Ministry of Finance published a report on state-owned enterprises containing information about the first half of 2011, from which it can be inferred that the indirect public debt stands at EUR 32 388 billion. This Directorate-General has also published a report on public-private partnerships, which suggests that the indirect public debt amounts to EUR 1 127 billion;

— it is important that we are given the most up-to-date statistical information on both the direct and indirect debts incurred by the Portuguese public sector;

I would ask the Commission:

1. Does Eurostat have any recent information on Portugal's aggregate public debt, including all central, regional, and local government, as well as state-owned enterprises, public-private partnerships and local enterprises?

2. Does Eurostat know the total amount of Portugal's direct public debt? How much debt has been incurred by the Portuguese authorities?

3. Does Eurostat know the total amount of Portugal's indirect public debt?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

In response to the questions raised by the Honourable Member of Parliament, it is to be underlined that,

1. The Commission (Eurostat) receives from the Portuguese statistical authorities information on the total gross debt of general government sector, which includes central government, regional and local units and Social Security.

Eurostat receives also from the Portuguese statistical authorities regular annual information on public-private partnerships classified in the general government sector. However, no information is available on those public-private partnerships, classified off-balance sheet of general government. The Commission (Eurostat) has no complete information at present on the debt of public corporations (held by central or local government units).

2. The total amount of Portugal's direct debt was of EUR 198 136 million at the end of the second quarter of 2012. The figure of direct debt increased by EUR 13 437 million compared to the end of 2011.

3. The Commission (Eurostat) understands the expression 'indirect public debt' as the debt of state-owned enterprises (public corporations). While the Commission is aware of the existence of these data and welcomes its publication, such data is not collected nor validated by the Commission for the time being. In the future, and at the latest from January 2015 onwards, the Commission (Eurostat) will be in a position to publish the debt of public corporations (as well as government guarantees and off-balance sheet public-private partnerships) due to Council Directive 2011/85/EU on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011255/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Análise Anual de Crescimento

Tendo em conta que:

— No discurso sobre o Estado da União realizado na sessão plenária do Parlamento Europeu, o Presidente da Comissão Europeia apresentou um intenso programa de trabalhos no sentido de promover um quadro macroeconómico e de governação favorável ao crescimento e ao emprego;

— A Comissão Europeia tem vindo a apresentar várias medidas que visam criar mais oportunidades de emprego e apoiar o empreendedorismo;

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou, no passado dia 28 de novembro, a Análise Anual do Crescimento para o próximo ano, definindo cinco prioridades estratégicas destinadas a melhorar o clima económico nos mais diversos Estados-Membros;

— As cinco prioridades definidas são: 1) prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento; 2) restabelecer condições normais de crédito à economia; 3) promover o crescimento e a competitividade hoje e no futuro; 4) dar resposta ao desemprego e às consequências sociais da crise; 5) modernizar a administração pública;

— Pretende-se assim alinhar o Semestre Europeu com o Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento e a estratégia «Europa 2020», alinhando a contenção orçamental com novas medidas de incentivo ao crescimento económico.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como é que se vão alinhar as medidas definidas na Análise Anual de Crescimento com as várias medidas de crescimento económico já anunciadas pela Comissão, como a estratégia de industrialização, reestruturação de fundos comunitários ou apoio aos jovens?

2. Entende apropriado alinhar todas as estratégias setoriais que têm vindo a ser anunciadas numa grande orientação estratégica para a UE que esteja em consonância com a «Europa 2020»?

Resposta dada por José Manuel Durão Barroso em nome da Comissão
(20 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em 2010, a Comissão Europeia adotou a Estratégia Europa 2020 de criação de emprego e de crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo. A Comissão aplica e acompanha anualmente esta estratégia abrangente de crescimento, no contexto do Semestre Europeu para a coordenação das políticas económicas. O Semestre Europeu inicia-se com a Análise Anual do Crescimento, que estabelece as prioridades de política económica a nível da UE e dos Estados-Membros, para alcançar os objetivos e metas a longo prazo. As iniciativas setoriais em curso e as novas estratégias a nível da UE e a nível nacional devem, sempre que possível, ser alinhadas com os objetivos da Europa 2020 e com as prioridades da Análise Anual do Crescimento, a fim de maximizar o efeito dos instrumentos da UE no crescimento e os benefícios da coordenação das políticas económicas a nível da União. São exemplos recentes a iniciativa emblemática da Europa 2020 no domínio da política industrial «Reforçar a indústria europeia em prol do crescimento e da recuperação económica» e o «Pacote da UE para o emprego dos jovens».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011255/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Annual Growth Survey

Taking into account that:

— in his State of the Union address to the plenary session of the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission outlined an intensive work programme aimed at promoting a macroeconomic and governance framework that favours growth and employment;

— the European Commission has outlined a number of measures that seek to create more job opportunities and provide support to entrepreneurs;

— on 28 November this year the European Commission approved the Annual Growth Survey for 2013, which defined five strategic priorities intended to improve the economic climate in a range of Member States;

— the five priorities defined are: (1) pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; (2) restoring normal lending to the economy; (3) promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow; (4) tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis; and (5) modernising public administration;

— the aim of this is to bring the European Semester into line with the Compact for Growth and Jobs and the Europe 2020 strategy, aligning fiscal restraint with new measures to provide incentives for economic growth;

I would ask the Commission:

1. How will the measures defined in the Annual Growth Survey be aligned with the various economic growth measures announced by the European Commission, such as the industrialisation strategy, restructuring of Community funds and support for young people?

2. Do you consider it appropriate to bring together all of the sector strategies announced as part of a major strategic approach for the EU in line with the Europe 2020 strategy?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

In 2010, the European Commission adopted the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs. The Commission implements and monitors this comprehensive growth strategy on an annual basis in the context of the European Semester for economic policy coordination. The European Semester begins with the Annual Growth Survey that sets the economic policy priorities at EU and Member States' level to achieve the long-term objectives and targets. Ongoing sectoral initiatives and new strategies at EU and national level should be aligned with the objectives of Europe 2020 and the priorities of the Annual Growth Survey whenever possible with a view to maximising the impact of EU levers for growth and the benefits of economic policy coordination at EU level. Recent examples are the Europe 2020 Industrial Policy flagship initiative 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery' or the 'EU Youth Employment Package'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011256/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Alavancar o Crescimento Económico e o Emprego

Tendo em conta que:

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou, no passado dia 28 de novembro, a Análise Anual do Crescimento para o próximo ano, definindo cinco prioridades estratégicas destinadas a melhorar o clima económico nos mais diversos Estados-Membros;

— As cinco prioridades definidas são: 1) prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento; 2) restabelecer condições normais de crédito à economia; 3) promover o crescimento e a competitividade hoje e no futuro; 4) dar resposta ao desemprego e às consequências sociais da crise; 5) modernizar a administração pública;

— Segundo a Comissão Europeia, «Não há um programa uniforme, de aplicação única para estimular o crescimento e o emprego, mas há objetivos comuns e um leque de reformas a ponderar. O apoio centrado à inovação nos setores público e privado, melhores sistemas de educação e de formação para aumentar os níveis gerais das competências e um regime jurídico mais simples para o arranque das empresas constituem, no seu conjunto, medidas que podem contribuir para estimular a competitividade e, portanto, o crescimento.»

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Porque é que não existe um programa integrado e uniforme para promover o crescimento e o emprego, mas sim várias medidas anunciadas?

2. Que reformas considera ainda que os Estados-Membros devem realizar?

3. Que reformas considera que Portugal ainda deverá realizar para alavancar o crescimento económico e o emprego?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. A Estratégia Europa 2020 para um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo é o programa integrado e uniforme da União Europeia para a promoção do crescimento e do emprego. As principais metas nos domínios do emprego, da inovação, da sustentabilidade, da educação e da inclusão social, juntamente com as sete iniciativas emblemáticas, formam um conjunto coerente de prioridades políticas da UE e ao nível nacional.

2. O Semestre Europeu para a coordenação das políticas económicas abrange o estabelecimento de recomendações específicas por países, que identificam os principais desafios enfrentados pelos Estados-Membros em matéria de reformas. A análise anual do crescimento apresentada pela Comissão em 28 de novembro de 2012 estabelece os desafios e as prioridades políticas para 2013 na União Europeia em geral.

3. As reformas prioritárias a realizar em Portugal encontram-se estabelecidas no programa de ajustamento económico para o país. O reforço do potencial de crescimento da economia, através do aumento da competitividade e da criação de empregos, continua a apresentar uma importância crucial para o êxito do referido programa. Neste contexto, foram realizados progressos importantes na implementação da agenda de reformas estruturais em diversos domínios, como os serviços, as profissões regulamentadas e o sistema judicial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011256/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Stimulating economic growth and employment

Taking into account that:

— on 28 November this year the European Commission approved the Annual Growth Survey for 2013, which defined five strategic priorities intended to improve the economic climate in a range of Member States;

— the five priorities defined are: (1) pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; (2) restoring normal lending to the economy; (3) promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow; (4) tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis; and (5) modernising public administration;

— according to the European Commission, 'There is no "one-size-fits-all" agenda to boost growth and jobs, but there are common goals and a range of reforms to consider. Targeted support for research in the public and private sectors, better performing education and training systems to raise overall skill levels, and a simpler legal regime for business start-ups — all of these measures can help to boost competitiveness and therefore growth.'

I would ask the Commission:

1. Why is there no integrated and uniform programme to promote growth and employment, but only different announced measures?

2. What reforms do you consider that the Member States still need to make?

3. What reforms do you consider that Portugal still needs to make to stimulate economic growth and employment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

1. The Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs is the European Union's integrated and uniform programme to promote growth and employment. The headline targets in the areas of employment, innovation, sustainability, education and social inclusion, together with the seven flagship initiatives, make up a coherent set of policy priorities for the EU and national level.

2. The European semester for economic policy coordination includes the setting of country specific recommendations, which identify the main reform challenges for the Member States. The Annual Growth Survey as presented by the Commission on 28 November 2012 sets out the policy challenges and priorities for 2013 for the European Union as a whole.

3. Reform priorities for Portugal are laid down in the Portuguese Economic Adjustment Programme. Raising the growth potential of the economy, improving competitiveness and employment creation remain of crucial importance for the success of the Programme. In this regard, good progress has been made in implementing the structural reform agenda in a number of areas such as services, regulated professions and judiciary reform.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011257/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio à empregabilidade em 2013

Tendo em conta que:

— Segundo a última informação estatística disponibilizada pelo Eurostat, em julho de 2012, a União Europeia apresentava uma taxa de desemprego de 10,4 %, enquanto na Zona Euro a taxa de desemprego atingia 11,3 %. A Europa a 27 tinha 25,2 milhões de desempregados e, destes, cerca de 18,1 milhões pertenciam à Zona Euro.

— As taxas mais baixas de desemprego verificam-se na Áustria (4,5 %), Holanda (5,3 %), Alemanha e Luxemburgo (5,5 %). Inversamente, os países mais penalizados pelos números do desemprego são Espanha (25,1 %), Grécia (23,1 %) e Letónia (15,9 %). Portugal é o quarto país com a taxa mais alta de desemprego (15,7 %).

— Ao longo dos últimos 12 meses, registou-se um aumento de 2 milhões no número de desempregados, havendo atualmente mais de 25 milhões de pessoas sem emprego;

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou no passado dia 28 de novembro a Análise Anual do Crescimento para o próximo ano, definindo cinco prioridades estratégicas destinadas a melhorar o clima económico nos mais diversos Estados-Membros;

— As cinco prioridades definidas são: 1) prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento; 2) restabelecer condições normais de crédito à economia; 3) promover o crescimento e a competitividade hoje e no futuro; 4) dar resposta ao desemprego e às consequências sociais da crise; 5) modernizar a administração pública.

— Segundo a Comissão Europeia «cada uma das cinco prioridades visa assegurar o crescimento e o emprego, sendo colocada uma tónica especial na equidade. A Análise Anual do Crescimento sublinha que a situação do mercado do trabalho exige uma resposta urgente.»

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como é que cada uma das 5 prioridades irá contribuir para diminuir o desemprego nos diversos Estados-Membros?

2. Quantos empregos espera que venham a ser criados no espaço europeu?

3. Entende que estas medidas estão alinhadas com outras que visam diminuir o desemprego?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(20 de fevereiro de 2013)

O emprego e as prioridades sociais permanecem na linha da frente da Análise Anual do Crescimento de 2013. São estabelecidas prioridades-chave no sentido da preparação de uma recuperação geradora de emprego e para uma melhoria da empregabilidade dos trabalhadores. Porém todas as cinco prioridades da Análise Anual do Crescimento contribuirão para reduzir o desemprego.

A Comissão recomenda, em particular, que a consolidação orçamental seja diferenciada e o potencial de crescimento futuro preservado. Os Estados-Membros devem dar prioridade aos investimentos destinados a reforçar a cobertura e a eficácia dos serviços de emprego e das políticas ativas do mercado de trabalho, tais como a formação para os desempregados e os mecanismos de garantias para os jovens.

A Comissão dá aos Estados-Membros orientações rigorosas para as políticas nacionais de emprego e do mercado de trabalho, ao centrar-se no desemprego de longa duração, no desemprego jovem (insistindo na implementação da garantia para a juventude) e na flexibilidade interna. A Análise Anual de Crescimento de 2013 também coloca uma forte tónica na criação de emprego e no potencial de setores em expansão, tais como a economia verde, os cuidados de saúde e as TIC. Espera-se que, até 2020, possam ser criados mais de 20 milhões de postos de trabalho no âmbito da economia verde. Quanto aos cuidados de saúde, serão criados mais 7 milhões de empregos até 2020 devido às necessidades de substituição. Por fim, no âmbito das TIC, a procura já ultrapassa a oferta de profissionais nessa área prevendo-se que a Europa venha a registar uma escassez de aproximadamente 700 000 profissionais das TIC até 2015. A Análise Anual de Crescimento de 2013 também recomenda que os Estados-Membros trabalhem num quadro jurídico fiável e orientado para o futuro, no desenvolvimento de competências adequadas e numa melhor orientação dos apoios públicos.

A Comissão examinará as políticas dos Estados-Membros, as reformas em curso e o seu potencial impacto socioeconómico, no contexto do Semestre Europeu de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011257/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Support for employability in 2013

Taking into account that:

— according to the most recent statistical information provided by Eurostat, in July 2012 the unemployment rate in the European Union stood at 10.4% while the unemployment rate in the eurozone was 11.3%. There are 25.2 million people out of work in the 27 EU Member States and of these around 18.1 million come from the eurozone;

— the lowest rates of unemployment were recorded in Austria (4.5%), the Netherlands (5.3%), Germany and Luxembourg (5.5%). Conversely, the countries hardest hit in terms of levels of unemployment are Spain (25.1%), Greece (23.1%) and Latvia (15.9%). The fourth highest rate of unemployment was recorded in Portugal (15.7%);

— over the past 12 months, the number of persons out of work has risen by 2 million and currently stands at over 25 million;

— on 28 November this year the European Commission approved the Annual Growth Survey for 2013, which defined five strategic priorities intended to improve the economic climate in a range of Member States;

— the five priorities defined are: (1) pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; (2) restoring normal lending to the economy; (3) promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow; (4) tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis; and (5) modernising public administration;

— according to the European Commission, 'each of the five priorities is focused on delivering growth and jobs, with a special emphasis on fairness. The Annual Growth Survey underlines that the labour market situation calls for an urgent response';

I would ask the Commission:

1. How will each of these five priorities contribute to reducing unemployment in the various Member States?

2. How many jobs do you hope will be created in the European area?

3. Do you believe that these measures are in line with others intended to reduce unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

Employment and social priorities remain at the forefront of the Annual Growth Survey 2013. Specific key priorities are set out for preparing for a job-rich recovery and improve the employability of workers but all five priorities of the Annual Growth Survey will contribute to reducing unemployment.

The Commission recommends in particular that the fiscal consolidation should be differentiated and future growth potential preserved. Member States should prioritize investments to reinforce the coverage and effectiveness of employment services and active labour market policies, such as training for the unemployed and youth guarantee schemes.

The Commission presents strong guidance to Member States for their employment and labour market policies by focusing on long term unemployment, on youth unemployment — by insisting on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee — or on internal flexibility. The 2013 AGS also puts a strong emphasis on job creation and on the potential of expanding sectors, such as the green economy, healthcare and ICT. It is expected that over 20 million jobs could be created between now and 2020 within the green economy. In healthcare, there will be 7 million additional job openings till 2020 due to replacement needs. Finally within ICT, demand is already outstripping supply of ICT practitioners, with Europe expected to face a shortage of approximately 700 000 ICT practitioners by 2015 The 2013 AGS also recommends to Member States to work on future-oriented and reliable legal framework, the development of adequate skills and targeted public support.

The Commission will scrutinise Member States' policies and ongoing reforms and their potential socioeconomic impact in the context of the 2013 Semester.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011258/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego

Tendo em conta que:

— O Conselho Europeu de junho de 2012 adotou o Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego no sentido de os Estados-Membros recorrerem aos instrumentos de crescimento de que dispõem;

— Ao longo dos últimos meses, os diversos Estados-Membros têm vindo a adotar várias medidas com vista a alavancar o crescimento económico, mas que ainda não deram fruto devido à constante subida da taxa de desemprego e ao clima económico negativo;

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou no passado dia 28 de novembro a Análise Anual do Crescimento para o próximo ano, definindo cinco prioridades estratégicas destinadas a melhorar o clima económico nos mais diversos Estados-Membros;

— As cinco prioridades definidas são: 1) prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento; 2) restabelecer condições normais de crédito à economia; 3) promover o crescimento e a competitividade hoje e no futuro; 4) dar resposta ao desemprego e às consequências sociais da crise; 5) modernizar a administração pública.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. O Pacto para o Crescimento e Emprego já entrou em vigor?

2. Quais são as suas prioridades estratégicas no âmbito do Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego?

3. Será este o principal instrumento de dinamização económica ou existem outros que estejam a ser estudados pela Comissão?

Resposta dada pelo Presidente José Manuel Barroso em nome da Comissão
(26 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. e 2. O Presidente da Comissão informou o Conselho Europeu de outubro de 2012 sobre a situação da implementação do Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego adotado pelos Chefes de Estado e de Governo em junho de 2012, concluindo que a Comissão tinha realizado progressos animadores em diversos aspetos. A Comissão apresentou uma vasta gama de propostas como parte do Pacto e está a trabalhar em estreita colaboração com o Conselho e o Parlamento Europeu para a rápida adoção e aplicação, a fim de que se possam verificar rapidamente resultados benéficos na economia.

Para mais pormenores sobre as suas prioridades e aplicação, a Comissão remete para a resposta à questão O-164/2012.

3. A «Europa 2020» é uma estratégia da UE para o crescimento executada e acompanhada no quadro do Semestre Europeu. Uma transposição completa e atempada das recomendações específicas dirigidas a cada país traduzir-se-á em reformas estruturais que têm o objetivo de aumentar a competitividade e a capacidade para gerar crescimento e emprego. O êxito do Pacto é também fundamental e o QFP é o principal instrumento de financiamento para a economia da UE e a expressão do compromisso coletivo no sentido de investir em termos de crescimento e de competitividade.

Em novembro passado, a Comissão adotou a Análise Anual do Crescimento 2013 (AGS). Dado que a situação económica continua a ser problemática e que as reformas iniciadas só agora começam a ter impacto, a Comissão considera que as prioridades do ano passado se mantêm plenamente válidas e que as atenções se deveriam centrar na execução das reformas em curso.

Na mesma data, a Comissão adotou o plano pormenorizado para uma União Económica e Monetária efetiva e aprofundada. Proporciona uma visão para um forte quadro institucional que tem por objetivo assegurar a estabilidade e a prosperidade do sistema financeiro e a economia da UE no futuro, o que é essencial para restabelecer a confiança e o crescimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011258/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Compact for Growth and Jobs

Taking into account that:

— in June 2012, the European Council adopted the Compact for Growth and Jobs with the aim of ensuring that Member States make use of the instruments of growth available to them;

— over recent months, Member States have adopted various measures aimed at driving economic growth which, owing to the constant rise in the unemployment rate and the negative economic climate, have not been successful;

— on 28 November this year the European Commission approved the Annual Growth Survey, which defined five strategic priorities intended to improve the economic climate in a range of Member States;

— the five priorities defined are: (1) pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; (2) restoring normal lending to the economy; (3) promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow; (4) tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis; and (5) modernising public administration;

I would ask the Commission:

1. Has the Compact for Growth and Jobs now entered into effect?

2. What are your strategic priorities with regard to the Compact for Growth and Jobs?

3. Will this be the main instrument of economic stimulation or are you also considering others?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

1, 2. The President of the Commission reported to the European Council of October 2012 on the state of play of the implementation of the Compact for Growth and Jobs, adopted by Heads of State in June 2012, concluding that encouraging progress has been made by the Commission on several aspects. The Commission has tabled a wide range of proposals as part of the Compact and is working closely with the Council and the European Parliament to secure rapid adoption and implementation so that beneficial results can be felt in the economy soon.

For details on its priorities and implementation, the Commission would refer to the answer to oral question O-164/2012.

3. Europe 2020 is the EU's growth strategy implemented and monitored in the framework of the European semester. A complete and timely implementation of the Country Specific Recommendations will translate into structural reforms to increase competitiveness and capacity to create growth and jobs. The success of the Compact is also key and the MFF is the main financing instrument to EU economy and the expression of the collective commitment to invest in growth and competitiveness.

Last November, the Commission adopted the 2013 Annual Growth Survey (AGS). Given that the economic situation remains challenging and that the reforms initiated are only starting to have an impact, the Commission considers that the priorities from last year remain fully valid and that the focus should be on implementation of ongoing reforms.

On the same day the Commission adopted the Blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union. It provides a vision for a strong institutional framework to ensure the stability and prosperity of the EU's financial system and economy in the future which is key to restore confidence and growth.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011259/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Emprego Jovem

Tendo em conta que:

— Em junho de 2012, a taxa de desemprego jovem (i.e. trabalhadores com idade inferior a 25 anos) na União Europeia era de 22,5 %, correspondendo a 5,5 milhões de jovens sem uma ocupação profissional, e de 22,6 % na Zona Euro, correspondendo a 3,4 milhões de desempregados. Este flagelo social tem vindo a aumentar ao longo dos últimos meses, dado que uma comparação homóloga (com junho de 2011) permite constatar que mais 182 mil jovens estão desempregados na Europa a 27, enquanto na Zona Euro são mais 204 mil.

— As taxas de desemprego jovem mais baixas verificam-se na Alemanha (8,0 %), na Áustria (8,9 %) e na Holanda (9,2 %). Os valores mais elevados registam-se na Grécia (53,8 % em Abril de 2012) e em Espanha (52,9 %).

— Portugal continua a apresentar uma das mais elevadas taxas de desemprego jovem da UE, atualmente equivalente a 36,4 %. Esta taxa representa um crescimento de 7,1 pontos percentuais face aos valores registados no período homólogo (junho de 2011 — 29,3 %).

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou, no passado dia 28 de novembro, a Análise Anual do Crescimento para o próximo ano, definindo o combate ao desemprego jovem como uma prioridade estratégica;

— Segundo a Comissão Europeia , a «Análise Anual do Crescimento» convida igualmente os Estados-Membros a desenvolver mecanismos de garantia destinados aos jovens no âmbito dos quais todos os jovens de idade inferior a 25 anos recebem uma oferta de emprego, prossecução dos estudos ou estágio no prazo de quatro meses a contar da conclusão formal dos seus estudos ou início do seu desemprego.

— Em 5 de dezembro, a Comissão apresentará uma proposta global sobre os mecanismos de garantia destinados aos jovens no seu Pacote sobre o Emprego dos Jovens.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como é que pretende sensibilizar os Estados-Membros para os novos mecanismos de garantia destinados aos jovens?

2. Qual a análise que faz das várias medidas destinadas a apoiar a empregabilidade jovem na União Europeia?

3. Tem conhecimento do número de jovens que atualmente trabalham fora do seu país de origem e se existe uma tendência crescente transversal aos diversos Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(11 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. No seu Pacote de Emprego dos Jovens ([1]), a Comissão propõe uma recomendação do Conselho que incentiva os Estados-Membros a criarem uma garantia para a juventude. As negociações no Conselho já foram iniciadas em dezembro de 2012 tendo em vista a sua adoção no início de 2013. De igual modo, a proposta inclui recomendações específicas que convidam a Comissão a apoiar iniciativas de sensibilização relativas à criação de garantias para a juventude.

2. A Comissão congratula-se com as várias medidas que os Estados-Membros adotaram ou estão em vias de adotar para aumentar o emprego jovem. O anexo 3 do documento de trabalho dos serviços da Comissão ([2]) que serve de apoio à comunicação principal ([3]) dá uma visão global completa destas medidas. A Comissão propôs a recomendação acima mencionada por ter em consideração os altos níveis de desemprego jovem persistentes e por se ter inspirado em políticas positivas baseadas em provas em toda a UE.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final de 5 de dezembro de 2012.
([2]) SWD(2012) 406 final de 5 de dezembro de 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727 final.

3. Os dados do Inquérito Europeu às Forças de Trabalho do segundo trimestre de 2012 mostraram que 489 000 trabalhadores entre os 15 e os 24 anos de idade residiam noutro país da UE (ou seja, 2,6 % do total da população jovem empregada). Isto representa uma diminuição em comparação com o que se verificava antes da crise (544 000 no segundo trimestre de 2007). Para a classe de idade 25-29, a tendência é diferente: cerca de 981 000 trabalhadores residiam noutro país da UE (ou seja, 4,2 % da população empregada com idades entre os 25 e os 29 anos), o que constitui um aumento em comparação com os dados de há cinco anos (868 000 no segundo trimestre de 2007).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011259/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Youth Employment

Taking into account that:

— in June 2012, the youth unemployment rate (i.e. among workers under 25) was 22.5% in the European Union, giving a total of 5.5 million young people out of work, and 22.6% in the euro area, equivalent to 3.4 million unemployed. This social scourge has worsened in recent months: compared with June 2011, the number of young people out of work has increased by 182 000 in the EU-27, and by 204 000 in the euro area;

— the lowest youth unemployment rates are in Germany (8%), Austria (8.9%) and the Netherlands (9.2%). The highest are Greece (53.8% in April 2012) and Spain (52.9%);

— Portugal still has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the EU, currently standing at 36.4%. This represents a 7.1% increase on the June 2011 rate (29.3%);

— on 28 November, the Commission approved the Annual Growth Survey for next year, in which it earmarked the fight against youth unemployment as a strategic priority;

— according to the Commission, the Annual Growth Survey also invites Member States to develop a 'youth guarantee' whereby every person under the age of 25 receives an offer of a job, further study or traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed;

— the Commission will present a full proposal on 'youth guarantees' in its Youth Employment Package on 5 December;

I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. How does it plan to raise the Member States' awareness of the new 'youth guarantees'?

2. What is the Commission's view of the various measures aimed at supporting youth employment in the European Union?

3. Does the Commission know how many young people are currently working outside their own countries of origin and whether this is a growing trend throughout the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

1. In its Youth Employment Package ([1]), the Commission proposes a Council recommendation calling the Member States to establish a Youth Guarantee. Negotiations have started already in the Council in December 2012 with a view to its adoption in early 2013. Equally, the proposal includes a specific recommendation inviting the Commission to support awareness-raising activities on the setting up of Youth Guarantees.

2. The Commission welcomes the various measures that Member States have adopted or are about to adopt to boost youth employment. A full overview can be found in Annex 3 of the Staff Working Document ([2]) supporting the main Communication ([3]). It is by taking into account the persisting high levels of youth unemployment and inspired by positive evidence based policies across the EU, that the Commission proposed the abovementioned recommendation.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.
([2]) SWD(2012) 406 final of 5 December 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727 final.

3. EU-Labour Force Survey data for the second quarter of 2012 showed 489 000 workers aged 15-24 residing in another EU country (or 2.6% of the overall young population in employment). This represents a decline compared to the pre-crisis situation (544 000 in the second quarter of 2007). For the age class 25-29, the trend is different: around 981 000 workers resided in another EU country (or 4.2% of those aged 25-29 in employment), an increase compared to five years ago (868 000 in the second quarter of 2007).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011260/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Programas de Assistência Financeira

Tendo em conta que:

— Vários países europeus estão sob assistência financeira, sendo a Comissão Europeia um dos principais intervenientes nestes programas de apoio.

— Portugal, à semelhança da Grécia, Irlanda, Espanha e, já recentemente, França, está a fazer inúmeros esforços no sentido de melhorar a sustentabilidade das suas contas públicas, devendo diminuir os impostos sobre o rendimento, conforme é agora sugerido pela Comissão Europeia.

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou, no passado dia 28 de novembro, a Análise Anual do Crescimento para o próximo ano, definindo o combate ao desemprego jovem como uma prioridade estratégica.

— Segundo a Comissão Europeia, a «Análise Anual do Crescimento» coloca a ênfase na proteção dos mais vulneráveis. Os impostos sobre o rendimento e as contribuições para a segurança social devem ser reduzidos, nomeadamente no que respeita aos trabalhadores com salários mais baixos, e devem ser aceleradas as reformas destinadas a simplificar a legislação laboral e a desenvolver regimes de trabalho flexíveis, bem como a garantir que a evolução salarial seja favorável à criação de emprego.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como avalia o facto de, nos programas de ajustamento financeiros realizados com vários Estados-Membros, defender o aumento de impostos para compensar a subida dos gastos sociais e agora, na Análise Anual de Crescimento, defender a diminuição dos impostos sobre o rendimento?

2. Sabendo desta nova posição, está a Comissão disponível para rever os acordos de assistência financeira realizados com os Estados-Membros?

3. Tendo conhecimento de que a Comissão é apenas uma das 3 instituições internacionais que supervisionam os programas de ajustamento, está disponível para sensibilizar as restantes para a importância de manter os rendimentos de trabalho inalteráveis?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Análise Anual do Crescimento (AAC) apresenta uma abordagem diferenciada e global do restabelecimento da produção sustentável e do crescimento do emprego nos Estados-Membros da UE. Em especial, no que respeita aos Estados-Membros que beneficiam de assistência financeira, a AAC salienta a necessidade de um esforço determinado para colocar as finanças públicas numa trajetória sustentável, a fim de restabelecer a confiança dos investidores, reduzir os custos do reembolso da dívida e criar margem de manobra orçamental para políticas orçamentais favoráveis ao crescimento. Propõe igualmente uma redução da carga fiscal nos Estados-Membros onde é comparativamente elevada e entrava a criação de emprego.

No caso dos Estados-Membros beneficiários de assistência financeira, a correção dos elevados défices públicos é uma prioridade. Para que esta correção seja sustentável, os programas de ajustamento centram-se na consolidação orçamental baseada nas despesas. No entanto, tendo em conta a envergadura do ajustamento necessário, uma consolidação feita exclusivamente do lado da despesa é difícil porque, a curto prazo, implica riscos para o bom funcionamento do Estado. Por este motivo, e tendo igualmente em conta o facto de a carga fiscal nestes países ser bastante inferior à média da UE, os programas também incluem um aumento da mesma. A mais longo prazo, estes aumentos de impostos devem ser substituídos, na medida do possível, por medidas suplementares de redução das despesas.

No âmbito das análises regulares dos programas de ajustamento, a Comissão aprecia, em estreita consulta com os outros membros da troica, todas as questões pertinentes para o programa, incluindo reformas estruturais destinadas a aumentar a competitividade da economia e o potencial de crescimento, o que constitui a base fundamental para um nível adequado de rendimentos do trabalho.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011260/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Financial assistance programmes

Given that:

— various European countries are receiving financial assistance, and the Commission is one of the main players in these support programmes;

— Portugal, together with Greece, Ireland, Spain and — most recently — France, is making a huge effort to improve the long-term sustainability of its public finances, and must lower its income tax rates, in line with what the Commission is now proposing;

— on 28 November the Commission adopted its Annual Growth Survey 2013, earmarking action to tackle youth unemployment as a strategic priority; and

— according to the Commission, the Annual Growth Survey will particularly target protecting the most vulnerable groups in society. Income tax rates and social security contributions should be cut, particularly in the case of the lowest wage earners. At the same time, action should be stepped up on reforms to simplify labour legislation and extend flexible working arrangements, as well as to ensure that wage trends have a positive impact on job creation;

I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. How does it view the fact that the fiscal adjustment programmes introduced with a number of Member States defend tax hikes to compensate for the increase in welfare payments, whereas the Annual Growth Survey advocates cutting income tax rates?

2. Given this change in position, does the Commission intend to review the fiscal adjustment programmes that have been introduced with the Member States?

3. Since the Commission is just one of three international bodies overseeing the fiscal adjustment programmes, does it intend to raise the awareness of the other international bodies as to the importance of maintaining current levels of labour income?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

The Annual Growth Survey (AGS) presents a comprehensive and differentiated approach of restoring sustainable output and employment growth in the EU Member States. In particular, with regard to Member States receiving financial assistance, the AGS emphasises the need for a determined effort to put public finances on a sustainable path in order to restore investor confidence, reduce the costs of debt repayment and create budgetary room for growth-enhancing fiscal policies. It also proposes a reduction in the tax burden in Member States where this is comparatively high and hampers job creation.

For Member States receiving financial assistance the correction of the high public deficits is a priority. In order to make this correction sustainable, the adjustment programmes focus on expenditure-based fiscal consolidation. However, in view of the large adjustment needs an exclusively expenditure-based consolidation is difficult as in the short term it entails risks to the well-functioning of the state. For this reason, and also in view of the fact that the tax burden in these countries is substantially below the average in the EU the programmes also include a targeted increase in the tax burden. In the longer-term, such tax increases should be replaced to the extent possible by further measures reducing expenditure.

In the framework of the regular reviews of the adjustment programmes, the Commission consults very closely with the other troika members on all matters relevant to the programme, including structural reforms aimed at raising the economy's competitiveness and growth potential which is the fundamental basis for an adequate level of labour incomes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011261/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Preservação das comunidades piscatórias, seu modo de vida e tradições

Segundo a própria Comissão, a política agrícola da UE propõe-se conciliar uma produção alimentar adequada na UE, garantindo, paralelamente, a viabilidade económica das comunidades rurais e contribuindo para fazer face a desafios ambientais, como as alterações climáticas, a gestão dos recursos hídricos, a bioenergia e a biodiversidade. Em todos os Estados-Membros da UE, os agricultores mantêm o espaço rural vivo e contribuem para a conservação do modo de vida rural. Se não existissem explorações agrícolas nem agricultores, as nossas aldeias, vilas e pequenas cidades seriam profundamente afetadas — no pior sentido.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Assume idêntica atitude para com as comunidades piscatórias? Reconhece a existência de um paralelismo entre a situação dos agricultores e dos pescadores, nomeadamente quanto ao seu papel social e ambiental?

2. Reconhece a necessidade de preservar as comunidades piscatórias, o seu modo de vida e as suas tradições?

3. Que medidas tomou ou prevê tomar neste tocante?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(11 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. As comunidades piscatórias desempenham um papel importante no tecido socioeconómico das zonas dependentes da pesca. Conceder-lhes apoio é essencial para o êxito da política comum das pescas reformada.

2. O apoio às comunidades piscatórias é importante e deve ir além da preservação do seu modo de vida tradicional. O setor das pescas está a atravessar tempos de mudança, o que tem fortes repercussões no emprego e na qualidade de vida das zonas dependentes da pesca. Para que estas comunidades permaneçam sustentáveis, é importante ajudá-las a fazerem face às mudanças. Este apoio pode assumir diferentes formas, nomeadamente ajuda à valorização, a nível local, das suas capturas ou à diversificação das suas atividades, por exemplo desenvolvendo produtos turísticos baseados na pesca.

3. A Comissão considera que é às zonas dependentes da pesca que cabe definir as suas necessidades e prioridades. Desde 2007, o Fundo Europeu das Pescas tem vindo a apoiar grupos de desenvolvimento local nas zonas dependentes da pesca, ajudando-os a definir e a aplicar estratégias integradas de desenvolvimento local. Atualmente estão ativos 303 grupos deste tipo e já foram apoiados cerca de 3 000 projetos. Na sua proposta para o futuro Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas, a Comissão propôs que estes grupos possam beneficiar de apoio europeu suplementar proveniente de outros fundos de gestão partilhada (Feader, FEAMP, FEDER e FSE), no quadro das estratégias de desenvolvimento local lideradas pelas comunidades locais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011261/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Safeguarding fishing communities, their way of life and their traditions

According to the Commission, the aim of the EU's farm policy is to ensure that adequate European food production goes hand in hand with economically viable rural communities and action on environmental challenges such as climate change, water management, bioenergy and biodiversity. In all EU Member States, farmers keep the countryside alive and maintain the rural way of life. If there were no farms or farmers, our hamlets, villages and market towns would be profoundly affected — for the worse.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. Does it believe the same policy should apply to fishing communities? Does it agree that a parallel can be drawn between the position of farmers and that of fishermen, in particular as regards the social and environmental role they play?

2. Does it agree that fishing communities, their way of life and their traditions need to be safeguarded?

3. What action has it taken or will it take to achieve this?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

1. Fishing communities play an important role in the socioeconomic fabric of fisheries-dependent areas. Supporting them is essential for the success of a reformed Common Fisheries Policy.

2. Support for fishing communities is important and should go beyond safeguarding their traditional way of life. The fisheries sector is undergoing times of change and this has a strong impact on jobs and the quality of life in those areas dependent on fishing. It is important to help these communities address these changes to remain sustainable. This support can take different forms, including helping these communities to add more value locally to their catches or diversifying their activities for example by the development of tourist products based on fishing.

3. The Commission is of the opinion that it is at the level of fisheries-dependent areas that needs and priorities should be defined. The European Fisheries Fund supports since 2007 local development groups in fisheries-dependent areas, helping them define and implement integrated local development strategies. 303 of these groups are now in activity and nearly 3.000 projects have already been supported. In its proposal for the future European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the Commission has proposed to allow these groups to access further European support from other shared management funds (EAFRD, EMFF, ERDF and ESF) in the framework of Community-Led Local Development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011262/12
ao Conselho
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Procuradoria de Justiça Europeia

O Diretor-Geral do OLAF, Giovanni Kessler, apelou recentemente ao estabelecimento de uma procuradoria de justiça europeia enquanto instituição europeia formal como forma de fazer face à corrupção a nível europeu.

Assim, pergunto ao Conselho:

1. Considera pertinente este apelo?

2. Que comentários lhe merece?

3. Assumiu alguma posição sobre esta matéria?

4. Em sua opinião, como deveria articular-se com os ordenamentos jurídicos nacionais?

5. Não crê que uma procuradoria europeia poderia pôr em causa o princípio da subsidiariedade e a independência judicial dos Estados-Membros? Por que forma poderia evitar-se estas consequências?

Resposta
(25 de fevereiro de 2013)

Nos termos do artigo 86.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia, introduzido pelo Tratado de Lisboa, «*a fim de combater as infrações lesivas dos interesses financeiros da União*», o Conselho, deliberando por unanimidade após aprovação do Parlamento Europeu, pode instituir uma Procuradoria Europeia por meio de regulamentos e com base numa proposta legislativa da Comissão. Até à data, a Comissão ainda não apresentou qualquer proposta nesse sentido.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011262/12
to the Council
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: European public prosecutor's office

Giovanni Kessler, Director-General of OLAF, recently called for the establishment of a European public prosecutor's office as a formal EU institution in order to combat corruption at EU level.

I would therefore ask the Council:

1. Does it consider this call to be relevant?

2. Does it have any comments to make?

3. Has it reached a position on the subject?

4. How does the Council consider that a European public prosecutor's office should intermesh with national legal systems?

5. Does the Council not think that a European public prosecutor's office would compromise the principle of subsidiarity and judicial independence of Member States? How could these consequences be avoided?

Reply
(25 February 2013)

Pursuant to Article 86 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which was introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, 'in order to combat crimes affecting the financial interests of the Union' the Council, acting unanimously after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament, may establish a European Public Prosecutor's Office by means of regulations and on the basis of a legislative proposal from the Commission. So far, no such proposal has been submitted by the Commission.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011263/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Procuradoria de Justiça Europeia

O Diretor-Geral do OLAF, Giovanni Kessler, apelou recentemente ao estabelecimento de uma procuradoria de justiça europeia enquanto instituição europeia formal como forma de fazer face à corrupção a nível europeu.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Considera pertinente este apelo?

2. Que comentários lhe merece?

3. Assumiu alguma posição sobre esta matéria?

4. Em sua opinião, como deveria articular-se com os ordenamentos jurídicos nacionais?

5. Não crê que uma procuradoria europeia poderia pôr em causa o princípio da subsidiariedade e a independência judicial dos Estados-Membros? Por que forma poderia evitar-se estas consequências?

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

A criação de uma Procuradoria de Justiça Europeia, a partir da Eurojust, em conformidade com o artigo 86.° do TFUE, faz parte do Programa de Trabalho da Comissão para 2013. O Presidente José Manuel Barroso confirmou no seu discurso no Parlamento Europeu sobre o estado da União 2012 que a Comissão apresentará uma proposta em 2013.

A Comissão está atualmente a realizar as necessárias consultas e trabalhos preparatórios tendo em vista a preparação de uma proposta. Os trabalhos preparatórios ainda não estão concluídos.

Uma Procuradoria de Justiça Europeia terá de trabalhar em estreita cooperação com as autoridades nacionais responsáveis pela aplicação da lei, dado que, em conformidade com o artigo 86.° do TFUE, os processos judiciais deverão ser apresentados nos tribunais nacionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011263/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: European public prosecutor's office

Giovanni Kessler, Director-General of OLAF, recently called for the establishment of a European public prosecutor's office as a formal EU institution in order to combat corruption at EU level.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. Does it consider this call to be relevant?

2. Does it have any comments to make?

3. Has it reached a position on the subject?

4. How does the Commission consider that a European public prosecutor's office should intermesh with national legal systems?

5. Does the Commission not think that a European public prosecutor's office would compromise the principle of subsidiarity and judicial independence of Member States? How could these consequences be avoided?

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

The establishment of a European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), from Eurojust in accordance with Article 86 TFEU, is included in the Commission Work Programme for 2013. President Barroso has confirmed in his 2012 state of the Union speech before the European Parliament that the Commission will present a proposal in 2013.

The Commission is currently conducting the necessary consultations and preparatory works in view of preparing a proposal. The preparatory works are not yet finalised.

An EPPO will need to work in close cooperation with national law enforcement authorities as its prosecution cases have to be brought to national courts in accordance with Article 86 TFEU.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011264/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Europeana: futuro ponto de referência para as tradições musicais da Europa

Em resposta à minha pergunta escrita E-008649/2012, a comissária Androulla Vassiliou declarou, em nome da Comissão que: «O Europeana já disponibiliza conteúdos relevantes para o ensino da música. A recomendação da Comissão sobre a digitalização, a acessibilidade em linha de material cultural e a preservação digital convida os Estados-Membros a incentivar as instituições culturais, os editores e outros detentores de direitos de autor a disponibilizar o seu material digital através do Europeana. Tal ajudará a projetar este sítio Web como ponto de referência para as tradições musicais da Europa.»

Depreendo da resposta recebida que, não obstante a sua relevância, os conteúdos disponibilizados não são ainda suficientes para projetar o Europeana como ponto de referência para as tradições musicais da Europa.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que resposta obteve por parte das instituições culturais, os editores e outros detentores de direitos de autor quanto à disponibilização do seu material digital no Europeana?

2. Considera que o convite que formulou tem surtido o efeito pretendido? Admite vir a tomar novas medidas que o promovam?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(11 de fevereiro de 2013)

Enquanto ponto único de acesso ao património cultural da Europa, a Europeana oferece atualmente acesso a mais de 23,5 milhões de bens culturais ([1]), propriedade de cerca de 2 200 instituições culturais de toda a Europa. Estes bens abrangem diversos aspetos do património, nomeadamente livros impressos antigos, artes do espetáculo e moda, mas igualmente tradições musicais.

Para além de incluir exposições temáticas, oferecendo aos visitantes a possibilidade de, por exemplo, explorar o mundo dos instrumentos musicais ([2]), a Europeana promove a reutilização das suas coleções pelas comunidades criativas e culturais ([3]).

A Recomendação sobre a digitalização e a acessibilidade em linha de material cultural e a preservação digital ([4]) reconhece que os conteúdos protegidos por direitos de autor, nomeadamente material sonoro ou audiovisual, não estão representados de forma adequada na Europeana. Estabelece, por conseguinte, de forma específica que 2 dos 30 milhões de objetos que as instituições culturais nos Estados-Membros devem a ajudar a Europeana a disponibilizar até 2015 devem ser material sonoro ou audiovisual, e convida ainda os Estados-Membros a melhorarem as condições para a digitalização e acessibilidade em linha de material protegido por direitos de autor.

Para reforçar os progressos a realizar nestes domínios, o programa de trabalho do Programa de Apoio à Política em matéria de TIC do Programa-Quadro para a Competitividade e a Inovação para 2013 dá preferência à agregação de material audiovisual, a fim de melhorar a base dos conteúdos ([5]) da Europeana, enquanto as propostas para o Mecanismo Interligar a Europa (2014-2020) ([6]) prevêem um apoio à agregação de novos domínios de conteúdos e domínios sub-representados para a Europeana.

([1]) Tal inclui cerca de 450 000 bens sonoros e 170 000 audiovisuais.
([2]) A exposição baseia-se nos conteúdos cedidos pelo projeto MIMO financiado pela UE, o museu dos instrumentos musicais em linha. http://exhibitions.europeana.eu/exhibits/show/musical-instruments-en/.
([3]) Por exemplo, http://www.classicalmusichackday.org/.
([4]) JO L 283 de 29.10.2011, p. 39.
([5]) CIP ICT PSP WP 2013, objetivo 2.1.a: Enriquecer e melhorar a base de conteúdos da Europeana — https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/cip_ict_psp_wp2013_publication.pdf
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/connecting-europe-facility.

Paralelamente, a Comissão está a lançar um diálogo entre os intervenientes sobre «Licenças para a Europa» ([7]), a fim de ajudar o setor a encontrar soluções inovadoras para um melhor acesso aos conteúdos em linha, devendo apresentar as suas conclusões e soluções até ao final de 2013.

([7]) Liderado conjuntamente pelos Comissários responsáveis pelo mercado interno e os serviços, pela agenda digital e pela educação, cultura, multilinguismo e inovação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011264/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Europeana: a future point of reference for musical traditions in Europe

In response to my Written Question E-008649/2012, Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou replied as follows on behalf of the Commission: 'Europeana already provides content relevant to music teaching. The Commission Recommendation on the digitisation, online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation invites Member States to encourage cultural institutions, publishers and other right holders to make their digitised material accessible through Europeana. This will help the site to become a reference point for Europe's musical traditions'.

On the basis of this response, and notwithstanding its relevance, I presume that the content is still not sufficient to make Europeana a point of reference for musical traditions in Europe.

I would therefore ask the Commission:

1. What response has it had from cultural institutions, editors and other copyright owners on the issue of whether their digital material can be made available via Europeana?

2. Does the Commission regard the invitation it has made as having been successful? Is it considering taking other measures?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

As the single access point to Europe's cultural heritage, Europeana currently provides access to over 23.5m cultural objects ([1]) held by some 2,200 cultural institutions from all across Europe. These objects address diverse aspects of culture, including early printed books, performing arts, fashion, but also musical traditions.

Besides featuring thematic exhibitions, offering its visitors the possibility to e.g. explore the world of musical instruments ([2]), Europeana promotes the re-use of its collections by creative and cultural communities ([3]).

The recommendation on the digitisation and the online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation ([4]) acknowledges that in-copyright content, including sound or audiovisual material, is ill represented on Europeana. It therefore stipulates specifically that 2m out of the 30m objects the cultural institutions in the MS should help Europeana make accessible by 2015 should be sound or audiovisual material, and further invites the Member States to improve the conditions for the digitisation and online accessibility of in-copyright material.

To reinforce progress in these areas, the CIP ICT PSP work programme for 2013 gives preference to the aggregation of audiovisual material to improve the Europeana content base ([5]), while the proposals for the Connecting Europe Facility (2014-2020) ([6]) foresee support for aggregation of new and underrepresented content domains for Europeana.

In parallel, the Commission is launching a stakeholder dialogue on 'Licences for Europe' ([7]) to help the industry deliver innovative solutions for greater access to online content. It should deliver its conclusions and solutions by the end of 2013.

([1]) This includes around 450,000 sound and 170,000 video objects.
([2]) http://exhibitions.europeana.eu/exhibits/show/musical-instruments-en/. The exhibition draws on content contributed by the EU-funded project MIMO, the musical instruments museum online.
([3]) E.g. http://www.classicalmusichackday.org/.
([4]) OJ L 283, 29.10.2011, p. 39.
([5]) CIP ICT PSP WP 2013, objective 2.1.a: Enriching and improving the Europeana content base — https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/cip_ict_psp_wp2013_publication.pdf
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/connecting-europe-facility.
([7]) jointly led by Commissioners responsible for Internal Market and Service, for Digital Agenda and for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Innovation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011265/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Aumento de emissões globais de dióxido de carbono

Notícias recentes dão conta de um relatório do East Anglia's Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research que aponta para um aumento das emissões globais de dióxido de carbono e que alerta para os riscos para a população e para a natureza se não for invertida esta tendência. Segundo o mesmo estudo, as emissões globais de 2012 ultrapassaram em 58 % as de 1990, tendo atingido o número recorde de 35,6 mil milhões de toneladas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento destes indicadores?

2. Quem são, neste momento, os maiores poluidores mundiais?

3. Que contributos dá para inverter esta tendência? Nomeadamente, que instrumentos utiliza para promover a redução das emissões de dióxido de carbono interna e externamente? Como avalia a sua eficácia?

4. Qual a melhor forma de conciliar o direito ao ambiente com o direito ao desenvolvimento dos povos?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(7 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento dos indicadores referidos pelo Senhor Deputado.

2. De acordo com os últimos dados da *Emission Database for Global Atmospheric Research trends*, os cinco países com maiores emissões de CO_2 a nível mundial em 2011 foram a China (29 %), os Estados Unidos da América (16 %), a UE (11 %), a Índia (6 %) e a Federação da Rússia (5 %). As emissões de CO_2 representam 77 % das emissões de gases com efeito estufa.

3. Em Copenhaga, a comunidade internacional reconheceu como objetivo geral para a ação climática manter o aquecimento mundial abaixo dos 2 °C, de forma a evitar impactos perigosos e potencialmente catastróficos. Embora países que representam mais de 80 % das emissões mundiais tenham prometido estabelecer metas internas, uma análise do PNUA mostra que, infelizmente, os compromissos de Quioto e as promessas incondicionais de Copenhaga-Cancun representam, no máximo, 1/3 das reduções de emissões necessárias até 2020. Por esta razão, a UE está empenhada no debate com os parceiros internacionais de maneiras de reduzir este desfasamento. Além disso, o pacote Clima e Energia adotado pela UE contém um vasto conjunto de medidas a tomar pela União Europeia para fazer face às alterações climáticas. A eficácia destas medidas é avaliada no quadro das obrigações de monitorização ao nível da UE e a nível internacional.

4. Não existe contradição alguma entre o direito dos povos ao desenvolvimento e o direito a ter um ambiente despoluído. Pelo contrário, tal como revela um relatório recente do Banco Mundial ([1]), não limitar as alterações climáticas porá em risco o desenvolvimento e a erradicação da pobreza. A experiência da europeia mostra que é possível dissociar o aumento das emissões do crescimento económico, uma vez que, nas duas últimas décadas, a redução das emissões foi de 18 % e o crescimento económico de 48 %.

([1]) http://climatechange.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/Turn_Down_the_heat_Why_a_4_degree_centrigrade_warmer_world_must_be_avoided.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011265/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Increase in global carbon dioxide emissions

Recent news reports have referred to a report by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in East Anglia, which states that there has been an increase in global carbon dioxide emissions and warns of the risks to the population and nature if this trend cannot be reversed. According to the report, global emissions in 2012 exceeded emission levels in 1990 by 58%, and have now reached the record level of 35.6 billion tonnes.

I would therefore ask the Commission.

1. Is it aware of these figures?

2. Who, at present, are the largest worldwide polluters?

3. What steps is it taking to reverse this trend? Specifically, what instruments is it using to encourage the reduction of carbon dioxide emission both internally and externally? How is it examining the effectiveness of such measures?

4. What is the best way to reconcile the right to an environment and the right of populations to develop?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

1. Yes, the Commission is aware of the data mentioned by the Honourable Member.

2. According to latest figures from the Emission Database for Global Atmospheric Research trends, the five largest CO_2 emitters worldwide in 2011 have been China (29%), the United States (16%), the EU (11%), India (6%) and the Russian Federation (5%). CO_2 emissions represent 77% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

3. In Copenhagen, the international community recognised limiting global warming below 2°C as the overall ambition level for climate action in order to be able to prevent dangerous and potentially catastrophic impacts. While countries representing more than 80% of global emissions have pledged domestic targets, a UNEP analysis shows that, unfortunately, the Kyoto commitments and the unconditional Copenhagen-Cancun pledges amount to at most 1/3 of the required emission reductions by 2020. Hence the EU is engaging proactively in discussions with international partners on how to close the ambition gap. Moreover, with the climate and energy package, the EU has developed a comprehensive set of measures to address climate change at EU level. The effectiveness of these measures is examined through the EU and international monitoring obligations.

4. There is no contradiction between the right of populations to develop and the right to a clean environment. On the contrary, as a recent World Bank report ([1]) shows, unabated climate change will undermine development and poverty eradication. Decoupling emissions from economic growth is possible as Europe's experience shows, since over the past two decades emissions reduced by 18% while the economy grew by 48%.

([1]) http://climatechange.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/Turn_Down_the_heat_Why_a_4_degree_centrigrade_warmer_world_must_be_avoided.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011266/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Biocombustíveis

Em resposta à minha pergunta escrita E-009442/2012, o senhor comissário Günther Oettinger declarou, em nome da Comissão que: «A Diretiva Energias Renováveis da UE inclui requisitos de monitorização e apresentação de relatórios para os Estados-Membros e a Comissão sobre vários aspetos da política de biocombustíveis da UE, incluindo o seu impacto na segurança alimentar. A Comissão deve propor, se for caso disso, medidas corretivas, nomeadamente se existirem elementos que atestem que a produção de biocombustíveis tem um impacto considerável sobre o preço dos géneros alimentícios. O primeiro relatório bianual da Comissão será brevemente publicado.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Quando será publicado o referido relatório? Pode destacar desde já alguns dos seus elementos?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(5 de fevereiro de 2013)

O primeiro relatório bianual da Comissão no âmbito da Diretiva Energias Renováveis ([1]) será publicado no primeiro trimestre de 2013.

Foram já publicados vários documentos que contêm informações pertinentes no que se refere aos requisitos de monitorização e de apresentação de relatórios para os Estados-Membros e a Comissão sobre os impactos da política de biocombustíveis da UE, entre os quais os seguintes:

1) Relatórios apresentados pelos Estados-Membros à Comissão em conformidade com o artigo 22.° da Diretiva Energias Renováveis. Estes relatórios fornecem, designadamente, informações sobre a flutuação dos preços das matérias-primas e a utilização dos solos nos Estados-Membros associadas à utilização crescente da biomassa e de outras formas de energia proveniente de fontes renováveis. Todos os relatórios dos Estados-Membros estão disponíveis no sítio Web da Comissão ([2]).

2) Uma avaliação de impacto, publicada juntamente com a proposta de diretiva que altera a Diretiva Energias Renováveis e a Diretiva Qualidade dos Combustíveis ([3]), incluindo informações e estatísticas sobre os aspetos da produção de biocombustíveis ligados à utilização dos solos que também são relevantes para a segurança alimentar.

3) As estatísticas e análises mais recentes sobre a energia proveniente de fontes renováveis publicadas pelo Eurostat, incluindo informações sobre a produção e utilização dos biocombustíveis ([4]).

Em geral, estes documentos confirmam que, em 2010, 83 % dos biocombustíveis consumidos na UE foram produzidos na própria UE; uma parte destes foi produzida a partir de matérias-primas importadas. Os principais países exportadores de biodiesel para a UE foram a Argentina, o Brasil e os EUA no que se refere ao biodiesel derivado principalmente da soja, e a Indonésia e a Malásia no que diz respeito ao biodiesel derivado principalmente do óleo de palma. No que toca à produção de bioetanol, os principais países exportadores foram o Brasil, no que respeita ao bioetanol derivado da cana-de-açúcar, e os EUA, no que se refere ao bioetanol derivado do milho.

([1]) Diretiva 2009/28/CE.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/reports/2011_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 595 final. A proposta está disponível na página seguinte: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/biofuels/land_use_change_en.htm
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/energy/introduction.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011266/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Biofuels

In response to my Written Question E-009442/2012, Commissioner Günther Oettinger has replied, on behalf of the Commission, that: 'the EU Renewable Energy Directive includes monitoring and reporting requirements for the Member States and the Commission on several aspects of EU biofuel policy, including its impact on food security. If appropriate, the Commission has to propose corrective action, in particular if evidence shows that biofuel production has a significant impact on food prices. The first biannual report of the Commission will be published shortly.'

I would therefore ask the Commission:

When will the report referred to above be published? Would the Commission be willing at this stage to divulge some of the contents of the report?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The first biannual report of the Commission under the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]) will be published in the first quarter of 2013.

Several documents containing information with relevance to the monitoring and reporting requirements of Member States and the Commission on the impacts of EU biofuels policy have already been published, including the following:

1) Reports submitted by the Member States to the Commission in accordance with Article 22 of the Renewable Energy Directive. These reports provide, *inter alia*, information on changes in commodity prices and land use within Member States associated with increased use of biomass and other forms of energy from renewable sources. All reports from Member States are available on the Commission's website ([2]).

2) An Impact Assessment published together with the proposal for a directive amending the Renewable Energy Directive and the Fuel Quality Directive ([3]) including information and statistics on land-use related aspects of biofuel production which are also of relevance to food security.

3) The latest statistics and analysis on energy from renewable sources published by Eurostat, including information on the production and use of biofuels ([4]).

In general, these documents confirm that in 2010, 83% of the biofuels consumed in the EU were produced in the EU, part of which was produced from imported feedstock. The main countries exporting biodiesel to the EU were Argentina, Brazil and the USA for biodiesel derived mainly from soy, and Indonesia and Malaysia for biodiesel derived mainly from palm oil. For bioethanol, the main exporting countries were Brazil for sugarcane bioethanol, and the USA for maize bioethanol.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/reports/2011_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 595 final. The proposal is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/biofuels/land_use_change_en.htm
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/energy/introduction.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011267/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Cuba: lei em matéria de migração — resultados práticos

Em resposta à minha pergunta escrita E-009489/2012, a Senhora Vice-Presidente declarou, em nome da Comissão: «Aquando da adoção da nova lei em matéria de migração, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente expressou o seu desejo de que a lei fosse amplamente aplicada»

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

1. Dispõe de informações quanto ao modo como a lei vem sendo aplicada?

2. Nomeadamente, os membros da oposição democrática têm tido tratamento idêntico ao dos demais cidadãos cubanos no tocante às facilidades de sair e regressar a Cuba?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(7 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. A lei entra em vigor em 14 de janeiro. As informações públicas mais recentes apontam no sentido de o novo sistema estar pronto para arrancar, estando 195 serviços em todo o país a preparar-se para dar início à emissão de novos passaportes ou à atualização dos atuais. A Delegação da UE em Havana e os Estados-Membros acompanharão o impacto da entrada em vigor da nova regulamentação sobre os pedidos de vistos Schengen.

2. Como indicado acima, ainda não é possível avaliar o impacto da nova lei sobre um grupo específico da população. A nova lei prevê algumas limitações à liberdade de viajar. Na sua declaração de 18 de outubro de 2012, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente expressou o seu desejo de que a lei fosse amplamente aplicada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011267/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: HR/VP — Cuba: migration law — practical results

In response to my Written Question E-009489/2012, you stated on the Commission's behalf: 'On the occasion of the adoption of the new migration law, the HR/VP expressed the wish that this law is broadly implemented.'

I should therefore like to ask you:

1. Do you have any information as to how the law has been applied?

2. In particular, have members of the democratic opposition received the same treatment as other Cuban citizens in terms of being free to leave and return to Cuba?

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

1. The law will come into effect starting from 14 January. The latest public information is that the new system is ready to take off, with 195 offices throughout the country getting prepared to start delivering new passports or updating current ones. The EU Delegation in Havana and Member States will monitor the impact on requests for Schengen visas further to the new regulations.

2. As above, it is not yet possible to assess the impact of the new law on a specific population target group. The new law includes a number of limitations to free travelling. The HR/VP expressed hope in her statement of 18 October 2012 that the law will be broadly implemented.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-011268/12
à la Commission
Jacky Hénin (GUE/NGL)
(10 décembre 2012)

Objet: Politique industrielle en Europe

Le secteur industriel est nécessaire au développement économique et social de l'Union européenne. Défendre notre patrimoine industriel constitue dès lors une exigence d'intérêt général.

Nombre d'emplois ont été détruits dans l'industrie manufacturière. Nos capacités de production ont été fortement réduites. Ce processus a été accéléré par la crise économique ravageuse qui a débuté en 2007. Ainsi à l'heure actuelle, le nombre d'emplois dans l'industrie en Europe est de 11 % inférieur à celui de 2008.

Pourtant, l'industrie constitue une activité phare de l'économie européenne. Elle produit la majorité des exportations de l'Union et concentre 70 % des dépenses de recherche et développement.

En France, la filière acier vient de subir un coup terrible avec les menaces de fermeture de l'usine de Florange détenue par le consortium Mittal, premier producteur européen d'acier.

La Commission a annoncé, dans plusieurs communications relatives au secteur industriel et à la stratégie Europe 2020, vouloir faire passer de 16 à 20 % la part de l'industrie dans le PIB européen. Par ailleurs, elle ne change pas de stratégie politique et économique misant toujours sur un marché de plus en plus concurrentiel.

Alors qu'il est chaque jour davantage évident que cette stratégie n'a pas réussi à maintenir l'emploi industriel en Europe, la Commission peut-elle indiquer les mécanismes concrets envisagés pour promouvoir et défendre l'industrie en Europe? Pourrait-elle également indiquer si elle compte ou non revoir sa conception de la politique industrielle basée uniquement sur les mécanismes de marché?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(23 janvier 2013)

En octobre 2010, la Commission a élaboré une politique industrielle intégrée à long terme dans le cadre de la stratégie Europe 2020. La dernière mise à jour de cette stratégie date du 10 octobre 2012: elle a pour objectif de s'attaquer aux graves conséquences de l'actuelle crise économique en apportant des résultats susceptibles de contribuer, à court terme, à la relance économique et, à moyen et long terme, à la croissance.

Le Conseil «Compétitivité» a approuvé cette stratégie, qui est plus axée sur l'action que par le passé et qui mise sur une réaction commune des autorités européennes (nationales et régionales) et du secteur industriel pour s'atteler aux problèmes auxquels doit faire face aujourd'hui l'industrie européenne. Dans le contexte de cette politique industrielle ainsi actualisée, six lignes d'action prioritaires ont été définies, qui devraient aider à stimuler l'investissement dans les secteurs émergents, certes, mais aussi dans les industries traditionnelles comme l'automobile ou la sidérurgie.

La stratégie prévoit également des mesures visant à ouvrir de nouveaux débouchés pour l'industrie sur le marché intérieur, qui connaît actuellement une période de relative stagnation, et sur les marchés mondiaux, qui affichent encore des taux de croissance nettement supérieurs à ceux du marché intérieur. Un défi majeur pour l'industrie de l'Union est d'exploiter au mieux les possibilités offertes par les marchés étrangers émergents, en particulier pour les PME, lesquelles continuent à afficher un taux d'internationalisation relativement faible en dehors du marché intérieur.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011268/12
to the Commission
Jacky Hénin (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Industrial policy in Europe

The industrial sector is essential for the European Union's economic and social development. It is therefore in the public interest to defend our industrial heritage.

Countless jobs have been lost in manufacturing industry and our production capacities have been slashed; a process that has only been exacerbated by the financial crisis that has ravaged Europe since 2007. There are now 11% fewer manufacturing jobs in Europe than in 2008.

Manufacturing is, however, a flagship sector of the European economy, which is responsible for 70% of EU exports and attracts 70% of spending on research and development.

France's steel industry was recently dealt a severe blow with the threatened closure of the factory in Florange owned by the Arcelor-Mittal consortium, Europe's leading steel producer.

In numerous recent papers on the manufacturing sector and the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission has stated its aim of increasing manufacturing's share of European GDP from 16 to 20%. It has, however, failed to change its economic and political strategy, which is based on an increasingly competitive market.

Since it is becoming ever more painfully evident that this strategy is unable to safeguard manufacturing employment in Europe, can the Commission say what measures it intends to take to protect and promote manufacturing in Europe? Does it intend to review its solely market-based industrial policy?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2013)

The Commission defined in October 2010 a long-term integrated industrial policy in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. This strategy was updated last on 10 October 2012 with a view to coping with the harsh consequences of the current economic crisis by delivering results that can help to economic recovery in the short-term and growth in the mid and long-term.

The 'Competitiveness' Council has endorsed this strategy that is more active than in the past and relies on the joint reaction by European authorities (both national and regional) and industry to respond to the challenges that European industry faces today. This updated industrial policy has identified six priority action lines that should help to boost investment in both rising sectors but also on traditional industries such as automobile and steel.

The strategy also includes measures to create new opportunities for industry in the internal market that is currently undergoing a relative period of stagnation and in the global markets that still show much higher growth rates than the internal market. A major challenge for EU industry is to make the best of the opportunities offered by foreign emerging markets, especially for SMEs that still present a relatively low rate of internationalisation outside the internal market.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011270/12
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: EU research funding for poverty related and neglected diseases

The ITRE Committee voted its text on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) on 28 November 2012. In the text which was adopted, there is specific mention of the importance of research into poverty related and neglected diseases (PRNDs) in the Societal Challenge on Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing.

Can the Commission explain how it intends to structure funding for PRNDs under Horizon 2020 and how it will ensure that that there will be funding for all aspects of the innovation cycle for product development for PRNDs, especially for pre-trial drug development?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The Commission's plan for Horizon 2020 is to continue supporting research on poverty related and neglected diseases (PRND). The bulk of clinical research for product development will be funded through the second phase of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP-2) ([1]), the public-public partnership initiative to undertake all types of clinical trials of new medical interventions against PRND in sub-Saharan Africa which is foreseen to start soon after the launch of Horizon 2020. The Commission has proposed a contribution of up to EUR 1 billion from the Health Challenge of Horizon 2020 for EDCTP-2.

Furthermore, Horizon 2020 will also have opportunities for investigator-driven basic research on PRND research through the European Research Council (ERC). The Commission proposed a major increased budget to support excellent science, of about EUR 13 billion under the Excellent Science pillar of Horizon 2020.

Finally, research on PRND could also be addressed under the next phase of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) ([2]), the foreseen public-private partnership between the Commission and various industries in the life sciences arena.

([1]) http://www.edctp.org/Towards_EDCTP2.799.0.html
([2]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-011271/12
till kommissionen
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(10 december 2012)

Angående: En ny alkoholstrategi för EU

Utvärderingen av en alkoholstrategi pågår fortfarande. Det är dock förvånande att trots att ett antal ledamöter av Europaparlamentet, företrädare för medlemsstaterna, icke-statliga organisationer och till och med alkoholindustrin har efterlyst en ny alkoholstrategi för EU, så har kommissionen inte för avsikt att följa upp och utveckla detta.

1. Kan kommissionen förklara varför den ignorerar dessa krav?

2. Hur tänker kommissionen gå vidare med en framtida alkoholstrategi när utvärderingen är klar?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(18 januari 2013)

Europeiska kommissionen är fullt medveten om den breda uppslutning kring de EU-åtgärder mot alkoholrelaterade skador som parlamentsledamoten hänvisar till. Emellertid har utvärderingen av den befintliga alkoholstrategin för EU ännu inte slutförts och därför har inte heller ett beslut om möjliga uppföljningsåtgärder inom detta område fattats.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011271/12
to the Commission
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: A new alcohol strategy for the EU

The evaluation of an alcohol strategy is still ongoing. However, I am astonished to be informed that, despite the fact that several Members of the European Parliament, Member State representatives, non-governmental organisations and even the alcohol industry have requested a new EU alcohol strategy, the Commission does not intend to develop this and follow it up.

1. Could the Commission explain why they are ignoring these requests?

2. How will the Commission proceed with a future alcohol strategy when the evaluation is done?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(18 January 2013)

The European Commission is fully aware of the broad support for EU Action on alcohol related harm as referred to by the Honourable Member. The evaluation of the current EU Alcohol strategy is not finalised yet and a decision on possible steps to follow-up action in this area has therefore not yet been taken.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011272/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(10 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Applicazione della direttiva 1999/22/CE in Italia e in altri Stati membri dell'UE

Tutti gli Stati membri sono tenuti a conformarsi alla direttiva 1999/22/CE relativa alla custodia degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici e, nello specifico, tutti i giardini zoologici (come da definizione) sono tenuti ad avere una licenza e sono oggetto di ispezioni periodiche allo scopo di garantirne la conformità. Alla luce di ciò, è preoccupante apprendere che la maggior parte dei giardini zoologici in Italia rimangano senza licenza e pertanto non siano regolamentati (fonte: Indagine sui giardini zoologici nei paesi dell'UE — 2011 Italia ([1]), a cura della Born Free Foundation per la Coalizione Europea ENDCAP). Ciò significa che migliaia di animali detenuti in questi zoo vivono ancora in condizioni inaccettabili.

Data la rilevanza della questione, lo scrivente si è rivolto assieme ad altri colleghi ai Ministri italiani dell'Ambiente, delle Politiche agricole, alimentari e forestali e della Salute, competenti in materia, ma ad oggi, dopo quasi cinque mesi, non è ancora pervenuta alcuna risposta ([2]). Dalla citata indagine sui giardini zoologici nei paesi dell'UE 2011 ([3]), realizzata in 20 Stati membri dell'Unione, si evince che l'Italia non è l'unico paese in cui molti zoo rimangono non regolamentati in violazione della direttiva 1999/22/CE.

In tale contesto, può la Commissione confermare il numero di giardini zoologici presenti nel territorio dell'UE, quanti sono in percentuale quelli non regolamentati e perché?

Ritiene essa di dover promuovere dei controlli per appurare la piena attuazione e applicazione della direttiva? Quali misure sono state adottate per garantire che tutti i giardini zoologici siano conformi ai requisiti di legge e che gli animali siano tenuti in condizioni adeguate e in linea con le loro esigenze di specie? Inoltre, quali azioni sono state intraprese nei confronti di quegli Stati membri, come l'Italia, che continuano a non rispettare i requisiti della direttiva 1999/22/CE?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(1º febbraio 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte alle interrogazioni E-003677/2011, presentata da Richard Ashworth, E-005760/2011, presentata da Oreste Rossi, E-006006/2011, presentata da Marina Yannakoudakis e E-004837/2012, presentata da Oreste Rossi, sullo stesso argomento.

([1]) http://www.bornfree.org.uk/zooreports/Italy-it/pages/BFF_EZR_ITALY_FINAL_24-04-12_SML.pdf
([2]) http://www.andreazanoni.it/it/news/comunicati-stampa/zoo-italia-fuori-legge-zanoni-scrive-ai-ministri-italiani.html
([3]) http://www.bornfree.org.uk/campaigns/zoo-check/zoos/eu-zoo-inquiry/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011272/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Enforcement of Directive 1999/22/EC in Italy and other EU Member States

All Member States are required to comply with Directive 1999/22/EC on the keeping of wild animals in zoos and, more specifically, all zoos (as defined in the directive) have to be licensed and are subject to regular inspections to ensure that they comply with the law. It is therefore worrying to learn that most zoos in Italy remain unlicensed and therefore unregulated (*Source:* EU Zoo Inquiry 2011 — Italy ([1]), by the Born Free Foundation for the European coalition ENDCAP). This means that thousands of animals kept in these zoos are still living in unacceptable conditions.

Given the importance of this issue, I and other colleagues have contacted the Italian Ministers of the Environment, Agriculture, Food and Forestry, and Health, who are responsible for such matters, but to date, after nearly five months, we have not yet received any reply ([2]). From the abovementioned EU Zoo Inquiry 2011 ([3]), carried out in 20 EU Member States, it is clear that Italy is not the only country in which many zoos are still unregulated and in breach of Directive 1999/22/EC.

In this regard, can the Commission confirm the number of zoos in the EU, what the percentage of unregulated zoos is and why they are unregulated?

Does it not think it should carry out inspections to ascertain whether the directive is being implemented and enforced in full? What measures have been taken to ensure that all zoos comply with legal requirements and that the animals are kept in appropriate conditions in keeping with the needs of their species? Lastly, what action has been taken against those Member States, such as Italy, which are still not meeting the requirements of Directive 1999/22/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-003677/2011 by Richard Ashworth, E-005760/2011 Oreste Rossi, E-006006/2011 Marina Yannakoudakis and E-004837/2012 by Oreste Rossi on the same issue.

([1]) http://www.bornfree.org.uk/zooreports/Italy-it/pages/BFF_EZR_ITALY_FINAL_24-04-12_SML.pdf
([2]) http://www.andreazanoni.it/it/news/comunicati-stampa/zoo-italia-fuori-legge-zanoni-scrive-ai-ministri-italiani.html
([3]) http://www.bornfree.org.uk/campaigns/zoo-check/zoos/eu-zoo-inquiry/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011274/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Kit per la fabbricazione di falsi vini in polvere in vendita on-line

Su due delle più grandi piattaforme di e-commerce attualmente presenti sul mercato mondiale, Amazon e Ebay, sono in vendita veri e propri kit per la produzione, evidentemente contraffatta, di vini italiani tutelati da denominazioni protette, fra cui Prosecco, Amarone e Valpolicella. Tali prodotti sono dei falsi che utilizzano la pratica della rinomanza italiana a danno non solo del mercato vitivinicolo italiano, ma anche della salute dei consumatori.

Stante la risposta della Commissione alla mia interrogazione E-008527/2012 intende essa prendere posizione anche avverso queste piattaforme di e-commerce e eventuali altri siti web che propongono la vendita di tali prodotti?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione ha chiesto agli Stati membri di prendere le misure necessarie per mettere fine alle pratiche illegali concernenti l'etichettatura dei prodotti in questione. Per tale ragione, sono anche state richieste indagini sulle vendite via Internet. I servizi della DG Agricoltura e sviluppo rurale hanno richiesto agli Stati membri interessati di comunicare entro la fine del mese di gennaio 2013 le misure prese dalle rispettive autorità di controllo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011274/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Online sale of kits for manufacturing fake wines from powder

Two of the leading on-line sales platforms in the world today — Amazon and eBay — are selling whole kits for manufacturing counterfeit versions of Italian wines covered by protected designations, including Prosecco, Amarone and Valpolicella. These are fake products that are using the reputation of Italian winemaking to the detriment not only of the Italian wine market, but also of consumer health.

With reference to the Commission's answer to my Written Question E-008527/2012, will it also take a stance with regard to these e-commerce platforms and any other websites which are offering these kits for sale?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

The Commission have asked the Members States to take the necessary measures to put an end to the illegal practices as regards the labelling of these products. Investigations about the Internet sales were also required for this reason. The services of DG Agriculture and Rural development have required the Member States concerned to report by the end of the month of January 2013 on the measures taken by their controlling authorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011275/12
an die Kommission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(10. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Nicht-Berücksichtigung der Meinung ihrer eigenen Sachverständigen im Bereich „Streitbeilegung Investor — Staat" seitens der Kommission

In der Nachhaltigkeitsstudie für das umfassende Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) der EU mit Kanada wird schlussfolgernd festgestellt, dass der Mechanismus zur zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegung ein angemesseneres Umsetzungsinstrument im Rahmen des CETA darstelle als die Streitbeilegung zwischen Investor und Staat ([1]). Dennoch basiert das CETA auf der Streitbeilegung zwischen Investor und Staat und nicht auf der zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegung.

Warum hat die Kommission sich dazu entschlossen, der Empfehlung ihrer eigenen Sachverständigen in der Frage der zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegung nicht zu folgen?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(5. Februar 2013)

In der Nachhaltigkeitsstudie für das umfassende Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) der EU mit Kanada wird ausdrücklich festgestellt, dass es nicht die Ansichten der Kommission wiedergibt. Das Parlament seinerseits hat — genauso wie der Rat — die Aufnahme der Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten in das CETA gebilligt.

Bezüglich der Streitbeilegung im Rahmen des CETA ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass ein Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten (Investor-State Dispute Settlement, ISDS) ein angemesseneres Instrument für die Beilegung von Streitigkeiten zwischen einem Investor und dem Staat, in dem die Investition getätigt wird, darstellt als ein Mechanismus zur zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegung. Zwar sieht das CETA auch die zwischenstaatliche Streitbeilegung vor, doch hat die Europäische Union nicht die Absicht, für jeden potenziellen Fall ein Streitbeilegungsverfahren anzustrengen. Sie legt den Schwerpunkt eher auf Fälle mit systemischer Bedeutung. Bisher kam der bilaterale Streitbeilegungsmechanismus in Freihandelsabkommen nicht zum Einsatz. Zudem sieht der Mechanismus zur zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegung keine Entschädigung für den Investor vor; die Sicherstellung einer angemessenen Entschädigung im Falle von rechtswidrigen Handlungen ist hingegen der Hauptzweck des Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten. Aus diesen und anderen Gründen ist es angebracht, einen ISDS-Mechanismus in das CETA aufzunehmen und sich nicht ausschließlich auf den Mechanismus zur zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegung zu verlassen.

([1]) Kirkpatrick et al. (2011): A Trade SIA Relating to the Negotiation of a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada. Development Solutions.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011275/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) och Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(10 december 2012)

Angående: Kommissionen ignorerar sina egna experter när det gäller tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat

I bedömningen av konsekvenserna för hållbar utveckling av det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada drar man slutsatsen att en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan stater är en lämpligare verkställighetsmekanism i det övergripande avtalet än tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat ([1]). Trots detta grundar sig det övergripande avtalet på tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat och inte på tvistlösning mellan stater.

Varför har kommissionen valt att bortse från råden från sina egna experter när det gäller tvistlösningar mellan investerare och stat?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(5 februari 2013)

I hållbarhetsbedömningen av det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada anges uttryckligen att den inte representerar kommissionens åsikt. Europaparlamentet har i sin tur godkänt att en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat förs in i avtalet, och det har även rådet.

När det gäller tvistlösning enligt avtalet anser kommissionen att en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat är lämpligare än en mekanism mellan stater för att lösa tvister mellan en investerare och den stat som står som värd för investeringen. Det finns även möjlighet till tvistlösning mellan stater enligt avtalet, men EU avser inte att föra varje tänkbart fall till tvistlösning. Fokus ligger istället på ärenden av principiell betydelse. Hittills har den bilaterala tvistlösningsmekanismen i frihandelsavtalen inte använts. I den bilaterala tvistlösningmekanismen ingår heller inte någon kompensation för investeraren. Huvudsyftet med mekanismen för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat är att säkra lämplig kompensation i händelse av illegalt agerande. Av detta och andra skäl är det lämpligt att införa en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat i avtalet, och inte förlita sig enbart till mekanismen för tvistlösning mellan stater.

([1]) Kirkpatrick et al (2011). A Trade SIA Relating to the Negotiation of a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) Between the EU and Canada. Development Solutions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011275/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Commission disregards its own experts regarding investor-to-state dispute settlement

The Sustainability Impact Assessment of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) concludes that a state-to-state dispute settlement mechanism is a more appropriate enforcement mechanism in CETA than an investor-to-state dispute settlement ([1]). Despite this, the CETA is based on investor-to-state dispute settlement and not state-to-state.

Why has the Commission chosen to disregard the advice of its own experts in the matter of investor-to-state dispute settlements?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Sustainability Impact Assessment of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) explicitly states that it does not represent the views of the Commission. Parliament, in turn, has endorsed the inclusion of investor-state dispute settlement in the CETA, as has the Council.

Concerning the settlement of disputes under CETA, the Commission considers that an investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism is more appropriate than a state-to-state mechanism for the settlement of disputes between an investor and the state hosting the investment. While state-to-state dispute settlement will be provided for as well in CETA, the Union does not intend to bring every potential case to dispute settlement. Rather it focuses on cases with systemic importance. To date, the bilateral dispute settlement in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) has not been used. Moreover, the state-to-state dispute settlement mechanism does not provide for compensation to the investor, and securing adequate compensation, where an illegal action has been taken, is the core purpose of the investor-state dispute settlement mechanism. For these and other reasons, it is appropriate to include an ISDS mechanism in CETA, and not rely on the state-to-state dispute settlement mechanism alone.

([1]) Kirkpatrick et al (2011). A Trade SIA Relating to the Negotiation of a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) Between the EU and Canada. Development Solutions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011276/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Trato fiscal privilegiado de los clubes de futbol en España

El Ministerio de Hacienda del Gobierno español está concediendo un trato privilegiado a una serie de clubes deportivos que mantienen una importante deuda tributaria con la Administración. Así, los clubes de futbol, las mayores asociaciones deportivas del país, han mantenido volúmenes de negocio muy altos, generando un volumen de deuda que, en la actualidad, está recayendo sobre la administración pública

Según datos presentados por Beatriz Viana, Directora General de la Agencia Estatal de Administración Tributaria, las citadas entidades deportivas adeudan más de 700 millones de euros. La administración afirma que no permitirá la generación de mayor deuda con el fisco, pero a la misma vez ofrece mecanismos para facilitar el pago de la deuda contraída hasta el momento aplazando o fraccionando los pagos a realizar por aquellos clubes que sean viables.

Esto supone un trato desigual con respecto al resto de contribuyentes dentro de España, así como con respecto al resto de clubes de futbol europeos que, como es lógico, deben estar al corriente en el pago de sus tributos.

No es comprensible que, mientras se incrementan impuestos como el IVA y se privatizan hospitales y empresas públicas para obtener recursos en el corto plazo, se ofrezca este trato fiscal privilegiado a estas entidades privadas recreativas.

Los sistemas tributarios deben garantizar un trato igualitario y una justicia redistributiva a través de su progresividad, y en el caso del sistema tributario español se está procurando exactamente lo contrario. Así, existen numerosas vías para facilitar la evasión fiscal, habiendo el Gobierno actual incluso aprobado una amnistía a tipos irrisorios, e instrumentos que, como las SICAV, permiten a los grandes capitales pagar cantidades mínimas. A esta injusticia fiscal se suman estos multimillonarios clubes deportivos que pueden adeudar enormes sumas mientras por otro lado se condena a la quiebra a miles de empresas productivas. En lugar de recomendar a España que ejerza la responsabilidad redistributiva que tiene, la Comisión recomendó subir impuestos tan regresivos como el IVA, medida que está hundiendo al consumo y, por tanto, a la economía española.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la facilitación de pago de la deuda a los clubes españoles? ¿Que opinión le suscita? ¿Considera la Comisión que dichos clubes deportivos reciben un trato fiscal igualitario en comparación con el resto de clubes europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de febrero de 2013)

Como explicó la Comisión en su respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-005751/2012 y E-005768/2012 ([1]), la Comisión conoce los informes sobre las importantes cantidades que los clubes profesionales de fútbol adeudan a la administración española en concepto de impuestos y cotizaciones a la seguridad social.

La Comisión está de acuerdo en que, en virtud de las normas sobre ayudas estatales, las deudas fiscales y de seguridad social de los clubes profesionales de fútbol no han de tratarse diferentemente de las deudas análogas de otros agentes económicos. Para poder evaluar la situación a que hace referencia Su Señoría, la Comisión solicitó a las autoridades españolas que proporcionaran la información correspondiente. Ahora está analizando esos datos y, por lo tanto, no está todavía en condiciones de hacer observaciones sobre las cuestiones planteadas.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011276/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Preferential tax treatment for football clubs in Spain

The Spanish Ministry of Finance is giving preferential treatment to a number of sports clubs which owe the authorities significant amounts in taxes. This has enabled football clubs, the country's biggest sports associations, to continue to do business on a very high scale, which has generated debts that are currently born by the public administration.

According to figures presented by Beatriz Viana, the Director-General of the State Tax Administration Agency, these sports clubs owe more than EUR 700 million. The tax agency has stated that it will not allow them to fall further into debt with the treasury, but at the same time it offers different options which make it easier to pay off the accumulated debt, for example, allowing viable clubs to defer payments or pay in instalments.

This is unfair since all other Spanish taxpayers, as well as the other European football clubs, must, of course, be up to date with their tax payments.

It is incomprehensible that while taxes such as VAT are being increased and hospitals and public companies are being privatised as a means of generating short-term resources, these private recreational bodies are receiving preferential tax treatment.

Tax systems should guarantee equal treatment and redistributive justice through progressive taxation, whereas exactly the opposite is occurring under the Spanish taxation system. In Spain, there are many mechanisms which make tax evasion easier, including the present government's approval of a tax amnesty with derisory rates, and instruments such as SICAVs, which allow large companies to pay minimal taxes. This unfair tax system allows multi-millionaire sports clubs to run up enormous amounts of debt, while it condemns thousands of manufacturing companies to bankruptcy. Instead of recommending that Spain should exercise its responsibility for redistribution, the Commission advised it to increase regressive taxes such as VAT, a measure which is causing consumption, and therefore the Spanish economy, to collapse.

Is the Commission aware of the debt payment options offered to Spanish football clubs, and what is its opinion on this matter? Does the Commission think that these sports clubs are being treated on an equal footing with other European clubs in relation to tax?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

As the Commission explained in its joint answer to written questions E-005751/2012 and E-005768/2012 ([1]), the Commission is aware of reports on substantial amounts of taxes and social security contributions which professional football clubs owe to the Spanish Government.

The Commission agrees that, under the state aid rules, tax and social security debts of professional football clubs must not be treated differently from similar debts of other economic actors. In order to be able to assess the situation referrred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission requested the Spanish authorities to provide relevant information. It is currently analysing this information, and hence is not yet in a position to comment on the issues raised.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011277/12
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: Competition law — 3M and a 'vertical agreement'

I am informed that 3M are purported to have created an unfair market situation within the European Union. It was raised with me that 3M by having partnered an Irish-based company have entered into what appears to be a vertical agreement contrary to the Treaties. This I am informed has forced other Irish-based companies to purchase their materials exclusively from a single local distributor, which is a direct competitor to those other companies that operate in that specific industry in the Irish jurisdiction. If correct, this means the company has a price advantage on raw materials and has access to sensitive information regarding their competitors' business. Other companies are also forced to use a foreign currency instead of the euro which incurs additional banking costs. It is suggested that this may be a breach of competition law.

Will the Commission make a statement on the matter?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2013)

Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union prohibits agreements which appreciably restrict competition in the internal market. Commission Regulation 330/2010 of 20 April 2010 exempts from the prohibition in Article 101 certain categories of vertical agreements (such as appointments of distributors) if, broadly, the market shares of the companies concerned do not exceed 30% on the relevant markets and the agreement does not contain so-called hardcore restrictions. If the block exemption does not apply, an individual assessment is required as to whether the agreement appreciably restricts competition and, if so, whether efficiencies outweigh the negative effects.

On the basis of the information provided in the Honourable Member's question, the Commission is not in a position to express a view on whether there may be a breach of Article 101 or other EU competition rules in the case at hand.

The European Commission and the national competition authorities of the Member States have parallel competence to apply the EU competition rules. The Commission notice on cooperation within the network of competition authorities explains in what situations one or more national competition authorities, or the European Commission, are well placed to deal with a case. In addition, every individual/business affected by anti-competitive behaviour has the right to enforce the EU competition rules through the courts and tribunals of the Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011278/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Dos años de encarcelamiento de David Ravelo en Colombia: persecución y amedrentamiento a organizaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos

Según numerosas ONG y asociaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos, el Gobierno colombiano está llevando a cabo un proceso de persecución contra los defensores de los derechos humanos que pone en duda la voluntad de respeto de los mismos por parte del Presidente Santos y que dificulta la labor de los defensores con obstáculos interpuestos por el propio Gobierno.

Este es el caso de David Ravelo Crespo, secretario general de la Corporación Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CREDHOS), organización que realiza un importante trabajo de seguimiento de numerosas violaciones de los derechos humanos desde su sede en la ciudad de Barrancabermeja (Colombia); el Sr. Ravelo lleva ya dos años encarcelado como parte de una estrategia de amedrentamiento constante a la labor crítica con el Gobierno.

Anteriormente fue encarcelado durante 27 meses en 1993, acusado de rebelión, pero resultó absuelto de todos los cargos e incluso ganó posteriormente una demanda de reparación contra el Estado, que tuvo que indemnizarle. El Secretario General de Credhos fue detenido de nuevo en 2010, acusado de un supuesto homicidio agravado. La acusación fue presentada por el Fiscal William Gildardo Pacheco Granados, quien anteriormente desempeñó el cargo de teniente de la Policía Nacional, del que fue destituido a raíz de una investigación iniciada por la Procuraduría por la supuesta desaparición de un joven en Armenia (Colombia) en 1991. Según la propia ley colombiana, en concreto el Decreto 261 de 2000, nadie que haya sido destituido de un cargo público puede desempeñar el cargo de fiscal.

Numerosas organizaciones internacionales han condenado las irregularidades cometidas durante su juicio, que, comenzando por la inhabilitación del fiscal, deberían ser suficientes para anular un proceso abierto en cualquier país democrático. Además, durante el juicio solo se han tenido en cuenta los testimonios de tres testigos de cargo, ignorándose más de 30 procedentes de diferentes personalidades de Barrancabermeja que aseguran que David Ravelo es inocente y que los testigos de cargo mienten.

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante del caso expuesto y ha mostrado su preocupación por él?

2. ¿Dispone la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de más información o piensa solicitarla e intervenir para que el Sr. Ravelo tenga un juicio con plenas garantías para su defensa?

3. ¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el Gobierno de Colombia garantiza los derechos humanos aun cuando numerosas ONG y asociaciones denuncian sistemáticamente una campaña constante de persecución y amedrentamiento?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2013)

La Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta está al tanto del caso del Sr. Ravelo que sus servicios vienen siguiendo desde 2008. Tras la condena del Sr. Ravelo en diciembre de 2012, su caso ha sido ahora recurrido y las presuntas irregularidades relativas al juicio en primera instancia están siendo sometidas a examen. A finales de diciembre, representantes de una serie de misiones de la UE visitaron al Sr. Ravelo en prisión. Durante esta reunión, el Sr. Ravelo manifestó su confianza en que su caso sería revisado de manera positiva, lo que supone que confía en que el sistema de justicia colombiano pueda garantizar vías de recurso y una tutela judicial efectiva.

No corresponde a la UE interferir en un procedimiento judicial. No obstante, su Señoría puede estar seguro de que los servicios de la UE, en estrecha colaboración con los Estados miembros, mantendrán la debida vigilancia de que el proceso se realiza en las condiciones adecuadas.

De acuerdo con la Constitución colombiana, el Gobierno no desempeña ningún papel en procedimientos judiciales como el que nos ocupa, que son competencia exclusiva de las autoridades judiciales (Ministerio Público y tribunales), que actúan con total independencia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011278/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — David Ravelo's two-year imprisonment in Colombia: persecution and intimidation of human rights organisations

According to several human rights NGOs and associations, the Colombian government is persecuting human rights advocates, which casts doubt on President Santos's commitment to guarantee these rights, and their work is being hampered by obstacles put in their way by the government itself.

Such is the case of David Ravelo Crespo, secretary-general of the Regional Corporation for the Defence of Human Rights (CREDHOS), an organisation which plays an important role in monitoring the many human rights violations from its headquarters in Barrancabermeja, Colombia. Mr Ravelo has already been imprisoned for two years under the relentless strategy of intimidation to curtail any criticism of the government.

He was previously imprisoned for 27 months beginning in 1993, when he was accused of rebellion. He was, however, acquitted of all charges, and he even won a subsequent claim for damages against the government. The secretary-general of CREDHOS was arrested again in 2010 on suspicion of aggravated murder. The case against him was brought by Public Prosecutor William Gildardo Pacheco Granados, who had previously been removed from his post as police inspector following an investigation by the Attorney General's Office into the disappearance of a young man in Armenia, Colombia in 1991. According to Colombian law, specifically Decree 261/2000, no one who has been dismissed from public office can fill the post of public prosecutor.

Numerous international organisations have condemned the anomalies in the trial, starting with Pacheco Granados's ineligibility to act as public prosecutor. These irregularities should be enough to quash proceedings in any democratic country. Furthermore, during the trial only the statements from three prosecution witnesses were heard, while more than 30 testimonies from various people in Barrancabermeja, who attested to David Ravelo's innocence and accused the prosecution witnesses of lying, were ignored.

1. Is the Vice-President/High-Representative aware of this case, and has she expressed herconcern about it?

2. Does the Vice-President/High-Representative have any further information, or does she intend to request it and intervene so that Mr Ravelo stands trial with all the guaranteesnecessary for his defence?

3. Does the Vice-President/High-Representative take the view that the Colombiangovernment guarantees human rights, even though numerous NGOs andassociations consistently speak out about a constant campaign of persecution andintimidation?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case of Mr Ravelo, which her services have been following since 2008. Following Mr Ravelo's conviction in December 2012, his case has now gone to appeal, where the alleged irregularities concerning the first-instance trial are being examined. Repesentatives of a number of EU missions visited Mr Ravelo in prison in late December. During this meeting, Mr Ravelo showed confidence that his case would be reviewed positively, implying his confidence that the Colombian justice system can afford remedies and ensure due process.

It is not for the EU to interfere in a judicial procedure. However, the Honourable Member can rest assured that EU services, working in close collaboration with Member States, will remain vigilant that due process is afforded.

Under Colombia's constitution, the government has no role in judicial procedures such as the present one, which are the exclusive domain of the judicial authorities (Public Prosecutor's office and courts), which operate in full independence.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011279/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Asesinato del líder campesino Vidal Vega en Paraguay

El pasado sábado 2 de diciembre asesinaron a un líder campesino en una colonia al este de Paraguay. Este asesinato ha sido uno de los nuevos golpes contra la movilización campesina que se están multiplicando desde la toma del poder por el Gobierno golpista de Federico Franco.

Vidal Vega era un líder campesino vinculado a las luchas por la restitución de las tierras que fueron expropiadas durante la dictadura. Una de las ocupaciones de tierras organizadas por los movimientos campesinos por la restitución dio lugar, el pasado junio, a la conocida «Masacre de Curuguaty», en la que murieron 11 campesinos y 6 policías y que resultó clave para el golpe contra el presidente electo Fernando Lugo.

El líder campesino vivía con su mujer y dos hijos en la colonia de Yvyra Pytã, donde dos sicarios llamaron a la puerta de su casa y le dispararon a quemarropa con una escopeta, acabando con su vida. Un sicario fue detenido y el otro escapó y continúa en paradero desconocido. El fiscal encargado del caso sostiene que fue un ajuste de cuentas, pero numerosas organizaciones de Paraguay sostienen que este asesinato supone un ataque político a la lucha de los campesinos sin tierra y una amenaza a quien trate de buscar la verdad.

Vega, que había participado en la ocupación que dio lugar a la masacre, estaba colaborando en una investigación paralela realizada por la Plataforma de Estudios e Investigación de Conflictos Campesinos (PEICC) sobre los hechos acaecidos en Curuguaty. Dicha investigación desacredita la versión oficial con numerosas pruebas de peso, sostiene la participación de francotiradores en la emboscada a la policía y denuncia posteriores ejecuciones extrajudiciales de campesinos por la policía.

Numerosas organizaciones internacionales y paraguayas sostienen la participación de los latifundistas en el asesinato del Sr. Vega para encubrir la participación de estos grandes terratenientes en los hechos de Curuguaty y sus conexiones con el actual Gobierno golpista de Federico Franco.

1. ¿Ha condenado o piensa condenar públicamente la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante el asesinato de Vidal Vega?

2. ¿Exigirá la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que se investiguen en profundidad los hechos, al tratarse de un importante testigo en la investigación de la PEICC y pudiendo estar ligados estos hechos con el golpe de Estado?

3. ¿Qué medidas de presión piensa llevar a cabo para solicitar que se garantice la seguridad de los movimientos campesinos en su lucha por la restitución de tierras robadas durante la dictadura?

4. ¿Qué medidas esta desarrollando la Alta Representante para favorecer la vuelta de Fernando Lugo a la Presidencia de Paraguay?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2013)

La Delegación de la UE en Paraguay sigue de cerca los acontecimientos en este país, incluidos los movimientos campesinos, y observa con ojos críticos los acontecimientos en torno a la masacre de Curuguaty y el asesinato de Vidal Vega. Toda reacción de la UE necesita ponderarse cuidadosamente en vista de la investigación interna en curso en Paraguay.

La UE apoya a Paraguay en su proceso democrático y en la normalización de su situación dentro de la región. La invitación de las autoridades paraguayas a la UE para que observe las elecciones de abril de 2013 fue acogida con satisfacción. Estas elecciones son especialmente importantes para Paraguay, y la contribución de la UE a la consolidación democrática de Paraguay será una Misión de Observación Electoral (MOE) que acompañará el proceso. La UE centrará todos sus esfuerzos en asegurar que una MOE de la UE se despliegue con medios y energías suficientes para garantizar una observación profesional de las elecciones de abril de 2013, en consonancia con las normas internacionales y en coordinación con otros observadores internacionales, contribuyendo así al proceso democrático de Paraguay.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011279/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Murder of peasant leader Vidal Vega in Paraguay

On Saturday, 1 December 2012, a peasant leader was murdered in a settlement in eastern Paraguay. Vidal Vega's murder is yet another blow to the peasant movement, which has repeatedly come under attack since the government headed by Federico Franco seized power in a coup.

Vega was a peasant leader who campaigned for the return of land confiscated during the dictatorship. In June 2012, one of the land occupations organised by the peasant movement to promote land returns led to the infamous 'Curuguaty massacre', which left 11 peasants and 6 police officers dead, and was a key factor in the coup against the president elect, Fernando Lugo.

The peasant leader lived with his wife and their two children in the settlement of Yvyra Pytã. Two hit men knocked on his front door and shot him dead at point-blank range with a shot gun. One of the hit men was caught but the other escaped and his whereabouts are still unknown. The public prosecutor investigating the case maintains that Vega was murdered to settle a private score, but many organisations in Paraguay believe his murder was a political attack on the landless peasants' fight and a warning for anybody trying to uncover the truth.

Vega, who had participated in the occupation that led to the massacre, had been cooperating with a parallel investigation into what happened in Curuguaty led by the Platform for the Study and Investigation of Peasant Conflicts (PEICC). The PEICC investigation discredited the official version of events on the basis of compelling proof, held that snipers had taken part in the police ambush and claimed there had been previous cases of extrajudicial killings of peasants by the police.

Many international and Paraguayan organisations maintain that large landowners were complicit in Vega's murder, their motive being to hide their involvement in the Curuguaty massacre and their links to Federico Franco's coup government.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative publically condemned the murder of VidalVega? If not, does she intend to?

2. Will the Vice-President/High Representative insist on a thorough inquiry being carriedout into Vidal Vega's murder, given that he was a key witness in the PEICC investigationand that these events might be linked to the coup d'état?

3. What type of pressure will the EU exert to guarantee the safety of the peasant movementsfighting for the return of land stolen from them during the dictatorship?

4. What measures is the High Representative planning to take to increase the likelihood ofFernando Lugo returning as President of Paraguay?

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

The Delegation of the EU in Paraguay is closely following events in Paraguay, including the peasant movements, and critically observing events around the Curuguaty massacre and the killing of Vidal Vega. Any reaction from the EU needs to be carefully assessed in view of the ongoing internal investigation in Paraguay.

EU supports Paraguay in its democratic process and normalisation of its situation within the region. The Paraguayan authorities' invitation to the EU to observe the April 2013 elections was welcomed. These elections are particularly important for Paraguay and accompanying the process with an Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) will be the EU's contribution to Paraguay democratic consolidation. The EU will put all its efforts into making sure that an EU EOM is deployed with sufficient means and energies to ensure a professional observation of the April 2013 elections, in line with international standards and in coordination with other international observers, thereby contributing to the Paraguay's democratic process.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011280/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(10 December 2012)

Subject: EU plans to reduce the regulatory burden on Member States

While the UK is ranked 8th overall in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2012-2013, it is ranked 72nd for burden of government regulation. EU Member States on average are ranked 94th in the world in this category (out of 144 countries) with three EU Member States (Greece, Italy and Hungary) ranked in the bottom 10. By way of comparison, non-EU Member States Iceland and Switzerland are ranked 20th and 16th respectively.

A recent report by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) estimated that in 2011 the extra cost to UK business from EU regulations was GBP 95.8million as opposed to GBP 89.1million from domestic rules. The CBI also estimates that over-regulation is holding back the British private sector from investing.

1. Against this background, how is the Commission planning to reduce the regulatory burden on EU Member States?

2. One of the CBI's recommendations is to strengthen the impact assessment process for new regulation. Is the Commission confident that its own impact assessment process is sufficiently robust given the high extra costs of EU regulation? How can the Commission improve its impact assessment process and ensure that EU regulation is adequately scrutinised?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2013)

1. Regulatory burden differs very much from Member State to Member State. Finland, for example, ranks in the Global report's index for 'Burden of government regulation' as number 6 out of 144 countries. This, like the Stoiber report ([1]), is evidence that how EU legislation is implemented is very important. The Commission Communication on 'EU Regulatory Fitness' adopted on 12 December 2012 refers to this, but also sets out how the Commission plans to ensure that EU legislation delivers its benefits at minimum costs. In particular, the communication announces a new Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) ([2]) specifically targeted at eliminating unnecessary regulatory costs (whatever their origins) and ensuring that the body of EU legislation remains fit for purpose. REFIT will be implemented in a transparent manner and include a follow-on to the Administrative Burden Reduction Programme (ABR) aimed at ensuring that the 25% reduction in administrative burden approved by the co-legislators will be successfully implemented by Member States.

2. The Commission's impact assessment system is comprehensive, transparent and subject to independent scrutiny. It is delivering results efficiently as confirmed by a recent report by the European Court of Auditors and indicated by various existing studies including one by the European Parliament ([3]). Further improvements to the *ex ante* assessment of costs and benefits, the presentation of summary results and the review of the impact assessment guidelines will be made. They are listed in the communication on 'EU Regulatory Fitness'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/admin_burden/best_practice_report/best_practice_report_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012)746.
([3]) European Court of Auditors, Special Report no. 3/2010, Impact assessments in the EU institutions: do they support decision-making, http://eca.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/publications/auditreportsandopinions/specialreports, European Parliament 2011, 'Comparative study on the purpose, scope and procedures of impact assessments carried out in the Member States of the EU', http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/JURI/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=36288

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011281/12
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Follow-up question to E-009750/2012: the role of COM(2001)0351and its regulatory role in the right to erect satellite TV dishes of the UK public

The Commission specifically set out the idea of an individual's 'right to use a satellite dish' in its communication of 27 June 2001 on satellite dishes (COM(2001)0351). More recently, a London constituent was refused planning permission to install a 1.4 m antenna by his local borough council planning authority in a way which would allow it to operate correctly. The local authority refused to enter into negotiations about how its requirements could be accommodated, instead referring the applicant to the appeals process, which requires considerable preparation, with no guarantee of permission being granted and the threat of fines being issued and/or the equipment being removed.

Is there any reason why COM(2001)0351 would not apply to the UK?

UK permitted development rights allow a parabolic antenna of up to 1 metre. Some broadcasts from EU Member States cannot be reliably received on such a small antenna in the UK. Larger antennas are usually refused planning permission. Does this infringe Section III(a) or Section III(c) of the communication?

If planning permission is refused a complicated appeals process must be followed, with no guarantee of success. Is this prohibited by Section III(b) of the communication?

Whilst it is accepted that local planning authorities may refuse any particular plan for normal planning reasons, COM(2001)0351 makes it very clear that an outright refusal to grant permission for an antenna of the required size to receive the services the individual chooses is an infringement of Article 56 (ex 49). However, UK local authorities argue that as long as some services can be received via a small dish the EU requirement is satisfied. Is there any reason why the clear requirement for the individual to choose the services he/she receives would be outweighed by aesthetic concerns, when the development is not on a listed building or in an area of special interest?

UK local planning authorities are only answerable to a judicial court. The cost of bringing a case to the UK courts is beyond many individuals. Does this constitute a breach of Section III(d)?

Very small antennas intended for the UK domestic services of BSkyB are routinely installed in ways prohibited by government guidelines, and this is ignored by local authorities: does this violate Section III(e) of the communication?

Considering sites which are not UK national listed buildings nor within conservation areas, is it a correct interpretation of the communication that if a 1.4m antenna is required, then permission should be granted routinely by a UK local authority even if this creates some negative aesthetic effects?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

COM(2001)0351 ([1]) sets out guidelines on the application of the general principles of free movement of goods and services ([2]) concerning the use of satellite dishes. These guidelines are based on case law of the CJEU ([3]) and are addressed to all Member States, including the United Kingdom.

Member States are free to adopt national measures in their internal legal systems on the installation and use of satellite dishes. National measures may include restrictions for reasons of public policy, public health safety or environmental protection. Any such restrictions must be compatible with Treaty principles, be proportionate, non-discriminatory and not effect competition between satellite dish installers.

Citizens in the UK wishing to install and use satellite dishes may be required to comply with pre-authorisation requirements and may use appeal procedures fixed by national or local authorities and established under national law in the event that authorisations are refused by public authorities. Designated appeal bodies in the UK, including courts, decide each individual case on its merits and determine whether the principles identified above are respected.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52001DC0351:EN:HTML.
([2]) Articles 28 and 49 of the EC Treaty.
([3]) Court of Justice of the European Union.

Local authorities in the UK impose planning restrictions which may vary because of the need to protect or preserve the local environment. In line with UK Government guidelines, these authorities generally do not grant permission to erect antenna exceeding 1.4 metres. This is not a breach of the Commission's guidelines as smaller satellites are available on the UK market.

In most cases, planning permission appeals are heard by the Planning Inspectorate whose decision can be appealed in national courts. Section 111 (d) of the Commission's guidelines only deals with taxation issues.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011282/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(11. december 2012)

Om: Økologiske mærkningsordninger

I uge 49 bragte et større, lokalt medie i Danmark (P4 Fyn) en række indslag om, at æbler fra for eksempel Tyskland i henhold til EU-regler kan få det danske økologiske mærke, selv om der er brugt sprøjtemidler, der ikke er tilladt inden for økologisk dyrkning i Danmark. Reglerne skulle gøre, at man ikke kan nægte udenlandsk frugt det danske Ø-mærke, så længe det sættes på inden for landets grænser.

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, om det virkelig kan passe, at EU kan tvinge dette ned over et frivilligt nationalt mærke, som det danske økologiske mærke er?

Forbrugerne bliver jo snydt som følge af denne praksis. Så vidt forespørgeren er orienteret, er det ifølge EU-regler tilladt for medlemsstaterne at have frivillige mærker.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Dacian Cioloş
(15. februar 2013)

Kommissionen er i øjeblikket i gang med en revision af den politiske og lovgivningsmæssige ramme for økologisk landbrug. Spørgsmålet om mærkning af økologiske produkter er et af de emner, der er under overvejelse i denne forbindelse.

Kommissionen har ikke tilstrækkeligt kendskab til dansk lovgivning på dette område til at kunne undersøge det stillede spørgsmål. Kommissionen vil anmode de danske myndigheder om de nødvendige oplysninger.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011282/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Eco-labelling rules

In the week of 3 December 2012 there were a number of reports on the Danish local radio station P4 Fyn, which has quite a large audience, stating that under EU rules apples from Germany, for example, may be awarded the Danish eco-label even if they are sprayed with substances that are not permitted in organic farming in Denmark. Apparently the rules mean that foreign fruit cannot be refused the Danish eco-label as long as it is affixed on Danish territory.

Can the Commission say whether it is really possible for the EU to render compulsory the award of a voluntary national eco-label such as the Danish one?

This type of practice misleads consumers. As far as I am aware the EU rules allow the Member States to have their own voluntary labels.

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The Commission is currently undertaking a review of the political and legislative framework for organic farming. Within this review, the issue of labelling of organic products is one of the issues under consideration.

The Commission does not have sufficient details on the Danish national legislation in this respect to be able to investigate the problem raised. It will request the necessary details from the Danish authorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011283/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Bahnhofsprivatisierungen

In Österreich sollen Medienberichten zufolge Bahnhöfe der öffentlichen Verkehrsgesellschaften an private Investoren verkauft werden. Dabei soll zumeist die Haltestellenfunktion erhalten bleiben, die Immobilien sollen jedoch anders genutzt werden und der Fahrkartenverkauf soll aufgegeben werden.

1. Welche Strategie verfolgt die Kommission im Rahmen der TEN-T für kleine und große Bahnhöfe?

2. In welchen Mitgliedstaaten sind Bahnhöfe zumeist in privater Hand, in welchen Mitgliedstaaten zumeist in öffentlicher Hand?

3. Verfügt die Kommission über Informationen darüber, welche Auswirkungen Bahnhofsprivatisierungen auf den inländischen und grenzüberschreitenden Personen- und Güterverkehr haben?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(18. Februar 2013)

1. Im Mittelpunkt der TEN-V-Politik der Kommission stehen die Funktionen von Bahnhöfen, nicht jedoch die Gebäude selbst. Bahnhofsgebäude wurden daher in den letzten Jahren ausdrücklich aus der TEN-V-Finanzierung ausgenommen. Andere EU-Rechtsvorschriften, die etwa die Zugänglichkeit für Personen mit eingeschränkter Mobilität betreffen, sind jedoch auch beim Bau von Bahnhöfen einzuhalten.

2. In der Mehrzahl der Fälle sind die Bahnhöfe Eigentum von staatseigenen Infrastrukturbetreibern oder Eisenbahnunternehmen. In sehr wenigen Ausnahmefällen befinden sie sich in privater Hand.

3. Die Richtlinie 2012/34/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. November 2012 zur Schaffung eines einheitlichen europäischen Eisenbahnraums ([1]) stellt sicher, dass das Recht auf Zugang zu Eisenbahninfrastrukturen sowie auf Nutzung von Serviceeinrichtungen für alle Bahnhöfe in der Union gilt, unabhängig von ihrem Eigentümer. Der Zugang zu diesen Dienstleistungen muss gewährt werden, wenn es für ein Eisenbahnunternehmen keine tragfähigen Alternativen zur Nutzung des Bahnhofs gibt, um Güter- oder Personenverkehrsdienste zu wirtschaftlich annehmbaren Bedingungen zu erbringen.

Nach ihrer Umsetzung sollen diese Vorschriften gewährleisten, dass die Eigentumsverhältnisse von Bahnhöfen die Schienenverkehrsdienste nicht beeinflussen.

([1]) ABl. L 343 vom 14.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011283/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Privatisation of railway stations

According to reports in the media, railway stations belonging to the public transport companies in Austria are to be sold to private investors. In most cases, the stations will still function as stations but the buildings themselves are to be put to other uses and tickets will no longer be sold.

1. What strategy is the Commission pursuing for large and small railway stations under the TEN-T project?

2. In which Member States are railway stations mostly in private hands and in which Member States are they mostly publicly owned?

3. Does the Commission have any information indicating the impact of railway station privatisation on domestic and international passenger and goods transport?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

1. The focus of the Commission's TEN-T policy concerns the function and not the buildings of the railway stations. Therefore TEN-T funding has in the last years explicitly excluded the buildings of railway stations from its scope. However, other pieces of EU legislation, such as those on accessibility for persons with reduced mobility, have to be complied with while constructing such stations.

2. In the majority of cases railway stations are owned by state-owned infrastructure managers or railway undertakings. Very few exceptions exist where railway stations are owned by private entities.

3. Directive 34/2012/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area ([1]) ensures that access rights to railway infrastructures and to services in service facilities apply to all railway stations throughout the Union, irrespective of their ownership. Access must be granted to such services where there is no viable alternative for a railway operator for using the station, in order to operate the freight or passenger service concerned under economically acceptable conditions.

These rules, once transposed, should ensure that ownership of the railway stations will have no bearing on rail services.

([1]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011284/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Bekämpfung von Fachkräftemangel und Arbeitslosigkeit in der EU

Die Österreichische Hoteliervereinigung (ÖHV) hat auf den Fachkräftemangel in der eigenen Branche mit Anwerbekampagnen in Spanien und Griechenland reagiert, wo die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit jeweils bei über 50 % liegt. Damit sollen qualifizierte Mitarbeiter angeworben werden, die in ihren Heimatländern keine Arbeitsstellen finden können.

1. Sieht die Kommission die Anwerbekampagnen des Österreichischen Hotelierverbands als Lösungsansatz für den Fachkräftemangel anderer Branchen sowie als eine Möglichkeit an, gleichzeitig die Arbeitslosigkeit in anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten zu reduzieren?

2. Sieht die Kommission Risiken oder Gefahren bei derartigen Anwerbekampagnen im Allgemeinen und bei den Kampagnen der Österreichischen Hoteliervereinigung im Speziellen?

3. Plant die Kommission ähnliche Anwerbekampagnen zu unterstützen, um die Arbeitslosigkeit in der Europäischen Union zu bekämpfen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(19. Februar 2013)

Nach Auffassung der Kommission steht die ÖHV-Kampagne mit dem EU-Ziel der Förderung der Arbeitskräftemobilität in der Europäischen Union im Einklang. Gezielte Anwerbekampagnen können dazu beitragen, den Fachkräftemangel im Hotelgewerbe und in anderen Branchen zu reduzieren, in denen vergleichbare Kampagnen bereits stattfinden. So wurden im Jahr 2012 über das Portal EURES Österreich, das von der öffentlichen Arbeitsvermittlung AMS verwaltet wird, Techniker aus Spanien angeworben. EURES Österreich nimmt außerdem an Jobmessen in Griechenland teil, um Personal für die Tourismusbranche in Österreich zu rekrutieren. Diese Maßnahmen wirken sich allerdings kaum auf die Arbeitslosigkeit aus, da die Arbeitskräftemobilität in Europa zwar zunimmt, aber insgesamt immer noch eher gering ist.

Die Kommission sieht keine größeren Gefahren bei derartigen Kampagnen, wenn sie gut vorbereitet und in Zusammenarbeit mit den Entsendeländern durchgeführt werden.

Die Kommission versucht mit dem Kooperationsnetz EURES, das 1993 eingerichtet wurde und an dem die Kommission und die öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen beteiligt sind, die Vermittlung und Rekrutierung von Arbeitskräften in ganz Europa zu verbessern. EURES umfasst derzeit ein Netz von mehr als 850 EURES-Beratern, die in täglichem Kontakt mit Arbeitsuchenden und Arbeitgebern in ganz Europa stehen. EURES bietet Arbeitskräften, Arbeitgebern und mobilitätswilligen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern Information, Beratung und Rekrutierungs-/Vermittlungsdienste an. Durch die EURES-Reform sollen in Zusammenarbeit mit öffentlichen und privaten Arbeitsvermittlungen Dienstleistungskapazitäten für die Vermittlung und Rekrutierung entwickelt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011284/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Addressing skill shortages and unemployment in the EU

The ÖHV [Austrian Hoteliers' Association] has responded to the skills shortage in its own sector with advertising campaigns in Spain and Greece, where youth unemployment stands at over 50%. The aim is to recruit qualified staff that are unable to find employment in their home countries.

1. Does the Commission view the recruitment campaign by the Austrian Hoteliers' Association as a possible solution for skills shortages in other sectors and as a way to reduce unemployment in other EU Member States?

2. Does the Commission identify any risks or dangers in such recruitment campaigns in general and in the campaigns of the Austrian Hoteliers' Association in particular?

3. Is the Commission planning to support similar recruitment campaigns in order to combat unemployment in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

The Commission considers that the ÖHV campaign is in line with the EU objective of promoting labour mobility throughout the Union. Targeted recruitment campaigns can help to reduce hiring difficulties in the hotel and other sectors where similar campaigns are already taking place. For example, in 2012 EURES Austria, which is managed by the public employment service AMS, undertook to recruit technicians from Spain. EURES Austria also takes part in job fairs in Greece to recruit staff for tourism in Austria. The effect on unemployment, however, appears to be limited, as the overall employment mobility of workers in Europe is still rather low, although it is increasing.

The Commission sees no major risks in such campaigns if they are well prepared and carried out in cooperation with the sending countries.

Through EURES, a cooperation network involving the Commission and the public employment services set up in 1993, the Commission aims to improve placement and recruitment across Europe. EURES currently has a human network of more than 850 EURES advisers in daily contact with jobseekers and employers across Europe. It seeks to provide workers, employers and citizens wishing to exercise their freedom of movement with information, advice and recruitment/placement (job-matching) services. The reform of EURES will help to develop service capacities for placement and recruitment in cooperation with public and private employment services.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011285/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Kosten der Polizeieinsätze bei Demonstration vor den Gebäuden der Europäischen Institutionen

Im Herbst 2012 fanden auf dem Place de Luxembourg vor dem Europäischen Parlament in Brüssel mehrmals größere Demonstrationen statt. Wohl im Hinblick auf mögliche Ausschreitungen wurde die Esplanade Solidarnosc vor dem Europäischen Parlament mit Stacheldrahtbarrieren abgesichert, und es war eine deutlich erhöhte Polizeipräsenz rund um das Parlament wahrzunehmen. Auch vor den Gebäuden andere EU-Institutionen sind Demonstrationen regelmäßig von Polizeipräsenz begleitet.

1. Standen die genannten polizeilichen Maßnahmen in direktem Zusammenhang mit den Demonstrationen vor dem Europäischen Parlament? Wenn ja, warum kam es speziell in Zusammenhang mit den letzten Demonstrationen zu zusätzlichen Sicherheitsmaßnahmen und zusätzlicher Polizeipräsenz?

2. Wie wird im Vorfeld von Demonstrationen entschieden, ob zusätzliche Sicherheitsmaßnahmen benötigt werden, und sind die Europäischen Institutionen in diesen Entscheidungsprozess eingebunden?

3. Wer trägt die Kosten für die Polizeieinsätze in Zusammenhang mit Demonstrationen im Umfeld der EU-Institutionen in Brüssel?

4. Werden die Veranstalter von Demonstrationen für die Kosten von Polizei- und Feuerwehreinsätzen vor EU-Institutionen herangezogen?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(12. Februar 2013)

1. und 2. Entscheidungen über (zusätzliche) Polizei- und Sicherheitsmaßnahmen bei Demonstrationen im öffentlichen Raum in Brüssel obliegen den zuständigen belgischen Behörden, im Falle von Demonstrationen im Gebiet Brüssel-Stadt namentlich der Brüsseler Polizei.

Die Brüsseler Polizeibehörden unterrichten die EU-Organe im Vorfeld über Großveranstaltungen und geplante Sicherheitsmaßnahmen. Die EU-Organe können am Entscheidungsprozess mitwirken, indem sie Informationen bereitstellen, die ihre spezifischen Sicherheitsbelange betreffen, und Maßnahmen vorschlagen, die insbesondere dem Schutz ihres Personals und ihrer Gebäude dienen. Die Entscheidung darüber, welche Maßnahmen getroffen werden, obliegt jedoch allein den zuständigen belgischen Polizeibehörden.

Entscheidungen über Sicherheitsmaßnahmen stützen sich in der Regel auf Analysen des OCAM (Organe de Coordination pour l'Analyse de la Menace), der belgischen Behörde für die Bewertung von Bedrohungen, sowie auf frühere Erfahrungen mit bestimmten Arten von Demonstrationen. Nach Kenntnis der Kommission waren in dem vom Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Fall der Grund für die erhöhte Polizeipräsenz in der Tat die in der Anfrage erwähnten Demonstrationen.

3. Die Kosten von Polizeieinsätzen bei Demonstrationen werden von den belgischen Behörden getragen.

4. Von einer Haftung der Veranstalter von Demonstrationen ist der Europäischen Kommission nichts bekannt. Daher bittet sie den Herrn Abgeordneten, sich diesbezüglich an die belgischen Behörden zu wenden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011285/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Cost of policing demonstrations near the premises of European institutions

In autumn 2012 several fairly large demonstrations were staged on Place de Luxembourg outside the European Parliament in Brussels. Solidarność 1980 Esplanade, which runs between Parliament's buildings, was closed off with barbed-wire barriers in anticipation of possible rioting, and a greatly increased police presence was clearly visible within the Parliament complex. The police are also routinely deployed when there are demonstrations close to the premises of other EU institutions.

1. Were these police measures directly linked to the latest demonstrations at Parliament? If so, why were additional security measures and a greater police presence considered necessary for those demonstrations in particular?

2. How is it decided before the event whether additional security measures will be needed for demonstrations, and are the European institutions involved in the decision-taking?

3. Who bears the cost of policing demonstrations at the EU institutions in Brussels?

4. Are the organisers of demonstrations liable for the costs of police and fire service operations in the vicinity of EU institutions?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

1 and 2. Decisions on (additional) police and security measures regarding demonstrations in the public domain in Brussels are the responsibility of the competent Belgian authorities, and in particular of the Brussels police for demonstrations taking place on the territory of Bruxelles-Ville.

The Brussels police authorities inform the EU institutions in advance of major events and of the

Security measures envisaged. The EU institutions can contribute to the decision-making process

by providing information on their specific security concerns and by suggesting measures aimed in

particular at protecting their staff and premises. The decision on which measures are taken, however, is made solely by the competent Belgian police authorities.

As a general rule, decisions on implementing security measures are based on analyses provided by OCAM (Organe de Coordination pour l'Analyse de la Menace), the Belgian threat assessment authority, and on previous experience with specific types of demonstrations. As far as the Commission is able to determine, the increased police presence was indeed linked to the demonstrations referred to in the question of the Honourable Member.

3. The costs of policing demonstrations are borne by the Belgian authorities.

4. The European Commission is not aware of a liability of organisers of demonstrations and

would ask the Honourable Member to address this question to the Belgian authorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011286/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Chemicals in the aviation industry

The aviation industry needs a lot of chemicals to fulfil stringent aviation safety requirements. For example a lot of chromates are needed within the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) sector. Despite many years of research, there seems to be no viable alternatives on the horizon which would fulfil aviation safety needs. Recent proposals under REACH (to add various chromates to the REACH authorisation list) have therefore raised some concerns within the aviation industry. Could the Commission clarify the following?

1. Has the Commission ignored EASA's objection to the proposal to add chromium trioxide to the REACH authorisation list (bearing in mind the fact that this substance is essential for the corrosion protection of aeroplanes and flight safety), and if so, why?

2. Is the Commission aware that many SMEs, which are essential to the supply chain of the aerospace industry, could go bankrupt as a result of the decision to add chromium trioxide to the REACH authorisation list? Has the Commission made an impact assessment on the amount of jobs which might be at stake as a result of this decision? Would the Commission be concerned that airlines might have to maintain aircraft outside the EU where these chemicals are not banned?

3. Will the European Parliament have a veto right to object to proposals under REACH which could have a negative impact on flight safety and the aviation industry?

4. Will the Commission reconsider the REACH legislation with regard to its applicability to chemical substances which are essential to fulfil flight safety requirements?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

A draft amendment of Annex XIV to REACH was transmitted to the European Parliament and the Council for scrutiny, in accordance with the procedure under Article 133. The draft includes trichloroethylene and seven chromium VI compounds.

While preparing the draft, the Commission based itself on the recommendation submitted by the Agency (ECHA), taking into consideration comments from stakeholders during the public consultation

For the seven chromium VI compounds, ECHA proposed the latest application date to be 21 months after entry into force of the regulation. Based on a broader appreciation of the significance of the specific structure of the relevant markets and the related supply chains, the Commission concluded that the latest application date should be extended to 35 months after entry into force of this regulation.

The Commission is aware of the critical use of chromium trioxide in the aerospace sector. Socioeconomic elements, including impacts on SMEs, will be considered when assessing the individual applications for authorisation, in accordance with Article 60 of REACH.

Applicants who make an application before the latest application date may continue to use the substance or place it on the market for the use(s) applied for until a decision on the application for authorisation is taken, and thereafter in case of a positive decision, thus allowing to maintain the continuity of their activities. Authorisations do not have to be held by all the downstream users, many of them being SMEs, but may instead be obtained by the manufacturer or importer of the substance, covering the uses for which he supplies it, thereby covering downstream users. The REACH Regulation does not foresee sector-specific exemptions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011287/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Humanitarian aid in Sudan

Given the urgent need for humanitarian aid in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, what steps has the Commission taken to urge the Government of Sudan to fully implement the memorandum of understanding for humanitarian access?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

Since the beginning of the crises in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, the unimpeded access to victims of conflict in both states has been a priority issue for the EU. To this end, the matter has been raised by the Commission as a major concern in every meeting with the Sudanese authorities since the beginning of the crisis, both in Sudan and in Brussels. In addition, in contacts with third countries that enjoy more privileged relations with the Government of Sudan, the EU has requested them to urge the Government of Sudan to allow access to the victims of these conflicts. The HR/VP also published a statement in September 2012 referring to this concern, and the EU Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan has repeatedly conveyed the EU's concern as regards humanitarian access. Finally, the Commission has also actively supported the efforts of the United Nations, notably Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in this respect.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011288/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Cost of the European Space Expo exhibition and visitor attendance

1. Can the Commission please confirm how many people visited the European Space Expo when it was launched in 7 EU cities between 1 June and 9 December 2012?

2. Can the Commission provide visitor breakdowns per city?

3. Can the Commission also provide details of the cost of the exhibition, especially information on its own contribution, including its staff members' mission expenses?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

1. From 1 June 2012 to 9 December 2012, the Commission showcased in seven major European cities the benefits of innovative space technologies for the economy and citizens' well-being. Carried out in collaboration with international partner organisations the Space Expo offers to visitors the opportunity to see, touch and experience the wide range of solutions that space technologies and services provide.

In this time frame the Space Expo has been visited by more than 80 000 citizens. This high number is due to the fact that the exhibition is located at prime locations that the host cities have made available for this project. Thanks to the collaboration with the host countries there is, moreover, a high proportion of school children among the visitors. This makes the Space Expo particularly valuable for inspiring young people to take a professional course that will equip them with the skills necessary for the jobs of the future.

2.

Date	City	Visitors
1 June-5 June 2012	Copenhagen	7 500
25 June-28 June 2012	Toulouse	4 000
17 August-21 August 2012	Helsinki	23 000
26 September-11 October 2012	Brussels	16 208
23 October-26 October 2012	Vienna	5 140
12 November-18 November 2012	Larnaca	14 504
3 December-9 December 2012	London	11 015

3. The average cost of the Space Expo per visitor is EUR 15.90. Calculated per city the budget of the exhibition is EUR 185 000 on average.

The main budget items are linked to logistics and communication (68.7%), the infrastructure (14.5%), external support (11.8%) and translation (3.8%). Staff members' mission expenses account for 1.2%.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011289/12
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Live plucking of geese

A constituent of mine has recently drawn my attention to the issue of the live plucking of goose feathers, most notably in Hungary, for use in down clothing and bedding. Birds experience pain when their feathers are plucked from them whilst they are still alive, leaving open wounds. When the feathers grow back, the birds often face further rounds of plucking.

1. To what extent is this practice banned under EU legislation?

2. What action is the Commission taking to ensure that Hungary complies with its animal welfare responsibilities under Directive 98/58/EC?

3. What action has the Commission taken, or does it intend to take, with regard to the practice of live plucking in the EU in response to the 2010 Scientific Opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the practice of harvesting (collecting) feathers from live geese for down production?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

Plucking feathers from live geese is forbidden by EU legislation on animal welfare. Article 23 (3) of the recommendation of the Council of Europe on geese ([1]) states that 'feathers, including down, shall not be plucked from live birds'. However, the practice of harvesting feathers from live geese during the moulting period is allowed in the EU.

Upon request from the Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) ([2]) issued a scientific opinion on the practice of harvesting feathers from live geese for down production. The opinion concludes that removing feathers from live geese can be carried out without causing pain, suffering or injury to the birds, if feathers are gathered. In addition, the opinion provides for several animal-based indicators that can be used by official inspectors and producers to monitor and minimise the potential negative impact of harvesting feathers from live birds.

Member States are primarily responsible for the implementation of EU welfare legislation. The Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General carries out on-the-spot audits in the Member States regarding the implementation of EU welfare legislation. An audit carried out in Hungary in September 2011 examined the system of welfare controls in farms keeping geese, including the aspects of feathers' harvesting. The report and the action plan of the Hungarian competent authorities to address its recommendations are available at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2802.

([1]) http://wayback.archive-it.org/1365/20090215072727/http://www.coe.int/t/e/legal_affairs/legal_cooperation/biological_safety%2C_use_of_animals/farming/Rec%20geese.asp
([2]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1886.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011290/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 décembre 2012)

Objet: La Commission néglige-t-elle l'influence des politiques budgétaires?

Quelle est la réaction de la Commission face au récent rapport de l'OFCE qui estime que les efforts budgétaires demandés aux pays européens sont trop élevés et leurs conséquences sous-estimées? Dans ce texte, la Commission est clairement accusée de sous-estimer les effets multiplicateurs des coupes budgétaires.

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(27 février 2013)

La validité des études récentes sur le multiplicateur budgétaire est limitée par le manque de recul et par le fait qu'on ne peut exclure que d'autres facteurs aient eu un impact sur la croissance par rapport à ce qui était attendu. Ces autres facteurs comprennent, en particulier, les effets de la confiance, qui se manifestent aujourd'hui du fait de nos politiques et dont profitent les pays vulnérables. En effet, en prenant en considération la détérioration de la confiance des investisseurs illustrée par la hausse des rendements des emprunts d'État, on a pu montrer ([1]) que les données ne sont pas incompatibles avec un multiplicateur moyen inférieur à un, tel que celui utilisé dans les modèles macroéconomiques classiques.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/pdf/ee-2012-7_en.pdf), encadré 1.5, p. 41.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011290/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Is the Commission neglecting the impact of fiscal policies?

What is the Commission's reaction to the recent French Economic Policy Institute report which states that the fiscal efforts required of European countries are too great and that their consequences are underestimated? In this report, the Commission is clearly accused of underestimating the multiplier effects of budget cuts.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

The robustness of recent studies on the fiscal multiplier is limited by their short time horizon and the fact that it cannot be excluded that other factors impacted on growth compared with what was expected. Such other factors include, in particular, the confidence effects that are materialising now due to our policies and from which the vulnerable countries are benefiting. Indeed, if one takes into account the deterioration of investor confidence expressed by rising government bond yields, it has been shown ([1]) that the evidence is not inconsistent with an average multiplier smaller than one, as used in common macroeconomic model.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/pdf/ee-2012-7_en.pdf, p. 41 Box 1,5.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011291/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 décembre 2012)

Objet: Retour d'informations sur REACH

Grâce à REACH, le consommateur bénéficie d'un droit nouveau: celui de demander au fabricant ou au distributeur d'un bien de consommation si l'article qu'il désire acheter contient ou non des substances figurant dans la liste ECHA. Si tel est le cas, le fabricant est tenu de répondre dans les 45 jours.

En Espagne et en Belgique, deux associations de défense du consommateur ont mené une enquête afin de savoir si les entreprises «jouaient le jeu». 50 % des entreprises ont répondu à l'association espagnole et 62,5 % à l'association belge. Les chiffres semblent être en augmentation par rapport à ceux collectés en 2010 par la BEE (22 %).

Néanmoins, même si le nombre de réponses augmente, force est de constater, d'une part, que près d'un distributeur ou fabricant sur deux ne répond toujours pas et, d'autre part, que 20 % des réponses reçues ne sont pas du tout conformes car beaucoup trop vagues.

En tant que député européen en charge de la protection des consommateurs, je souhaiterais poser les questions suivantes:

1. La Commission possède-t-elle une estimation du nombre de demandes émanant des consommateurs en direction des fabricants et des distributeurs? Si oui, quelle est-elle? Si non, comptez-vous en ordonner une?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle faire tester à nouveau le système pour disposer d'une statistique plus récente du pourcentage de fabricants et de distributeurs qui remplissent leurs obligations à cet égard?

3. Des sanctions sont-elles prévues pour les entreprises qui continueraient à ne pas répondre aux consommateurs européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(25 février 2013)

La Commission ne dispose pas d'une estimation du nombre de demandes émanant de consommateurs et soumises aux fabricants et aux distributeurs. Parmi d'autres études, le rapport de synthèse REACH donne un aperçu des résultats d'une enquête Eurobaromètre sur l'information des consommateurs sur les produits chimiques contenus dans les produits courants.

L'obligation visée à l'article 33 du règlement REACH ([1]) incombe au secteur et principalement aux détaillants. La Commission ne dispose pas des moyens nécessaires pour obtenir des données chiffrées sur le nombre de demandes envoyées dans l'Union européenne. Toutefois, la Commission entretient des contacts avec des organisations européennes de consommateurs et assurera le suivi auprès des États membres si de nouvelles données deviennent disponibles.

Conformément au règlement REACH, c'est aux États membres qu'incombe la responsabilité d'imposer des sanctions aux entreprises qui ne répondent pas aux consommateurs européens. Ces sanctions peuvent donc varier d'un pays à l'autre. Une étude sur les différentes sanctions en vigueur dans les États membres a été menée pour la Commission en 2010 et peut être consultée à l'adresse suivante:

(http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/reach/enforcement_en.htm).

([1]) Règlement (CE) nº 1907/2006, JO L 396 du 30.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011291/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Feedback on REACH

Thanks to REACH, consumers have a new right — the right to ask the manufacturer or the distributor of a consumer product whether the item they wish to buy contains any of the substances on the ECHA list. Manufacturers must respond within 45 days.

In Spain and Belgium, two consumer protection associations conducted an investigation to find out whether businesses have been 'playing the game'. 50% of the businesses replied to the Spanish association and 62.5% to the Belgian association. The figures seem to have increased compared to those collected in 2010 by the EEB (22%).

However, despite the increase in the number of responses, almost one in two distributors or manufacturers are still not replying and 20% of the responses received fail to comply as they are too vague.

As the MEP responsible for consumer protection, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Does the Commission have an estimate on the number of requests from consumers submitted to manufacturers and distributors? If so, what is this estimate? If not, does it intend to call for one?

2. Does the Commission intend to test the system again to obtain more recent statistics on the percentage of manufacturers and distributors who are fulfilling their obligations in this respect?

3. Are there any sanctions established for businesses that fail to respond to European consumers?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Commission does not have an estimate on the number of requests from consumers submitted to manufacturers and distributors. The REACH Review outlines, amongst other studies, the results of a Eurobarometer survey on the awareness of consumers about chemicals in everyday products.

The obligation set out in Article 33 of the REACH regulation ([1]) rests upon the industry and mainly retailers. The Commission does not have the means necessary to obtain figures about the number of requests sent out in the European Union. However, the Commission maintains contact with European consumer organisations and will be following up with Member States if new figures become available.

In line with REACH, sanctions for businesses that fail to respond to European consumers are the responsibility of Member States. They can thus vary from one country to the other. A study of the different sanctions in place in Member States was carried out for the Commission in 2010 and can be consulted at this address:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/reach/enforcement_en.htm

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, OJ L 396, 30.12.2006.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011292/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 décembre 2012)

Objet: Réforme du droit d'auteur: composition du groupe de réflexion et programme des travaux

Une réforme profonde du droit d'auteur est indispensable. La récente actualité et les débats tumultueux autour de l'accord ACTA nous l'ont amplement rappelé.

La Commission vient de rendre public un plan d'action en deux temps pour un toilettage du droit d'auteur, dont le modèle traditionnel est mis à mal par la diffusion des technologies de l'information et de la communication.

Les problèmes à traiter à court terme se regroupent dans six domaines, selon la Commission: la portabilité transfrontalière des contenus, les contenus créés par les utilisateurs, l'utilisation d'instruments de fouille de données, la redevance pour copie privée, l'accès aux œuvres audiovisuelles et le patrimoine culturel.

La communication de la Commission indique qu'une phase de réflexion précèdera les phases des études d'incidence, des études de marché et de la rédaction législative.

Mes premières questions sur cette thématique qui me tient à cœur sont les suivantes:

1. Qui fera partie du groupe qui sera mis en place durant la phase de réflexion?

2. La Commission lancera-t-elle elle-même les invitations et, si oui, quels sont ses critères?

3. La Commission acceptera-t-elle les candidatures spontanées?

4. La composition du groupe de réflexion ou la liste des interlocuteurs seront-elles rendues publiques?

5. Quel est le programme des différentes phases?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(22 février 2013)

Conformément au débat d'orientation tenu au sein du collège des commissaires, le 5 décembre 2012, les travaux visant à mettre en place un marché unique efficace dans le domaine des droits d'auteur se dérouleront selon deux axes parallèles. D'une part, la Commission conduira à son terme l'effort qu'elle a engagé pour revoir et moderniser le cadre législatif de l'UE sur le droit d'auteur. D'autre part, elle s'attaquera à un certain nombre de problèmes dans le cadre du dialogue «Des licences pour l'Europe ([1])» avec les parties prenantes. Dans la communication sur le contenu dans le marché unique numérique ([2]), la Commission a recensé quatre domaines de travail ([3]).

1. Chaque groupe de travail sera composé de représentants de différentes parties prenantes, issus de tous les secteurs concernés ([4]). Les participants devraient être en mesure, par une approche constructive, d'identifier les problèmes dans chacun des domaines, de partager leurs expériences, de participer au dialogue et de proposer des solutions adaptées.

2. Le 21 décembre 2012, la Commission a invité des associations représentant différents groupes de parties prenantes. Les membres des groupes de travail ont été sélectionnés sur la base des critères précités, dans la réponse à la question n° 1.

3. Lorsqu'elles reçoivent des candidatures spontanées, les trois directions générales responsables de l'organisation de l'initiative «Des licences pour l'Europe» décident d'un commun accord de l'opportunité d'inclure ou non un candidat dans un ou plusieurs groupe(s) de travail. La Commission a déjà accepté des candidatures spontanées.

([1]) Ce dialogue, «Des licences pour l'Europe», qui vise à explorer le potentiel et les limites des régimes de licences innovants et des solutions technologiques, a été lancé le 4 février, conjointement par la DG MARKT, la DG CNECT et la DG EAC.
([2]) Communication sur le contenu dans le marché unique numérique du 18 décembre 2012.
([3]) Ces domaines de travail sont les suivants: i) accès transfrontière et portabilité des services; ii) contenus générés par les utilisateurs et octroi de licences aux petits utilisateurs de matériel protégé; iii) secteur audiovisuel et institutions de gestion et de conservation du patrimoine culturel et iv) fouille de textes et de données.
([4]) Titulaires de droits, organismes chargés de l'octroi des licences, utilisateurs commerciaux et non commerciaux de contenus protégés, utilisateurs finaux de l'internet.

4. Un site internet permettant de rendre publiques les informations concernant l'initiative «Des licences pour l'Europe» sera créé.

5. Selon le calendrier préliminaire, le dialogue aura lieu dans le courant de 2013. Une séance plénière et les premières réunions des groupes de travail ont eu lieu le 4 février ([5]).

([5]) Chaque groupe de travail établira son propre agenda. Il est toutefois prévu de tenir une séance plénière de mi-parcours en juin et une réunion plénière de clôture en novembre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011292/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Copyright reform: makeup of the focus group and work programme

A radical reform of copyright is needed. Recent events and heated discussions concerning the ACTA agreement have been a sharp reminder of this.

The Commission has just released a two-stage action plan for revising copyright law, the conventional model of which is being undermined by the dissemination of information and communication technologies.

According to the Commission, the issues to be dealt with in the short term can be divided into six areas — the cross-border portability of content, content created by users, the use of data mining tools, private copying levy, access to audiovisual works and cultural property.

The Commission's Communication indicates that there will be a phase of reflection before the impact assessment, market research and legislative drafting phases.

My initial questions on this subject, which is particularly important to me, are the following:

1. Who will be part of the group set up during the reflection phase?

2. Will the Commission send out invitations itself and, if so, what are its criteria?

3. Will the Commission accept unsolicited applications?

4. Will the members of the focus group or the list of speakers be made public?

5. What is the schedule for the different phases?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

From the orientation debate held by the College of Commissioners on 5 December 2012 follows that the work to ensure an effective single market in the area of copyright will proceed along two parallel tracks. On the one hand, it will complete its ongoing effort to review and to modernise the EU copyright legislative framework. On the other hand a number of issues will also be addressed through a stakeholder dialogue, 'Licenses for Europe' ([1]). In the communication on content in the Digital Single Market ([2]), the Commission identified those issues along 4 work strands ([3]).

1. Each working group will consist of representatives of different stakeholders, from all sectors ([4]). The participant should be able to, in a constructive way, identify problems within each topic, share experiences, participate in the dialogue and propose appropriate solutions.

2. The Commission sent out invitations to associations representing different groups of stakeholders on 21 December 2012. The participants of the working groups were selected in accordance with the criteria indicated above in the reply to question 1.

3. When receiving unsolicited applications, the 3 Directorates-General responsible for the organisation of 'Licenses for Europe' decide with a common agreement whether to include or not a certain applicant in one or several of the working groups. The Commission has already accepted unsolicited applications.

4. A website will be created where information concerning 'Licenses for Europe' will be published.

([1]) This stakeholder dialogue, 'Licenses for Europe', aiming at exploring the potential and limits of innovative licensing and technological solutions was launched on 4 February, jointly by DG MARKT, DG CNECT and DG EAC.
([2]) Communication on content in the Digital Single Market of 18 December 2012.
([3]) Those work strands are:i) Cross-border access and the portability of services; ii) User-generated content and licensing for small-scale users of protected material; iii) Audiovisual sector and cultural heritage institutions, and iv) Text and data mining.
([4]) Such as rightholders, licensing bodies, commercial and non-commercial user of protected content, as well as Internet users.

5. According to the preliminary timeframe, the dialogue will be held throughout 2013. On 4 February a plenary session and kick-off meetings of the working groups took place ([5]).

([5]) Each working group will set its own agenda. It is moreover planned to hold a mid-term plenary session in June and a closing plenary session in November.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011293/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 décembre 2012)

Objet: Discrimination via les droits d'accise sur la bière

Les députés français viennent d'adopter le projet de loi de finance de la sécurité sociale, qui prévoit une augmentation de 160 % des droits d'accise sur la bière. Cette augmentation devrait initialement rapporter 280 millions d'euros par an à l'État français, dont 95 millions proviendraient de la filière brassicole belge (pour qui la France est le premier marché d'exportation, avec 32 % du volume).

Les conséquences pour les brasseurs belges seraient bien sûr désastreuses.

En tant qu'eurodéputé en charge de la protection des consommateurs et en tant que Belge de surcroît, j'en appelle à la Commission:

1. Comment la Commission se positionne-t-elle dans ce dossier? Compte-t-elle faire annuler la décision de l'État français, ou à tout le moins ouvrir une enquête? Souvenons-nous que la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne a, par le passé, annulé la décision du Royaume-Uni d'augmenter les taxes sur le vin pour privilégier la production nationale de bière!

2. La Commission estime-t-elle que la politique fiscale d'un État membre peut influer sur les habitudes de consommation existantes afin de privilégier les industries nationales?

3. Ce dossier est-il en parfaite concordance avec la définition européenne et l'esprit du marché unique?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(25 janvier 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question écrite E-010183/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011293/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Discrimination through excise duties on beer

French MPs have just adopted a Finance Bill on social security which provides for an increase of 160% in excise duties on beer. This increase should initially bring in EUR 280 million per year to the French State, EUR 95 million of which would come from the Belgian brewing industry (for which France is the main export market with 32% of the amount of exports).

The consequences for Belgian breweries would of course be disastrous.

As the MEP responsible for consumer protection and as a Belgian, I would like to ask the Commission the following:

1. What is its position on this matter? Does it intend to overturn the decision by the French State or, at the very least, initiate an investigation? It is worth remembering that the Court of Justice of the European Union has in the past overturned a decision by the United Kingdom to increase taxes on wine to favour domestic beer production.

2. Does the Commission believe that a Member State's fiscal policy could influence existing patterns of consumption, favouring national industries?

3. Is this matter fully consistent with the EU definition of the single market?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer given to Written Question E-010183/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011295/12
to the Commission
Seán Kelly (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Grading practices on factory ships

Does the Commission have any plans to bring forward legislation to prohibit the use of mincing equipment on factory fishing vessels operating in European waters?

It has come to my attention that a practice has developed whereby factory ships use mincing equipment which enables the practice of high grading. This involves the selection of smaller- sized, less valuable fish, mincing them, and dumping them back into the sea.

It in effect enables these ships to dump small fish almost undetectably. This results in these ships being able only to declare the catch that they land at port and not what is actually caught by the ships concerned, to the detriment of the livelihoods of law-abiding fishermen and the sustainability of fish stocks.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

Addressing the issue of discards is central in reforming the common fisheries policy (CFP) and moving towards sustainable fisheries. The Commission recognises the practice highlighted by the Honourable Member is contrary to this objective.

The mincing of fish on board vessels for use in the preparation of imitation seafood is allowed under Article 42 of Regulation (EC) No 850/98 ([1]). However, the clear intention of this article is that such products are retained on board and not discarded. Moreover, under Article 32 of the same Regulation, the carrying on board of automatic grading equipment for the size sorting of certain species is prohibited. The practice described would seem to constitute a breach of this provision.

Such discarding of fish would also be contrary to the general ban on high-grading (i.e. discarding fish of low value to keep space on board for higher value fish) in EU waters previously contained on a temporary basis in Regulation (EU) No 579/2011 ([2]). The Commission proposes to make this measure permanent under a proposed amendment to Regulation (EC) No 850/98. This proposal is currently awaiting formal adoption by Council and the European Parliament.

Given these existing provisions that outlaws the practice described, the Commission does not see the need to introduce any specific legislation at this time. It is the responsibility of the control authorities of the relevant Member States to enforce these provisions in waters under their jurisdiction.

([1]) OJ L 125, 27.4.1998.
([2]) OJ L 165, 24.6.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011570/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Modificaciones al Decreto legislativo 31/2001, relativo a la calidad del agua destinada al consumo humano

El proyecto de Decreto interministerial que propone la introducción de varias modificaciones en el Decreto legislativo 31/2001 relativo a la calidad del agua destinada al consumo humano (n° 2012/0534/I — C50A, título «Proyecto de Decreto interministerial para la introducción, en el anexo I, parte B, del Decreto legislativo n° 31 de 2 de febrero de 2001, del parámetro "Microcistina-LR" y su relativo valor de parámetro») podría ir en contra de la legislación comunitaria y, en concreto, de la Directiva 98/83/CE del Consejo, de 3 de noviembre de 1998, relativa a la calidad de las aguas destinadas al consumo humano, que Italia ha transpuesto a su ordenamiento mediante el Decreto 31/2001.

Esta modificación difiere de la opinión científica de la Asociación italiana de médicos por el medio ambiente (ISDE) y de los expertos del Instituto Superior de Sanidad (Italia), entre otros, y va en perjuicio del principio de cautela. De acuerdo con dichas instituciones, si se aprueban las modificaciones propuestas, aunque se respeten determinados valores paramétricos, se posibilitaría el suministro de agua contaminada destinada al consumo humano con presencia de cianobacterias y de toxinas que estas producen, tales como microcistinas, que han sido clasificadas como posibles cancerígenos para el ser humano (grupo 2B) por el Centro Internacional de Investigación sobre el Cáncer (CIIC).

El 20 de noviembre de 2012, la Asociación italiana de médicos por el medio ambiente (ISDE) ha proporcionado información y evidencias específicas a los responsables de la Comisión Europea en relación con la Directiva 98/34/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 22 de junio de 1998, por la que se establece un procedimiento de información en materia de las normas y reglamentaciones técnicas.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿tiene la Comisión la intención de rechazar las modificaciones propuestas al Decreto legislativo 31/2001 en el proyecto de Decreto interministerial (2012/0534/I — C50A) y garantizar que toda modificación en la transposición de la Directiva 98/83/CE relativa a la calidad de las aguas destinadas al consumo humano tendrá el único objeto de asegurar unos niveles de calidad más elevados?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de febrero de 2013)

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-10723/12, la Comisión explicó los procedimientos del proceso de notificación y sus implicaciones en el marco de la Directiva sobre la calidad de las aguas destinadas al consumo humano ([1]).

Las autoridades italianas notificaron a la Comisión la propuesta de decreto interministerial 2012/0534/I-C50A, que modifica el Decreto 31/2001. La Comisión acaba de examinar esa notificación y no ha detectado ninguna infracción de la legislación de la UE.

El valor propuesto en la notificación para el parámetro «Microcystin-LR» (1.0 µg/l) se ajusta a los valores orientativos provisionales de la OMS, en los que se basan por lo general las normas de la Directiva sobre la calidad de las aguas destinadas al consumo humano (considerando 16).

([1]) Directiva 98/83/CE (DO L 330 de 5.12.1998).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011298/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Introduzione della sostanza microcistina LR (e relativo valore di parametro) nel decreto ministeriale 31/2001

Il governo italiano ha recentemente presentato alla Commissione uno schema di decreto interministeriale con il quale viene proposta l'introduzione del parametro «microcistina LR» nell'allegato I, parte B del decreto legislativo 31/2001, con cui l'Italia ha recepito nel proprio ordinamento la direttiva 98/83/CE relativa ai requisiti di potabilità dell'acqua destinata al consumo umano.

Tali modifiche, se approvate, permetterebbero, anche se con determinati valori di parametro, l'erogazione di acque potabili contaminate da cianobatteri e microcistine da essi prodotte, sostanze quest'ultime classificate dalla Iarc (Agenzia internazionale di ricerca sul cancro) come elementi cancerogeni di classe 2 b.

Considerato che:

— l'elevata potenzialità tossica, epigenetica e oncogena di alcuni tipi di microcistine presenti nelle acque, nonché la loro mutevole e imprevedibile risposta a diverse condizioni climatiche e ambientali, sono scientificamente documentate e rappresentano un concreto rischio per la salute umana;

— su tutto il territorio italiano manca un efficace sistema di sorveglianza e gestione delle acque che presentano tali criticità e che una potabilizzazione sicura in molte regioni italiane non è quindi tuttora garantita;

— l'introduzione nel decreto legislativo 31/2001 di nuovi valori di parametro relativi a sostanze palesemente cancerogene determinerebbe il venir meno della capacità di tutela della salute pubblica a cui sono demandati sia il decreto summenzionato sia la direttiva 98/83/CE dal medesimo recepita;

può la Commissione specificare come intende operare rispetto alla proposta di modifica del decreto legislativo 31/2001 presentata dal governo italiano (notifica n. 2012/0534/I — C50, «Schema di decreto legislativo per l'introduzione, nell'allegato I, parte B del decreto legislativo 2 febbraio 2001 n. 31 del parametro microcistina LR e relativo valore di parametro)»?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011528/12
alla Commissione
Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(18 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Decreto sui requisiti di potabilità dell'acqua

Il decreto interministeriale n. 2012/0534/I — C50A, che propone modifiche al decreto legislativo n. 31/2001 relativo ai requisiti di potabilità dell'acqua destinata al consumo umano, è ora all'esame della Commissione europea (DG ENTR). Questo decreto interministeriale permette di erogare — come potabile per il consumo umano — acqua proveniente da corpi idrici inquinati da sostanze tossiche e cancerogene, come cianobatteri e relative microcistine.

Considerato che:

— il decreto legislativo n. 31/2011, che ha recepito la direttiva europea 98/83/CE, può essere modificato solo per introdurre criteri più stringenti, e non più permissivi come è avvenuto nel caso specifico;

— l'approvazione di questo decreto comporta un rischio documentato e concreto per la salute umana e che è necessario, invece, rispettare pienamente il principio di precauzione;

— l'Associazione italiana medici per l'ambiente — Isde (*International Society of Doctors for the Environment — Italy*) ha inviato al responsabile per la direttiva 98/34/CE della Commissione europea un documento recante una serie di osservazioni volte a sostenere la richiesta di rigetto del suddetto decreto;

la Commissione non ritiene sia necessario intervenire per valutare eventuali violazioni del diritto comunitario ed eventualmente chiedere il ritiro alle autorità italiane di tale decreto?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011570/12
alla Commissione
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Modifiche al decreto legislativo 31/2001 relativo ai requisiti di potabilità

Lo schema di decreto interministeriale che propone l'introduzione di alcune modifiche al decreto legislativo 31/2001 relativo ai requisiti di potabilità (n. 2012/0534/I — C50A, titolo «Schema di decreto interministeriale per l'introduzione, nell'allegato I, parte B, del decreto legislativo 2 febbraio 2001 n. 31, del parametro "Microcistina-LR" e relativo valore di parametro») potrebbe essere contrario alla legislazione europea con specifico riferimento alla direttiva 98/83/CE del Consiglio, del 3 novembre 1998, concernente la qualità delle acque destinate al consumo umano, di cui il decreto 31/2001 ne è la trasposizione.

Questa modificazione è stata realizzata contro l'opinione scientifica dell'Associazione italiana medici per l'ambiente (ISDE) e di specialisti dell'Istituto Superiore di Sanità, fra altri, e sarebbe contraria al principio di precauzione. A loro avviso queste modifiche, se approvate, permetterebbero, anche se con determinati valori di parametro, l'erogazione di acque a uso umano anche in presenza di contaminazione da cianobatteri e delle loro microcistine classificate dalla IARC (Agenzia internazionale di ricerca sul cancro) come cancerogeni di classe 2 b.

Il 20 novembre 2012 l'ISDE ha inviato documentazione e evidenze specifiche ai responsabili della Commissione europea in relazione alla direttiva 98/34/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 22 giugno 1998, che prevede una procedura d'informazione nel settore delle norme e delle regolamentazioni tecniche.

Alla luce di quanto precede, intende la Commissione rigettare le modifiche proposte al decreto legislativo 31/2001 per lo schema di decreto interministeriale (2012/0534/I — C50A) e far sì che qualsiasi modifica nella trasposizione della direttiva 98/83/CE sulla qualità dell'acqua sia solo diretta ad assicurare livelli di qualità più elevati?

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(25 febbraio 2013)

Nella risposta all'interrogazione parlamentare E-10723/12 la Commissione ha specificato le procedure connesse al processo di notifica e le relative implicazioni che derivano dalla direttiva sull'acqua potabile ([1]).

Le autorità italiane hanno notificato alla Commissione lo schema di decreto interministeriale n. 2012/0534/I-C50A che modifica il decreto 31/2001. La Commissione ha preso in esame tale notifica e non ha individuato nessun elemento che provi una violazione del diritto dell'UE.

Il valore proposto nella notifica per il parametro «microcistina LR» (1.0 µg/l) è in linea con i valori degli orientamenti stabiliti dall'OMS, su cui sono in genere fondate le norme stabilite nella direttiva sull'acqua potabile (considerando 16).

([1]) Direttiva 98/83/CEE, GU L 330 del 5.12.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011298/12
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Addition of the substance microcystin-LR (and the relative parametric value) to Ministerial Decree 31/2001

The Italian Government recently presented a draft interministerial decree to the Commission proposing to add the 'microcystin-LR' parameter to Annex I, part B of Legislative Decree 31/2001, with which Italy transposed Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption.

If approved, albeit subject to specific parameters, this amendment would enable the supply of drinking water contaminated with cyanobacteria and the microcystins they produce, the latter being classified by the IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) as a class 2 b carcinogenic elements.

Given that:

— the high toxic, epigenetic and oncogenic potential of certain types of microcystin present in water, as well as their changeable and unpredictable responses to different climatic and environmental conditions, have been scientifically documented and present a concrete risk to human health;

— Italy lacks an effective national surveillance and management system for water containing such critical hazards and therefore safe drinking water cannot yet be guaranteed in many Italian regions;

— the addition to Legislative Decree 31/2001 of new parametric values for clearly carcinogenic substances would make it impossible for the aforementioned Decree and Directive 98/83/EC, adopted by the said Decree, to safeguard public health;

Can the Commission state how it intends to act concerning the proposal to amend Legislative Decree 31/2001 presented by the Italian Government (notification no. 2012/0534/I- C50, 'Draft legislative decree for the addition to Annex I, part B of Legislative Decree No 31 of 2 February 2001 of the "microcystin-LR" parameter and the relative parametric value')?

Question for written answer P-011528/12
to the Commission
Rita Borsellino (S&D)
(18 December 2012)

Subject: Decree on drinking water quality standards

Interministerial Decree No 2012/0534/I — C50A amending Legislative Decree No 31/2001 on the quality of water intended for human consumption is currently being considered by the Commission (DG ENTR). This interministerial decree would make it possible to declare as suitable for human consumption water drawn from bodies of water contaminated with toxic and carcinogenic substances, such as cyanobacteria and their microcystins.

Legislative Decree No 31/2001, implementing Directive 98/83/EC, can be amended only in order to introduce more stringent criteria, but not laxer criteria, as would be the case here.

The adoption of this decree would create a specific, well-documented risk to human health, in blatant disregard of the precautionary principle.

The International Society of Doctors for the Environment — Italy (ISDE) has forwarded to the official responsible for monitoring the application of Directive 98/34/EC at the Commission a document setting out a range of observations in support of this call to reject the decree.

Does the Commission not take the view that it should intervene in order to determine whether EC law is being breached and, if necessary, call on the Italian authorities to withdraw the decree?

Question for written answer E-011570/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 December 2012)

Subject: Amendments to Legislative Decree 31/2001 concerning drinking water requirements

The draft inter-ministerial decree which is seeking to make some changes to Legislative Decree 31/2001 concerning drinking water requirements (No 2012/0534/I — C50A, entitled 'Draft Inter-Ministerial Decree for the introduction, in Annex I, part B to Legislative Decree No 31 of 2 February 2001, of the parameter "Microcystin-LR" and its relevant parameter value') may be in breach of EU legislation, with specific reference to Council Directive 98/83/EC of 3 November 1998 on the quality of water intended for human consumption, which Decree 31/2001 incorporates into Italian law.

This amendment has been made against the scientific opinion of the Italian Association of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE) and specialists from the Institute of Health, amongst others, and runs counter to the precautionary principle. In their view, these changes, if approved, would allow (albeit in accordance with certain parameter values) water to be supplied for human use even when that water is contaminated by cyanobacteria and their microcystins, which are classified by the IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) as Class 2B carcinogens.

On 20 November 2012, the ISDE sent documentation and specific evidence to the people responsible at the Commission with regard to Directive 98/34/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 June 1998 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards.

In the light of the above, will the Commission reject the proposed changes to Legislative Decree 31/2001 in relation to the draft inter-ministerial decree (2012/0534/I — C50A) and will it ensure that any amendments made during the transposition of Directive 98/83/EC on water quality aim solely to ensure higher quality levels?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

In its reply to Question E-10723/12, the Commission clarified the procedures related to the notification process and its implications under the Drinking Water Directive (DWD) ([1]).

The Italian authorities have notified the Commission of the proposed Interministerial Decree No 2012/0534/I-C50A amending Decree 31/2001 to the Commission. The Commission has now examined this notification and found no evidence of any infringement to EC law.

The value proposed in the notification for the parameter 'Microcystin-LR' (1.0 µg/l) is in line with the WHO provisional guideline values, on which the DWD standards are generally based (Recital 16).

([1]) Directive 98/83/EC, OJ L 330, 5.12.1998.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011299/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Scioperi nella fabbrica cinese della Foxconn International Holdings Ltd: possibile violazione delle norme a tutela dei lavoratori

Nei mesi scorsi nella provincia cinese di Guangdong si sono verificati diversi scioperi nella fabbrica della Foxconn, l'azienda alla quale la Apple ha affidato la produzione di alcuni dei pezzi più delicati del noto prodotto Iphone5. I circa 4.000 operai in sciopero lamentano di non essere in grado di rispettare i rigidi controlli di qualità imposti dalla casa madre Apple, senza avere prima effettuato un periodo di addestramento adeguato. Nei nuovi apparecchi Iphone5 è stata infatti rilevata un'imprecisione macroscopica delle nuove mappe stradali e geografiche oltre ad altri problemi tecnici.

Ma il fatto ancor più grave sono le condizioni di lavoro che gli operai della Foxconn hanno denunciato. Infatti, nel 2010 tale azienda è salita alla ribalta a causa dei diciotto dipendenti che si sono tolti la vita per le dure condizioni di lavoro e dei turni massacranti, il che le ha fatto acquisire il soprannome di «fabbrica di suicidi».

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione suesposta;

2. come intende far rispettare il protocollo relativo alla Convenzione OIL sulla sicurezza e la salute dei lavoratori e quella sul riposo settimanale negli stabilimenti industriali;

3. quali sono i vincoli all'accordo di cooperazione economica e commerciale tra l'UE e Cina?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza delle denunce contro le pessime condizioni di lavoro nella fabbrica della Foxconn a Taiyuan (nella provincia dello Shanxi), che hanno provocato proteste e suicidi. In seguito a questi ultimi avvenimenti Foxconn ha concesso di recente una riduzione dei turni di lavoro, un salario minimo e un miglioramento della rappresentanza del personale.

La Commissione ha formalizzato la propria strategia in materia di RSI ([1]) in una comunicazione del 2011 ([2]) che esorta al massimo rispetto delle linee direttrici e dei principi riconosciuti a livello internazionale in materia di responsabilità sociale delle imprese, tra cui figurano la dichiarazione tripartita di principi sulle imprese multinazionali e la politica sociale dell'OIL ([3]), gli orientamenti dell'OCSE ([4]) sulle imprese multinazionali e i principi guida delle Nazioni Unite sulle imprese e sui diritti umani.

I punti di contatto nazionali, istituiti dai governi che aderiscono agli orientamenti dell'OCSE, dovrebbero indagare sui casi presunti di mancato rispetto di tali linee direttrici e cercare di mediare tra le parti interessate.

Inoltre, l'UE si sta adoperando per proseguire l'attuazione dei principi guida delle Nazioni Unite sulle imprese e sui diritti umani. Le misure adottate prevedono anche l'elaborazione di orientamenti in materia di diritti umani per le imprese del settore delle TIC ([5])/telecomunicazioni, che dovrebbero essere pubblicati nel primo semestre del 2013.

([1]) RSI = responsabilità sociale delle imprese.
([2]) COM(2011)681 definitivo.
([3]) OIL = Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro.
([4]) OCSE = Organizzazione per la cooperazione e lo sviluppo economico.
([5]) TIC = Tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione.

Infine, la Commissione si impegna a promuovere condizioni di lavoro dignitose nell'ambito delle relazioni bilaterali e regionali con i suoi partner, nonché a livello multilaterale nei consessi internazionali pertinenti, in particolare con l'OIL che è l'organo di riferimento per la definizione e la sorveglianza delle norme internazionali sul lavoro. L'azione svolta dall'UE per promuovere condizioni di lavoro dignitose in tutto il mondo rientra nel suo impegno volto a rafforzare la dimensione sociale della globalizzazione, sia all'interno che all'esterno dell'Unione. Essa è incoraggiata dal rafforzamento reciproco delle politiche economiche, occupazionali, sociali e ambientali, in linea con la strategia UE 2020 per una crescita intelligente, sostenibile e inclusiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011299/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Strikes in the Chinese factory of Foxconn International Holdings Ltd: possible violation of the laws protecting workers

Over the last few months, several strikes have taken place at the Foxconn factory in the Chinese province of Guangdong. Foxconn has been contracted by Apple to produce some of the most delicate parts of the famous iPhone 5. The 4 000 or so workers on strike are protesting that they are unable to meet the strict quality controls imposed by the parent company, Apple, without first undergoing a suitable training period. Along with other technical problems, gross inaccuracies have in fact been found in the new street and geographical maps on the new iPhone 5 devices.

However, the working conditions revealed by the Foxconn workers are an even more serious concern. In 2010, the same company rose to prominence after eighteen employees took their lives owing to the harsh working conditions and exhausting shifts, which earned it the nickname of 'the suicide factory'.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the abovementioned situation?

2. How it intends to ensure that the protocol relating to the ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention and Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention is adhered to?

3. What obligations are contained in the Agreement for Commercial and Economic Cooperation between the European Union and China?

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

The HR/VP is aware of allegations of harsh working conditions in the Foxconn Factory in Taiyuan (Shanxi province), and recent protests and suicides in response, in reaction of which, Foxconn has recently agreed to reduce hours, protect pay and improve staff representation.

The Commission has a policy on CSR ([1]) which the Commission formalised in a communication in 2011 ([2]). This calls for the utmost respect for internationally recognised CSR guidelines and principles, including the ILO ([3]) Tri-Partite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, the OECD ([4]) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

National Contact Points, established by Governments that adhere to the OECD Guidelines, should investigate allegations of non-respect of the Guidelines and seek to mediate between concerned parties.

Furthermore, the EU is taking steps to further implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This includes the development of human rights guidance for ICT ([5])/telecommunications companies, which is due to be published in the first half of 2013.

Finally, the Commission is committed to promoting decent work in bilateral and regional relations with its partners, and within the relevant international fora at multilateral level, notably the ILO as the key body for setting and monitoring international labour standards. The EU contribution to decent work throughout the world is part of its efforts to strengthen the social dimension of globalisation, both in the EU and abroad. It is driven by mutually reinforcing economic, employment, social and environmental policies, in line with the EU 2020 strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth.

([1]) CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility.
([2]) COM(2011) 681 final.
([3]) ILO = International Labour Organisation.
([4]) OECD = Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
([5]) ICT = Information and Communications Technology.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011300/12
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Accesso negato alla nave Grimaldi in Tunisia

Lo scorso 6 novembre, il Ministero dei trasporti e l'Office de la marine marchande et des ports (OMMP) della Tunisia hanno autorizzato il Gruppo Grimaldi e la odierna ricorrente Atlantica a prestare il servizio di trasporto ro/ro dall'Italia (Genova, Livorno, Palermo) al porto di La Goulette (Tunisi) consentendo con ciò al Gruppo Grimaldi di accedere al mercato dell'autostrada del mare Genova-Tunisi secondo quanto previsto dalle vigenti norme europee.

In data 23 novembre 2012, l'ufficio di Tunisi della Atlantica ha ricevuto una comunicazione da parte dell'OMMP che negava alla nave Eurocargo Bari l'accesso al porto di La Goulette per problemi di congestione nel porto. Nonostante siano passati 10 giorni, l'OMMP continua inspiegabilmente a negare l'accesso lasciando così la nave in rada e arrecando un ingente danno.

Dall'accertamento effettuato anche con la presenza di diplomatici italiani, emerge che le autorità tunisine impediscono l'accesso del Gruppo Grimaldi al mercato della linea Genova-Tunisi per sostenere la compagnia marittima nazionale (Cotunav) e che quindi abusano della loro posizione dominante attraverso il diritto esclusivo sulla linea/mercato Genova-Tunisi.

1. Considerato che dal 1° gennaio 2008 la Tunisia è entrata nella zona di libero scambio con l'Europa, dopo un periodo transitorio di dodici anni iniziato nel 1995 con la firma dell'accordo di associazione tra Tunisia e Unione europea, ritiene la Commissione che con tale comportamento siano state infrante le norme che regolano i rapporti commerciali tra UE e Tunisia?

2. Se sì, quali azioni intende intraprendere per far sì che sia assicurato il rispetto delle norme vigenti, inclusa la legislazione del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea in materia di concorrenza (articoli 101 e 102)?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente delle difficoltà incontrate dalla compagnia in questione.

L'accordo di associazione UE-Tunisia non comprende una base giuridica per affrontare una simile situazione. Pertanto, in assenza di mezzi giuridici, la Commissione continua a trattare tali questioni, ove possibile, nell'ambito dei contatti e degli incontri bilaterali.

Inoltre, gli eventuali futuri negoziati in merito a una Zona di libero scambio globale e approfondito svilupperanno disposizioni per la liberalizzazione degli scambi di servizi con una sostanziale copertura settoriale. Si potranno sviluppare disposizioni normative specifiche per determinati settori dei servizi, in particolare quello dei trasporti marittimi internazionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011300/12
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Grimaldi vessel refused access in Tunisia

On 6 November this year, the Tunisian Ministry of Transport and the country's Merchant Navy and Ports Authority (OMMP) authorised the Grimaldi Group and this claimant, Atlantica, to provide a RORO transport service from Italy (Genoa, Livorno, Palermo) to the port of La Goulette (Tunis), thus allowing the Grimaldi Group access to the Genoa-Tunis Motorway of the Sea market in accordance with the provisions of current European legislation.

On 23 November 2012, the Tunis office of Atlantica received notification from the OMMP denying the Eurocargo Bari vessel access to the port of La Goulette owing to congestion problems inside the port. 10 days have passed since then but the OMMP is inexplicably continuing to refuse access, thus leaving the vessel in the roadsteads and causing huge losses.

An investigation carried out in the presence of Italian diplomats has revealed that the Tunisian authorities are preventing the Grimaldi Group from accessing the market for the Genoa-Tunis route in order to support the national shipping line (Cotunav) and thus abusing their dominant position through the exclusive right to the Genoa-Tunis market.

1. Considering that, on 1 January 2008, Tunisia entered the free trade zone with Europe, after a transitional period of twelve years which began in 1995 with the signature of the association agreement between Tunisia and the European Union, does the Commission judge that such behaviour marks an infringement of the regulations which govern the trade relationship between the EU and Tunisia?

2. If so, which measures does it intend to take to ensure that the prevailing laws, including the terms of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union regarding competition (Articles 101 and 102) are adhered to?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the difficulties faced by the company in question.

The EU-Tunisia Association Agreement does not include a legal basis in order to tackle such a situation. Thus, due to the absence of legal means, the Commission continues to address the issues whenever possible during bilateral contacts and meetings.

Furthermore, any future negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area would develop provisions on liberalisation of trade in services with a substantial sectoral coverage. Specific regulatory provisions may be developed for selected services sectors in particular in the area of international maritime transport services.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011301/12
ao Conselho
Edite Estrela (S&D), Vital Moreira (S&D), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), Elisa Ferreira (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Luís Paulo Alves (S&D) e Ana Gomes (S&D)
(11 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira

— Considerando que, na reunião do Eurogrupo de 26 de novembro de 2012, foi decidido conceder condições mais flexíveis à Grécia para cumprir o programa de ajustamento económico;

— Considerando as declarações à imprensa de 26 de novembro do Presidente do Eurogrupo, Jean-Claude Juncker, em relação à Grécia, segundo as quais «tomámos a decisão há meses, ou mesmo há mais de um ano, de que temos que aplicar as mesmas regras aos países do programa»;

— Considerando que, na sequência destas declarações, o Ministro das Finanças português, Vítor Gaspar, afirmou, em 27 de novembro, que «Portugal e a Irlanda, países do programa, serão, de acordo com o princípio de igualdade de tratamento adotado na cimeira da área do euro, em julho de 2011, beneficiados pelas condições abertas no quadro do Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira»;

— Considerando que, na última reunião do Eurogrupo, o Presidente Jean-Claude Juncker rejeitou, em 3 de dezembro, a possibilidade de tratamento equivalente ao da Grécia para Portugal e para a Irlanda;

— Considerando que o Ministro da Finanças português, Vítor Gaspar, veio de imediato contrariar, na mesma data e de forma pouco clara, o que antes afirmara, declarando que «a simplificação excessiva de assuntos complexos conduz, inevitavelmente, a mal-entendidos, que, infelizmente, tendem a persistir, ao ponto de serem considerados verdades demonstradas»;

— Considerando que as condições económicas e sociais em Portugal se degradam dia após dia em consequência das medidas de austeridade, o que se comprova, quer pela subida da taxa de desemprego (de 13,7 % para 16,3 % no período homólogo de 2012), quer pela contração da economia, que, de acordo com as previsões da OCDE, atingirá 1,8 % em 2013, quase o dobro do que o governo e a «troika» esperam (1 %);

Perguntamos ao Conselho:

— Tendo o Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira como objetivo a salvaguarda da estabilidade financeira da zona euro através da assistência financeira temporária aos seus Estados-Membros, poderá Portugal beneficiar das novas condições estabelecidas para a Grécia? No caso de a resposta ser negativa, qual a razão?

Resposta
(15 de abril de 2013)

A assistência financeira a Portugal é concedida através do Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilização Financeira (MEEF) e do Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira (FEEF).

Enquanto que o MEEF foi estabelecido pelo Regulamento (UE) n.° 407/2010 do Conselho, de 11 de maio de 2010, que cria um mecanismo europeu de estabilização financeira ([1]), o FEEF é uma sociedade de responsabilidade limitada, criada pelos Estados-Membros da área do euro, fora da alçada da UE.

No que diz respeito ao MEEF, o Conselho facilitou as condições de concessão de empréstimos a Portugal em 11 de outubro de 2011 tendo adotado a Decisão de Execução que altera a Decisão de Execução 2011/344/UE relativa à concessão de assistência financeira da União a Portugal ([2]). Em 5 de março de 2013, os Ministros das Finanças dos Estados-Membros da UE debateram a questão de saber se estariam prontos, em princípio, a ponderar um ajustamento dos prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos do FEEF e do MEEF a Portugal para suavizar o perfil de reembolso da dívida do país. Os Ministros acordaram em solicitar à Troika que apresentasse uma proposta com a melhor opção possível para Portugal no que diz respeito aos empréstimos do MEEF.

([1]) JO L 118 de 12.5.2010, p. 1.
([2]) JO L 269 de 14.10.2011, p. 32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011301/12
to the Council
Edite Estrela (S&D), Vital Moreira (S&D), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), Elisa Ferreira (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Luís Paulo Alves (S&D) and Ana Gomes (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: European Financial Stability Fund

At the Eurogroup meeting of 26 November 2012, it was decided that Greece would be granted more flexible terms of compliance with the economic adjustment programme.

At a press conference on 26 November 2012, the Eurogroup President, Jean-Claude Juncker said in relation to Greece that it had been decided months earlier, over a year ago, that the same rules had to be applied to the countries in the programme.

Following these declarations, the Portuguese Finance Minister, Vítor Gaspar, said on 27 November that 'Portugal and Ireland, which both belong to the programme, will be able to benefit from the conditions made available within the framework of the European Financial Stability Mechanism, in line with the principle of equal treatment adopted by the euro area summit in July 2011'.

At the latest Eurogroup meeting on 3 December, its President Jean-Claude Juncker rejected the possibility of giving Portugal and Ireland equivalent treatment to Greece.

On the same day, the Portuguese Finance Minister, Vítor Gaspar, immediately contradicted his previous statements, rather unclearly, by saying that 'oversimplification of complex issues inevitably leads to misunderstandings, which unfortunately tend to persist, to the point of being considered established truths'.

Economic and social conditions in Portugal are deteriorating on a daily basis as a result of the austerity measures, as is borne out by the rising unemployment rate (from 13.7% to 16.3% during the same period in 2012) and economic recession, which the OECD estimates will reach 1.8% in 2013, almost twice the figure hoped for by the Portuguese Government and the Troika (1%)

Can the Council answer the following:

— In view of the fact that the aim of the European Financial Stability Fund is to safeguard the financial stability of the euro area by providing temporary financial aid to its Member States, will Portugal be able to benefit from the new conditions set for Greece? If not, why not?

Reply
(15 April 2013)

Financial assistance to Portugal is provided by the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM) and the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF).

While the EFSM was established by Council Regulation (EU) No 407/2010 of 11 May 2010 establishing a European financial stabilisation mechanism ([1]), EFSF is a limited liability company, established by the euro area Member States, outside the remit of the EU.

As regards the EFSM, the Council eased lending conditions regarding loans to Portugal on 11 October 2011 by adopting the Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision 2011/344/EU on granting Union financial assistance to Portugal ([2]). On 5 March 2013, Finance Ministers of the EU Member States discussed whether they would be ready in principle to consider an adjustment of the maturities on the EFSF and EFSM loans to Portugal in order to smooth the debt redemption profile of the country. Ministers agreed to ask the Troika to come forward with a proposal for their best possible option for Portugal for EFSM loans.

([1]) OJ L 118, 12.5.2010, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 269, 14.10.2011, p. 32.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011302/12
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D), Vital Moreira (S&D), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), Elisa Ferreira (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Luís Paulo Alves (S&D) e Ana Gomes (S&D)
(11 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira

— Considerando que, na reunião do Eurogrupo de 26 de novembro de 2012, foi decidido conceder condições mais flexíveis à Grécia para cumprir o programa de ajustamento económico;

— Considerando as declarações à imprensa de 26 de novembro do Presidente do Eurogrupo, Jean-Claude Juncker, em relação à Grécia, segundo as quais «tomámos a decisão há meses, ou mesmo há mais de um ano, de que temos que aplicar as mesmas regras aos países do programa»;

— Considerando que, na sequência destas declarações, o Ministro das Finanças português, Vítor Gaspar, afirmou, em 27 de novembro, que «Portugal e a Irlanda, países do programa, serão, de acordo com o princípio de igualdade de tratamento adotado na cimeira da área do euro, em julho de 2011, beneficiados pelas condições abertas no quadro do Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira»;

— Considerando que, na última reunião do Eurogrupo, o Presidente Jean-Claude Juncker rejeitou, em 3 de dezembro, a possibilidade de tratamento equivalente ao da Grécia para Portugal e para a Irlanda;

— Considerando que o Ministro da Finanças português, Vítor Gaspar, veio de imediato contrariar, na mesma data e de forma pouco clara, o que antes afirmara, declarando que «a simplificação excessiva de assuntos complexos conduz, inevitavelmente, a mal-entendidos, que, infelizmente, tendem a persistir, ao ponto de serem considerados verdades demonstradas»;

— Considerando que as condições económicas e sociais em Portugal se degradam dia após dia em consequência das medidas de austeridade, o que se comprova, quer pela subida da taxa de desemprego (de 13,7 % para 16,3 % no período homólogo de 2012), quer pela contração da economia, que, de acordo com as previsões da OCDE, atingirá 1,8 % em 2013, quase o dobro do que o governo e a «troika» esperam (1 %);

Perguntamos à Comissão:

— Serão as condições de que passou a beneficiar a Grécia na utilização do Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira extensíveis a Portugal? No caso de a resposta ser negativa, qual a razão?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(24 de janeiro de 2013)

Na sequência da decisão do Eurogrupo tomada em 13 de dezembro de 2012, a Grécia irá pagar juros mais baixos sobre os empréstimos concedidos ao abrigo do mecanismo de concessão de empréstimos à Grécia, um acordo bilateral entre a Grécia e outros Estados-Membros da zona euro, uma vez que a margem aplicada a estes empréstimos relativamente à taxa Euribor, foi reduzida de 150 para 50 pontos de base. Não existe um mecanismo semelhante para Portugal.

As taxas de juro do Fundo Europeu de Estabilidade Financeira (FEEF) permanecerão inalteradas para a Grécia. Tanto a Grécia como Portugal (assim como a Irlanda), pagam ao FEEF uma taxa de juro igual à taxa média anual a que o FEEF contrai empréstimos no mercado. No caso de Portugal, esta taxa encontra-se atualmente ligeiramente acima dos 3 %.

Os Estados-Membros da zona euro decidiram igualmente adiar 10 anos o pagamento dos juros sobre os empréstimos concedidos pelo EFSF e alargar os prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos do EFSF concedidos à Grécia. O adiamento no pagamento dos juros implica que, durante a presente década, a carga de juros será menor, no entanto esta carga será mais pesada durante a década seguinte; trata-se sobretudo de uma transferência temporária dos custos de financiamento e a Grécia terá de pagar juros sobre este diferimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011302/12
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D), Vital Moreira (S&D), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), Elisa Ferreira (S&D), António Fernando Correia de Campos (S&D), Luís Paulo Alves (S&D) and Ana Gomes (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: European Financial Stability Fund

At the Eurogroup meeting of 26 November 2012, it was decided that Greece would be granted more flexible terms of compliance with the economic adjustment programme.

At a press conference on 26 November 2012, the Eurogroup President, Jean-Claude Juncker said in relation to Greece that it had been decided months earlier, over a year ago, that the same rules had to be applied to the countries in the programme.

Following these declarations, the Portuguese Finance Minister, Vítor Gaspar, said on 27 November that 'Portugal and Ireland, which both belong to the programme, will be able to benefit from the conditions made available within the framework of the European Financial Stability Mechanism, in line with the principle of equal treatment adopted by the euro area summit in July 2011'.

At the latest Eurogroup meeting on 3 December, its President Jean-Claude Juncker rejected the possibility of giving Portugal and Ireland equivalent treatment to Greece.

On the same day, the Portuguese Finance Minister, Vítor Gaspar, immediately contradicted his previous statements, rather unclearly, by saying that 'oversimplification of complex issues inevitably leads to misunderstandings, which unfortunately tend to persist, to the point of being considered established truths'.

Economic and social conditions in Portugal are deteriorating on a daily basis as a result of the austerity measures, as is borne out by the rising unemployment rate (from 13.7% to 16.3% during the same period in 2012) and economic recession, which the OECD estimates will reach 1.8% in 2013, almost twice the figure hoped for by the Portuguese Government and the Troika (1%).

Can the Commission say whether Portugal will be able to benefit from the same conditions applied to Greece when it comes to using the European Financial Stability Fund? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2013)

Following the decision of the Eurogroup on 13 December 2012, Greece will pay lower interest charges on loans granted under the Greek Loan Facility, a bilateral agreement between Greece and other Euro Area Member States, since the margin on these loans, on top of the Euribor interest rate, has been reduced from 150 bps to 50bps. There is no similar facility for Portugal.

European Financial Stability Fund (EFSF) interest rates will remain unchanged for Greece. Both Greece and Portugal (like Ireland) pay interest rate charges to the EFSF equal to the annual average interest rate at which the EFSF borrows in the market. For Portugal, this rate is currently slightly above 3%.

Euro Area Member States also decided to postpone interest payments by 10 years on EFSF loans and to extend the maturities of EFSF loans to Greece. The postponement of interest payments implies a lighter interest burden for Greece during this decade but heavier one in the next decade; it is mainly a temporary shift in financing cost and Greece will have to pay interest charges on its deferred interest payments.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011303/12
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Regolamento (UE) n. 432/2012: periodo transitorio di sei mesi

Il regolamento (UE) n. 432/2012 della Commissione, con il quale sono stati autorizzate 222 dichiarazioni sulla salute applicabili agli alimenti (tra le circa 4000 domande inoltrate alla Commissione, già preselezionate rispetto alle 44mila iniziali), ha previsto un periodo transitorio di sei mesi.

Gli operatori del settore hanno dovuto affrontare le nuove regole in condizioni di assoluta emergenza, senza neppure il tempo di programmare la revisione di etichette e confezioni né di gestire le loro scorte.

Il paradosso è ora quello della ipotetica messa al bando, distruzione e spreco di alimenti sani e sicuri, confezionati nel rispetto delle regole previgenti, con grave e ingiustificato danno all'intera filiera alimentare in un periodo non proprio roseo, tra l'altro, per l'economia della zona dell'euro.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione dare un'eventuale valutazione in merito all'impatto di un periodo transitorio così breve sulle imprese alimentari europee, che nella stragrande maggioranza sono piccole e micro-imprese?

Può verificare la compatibilità di una transizione così immediata con i criteri introdotti dal regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 e in generale con il principio del legittimo affidamento,

Può inoltre far conoscere come abbia previsto di limitare le gravi conseguenze socio-economiche che le imprese e i loro lavoratori rischiano di subire in relazione a prodotti legittimamente etichettati nel rispetto delle norme coeve e tuttora presenti sul mercato?

Può infine precisare come intende limitare l'eventuale spreco di alimenti commestibili che risulterebbe motivato solo da una repentina riforma delle norme in materia di informazione commerciale?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(22 gennaio 2013)

Il regolamento (CE) n. 1924/2006 ([1]) relativo alle indicazioni nutrizionali e sulla salute fornite sui prodotti alimentari, adottato dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio, prevede un periodo di transizione di sei mesi per le indicazioni sulle salute non autorizzate.

Le valutazioni delle indicazioni sulle salute, in base alle quali la Commissione adotta la decisione se autorizzare o meno un'indicazione in forza del regolamento (UE) n. 432/2012 relativo alla compilazione di un elenco di indicazioni sulla salute consentite sui prodotti alimentari, diverse da quelle facenti riferimento alla riduzione dei rischi di malattia e allo sviluppo e alla salute dei bambini ([2]), sono state presentate dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare tra l'ottobre 2009 e il luglio 2011. Il progetto di misure della Commissione è stato sottoposto al Comitato permanente per la catena alimentare e la salute degli animali nel novembre 2011. Pertanto gli operatori erano a conoscenza della situazione ben prima dell'adozione del regolamento (UE) n. 432/2012.

Si noti inoltre che le nuove regole riguardano eventuali cambiamenti dell'etichettatura, della presentazione e della pubblicità dei prodotti in questione. I prodotti stessi non sono vietati.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1924/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 dicembre 2006, relativo alle indicazioni nutrizionali e sulla salute fornite sui prodotti alimentari, GU L 404 del 30.12.2006; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:IT:PDF

([2]) GU L 136 del 25.5.2012, pag.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011303/12
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Regulation (EU) No 432/2012: six-month transitional period

Commission Regulation (EU) No 432/2012 authorising 222 out of around 4 000 food health claims forwarded to the Commission (which had in turn been selected from 44 000 initial claims) stipulates a six-month transitional period.

Operators in this sector have had to comply with the new rules without a moment to spare, having no time even to organise the modification of labels and packaging or for stock management.

Paradoxically, this could involve the banning, destruction and waste of safe and healthy foods manufactured in accordance with the rules applicable to date, thereby causing serious and unjustified harm to the entire food chain in a period which is, to say the least, not exactly favourable as far as the euro area economy is concerned.

In view of this, can the Commission assess the impact of such a brief transitional period on European food companies, the overwhelming majority of which are small enterprises or microenterprises?

Can it indicate whether such a brief transitional period is in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 and in general with the principle of legitimate expectation?

Can it indicate what measures it has envisaged to contain the serious social and economic consequences for enterprises and their workforces in respect of products properly labelled in accordance with the rules applicable to date and currently present on the market?

Finally, can it indicate how it intends to limit the possible waste of edible food resulting from nothing more than an unexpected amendment to trade information rules?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 ([1]) on nutrition and health claims made on foods, which was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council foresees a six months transitional period for non-authorised claims.

The evaluations of health claims, on the basis of which the Commission takes a decision whether to authorise a claim or not, which are subject to Regulation (EU) No 432/2012 establishing a list of permitted health claims made on foods, other than those referring to the reduction of disease risk and to children's development and health ([2]), were delivered by the European Food Safety Authority between October 2009 and July 2011. The draft Commission measure was tabled to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health in November 2011. Therefore, operators were aware of the situation well before the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 432/2012.

It should also be noted that the new rules concern possible changes to the labelling, presentation and advertising of products concerned. The products themselves are not banned.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods, OJ L 404, 30.12.2006; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:EN:PDF.

([2]) OJ L 136, 25.5.2012, p.1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011304/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: 18ª Conferencia de las Partes (CP) en Doha: falta total de acuerdo internacional

Del 26 de noviembre al 7 de diciembre de 2012 se celebraron en Doha, Qatar, la 18ª Conferencia de las Partes (CP) de la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático (CMNUCC) y la 8ª Reunión de las Partes del Protocolo de Kioto y, pese al incremento de la preocupación social por un cambio climático que comienza a pasar factura en muchas zonas del planeta, ninguna de estas reuniones ha conllevado la adopción de decisión firme alguna.

De nuevo, tal y como *viene ocurriendo desde la Cumbre de Copenhague de 2009, ante la necesidad de adoptar con urgencia decisiones, se van sucediendo costosísimas cumbres (Cancún, Durban y ahora Doha) donde se reúnen los cuerpos diplomáticos para, básicamente, convocar la siguiente cumbre. En este contexto, resulta sorprendente cómo la Comisaria Connie Hedegaard se regodea en ello, sosteniendo que «we are now on our way to the 2015 global deal»*, como si fuese un éxito el aplazamiento de las decisiones de calado para enfrentarse al cambio climático y fuese esta la fecha original propuesta para alcanzar el acuerdo.

Los «acuerdos» alcanzados en Doha contienen intencionadamente numerosas páginas en blanco en las áreas más importantes por la falta de voluntad política, encontrándose entre estas todas aquellas que afectan más de pleno al desarrollo y la vida en los países más empobrecidos: medidas para la adaptación, desarrollo tecnológico, finanzas, etc.

Sin embargo, en estas cumbres, caracterizadas por el desacuerdo generalizado para llegar a compromisos transcendentales en la lucha *contra el cambio climático, sí surgen acuerdos e iniciativas de negocios para los grandes capitales a costa mayoritariamente de los recursos naturales de los países empobrecidos.*

Así, la reducción del carbono se *ha convertido en un ridículo mercado, actualmente en cuestión incluso por la propia Comisión, que convocó una consulta pública para la «reforma estructural del Sistema Europeo de Comercio de Emisiones», y programas como el REDD o el REDD+ se han convertido en instrumentos para el acaparamiento de tierras. En esta nueva ronda se ha comenzado a hablar, sin mencionar su contribución a la seguridad alimentaria, de la agricultura y de su posible contribución al cambio climático lo que, viendo los antecedentes, puede llevar a convertirla en un nuevo recurso meramente especulativo.*

1. ¿Cuál es el papel que la Comisión pretende dar a la agricultura en las negociaciones sobre el cambio climático?

2. *¿Qué medidas piensa implementar ante la no ratificación del protocolo de Kioto por parte de los países más contaminantes?*

3. ¿Piensa revisar los límites de emisiones para las empresas europeas, *de manera que en Europa se produzcan reducciones de emisiones de acuerdo con el límite de los 2° C que establece la comunidad científica para evitar el «caos climático»?*

Respuesta de la Sra. Hedegaard en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de febrero de 2013)

1. La agricultura puede contribuir a la reducción del volumen de gases de efecto invernadero en la atmósfera y figura incluida en las obligaciones internacionales de reducción de emisiones en todas las actividades económicas asumidas por los países desarrollados. Tal como se acordó en Durban, el Órgano Subsidiario de Asesoramiento Científico y Técnico (OSACT) es el marco en el que se están desarrollando los debates sobre un programa de trabajo para la agricultura. En este contexto, la UE apoya todas las actuaciones orientadas a impulsar la capacidad de la agricultura para contribuir tanto a la mitigación como a la adaptación al cambio climático, fortaleciendo al mismo tiempo su contribución a la seguridad alimentaria, el desarrollo sostenible y la protección del medio ambiente; a este respecto, lamenta que no fuese posible alcanzar en Doha una decisión, dado que cierto número de países en desarrollo deseaban limitar el programa de trabajo de la agricultura a la adaptación a dicho cambio.

2. La UE dio su acuerdo a un segundo periodo de compromiso del Protocolo de Kyoto como parte de un conjunto de medidas que incluyen asimismo unos compromisos y acuerdos de reducción de emisiones contraídos por más de 60 países que no están cubiertos por el segundo periodo de compromiso, entre los que figuran los Estados Unidos, China, Brasil, Sudáfrica e India. Estos compromisos suponen conjuntamente más del 83 % de las emisiones mundiales de gases de efecto invernadero. Además, se acordó alcanzar un nuevo acuerdo aplicable a todos los países para el año 2015, y reducir la diferencia de aspiraciones antes de 2020.

3. La UE ha propuesto, en el caso de los países desarrollados en su conjunto, una reducción de las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero del 80-95 % en 2050 respecto de los niveles de 1990. La «Hoja de ruta hacia una economía hipocarbónica competitiva en 2050» señala que unas reducciones de las emisiones internas del orden del 40 % y el 60 % por debajo de los niveles de 1990 en 2030 y 2040, respectivamente, serían la vía más rentable para alcanzar una economía baja en carbono en 2050. En la actualidad, la Comisión está trabajando en la preparación de un marco de medidas en materia de clima y energía para el periodo que se extiende hasta 2030.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011304/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: 18th Conference of the Parties (COP) in Doha: failure to reach international agreement

The 18th Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 8th Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol took place in Doha, Qatar from 26 November to 7 December 2012. Despite increased social concern regarding climate change, which is beginning to take its toll in many parts of the world, none of these meetings have led to the adoption of a final decision.

Once again, as has been the case since the 2009 Copenhagen Summit, the need to adopt urgent decisions has resulted in very expensive summits (Cancun, Durban and now Doha) where diplomats essentially meet to call the next summit. It is therefore surprising that Commissioner Connie Hedegaard is feeling so smug. She claims that 'we are now on our way to the 2015 global deal', as if postponing important decisions on tackling climate change were an indication of success and this were the original date proposed to reach an agreement.

The 'agreements' reached in Doha deliberately contain numerous blank pages in the most important areas due to a lack of political will. Among them are those areas most profoundly affecting development and life in the poorest countries, inter alia: adaptation measures, technological development and finance.

In these summits, however, which are characterised by widespread disagreement in reaching transcendental commitments to fight climate change, business agreements and initiatives for big capital arise, mainly at the expense of natural resources in poor countries.

Carbon reduction has therefore become a ridiculous market, and is even currently under threat from the Commission itself, which held a public consultation on the 'structural reform of the European Emissions Trading System'. Furthermore, programmes such as REDD and REDD + have become instruments for land grabbing. This new round of talks has seen discussions on agriculture and its potential contribution to climate change, without mentioning its contribution to food security, which, given the background, may turn it into a new purely speculative resource.

1. What role will agriculture play in the Commission's negotiations on climate change?

2. What measures will the Commission implement given that the Kyoto Protocol was not ratified by the most polluting countries?

3. Will it revise emissions limits for European companies so that EU emissions reductions comply with the 2°C limit established by the scientific community to prevent 'climate chaos'?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

1. Agriculture can play a role to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and is included in the international economy-wide emission reduction obligations of developed countries. As agreed in Durban, discussions on a work programme for agriculture are pursued in the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA). In this context, the EU supports work addressing the capacity of agriculture to contribute both to mitigation and to adapting to climate change while enhancing its contribution to food security, sustainable development and environmental protection and regrets that it was not possible to reach a decision in Doha where a number of developing countries wanted to limit the work programme in agriculture to adaptation.

2. The EU agreed to a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol as part of a package which also includes emission reduction commitments pledges by more than 60 countries that are not covered under the second commitment period, including the US, China, Brazil, South Africa and India. Together, these commitments cover more than 83% of global greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, it was agreed to reach a new agreement applicable to all countries by 2015, and to narrow the ambitions gap before 2020.

3. The EU has proposed for developed countries as a group to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels. The Roadmap for moving to an EU low carbon economy by 2050 has indicated that domestic emissions reductions in the order of 40% and 60% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 2040 respectively, would represent a cost-effective pathway to achieve a low carbon economy by 2050. Currently the Commission is working on preparations for a climate and energy framework for the period up to 2030.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011305/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Un detenuto minorenne yemenita in Iraq è in attesa dell'esecuzione della pena capitale

Il 9 dicembre 2012, Human Rights Watch ha riferito che un cittadino yemenita in Iraq è in attesa dell'esecuzione capitale sebbene avesse solo 16 anni al momento di commettere il suo presunto reato. Saleh al-Ahmed Moussa Baidany aveva ancora 16 anni quando è stato preso in custodia dalle forze armate americane in Iraq nel 2009, e questo è confermato dal certificato di nascita presentato dalla famiglia.

Il padre di al-Baidany dice che suo figlio è stato fermato sul confine tra Siria e Iraq nell'agosto 2009. Detenuto per un certo tempo nella prigione di Abu Ghraib, è stato poi trasferito in un carcere nel centro di Baghdad, dove è stato costretto a firmare una confessione mentre aveva gli occhi bendati. Successivamente è stato detenuto in una serie di carceri, e si trova ora in una struttura penitenziaria chiamata Camp Justice, nota anche come al-Sha'ba al-Khamsa, dove sono detenuti i condannati a morte e vengono eseguite le sentenze capitali.

Sia il signor al-Baidany padre sia l'avvocato yemenita che lavora sul caso, Hamid al-Houjaili, hanno informato Human Rights Watch che le autorità irachene hanno mancato di dar loro informazioni sull'attuale luogo di detenzione del giovane, sulle accuse contro di lui o sui dettagli del processo.

L'Iraq ha ratificato sia la convenzione internazionale sui diritti civili e politici (ICCPR) sia la convenzione sui diritti del fanciullo (CRC).

1. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza del caso di Saleh al-Ahmed Moussa Baidany?

2. La Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è disposta a chiedere alle autorità irachene del suo caso, e a chiedere anche la sospensione dell'esecuzione?

3. Quali passi ha effettuato la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in passato per affrontare il problema di esecuzioni capitali di minori in Iraq?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è molto preoccupata per l'aumento delle esecuzioni capitali in Iraq nel corso dell'ultimo anno ed è a conoscenza del caso Al Baidany.

L'Unione europea si è impegnata costantemente sul fronte della pena di morte e ha continuato a sollecitare le autorità irachene, sia pubblicamente che attraverso i canali diplomatici, affinché cessino le esecuzioni e sia introdotta una moratoria, in attesa che la pena capitale venga abolita. L'UE ha altresì attirato l'attenzione delle autorità sui singoli casi, compreso il caso Al Baidany.

L'Unione europea, in particolare tramite la sua delegazione, è impegnata anche in un dialogo più generale sulla questione con le autorità irachene, tra cui il presidente della Corte suprema, i ministri competenti per i diritti umani e la giustizia, nonché il Parlamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011305/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Pending execution for Yemeni juvenile offender in Iraq

On 9 December 2012, Human Rights Watch reported that a Yemeni national in Iraq is due to be executed, even though he was only 16 at the time of committing his alleged offence. Saleh Moussa Ahmed al-Baidany was still 16 when he was taken into custody by US armed forces in Iraq in 2009, and this is confirmed by his birth certificate which was provided by the family.

Mr al-Baidany's father says that his son was apprehended on the Iraqi-Syrian border in August 2009. He was detained for a period of time in Abu Ghraib prison, but was then transferred to a prison in central Baghdad where he was forced to sign a confession while blindfolded. He was subsequently held in a string of prisons, and is now in a prison facility called Camp Justice, also known as al-Sha'ba al-Khamsa, where death row inmates are held and executions are carried out.

Both Mr al-Baidany's father and Hamid al-Houjaili, the Yemeni lawyer working on the case, have informed Human Rights Watch that the Iraqi authorities have failed to provide them with information about the young man's present location, the charges against him or the details of his trial.

Iraq has ratified both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the case of Saleh Moussa Ahmed al-Baidany?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to ask the Iraqi authorities about his case, and in addition seek a stay of execution?

3. What steps has the Vice-President/High Representative taken in the past to address the issue of juvenile executions in Iraq?

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

The HR/VP has been following with concerns the increased use of the death penalty in Iraq during the last year. She is aware of the case of Mr Al Baidany.

The EU has been consistently engaged on the issue of the death penalty and has continued to urge the Iraqi authorities both publicly and through diplomatic channels to cease all executions and introduce a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, pending its abolition. The EU has also raised individual cases with the authorities, including the one of Mr Al Baidany.

The EU, in particular through the EU Delegation, also engages in a more comprehensive dialogue on this issue with the Iraqi authorities, including with the Chief Justice, the Ministers of Human Rights and Justice as well as the Parliament.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011306/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Silvia Costa (S&D), Potito Salatto (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Guido Milana (S&D) e Roberto Gualtieri (S&D)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Schneider Electric S.p.A. di Rieti: possibile violazione delle norme a tutela dei lavoratori e dei livelli occupazionali in caso di dismissioni

Nelle scorse settimane la società multinazionale francese Schneider Electric, che opera nella produzione di interruttori magnetotermici, ha annunciato la volontà di chiudere lo stabilimento di Rieti, licenziando ben 181 lavoratori diretti e mettendo a rischio l'occupazione di tutti coloro che sono impegnati nell'indotto. Già in passato lo stabilimento in questione era stato oggetto di una ristrutturazione che aveva portato alla riduzione del personale da 300 unità alle attuali 181. In Italia il gruppo conta circa 3 000 dipendenti distribuiti in 5 siti produttivi e 8 sedi commerciali (Rieti, Roma, Bastia Umbra, Firenze, Napoli, Pesaro, Castel Maggiore, Pieve di Cento, Cairo Montenotte, Pavia, Stezzano, Milano, Torino) oltre a un centro logistico integrato a Venaria, su un totale nel mondo di circa 110 000 lavoratori.

Eppure, lo stabilimento di Rieti, che è in attività da oltre 30 anni, è quello maggiormente automatizzato e ha standard qualitativi di altissimo livello. Per questo rappresenta un polo fondamentale in termini economici, sociali e occupazionali per tutto il territorio.

Nonostante la già dimostrata disponibilità delle organizzazioni sindacali e quella espressa dalle autorità locali a sostenere la produzione e ricercare soluzioni alternative, dal momento che anche per il 2013 sono previsti volumi produttivi sostenuti, la Schneider Electric nei giorni scorsi è rimasta sulle proprie posizioni, confermando la volontà di chiudere il sito di Rieti con il conseguente licenziamento di tutti i dipendenti. Tutto ciò porterà anche a un ridimensionamento della realtà produttiva di tutta l'area di Rieti, già duramente colpita da altre dismissioni aziendali avvenute negli ultimi anni a causa dell'attuale congiuntura economica sfavorevole.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se la Schneider Electric ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 98/59/CE in materia di licenziamenti collettivi, in particolare l'articolo 2;

2. se sono state rispettate le previsioni della direttiva 94/45/CE, modificata dalla direttiva 2009/38/CE, della direttiva 2002/14/CE relativa alla procedura d'informazione e di consultazione dei lavoratori, della direttiva 2001/23/CE sul mantenimento dei diritti dei lavoratori e della direttiva 2008/94/CE;

3. se la Schneider Electric ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 2006/54/CE che vieta, tra le altre misure, le discriminazioni dirette e indirette tra uomini e donne per quanto riguarda le condizioni di licenziamento;

4. quali azioni possono essere intraprese a tutela e salvaguardia dei posti di lavoro oggi in pericolo;

5. qual è la strategia generale che la Commissione intende adottare nella prossima programmazione finanziaria 2014-2020 per fronteggiare tali situazioni?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2013)

1.-3. La Commissione non è in condizione di accertare i fatti o di stabilire se un'impresa privata abbia o meno ottemperato alle disposizioni nazionali che recepiscono direttive dell'UE. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, compresi i tribunali, assicurare che la legislazione nazionale di recepimento delle direttive UE cui fanno riferimento gli Onorevoli deputati venga applicata in modo corretto e efficace dal datore di lavoro in questione tenuto conto delle circostanze specifiche di ciascun caso.

4. La Commissione sollecita le imprese e tutti gli stakeholder a gestire nei limiti del possibile in modo proattivo e socialmente responsabile le ristrutturazioni. A tal fine, a seguito della pubblicazione del suo Libro verde sulla ristrutturazione e la gestione proattiva del cambiamento, la Commissione esamina ora il modo migliore per incoraggiare e assicurare un'ampia applicazione delle migliori pratiche in tale ambito. Se i licenziamenti presso la Schneider Electric S.p.A. si sono verificati in seguito a trasformazioni rilevanti della struttura del commercio mondiale l'Italia potrebbe chiedere un sostegno al FEG ([1]) tenendo conto dei criteri che presiedono alla sua attivazione.

5. Il Fondo sociale europeo è il principale strumento finanziario dell'UE per sostenere le politiche dell'occupazione portate avanti dagli Stati membri e migliorare le competenze, comprese quelle dei lavoratori licenziati. La proposta della Commissione relativa a un regolamento del FSE per il periodo di programmazione 2014-20 intende continuare a promuovere l'occupazione e a sostenere la mobilità del lavoro, in particolare incoraggiando i lavoratori, le imprese e gli imprenditori ad essere aperti al cambiamento.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n.1927/2006, GU L 48 del 22.2.2008 e regolamento (CE) n. 546/2009 che modifica il regolamento (CE) n. 1927/2006, GU L 167 del 29.6.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011306/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Silvia Costa (S&D), Potito Salatto (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Guido Milana (S&D) and Roberto Gualtieri (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Schneider Electric S.p.A. in Rieti: possible violations of the regulations for protecting workers and employment levels in the event of closures

Over the last few weeks, the French multinational company Schneider Electric, which produces thermal magnetic circuit breakers, has announced its intention to close its plant in Rieti, making some 181 direct employees redundant and jeopardising the employment of all those working in satellite industries. The plant in question has already been restructured in the past, resulting in a reduction in the numbers of employees from 300 to the current 181. In Italy, the group has around 3 000 employees spread across 5 production sites and 8 commercial centres (Rieti, Rome, Bastia Umbra, Florence, Naples, Pesaro, Castel Maggiore, Pieve di Cento, Cairo Montenotte, Pavia, Stezzano, Milan, Turin) as well as an integrated logistics centre at Venaria, out of a worldwide total of approximately 110 000 employees.

Yet the factory in Rieti, which has been operating for over 30 years, is its most automated plant and has an extremely high standard of quality. This makes it a vital centre for the economy, society and employment of the whole region.

Despite the willingness already shown by trade unions and local authorities to sustain production and seek alternative solutions, given that production volumes are forecast to remain constant in 2013, Schneider Electric has stood firm in recent days, confirming its desire to close the Rieti site and lay off all its employees. All this will also lead to a downsizing of the production structure throughout the Rieti area, which has already been hit hard by other redundancies over the last few years because of the current unfavourable short-term economic prospects.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Whether Schneider Electric has complied with the provisions of Directive 98/59/EC on collective redundancies and with Article 2 in particular?

2. Whether the provisions of Directive 94/45/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/38/EC, Directive 2002/14/EC on information and consultation procedures for workers, Directive 2001/23/EC on safeguarding employees' rights and Directive 2008/94/EC have been complied with?

3. Whether Schneider Electric has complied with the provisions of Directive 2006/54/EC, which prohibit, amongst other things, direct and indirect discrimination between men and women in relation to terms of dismissal?

4. What measures are envisaged to protect and safeguard jobs which are under threat;

5. What general strategy the Commission intends to adopt in the 2014-2020 financial programme to tackle such situations?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

1-3. The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with national provisions implementing EU directives. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives referred to by the Honourable Members is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

4. The Commission urges companies and all stakeholders to anticipate restructuring as far as possible and to manage it in a socially responsible way. To that end, following the publication of its Green Paper on restructuring and anticipation of change, the Commission is now considering how best to encourage and ensure wide observance of best practice in that field.

If redundancies in Schneider Electric S.p.A. occurred as a result of changing world trade patterns, Italy could apply for support from the EGF ([1]), taking its intervention criteria into account.

5. The European Social Fund is the EU's main financial instrument for supporting Member States' employment policies and improving skills, including those of people made redundant. The Commission proposal for an ESF Regulation for the 2014-20 programming period seeks to continue promoting employment and supporting labour mobility, in particular through adaptation to change among workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006, OJ L 48 of 22.2.2008 and Regulation (EC) No 546/2009 amending Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006, OJ L 167 of 29.6.2009.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011307/12
til Kommissionen
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(11. december 2012)

Om: Kommissionens godkendelse af bundfradraget ved særlig energiintensiv produktion

Den danske regering har anmodet Europa-Kommissionen om godkendelse af ændring af bundfradraget for NO_x-afgiften efter reglerne for statsstøtte i forbindelse med en betydelig forhøjelse af NO_x-afgiften.

NO_x-afgiftsforhøjelsen blev allerede indført med virkning fra juli 2012, og bundfradraget i NO_x-afgiften har væsentlig betydning for den berørte branches konkurrenceevne og beskæftigelse. Det er derfor væsentligt, at sagsbehandlingen af statsstøtteansøgningen gennemføres hurtigst muligt, idet den berørte branche siden afgiftsforhøjelsen i juli ikke har haft adgang til bundfradraget pga. den manglende statsstøttegodkendelse.

Kan Kommissionen vurdere, hvornår ansøgningen fra den danske regering vil være færdigbehandlet?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Joaquín Almunia
(15. februar 2013)

Kommissionen modtog anmeldelse af ændring af bundfradraget for NO_x-afgiften, hvilket blev godkendt af Kommissionen i forbindelse med sag nr. 327/2008 på grund af en stigning i NO_x-afgiften.

Kommissionen har forståelse for, at det er af stor betydning for den berørte branche med en ændring af bundfradraget for NO_x-afgiften.

Imidlertid har Kommissionen anmodet de danske myndigheder om yderligere oplysninger vedrørende den anmeldte foranstaltning for at kunne afslutte sin vurdering af sagen. De danske myndigheder har arbejdet tæt sammen med Kommissionen gennem hele anmeldelsesproceduren og har leveret nyttige og relevante opklarende oplysninger og yderligere information i rette tid.

Kommissionen vedtager en afgørelse vedrørende anmeldelsen, så snart det står klart, at den anmeldte foranstaltning opfylder alle betingelserne i fællesskabsrammebestemmelserne for statsstøtte til miljøbeskyttelse ([1]).

([1]) EUT C 82 af 1.4.2008, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011307/12
to the Commission
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Commission's approval of tax allowance for specially energy-intensive industries

The Danish Government has applied to the Commission for approval under the rules on state aid of an amendment to the basic allowance for NOx excise duty in connection with a major increase in that duty.

The increase in the NOx excise duty has already come into force, with effect from July 2012, and the basic allowance for the NOx duty is vitally important in the interest of competitiveness and employment in the industry. It is therefore essential that the state aid application is dealt with as quickly as possible, since in the absence of approval of state aid the industry has not had access to the allowance since the duty was increased in July.

Can the Commission estimate when its treatment of the application from the Danish Government will be completed?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The Commission received a notification on the modification of the NOx tax basic allowance, which was approved by the Commission in case N 327/2008, because of the increase in the NOx tax.

The Commission understands the importance of the modification of the NOx tax allowance for the concerned industry.

However, the Commission has asked the Danish authorities for additional information concerning the notified measure in order to complete its assessment of the case. The Danish authorities have closely cooperated with the Commission throughout the notification proceedings and have provided useful and pertinent clarification and additional information in due time.

The Commission will adopt a decision on the notification as soon as it is clear that the notified measure fulfils all the conditions set out in the Community Guidelines on State Aid for Environmental Protection ([1]).

([1]) OJ C 82, 1.4.2008, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011308/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(11 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ελκυστικότητα της ΕΕ για ξένες και εγχώριες επενδύσεις

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Eurostat, έπειτα από σημαντικές πτώσεις το 2010, οι ροές ξένων άμεσων επενδύσεων (foreign direct investment flows) εντός της ΕΕ υπερδιπλασιάστηκαν το 2011. Παράλληλα, όπως και τα προηγούμενα χρόνια, η ΕΕ ήταν το 2011 καθαρός επενδυτής προς τον υπόλοιπο κόσμο, με τις εκροές να ξεπερνούν τις εισροές επενδύσεων κατά 145 δισ. ευρώ. Συγκεκριμένα, το 2011, οι σημαντικότεροι επενδυτές εντός της ΕΕ ήταν οι ΗΠΑ (115 δισ.), η Ελβετία (34 δισ.), τα «offshore» χρηματοπιστωτικά κέντρα (16 δισ.), ο Καναδάς (7 δισ.), το Χονγκ Κονγκ (6 δισ.), η Ιαπωνία κι η Βραζιλία (από 5 δισ.) ([1]).

Παράλληλα όμως, σύμφωνα με την έρευνα της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για τις βιομηχανικές επενδύσεις (Οκτώβριος-Νοέμβριος 2012), στην ευρωζώνη οι managers των επιχειρήσεων σχεδιάζουν να μειώσουν τις πραγματικές επενδύσεις κατά 1% το 2013 σε σχέση με το 2012. Στην ΕΕ ευρύτερα, δεν αναμένεται μεταβολή στις πραγματικές επενδύσεις ([2]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει την προβλεπόμενη στασιμότητα των πραγματικών επενδύσεων και τις επιπτώσεις της στην προσπάθεια των κρατών μελών για οικονομική ανάκαμψη;

2. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για την πορεία των ξένων άμεσων επενδύσεων στην ΕΕ κατά τομείς για το 2012; Πώς σχεδιάζει να ενισχύσει αλλά και να προβάλλει την ελκυστικότητα της ΕΕ ως προορισμό ξένων επενδύσεων για επενδυτές από τρίτες χώρες συγκεκριμένα για την ενιαία αγορά ως σύνολο αλλά και για τομείς με συγκριτικά πλεονεκτήματα;

3. Πώς αξιολογεί την κατανομή των εγχώριων επενδύσεων εντός της ΕΕ; Ποια κράτη μέλη αποτελούν τους σημαντικότερους επενδυτές και ποια τους σημαντικότερους αποδέκτες επενδύσεων; Ποια τα συμπεράσματά της για την άνιση κατανομή μεταξύ κρατών μελών, μεταξύ περιφερειών, μεταξύ τομέων και ποια βήματα έχει αναλάβει για την αντιμετώπιση των ανισορροπιών και ανισοτήτων στους τομείς αυτούς; Θεωρεί ότι πρέπει να υπάρξουν στοχευμένες παρεμβάσεις για τα κράτη του ευρωπαϊκού Νότου;

4. Πώς παρακολουθεί και καταγράφει την εξέλιξη διαφορετικών μορφών ξένων επενδύσεων (π.χ. άμεσες επενδύσεις, όπως εξαγορές και συγχωνεύσεις, επενδύσεις για νέες βιομηχανικές εγκαταστάσεις ή επενδύσεις χαρτοφυλακίου) και τις επιδράσεις τους στην ανάπτυξη των διαφόρων περιοχών της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τακτικά τις τάσεις των άμεσων ξένων επενδύσεων (ΑΞΕ) (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των συγχωνεύσεων και εξαγορών), τις επενδύσεις χαρτοφυλακίου και τις άλλες κινήσεις κεφαλαίων, στο πλαίσιο της συμβολής της στην ετήσια εξέταση των κινήσεων κεφαλαίων και της ελευθερίας των πληρωμών, την οποία διενεργεί η Οικονομική και Δημοσιονομική Επιτροπή (ΟΔΕ). Στις εργασίες αυτές περιλαμβάνονται εμπειρικά στοιχεία για τις ροές κεφαλαίων στην ΕΕ και στο παγκόσμιο πλαίσιο, καθώς και σχετικές αναλύσεις. Το 2012 η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της ([3]) για να παρουσιάσει τα κύρια πορίσματα στο ευρύ κοινό.

Ο αντίκτυπος των επενδύσεων στις οικονομικές προοπτικές των κρατών μελών εξετάζεται στις Ευρωπαϊκές οικονομικές προβλέψεις του φθινοπώρου 2012. Σύμφωνα με τις εν λόγω προβλέψεις, οι επενδύσεις αναμένεται να αυξηθούν κατά 0,1% το 2013 και 2,8% το 2014. Η βελτίωση των συνθηκών πλαισίωσης έχει καθοριστική σημασία για να καταστεί η Ευρώπη ελκυστικότερος τόπος επένδυσης. Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε στις 10 Οκτωβρίου νέα ανακοίνωση με τίτλο «Μια ισχυρότερη ευρωπαϊκή βιομηχανία για την ανάπτυξη και την οικονομική ανάκαμψη» ([4]). Τα μέτρα επικεντρώνονται σε τέσσερις τομείς προς βελτίωση: i) περισσότερες επενδύσεις στη βιομηχανική καινοτομία, ii) πρόσβαση στη χρηματοδότηση, iii) πρόσβαση στις αγορές και iv) δεξιότητες και κατάρτιση.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-12-88_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1291_en.htm
([3]) Το εν λόγω έγγραφο εργασίας και μια διεξοδική μελέτη με τίτλο «Analysis of developments in the fields of direct investment and M&A — 2012 Report» (Ανάλυση των εξελίξεων στους τομείς των άμεσων επενδύσεων και των συγχωνεύσεων και εξαγορών — Έκθεση 2012) δημοσιεύονται στον ιστότοπο της Επιτροπής: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/capital/reports/index_en.htm.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0582:FIN:EL:PDF.

Οι πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις επενδύσεις μπορούν να παρουσιαστούν με διάφορους τρόπους (εισροές/εκροές ή αποθέματα). Το 2011 η πλειονότητα των αποθεμάτων ΑΞΕ με προέλευση από την ΕΕ βρίσκονταν στη Γαλλία, το ΗΒ, την Ισπανία, το Βέλγιο και τις Κάτω Χώρες. Η Γαλλία, το ΗΒ, οι Κάτω Χώρες, η Ιταλία και το Βέλγιο κατείχαν την πλειονότητα των αποθεμάτων ενδοενωσιακών ΑΞΕ στην ΕΕ. Εναπόκειται στους επενδυτές να αποφασίσουν σε ποια κράτη μέλη ή σε ποιον τομέα επιθυμούν να επενδύσουν. Η Επιτροπή δεν προτίθεται να ασχοληθεί με τυχόν ζητήματα ανισορροπιών ή ανισοτήτων, αλλά θα εστιάσει τις εργασίες της στον τρόπο εξασφάλισης της σωστής λειτουργίας της εσωτερικής αγοράς και κατάλληλων συνθηκών πλαισίωσης σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ προς όφελος όλων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011308/12
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Foreign and domestic investment in the EU

According to Eurostat, following a substantial fall in 2010, foreign direct investment flows to the EU more than doubled in 2011. At the same time, as in previous years, the EU was a net investor in 2011, with outflows exceeding inflows by EUR 145 billion, the principal investors in the EU being the United States (EUR 115 billion), Switzerland (EUR 34 billion), offshore financial centres (EUR 16 billion), Canada (EUR 7 billion), Hong Kong (EUR 6 billion), and Japan and Brazil (EUR 5 billion each) ([1]).

At the same time, however, according to Commission findings regarding industrial investment (October to November 2012), business managers in the euro area are contemplating a 1% cut in real investment in 2013 compared with 2012. In the EU as a whole, real investment levels are expected to remain unchanged ([2]).

In view of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of the projected stagnation in real investment figures and the impact thereof on endeavours by the Member States to reinvigorate their economies?

2. Does it have information concerning direct foreign investment trends in the EU by sector for 2012? What measures does it intend to take to consolidate and further promote the ability of the EU to attract investment by third countries, particularly in view of the specific advantages offered by both the single market as a whole and certain individual sectors?

3. What view does it take of the distribution of domestic investment within the EU? Which Member States are the principal investors and which are the principal recipients? What are its findings regarding imbalances and inequalities between Member States, regions and sectors and what action has it taken to remedy them? Does it consider targeted measures to be necessary for the southern European countries?

4. How is it monitoring and recording foreign investment trends (for example direct investment in the form of takeover bids and mergers, investment in new industrial plant or portfolio investments) and their impact on growth in the various EU regions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The Commission regularly monitors FDI trends (incl. M&A), portfolio investment and other capital movements, as part of its contribution to the annual examination made by the Economic and Financial Committee (EFC) on capital movements and freedom of payments. The inputs include empirical evidence on and analyses of capital flows within the EU and in the global context. In 2012 the Commission issued a Staff Working Document ([3]) to share with the broader public the main findings.

The impact of investment on the economic prospects of the Member States is dealt with in the Autumn 2012 European Economic Forecast. According to this forecast investment is projected to grow by 0.1% in 2013 and 2.8% in 2014. Improved framework conditions are crucial to make Europe a more attractive place to invest. Therefore, the Commission adopted a new Industrial Policy Communication on 10 October, 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery' ([4]). The measures are focused on four areas for improvement: (i) more investment in industrial innovation, (ii) access to finance, (iii) access to markets, and (iv) skills and training.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-12-88_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1291_en.htm
([3]) This Staff Working Document and an extensive study 'Analysis of developments in the fields of direct investment and M&A — 2012 Report' is published on the Commission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/capital/reports/index_en.htm
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0582:FIN:EN:PDF.

Information of investments can be presented in various ways (inflows/outflows or in terms of stocks). In 2011 the majority of FDI stocks originating within the EU were located in FR, UK, ES, BE and NL. FR, UK, NL, IT and BE held the majority of EU intra-EU FDI stocks. It is for investors to decide in which Member State or sector they wish to invest. The Commission will not seek to address any imbalances or inequalities but will focus its work on how to ensure a well functioning Internal Market and suitable framework conditions throughout the EU which will favour all.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011310/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Reimbursement of costs resulting from air travel delays

It has come to my attention that some air passengers are in ongoing disputes with Vueling Airlines regarding reimbursement of costs resulting from delayed flights.

The case of TUI v CAA supposedly clarified the law in this area, stating that passengers whose flights arrive more than three hours late may be entitled to compensation for the delay in line with Regulation (EC) No 261/2004, unless the flight was delayed as a result of extraordinary circumstances outside the airline's control.

It appears, however, that Vueling Airlines, and I am sure many others, are not complying with this precedent.

1. In light of this, can the Commission confirm what actions can be taken against airlines who do not comply with the above regulation?

2. In addition, in the case of Vueling Airlines, can the Commission confirm what effect an Iberia takeover could have on any outstanding claims?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

1. The Commission has informed the national enforcement bodies (NEBs) for the regulation of this ruling which it will present at the next NEB meeting to ensure it is integrated into their day-to-day enforcement of this legislation. If an air carrier fails to comply with the requirements of this judgment then it will be for NEBs to take enforcement action. In addition, passengers have the right to seek individual redress through national courts.

2. Iberia's acquisition of the company should have no effect on any outstanding claim under the regulation.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011311/12
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(11 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Eficacitatea Strategiei pentru Europa privind problemele de sănătate legate de alimentație, excesul de greutate și obezitate

În 2007, Comisia a publicat o carte albă în care expune „O Strategie pentru Europa privind problemele de sănătate legate de alimentație, excesul de greutate și obezitate" ([1]).

În cartea albă menționată, se afirmă că „incidența obezității va fi unul dintre indicatorii cheie pentru măsurarea oricărui progres realizat în Uniunea Europeană de către această strategie".

Raportul recent publicat de OCDE sub titlul *Health at the Glance — Europe 2012* („Sănătatea pe scurt: Europa 2012" ([2]) prezintă statistici referitoare la o serie de indicatori din domeniul sănătății, printre care este inclusă și incidența obezității.

Raportul a concluzionat următoarele:

„Incidența excesului de greutate și a obezității din rândul adulților depășește 50% în nu mai puțin decât 18 dintre cele 27 de state membre ale UE. […] Rata obezității s-a dublat în ultimii 20 de ani în numeroase țări europene […]. Creșterea ratei obezității a afectat toate categoriile de populație."

De asemenea, potrivit concluziilor raportului:

„Ratele medii raportate ale excesului de greutate și ale obezității din UE au crescut între 2001-02 și 2009-10 de la 11 % la 13 % în rândul persoanelor cu vârsta de 15 ani. Cele mai importante creșteri care au avut loc de-a lungul acestei perioade de 8 ani au fost înregistrate în Republica Cehă, România și Slovenia, depășind 5% în fiecare dintre țările citate."

1. Ar fi de acord Comisia că incidența tot mai mare a obezității, care se numără printre indicatorii-cheie de sănătate selectați pentru a evalua progresele strategiei din 2007, demonstrează ineficacitatea strategiei respective?

2. Intenționează Comisia să dea curs raportului din 2010 privind punerea în aplicare a strategiei ([3]) efectuând noi analize, inclusiv în încercarea de a stabili cauzele acestei ineficacități?

3. Va propune Comisia o nouă strategie mai ambițioasă în locul celei aflate în vigoare?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(24 ianuarie 2013)

Comisia este conștientă de creșterea nivelurilor obezității și supraponderabilității în Uniunea Europeană. Faptul că aceste tendințe nu au fost încă inversate nu anulează eforturile și inițiativele concrete ale Comisiei, ale statelor membre și ale părților interesate.

Comisia contribuie la combaterea obezității prin promovarea de acțiuni la nivelul UE, astfel cum se prevede în cadrul Strategiei pentru Europa privind problemele de sănătate legate de alimentație, excesul de greutate și obezitate ([4]) — inclusiv prin parteneriate cu statele membre și cu părțile interesate.

În 2005, Comisia a înființat Platforma Uniunii Europene privind alimentația, activitatea fizică și sănătatea. Membrii platformei s-au angajat până în prezent la realizarea a peste 300 de acțiuni concrete acoperind următoarele domenii: informarea consumatorilor, inclusiv etichetarea; educație, inclusiv schimbarea stilului de viață; promovarea activității fizice; marketing și publicitate; compoziția alimentelor (reformulare), disponibilitatea opțiunilor de hrană sănătoasă, dimensiunile porțiilor; acțiuni de sensibilizare și schimburi de informații.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/documents/nutrition_wp_ro.pdf
([2]) http://www.oecd.org/els/healthpoliciesanddata/HealthAtAGlanceEurope2012.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/implementation_report_en.pdf
([4]) COM (2007) 279 final.

Raportul intermediar din 2010 privind strategia concluzionează că perioada 2007-2010 este prea scurtă pentru a se putea observa modificări semnificative ale tendințelor ([5]). Strategia este în prezent evaluată — rezultatele sunt așteptate în primăvara anului 2013 –, iar rezultatele acestei evaluări vor ajuta la definirea unor posibile noi acțiuni.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/implementation_report_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011311/12
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Effectiveness of the 'Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related Health Issues'

In 2007, the Commission published a White Paper in which it set out a 'Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues' ([1]).

The White Paper stated that 'the prevalence of obesity will be one of the key indicators for the measurement of any progress brought about by this strategy in the EU'.

The recently published OECD report entitled 'Health at a Glance: Europe 2012' ([2]) presents statistics for a series of health indicators, including the prevalence of obesity.

The report concludes that:

'The prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults exceeds 50% in no less than 18 of 27 EU member states. […] The rate of obesity has doubled over the past 20 years in many European countries […]. The rise in obesity has affected all population groups.'

and that:

'Average reported rates of overweight and obesity across the EU increased between 2001-02 and 2009-10 from 11% to 13% of 15-year-olds. The largest increases during the eight year period were found in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Romania and Slovenia, all greater than 5%.'

1. Would the Commission agree that the increasing prevalence of obesity — one of the key health indicators chosen to measure the progress of the 2007 strategy — demonstrates the ineffectiveness of that strategy?

2. Does the Commission intend to follow up the 2010 report on the implementation of the strategy ([3]) with any further analysis, including an attempt to identify the reasons for its ineffectiveness?

3. Will the Commission propose a new, more ambitious strategy to replace the current one?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2013)

The Commission is aware of the rising obesity and overweight levels in the European Union. The fact that such trends are not yet reversed does not negate the concrete efforts and initiatives of the Commission, Member States and the stakeholders.

The Commission contributes to addressing obesity by promoting EU action as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health issues ([4]) — including through partnerships with Member States and stakeholders.

In 2005, the Commission established the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. Platform members have so far committed themselves to carrying out over 300 concrete actions covering the following areas: consumer information, including labelling; education, including lifestyle modification; physical activity promotion; marketing and advertising; composition of foods (reformulation), availability of healthy food options, portion sizes; advocacy and information exchange.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/documents/nutrition_wp_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.oecd.org/els/healthpoliciesanddata/HealthAtAGlanceEurope2012.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/implementation_report_en.pdf
([4]) COM(2007)279 final.

The 2010 progress report of the strategy concludes that the period of 2007-2010 is too short to observe significant changes in trends ([5]). The strategy is currently being evaluated — results are expected in Spring 2013 — and the results of this evaluation will help define possible new action.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/implementation_report_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011312/12
a la Comisión
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Dinero de los carteles de la droga mexicanos

Desde 2006, han muerto asesinadas en México casi 100 000 personas en la llamada «guerra del narcotráfico». Las fuentes de ingresos de los carteles incluyen la droga, el contrabando de armas, el tráfico de seres humanos y la extorsión. Se presume que blanquean e invierten este dinero en 52 países de todo el mundo y grandes cantidades terminan llegando a la Unión Europea.

1. ¿Cómo se informa la Comisión de la cantidad de dinero que entra en la Unión Europeaproveniente de los carteles de la droga mexicanos y cómo la evalúa? ¿Qué direccionesgenerales trabajan en este ámbito?

2. ¿Hacia qué sectores fluye este dinero? ¿Qué instrumentos utiliza la Comisión paradesglosar estos datos?

3. ¿Qué tipo de medidas se están tomando o se pretende tomar en el futuro con vistas adetener el flujo de «dinero sucio» hacia la UE?

4. Previendo futuros avances en el marco del Acuerdo Global EU-México y teniendo encuenta el hecho de que varios sectores están abriéndose paulatinamente, ¿ha identificado laComisión qué secciones del Acuerdo Global deberían incluir disposiciones sobresupervisión común, rediseños preventivos, control del flujo de dinero, etc.? ¿Mantiene laComisión algún tipo de contacto con las autoridades mexicanas en este sentido?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión no recopila información sobre la cantidad de dinero de origen ilícito procedente de México (o de cualquier otro tercer país) que entra en la EU. El informe Eurostat 2010 sobre el blanqueo de capitales en la EU contiene estadísticas al respecto, en las que se mide indicadores pertinentes, tales como el número de notificaciones de operaciones sospechosas presentado. Se está elaborando un informe actualizado que se publicará en el primer semestre de 2013. No obstante, estos informes no son tan detallados como requieren Sus Señorías.

La UE cuenta con una rigurosa Directiva sobre el blanqueo de capitales ([1]), que establece las medidas que —una vez incorporada en cada Estado miembro— deben adoptar las entidades financieras para identificar a sus clientes y verificar las razones que motivan la relación u operación comercial y, en su caso, el origen de los fondos. A fin de mejorar esta Directiva, se ha elaborado una propuesta de Cuarta Directiva sobre el blanqueo de capitales, que reforzará las actuaciones que las entidades obligadas deben emprender para adoptar medidas basadas en el riesgo (incluido el riesgo geográfico) con objeto de luchar contra la amenaza que representan el blanqueo de capitales y la financiación del terrorismo.

El Acuerdo Global México-Unión Europea no incluye este tema y, por el momento, no se han iniciado conversaciones específicas entre México y la UE para una ampliación en este sentido. La UE ha iniciado con México un diálogo sobre temas de seguridad y de justicia, uno de cuyos objetivos es promover una cooperación más estrecha entre los dos socios en materia de seguridad. Asimismo, un posible acuerdo entre la Europol y las autoridades mexicanas supondría un avance, pues ayudaría a hacer un mejor seguimiento de los flujos de capitales.

([1]) Directiva 2005/60/CE.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011312/12
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) und Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Geld aus den mexikanischen Drogenkartellen

Seit 2006 wurden annähernd 100 000 Menschen im sogenannten mexikanischen Drogenkrieg getötet. Die Kartelle erzielen ihre Einnahmen aus Drogen, Waffenschmuggel, Menschenhandel und Erpressung. Es wird davon ausgegangen, dass sie dieses Geld waschen und in 52 Ländern der ganzen Welt „investieren"; ein großer Anteil dieses Geldes gelangt in die Europäische Union.

1. Wie erfasst die Kommission einschlägige Informationen und wie bewertet sie die Höhe des Geldes, das aus den mexikanischen Drogenkartellen in die Europäische Union gelangt? Welche Generaldirektionen sind beteiligt?

2. In welche Bereiche gelangt dieses Geld? Welche Instrumente nutzt die Kommission, um die Daten aufzuschlüsseln?

3. Welche Maßnahmen werden eingesetzt oder sollen eingesetzt werden, um diesen Strom „schmutzigen Geldes" in die EU zu stoppen?

4. Hat die Kommission angesichts der künftigen Entwicklung im Hinblick auf das Globalabkommen EU-Mexiko und der Tatsache, dass sich verschiedene Sektoren zunehmend öffnen, festgelegt, welche Teile des Globalabkommens Bestimmungen zu einer gemeinsamen Überwachung, vorsorglichen Sonderregelungen (Carve-outs), der Überwachung der Geldströme usw. enthalten sollten? Steht die Kommission im Hinblick auf diese Frage in Kontakt mit den mexikanischen Behörden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(18. Februar 2013)

Die Kommission erhebt keine Informationen über die Höhe der Gelder, die aus illegalen Quellen in Mexiko (oder anderen Drittländern) stammen und in die EU gelangt sind. Der Eurostat-Bericht 2010 über Geldwäsche in der EU enthielt Daten zur Geldwäsche, darunter zu einschlägigen Indikatoren wie zur Anzahl gemeldeter verdächtiger Transaktionen. Ein aktualisierter Bericht, der zurzeit in Bearbeitung ist, soll in der ersten Jahreshälfte 2013 veröffentlicht werden. Berichte dieser Art enthalten jedoch keine ausführlichen Informationen, wie sie von den Damen und Herren Abgeordneten gewünscht werden.

Mit der Geldwäsche-Richtlinie ([1]) verfügt die EU über ein zuverlässiges Instrument, das die Schritte vorgibt, die die Finanzinstitute nach der Umsetzung der Richtlinie in das Recht der Mitgliedstaaten ergreifen müssen, um die Identität ihrer Kunden, die Basis für die Geschäftsbeziehung/die Zahlungsvorgänge sowie die Herkunft der Mittel festzustellen. Ein Vorschlag für eine vierte Richtlinie zur Bekämpfung der Geldwäsche sieht zusätzliche Verpflichtungen für Institute vor, um ausgehend vom jeweiligen Risiko (einschließlich des mit der geografischen Herkunft verbundenen Risikos) Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Geldwäsche und der Terrorismusfinanzierung zu ergreifen.

Geldwäsche ist nicht Gegenstand des Globalen Abkommens zwischen der EU und Mexiko, und eine Ausweitung des Abkommens kam bisher zwischen der EU und Mexiko konkret nicht zur Sprache. Die EU hat einen Dialog über Fragen der Sicherheit und des Rechts mit Mexiko initiiert. Eines ihrer Ziele ist die Förderung einer engeren Zusammenarbeit in Sicherheitsfragen. Auch wäre der Abschluss eines Abkommens zwischen Europol und den mexikanischen Behörden zu begrüßen, da ein solches Abkommen zu einer besseren Überwachung der Geldströme beitragen könnte.

([1]) Richtlinie 2005/60/EG.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011312/12
komissiolle
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) ja Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11. joulukuuta 2012)

Aihe: Meksikolaisista huumekartelleista peräisin oleva raha

Meksikossa on vuodesta 2006 lähtien kuollut melkein 100 000 ihmistä niin sanotussa huumesodassa. Kartellien tulonlähteitä ovat muun muassa huumeet, aseiden salakuljetus, ihmiskauppa ja kiskonta. Oletetaan, että kartellit pesevät näin saadut rahat ja ”sijoittavat” ne 52 valtioon ympäri maailman ja että suuri osa rahoista päätyy Euroopan unionin alueelle.

1. Miten komissio kerää tietoa meksikolaisista huumekartelleista peräisin olevasta ja Euroopan unionin alueelle pääsevästä rahasta ja miten se arvioi sen määrää? Minkä pääosastojen toimialaan tämä kuuluu?

2. Mille aloille kartelleista peräisin oleva raha virtaa? Mitä välineitä komissio käyttää näiden tietojen käsittelyyn?

3. Mihin toimiin on ryhdytty tai mihin toimiin aiotaan ryhtyä, jotta ”likaisen rahan” virtaaminen EU:n alueelle saataisiin pysäytettyä?

4. Kun otetaan huomioon EU:n ja Meksikon välisen kokonaissopimuksen tuleva kehitys ja monien alojen kasvava avoimuus, onko komissio tunnistanut kokonaissopimuksen kohdat, joiden pitäisi sisältää määräyksiä yhteisestä valvonnasta, toiminnan vakauden ja luotettavuuden turvaamiseksi tehtävistä poikkeuksista, rahavirtausten valvonnasta ja niin edelleen? Onko komissio ollut tästä aiheesta yhteydessä Meksikon viranomaisiin?

Cecilia Malmströmin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(18. helmikuuta 2013)

Komissio ei kerää tietoja EU:hun tuotujen, Meksikosta (tai muista kolmansista maista) peräisin olevien laittomasti hankittujen rahasummien suuruudesta. Eurostatin vuoden 2010 kertomuksessa EU:ssa tapahtuvasta rahanpesusta esitettiin rahanpesua koskevia tilastotietoja, joissa otettiin huomioon asianmukaiset indikaattorit, kuten epäilyttäviä liiketoimia koskevien ilmoitusten määrä. Parhaillaan valmistellaan päivitettyä kertomusta, joka julkaistaan vuoden 2013 ensimmäisellä puoliskolla. Näissä kertomuksissa ei kuitenkaan tarkastella asioita niin yksityiskohtaisesti, että parlamentinjäsenten kysymyksiin voitaisiin vastata tarkemmin.

EU:lla on vahva rahanpesun vastainen direktiivi ([1]), jossa vahvistetaan toimet, jotka rahoituslaitosten on toteutettava jäsenvaltioiden tasolla asiakkaidensa tunnistamiseksi, liikesuhteiden ja -toimien taustojen selvittämiseksi ja tarvittaessa asiakkaiden varojen alkuperän tarkistamiseksi. Direktiivin tehostamiseksi on annettu neljättä rahanpesudirektiiviä koskeva ehdotus, jossa tehostetaan soveltamisvelvollisuuden piiriin kuuluvien yksiköiden toimia riskit (myös maantieteelliset riskit) huomioon ottavien toimenpiteiden toteuttamisessa niiden torjuessa rahanpesun ja terrorismin rahoittamisen uhkaa.

EU:n ja Meksikon välisessä kokonaissopimuksessa ei käsitellä tätä aihetta eikä EU:n ja Meksikon välillä ole vielä aloitettu neuvotteluja sopimuksen päivittämisestä. EU on aloittanut Meksikon kanssa turvallisuus- ja oikeuskysymyksiä koskevan vuoropuhelun, jonka yhtenä tavoitteena on edistää maiden välistä tiiviimpää turvallisuusyhteistyötä. Lisäksi olisi myönteistä, jos Europolin ja Meksikon viranomaisten välillä tehtäisiin sopimus, sillä se voisi helpottaa rahavirtojen seuraamista.

([1]) 2005/60/EY.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011312/12
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE), Satu Hassi (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Money from Mexican drug cartels

Since 2006 almost 100 000 people have been killed in Mexico in the so-called war on drugs. The sources of the cartels' revenues include drugs, the smuggling of weapons, human trafficking and extortion. It is assumed that they launder and 'invest' this money in 52 countries worldwide, with much of this money finding its way to the European Union.

1. How does the Commission collect information on and assess the amount of money from Mexican drug cartels that enters the European Union? Which DGs are involved?

2. Into which sectors does this money flow? What instruments does the Commission use to break the data down?

3. What kinds of measures are being used or are intended for use with a view to stemming this flow of 'dirty money' into the EU?

4. Bearing in mind future developments as regards the EU-Mexico Global Agreement, and with various sectors becoming more open, has the Commission identified the sections of the Global Agreement that should contain provisions on common supervision, prudential carve-outs, money flow monitoring, etc.? Is the Commission in contact with the Mexican authorities on this issue?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Commission does not collect information regarding the amount of money of illicit origin from Mexico (or any other third country) entering the EU. The 2010 Eurostat report on money laundering in the EU provided statistics on money laundering, measuring relevant indicators such as numbers of suspicious transaction reports submitted. An updated report is under preparation and will be published in the first half of 2013. These reports do not, however, go to the level of detail requested by the Honourable Members.

The EU has a robust Anti-Money Laundering Directive ([1]), which sets out the steps that, when implemented at Member State level, must be followed by financial institutions to identify their clients and to take measures to check the reason for the business relationship/transaction and, where appropriate, the source of their funds. This directive is being further enhanced by a proposal for a Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive, which will strengthen the measures that obliged entities have to take in order to have risk-focused (including geographical risk) measures to combat the threat of money laundering and terrorist financing.

The EU-Mexico Global Agreement does not include this topic, and no specific talks have yet started between the EU and Mexico on its upgrade. The EU has initiated a dialogue on security and justice issues with Mexico; one of its objectives is to promote closer security cooperation between the two partners. Furthermore, the eventual conclusion of an agreement between Europol and the Mexican authorities would be a positive development as it could also contribute to better monitoring of money flows.

([1]) 2005/60/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011313/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Contro la commercializzazione del wine-kit

Il regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 mira ad assicurare la qualità e la sicurezza degli alimenti circolanti nel mercato interno, per cui si desume senza ombra di dubbio che la salute dei consumatori sia requisito fondamentale per commercializzare legittimamente un prodotto alimentare in seno all'Unione. Alla luce di ciò, appare evidente che il wine-kit, liberamente acquistabile nel territorio europeo, disattende totalmente i predetti obiettivi. Più in particolare, i produttori di wine-kit pretendono di garantire ai consumatori la preparazione dei tipici vini italiani ottenibili semplicemente miscelando le polveri presenti nella confezione.

Se non si fosse ancora abbastanza sconvolti dall'artificialità del prodotto che mette allegramente al bando il know-how e le relative tempistiche necessarie per l'originale vino prodotto in Italia, ecco che si legge sulla confezione la lista degli ingredienti: trucioli di quercia, lievito, solfiti e additivi vari, nonché l'avvertenza di probabili tracce di crostacei, che sono solamente alcuni degli elementi presenti nelle polveri. Desta molta preoccupazione l'effetto che tale mistura possa avere sulla salute dei consumatori europei. Troppo poco, infatti, si sa dell'incidenza che le sostanze sconosciute presenti nella mistura possano avere sulla salute dei consumatori. Peraltro, i viticoltori resterebbero sconvolti nel riconoscere il proprio marchio a denominazione di origine protetta (D.O.P.) sull'etichetta del wine-kit seguito dalla frase «Just add water! Makes 21 litres» («Basta solo aggiungere acqua! E si ottengono 21 litri»).

Di fatto, tali pratiche violano le prescrizioni in materia di etichettatura stabilite dalla legislazione europea relativamente al settore vitivinicolo.

In ragione di tutto quanto fin qui premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. in che modo ha intenzione di tutelare la salute dei consumatori europei relativamente al commercio del wine-kit;

2. posto che con l'acquisto del kit in oggetto si assicurerebbe ai consumatori una bevanda definita «vino italiano» e considerato che tale agropirateria si fregia dei marchi dei vini a denominazione di origine protetta (D.O.P.) più prestigiosi, come reputa di agire al fine di prevenire qualunque uso illecito dei marchi ed eliminare qualsivoglia rischio in tema di cattiva nonché illegittima pubblicità ai danni degli stessi?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(13 febbraio 2013)

La legislazione unionale dispone che solo gli alimenti sicuri possono essere immessi sul mercato dell'UE. Spetta alle competenti autorità degli Stati membri garantire l'attuazione della legislazione unionale sui prodotti alimentari e verificarne il rispetto da parte degli operatori mediante opportuni controlli. Gli Stati membri sono tenuti a effettuare regolarmente controlli ufficiali e ad adottare le misure necessarie a garantire l'attuazione della disciplina UE sia per i prodotti nazionali che per quelli importati.

La Commissione rammenta che nelle ultime riunioni del comitato di gestione dell'OCM unica le delegazioni degli Stati membri sono state informate del fatto che pratiche quali la produzione o la commercializzazione di wine-kit ottenuti da mosti e additivi vari che recano la dicitura europea DOP/IGP nella presentazione e descrizione dei prodotti violano le norme in materia di etichettatura previste dalla legislazione europea per il settore vitivinicolo.

È stato altresì precisato che questi kit non possono essere commercializzati con la denominazione «vino», poiché non soddisfano i requisiti stabiliti dalla legislazione unionale in ordine alla definizione di «vino».

La Commissione ha chiesto agli Stati membri di adottare le misure necessarie per porre fine alle pratiche che violano le norme per la tutela della salute dei consumatori europei e l'etichettatura dei prodotti. Per la stessa ragione sono anche state richieste indagini sulle vendite via Internet.

I servizi della DG Agricoltura e sviluppo rurale hanno chiesto agli Stati membri interessati di comunicare entro la fine di gennaio 2013 le misure prese dalle rispettive autorità di controllo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011313/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Against the marketing of wine kits

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 seeks to ensure the quality and safety of foodstuffs circulating within the internal market. One can therefore deduce, without a shadow of a doubt, that the health of consumers is a fundamental requirement for the legitimate marketing of a food product within the European Union. In view of this, it seems obvious that the wine kits which can be freely purchased across the European Union display a total disregard for the aforementioned objectives. More specifically, the wine kit producers guarantee that consumers can make typical Italian wines by simply mixing the powders contained in the pack.

If the artificiality of a product which carelessly casts aside the know-how and time required to produce the original wine in Italy were not shocking enough, here is the list of ingredients on the packaging: oak chips, yeast, sulphites and various additives, as well as the warning about the probable traces of shellfish; these are just a few of the elements present in the powders. The effect that such a mixture may have on the health of European consumers is a source of great concern. Indeed, all too little is known about the effects that the unknown substances present in the mixture may have on the health of consumers. Moreover, wine growers would be shocked to recognise their own protected designation of origin (PDO) brand on the label of the wine kit, followed by the phrase 'Just add water! Makes 21 litres'.

These practices are a de facto violation of the legal provisions on labelling set forth in the European legislation governing the wine-growing sector.

On the basis of the above, can the Commission state:

1. How it intends to safeguard the health of European consumers with regard to the sale of these wine kits?

2. Considering that purchasing one of these kits would ensure the consumer a beverage described as 'Italian wine' and in view of the fact that such 'food piracy' comes adorned with the trademarks of the most prestigious protected designation of origin (PDO) wines, what action does it intend to take in order to prevent any illegal use of the trademarks and eliminate any risks in terms of malicious and unlawful advertising causing damage to said wines?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

According to EU legislation, only safe food can be placed on the EU market. The enforcement of the EU food legislation is the responsibility of the competent authorities of the Member States. They shall verify, through the organisation of controls, that EU rules are fulfilled by food business operators. Official controls must be carried out regularly and appropriate measures must be taken to eliminate and ensure enforcement of EC law in relation to both domestic and imported products.

The Commission reminds that the delegations of the Member States were informed during the last meetings of the management committee of the single CMO that practices like producing or marketing wine kits made with musts and various additives bearing on the presentation and the description EU PDO/PGI were in infringement with the rules of labelling laid down in the wine sector by the European legislation.

In addition, it was specified that these kits cannot being marketed under the name 'wine', because these products do not meet the requirements of the definition of wine in the EC law.

The Commission has asked the Members States to take the necessary measures to put an end to the illegal practices as regards the protection of the health of European consumer and the labelling of these products. Investigations about the Internet sales were also required for this reason.

The services of DG Agriculture and Rural development have required the Member States concerned to report by the end of the month of January 2013 on the measures taken by their controlling authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011314/12
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(11 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Batterio Klebsiella pneumoniae

In Italia, soprattutto nelle sale di rianimazione e nei reparti di medicina e chirurgia, ci si ritrova sempre più spesso in situazioni sconfortanti a causa di un batterio, chiamato *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, che vive nell'intestino dei portatori, ma provoca infezioni a livello dei polmoni e delle vie urinarie, da dove può dare origine a gravi setticemie. Da alcuni anni, molte klebsielle hanno imparato a difendersi dalla maggior parte degli antibiotici di uso comune, con una percentuale che è andata costantemente crescendo in più di un terzo dei paesi europei negli ultimi quattro anni, in particolare passando dal 5 al 27 % in Italia.

L'impotenza della medicina si traduce in altissimi tassi di mortalità, che vanno dal 50 al 70 per cento dei casi.

La capacità di resistenza di questo batterio è favorita laddove si fa maggior uso di antibiotici, come in Grecia e nel sud Italia. Secondo Marc Sprenger, direttore del Centro europeo per il controllo delle malattie, stante la crisi economica che stanno attraversando l'Italia e l'Europa, la volontà di risparmiare potrebbe portare, da un lato, a una diminuzione dell'acquisto di farmaci negli ospedali e, dall'altro, indurre le persone a procurarsi di loro iniziativa direttamente l'antibiotico in farmacia, dove spesso è possibile acquistare farmaci generici anche senza ricetta medica. Inoltre, tale situazione mette in evidenza quanto la ricerca medica sia carente in Italia e in Europa.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. considerato che nell'UE, ogni anno, il costo di tutte le infezioni resistenti agli antibiotici, non solo da klebsiella, è di 1,5 miliardi di euro, e che quindi l'apparente risparmio di oggi, con i tagli al personale, potrebbe costare molto di più in un futuro non molto lontano, se intende incoraggiare gli Stati membri a non adottare politiche restrittive e di austerità nel campo medico-sanitario;

2. se nell'ambito del programma Orizzonte 2020, che mira a incoraggiare la ricerca raggruppando tutti i finanziamenti UE nel campo della ricerca e innovazione per il periodo 2014-2020, intende intraprendere azioni volte a stimolare la ricerca medico-sanitaria negli Stati membri?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(13 febbraio 2013)

La gestione dei servizi sanitari e dell'assistenza medica e l'assegnazione delle risorse loro destinate rientrano tra le responsabilità di ciascuno Stato membro.

Nella raccomandazione 2009/C 151/01 del Consiglio sulla sicurezza dei pazienti, comprese la prevenzione e il controllo delle infezioni associate all'assistenza sanitaria ([1]), gli Stati membri si sono impegnati a migliorare la prevenzione e il controllo delle infezioni. Nella sua relazione riguardante l'attuazione di tale raccomandazione ([2]), la Commissione ha descritto i progressi compiuti finora e i settori in cui sono necessari maggiori sforzi. La Commissione continuerà a sostenere gli Stati Membri nell'attuazione della raccomandazione. Nel 2011 la Commissione europea ha inoltre presentato un «Piano d'azione di lotta ai crescenti rischi di resistenza antimicrobica (AMR) » che comprende la prevenzione e il controllo delle infezioni resistenti ai medicinali ([3]).

Nell'ambito dei programmi quadro di ricerca, a partire dal 5° PQ nel 1999 fino all'attuale 7° PQ, la Commissione ha attribuito una notevole priorità alla ricerca sulla resistenza agli antimicrobici mettendo a disposizione circa 600 milioni di EUR. Vi rientrano anche progetti per la lotta contro le infezioni causate dai batteri gram negativi resistenti come la Klebsiella pneumoniae ([4]). Nel 2012 l'Iniziativa in materia di medicinali innovativi, il più grande partenariato pubblico e privato europeo istituito tra la Federazione europea delle industrie e delle associazioni farmaceutiche e la Commissione, ha inoltre avviato un programma di ricerca «New drugs for bad bugs» con una dotazione di bilancio di oltre 350 milioni di EUR.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:151:0001:0006:IT:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0658:FIN:IT:PDF.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_it_pdf.
([4]) http://www.r-gnosis.eu.

La resistenza agli antimicrobici e l'aumento di agenti patogeni resistenti come la klebsiellae restano un'area di ricerca prioritaria anche nell'ambito del programma Orizzonte 2020. Gli Stati membri tra l'altro stanno attualmente elaborando un'iniziativa di programmazione congiunta intitolata «La sfida microbica — una minaccia emergente per la salute umana» ([5]), ([6]).

([5]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/it/ec/126583.pdf
([6]) http://www.ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/download?docId=31943.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011314/12
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Klebsiella pneumoniae bacterium

In Italy, particularly in intensive care units and medical and surgical wards, ever more daunting situations are being experienced as a result of the *Klebsiella pneumoniae* bacterium, which lives in the intestine of its carrier but causes lung and urinary tract infections, which can lead to serious septicaemia. Over the last few years, many *klebsiellae* have learned to defend themselves against most common antibiotics. The percentage of these has been constantly rising in over a third of European Union countries over the last few years, particularly in Italy, where it has grown from 5% to 27%.

The ineffectiveness of medicines has resulted in extremely high mortality rates, with 50-70% of cases being fatal

The resistance of this bacterium is boosted in places where antibiotics are used the most, such as Greece and southern Italy. According to Marc Sprenger, head of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, as a result of the economic crisis affecting Italy and Europe, a desire to save money could lead to a reduction in the amount of drugs purchased by hospitals and push people to purchase antibiotics themselves directly from pharmacies, where it is often possible to purchase generic drugs without a medical prescription. This situation also highlights the failings of medical research in Italy and Europe.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

1. Considering that every year in the EU the cost of all antibiotic resistant infections, including *klebsiella*, is EUR 1.5 billion, and that today's apparent savings, with staff cuts, could cost a lot more in the near future, whether it intends to discourage Member States from adopting restrictive austerity policies in the field of medicine and healthcare?

2. Whether, within the framework of the Horizon 2020 programme, which is seeking to encourage research by pooling all EU funding in the field of research and innovation for the 2014-2020 period, it intends to take measures aimed at stimulating medical and healthcare research in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The management of health services and medical care and the allocation of the resources assigned to them is a Member State responsibility.

Member States have committed themselves to improving infection prevention and control in Council Recommendation 2009/C 151/01 on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections ([1]). In its report on the implementation of this recommendation ([2]), the Commission described progress made so far and the areas where more effort is needed. The Commission will continue supporting the Member States in implementing the recommendation. In addition, in 2011 the European Commission presented an 'Action plan against the rising threats from antimicrobial resistance' which includes the prevention and control of drug resistant infections ([3]).

The Commission has prioritised research to combat antimicrobial resistance over its Framework Programmes for Research starting from FP5 in 1999 to FP7 today with nearly EUR 600 million. This includes projects to combat infections caused by resistant Gram-negative bacteria like *Klebsiella pneumoniae* ([4]). In addition, the Innovative Medicines Initiative, Europe's largest public-private partnership established between the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations and the Commission, launched in 2012 a research programme 'New drugs for bad bugs' with a budget of over EUR 350 million.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:151:0001:0006:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0658:FIN:EN:PDF.
([3]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council — Action Plan against the rising threats from AMR, COM(2011)748 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_en.pdf
([4]) http://www.r-gnosis.eu/.

Antimicrobial resistance and the increase of resistant pathogens like *klebsiellae* remains a priority research area to be addressed also under the Horizon 2020 programme.Among others, a Joint Programming Initiative entitled 'The Microbial Challenge — An Emerging Threat to Human Health' is being developed by the Member States ([5]) ([6]).

([5]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/126583.pdf
([6]) http://www.ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/download?docId=31943.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-011315/12
a Bizottság számára
Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D), Göncz Kinga (S&D), Herczog Edit (S&D) és Gurmai Zita (S&D)
(2012. december 11.)

Tárgy: Az új magyar választójogi szabályozás alapvető jogokba ütköző rendelkezései

A Magyar Országgyűlés 2012. október 29-én módosította Magyarország Alaptörvényét, majd november 26-án elfogadta a kormány által benyújtott, a választási eljárásról szóló T/8405. sz. törvényjavaslatot. Ez a választók kötelező előzetes feliratkozásához köti a választójog gyakorlását. Mindkét törvény alkalmas arra, hogy bizonyos választói csoportok súlyos hátrányos megkülönböztetését eredményezze – ezt azóta több közvélemény-kutatás is előzetesen megerősítette –, és ezáltal kétségbe vonja az általános és titkos választójog követelményei közül az általánosság érvényesülését. Ez ellentétes az Alapjogi Charta 21. cikkével, valamint az Európai Parlament képviselőinek megválasztására vonatkozó európai joggal, az EUSZ 14. cikkének (3) bekezdésével, a 76/787/ESZAK, EGK, Euratom határozattal és a 93/109/EK tanácsi irányelvvel, amelyek megerősítik az általános és közvetlen választójog alapelvét. Ellentmond az EP a magyarországi helyzettel foglalkozó 2012. február 16-i állásfoglalásában foglaltaknak a politikai verseny és a hatalomváltás tisztességes feltételeiről. Az alaptörvényben rögzített szabályozás értelmében a Magyarországon állandó lakhellyel rendelkező választók számára személyesen vagy a kérelmező azonosítását lehetővé tevő elektronikus úton (ügyfélkapun) lenne lehetséges a regisztráció, ami kutatási adatokkal alátámasztottan várhatóan a részvétel csökkenéséhez vezetne a szegények, a vidékiek és az idősek körében. Ugyanakkor a szomszédos országokban élő, a magyar állampolgársággal együtt kapott választójoggal rendelkező magyarok számára lehetséges lenne a levélben történő regisztráció is, sőt, később a levélben történő szavazás is. Mindez egyértelműen hátrányos helyzetbe hozza a magyarországi lakosokat.

A választási eljárás további torzítására ad lehetőséget, hogy az új választási eljárási törvény értelmében az új Nemzeti Választási Bizottság tagjait szokatlanul hosszú időre, 9 évre választják, amit bírált a Velencei Bizottság 662/2012/EU. számú véleménye, mivel az alkalmat adhat a jelenlegi kétharmados parlamenti többség jelöltjeinek bebetonozására.

1. Tervezi-e az Európai Bizottság, hogy figyelmezteti a magyar hatóságokat a választójog diszkriminatív korlátozása miatt?

2. Tekinthető-e az általános és titkos választójog korlátozásának az, hogy az Alaptörvény határidőt szab a regisztrációra, amit semmilyen szakmai indok nem támaszt alá, hiszen ma is létezik hiteles magyar lakcímnyilvántartás, amely alapján az elmúlt hat szabad választást gond nélkül le lehetett bonyolítani?

3. Figyelembe véve, hogy Viviane Reding és José Manuel Barroso 2012. január 18-án az Európai Parlamentben felvetették a Bizottság és a Velencei Bizottság együttműködését, tervezik-e a szóban forgó, a Nemzeti Választási Bizottságot érintő rendelkezés vizsgálatát, illetve a Velencei Bizottság véleményének kikérését?

Viviane Reding válasza a a Bizottság nevében
(2013. március 1.)

A Bizottság értékelte az új választójogi szabályozást és arra a következtetésre jutott, hogy e szabályok ebben a szakaszban nem vetik fel az uniós jogszabályoknak való meg nem felelés kérdését, mivel a nemzeti parlamenti választások megszervezése a tagállamok kizárólagos hatáskörébe tartozik.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011315/12
to the Commission
Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Edit Herczog (S&D) and Zita Gurmai (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Provisions of the new Hungarian electoral legislation which contravene fundamental rights

On 29 October 2012 the Hungarian Parliament amended the Basic Law of Hungary before adopting, on 26 November, law T/8405 on electoral procedure, which was submitted by the government. This makes the exercise of voters' electoral rights conditional on their prior registration. Both laws are likely to result in serious discrimination against certain groups of voters (something which has since been highlighted by a number of public opinion surveys), thereby putting in jeopardy the implementation of universality, one of the requirements of universal suffrage and voter anonymity. This goes against Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights; European legislation on the right of Europeans to be elected as MEPs; Article 14(3) TEU; Decision 76/787/ECSC, EEC, Euratom; and Council Directive 93/109/EC, which reinforce the principle of direct universal suffrage. It also contradicts the provisions of Parliament's resolution of 16 February 2012, concerning the situation in Hungary, on fair conditions of political competition and political alternation. Under the rules laid down in the Basic Law, registration for voters whose permanent residence is in Hungary would be possible in person or by electronic means — a portal) — which makes it possible to identify the applicant. Research data suggest that this would lead to a reduction in the numbers of poor and elderly people and inhabitants of rural areas voting. Hungarians living in neighbouring countries who were granted voting rights at the same time as Hungarian citizenship would also be able to register — and subsequently vote — by post. All this clearly puts the inhabitants of Hungary at a disadvantage.

A further possibility for distorting the electoral procedure is provided by the election, under the new law on electoral procedure, of the members of the new National Electoral Commission for the unusually long period of nine years, which was criticised in opinion No 662/2012/EU of the Venice Commission, as this would make it possible for nominees from the current two-thirds majority in parliament to consolidate their position unreasonably.

1. Does the Commission intend to issue a warning to the Hungarian authorities as a result of the discriminatory restrictions of the electoral law?

2. Does the stipulation of a registration deadline by the Basic Law — which has no practical justification — count as a restriction of the universality and voter anonymity of electoral law, given that there exists an attested Hungarian register of residential addresses on which the last six free elections — which were conducted with no problems whatsoever — were based?

3. Given that, on 18 January 2012, Viviane Reding and José Manuel Barroso broached the subject of cooperation between the Commission and the Venice Commission in the European Parliament, do they intend to examine the relevant provision concerning the National Electoral Commission or seek the opinion of the Venice Commission?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

The Commission assessed the new electoral rules and concluded that they do at this stage not raise issues of non-compliance with EC law, as the organisation of the elections to the national parliament falls within the exclusive responsibility of the Member States.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-011316/12
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(11 décembre 2012)

Objet: Réévaluation du rapport bénéfice-risque des boissons énergisantes

Le 15 janvier 2009, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) rendait un avis sur l'innocuité de la taurine et de la D-glucurunolactone utilisées comme ingrédients dans les boissons énergisantes. Dans cet avis, l'EFSA concluait que l'exposition à la taurine et à la D-glucurunolactone en tant qu'ingrédients individuels de ces boissons, aux niveaux utilisés actuellement, ne suscitait pas d'inquiétudes sur le plan sanitaire.

En décembre 2011, l'Union européenne a adopté de nouvelles exigences d'étiquetage pour les boissons énergisantes contenant plus de 150 mg/l de caféine.

Depuis lors, aucune action n'a été prise au niveau européen pour prévenir, voire contrer, les dangers de la consommation de ces boissons pour la santé des citoyens.

Les trois décès par crise cardiaque reportés en France en juin 2012 et les enquêtes lancées par l'Agence américaine des produits alimentaires et des médicaments (FDA) cet automne suite aux dix-huit décès liés à la consommation de boissons énergisantes devraient encourager l'EFSA à réévaluer les risques entraînés par ces boissons.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer si elle envisage de demander prochainement à l'EFSÀ une réévaluation du rapport bénéfice-risque de la consommation de ces boissons énergisantes?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(14 janvier 2013)

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire aux réponses qu'elle a données aux questions écrites E-006647/2012 et E-005939/2012 ([1]).

En outre, le rapport de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) sur les habitudes de consommation des boissons énergisantes dans les États membres qui est mentionné dans la réponse à la question écrite E-005939/2012 devrait être publié d'ici la fin du mois de février 2013.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011316/12
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(11 December 2012)

Subject: Reassessment of the risks and benefits of energy drink consumption

On 15 January 2009, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) issued an opinion on the possible harmful effects of two ingredients used in energy drinks — taurine and d-glucuronolactone. The EFSA concluded that exposure to taurine and d-glucuronolactone, in the quantities currently used in such drinks, did not pose a health risk.

In December 2011, the EU adopted new labelling requirements for energy drinks containing more than 150mg/l of caffeine.

Since then, no action has been taken at European level to limit the risks to people's health posed by the consumption of energy drinks.

Three people died from energy drink-induced heart attacks in France in June 2012, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration launched investigations in autumn 2012 after 18 energy drink-related deaths. These cases should cause the EFSA to reassess the risks associated with these kinds of drinks.

Can the Commission indicate whether it intends to ask the EFSA in the near future to reassess the risks and benefits of energy drink consumption?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 January 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-006647/2012 and E-005939/2012 ([1]).

Furthermore, the report of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on the consumption patterns of energy drinks in the Member States that is mentioned in the reply to Written Question E-005939/2012 should be published by the end of February 2013.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011318/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI) en Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(12 december 2012)

Betreft: Aanwezigheid Turks sprekenden in Europees Parlement

Tijdens recente activiteiten van het Europees Parlement, waaronder commissie- en plenaire vergaderingen, bleken onbekende Turks sprekenden aanwezig.

Kan de Commissie u aangeven in welke fase zich het toetredingsproces van Turkije tot de EU exact bevindt? Met andere woorden: welke onderhandelingshoofdstukken zijn geopend, moeten nog behandeld, welke mondelinge en/of schriftelijke afspraken zijn met Turkije gemaakt in de aanloop naar toetreding, enz.?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(7 februari 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar de inleiding van het voortgangsverslag 2012 betreffende Turkije dat op 10 oktober 2012 ([1]) aan het Europees Parlement is voorgesteld.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011318/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI) and Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Presence of Turkish-speakers at the European Parliament

During recent European Parliament activities, including committee meetings and plenary sittings, it has become apparent that unidentified Turkish-speakers were present.

Can the Commission indicate exactly what stage Turkey's accession process has reached? In other words, which chapters of the negotiations have been opened, which of them remain to be dealt with, what verbal and/or written agreements have been reached with Turkey in the run-up to accession, etc.?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the introduction of the Turkey 2012 Progress Report which was presented to the European Parliament on 10 October 2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011319/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Indagini in corso sulla manipolazione dell'Euribor

Da rivelazioni giornalistiche (Wall Street Journal) si apprende il coinvolgimento di alcune banche in uno scandalo che, dopo quello sulla manipolazione del Libor, sembra dover investire l'Euribor.

Premesso che:

— sarebbero coinvolte nell'accusa di aver manipolato i tassi interbancari europei una dozzina di banche, fra cui la Société Générale, il Crédit agricole, la HSBC e la Deutsche Bank;

— sarebbero inoltre stati rinvenuti scambi di messaggi decisamente compromettenti fra alcuni traders di queste banche e quelli della Barclays di Londra, dai quali emergerebbe un sistema di connivenza nella fissazione dell'Euribor;

può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. intende confermare l'esistenza di tali accordi illegali per la manipolazione dei dati relativi alla fissazione dell'Euribor;

2. quali provvedimenti intende attuare in merito per riportare piena trasparenza nelle fissazione dell'Euribor?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(8 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione indaga, dall'inizio del 2011, sulle presunte violazioni delle norme antitrust che vietano i cartelli e le pratiche commerciali restrittive in relazione al Libor e all'Euribor. Il Vicepresidente e Commissario per la Concorrenza ha dato la massima priorità a questi casi. L'indagine riguarda la condotta di alcune banche operanti nel settore dei prodotti derivati su tassi di interesse collegati ai tassi Euribor e Libor di diverse valute. Nell'ottobre 2011 i funzionari della Commissione hanno effettuato verifiche a sorpresa presso i locali di società attive nel settore dei derivati legati all'Euribor. L'indagine è tuttora in corso.

Come prima risposta legislativa, il 25 luglio 2012 la Commissione ha presentato modifiche alle sue proposte di regolamento sugli abusi di mercato e di direttiva sulle sanzioni penali per gli abusi di mercato, per assicurare che le manipolazioni di parametri di riferimento siano chiaramente vietate e soggette a sanzioni amministrative o penali. La Commissione ha inoltre avviato una consultazione pubblica sui parametri di riferimento. Secondo la Commissione, aumentando la trasparenza in materia di dati e di calcolo dell'indice sarà possibile accrescere la fiducia nei parametri di riferimento, ridurre il rischio di abusi e assicurare che gli utenti dispongano di informazioni adeguate per decidere se e come utilizzare un indice. Tale obiettivo può essere raggiunto prevedendo che gli indici utilizzino unicamente dati oggettivi e verificabili, o stabilendo che il produttore dei parametri di riferimento usi, dove disponibili, i dati relativi a operazioni reali, sostituiti, se non disponibili, da dati alternativi. Un'iniziativa sui parametri di riferimento è stata inclusa nel programma di lavoro della Commissione per il 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011319/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Investigations into manipulation of Euribor

According to reports in the Wall Street Journal, certain banks have been involved in a scandal which, following the Libor rate-fixing scandal, seems set to hit Euribor.

Given that:

— a dozen banks, including Société Générale, Crédit Agricole, HSBC and Deutsche Bank, are accused of having manipulated European interbank rates;

— it has also been discovered that extremely compromising messages were exchanged between some traders at these banks and traders at Barclays Bank in London, in which they allegedly conspired to fix Euribor rates;

can the Commission state:

1. whether it intends to confirm that illegal agreements were made to manipulate data relating to fixing Euribor rates;

2. what steps it intends to take to ensure that there is complete transparency regarding the fixing of Euribor rates?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

Since early 2011, the Commission has been investigating alleged violations of the antitrust rules that prohibit cartels and restrictive business practices, in relation to LIBOR and EURIBOR. The Vice-President and Member of the Commission responsible for Competition has given high priority to these cases. The investigation concerns the conduct of certain banks active in interest-rate derivative products linked to the EURIBOR and the LIBOR for several currencies. In October 2011, Commission officials undertook unannounced inspections at the premises of companies active in the sector of derivatives linked to the EURIBOR. This investigation is ongoing.

As a first legislative response, the Commission presented amendments to its proposals for the market abuse Regulation and the criminal sanctions for market abuse Directive on 25 July 2012 to ensure that any manipulation of benchmarks is clearly prohibited and subject to administrative or criminal sanctions. The Commission has also held a public consultation on benchmarks. In this consultation, the Commission has suggested that increasing the transparency of input data and the calculation of the index will increase confidence in benchmarks, reduce the scope for abuse and ensure that users are adequately informed to make any decisions about whether and how to use an index. This may be achieved by requiring that indices only use objective and verifiable data, or by requiring the producer of a benchmark to use actual transaction data where available, but substituted with alternative measures when actual transactions are unavailable. An initiative on benchmarks has been included in the Commission Work Programme for 2013.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-011320/12
Komisi
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(12. prosince 2012)

Předmět: Zajištění dodržování požadavků směrnice o ochraně přírodních stanovišť na Slovensku v souvislosti s úsekem dálnice D1 Turany-Hubová

Komise v odpovědi na mou otázku k písemnému zodpovězení E-001285/2012 o zajištění dodržování požadavků směrnice o ochraně přírodních stanovišť na Slovensku v souvislosti s úsekem dálnice D1 Turany-Hubová oznámila, že očekává výsledky nového náležitého posouzení podle čl. 6 odst. 3 a 4 směrnice o ochraně přírodních stanovišť (92/43/EHS) z června 2012, a že každý větší projekt bude prověřen s ohledem na jeho potenciální dopad na životní prostředí tak, jak je stanoveno v článku 41 nařízení Rady (ES) č. 1083/2006.

1. Může Komise sdělit, zda již slovenské orgány vypracovaly náležité posouzení v souladu s požadavky článku 6 směrnice o ochraně přírodních stanovišť?

2. Může Komise také sdělit, zda toto posouzení bere v potaz výstavbu štěrkového lomu mezi obcemi Krpeľany a Turany, jenž má zásobit materiálem stavbu dálnice D1 a který bude mít dopad nejen na oblasti sítě Natura 2000 již dotčené výstavbou dálnice, ale ohrozí i zmírňující opatření navržená slovenskými orgány?

3. Souhlasí Komise s tím, že bude-li pokračovat výstavba tohoto štěrkového lomu, nebudou již zmírňující opatření navrhovaná slovenskými orgány proveditelná, což v podstatě vyvrátí závěr náležitého posouzení, podle nějž by projekt neměl žádný nepříznivý dopad?

4. Může Komise rovněž sdělit, zda při náležitém posouzení slovenské orgány dostatečně zvážily variantu výstavby tunelu na této trase, která nejenže by méně zatěžovala životní prostředí, ale byla by i o 50 % levnější?

5. Může, prosím, Komise sdělit, jaké kroky hodlá učinit, aby zajistila realizaci zmírňujících opatření a aby byl tento projekt v souladu s politikami Unie v oblasti životního prostředí a v oblasti zadávání veřejných zakázek?

Odpověď pana Potočnika jménem Komise
(12. února 2013)

1. Komise o projektu v prosinci 2012 jednala se slovenskými orgány a při této příležitosti jí byla předána kopie dodatečného posouzení vypracovaného nezávislými odborníky. Podle názoru Komise toto posouzení splňuje požadavky stanovené v čl. 6 odst. 3 směrnice Rady 92/43/EHS ([1]) o ochraně přírodních stanovišť.

2. Z dodatečného posouzení vyplývá, že dálnice by neměla mít vliv na integritu lokalit soustavy Natura 2000 za předpokladu, že nebude povolena těžba štěrku a zavedou se dodatečná zmírňující a technická opatření na zvýšení migrační prostupnosti.

3. Komise souhlasí se zjištěním uvedeným v posouzení, podle něhož by v případě povolení těžby štěrku v obci Turany byla ohrožena funkčnost přechodu pro zvířata plánovaného na tomto úseku dálnice.

4. Posouzení se nezabývalo alternativními možnostmi. Podle čl. 6 odst. 3 směrnice o ochraně přírodních stanovišť není zvážení alternativních možností nutné, pokud z odpovídajícího posouzení vyplývá, že projekt (buď samostatně, nebo v kombinaci se zmírňujícími opatřeními) nebude mít vliv na integritu lokalit soustavy Natura 2000.

5. Závěry posouzení a nezbytná dodatečná opatření, které jsou v něm specifikována, by měly být ve výsledném projektu výstavby dálnice plně zohledněny. Komise zůstane během přípravy projektu se slovenskými orgány i nadále v kontaktu.

([1]) Úř. věst. L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011320/12
to the Commission
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive in Slovakia in connection with the Turany-Hubová section of the D1 motorway

In its answer to my Written Question E-001285/2012 on ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive in Slovakia in connection with the Turany-Hubová section of the D1 motorway, the Commission advised that it was expecting the results of a new appropriate assessment under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) in June 2012, and that any major project would be scrutinised regarding its potential impact on the environment, as stipulated by Article 41 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

1. Can the Commission advise whether the Slovak authorities have now produced an appropriate assessment that fulfils the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive?

2. Can the Commission also advise whether this assessment takes into account the construction of a gravel pit between the villages of Krpeľany and Turany to supply building materials for the D1 motorway, which will not only impact the Natura 2000 areas already affected by the motorway, but also undermine the mitigation measures proposed by the Slovak authorities?

3. Does the Commission agree that if construction of this gravel pit goes ahead, the mitigation measures proposed by the Slovak authorities will no longer be feasible, and that this will effectively negate the appropriate assessment's finding that the project would have no adverse effect?

4. Can the Commission also advise whether, in the appropriate assessment, the Slovak authorities have properly considered the tunnel variant for this route, which would not only be less environmentally damaging than the surface variant, but also 50% cheaper?

5. Can the Commission please advise what action it plans to take to ensure that any mitigation measures are delivered, and that this project is consistent with Union environmental and public procurement policies?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

1. The Commission discussed the project with Slovak authorities in December 2012 and received on this occasion a copy of the additional appropriate assessment prepared by independent experts. In the opinion of the Commission, this assessment complies with the requirements stipulated in Art 6.3. of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]).

2. The additional assessment concludes that the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites should not be affected by the motorway provided that the gravel extraction is not permitted and that additional mitigation and technical measures ensure an increased migration permeability.

3. The Commission agrees with this assessment in finding that, should gravel extraction be allowed in Turany, it would impede the functioning of the animal pass designed in this part of the motorway.

4. The assessment did not examine alternative routes. According to Art. 6.3. of the Habitats Directive, the consideration of alternatives is not required if the appropriate assessment concludes that the project will either alone or with mitigation measures not affect the integrity of Natura 2000.

5. The conclusions of the assessment, and the additional necessary measures it identifies should be fully incorporated in the final motorway project. The Commission will remain in contact with the Slovak authorities as concerns the preparation of the project.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011321/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Acciones homófobas de Amanecer Dorado

Las agresiones y violencia por parte de *Amanecer Dorado* en Grecia son crecientes, no solo contra los inmigrantes, sino también contra las personas LGBT.

Hasta la fecha se han denunciado a la policía cinco incidentes de ataques homófobos en la zona de Kerameikos, lugar de ambiente en Atenas. Los casos registrados en los últimos dos meses pueden parecer pocos, pero hay otros muchos casos que no salen a la luz. Muchas mujeres transexuales que son golpeadas durante el ejercicio de la prostitución no denuncian a la policía porque esta coopera con el Centro Helénico para el Control y Prevención de Enfermedades (HCDCP) y, sin ninguna aprobación por parte de una autoridad oficial, ha hecho públicos los nombres de estas mujeres, que han sido encarceladas acusadas de transmitir supuestamente el VIH por no usar protección, lo que además supone una violación de su privacidad y sus datos personales. No hace falta mencionar que, de acuerdo con la legislación griega, el cliente es el responsable de usar protección. No hay ninguna ley griega contra el discurso de odio y los crímenes de odio basados en la orientación sexual y la identidad de género. No hay ninguna ley para los derechos del colectivo LGBTI. El Ministro de Orden Público y Protección Ciudadana, Sr. N. Dendias, dijo que establecería un comité para el fenómeno de la violencia racista, pero por desgracia no ha realizado ninguna gestión al respecto todavía.

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de los ataques homófobos de *Amanecer Dorado*?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que Grecia está incumpliendo así la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI relativa a la lucha contra determinadas formas y manifestaciones de racismo y xenofobia mediante el Derecho Penal?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que el nuevo paquete de medidas legislativas sobre los derechos de las víctimas adoptado a nivel de la UE obliga a Grecia a modificar la ley de protección de las personas LGBT, principalmente las mujeres transexuales, para que no sufran esta doble discriminación?

4. ¿Recomendaría la Comisión la ilegalización del partido neonazi *Amanecer Dorado* por apología del nazismo, delitos motivados por el odio e incitación al odio?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de marzo de 2013)

En los límites de sus competencias, la Comisión vela por que la legislación de la Unión se ajuste a la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea.

Con arreglo a su artículo 51, apartado 1, sus disposiciones están dirigidas a los Estados miembros únicamente cuando estos apliquen el Derecho de la Unión. El marco jurídico de la organización de los partidos políticos nacionales no se trata a escala de la UE. No obstante, de acuerdo con la propuesta de la Comisión de un Reglamento sobre el estatuto y la financiación de los partidos políticos europeos, los miembros de partidos políticos europeos deben observar los valores fundamentales de la Unión Europea, a saber, el respeto de la dignidad humana y de los derechos humanos, incluidos los de las personas pertenecientes a minorías, la libertad, la democracia, la igualdad y el Estado de Derecho.

Aunque obliga a los Estados miembros a sancionar la incitación a la violencia o el odio por motivos de raza, color, religión, ascendencia y origen étnico o nacional, la Decisión marco 2008/913 no contempla la homofobia. La Comisión está estudiando las notificaciones de los Estados miembros sobre las medidas nacionales de aplicación de la Decisión marco, Sus conclusiones se publicarán en un informe a finales de 2013. En virtud de los Tratados, la Comisión no está autorizada a incoar procedimientos de infracción sobre la base de las Decisiones marco hasta el 1 de diciembre de 2014.

La nueva Directiva 2012/29/UE sobre las víctimas ([1]), que los Estados miembros deberán incorporar a sus ordenamientos jurídicos a más tardar el 16 de noviembre de 2015, tiene por objeto garantizar que las víctimas de delitos reciban la información, la protección y el apoyo adecuados y que puedan participar en los procesos penales. Aunque trata de los derechos procesales de las víctimas, la Directiva no armoniza la tipificación de conductas. Así pues, la aplicabilidad de la Directiva depende de si tales conductas están tipificadas como delito en virtud del Derecho nacional.

([1]) Directiva 2012/29/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2012, por la que se establecen normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos, y por la que se sustituye la Decisión marco 2001/220/JAI del Consejo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011321/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Homophobic actions by Golden Dawn

Aggression and violence by Golden Dawn in Greece is increasing, not only against immigrants, but also against the LGBT community.

To date, the police have reported five incidents of homophobic attacks in the Kerameikos area of Athens. The number of cases reported in the past two months may seem few, but there are many other cases that have not come to light. Many transsexual women beaten during prostitution do not report it to the police as officers cooperate with the Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (HCDCP). Without any approval from an official authority, they have made public the names of these women, who have been imprisoned accused of allegedly transmitting HIV by not using protection, which is also a violation of their privacy and personal data. Not only that but, according to Greek law, the customer is responsible for using protection. There is no Greek law against hate speech and hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity. There is no law on the rights of the LGBTI community. The Minister of Public Order and Citizen Protection, Mr N. Dendias, said that he would establish a committee on racist violence, but unfortunately he has not yet taken any steps in this regard.

1. Is the Commission aware of the homophobic attacks by Golden Dawn?

2. Does it believe that Greece is in breach of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law?

3. Does it believe that the new legislative package on the rights of victims adopted at EU level requires Greece to amend the law to protect the LGBT community, especially transsexual women, to prevent them from suffering this double discrimination?

4. Would it recommend banning the Golden Dawn neo-Nazi party for advocating Nazism, hate crimes and hate speech?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2013)

Within the boundaries of its competences, the Commission ensures that Union legislation complies with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

According to its Article 51(1), its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. The legal framework for the organisation of national political parties is not dealt with at EU level. However, under the Commission's proposal for a regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties, members of European political parties must observe the EU founding values, namely respect for human dignity and for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect.

While obliging Member States to penalise incitement to violence or hatred based on race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, Framework Decision 2008/913 does not cover homophobia as a ground. The Commission is examining the Member States' notifications on national implementing measures transposing the framework Decision. Its findings will be published in a report by the end of 2013. Under the Treaties, the Commission is not authorised to launch infringement proceedings based on Framework Decisions until 1 December 2014.

The new Victims' Directive ([1]), to be implemented by Member States by 16 November 2015, aims to ensure that victims of crime receive appropriate information, support and protection and are able to participate in criminal proceedings. Despite dealing with procedural rights of victims, the directive does not harmonise the criminalisation of behaviour. Thus, the directive's applicability depends on whether behaviour constitutes a criminal offence under national law.

([1]) Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011322/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Evasión fiscal de gigantes tecnológicos en España

Según un artículo publicado en el diario *El País* el día 23 de noviembre, «el impuesto de sociedades en España favorece la deducción de gastos frente al de otros países que priman la tributación reducida de los ingresos. Esta situación permite crear una estructura empresarial con la que sacar los ingresos a otros países con tributación más baja y atraer gastos a filiales españolas con más deducciones y bonificaciones». Apple en España pagó impuestos sobre un beneficio declarado del 0,4 % de sus ingresos, ya que, de 76 300 millones, envió 60 500 millones a Apple Sales International, con sede en Irlanda. Google España está investigada por Hacienda, pero continúa enviando sus ingresos a Google Ireland y Google Inc. Microsoft Ibérica actúa como comisionista de las ventas que realiza Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd. en España, y factura el 80 % (125 millones) a su hermana irlandesa por las comisiones de las ventas de licencias de productos en España. Hacienda le reclama a Microsoft Ibérica 11,9 millones del impuesto de sociedades de los ejercicios 2004 y 2005. Facebook ingresó 1,7 millones en España en 2011 pero los facturó via Facebook Ireland Limited y solo pagó 39 740 euros de impuesto de sociedades. Yahoo Iberia ingresó 17,1 millones en 2011 y realiza todas sus ventas a compañías del grupo, fundamentalmente a Yahoo! Sarl, domiciliada en Suiza. La empresa no ha tenido que pagar el impuesto de sociedades prácticamente desde que está en España. Amazon España facturó 314 417 millones en 2011, una pequeña parte de los millones de euros generados por el portal de compras desde España. La mayor parte de sus operaciones las realiza a través de Amazon EU Sarl, con sede en Luxemburgo. Ebay tiene una filial española que facturó 443 109 euros en 2011. La multinacional traslada los ingresos por sus ventas a otras firmas del grupo como Ebay Internacional, con sede en Suiza. La compañía ha evitado pagar el impuesto de sociedades al compensar bases negativas de otros ejercicios. Entre 2009 y 2010 apenas pagó 9 500 euros.

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión esta información? ¿Qué opinión le merece?

2. ¿Qué mecanismos de cooperación entre países propone la Comisión a fin de evitar estos mecanismos de ingeniería financiera?

3. ¿Cuál es la pérdida total de recaudación fiscal de España y de los Estados de la Unión Europea debido a prácticas ilegales de las multinacionales?

4. ¿Cuánto se podría reducir el déficit español gracias a la cooperación con las Haciendas de los Estados Miembros para evitar esta situación? ¿Qué medidas va a tomar al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de enero de 2013)

La pregunta aborda la cuestión de la imposición sobre los beneficios de las empresas multinacionales (MNE) en los Estados miembros de la UE que ya ha sido objeto de diversas preguntas por parte de Sus Señorías durante los últimos meses (la más reciente, E-10066/12 ([1])).

La Comisión no realiza comentarios sobre asuntos fiscales de contribuyentes individuales, pero ha subrayado su opinión general sobre este tema en la respuesta a la pregunta E-10066/12.

Para los aspectos específicos adicionales que expone Su Señoría, la Comisión puede añadir lo siguiente:

La planificación fiscal agresiva y la transferencia de beneficios suelen aprovechar las lagunas jurídicas o los desajustes entre los sistemas fiscales nacionales, dando lugar a una erosión de la base imponible en los Estados miembros. La Comisión promueve ([2]) la intervención de los Estados miembros de la UE y de terceros países, para reforzar la aplicación de la legislación vigente y, en caso necesario, para adoptar nuevas normas legislativas que acaben con las prácticas desleales y abusivas.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012) 722 final (Plan de acción para reforzar la lucha contra el fraude fiscal y la evasión fiscal) de 6.12.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011322/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Tax evasion by tech giants in Spain

According to an article published in the newspaper *El País* on November 23, corporation tax in Spain fosters expensing, while other countries prioritise reduced income tax. This enables the creation of a business structure in which revenue is sent to other countries with lower tax rates and expenses are charged to Spanish subsidiaries with greater deductions and allowances. Apple in Spain paid taxes on a declared profit of 0.4% of its income as, out of EUR 76 300 million, it sent EUR 60 500 million to Apple Sales International, based in Ireland. Google Spain is being investigated by the Ministry of Finance, but it continues to send its revenue to Google Ireland and Google Inc. Microsoft Ibérica acts as a commission agent for sales made by Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd in Spain, and invoices 80% (EUR 125 million) to its Irish sister for sales commissions from product licence sales in Spain. The Ministry of Finance claims EUR 11.9 million in corporation tax from Microsoft Ibérica for the years 2004 and 2005. Facebook deposited EUR 1.7 million in Spain in 2011, but invoiced it via Facebook Ireland Limited and paid only EUR 39 740 in corporation tax. Yahoo Iberia deposited EUR 17.1 million in 2011 and makes all its sales through group companies, mainly Yahoo! Sarl, based in Switzerland. The company has not had to pay corporation tax, almost from the moment it arrived in Spain. Amazon Spain invoiced EUR 314 417 million in 2011, a small percentage of the millions of euros generated by its shopping portal in Spain. Most of its operations are conducted through Amazon EU Sarl, based in Luxembourg. eBay's Spanish subsidiary invoiced EUR 443 109 in 2011. The multinational sent its sales revenues to other group companies such as eBay International, based in Switzerland. The company has avoided paying corporation tax, by applying carryforwards from other tax years. Between 2009 and 2010 it paid only EUR 9 500.

1. Is the Commission aware of this information? What is its opinion of it?

2. What cooperation mechanisms between countries does it propose to prevent such financial engineering mechanisms?

3. What is the total loss in tax revenue suffered by Spain and by EU Member States due to illegal practices by multinationals?

4. By how much could the Spanish deficit be reduced through cooperation with the Finance Ministries of Member States to prevent this situation? What measures will the Commission take in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

The question addresses the issue of profit taxation of Multinational Enterprises (MNE) in EU Member States which has been the subject of several other questions by Honourable Members in the last months (the most recent one E-10066/12 ([1])).

The Commission does not comment on individual taxpayers' tax affairs but has outlined its general view on this topic in the answer to Question E-10066/12.

For the additional specific aspects tabled by the Honourable Member the Commission can add the following:

Aggressive tax planning and profit shifting usually exploit loopholes in, or mismatches between national tax systems, leading to Member States tax base erosion. The Commission promotes ([2]) action by EU Member States, and third countries, to strengthen the application of existing legislation and where necessary to introduce new legislation to tackle unfair and abusive practices.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2012)722 final (An Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion) of 6/12/2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011323/12
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(12 décembre 2012)

Objet: Ratification de l'accord de Doha

La délégation de l'Union européenne à Doha a souscrit à un «accord minimaliste» sur une deuxième période d'engagement du protocole de Kyoto, qui prendrait le relais de l'accord initial à partir du 1er janvier 2013.

Cet accord ne concernerait que l'Union européenne et quelques pays européens comme la Norvège, la Suisse, la Croatie et le Liechtenstein, ainsi que l'Australie, seul pays non-européen qui se sent encore lié par cet accord.

1. Quand on sait que tous ces pays représentent moins de 15 % des émissions mondiales de gaz à effet de serre (l'Union européenne à elle seule émettant moins de 11 %), on est en droit de se demander quel sera l'impact de l'effort continu des Européens et des Australiens? Ne sera-t-il pas annihilé par les émissions croissantes de la Chine, de l'Inde, de l'Indonésie et des autres grands pays absents à Kyoto II?

2. Cet «accord minimaliste» de Doha sera-t-il soumis à la ratification parlementaire des États membres et du Parlement européen?

3. La Commission peut-elle continuer à appliquer ce nouvel accord sans ratification préalable?

4. Comme les secteurs de l'aviation et maritime ne sont pas concernés par l'accord de Kyoto initial, comment la Commission peut-elle justifier ses actions unilatérales dans ces domaines?

Réponse donnée par Mme Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(8 février 2013)

1. En 2011, l'UE et ses États membres sont convenus de participer à la deuxième période d'engagement de Kyoto (CP2) dans le cadre d'un ensemble incluant un accord visant à engager la négociation d'un nouvel accord mondial applicable à tous les pays qui devra être finalisé d'ici la fin de l'année 2015 et entrer en vigueur à compter de 2020, ainsi que des actions destinées à augmenter le niveau d'ambition des engagements pré-2020 de toutes les parties. Cet ensemble comprend également des règles visant à assurer la transparence des engagements en matière de réduction des émissions pour 2020 que plus de 60 pays non couverts par CP2 ([1]) se sont engagés à fournir Ces engagements concernent plus de 83 % des émissions mondiales de gaz à effet de serre (GES).

2. Les parties doivent ratifier CP2 pour qu'il puisse entrer en vigueur dans ces pays. La ratification par l'UE requiert une décision du Conseil, après approbation du Parlement européen, sur une proposition de la Commission. Les États membres ratifieront par l'intermédiaire de leurs propres procédures.

3. À Doha, l'UE et ses États membres ont décidé, au niveau politique, de mettre en œuvre leur engagement à compter du 1er janvier 2013, ce que fait l'UE à travers sa législation en vigueur, et notamment son paquet «Climat et énergie» qui traduit son engagement CP2.

4. Le Parlement européen et le Conseil ont décidé d'inclure l'aviation internationale dans le système d'échange de quotas d'émission de l'UE, entraînant ainsi une accélération des négociations au sein de l'OACI afin d'établir un cadre mondial en ce qui concerne les émissions dues à l'aviation. Dans le secteur maritime, la Commission présentera en 2013 une proposition concernant un système de surveillance, de déclaration et de vérification des émissions de CO^2 et contribuera ainsi à progresser au niveau mondial et à alimenter le processus de l'OMI.

([1]) Parmi ces pays se trouvent les États-Unis, la Chine, le Brésil, l'Afrique du Sud et l'Inde [par exemple, la Chine a promis une réduction de l'intensité de carbone de 40 à 45 %, l'Inde une réduction de l'intensité énergétique de 20 à 25 % (par rapport à 2005 pour ces deux pays) et l'Indonésie une réduction des émissions de 26 % par rapport au niveau normal en l'absence de mesures].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011323/12
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Ratification of the Doha Agreement

The EU's Delegation in Doha signed a 'minimalist agreement' on a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, which would take over the initial agreement from 1 January 2013.

This agreement would only apply to the European Union and certain European countries such as Norway, Switzerland, Croatia and Liechtenstein, as well as Australia, which is the only non-European country that still feels bound by this agreement.

1. Since all these countries represent less than 15% of global greenhouse gas emissions (with the EU emitting less than 11%), it is worth asking what the impact of the continuous effort by the Europeans and Australians will be. Will it not be cancelled out by the increasing emissions of China, India, Indonesia and other larger countries absent from Kyoto II?

2. Will the 'minimalist agreement' made at Doha be submitted for parliamentary ratification by the Member States and the European Parliament?

3. Could the Commission continue to apply this new agreement without prior ratification?

4. Since the aviation and maritime sectors are not concerned by the initial Kyoto agreement, how can the Commission justify its unilateral actions in these industries?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

1. The EU and its Member States agreed in 2011 to join Kyoto's second commitment period (CP2) as part of a package including an agreement to start negotiating a new global agreement that will be applicable to all countries and which is to be finalised by the end of 2015 and to apply from 2020 onwards, as well as work to step up the ambition of pre-2020 commitments of all Parties. It also includes rules to ensure the transparency of emission reduction commitments for 2020 pledged by more than 60 countries not covered under CP2 ([1]). These commitments cover more than 83% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

2. Parties need to ratify CP2 for it to enter into force for them. EU ratification requires a decision by the Council, after consent of the European Parliament, on a Commission proposal. Member States will ratify through their own procedures.

3. In Doha, the EU and its Member States agreed politically to implement their commitment as of 1 January 2013. The EU does so through existing EU legislation, including the Climate and Energy Package, which mirrors its CP2 commitment.

4. The European Parliament and the Council decided to include international aviation in the EU Emission Trading Scheme This has led to an acceleration of negotiations in the context of the ICAO to reach a global framework for emissions from aviation. In the maritime sector, the Commission will be presenting a proposal on a monitoring, reporting and verification system of CO_2 emissions in 2013. This will help make progress at global level and feed into the IMO process.

([1]) This includes the United States, China, Brazil, South Africa and India (e.g. China pledged a reduction of carbon intensity of 40-45%, India a reduction of energy intensity of 20-25% (both compared to 2005) and Indonesia a reduction of emissions of 26% below business-as-usual).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011324/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Informe sobre la aplicación de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE en 2011

Recientemente, la Comisión Europea ha publicado su «Informe sobre la Aplicación de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea» para el año 2011.

Este informe trata de recoger la evidencia sobre la práctica de esta lista de derechos en la realidad de los diferentes Estados miembros de la Unión Europea a través de datos procedentes de numerosas fuentes de información y está compuesto por 6 capítulos específicos que hacen referencia a cada uno de los capítulos recogidos en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales, entre ellos: dignidad, libertades, igualdad, justicia, etc. Si tenemos en cuenta las diferentes violaciones que hemos podido contemplar a lo largo de todo el año 2011, son numerosos los artículos sobre los que no se recoge información o se recoge información marcadamente insuficiente.

Así, en lo que se refiere al Título II de la Carta, que contiene los artículos de las libertades, no es comprensible que, en un informe de estas características, no exista ningún tipo de información referente a los artículos 11 y 12 sobre libertad de expresión y de información y libertad de reunión y de asociación, sobre todo teniendo en cuenta las numerosas denuncias de incumplimiento presentadas en casi todos los Estados miembros de la UE, como, por ejemplo, las cargas policiales que se realizaron en España contra los «indignados» que celebraban asambleas pacíficas. Pero también llama la atención que no haga referencia a otros artículos, como el 21 del título III, referente a la no discriminación, cuando hay gobiernos que financian organizaciones que llevan a cabo apología del fascismo, como, por ejemplo, el ejecutivo español y las subvenciones concedidas a la Fundación Francisco Franco.

Teniendo en cuenta que importantes organizaciones que trabajan en el seguimiento del respeto de los derechos humanos, como Amnistía Internacional, han señalado en sus informes una clara regresión al respecto en la Unión, y preasumiendo que este informe pretende mostrar la realidad del cumplimiento de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, ¿puede explicar la Comisión la ausencia completa de referencia a determinados artículos de la Carta o de algunos epígrafes?

El informe reza: *«he Commission is determined to help citizens exercise their rights through a multilevel cooperation with all actors involved at EU and at national level»*. ¿Cuáles son los componentes de esta cooperación a varios niveles entre la UE y los Estados miembros para ayudar a los ciudadanos en el ámbito de los artículos violados por la brutalidad policial y la impunidad de sus acciones en España?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de febrero de 2013)

La finalidad del informe anual sobre la Aplicación de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE es ofrecer una visión panorámica de la manera en que las instituciones de la UE y los Estados miembros atienden a lo dispuesto en dicha Carta al aplicar la legislación de la UE. Con arreglo a su artículo 51, las disposiciones de la Carta se dirigen a los Estados miembros únicamente cuando apliquen el Derecho de la Unión. En los casos que menciona su Señoría, no parece que el Estado miembro mencionado actuara en el curso de tal aplicación. Por tanto, no hay motivo para que el citado informe anual se refiera a los mismos. En los citados casos, es competencia exclusiva de los Estados miembros velar por el cumplimiento de las obligaciones que les incumben en materia de derechos fundamentales, según se deriven estos de los acuerdos internacionales y de su propia legislación.

En cuanto a la cooperación a distintos niveles con todos los agentes involucrados tanto a escala europea como nacional, es necesario un diálogo más estrecho entre las múltiples y distintas instituciones de los Estados miembros que, paralelamente a la función esencial de los jueces en la defensa de los derechos fundamentales, deben acoger las denuncias de ciudadanos que consideren vulnerados sus derechos fundamentales. A estos efectos, la Comisión proporcionará fondos, a través del programa de Derechos Fundamentales y Ciudadanía de 2013, otorgando prioridad a aquellos proyectos cuyo objeto sea dirigir a quienes consideren lesionados sus derechos fundamentales hacia las autoridades adecuadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011324/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: 2011 Report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

The Commission has recently published its '2011 Report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights'.

This report attempts to gather evidence on these rights in practice in the different EU Member States, using data from numerous sources. It comprises six specific chapters that refer to each chapter of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, *inter alia*: dignity, freedoms, equality and justice. Given the various violations throughout 2011 that could have been considered, information on some of the articles is either lacking or clearly inadequate.

With regard to Chapter II of the Charter, for instance, which contains the articles on freedoms, it is incomprehensible that a report of this nature does not contain information on Articles 11 and 12 on freedom of expression and information and freedom of assembly and of association. This is particularly perplexing given the numerous alleged violations of these articles in almost every EU Member State, for example: the police charges in Spain brought against the 'indignados' group that held peaceful gatherings. It is also noteworthy, however, that no reference is made to other items, such as Article 21 of Chapter III, on non-discrimination, when some governments fund organisations that advocate fascism, for example: the Spanish Government awards grants to the Francisco Franco Foundation.

Given that major organisations such as Amnesty International, which actively monitor respect for human rights, have noted a clear regression in the EU in their reports, and that this report seeks to show the reality of compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, can the Commission explain the complete lack of reference to certain articles or segments of the Charter?

The report says that: 'the Commission is determined to help citizens exercise their rights through a multilevel cooperation with all actors involved at EU and at national level'. What does this multilevel cooperation between the EU and the Member States entail, as regards helping citizens affected by the violation of articles in Spain through police brutality and impunity for their actions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The purpose of the annual report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is to provide an overview of the implementation of the Charter by EU institutions and Member States when implementing EC law. According to Article 51 of the Charter, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. In the cases mentioned by the Honourable Member, it does not appear that the Member State concerned did act in the course of implementation of EC law. There is therefore no reason to mention these cases in the Charter annual report. In such cases, it is for Member States alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected.

As regards multilevel cooperation with all actors involved at EU and at national level, a closer dialogue is necessary among the many different institutions in Member States which, in addition to the key role of the judiciary in defending fundamental rights, are called upon to address complaints from citizens who consider that their fundamental rights have been violated. To pursue this goal the Commission will make funding available under the 2013 Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme. Priority will be given to projects with a focus on directing individuals who believe their fundamental rights have been violated towards the appropriate authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011325/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Impacto del cultivo del NK603 en España

Los datos sobre el área cultivada con organismos transgénicos se encuentran publicados, en el caso de España, en el Registro Público de Organismos Modificados Genéticamente (OMG). Este registro se nutre de los datos a disposición del Consejo Interministerial de OMG y la Comisión Nacional de Bioseguridad, dependientes ambos organismos del Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente, que es la autoridad competente en este ámbito.

Para los cultivos en estado experimental la página *web* del citado Ministerio ofrece la localización de las parcelas que han solicitado el cultivo de las variedades. La autorización de un cultivo experimental supone el uso de una pequeña superficie de terreno para comprobar el desarrollo de la variedad experimental.

En España, solo en 2011, se han solicitado al menos 29 cultivos experimentales de maíz NK603 y el Ministerio no ofrece información sobre qué fincas han sido finalmente autorizadas. Si a este número de solicitudes le sumamos las 38 autorizadas en 2010, el importante número de parcelas resultante permite considerar que en España se cultiva esta variedad. Teniendo en cuenta que se trata de cultivos temporal y geográficamente dispersos, el polen de este maíz se ha podido diseminar a lo largo de buena parte del territorio español y contaminar innumerables cultivos de otras variedades de maíz.

Según mantiene la Comisión Europea en su respuesta a mi pregunta E-009241/2012, «el maíz NK603 está autorizado en la EU únicamente para su uso en alimentos y piensos, y no para el cultivo», afirmación que contrasta con el elevado número de cultivos experimentales.

Considerando por tanto que estos cultivos experimentales pueden propagar el polen de dichas plantas y contaminar el medio en el que se encuentran, como así lo demuestra el fallo del Tribunal de Justicia de la UE en el caso de la miel con polen transgénico C-442/09, y que las consecuencias de la diseminación del polen de estas variedades las pagan, entre otros, los agricultores que no las han cultivado, ya que ven mermado el valor de sus productos al ser escasamente valorados por el consumidor,

¿Dispone la Comisión de estimaciones científicas empíricamente sostenibles sobre la potencial diseminación de esta variedad de maíz a lo largo de estos años de cultivos experimentales en España? ¿Ha estimado la Comisión el impacto económico que puede tener en España la contaminación, con el NK603 y el MON 810, de variedades locales y tradicionales, especialmente las de maíz orgánico que, al quedar contaminado con el polen transgénico, pierden su valor de mercado?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de febrero de 2013)

Las autorizaciones de ensayos de campo con OMG las conceden los Estados miembros, con arreglo a la parte B de la Directiva 2001/18/CE. Las condiciones de los ensayos de campo son sumamente estrictas, en particular sobre las medidas de gestión y de control para evitar la propagación accidental en el medio ambiente de la planta modificada genéticamente sometida a experimento (por ejemplo, mediante distancias de aislamiento). Los titulares de autorizaciones deben supervisar y comunicar a las autoridades competentes todo efecto medioambiental adverso e inesperado que se produzca durante o después de los ensayos de campo. Las descripciones de las especificaciones y los informes finales de los ensayos de campo con NK603 en España están disponibles en la base de datos de la UE sobre notificaciones de liberación de OMG ([1]). No se han comunicado casos de propagación accidental en este contexto.

([1]) http://gmoinfo.jrc.ec.europa.eu/gmp_browse.aspx.

Las autoridades españolas no han informado a la Comisión sobre problemas económicos derivados de los ensayos de campo o del cultivo de MON 810 en su territorio. La Comisión publicó en 2011 un informe sobre las consecuencias socioeconómicas del cultivo de OMG en la EU. En él llega a la conclusión de que a menudo no había datos estadísticos relevantes para el contexto de la UE que permitiesen confirmar los puntos de vista expresados por los consultados, por ejemplo, sobre posibles efectos negativos para el sector convencional o para la agricultura biológica. Por consiguiente, la Comisión y los Estados miembros han creado una Oficina Europea de Coexistencia sobre los OMG, que tiene como objetivo definir los factores que reflejen las consecuencias socioeconómicas del cultivo de OMG, en particular sobre la agricultura biológica. La Comisión también recuerda que la Oficina Europea de Coexistencia ([2]), establecida en la Comisión, recopila y difunde en colaboración con los Estados miembros las mejores prácticas en materia de coexistencia y la Comisión publicó en 2010 una recomendación sobre directrices para el desarrollo de medidas nacionales de coexistencia destinadas a evitar la presencia accidental de OMG en los cultivos convencionales y ecológicos.

([2]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011325/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Impact of the NK603 crop in Spain

Data on land cultivated with genetically modified organisms in Spain have been published, in the Public Register of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). This register draws on the data available to the GMO Interministerial Council and the National Biosafety Committee, both of which are agencies of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, which is the competent authority in this area.

The Ministry's website provides the location of smallholdings that have requested permission to cultivate varieties of experimental crops. In order for an experimental crop to be approved, a small area of land is used to check the development of the experimental variety.

In 2011 alone, there were at least 29 requests to grow experimental maize NK603 crops in Spain. The Ministry does not provide information on which farms were eventually approved. If we add this number of requests to the 38 approved in 2010, the resulting and significant number of smallholdings suggests that Spain cultivates this variety. As these crops are temporary and geographically dispersed, the pollen from this maize has spread throughout much of Spain and has contaminated countless other maize crop varieties.

According to the Commission, in answer to my Question E-009241/2012, 'maize NK603 is authorised in the EU for food and feed use only, and not for cultivation'. This contradicts the high number of experimental crops.

Given therefore that pollen from these experimental crops can spread and pollute the surrounding environment, as demonstrated by the Court of Justice of the European Union decision in Case C-442/09 on GM pollen in honey, and that the effects of pollen spreading from these varieties are felt, *inter alia*, by farmers who have not cultivated them, since customers do not value their products, therefore decreasing their value:

Does the Commission have empirically sustainable scientific estimates on the potential spread of this maize variety during the years in which experimental crops have been cultivated in Spain? Has it estimated the economic impact that pollution from NK603 and MON810 could have on Spain, since both local and traditional maize varieties, particularly organic maize, have been contaminated with GM pollen, causing them to lose their market value?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

Authorisations for GMO field trials are granted by Member States, pursuant to Part B of Directive 2001/18/EC. Conditions for field trials are extremely strict, in particular on control and management measures to avoid adventitious spreading of the experimental GM plant in the environment (e.g. isolation distances). Consent holders are required to monitor and report to Competent Authorities any unexpected adverse environmental effects during or after field trials. Descriptions of the specifications and final reports of the field trials with NK603 in Spain are available in the EU Database on the notification for GMO releases ([1]). No occurrence of adventitious spreading have been reported in this context.

The Commission has not been informed by the Spanish authorities about economic problems linked with field trials or cultivation of MON 810 in their territory. The Commission published in 2011 a report on the socioeconomic implications of GMO cultivation in the EU. It concluded that facts and statistics pertinent to the EU context were often missing to support the views expressed by the respondents, e.g. on possible negative impacts for conventional or organic sectors. Consequently the Commission and the Member States have set up a European GMO Socio-Economic Bureau, which aim at defining factors to capture the socioeconomic consequences of GMO cultivation, including on organic production. The Commission also reminds that the European Coexistence Bureau ([2]), hosted by the Commission, develops with Member States best practices for co-existence, and the Commission published in 2010 a recommendation on guidelines for the development of national co-existence measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in conventional and organic crops.

([1]) http://gmoinfo.jrc.ec.europa.eu/gmp_browse.aspx.
([2]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011326/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Nationalistische Tendenzen an Schulen in Griechenland

Nach aktuellen Medienberichten nehmen Xenophobie und übersteigerter Hellenismus an Schulen in Griechenland zu — teilweise mit Unterstützung der jeweiligen Verantwortlichen. Durch die Verbreitung von nationalistischem Gedankengut nimmt man Einfluss auf die Schüler, wobei auch andere gesellschaftliche Faktoren zur Verschärfung des Klimas an den Schulen beitragen.

Unter anderem soll die rechtsextreme Partei „Goldene Morgenröte" aktiv Mitglieder unter den Schülern rekrutieren und diese anschließend in paramilitärische Ausbildungen eingliedern. Diese Entwicklungen sind gesamtgesellschaftlich auch und gerade auf Europa bezogen mit Sorge zu betrachten.

Das griechische Bildungsministerium plant eine „Beobachtungsstelle für Gewalt an Schulen", welche gegen die Welle von übersteigertem Nationalismus vorzugehen versucht.

1. Hat die Kommission bereits Kenntnis von den Entwicklungen hinsichtlich eines zunehmenden Nationalismus in Griechenland? Wenn ja, welche Erkenntnisse hat die Kommission bereits daraus gezogen?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, konkret Empfehlungen oder Informationsstrategien aus- bzw. anzusprechen, um diesen hier wohl aufkommenden Nationalismus besonders an den Schulen einzudämmen?

3. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von der derzeitigen gesamteuropäischen Situation?

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

Rassistische oder fremdenfeindliche Zwischenfälle an Schulen rufen bei der Kommission stets Bestürzung hervor. Die Kommission kann jedoch nur tätig werden, wenn ein konkreter Bezug zum EU-Recht besteht.

Ob im Einzelfall ein Aufruf zu Gewalt und Hass vorliegt, können nur die Behörden und Gerichte des jeweiligen Mitgliedstaats feststellen.

Die Kommission fördert aber Maßnahmen, die sich gegen Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit richten. Finanzielle Unterstützung kann beispielsweise über das Programm „Grundrechte und Unionsbürgerschaft" ([1]) beantragt werden.

In diesem Zusammenhang sei auch auf das Programm „Jugend in Aktion" (2007-2013) verwiesen, das sich an junge Menschen zwischen 15 und 28 Jahren (in einigen Fällen auch zwischen 13 und 30 Jahren) richtet. Es soll bei jungen Europäern den Sinn für die aktive Teilhabe an der Gesellschaft sowie für Solidarität und Toleranz schärfen und ihr Interesse an der Mitgestaltung der Zukunft Europas wecken. Mit dem Programm werden vielfältige Maßnahmen zugunsten junger Leute und junger Arbeitnehmer gefördert, die die Mobilität innerhalb und außerhalb der Grenzen der EU sowie außerschulisches Lernen und den interkulturellen Dialog fördern sollen. Generell möchte die EU mit ihrer Strategie im Jugendbereich Maßnahmen auf nationaler und EU-Ebene unterstützen, die das Verständnis und den Respekt der Jugendlichen für die kulturelle Vielfalt erhöhen.

([1]) Siehe hierzu auch die Website der GD Justiz (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_de.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011326/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Nationalist tendencies in schools in Greece

According to current reports in the media, xenophobia and extreme Hellenism are on the rise in schools in Greece — in some cases with the support of the people in charge. Schoolchildren are being influenced by the propagation of nationalist sentiment and other social factors are also contributing to a deterioration of the atmosphere in schools.

Among other things, the extreme right-wing party 'Golden Dawn' is said to be actively recruiting members among schoolchildren and then providing them with paramilitary training. These developments should be viewed with concern both in relation to society as a whole and Europe in particular.

The Greek Ministry of Education is planning to establish an 'office for monitoring violence in schools' in an attempt to stem this wave of excessive nationalism.

1. Is the Commission already aware of the developments regarding increasing nationalism in Greece? If so, what conclusions has the Commission already drawn?

2. Does the Commission intend to make specific recommendations or to launch information strategies in an effort to stem this rising nationalism, particularly in schools?

3. Is the Commission aware of the current situation in Europe as a whole?

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

The Commission is deeply concerned about any racist or xenophobic incidents in schools. However, the Commission can only intervene if an issue of EC law is involved.

It is for national authorities and courts to investigate and determine whether a situation represents an incitement to violence or hatred.

The Commission also tackles racism and xenophobia by providing financial support to stakeholders' activities aimed at fighting these phenomena. Such support can be received for instance through the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme ([1]).

This is also the case with the Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013), for young people aged 15-28 (in some cases 13-30). It aims to inspire a sense of active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the EU's future. This programme supports a large variety of activities for young people and youth workers, and promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue. More generally, the EU Youth Strategy encourages at EU and national level measures to promote understanding and respect for cultural diversity among young people.

([1]) For further information please view the DG Justice website (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011327/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(12 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: 10 cristiani uccisi durante incursione notturna con machete e armi da fuoco nello stato di Borno, in Nigeria

Nel corso di quest'anno l'intolleranza religiosa in Nigeria ha conosciuto un aumento preoccupante. In un tragico caso, verificatosi durante il fine settimana del 1° e 2 dicembre 2012, la comunità cristiana del paese ha subito l'ennesimo attacco. Secondo quanto riferito da alcuni abitanti dello stato di Borno, un gruppo di uomini sarebbe andato di casa in casa, in un'area a prevalenza cristiana del villaggio isolato di Chibok, e avrebbe sgozzato dieci persone. Un ex consigliere del villaggio, sfuggito all'attacco, ha raccontato di come il gruppo sia giunto durante la notte e abbia appiccato il fuoco alle abitazioni, prima di uccidere le vittime. La stessa fonte ha riferito di aver contato dieci corpi e ha dichiarato di sospettare che la responsabilità dell'incursione sia da attribuire al gruppo Boko Haram.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere alle domande seguenti:

1. È a conoscenza di questo attacco, la cui notizia è stata divulgata di recente, contro i cristiani che vivono nello stato di Borno, in Nigeria?

2. Tenuto conto del proliferare degli attacchi contro i cristiani in Nigeria quest'anno, cosa ritiene di poter fare per sostenere maggiormente la comunità cristiana in Nigeria?

3. Cos'altro ritiene che possa essere fatto per aiutare a stabilizzare questa delicata regione di conflitto religioso in cui, secondo i gruppi che si occupano di diritti umani, più di 3.000 persone sarebbero state uccise da Boko Haram dal 2010 a oggi?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 febbraio 2013)

L'inasprirsi della violenza in alcune zone della Nigeria settentrionale è fonte di crescenti preoccupazioni per quanti si trovano all'interno e all'esterno del paese e prende di mira civili innocenti, sia cristiani che musulmani, nonché le istituzioni dello Stato. L'UE collabora con la Nigeria per sostenerla nel difficile tentativo di creare condizioni di sicurezza durature e di agire sui fattori che contribuiscono alla radicalizzazione e alla violenza, sia mediante un costante dialogo politico sulle strategie più idonee ad affrontare i problemi, sia con interventi di aiuto mirati. Di recente, una missione inviata in Nigeria ha esaminato forme specifiche di sostegno alla lotta al terrorismo. L'UE intende aiutare le autorità nigeriane a garantire lo Stato di diritto e il rispetto dei principi in materia di diritti umani.

L'UE realizza già una serie di programmi di assistenza sociale, ad esempio nel settore della maternità e in materia di risorse idriche nel nord del paese. La Commissione sta tuttavia esaminando la possibilità di concentrarsi maggiormente, nell'ambito dell'11° Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES), su programmi integrati volti a far fronte all'insieme dei problemi economici e sociali all'origine della violenza.

Inoltre, nel luglio 2012 l'UE ha appoggiato lo sviluppo delle capacità di mediazione in una delle aree più a rischio, avvalendosi dei fondi provenienti da un'iniziativa speciale del Parlamento. Un altro progetto imperniato sulla prevenzione dei conflitti e sull'occupazione giovanile nella regione è in fase di elaborazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011327/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: 10 Christians killed in an overnight machete and gun attack in Borno State in Nigeria

Religious intolerance has been increasing this year in Nigeria at a worrying rate. In an unfortunate incident, the country's Christian community was attacked yet again on the weekend of 1 and 2 December 2012. Residents in Borno State reported that a group of men had gone from house to house in a largely Christian area of the remote village of Chibok, where they slit the throats of ten people. A former village councillor who escaped the attack said that men came at night and set people's houses on fire before killing their victims. The same councillor said he counted ten bodies, stating that he suspected that the Boko Haram group was responsible for the attack.

In light of this information, can the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of this most recently reported attack on Christians living in Borno State in Nigeria?

2. As there unfortunately seems to be a trend of attacks against Christians in Nigeria this year, what does the Commission think it could do to further aid Nigeria's Christian community?

3. What more does the Commission believe needs to be done to help stabilise this fragile region of religious conflict in which, according to human rights groups, more than 3 000 people have been killed by Boko Haram since 2010?

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

The escalating violence in parts of northern Nigeria is a growing cause of concern for those inside and outside the country. It targets innocent civilians, both christians and muslims, and the institutions of the state. The EU is working with Nigeria to help it tackle the challenges of creating durable security and dealing with the factors conducive to radicalisation and violence, through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate approaches to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions. A mission was recently in Nigeria to examine specific forms of support to fight terrorism. The EU's objective is to help the Nigerian authorities ensure the rule of law and the respect of human rights principles.

The EU already carries out a number of programmes, providing social assistance, e.g. maternal care, and water resources in the north. The Commission is considering, however, focusing more attention under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) on integrated programmes that tackle the full range of economic and social challenges that give impetus to the violence.

In addition, in July 2012, the EU provided capacity building for mediation in one of the most fragile areas, using funds from a special initiative by Parliament. Another project focusing on conflict prevention and youth employment for this area is under preparation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011328/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(12 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Gravi condizioni di sicurezza per i funzionari e i leader delle comunità in Afghanistan

I tragici incidenti avvenuti di recente hanno posto in evidenza la gravità delle attuali condizioni di sicurezza per i funzionari politici e i leader delle comunità in Afghanistan. Eventi di questo genere destano grande preoccupazione in un momento in cui l'UE si sta impegnando per promuovere la buona governance in Afghanistan. Nell'arco della stessa giornata Najia Sidiqi, direttore ad interim del dipartimento per le questioni femminili nella provincia di Laghman, è stata uccisa da colpi di arma da fuoco mentre si recava al lavoro e il generale Mohammad Musa Rasuli, capo della polizia di Nimroz, è rimasto ucciso rientrando a casa dalla provincia di Herat, quando la sua auto è stata colpita da una bomba posizionata sulla strada.

Nel dipartimento per le questioni femminili di Langhman Najia Sidiqi era subentrata a Hanifa Safim, sostenitrice del trattamento equo delle donne, uccisa durante un attentato dinamitardo nel luglio del 2012. Inoltre, il 6 dicembre 2012 Asadullah Khalid, capo dell'intelligence afghana, è rimasto ferito in un attentato suicida a Kabul a opera di un militante talebano travestito da inviato di pace.

Alla luce delle informazioni suesposte, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È al corrente dell'omicidio di Najia Sidiqi e di Mohammad Musa Rasuli e del tentativo di omicidio nei confronti di Asadullah Khalid? Quale analisi può fornire in merito a tali avvenimenti? Che cosa intende per sforzi di pace?

2. In che modo collabora attualmente con l'Afghanistan per promuovere la sicurezza delle donne leader afghane? Ritiene che a partire dal 2014 le condizioni di sicurezza in Afghanistan saranno tali da garantire ai leader lo svolgimento del loro lavoro, considerando che al momento gli attacchi si verificano mentre nel paese sono ancora presenti truppe straniere?

3. L'UE è impegnata attivamente nella promozione della buona governance in Afghanistan attraverso cinque sottocategorie: riforma della polizia, riforma della pubblica amministrazione, giustizia, governance subnazionale ed elezioni. Poiché le condizioni di sicurezza si presentano tuttora estremamente pericolose, come ritiene possibile migliorare le strutture di governance, con particolare riferimento alle sottocategorie summenzionate? Nella prospettiva del 2014, quali aree della politica dell'UE devono essere rafforzate per promuovere ulteriormente la sicurezza dei funzionari e dei leader delle comunità in Afghanistan, in particolare delle donne?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(12 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha fermamente condannato l'uccisione dell'attivista per i diritti delle donne Nadia Seddiqi ed è a conoscenza degli altri gravi incidenti a cui si fa riferimento, che rientrano in una serie di manifestazioni di violenza in atto nei confronti di influenti leader religiosi, di tribù e di comunità responsabili di decisioni importanti in materia di transizione e riconciliazione.

Il processo di pace è stato intensificato attraverso le recenti iniziative dell'Alto consiglio afghano per la pace e la liberazione dei prigionieri talebani in Pakistan. L'UE ritiene che il risultato debba rispettare le «linee rosse» convenute dalla comunità internazionale e dal governo dell'Afghanistan, ossia la rinuncia alla violenza e al terrorismo e il rispetto della costituzione afghana, comprese le disposizioni in materia di diritti umani e, in particolare, delle donne.

Sebbene spetti alle autorità afghane garantire la sicurezza dei propri cittadini, l'UE si concentrerà sul sostegno a meccanismi di attuazione quali operazioni di polizia, gestione dei settori della polizia e della giustizia e governance in generale. L'accordo di Tokyo sul quadro di responsabilità reciproca definisce in dettaglio gli impegni delle autorità afghane e della comunità internazionale, cui fa riferimento l'accordo di cooperazione tra l'UE e l'Afghanistan, in corso di negoziazione. L'Unione europea continuerà a esercitare pressioni sulle autorità afghane affinché rispettino tutti gli impegni assunti, compresa la riforma del settore della giustizia che accusa ritardi. L'UE ha deciso di rinviare il proprio sostegno finanziario alla riforma giudiziaria fino a quando non sarà posto in essere un programma di priorità nazionale credibile, che tenga conto della priorità accordata alla riforma di tale settore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011328/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Grave security situation for officials and community leaders in Afghanistan

Recent tragic incidents have highlighted the ongoing grave security situation for political officials and community leaders in Afghanistan. Events such as these are extremely concerning at a time when the EU is working to promote good governance in Afghanistan. In the same day, Najia Sidiqi, acting head of the women's affairs department for Laghman province, was shot and killed on her way to work and General Mohammad Musa Rasuli, Nimroz's police chief, was killed whilst returning home from Herat province when his vehicle struck a roadside bomb.

Ms Sidiqi had taken over the Laghman women's affairs department from Hanifa Safi, a leading advocate for the fair treatment of woman who was killed in a bomb attack in July 2012. Furthermore, on 6 December 2012 Asadullah Khalid, Afghanistan's spy chief, was wounded in a Taliban suicide bombing in Kabul by a man dressed as a peace envoy.

In light of this information, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of the killings of Ms Sidiqi and Mr Rasuli and the attempted killing of Mr Khalid? What analysis can it provide with regard to these acts? What do they mean for peace efforts?

2. How is the Commission working with Afghanistan to promote security for female Afghan leaders? Does it believe Afghanistan will be safe enough post-2014 for those leaders to do their jobs adequately, considering that these sorts of attack are taking place while foreign troops are still in Afghanistan?

3. The EU is actively promoting good governance in Afghanistan via the five subsectors of police reform, public administration reform, justice, sub-national governance and elections. Given that the security situation continues to be extremely dangerous, how does the Commission think governance structures in Afghanistan can be improved, with particular reference to these subsectors? Looking ahead to 2014, what areas of EU policy need to be strengthened in order further to promote security for officials and community leaders in Afghanistan, especially women?

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

The HR/VP has strongly condemned the killing of the women's rights activist Nadia Seddiqi and is aware of the other grave incidents referred to. These are part of a pattern of ongoing violence aimed at influential religious, tribal and community figures ahead of important decisions regarding transition and reconciliation.

The peace process has been stepped up with the recent initiatives of the Afghan High Peace Council and the release of Taliban prisoners in Pakistan. The EU's position is that the outcome must respect the 'red lines' agreed by the international community and the Government of Afghanistan, i.e. renunciation of violence and terrorism and the respect for the Afghan constitution, including its human rights provisions and, notably, the rights of women.

While it is for the Afghan authorities to ensure the safety of their nationals, the EU will concentrate on supporting the enabling mechanisms: policing, administration of the police and justice sectors, and governance generally. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework defines detailed commitments for both the Afghan authorities and the international community. The Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Afghanistan which is currently under negotiation refers to these. The EU will continue to press the Afghan authorities to implement their commitments in full, including the reform of the justice sector which has lagged behind. The EU decided to defer its financial support to judicial reform until a credible National Priority Programme was in place, reflecting the priority attached to reform in this sector.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011329/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 décembre 2012)

Objet: Liste des paradis fiscaux

L'OCDE tente depuis des années d'établir la liste des paradis fiscaux, sans toutefois parvenir à des résultats satisfaisants. Au sein même de l'UE, des efforts pour cibler ces pays dans diverses législations financières ont échoué.

1. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle donner une impulsion à ces efforts?

2. Quelles sont les sanctions imaginées par la Commission pour les pays identifiés?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(25 janvier 2013)

À la suite de l'initiative de l'OCDE visant à améliorer la transparence et l'échange d'informations, les 38 juridictions qui figuraient en 2000 sur la liste initiale des juridictions non coopératives ont toutes pris des engagements formels afin de mettre en œuvre les normes internationales en matière de transparence et d'échange d'informations. Afin d'assurer le suivi de la mise en œuvre effective, le forum global sur la transparence et l'échange d'informations participe actuellement à un processus d'évaluation par les pairs.

La récente recommandation relative à des mesures visant à encourager les pays tiers à appliquer des normes minimales de bonne gouvernance dans le domaine fiscal [C(2012) 8805] repose sur ces travaux et va plus loin en imposant également le respect des normes minimales relatives à la concurrence fiscale loyale, qui sont déjà appliquées par les États membres de l'Union et leurs territoires dépendants ou associés. Afin d'accroître le respect de ces deux ensembles de normes minimales, la Commission recommande aux États membres d'établir une liste noire des pays tiers qui ne respectent pas ces normes et de renégocier, suspendre ou dénoncer les conventions existantes conclues avec ces pays en matière de double imposition, en fonction de ce qui est le plus approprié. Pour ce qui est des pays qui respectent ces normes, la Commission recommande aux États membres de supprimer ces pays des listes noires et d'envisager d'entamer des négociations pour la conclusion de conventions fiscales bilatérales. En ce qui concerne enfin les pays tiers qui se sont engagés à respecter ces normes, la Commission recommande aux États membres d'envisager de participer à des programmes de coopération et d'assistance pour aider ces pays à lutter efficacement contre l'évasion fiscale et la planification fiscale agressive. La Commission renvoie également l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse donnée à la question écrite P-010648/2012, posée par M. George Sabin Cutaş.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011329/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: List of tax havens

The OECD has been trying to draw up a list of tax havens for years without success. Even within the EU, attempts at targeting these countries through various financial laws have failed.

1. How does the Commission intend to boost these efforts?

2. What sanctions does the Commission have in mind for the countries identified?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

Following the OECD initiative to improve transparency and exchange of information, all of the 38 jurisdictions initially listed as uncooperative jurisdictions in 2000 have in the meantime made formal commitments to implement the international standards of transparency and exchange of information. To monitor actual implementation, the Global Forum on transparency and exchange of information is currently engaged in a peer review process.

The recent Recommendation regarding measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters (C(2012)8805) builds on this work and goes further by additionally requiring compliance with minimum standards on fair tax competition, already applied by EU Member States and their dependent or associated territories. With a view to improving compliance with both sets of minimum standards the Commission recommends Member States to establish a blacklist of non-compliant third countries and renegotiate, suspend or terminate, as most appropriate, existing double tax conventions with such countries. With respect to compliant third countries, the Commission recommends Member States remove such countries from blacklists and consider initiating negotiations for bilateral tax conventions. With respect to third countries committed to complying with these standards, the Commission recommends Member States consider engaging in cooperation and assistance programs to help them fight effectively against tax evasion and aggressive tax planning. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-010648/2012 by Mr George Sabin Cutaş.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011330/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 décembre 2012)

Objet: Dumping de ZTE et Huawei

ZTE et Huawei, les deux principaux équipementiers télécoms chinois, proposent des prix inférieurs d'au moins 35 % aux prix du marché, au grand dam des équipementiers européens et américains qui ne cessent de dénoncer cet état de fait.

Ces deux entreprises sont ainsi régulièrement soupçonnées de profiter de subventions et d'aides illégales du gouvernement chinois qui leurs permettent de casser les prix pour remporter des marchés.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle lancer une procédure antidumping contre ZTE et Huawei?

2. La Commission pourrait-elle, le cas échéant, imposer des sanctions via un relèvement des droits douaniers augmentant mécaniquement le prix des produits des deux groupes?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(25 janvier 2013)

La Commission peut envisager d'ouvrir une enquête *antidumping* ou antisubventions lorsqu'elle dispose de suffisamment d'éléments prouvant à première vue qu'il y a subvention ou *dumping* et que l'industrie de l'Union subit un préjudice important causé par les importations faisant l'objet de l'une ou l'autre de ces pratiques. Si la Commission obtient des preuves en ce sens, elle examinera soigneusement tous les faits et ouvrira éventuellement une enquête si toutes les conditions juridiques sont réunies. Des droits compensateurs ou *antidumping* peuvent être institués dès lors qu'une enquête menée par la Commission démontre que les conditions juridiques nécessaires à cet effet sont remplies. Ces mesures peuvent prendre la forme de droits de douane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011330/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Dumping by ZTE and Huawei

ZTE and Huawei, the top two manufacturers of telecoms components in China, price their goods at 35% or more below market prices, to the constant annoyance of the European and US manufacturers which suffer as a result.

These two firms are therefore habitually suspected of receiving illegal subsidies and aid from the Chinese Government, allowing them to slash prices and win contracts.

1. Is the Commission planning an anti-dumping procedure against ZTE and Huawei?

2. Could the Commission, if necessary, impose sanctions by raising customs duties and thereby mechanically increasing the price of goods from these two firms?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

The Commission can consider opening an anti-subsidy and/or an anti-dumping investigation when it has sufficient prima facie evidence that dumping and/or subsidisation takes place and the Union industry is suffering material injury, caused by the dumped and/or subsidised imports. If the Commission obtains such evidence, it will carefully analyse all facts and may initiate an investigation if all legal conditions are met. Anti-subsidy and/or anti-dumping duties may be imposed after an investigation by the Commission demonstrates that the legal conditions to do so are met. Such measures can take the form of tariff duties.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011331/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(12 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Necesitatea unei prevederi în protocolul unui studiu clinic

În continuarea răspunsului Comisiei Europene din data de 5 noiembrie 2012 referitor la întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris numărul E-008806/2012, aș vrea să fac câteva precizări.

Având în vedere că, în cazul încheierii premature a unui studiu clinic, se modifică raportul risc/beneficiu prevăzut inițial de protocolul studiului, adresez Comisiei următoarea întrebare cu referire la prevederile propunerii de regulament COM(2012)0369:

— care este opinia Comisiei cu privire la introducerea, în amintita propunere de regulament privind studiile clinice, a obligativității prezentării măsurilor care sunt sau nu luate de sponsor în cazul încheierii premature a studiului clinic?

Consider că este etic ca pacientul pasibil a fi inclus în studiu să cunoască situația sa în cazul încheierii premature a studiului, înainte de a semna consimțământul în cunoștință de cauză („informed consent").

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(30 ianuarie 2013)

Propunerea Comisiei de Regulament privind trialurile clinice ([1]) clarifică, la articolul 35, faptul că oprirea înainte de termen a unui trial clinic din cauza modificării raportului riscuri/beneficii se consideră o modificare substanțială a unui trial clinic. Aceasta înseamnă că oprirea înainte de termen este supusă unui mecanism de control și de aprobare prealabilă. În acest context, sponsorul trebuie să transmită, *inter alia*, informații referitoare la posibilele consecințe pentru subiecții care sunt deja incluși în trialul clinic (a se vedea anexa II, secțiunea 5 din propunere).

Propunerea Comisiei prevede, de asemenea, la articolele 28 și 29, că subiectului trebuie să i se ofere posibilitatea să înțeleagă obiectivele, riscurile și inconvenientele trialului clinic, precum și condițiile în care urmează să se desfășoare acesta. Informațiile trebuie să se refere la natura, semnificația, implicațiile și riscurile trialului clinic. Propunerea nu se referă în mod specific la aspecte legate de oprirea înainte de termen a unui trial clinic. În funcție de circumstanțele fiecărui trial clinic, se pot include informații despre oprirea înainte de termen.

([1]) COM(2012)369.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011331/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Need for a provision in the protocol of clinical trials

Further to the Commission's answer of 5 November 2012 to Written Question E-008806/2012, and bearing in mind that the early termination of a clinical trial alters the risk-benefit ratio initially envisaged in the trial protocol, can the Commission answer the following questions in relation to its proposal for a regulation COM(2012)0369:

What is the Commission's view on the introduction of a provision in the proposal for a clinical trials regulation concerning the mandatory setting-out of the measures that must be taken by sponsors in the event of the early termination of the clinical trial?

Does the Commission consider it an ethical requirement that patients who may be included in the trial should be made aware of their situation in the event of its early termination, before giving their informed consent?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2013)

The proposal of the Commission for a Clinical Trials Regulation ([1]) clarifies, in its Article 35, that early termination of a clinical trial for reasons of a change of the benefit-risk balance shall be considered as a substantial modification of a clinical trial. This means that an early termination is subject to a scrutiny and pre-approval. In this context, the sponsor has to submit, *inter alia*, information of the possible consequences for subjects already included in the clinical trial (see Annex II, Section 5 of the proposal).

The Commission proposal also provides, in its Articles 28 and 29, that the subject has to be given the opportunity to understand the objectives, risks and inconveniences of the clinical trial, as well as the conditions under which it is to be conducted. Information has to cover the nature, significance, implications and risks of the clinical trial. The proposal does not specifically refer to issues of early termination of the clinical trial. Depending on the circumstances of each clinical trial, this may include information about possible early termination.

([1]) COM(2012)369.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011332/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Recursos dedicados a las necesidades básicas de los pobres europeos

El pasado 24 de octubre, László Andor, Comisario europeo de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión, lanzaba la propuesta de la creación de un nuevo fondo complementario al Fondo Social Europeo para la lucha contra la pobreza en Europa en el período 2014-2020.

Según la propuesta de la Comisión, dicho nuevo fondo supondría un aporte extra de 2 500 millones de euros para apoyar el desarrollo de programas de los Estados miembros «destinados a suministrar alimentos a las personas más necesitadas, así como ropa y bienes esenciales a las personas sin hogar y a los niños que padecen privaciones materiales», según declaraciones del señor Andor.

La Estrategia 2020, desarrollada por la Comisión, especifica el objetivo del número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social. Los datos actualizados sobre pobreza confirman que los recortes en el gasto público están provocando en la sociedad europea un incremento sin precedentes del número de personas que viven bajo este umbral. Lejos de reducir la pobreza, la política económica neoliberal que se está imponiendo en muchos Estados miembros, basada estrictamente en las recomendaciones elaboradas por la Comisión Europea, está condenando a la pobreza a las personas trabajadoras.

Consideramos absolutamente necesaria la disposición inmediata de recursos para las personas económicamente más desfavorecidas en Europa, pero esta asistencia a los más necesitados no resulta suficiente para lograr la inclusión social. Debemos considerar que las últimas reformas laborales elaboradas aplicando las recomendaciones hechas por la misma Dirección General de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión son una de las principales causas de empobrecimiento de los trabajadores que día a día descienden bajo el umbral de la pobreza.

¿Cuáles son los mecanismos que la Comisión piensa adoptar para reducir el número de las personas que viven bajo el umbral de la pobreza y no solo mejorar su asistencia básica? ¿Cómo pretende la Comisión cubrir las necesidades básicas de los pobres europeos con una dotación aproximada de 101,6 euros anuales per cápita?

En opinión de la Comisión, ¿cómo puede resultar inclusivo dicho fondo de carácter asistencial en un contexto laboral de flexibilización que en buena parte de los Estados miembros está expulsando cada día a más trabajadores y obligándoles a vivir bajo el umbral de la pobreza?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de febrero de 2013)

El FEAD ([1]) propuesto por la Comisión no pretende hacer frente por sí solo a las privaciones de los ciudadanos europeos más vulnerables, aunque sí debería contribuir a ello apoyando los dispositivos nacionales.

Para ello, la Comisión propone un instrumento que garantiza a la vez una gran previsibilidad de los recursos y una gran flexibilidad. Efectivamente, el Fondo lo pondrían en marcha los Estados miembros a través de programas plurianuales. Cada país tendría, pues, la posibilidad de dar prioridad a una de las formas de asistencia ([2]) o de combinarlas, para afrontar las situaciones nacionales de la mejor manera posible.

Este nuevo instrumento se integrará plenamente en la política de cohesión social y completará los instrumentos ya existentes, especialmente el FSE ([3]), que debería destinar el 20 % de su dotación a las intervenciones en favor de la inclusión social. El FEAD permitirá aportar una ayuda material, pero también proponer itinerarios de inserción a las personas que, al estar excluidas del mercado de trabajo, no pueden beneficiarse de las medidas de activación del FSE.

([1]) Fondo de Ayuda Europea para los Más Necesitados.
([2]) Alimentos o bienes de primera necesidad para personas sin hogar o niños indigentes.
([3]) Fondo Social Europeo.

A través del mecanismo de coordinación de las políticas económicas y de empleo, y en concreto de las recomendaciones específicas dirigidas a cada país en el contexto del semestre europeo, la Unión Europea anima a los Estados miembros a poner en marcha reformas fundamentales que permitan el crecimiento y la creación de puestos de trabajo sostenibles a largo plazo. Al mismo tiempo, la Unión apoya la aplicación de esas reformas y los necesarios esfuerzos de inversión mediante los fondos de la política de cohesión, que son el Fondo de Desarrollo Regional, el Fondo de Cohesión y el FSE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011332/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Funds to provide basic necessities for poor people in the EU

László Andor, the Commissioner responsible for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, proposed on 24 October 2012 that a new fund to combat poverty in Europe during the period 2014-2020 be set up, to run in tandem with the European Social Fund.

The Commission proposal states that a further EUR 2.5 billion would be needed for the new fund. This would support the development of programmes in the Member States which, in Mr Andor's words, 'aim to provide food to the most deprived people, and clothing and other essential goods to the homeless and to materially deprived children'.

One of the objectives of the Commission's Europe 2020 strategy is to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion. The latest figures on poverty confirm that cuts in public spending are causing an unprecedented rise in Europe in the number of people living below the poverty line. Far from reducing poverty, the neo-liberal economic policy being imposed in many Member States, based strictly on the Commission's recommendations, is condemning hard-working people to poverty.

We agree absolutely that funds have to be made available immediately for the people in Europe who are most economically deprived people, but assistance of this kind to those most in need will not be enough to bring about social inclusion. We have to see that the latest labour reforms drawn up on the basis of recommendations made, in fact, by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion are one of the principal causes of impoverishment for workers daily sinking below the poverty line.

What measures does the Commission plan to implement which will not simply help people with the basics but reduce the number that are living below the poverty line? How can the Commission hope to cover the basic needs of impoverished people in Europe with a subsidy of approximately EUR 101.60 per capita per year?

In the Commission's view, how can this welfare fund bring about inclusion while in a large number of Member States labour market flexibility is driving more and more workers out and below the poverty line?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(18 février 2013)

Le FEAD ([1]) proposé par la Commission n'a pas pour ambition de répondre à lui seul au dénuement des citoyens européens les plus vulnérables. Il devrait néanmoins y contribuer en soutenant les dispositifs nationaux.

Pour ce faire, la Commission propose un instrument qui assure à la fois une grande prévisibilité des ressources et une grande flexibilité. En effet, le Fonds serait mis en œuvre par les États membres à travers des programmes multi-annuels. Chaque pays serait donc en mesure d'adapter l'assistance en privilégiant une des formes d'assistance ([2]) ou en les combinant, afin de répondre au mieux aux situations nationales.

Ce nouvel instrument s'inscrira pleinement dans la politique de cohésion sociale où il viendra compléter les instruments déjà existants, notamment le FSE ([3]), dont 20 % devrait être alloué aux interventions en faveur de l'inclusion sociale. Le FEAD permettra d'apporter une aide matérielle mais aussi de proposer des parcours d'insertion aux personnes qui, trop éloignées du marché du travail, ne peuvent pas bénéficier des mesures d'activation du FSE.

([1]) Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis.
([2]) Nourriture ou biens de base pour les personnes sans-abris ou les enfants en grande pauvreté.
([3]) Fond social européen.

À travers le mécanisme de coordination des politiques économiques et de l'emploi, et en particulier les recommandations spécifiques adressées à chaque pays dans le cadre du semestre européen, l'Union européenne incite les États membres à mettre en place des réformes essentielles pour permettre une croissance et une création d'emploi soutenables à long terme. En même temps, l'Union soutient la mise en œuvre de ces réformes et les efforts d'investissement nécessaires avec les fonds de la politique de cohésion, dont le Fonds de développement régional, le Fonds de cohésion et le FSE.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011333/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Situación de la población inmigrante en España

La ONG española Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM) ha publicado un estudio, titulado «Impactos de la Crisis sobre la Población Inmigrante», con el objetivo de poner de manifiesto la situación de la población inmigrada en España.

Según los datos presentados en el citado informe, desde el estallido de la crisis financiera internacional en 2007 se ha reducido considerablemente el saldo migratorio en España, pasando de 700 000 personas en 2007 a 100 000 personas por año. Pero esta importante caída del saldo no se ha debido al retorno masivo que anuncian las autoridades, sino más bien a la intensa caída de nuevas entradas de inmigrantes. Solo en 2011, se ha producido un saldo negativo de un 1,5 %. Por tanto, la gran mayoría de la población inmigrante continúa residiendo en el país.

Actualmente continúa viviendo en España un gran número de población inmigrante que se ejemplifica en el contundente dato de que el 20 % de la población en edad de trabajar es de origen extranjero. Esta importante cifra nos debe poner en alerta sobre la precariedad de sus condiciones ante la intensa crisis económica que afronta el país y que afecta más a los colectivos más vulnerables. A modo de ejemplo, en 2010 más del 50 % de los trabajadores inmigrados cobraba un salario inferior al salario mínimo interprofesional en cómputo anual, lo que supone un indicador de una situación de precariedad e indefensión ante la imposición de condiciones laborales abusivas. Según el informe, la brecha social entre nacionales y extranjeros ha aumentado considerablemente desde el inicio de la crisis, en términos de mayores tasas de desempleo, menor cobertura por la seguridad social, mayor presencia de contratos temporales y precarios, menores ingresos medios, mayores carencias materiales, etc.

Dicha situación exige una intensa intervención a través de políticas sociales que garanticen la igualdad de trato y no traten de generar bolsas de exclusión de parte de la población que sufra todas las consecuencias de la crisis. Desde 2008, el Gobierno español solo ha impulsado dos leyes sobre el tema, y todas desde un enfoque restrictivo: sobre el control de fronteras y los planes de retorno.

¿Considera la Comisión que el colectivo inmigrado en España es un colectivo de especial atención frente a los efectos de la crisis económica? ¿Considera la Comisión suficiente la política de inclusión del Gobierno? ¿Qué medidas propone la Comisión para la protección de dicho sector, que afronta los efectos más intensos de la crisis?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión está de acuerdo en que la crisis económica y financiera ha tenido una gran repercusión en las condiciones sociales y de empleo del país que ha afectado especialmente a los grupos más vulnerables. Los hogares de inmigrantes siguen entre los que más riesgo de pobreza corren, y se ha registrado en España un aumento del desempleo entre los ciudadanos de otros países ([1]).

El Gobierno español ha anunciado los preparativos de un plan nacional de acción para la inclusión social 2013-2016. La Estrategia Nacional de Empleo 2012-2014, destinada a fomentar el empleo de forma sostenible entre la población activa, apoya el acceso a un mercado de trabajo inclusivo. Esta Estrategia se centra en las personas con mayores dificultades para acceder a un puesto de trabajo (incluida la población inmigrante) y está cofinanciada por el Fondo Social Europeo

La Recomendación del Consejo, de 10 de julio de 2012, sobre el Programa Nacional de Reforma de 2012 de España y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España para 2012-15 ([2]), y, en particular, la recomendación n° 7 de este acto, invitan a España a mejorar la empleabilidad de los grupos vulnerables, junto con servicios eficaces de apoyo a los niños y a las familias, con el fin de mejorar la situación de las personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social, o ambas, y de incrementar por consiguiente el bienestar de los niños.

([1]) Según los datos del segundo trimestre de 2012 (en la horquilla de población de 15 a 74 años), el índice de desempleo de los inmigrantes se sitúa en el 35,8 %, lo que supera en 13,1 puntos porcentuales el índice de los nacionales españoles.
([2]) DO C 219 de 24.7.2012.

La Comisión considera prioritario fomentar la inclusión social y disminuir la pobreza, como se indica en el Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento, en consonancia con el objetivo de la Estrategia Europa 2020 de reducir el número de personas que viven en la pobreza y la exclusión social en un mínimo 20 millones de aquí a 2020 (de 1,4 a 1,5 millones de personas en el caso de España).

Los fondos de la UE son un instrumento excelente para desbloquear el crecimiento, crear empleo y paliar el impacto social de la crisis. Una de las prioridades del FSE en España es mejorar la empleabilidad, la inclusión social y la igualdad de oportunidades, lo que engloba también, en el caso de los inmigrantes, mejorar el acceso y las posibilidades de empleo y desarrollar sus capacidades a largo plazo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011333/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Plight of immigrants in Spain

The Spanish NGO International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has published a report entitled 'Impacts of the Crisis on the Immigrant Population', to highlight the plight of immigrants in Spain.

According to the data presented in this report, since the international financial crisis began in 2007, net migration to Spain has fallen considerably from 700 000 people in 2007 to 100 000 people per year. However, this significant reduction has not been due to the massive repatriations announced by the authorities, but rather to the sharp decline in new immigrant inflows. In 2011 alone, a negative balance of 1.5% was recorded. The vast majority of the immigrant population therefore continues to reside in the country.

A large number of immigrants currently continue to live in Spain, as illustrated by the hard fact that 20% of the working-age population is of foreign origin. This large figure should alert us to their precarious situation, given the severe economic crisis facing the country, which is having the most serious impact on the most vulnerable groups. For example, in 2010 more than 50% of immigrant workers earned less than the annual minimum wage, a fact that reflects their precarious situation and their defencelessness against abusive working conditions. According to the report, the social gap between nationals and foreigners has increased considerably since the beginning of the crisis, in terms of higher unemployment rates, lower social security coverage, more temporary and precarious contracts, lower average income, greater material deprivation, etc.

This situation demands substantial intervention through social policies that ensure equal treatment and do not try to create pockets of exclusion for a section of the population that is suffering all the effects of the crisis. Since 2008, the Spanish Government has enacted only two laws on the subject, both of which follow a restrictive approach: one on border controls, and the other on repatriation programmes.

Does the Commission believe that immigrants in Spain are a group requiring special attention in the light of the effects of the economic crisis? Does it believe that the Spanish government's inclusion policy is sufficient? What measures does it propose to protect this group, which is facing the most intense effects of the crisis?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission agrees that the economic and financial crisis has had a big effect on employment and social conditions, in particular for vulnerable groups. Immigrant households continue to be among those at greatest risk of poverty, while unemployment among foreign nationals has risen ([1]).

The Spanish Government has announced preparations for the national action plan for social inclusion for 2013-16. Access to an inclusive labour market is supported by the 2012-14 National Employment Strategy, which seeks to foster sustainable employment among the active population. It focuses on those with greatest difficulty in gaining access to employment (incl. the immigrant population) and receives funding by the ESF.

The Council Recommendation of 10 July 2012 on the National Reform Programme 2012 of Spain and the Council opinion on the Stability Programme for Spain, 2012–15 ([2]), in particular of Recommendation 7, invite Spain to improve the employability of vulnerable groups, combined with effective child and family support services, in order to improve the situation of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion, and consequently to achieve the well-being of children.

The Commission believes that promoting social inclusion and reducing poverty is a priority, as the 2013 Annual Growth Survey states, in line with the EU 2020 target for reducing those living in poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million by 2020 (1.4 to 1.5 million in Spain).

([1]) According to data for the second quarter of 2012 (15 to 74 age group), it stands at 35.8%, 13.1 percentage points higher than for Spanish nationals.
([2]) OJ C 219, 24.7.2012.

EU funds are a powerful instrument to unblock growth, create jobs and mitigate the social impact of the crisis. One of the priorities of the ESF in Spain is to enhance employability, social inclusion and equal opportunities, including improved access to jobs, long-term development and employment of migrants.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011334/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Esquilmación de los recursos pesqueros del Cuerno de África

Desde 1991, Somalia es un territorio que carece de un Estado de Derecho reconocido por la comunidad internacional. El territorio del país ha sido dividido entre diferentes milicias que consiguen imponer un monopolio de violencia a otras milicias.

Este contexto de violencia generalizada ha sido un verdadero polo de atracción para todo tipo de actividades ilegales de todas partes del mundo. El imperio de la violencia ha sido el hogar de los traficantes de droga, armas o incluso seres humanos, pero existe también un tipo de tráfico que, pese a parecer plenamente inofensivo, resulta quizás más destructivo: la pesca ilegal. Son muchos los barcos de diferentes pabellones que esquilman los recursos pesqueros, empleando técnicas ilegales en otros países, como por ejemplo las redes de arrastre, que les permiten obtener el máximo de capturas. Estas prácticas están destruyendo las abundantes reservas de recursos pesqueros que existían en la zona gracias a la explotación sostenible que llevan realizando las comunidades somalíes desde hace cientos de años.

Estas actividades ilegales, al no existir un Estado, no pueden ser perseguidas, ni existe ningún tipo de protección frente a los abusos sobre los recursos marinos de Somalia, y, ante esta degradación, son muchos los pescadores que se han transformado en «piratas» ante la desaparición de los recursos de los que tradicionalmente han vivido. Frente a esta indefensión de los recursos pesqueros de Somalia y de la forma de vida de los somalíes, la comunidad internacional solo ha actuado militarizando aún más la zona y dejando hacer a las flotas pesqueras, incluidas las europeas, que pueden pescar sin ningún tipo de control protegidas por las fuerzas militares de la OTAN. La Comisión debe garantizar el respeto de las normativas pesqueras internacionales y explotar los recursos pesqueros de manera sostenible, tanto en Europa como en el resto de las regiones del mundo.

¿Dispone la Comisión de información exacta sobre el volumen de capturas realizadas en aguas somalíes por barcos pesqueros de pabellón europeo? ¿Cuántos barcos europeos operan en dichas aguas? ¿Qué controles lleva a cabo la Comisión de los pesqueros con pabellón de algún Estado miembro que opera en Somalia? ¿Considera la Comisión que los controles realizados son suficientes para evitar en todo caso prácticas de pesca ilegal? ¿Calcula la Comisión el impacto ambiental del volumen de capturas de la flota europea en dichas aguas? En opinión de la Comisión, ¿puede suponer un caso de dumping ecológico y social con respecto al resto del sector pesquero europeo?

Respuesta del Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión carece de pruebas que confirmen las alegaciones de actividades de pesca ilegales de buques europeos en aguas de Somalia.

La pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada y la ubicación de los buques es, en primer lugar y ante todo, competencia del Estado miembro o de abanderamiento. No obstante, la Comisión puede solicitar registros de pesca e información sobre casos sospechosos, y actuar en consecuencia.

Todos los buques pesqueros de la UE en el Índico están sometidos a las normas de la Comisión del Atún para el Océano Índico y a la legislación de la UE, y son objeto de seguimiento en ese contexto. La Comisión considera que estos sistemas son los adecuados para impedir la pesca de los buques de la UE en la zona de 200 millas, y quisiera tranquilizar a Su Señoría afirmando que la Comisión investiga todas las alegaciones de fondo de pesca ilegal por parte de buques de la UE con el Estado miembro de que se trate.

Además, es importante señalar que la fuerza naval de la UE (EU Navfor) patrulla desde 2008, en el marco de la Operación Atalanta, frente al Cuerno de África y las aguas de la costa de Somalia.

La actuación de la UE contra la piratería implica a varios servicios de la Comisión, el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior y los Estados miembros. Sus efectos son particularmente eficaces en áreas como relaciones exteriores, desarrollo, protección marítima y transporte, asuntos jurídicos, ayuda humanitaria, pesca y asistencia técnica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011334/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Exploitation of fish stocks in the Horn of Africa

Since 1991, Somalia has lacked a rule of law recognised by the international community. The country's territory has been divided among various militias who manage to impose a monopoly of violence on other militias.

This context of widespread violence has been a real magnet for all kinds of illegal activities from around the world. The rule of violence has been home to drugs, arms and even human trafficking, but there is also another type of trafficking which, despite seeming completely inoffensive, is perhaps even more destructive: illegal fishing. Many vessels operating under different flags are exploiting fish stocks, using techniques that are illegal in other countries, such as trawl nets, to obtain the maximum catch. These practices are destroying the abundant reserves of fish stocks that were present in the area due to the sustainable fishing practices used by Somali communities for hundreds of years.

In the absence of a state, these illegal activities cannot be prosecuted, nor is there any type of protection against the abuse of Somalia's marine resources. Due to the deteriorating situation, many fishermen have become 'pirates', as the resources on which they have traditionally based their livelihood are disappearing. Given the defencelessness of Somalia's fish stocks and the Somalis' way of life, all that the international community has done is further militarise the area, leaving fishing fleets, including EU fleets, to fish unsupervised under the protection of NATO military forces. The Commission must ensure compliance with international fishing regulations and exploit fish stocks sustainably, both in Europe and in the rest of the world.

Does the Commission have accurate information on the volume of catches in Somali waters by fishing vessels operating under the EU flag? How many EU vessels operate in these waters? What checks has the Commission carried out on vessels operating under a Member State's flag in Somalia? Does it believe that these checks are enough to prevent illegal fishing practices? Is it calculating the environmental impact of the EU fleet's catch volumes in these waters? Does it believe that this might be a case of ecological and social dumping with regard to the rest of the EU fisheries sector?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2013)

The Commission has no evidence confirming the allegations of illegal fishing activities of European vessels in Somali waters.

IUU fishing activities and location of vessels is first and foremost a Member/Flag State competence. However, the Commission can request fishing records and information on suspicious cases, and act accordingly.

All EU fishing vessels in the Indian Ocean are bound by the rules of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and the EU legislation and are monitored in that context. The Commission considers that these systems are adequate to prevent fishing of EU vessels in the 200 mile zone and would like to reassure the Honourable Member that the Commission investigates any substantive allegations of illegal fishing by EU vessels with the Member State concerned.

In addition, it is relevant to note that the EU NAVFOR ATALANTA patrols since 2008 the Horn of Africa and the waters off the coast of Somalia.

The implication of the EU against piracy involves several services of the Commission, the European External Action Service and Member States. It is particularly active in areas such as external relations, development, maritime security and transport, legal affairs, humanitarian aid, fisheries and technical assistance.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011335/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Precios en origen

Las explotaciones agrícolas en Europa están afrontando una erosión de sus márgenes de renta que supone una verdadera amenaza a la actividad. Son miles las explotaciones que han ido desapareciendo a lo largo de los últimos años y esto supone una amenaza a la soberanía y seguridad alimentaria de la Unión a medio y largo plazo.

Nos encontramos ante un contexto internacional de crisis alimentaria y extrema volatilidad de los precios de los alimentos. Día a día las grandes multinacionales de la distribución y de la industria alimentaria estrangulan a los productores agrícolas a través de su absoluto control de la comercialización. Estas grandes compañías son capaces de imponer precios a los agricultores al encontrarse en un mercado asimétrico donde muchos pequeños productores tienen que negociar los precios con un número reducido de grandes distribuidores. La Unión Europea debe garantizar el futuro de nuestros agricultores y la estabilidad de los precios para asegurar a medio y largo plazo la seguridad alimentaria de la región.

La organización española Coordinadora de Organizaciones de Agricultores y Ganaderos (COAG) elabora el Índice de Precios en Origen y Destino de los alimentos (IPOD) para España, que el pasado mes de agosto arrojó una diferencia media de los precios del 444 % entre el origen y el supermercado. Este índice resulta fundamental para entender el verdadero problema del sector agrícola europeo y la nueva PAC debe legislar en favor del uso de este tipo de índices para lograr balancear la distribución de rentas entre los productores y los distribuidores de alimentos en Europa. Sin una regulación eficaz de los mercados agrícolas que imponga a las empresas distribuidoras unas condiciones de retribución justa del producto, la situación de los agricultores europeos continuará siendo la misma. La indicación del precio pagado al productor en el etiquetado de los productos agrarios podría suponer una alternativa a los abusos de las distribuidoras sobre los productores, y es una reivindicación ya tradicional de las organizaciones de agricultores.

¿Está la Comisión desarrollando índices como el citado IPOD para establecer objetivos dentro de la nueva PAC?

¿Está la Comisión planteándose integrar dicha reclamación en la normativa sobre etiquetado para garantizar una retribución justa a los agricultores? En caso positivo, ¿cuáles son los avances en dicha dirección? En caso negativo, ¿cuál es, según la Comisión, la justificación para no desarrollar la citada indicación?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión considera que una distribución desigual del valor añadido es perjudicial a largo plazo para la viabilidad de todos los interesados de la cadena alimentaria. Para paliar esos desequilibrios, actualmente se están realizando esfuerzos en el marco del Foro de Alto Nivel sobre la Mejora del Funcionamiento de la Cadena Alimentaria, en el que intervienen todos los agentes de esta cadena. La plataforma interempresarial del Foro ha creado un código de buenas prácticas y un mecanismo para ponerlo en práctica. La aplicación del código por las asociaciones signatarias, entre las cuales se encuentran por ahora la industria alimentaria y los comerciantes minoristas, se producirá este año paralelamente a las tareas que está realizando la Comisión para la elaboración de un Libro Verde sobre las relaciones contractuales injustas en la cadena alimentaria y la posterior evaluación de impacto sobre ese mismo asunto.

El instrumento europeo de supervisión de los precios de los alimentos contribuye a mejorar la transparencia de los precios a lo largo de la cadena facilitando información sobre los precios de determinados productos agrícolas en diferentes niveles de la cadena alimentaria.

La Comisión toma nota de la propuesta de etiquetado mencionada por Su Señoría, si bien considera que, por ahora, es más fácil dar solución a los problemas expuestos aplicando el mencionado código de buenas prácticas en materia de relaciones contractuales y las medidas propuestas para la futura PAC, las cuales tienen por objeto promover la cooperación entre los productores y mejorar así su capacidad de negociación. Entre esas medidas cabe mencionar el reconocimiento obligatorio de las organizaciones de productores, de sus asociaciones y de las organizaciones interprofesionales, la ampliación de la financiación del pilar II destinada a la creación de agrupaciones de productores en todos los Estados miembros y en todos los sectores agrícolas, así como la medida de «cooperación» propuesta al amparo del pilar II, que ofrece diversos tipos posibles de ayuda a las explotaciones pequeñas y medianas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011335/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Farm gate prices

Farms in Europe are seeing their income margins tumble, posing a real threat to their livelihood. Thousands of farms have disappeared in recent years and this jeopardises the EU's medium- and long-term food sovereignty and security.

We are facing an international food crisis and extreme volatility in food prices. Every day, large multinationals in the distribution and food industry strangle farmers due to their absolute control over the market. These large companies are able to impose prices on farmers, who find themselves in an asymmetric market where large numbers of small producers have to negotiate prices with a small number of large distributors. The European Union must guarantee our farmers' future and price stability to ensure the region's medium- and long-term food security.

The Spanish organisation Coordinator of Farmer and Livestock Breeder Organisations (COAG) compiles the Origin-Destination Price Index (IPOD) for Spain, which in August of this year showed an average price difference of 444% between farm gate and supermarket prices. This index is essential to understanding the real issue in the European agricultural sector. The new common agricultural policy (CAP) should legislate in favour of using such indices to balance income distribution between European food producers and distributors. Without an effective regulation of agricultural markets that imposes fair product payment conditions on the distribution companies, the European farmers' plight will remain the same. Displaying the price paid to the producer on the labels of agricultural products could be an alternative to the distributors' abuse of the producers, and is something that farmer organisations have been demanding for a long time.

Is the Commission developing indices such as the IPOD to set goals within the new CAP?

Does it plan to include this requirement in the labelling regulations to guarantee a fair return to farmers? If so, what steps has it taken in this regard? If not, how does it justify its failure to develop such an initiative?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission considers that an imbalanced distribution of value added is detrimental to the long term viability for all stakeholders of the food supply chain. Ongoing efforts to address such imbalances are made in the framework of the High Level Forum for a better functioning food supply chain, involving all food chain actors. The Business to Business platform of the Forum has developed a code of good practices along with an enforcement mechanism. The implementation of the code by the signatory associations, including so far the food industry and retailers, will take place this year in parallel with further work by the Commission on a Green Paper on unfair contractual relations in the food chain and a subsequent impact assessment on the same issue.

The European Food Prices Monitoring Tool contributes to improving the transparency of prices along the chain through information on prices at different levels of the food supply chain for selected agricultural commodities.

The Commission takes note of the labelling approach set out by the Honourable Member of Parliament. However it believes that the challenges are best addressed at this stage through the aforementioned code of good practices on contractual relations together with the measures proposed for the future CAP that aim to promote producer cooperation and thereby improve bargaining power of producers. Such measures include the mandatory recognition of producer organisations, their associations and interbranch organisations and the extension of Pillar II funding for the setting up of producer groups in all Member States and all agricultural sectors as well as the 'cooperation' measure proposed under Pillar II offering a range of potential types of support to small and medium-sized farms.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011336/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Reducción de salarios a los investigadores en España

En la nómina del mes de diciembre del presente año 2012, unos 1 000 investigadores de la Universidad de Granada verán reducido su salario en un 84 % al haber declarado el Gobierno que iba a recortarles una catorceava parte de sus ingresos. El caso de la Universidad de Granada es importante, puesto que es una de las pocas universidades que no ha compensado dicha reducción en la nómina de sus investigadores.

Estos investigadores, tanto de la Universidad de Granada como de otras universidades españolas, cuentan con unos contratos absolutamente precarios y con un nivel muy bajo de ingresos. Los investigadores en España deben afrontar decenios de precariedad y nula garantía de su continuidad para después tener que emigrar al no existir suficientes empresarios que sean capaces de invertir en nuevas tecnologías, la única forma de generar crecimiento económico en España. La mayoría de los empresarios españoles solo son capaces de vender pisos y contratar a camareros, mientras abandonan el país los investigadores más cualificados.

Pero, más allá de la precariedad de este sector de la población, el problema surge cuando los fondos que han financiado sus contratos e investigaciones proceden de proyectos de la Unión Europea que cofinancian buena parte de estas actividades académicas a tasas de un 75 % o un 80 %. Teniendo en cuenta esto, el Gobierno de España está desviando fondos asociados a actividades de investigación a otros fines establecidos por los objetivos del Gobierno. Esta práctica es completamente ilegal, ya que cualquier partida de fondos europeos está orientada a unos objetivos específicos y deberá posteriormente ser adecuadamente auditada para garantizar el cumplimiento de los mismos.

¿Está la Comisión informada de la reducción de los salarios de los investigadores por parte del Gobierno español en proyectos cofinanciados por la Unión Europea?

¿Qué medidas piensa emplear la Comisión para garantizar que los fondos destinados a dichos proyectos de investigación lleguen definitivamente a sus destinatarios? Si no pretende tomar medida alguna, ¿cómo justificará la Comisión en una futura auditoría de los proyectos de investigación afectados esta falta de cumplimiento de las condiciones de los contratos de los investigadores?

¿Piensa la Comisión presionar de alguna forma al Gobierno español para que proteja los intereses de sus investigadores a fin de tratar de impulsar el crecimiento de su economía a través de la inversión en I+D?

Respuesta de la Sra. Geoghegan-Quinn en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión señala a la atención de Su Señoría el hecho de que cada Estado miembro o empresario fija el salario de sus investigadores y ello no es competencia de la Unión Europea.

La Comisión ha declarado en distintas ocasiones, por ejemplo, en su Comunicación sobre una Unión por la innovación ([1]) y su Comunicación sobre el Espacio Europeo de Investigación ([2]), que, para garantizar el éxito de la estrategia Europa 2020, Europa debe atraer a los investigadores.

España ha adoptado el objetivo de inversión del 3 % del PIB ([3]) y ha confirmado que es necesario mejorar las condiciones en que se desarrolla la investigación ([4]). La Comisión supervisa la ejecución de las actuaciones emprendidas por los Estados miembros.

En el contexto del Semestre Europeo, en julio de 2012, el Consejo recomendó a España, sobre la base de una propuesta de la Comisión, que tomara medidas durante el período 2012-2013 para revisar las prioridades de gasto y reasignar fondos a fin de fomentar, entre otras cosas, la investigación y la innovación ([5]).

([1]) COM(2010) 546 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 392 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/targets/index_es.htm
([4]) Véanse las conclusiones del Consejo de 11 de diciembre de 2012: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/134168.pdf
([5]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/es/12/st11/st11273.es12.pdf

Además, según el marco regulador del Séptimo Programa Marco de investigación y desarrollo tecnológico (2007-2013), deben reembolsarse los costes realmente incurridos. La Comisión reembolsará los importes abonados a los investigadores y posteriormente consignados en la contabilidad. En cuanto a su preocupación de que puedan reembolsarse gastos no justificados (por ejemplo, salarios más elevados que los realmente abonados a los investigadores), cabe señalar que la Comisión recuperaría en tal caso el importe pagado de forma indebida, que quedaría de manifiesto en futuras auditorías.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011336/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Salary cuts for researchers in Spain

Some 1 000 researchers from the University of Granada will see their December 2012 salary cut by 84%, as the Government has declared that it will cut a fourteenth of their annual income. The University of Granada is an important case because it is one of the few universities that have not offset this reduction in their researchers' payroll.

These researchers, from the University of Granada and from other Spanish universities, have precarious contracts and earn a very low income. Researchers in Spain are facing decades of instability and a lack of job security. They must therefore emigrate in the absence of employers able to invest in new technologies: the only way to generate economic growth in Spain. Most Spanish employers are only capable of selling homes and hiring waiters, while the more qualified researchers are leaving the country.

Notwithstanding the instability facing this group, further problems stem from the fact that the funds that have financed their contracts and research come from European Union projects. The EU co-finances many of these academic activities at rates of 75% or 80%. With this in mind, the Spanish Government is diverting funds for research activities and using them for other ends, in accordance with its own objectives. This practice is totally illegal, since EU funds must be used for specific objectives and must later be properly audited to ensure compliance with them.

Is the Commission aware that the Spanish Government is making cuts to researchers' salaries in projects co-financed by the European Union?

What action will it take to ensure that funding for such research projects reaches its intended recipients? If no action is planned, how will it justify the failure to comply with the terms of the researchers' contracts in future audits of the research projects?

Will it put any pressure on the Spanish Government to protect the interests of its researchers, to try to boost its economic growth through investment in R R&D D?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that each Member State or private employer fixes the salary of its research personnel, and that this is not a competence of the European Union.

The Commission has repeatedly stated, for instance in its communications on the Innovation Union ([1]) and on the European Research Area ([2]), that for the Europe 2020 strategy to succeed, Europe must be attractive for researchers.

Spain endorsed the 3% GDP investment target ([3]) and confirmed the need to improve the conditions for research ([4]). The Commission monitors the implementation of the actions by Member States.

In the context of the European Semester, the Council recommended to Spain in July 2012, based on a proposal from the Commission, to take action during the period 2012-2013 by reviewing spending priorities and reallocating funds to support *inter alia* research and innovation ([5]).

Furthermore, the regulatory framework for the Seventh Framework Programme and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) defines that actual costs are reimbursed. Whatever is paid to the researcher and recorded subsequently in the accounts will be reimbursed by the Commission. If the concern is that unjustified expenditure would be reimbursed (f.i salaries higher than that what was actually paid to the researcher(s)), the Commission would recover the amount unduly paid; the latter could indeed be established during an audit.

([1]) COM(2010) 546 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 392 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/targets/index_en.htm
([4]) see Council Conclusions of 11 December 2012: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/134168.pdf
([5]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11273.en12.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011337/12
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Imposición de límites efectivos a la especulación financiera sobre los alimentos

El pasado 26 de octubre, el Parlamento Europeo aprobó en su Pleno el informe sobre la Directiva de Mercados de Instrumentos Financieros (MiFID) por la cual se pretende limitar el impacto que la especulación financiera está teniendo sobre los precios de los bienes agrícolas.

Durante los últimos años, con la crisis internacional de los mercados financieros, muchos activos financieros están buscando seguridad en «valores refugio», entre los cuales se encuentran los productos agrícolas básicos. Ante la inestabilidad de las tradicionales formas de capital, los bienes alimentarios básicos como el trigo, el maíz o el arroz suponen valores con los que los especuladores financieros pueden generar ganancias. Estas ganancias se producen con la elevación artificial de dichos precios que impactan la alimentación de millones de personas en el mundo, produciendo la extensión del hambre y la malnutrición, pese a la suficiencia de la producción mundial de alimentos.

Este importantísimo tema debe ser tratado con la máxima coherencia por parte del Consejo, que ahora debe revisar el texto para después llegar a un acuerdo a través de la negociación con el Parlamento para elaborar la regulación definitiva. En esta fase del proceso legislativo, la normativa tiene que colmar determinadas lagunas que existen en el informe aprobado por el Parlamento. Entre ellas podemos encontrar la limitación del número de contratos, pero no de las cantidades recogidas, pudiéndose ejercer movimientos que afecten al precio de las mercancías. También existen lagunas referentes a la extensión temporal de los límites que no tienen por qué aplicarse durante toda la vida útil de un derivado financiero.

¿Cómo piensa el Consejo colmar las lagunas señaladas en la Directiva MiFID que podrían permitir la actividad especulativa sobre mercancías alimentarias, pese a la reforma?

¿Dispone el Consejo de datos referentes al volumen de operaciones de las actividades especulativas del sector financiero europeo sobre los mercados de alimentos?

¿Qué mecanismos prevé el Consejo para evitar las actividades especulativas sobre los precios de los alimentos de inversores y grupos de inversores europeos desde terceros países?

Respuesta
(4 de marzo de 2013)

La Comisión presentó al Parlamento Europeo sus propuestas de Directiva y Reglamento sobre los mercados de instrumentos financieros (DMIF y RMIF) en octubre de 2011.

El Consejo aún está debatiendo la orientación general de ambas propuestas y es demasiado pronto para prejuzgar el resultado de dichas negociaciones, también en relación con el tema que menciona Su Señoría.

Una vez que el Consejo haya alcanzado un acuerdo sobre la orientación general, darán comienzo las negociaciones con el Parlamento Europeo, con vistas a llegar a un acuerdo entre ambos colegisladores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011337/12
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Imposing effective limits on financial speculation on food

In its plenary session of 26 October 2012, Parliament adopted the report on the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) which aims to limit the impact that financial speculation is having on the prices of agricultural goods.

In recent years, due to the global crisis in the financial markets, many financial assets have sought security in 'safe havens', one of which being agricultural commodities. Given the instability of traditional forms of capital, food staples such as wheat, maize and rice are assuming values from which financial speculators can profit. These profits are generated by artificially raising these prices, impacting the diet of millions of people worldwide and increasing hunger and malnutrition, despite adequate global food production.

This extremely important issue must be handled with the utmost consistency by the Council, which must now review the text and reach an agreement through negotiation with Parliament to draft the final regulation. At this stage of the legislative process, the regulations must fill certain gaps in the report adopted by Parliament. Among them is the limitation on the number of contracts, but not on the amounts collected, which enables movements that affect the price of goods. There are also gaps regarding the extension of time limits that need not be applied during the lifetime of a financial derivative.

How will the Council fill the gaps identified in the MiFID that could allow speculative activity on foodstuffs, despite the reform?

Does it have data on the volume of speculative activities conducted by the European financial sector on the foodstuffs market?

What mechanisms will it implement to prevent speculative activities on food prices by individual and groups of European investors from third countries?

Reply
(4 March 2013)

The Commission submitted its proposals for the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive and Regulation (MiFID and MiFIR) to the European Parliament and to the Council in October 2011.

The Council is still in the process of discussing its general approach both on the directive and on the regulation, and it is too early to prejudge the outcome of these negotiations, including with regard to the issue mentioned by the Honourable Member.

Once the Council has reached an agreement on its general approach, it will start negotiations with the European Parliament with a view to reaching an agreement between the two co-legislators.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011338/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Trade competition and animal welfare

The Commission will be aware of concerns that European egg producers, having made the investments to improve animal welfare standards required by the Laying Hens Directive, now face enhanced competition for the bulk supply of eggs and egg products to the food manufacturing industry, from producers in countries that do not have the same requirements.

While World Trade Organisation rules do not take account of animal welfare considerations, will the Commission indicate what progress it is making in negotiating the inclusion of such criteria in bilateral agreements, for example with the USA, Japan and Mercosur?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission has been working for years now to raise awareness and promote shared understanding on mutually agreed standards with the main EU trading partners. Animal welfare has been included in several bilateral trade agreements and technical collaboration with a number of trading partners has also been put in place to set up common objectives, address main animal welfare issues with a common approach and exchange knowledge and technical expertise to jointly contribute to the improvement of animal welfare.

In the EU strategy for animal welfare (2012-2015) ([1]), the Commission announces its intention to continue to include animal welfare in bilateral trade agreements.

This intention will continue in the bilateral trade negotations with Mercosur, and with Japan, once the negotiation starts. As for the United States, there are no Free Trade Agreement negotiations open at this stage.

([1]) The EU Strategy for the protection and welfare of animals (2012-2015) — COM(2012) 6 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011339/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Common EU fire safety standards

The Commission will be aware that domestic furniture fires are said to be responsible for the deaths of 1 500 people in Europe each year, and for serious injury to a further 15 000. The Commission will also be aware of the EU legislation intended to ensure that flame retardants authorised for use within Europe are safe.

Why has the Commission not yet proposed draft legislation to introduce common fire safety standards for furniture products placed on the EU market; and is it giving consideration to the introduction of such standards?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2013)

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to its answer to Written Question E-8102/2010 by Ms De Sarnez ([1]).

The study on the safety of flame retardants ([2]) referred to in the aforementioned answer demonstrated that publicly-available data on the health and environmental effects of flame retardants are incomplete. It is therefore currently not possible to identify safe flame retardants.

In the meantime, four of these substances have been identified as of very high concern and candidates for authorisation under REACH, out of which, the use of hexabromocyclododecane (HBCCD) has been subjected to authorisation requirement from 21 August 2015.

Concurrently the Commission is collecting information about other means of ensuring the fire safety of consumer products in dwellings, including furniture.

The Commission will again consider raising the issue of fire safety with Member States once available information indicates measures that do not compromise either consumer health or environmental protection.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/news/flame_retardant_substances_study_en.htm

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011340/12
za Komisijo
Alojz Peterle (PPE) in Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(12. december 2012)

Zadeva: Breme, ki je posledica kroničnih bolezni jeter v Evropi

Ocenjuje se, da 6 % prebivalcev EU (približno 29 milijonov ljudi) trpi zaradi kroničnih bolezni jeter, o katerih se poroča, da so peti najpogostejši vzrok smrti v EU, saj jim lahko pripišemo vsak šesti primer smrti. Leta 2004 je bila v EU-25 ocenjena stopnja umrljivosti pri kroničnih boleznih jeter 14,3 na 100 000 ([1]), kar je peti najpogostejši vzrok smrti v EU. To pomeni, da vsako leto zaradi kroničnih bolezni jeter umre 70 000 Evropejcev. Ta ocena ne vključuje smrti, povezanih z rakom jeter ([2]), niti bolezni jeter, ki so posledica alkohola. Ciroza jeter, pri kateri se alkohol šteje za poglavitni dejavnik tveganja, je vzrok za 1,8 % vseh smrti v evropski regiji, kot jo obravnava Svetovna zdravstvena organizacija. Poleg tega je v strategiji EU na področju alkohola omenjeno, da ta povzroči 7,4 % vseh težav z zdravjem in zgodnjih smrti v EU.

V nedavni študiji, predstavljeni na mednarodnem kongresu o jetrih leta 2012, je navedena ocena, da bolezni jeter v EU povzročijo povprečno vsaj 644,77 EUR stroškov na pacienta na mesec ([3]). Poleg tega pacienti in družinski oskrbovalci povprečno izgubijo 1,15 produktivnih dni na pacienta na mesec, kar je pomemben posredni strošek. Katere dejavnosti izvaja Komisija, da bi podpirala sekundarno preventivo in pomagala zdravnikom pri diagnosticiranju, saj posledice kroničnih bolezni jeter predstavljajo občutno breme?

Poleg tega so za nadzor teh bolezni potrebni primerljivi podatki – ali so posledica alkohola, virusov ali genetske nagnjenosti – da bi se povečala baza podatkov po EU, zagotovile informacije za oblikovanje politik in izboljšalo preprečevanje bolezni.

Kako namerava Komisija izboljšati evropski nadzor na področju kroničnih bolezni jeter?

Z encimskim testom jeter, kot je na primer GPT (ALT), je mogoče zgodnje ugotavljanje zdravstvenega stanja jeter. Ali bi torej Komisija soglašala s tem, da bi bilo treba test GPT (ALT) vključiti v raziskave kazalnikov zdravja, kot je evropska raziskava zdravstvenih pregledov (EHES) za osebe v starosti od 20 do 60 let, skupaj z drugimi ključnimi meritvami, kot sta krvni pritisk in krvni sladkor?

Glede na to, da se pri evropski raziskavi zdravstvenih pregledov (EHES) zbere več krvi, kot je potrebno, in ker je test GPT (ALT) enostaven in poceni, bi ga bilo mogoče izvajati ob le majhnih dodatnih finančnih in upravnih stroških, pridobili pa bi zelo uporabne in primerljive podatke.

Ali lahko Komisija pojasni, katere dejavnosti se trenutno izvajajo na področju alkohola, saj je bil ta izključen iz področja uporabe uredbe o zagotavljanju informacij o živilih? Ali bi bilo mogoče predvideti posebno zakonodajo o označevanju in trženju alkoholnih proizvodov v EU, kot to velja za živila in tobačne izdelke?

Odgovor komisarja Borga v imenu Komisije
(12. februar 2013)

Komisija se zaveda težav v zvezi s kroničnimi boleznimi jeter. Večina kroničnih bolezni jeter je povezanih z virusom hepatitisa B ali virusom hepatitisa C, ki spadata na področje spremljanja EU na podlagi Odločbe št. 2119/98/ES Evropskega parlamenta in Sveta o spremljanju in obvladovanju nalezljivih bolezni ([4]). Komisija ne namerava razširiti presejalnih pregledov za odkrivanje bolezni jeter zunaj področja spremljanja, kot je določeno v navedeni odločbi, saj so v skladu s členom 168(7) Pogodbe o delovanju Evropske unije za organizacijo in zagotavljanje zdravstvenega varstva odgovorne predvsem države članice.

V skladu z Uredbo (EU) št. 1169/2011 o zagotavljanju informacij o živilih potrošnikom mora Komisija do 13. decembra 2014 pripraviti poročilo glede upoštevanja zahtev o navajanju sestavin in označevanju hranilne vrednosti pri alkoholnih pijačah.

([1]) Statistični letopis EU 2006-2007.
([2]) Po oceni Svetovne zdravstvene organizacije 47,147 na 100 000 v EU-27 v letu 2008.
([3]) Fagiuoli, S. et al.
([4]) UL L 268, 3.10.1998.

Komisija ne predvideva dodatne zakonodaje o opozorilnih oznakah na alkoholnih pijačah. Vendar pa strategija EU za podporo državam članicam pri zmanjševanju škode zaradi uživanja alkohola ([5]) poudarja potrebo po obveščanju in ozaveščanju o vplivu škodljivega in nevarnega uživanja alkohola. V okviru te strategije Komisija spodbuja proizvajalce alkoholnih pijač, naj svoje pijače prostovoljno opremijo s sporočili, s katerimi bi potrošnike obveščali o zdravstvenih tveganjih.

Trenutno potekajo razprave o možnosti razvoja evropske raziskave zdravstvenih pregledov in o vprašanjih, ki bi jih države članice želele vključiti vanjo.

([5]) COM(2006) 625 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011340/12
to the Commission
Alojz Peterle (PPE) and Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Burden resulting from chronic liver disease in Europe

Chronic liver disease is estimated to affect 6% of the EU's population (approx. 29 million people) and is reported to be the EU's fifth-biggest killer, accounting for at least one in six deaths. The mortality rate for chronic liver disease was estimated at 14.3 per 100 000 in the EU-25 in 2004 ([1]), making it the fifth most common cause of death in the EU. This means that more than 70 000 Europeans are dying from chronic liver disease every year. This estimate does not include deaths related to liver cancer ([2]) or liver disease caused by alcohol. Liver cirrhosis, for which alcohol is considered to be the main risk factor, accounts for 1.8% of all deaths in the WHO Europe region. Furthermore, the EU alcohol strategy mentions alcohol as the net cause of 7.4% of all ill-health and early death in the EU.

A recent study, presented at the International Liver Congress 2012, estimates that liver disease in the EU costs on average at least EUR 644.77 per patient per month ([3]). In addition, patients and family caregivers lost an average of 1.15 days of productivity per patient per month, an important indirect cost. In view of this significant burden resulting from chronic liver disease, what is the Commission doing to assist in secondary prevention and help doctors in their diagnoses?

Furthermore, comparable data is needed for the surveillance of chronic liver disease as such, be it alcohol- or virus-related or due to a genetic predisposition, in order to increase the evidence base across the EU, inform policy development and enhance disease prevention.

How does the Commission intend to improve European surveillance as regards chronic liver disease?

A liver enzyme test, such as the GPT (ALT), gives an early indication of the state of health of a liver. Would the Commission therefore agree that a GPT (ALT) test should be included in health indicator surveys such as the European Health Examination Survey (EHES) for those aged between 20 and 60, along with other core measurements such as blood pressure and blood sugar?

Since the EHES collects more blood than needed, and a GPT (ALT) test is simple and inexpensive, this would come at little extra financial and administrative cost, whilst generating very useful and comparable data.

As alcoholic drinks were excluded from the scope of the Food Information Regulation, can the Commission explain what work is currently being carried out in relation to alcohol? Would it be a possibility to envisage specific legislation on the labelling and marketing of alcoholic products in the EU, as is the case for food and tobacco?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the problems associated with chronic liver diseases. The majority of chronic liver diseases are associated with either Hepatitis B- or C-virus, which are both covered by EU surveillance under European Parliament and Council Decision 2119/98/EC ([4]) on surveillance and control for communicable diseases. The Commission does not intend to widen the scope of liver disease screening beyond the surveillance foreseen in this decision, as, according to Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the organisation and the delivery of healthcare are primarily a matter of Member States responsibility.

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers requests the Commission to produce, by 13 December 2014, a report concerning the application of the requirements on listing of ingredients and nutrition labelling to alcoholic beverages.

([1]) EU Statistical Yearbook 2006-2007.
([2]) Estimated by the WHO at 47.147 per 100 000 in the EU-27 in 2008.
([3]) Fagiuoli, S. et al.
([4]) OJ L 268, 3.10.1998.

The Commission does not foresee further legislation on warning labels on alcoholic beverages. However, the EU strategy ([5]) to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm emphasises the need for information, and awareness raising on the impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption. In the context of this strategy, the Commission is encouraging alcohol producers to voluntarily put messages on alcoholic drinks to inform consumers about health risks.

Discussions are ongoing regarding the possibility of developing a European Health Examination Survey and the issues that Member States may wish to see included.

([5]) COM(2006) 625 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-011341/12
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(12 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Grupowe zwolnienia w zakładach Fiata w Tychach

W ostatnich tygodniach firma Fiat poinformowała o grupowych zwolnieniach w swoich tyskich zakładach oraz przeniesieniu produkcji do Włoch. Z dnia na dzień zwolnionych zostanie ponad 1,5 tysiąca pracowników, co dramatycznie pogorszy sytuację na rynku pracy w regionie Górnego Śląska.

1. Czy polski rząd wystąpił już do Komisji o uruchomienie środków z Europejskiego Funduszu Dostosowania do Globalizacji (EFG) dla osób zwalnianych w tyskich zakładach Fiata? Kiedy Komisja może wypłacić środki pomocowe dla zwalnianych?

2. Jak wysokie środki i kiedy Komisja zamierza przeznaczyć z funduszy Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego w celu pomocy zwalnianym w Tychach pracownikom? Czy wiadomo już, ile osób zostanie objętych pomocą?

3. Jak Komisja zamierza wspierać powrót na rynek pracowników z sektorów przemysłu motoryzacyjnego zwalnianych ze względu na kryzys?

4. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja w celu wzmocnienia konkurencyjności oraz kondycji przemysłu motoryzacyjnego w Europie?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011342/12
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(12 grudnia 2012 r.)

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Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(21 stycznia 2013 r.)

1. Komisja nie otrzymała wniosku o dofinansowanie z Europejskiego Funduszu Dostosowania do Globalizacji (EFG) w związku ze zwolnieniami w zakładach Fiata w Polsce. Komisja zachęca Szanownego Pana Posła do nawiązania kontaktu z osobą kontaktową do spraw EFG w Polsce ([1]) w celu dowiedzenia się, czy rozważane jest złożenie wniosku w tej sprawie.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=568&langId=pl.

2. Województwo śląskie wciąż ma do dyspozycji 166 mln EUR w ramach Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego na okres programowania 2007-2013. W celu pomocy pracownikom zwolnionym przez Fiata organy lokalne mogą przygotować specjalny projekt dotyczący zwolnień monitorowanych w ramach działania 8.1.2, adresowany do pracowników dotkniętych procesem restrukturyzacji. Mogliby oni także zbadać możliwości oferowane przez lokalne urzędy pracy w ramach priorytetu 6 „Rynek pracy otwarty dla wszystkich". Region może również skorzystać ze strategii szybkiego reagowania opracowywanych na poziomie krajowym w ramach Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki (PO KL).

3. Komisja jest gotowa rozważyć wykorzystanie wszystkich narzędzi, jakimi dysponuje, w celu dofinansowania działań związanych z przekwalifikowaniem zwolnionych pracowników, a w szczególności EFS, EFG oraz EFRR.

4. Komisja jest zaangażowana we wdrażanie planu działania CARS 2020, który zakłada wspieranie tego sektora w zapewnianiu zrównoważonej przyszłości dla działań i miejsc pracy w jego zakresie. Działania podzielone są na cztery filary: promowanie inwestycji w zaawansowane technologie i innowacje w dziedzinie ekologicznych pojazdów, poprawa warunków rynkowych, wspieranie przemysłu w dostępie do rynku światowego oraz przewidywanie przyszłych dostosowań poprzez inwestycje w kapitał ludzki i umiejętności.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011341/12
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Mass redundancies at Fiat plant in Tychy

In recent weeks Fiat has announced large-scale redundancies at its plant in Tychy, Poland and the transfer of production to Italy. More than 1500 workers will be laid off at the same time, which will dramatically worsen the labour market situation in the Upper Silesia region.

1. Has the Polish Government already asked the Commission to mobilise funds from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for workers laid off at the Fiat plant in Tychy? When will the Commission be able to disburse this assistance to the workers made redundant?

2. How much funding does the Commission intend to allocate from the European Social Fund to help workers made redundant in Tychy, and when will this funding be made available? Is it known yet how many people will receive such assistance?

3. How does the Commission intend to support the return to the labour market of workers in the automotive industry laid off as a result of the economic crisis?

4. What action does the Commission intend to take to enhance the competitiveness and the state of the automotive industry in Europe?

Question for written answer E-011342/12
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(12 December 2012)

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4. What action does the Commission intend to take to enhance the competitiveness and the state of the automotive industry in Europe?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2013)

1. The Commission has not received any application for funding from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) related to redundancies made by Fiat in Poland. It invites the Honourable Member to get in touch with the EGF Contact Person for Poland ([1]) to find out whether any application is being considered.

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

2. The Śląskie region still has at its disposal EUR 166 million under the European Social Fund (ESF) for the programming period 2007-13. To assist the workers made redundant by Fiat, the local authorities could prepare a specific outplacement project under Measure 8.1.2 which is dedicated to workers affected by restructuring processes. They could also explore the possibility offered under Priority 6 'Labour market open for all' implemented by the local labour offices. Finally, the region could take advantage of rapid-response strategies developed country-wide under the Human Capital Operational Programme (HCOP).

3. The Commission is willing to consider using all tools at its disposal to support the retraining of workers made redundant in particular the ESF, the EGF and the ERDF.

4. The Commission is engaged in the implementation of the CARS 2020 Action Plan which includes measures to help this sector build a sustainable future for its activities and jobs. The actions are grouped in four pillars: promoting investment in advanced technologies and innovation for clean vehicles, improving market conditions, supporting industry in accessing the global markets, anticipating adaptation by investing in human capital and skills.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011343/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Deficiencias en las pasadas elecciones presidenciales de México

El pasado 1 de julio se celebraron las elecciones presidenciales de México, que resultaron en el nombramiento de Enrique Peña Nieto miembro del Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) como nuevo Presidente de la República.

Dicha elección presidencial gozó del respaldo del 39,19 % de los votos escrutados en dicho proceso electoral, pero dicho resultado ha sido puesto en cuestión por numerosas organizaciones civiles y políticas de dentro y fuera del país. El Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD), partido del candidato Andrés Manuel López Obrador, principal partido de la oposición, no aceptó los resultados electorales, acusando a Peña Nieto de fraude electoral. Según el PRD, durante la campaña el partido de Peña Nieto compraba votos directamente a través de tarjetas con 100 pesos de dinero electrónico válido en una popular cadena de supermercados. Se han hecho públicos, desde numerosas fuentes de información, cientos de documentos que contienen confesiones sobre cómo se ofrecía la compra de votos directamente en los mítines del PRI, repartiendo las citadas tarjetas después de confirmarse el voto al PRI.

El pasado 31 de agosto el Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de México se pronunció sobre la citada impugnación, rechazándola de manera inapelable. Pese a la decisión judicial, el líder opositor López Obrador no reconoce «un poder ilegítimo surgido de la compra del voto y otras violaciones graves de la constitución». El pasado 4 de octubre la Delegación Europea en México entregó su informe final sobre las elecciones generales del 1 de julio de 2012. Dicho informe señalaba en sus recomendaciones diversos puntos que coinciden con las denuncias del candidato del PRD como, por ejemplo, con respecto a la normativa que afecta a la compra de votos que «podría ser aplicada más vigorosa y sistemáticamente por autoridades competentes como la Fepade». Del mismo modo, ofrece numerosas recomendaciones sobre el papel de los medios de comunicación, aspectos señalados también por la impugnación de López Obrador.

Ante el informe presentado por la Delegación en México, ¿qué medidas piensa emplear la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante para garantizar la realización de las recomendaciones del documento de la Delegación?

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que se debe garantizar una salida pacífica y democrática a esta crisis electoral que aún se manifiesta en los recientes altercados en México?

En el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México, ¿qué medidas se están emprendiendo para reforzar la normativa electoral y luchar contra el fraude?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de febrero de 2013)

A través de su asociación estratégica y acuerdo global con México, la UE apoya a este país en la protección de valores comunes como la democracia y los derechos humanos. A este respecto, la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta animó y acogió favorablemente las reformas electorales introducidas en México en 2008, que se han traducido en una mejora considerable del marco jurídico y la transparencia en lo referido a la organización de elecciones en ese país.

Como contribución a nuevas reformas en este ámbito, se ha remitido a las autoridades mexicanas el informe de los dos expertos enviados por la UE para seguir el proceso electoral federal de 2012. Este documento llega a la conclusión de que las normas que regulan la cobertura mediática de los partidos político se ajustan a las mejores prácticas internacionales y han propiciado la igualdad de condiciones entre los candidatos. El informe también formula una serie de observaciones y recomendaciones que contribuirán a la consolidación de las reformas electorales en México. La UE tiene previsto seguir la aplicación de las recomendaciones de los expertos tanto en su diálogo político con el nuevo Gobierno como en la programación de la cooperación con México.

Como señala su Señoría, el Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de México consideró infundadas las alegaciones del Sr. López Obrador y declaró que no existían pruebas sólidas de coacción y compra de votos generalizadas. A pesar de las protestas que han acompañado a las denuncias del Sr. López Obrador, el Gobierno de Enrique Peña Nieto está ahora bien asentado y goza de amplia legitimidad. La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta se propone ahora multiplicar los contactos con el nuevo Gobierno a fin de establecer la confianza y proseguir un diálogo fructífero, sobre todo en materia de gobernanza, democracia y derechos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011343/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Irregularities during Mexico's last presidential elections

Mexico's presidential elections were held on 1 July 2012, resulting in the appointment of Enrique Peña Nieto, a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), as the new President of the Republic.

Peña Nieto received 39.19% of the votes cast during the election, but numerous civil and political organisations both within and outside the country have questioned the result. The Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), the main opposition party led by Andres Manuel López Obrador, refused to accept the election results, accusing Peña Nieto of electoral fraud. According to the PRD, Peña Nieto's party bought votes during their campaign by handing out pre-paid gift cards worth MXN 100 which could be spent in a popular supermarket chain. Hundreds of documents from numerous sources have come to light disclosing how votes were bought at PRI rallies, with these cards handed out in exchange for a confirmed PRI vote.

On 31 August Mexico's Federal Electoral Tribunal unequivocally rejected this legal challenge. Despite the court ruling, the opposition leader López Obrador refuses to recognise what he believes to be an illegitimate leader who has come to power through vote buying and other serious violations of the constitution. On 4 October 2012 the EU Delegation in Mexico issued its final report on the general elections of 1 July 2012. The report's recommendations include several points that correspond to the accusations made by the PRD candidate, for example, that regulations affecting vote buying 'could be applied more vigorously and systematically by the competent authorities such as FEPADE [Special Office of the Public Prosecutor for Electoral Crimes]'. It also contains numerous recommendations on the media's role, which was also mentioned during López Obrador's appeal.

In view of the report issued by the EU Delegation in Mexico, what steps will the Vice-President/High Representative take to ensure that the recommendations contained in this document are implemented?

Does she believe that it is necessary to guarantee a peaceful and democratic solution to this electoral crisis, the effects of which are demonstrated by the recent protests in Mexico?

What steps are being taken as part of the EU-Mexico Association Agreement to strengthen electoral law and to combat fraud?

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

Through its strategic partnership and Global Agreement with Mexico, the EU is supporting this country in the protection of shared values, such as democracy and human rights. In this regard, the HR/VP encouraged and welcomed the electoral reforms introduced in Mexico in 2008, which have led to a considerably improved legal framework and transparency for the organisation of elections in Mexico.

As a contribution to further reforms in this field, the report of the two experts sent by the EU to follow the 2012 federal electoral process was addressed to the Mexican authorities. This document concludes that the norms regulating the political parties' media exposure are in accordance with international best practice and have created a level playing field among candidates. The report also formulates a number of observations and recommendations that will contribute to the consolidation of electoral reforms in Mexico. The EU intends to build monitoring of the implementation of the experts' recommendations into both its political dialogue with the new government and the programming of cooperation with Mexico.

As the Honourable Member notes, the Mexican Federal Electoral Tribunal considered that Mr Lopez Obrador's claims were unfounded, and that there was no solid evidence of widespread vote-buying and coercion. Despite protests that have accompanied Mr Lopez Obrador's claims, the government of Enrique Peña Nieto is now well established and enjoys wide legitimacy. The HR/VP now intends to multiply contacts with the new government, in order to establish confidence and continue a fruitful dialogue, in particular as regards governance, democracy and human rights.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011344/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Daphne Programme funding post-2014

Could the Commission state what it intends to do to protect the survival of the Daphne Programme post-2014? Could the Commission state how it intends to protect the funding for projects which are currently recipients under the Daphne Programme?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The proposal of the Commission to establish the Rights and Citizenship Programme for the period 2014-2020 includes the current Daphne III programme. Although the Daphne name is not maintained as such for the period after 2013, funding will continue to be targeted at its objectives, its activities and its beneficiaries.

The Commission will aim to make use of the high profile of Daphne also in the framework of the new programme. The funds of the Rights and Citizenship Programme, covering the current Daphne priorities, will be supplemented by funds under the proposed Justice Programme, especially for funding activities in the area of victims' rights. The combination of funds from these two proposed programmes would result in a budget comparable to what has been made available for the period of 2007-2013, provided the total amount to be allocated to both programmes will not be reduced as the result of any cuts imposed by the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-011345/12
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(12 Nollaig 2012)

Ábhar: Gaineamhroiseadh san earnáil éadaigh agus imní ó thaobh cúrsaí sláinte

Tá an gaineamhroiseadh fós in úsáid go forleathan san earnáil éadaigh chun cuma 'chaite' a thabhairt do bhrístí géine, toisc go bhfuil costas réasúnta íseal ag baint leis an bpróiseas sin. Is éard a tharlaíonn leis an ngaineamhroiseadh ná go ndéantar an t-éadach deinim a roiseadh le gaineamh atá faoi ardbhrú chun barrdhromhcla an éadaigh a bhaint.

Is méadú ar chásanna sileacóise i measc lucht oibre na hearnála a bhíonn mar thoradh ar mhodh caite an ghaineamhroiste a úsáid. Is galar doleigheasta í an tsileacóis, arb í an tsilice chriostalta inanálaithe san aer is cúis leis. Níl leigheas ar bith air agus ní thagann biseach ar bith ar an té a bhfuil an galar air, fiú nuair nach mbíonn sé faoi lé na silice criostalta a thuilleadh.

Tá rialacháin agus srianta diana curtha i bhfeidhm ag clár idirnáisiúnta an EIS/EDS um Dhíothú Domhanda na Sileacóise, a seoladh sa bhliain 1995, i gcás na n-earnálacha mianadóireachta agus foirgneoireachta.

Tá taighde déanta ag eagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha agus ag ceardchumainn a dhéanann cur síos ar an iarmhairt a bhíonn ag an tsileacóis ar lucht oibre na hearnála éadaigh. Má chuirtear i gcomórtas leis na hearnálacha mianadóireachta agus foirgneoireachta é, is féidir tuiscint níos soiléire fós a fháil ar dhonacht scéal na hearnála éadaigh: go ginearálta is i ndiaidh tréimshe 15-20 bliain faoi lé silice criostalta a tholgann oibrithe na n-earnálacha mianadóireachta agus foirgneoireachta galar na sileacóise, ach i gcásanna áirithe is tréimhse sé mhí a bhíonn i gceist d'oibrithe na hearnála éadaigh.

Dé réir tuarascáil nua ón bhfeachtas *Clean Clothes Campaign* tá an gaineamhroiseadh meicniúil agus láimhe fós in úsáid go forleathan san earnáil éadaigh, cé go bhfuil bac iomlán ar an ngaineamhroiseadh fógartha ag roinnt mhaith comhlachtaí éadaí.

An bhfuil an Coimisiún ar an eolas maidir le cleachtadh an ghaineamhroiste agus an baol atá i gceist leis d'oibrithe na hearnála éadaigh?

An bhfuil aon rud déanta nó á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún chun go gcuirfeadh an Eagraíocht Idirnáisúnta Saothair/Eagraíocht Dhomhanda Sláinte an earnáil éadaigh san áireamh sa Chlár um Dhíothú atá acu?

Freagra comhpháirteach ón De Gucht thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(11 Feabhra 2013)

Is eol don Choimisiún na dálaí contúirteacha ina n-oibríonn na hoibrithe a bhíonn i mbun gaineamhroiste, agus ba mhian leis aird na gComhaltaí Onóracha a tharraingt ar na freagraí a thug sé ar cheisteanna scríofa E-008710/2011 agus E-009447/2011 ([1]).

Bíonn an Coimisiún ag obair chun go ndaingneofar agus go gcuirfear chun feidhme go héifeachtach coinbhinsiúin na hEagraíochta Idirnáisiúnta Saothair (EIS) a bhaineann leis an tsláinte cheirde agus leis an tsábháilteacht cheirde ([2]), agus tá tionscadail curtha i gcrích aige chuige sin i gcomhar leis an EIS. Ina theannta sin, bíonn an Coimisiún ag obair chun go n-urramóidh fiontair atá bunaithe san Eoraip Dearbhú Tríthaobhach Prionsabal na hEagraíochta Idirnáisiúnta Saothair maidir le Fiontair Ilnáisiúnta agus Beartas Sóisialta agus Prionsabail Threoracha na Náisiún Aontaithe maidir le Gnó agus Cearta an Duine. Pléitear sonraíochtaí an tionscail éadaí níos mine sa chaidreamh déthaobhach idir an tAontas Eorpach agus na tíortha is mó a mbaineann an cheist sin leo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN
([2]) An Coinbhinsiún maidir leis an tSláinte Cheirde agus an tSábháilteacht Cheirde, 1981 (Uimh. 55); An Coinbhinsiún maidir leis an tSláinte Cheirde agus an tSábháilteacht Cheirde, 1981 (Uimh. 161); Creat le haghaidh Chur chun Cinn na Sábháilteacht Ceirde agus na Sláinte Ceirde (Uimh. 187).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011345/12
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Serious health concerns about the use of sandblasting in the garment industry

Sandblasting is still widely used in the garment industry to give a 'worn' look to denim jeans, because of the relatively low cost of the process. Sandblasting is the process of weathering denim cloth by blasting sand under high pressure to remove the outer layer of the cloth.

Sandblasting is the reason for the increase in the number of cases of silicosis among the workforce in the garment industry. Silicosis is an irreversible condition caused by the inhalation of crystalline silica dust. There is no cure for it and the person afflicted by it does not recover even when they have no further exposure to crystalline silica.

Stringent regulations and restrictions have been put in place for the mining and building sectors by the ILO/WHO Global Programme for the Elimination of Silicosis which was launched in 1995.

Research has been carried out by NGOs and trade unions which describe the impact of silicosis on the garment industry workforce. When compared with the mining and building sectors, it is clear how terrible the effect of sandblasting is on the garment industry workforce. After a period of 15-20 years workers exposed to crystalline silica in the mining and building sectors contract silicosis, but in some cases garment industry workers contract the disease after just six months.

According to a new report from the Clean Clothes Campaign mechanical and manual sandblasting is still widely used in the garment industry, although many clothing companies have announced a complete ban on sandblasting.

Is the Commission aware of the practice of sandblasting and the risks posed for garment industry workers?

Has the Commission requested the International Labour Organisation/World Health Organisation to include the garment industry in the Eradication Programme?

Question for written answer E-011357/12
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Sandblasted denim

The practice of sandblasting denim is known to cause significant health problems for the workers employed in garment factories, mainly located in developing countries.

Can the Commission outline the action taken at EU level to prevent this unacceptable practice?

Does the Commission support an outright ban on the import of sandblasted denim into the Union?

Joint answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the dangerous situation for workers working on sand blasting, and would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to previous Written Question E-008710/2011 and E-009447/2011 ([1]).

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

The Commission promotes the ratification and effective implementation of the Conventions of the International Labour Organisations (ILO) dealing with Occupational health and safety ([2]) and has carried out joint projects with the ILO to this regard. The Commission also promotes the respect of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the European-based enterprises. The specificities of the garnment industry are more specifically reflected in the bilateral relations of the European Union with the countries most concerned.

([2]) Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No.155); Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No 161); Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No 187).

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011346/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(12 december 2012)

Angående: Deltagande av många olika berörda aktörer i Världshandelsorganisationens arbete

Med tanke på kommissionens fortlöpande uppdrag att övervaka och delta i diskussionerna i Världshandelsorganisationen (WTO) om elektronisk handel och telekommunikationstjänster, vad gör kommissionen för att se till att många olika aktörer, såsom företag, konsumentorganisationer, civilsamhället, icke-statliga organisationer och tekniska kretsar, ges tillfälle att delta i WTO:s arbete?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(5 februari 2013)

Kommissionen är angelägen om att handelsfrågor som rör telekommunikation och e-handel inom Världshandelsorganisationen (WTO) diskuteras med alla berörda parter. Kommissionen bidrog därför under 2012 till WTO:s arbetsseminarium om internationell roaming i mobilnät. Arbetsseminariet hölls i Genève den 22 mars och var öppet för företag, konsumenter, det civila samhället och tekniska experter. År 2013 kommer kommissionen att stödja anordnandet av ytterligare två seminarier om e-handel. Det första av dem kommer att ägnas åt utvecklingsrelaterade frågor, medan det andra kommer att behandla mer övergripande frågor. Företrädare för alla berörda aktörer kommer att delta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011346/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Multi-stakeholder inclusion at the World Trade Organisation

As part of its ongoing mission to monitor and participate in the discussions at the World Trade Organisation on the topics of electronic commerce and telecommunications services, how is the Commission working to ensure that a multi-stakeholder approach including business, consumer organisations, civil society, non-governmental organisations and the technical communities is upheld in the work of the World Trade Organisation?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission is keen to ensure that the trade topics related to both telecommunication and e-commerce in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are being discussed with all interested stakeholders. In this context, in 2012 the Commission was supportive of and contributed to a WTO workshop on international mobile roaming. This workshop — held in Geneva on 22 March — was open to business, consumers, civil society and technical experts. In 2013, the Commission will support the organisation of two additional workshops dedicated to electronic commerce. The first one will cover development-related issues, while the second one will consider broader questions. Both those events will gather participants representing the variety of stakeholders interested in the matter.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011347/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Informe de la OCDE sobre la situación económica en España

La Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económico (OCDE) ha publicado recientemente el Estudio sobre la Economía de España de 2012, que incluye nuevas recomendaciones para la política económica que debe llevar a cabo el Gobierno español; ante las nefastas previsiones económicas que el mismo organismo publicó para España para el próximo año, las recomendaciones hechas resultan sorprendentes.

La OCDE considera que la política del Gobierno español es acertada y que tan solo se debe hacer «*más de lo mismo*». *Mientras todos los indicadores estadísticos indican el deterioro económico, el crecimiento del desempleo hasta límites insospechados, el hundimiento de millones de españoles bajo el umbral de la pobreza, la destrucción del sistema educativo y su capacidad de innovación, la paralización del consumo de las familias, etc., la OCDE mantiene que la solución es hacer lo mismo.*

Así, la OCDE sugiere de nuevo elevar los impuestos indirectos como el IVA y los especiales, un mayor abaratamiento del despido, suprimir la negociación colectiva, garantizar que las participaciones preferentes absorban pérdidas, etc., *lo que hasta ahora solo ha empeorado la grave situación de las clases medias y bajas.*

Por lo tanto, para este organismo internacional no existe otra vía para salir de la crisis que la que lleva a destruir los derechos sociales y laborales, única forma que conoce para que la economía española vuelva a la «*senda de la competitividad*». *Al no tener en cuenta la OCDE que la situación económica en España se ha deteriorado gravemente precisamente debido a la aplicación de medidas económicas similares planteadas, este informe dista de ser una lectura supuestamente científica y constituye un irresponsable ejercicio de ortodoxia neoliberal que entiende la «competitividad» como el «dumping social», suponiendo además un ataque político directo a determinados derechos recogidos tanto en la Constitución Española como en varias sentencias judiciales.*

¿Considera la Comisión que la OCDE acierta en sus recomendaciones y *que, por tanto, el Gobierno español debe implementar las recomendaciones recogidas en el citado informe de la OCDE aunque sean una repetición de las recomendaciones que han provocado la profundización de la recesión que afectará a España en 2013?*

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de febrero de 2013)

No corresponde a la Comisión Europea formular observaciones sobre el análisis y las recomendaciones realizadas por la OCDE.

El crecimiento económico en España se ve frenado por la necesidad de corregir los muy grandes desequilibrios externos e internos acumulados durante el periodo de auge. En este contexto, el 10 de julio de 2012, el Consejo adoptó diversas recomendaciones específicas por país dirigidas a España y también abordó los desequilibrios macroeconómicos. Las recomendaciones hechas a España y a otros Estados miembros son parte del proceso de coordinación de las políticas de la UE en el cual los Estados miembros coordinan sus políticas económicas y de empleo para el año siguiente. Las recomendaciones se adaptan a los retos concretos a los que se enfrentan los Estados miembros. Las correspondientes al año 2012 dirigidas a España hacen especial hincapié en la política activa del mercado de trabajo y en las reformas estructurales en los mercados de productos y servicios, necesarias para que la economía española vuelva a crecer y a crear puestos de trabajo. Además, el programa de ayuda financiera en curso aborda más específicamente las deficiencias en el sector financiero.

Se puede consultar más información sobre las actuales recomendaciones específicas por país dirigidas a España en la siguiente página web:

http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011347/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: OECD Economic Survey of Spain

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently published its Economic Survey of Spain 2012, which includes new economic policy recommendations for the Spanish Government; given the dire economic forecasts for 2013 that this organisation has issued for Spain, the recommendations are surprising.

The OECD believes that the Spanish Government's policy is sound and that it must continue to do more of the same. While all statistical indicators point to, *inter alia*, the economic downturn, unemployment reaching unprecedented levels, millions of Spaniards falling below the poverty line, the destruction of the education system and its capacity for innovation and the stagnation of household consumption, the OECD maintains that the solution is to keep doing the same thing.

As such the OECD once again suggests raising indirect taxes such as VAT and excise duties, further reducing dismissal costs, abolishing collective bargaining and ensuring that preference shares absorb losses: measures which to date have only worsened the plight of the middle and lower classes.

As far as this international organisation is concerned, a route that destroys social and labour rights is the only way out of the crisis and is the only way for the Spanish economy to regain its competitiveness. The OECD has not taken account of the fact that the economic situation in Spain has worsened considerably, precisely due to the implementation of similar economic measures. This report therefore falls far short of a supposedly scientific reading and is an irresponsible exercise in neoliberal orthodoxy which understands *'competitiveness' to mean 'social dumping'. It is also a direct political attack on certain rights laid down in both the Spanish Constitution and in several court rulings.*

Does the Commission believe that the OECD's recommendations are correct and that the Spanish Government should therefore implement the recommendations contained in this report, even though they are essentially the same recommendations that have led to the deepening recession that will affect Spain in 2013?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

It is not for the European Commission to comment on the analysis and recommendations made by the OECD.

Economic growth in Spain is held back by the need to correct very large external and internal imbalances accumulated during the boom period. Against this background, on 10 July 2012, the Council adopted a set of country-specific recommendations addressed to Spain, also addressing macroeconomic imbalances. The recommendations given to Spain as well as other Member States are part of the EU policy coordination process within which Member States coordinate their economic and employment policies for the year to come. The recommendations are tailored to the particular challenges Member States are facing. The 2012 recommendations addressed to Spain put strong emphasis on active labour market policy and structural reforms in product and service markets, necessary for the Spanish economy to re-start growth and job creation. In addition, the ongoing financial assistance programme addresses more specifically shortcomings in the financial sector.

More background on the current country specific recommendations addressed to Spain can be found on the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-your-country/espana/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011348/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(12 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Retribuzione minima garantita a livello europeo per gli stagisti e i tirocinanti

Migliaia di giovani europei sono entrati da diversi anni nella cosiddetta «trappola della precarietà», una fase della vita lavorativa contraddistinta dal susseguirsi di lavori temporanei e di tirocini non retribuiti.

Le notizie apparse negli ultimi mesi sulla stampa europea relative alla pratica di stage e tirocini non remunerati mettono chiaramente in luce un fenomeno che colpisce una parte consistente delle nuove generazioni già duramente colpite dalla difficoltà di trovare un impiego lavorativo. In Italia l'Istat ha comunicato che la disoccupazione giovanile si attesta al 36,5 %, mentre in alcuni stati dell'UE, maggiormente colpiti dalla crisi economico-finanziaria, si attesta oltre il 50 %.

Quella degli stage e dei tirocini non retribuiti è una pratica che aggrava ulteriormente i bilanci di numerose famiglie europee che sono costrette a sostenere economicamente i propri figli non solo durante il percorso di formazione universitaria, ma anche durante il periodo d'inserimento nel mondo del lavoro a causa della mancanza di una retribuzione minima garantita per gli stagisti e i tirocinanti.

Stanti gli ultimi provvedimenti da essa proposti in materia di occupazione giovanile, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. ritiene necessaria un'azione concertata a livello europeo che possa garantire una retribuzione minima garantita ai giovani che svolgono stage e tirocini;

2. a seguito della risoluzione del Parlamento europeo sull'iniziativa «Opportunità per i giovani» approvata nello scorso mese di maggio, intende presentare iniziative volte a dare un concreto seguito a quanto contenuto nella risoluzione in oggetto, in particolar modo per quanto concerne l'obiettivo di assicurare una «retribuzione decorosa» ai tirocinanti;

3. può indicare i modi e i tempi previsti per l'attuazione della risoluzione sopra citata?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è profondamente preoccupata per gli elevati tassi di disoccupazione tra i giovani nell'UE e per il fatto che tutto un sistema di tirocini irregolari rimpiazza i posti di lavoro invece di aiutare i giovani nella transizione dagli studi al lavoro. Queste preoccupazioni sono confermate da una relazione recente finanziata dalla Commissione intitolata «Study on a comprehensive overview on traineeship arrangements in Member States» ([1]).

Il Pacchetto per l'occupazione giovanile presentato dalla Commissione il 5 dicembre 2012 ha aperto pertanto una consultazione di secondo livello delle parti sociali europee in merito a un quadro qualitativamente valido per i tirocini ([2]). Il documento di consultazione suggerisce che gli accordi di tirocinio dovrebbero specificare chiaramente i compensi e le retribuzioni offerti ai tirocinanti. Esso riconosce tuttavia che, se il tirocinio va a reciproco vantaggio dell'organizzazione ospitante e del tirocinante in termini di trasferimento di conoscenze e di apprendimento, un tirocinio non retribuito può essere ammissibile, ferme restando le disposizioni in tema di sicurezza sociale.

La Commissione proporrà un quadro di qualità per i tirocini soltanto se le parti sociali decideranno di non condurre esse stesse negoziati nel merito o se i loro negoziati non avranno esito. In tal caso la Commissione presenterà una proposta nel 2013.

([1]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6717.
([2]) «Verso un quadro di qualità per i tirocini», COM(2012)728 final del 5 dicembre 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011348/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: European-level guaranteed minimum wage for trainees and interns

For several years, thousands of young people in Europe have fallen into the so-called 'precariousness trap', a phase in their working lives marked by a succession of temporary jobs and unpaid internships.

Recent reports in the European press regarding unpaid traineeships and internships highlight a practice affecting considerable numbers of young people who are already being hit hard by the difficulty of finding meaningful employment.

According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat), youth unemployment in Italy stands at 36.5%. In some EU Member States more badly affected by the economic and financial crisis, the rate is higher than 50%.

Unpaid traineeships and internships put a further strain on the purse strings of many families in Europe who are forced to support their sons and daughters financially, not only through university, but also while they are trying to enter the world of work, due to the lack of a guaranteed minimum wage for trainees and interns.

Given the latest measures that it has proposed on youth employment, can the Commission state:

1. whether it believes that concerted action is required at European level which will ensure a guaranteed minimum wage for those young people undertaking traineeships and internships;

2. further to the European Parliament resolution on the Youth Opportunities Initiative adopted in May, whether it intends to put forward initiatives designed to ensure a positive follow-up to the substance of this resolution, particularly in terms of the objective of offering 'decent wages' to interns;

3. whether it can indicate the steps and timeframe required to implement the above resolution?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission is very concerned at the high unemployment among young people in the EU and at irregular traineeships that replace normal jobs instead of helping young people to make the transition from education to work. These concerns are confirmed by a recent report funded by the Commission and entitled 'Study on a comprehensive overview on traineeship arrangements in Member States' ([1]).

The Commission's Youth Employment Package of 5 December 2012 therefore opened a second-stage consultation of the European social partners on a quality framework for traineeships ([2]). The consultation paper suggests that traineeship agreements should specify clearly any compensation or remuneration offered to trainees. However, it recognises that, if the traineeship is of mutual benefit to both the host organisation and the trainee in terms of knowledge transfer and learning, unpaid traineeships may be appropriate, subject to the provision of social security.

The Commission will propose a quality framework for traineeships only where the social partners decide not to negotiate among themselves on this issue or if their negotiations fail. In that case, the Commission will present a proposal in 2013.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6717.
([2]) 'Towards a Quality Framework on Traineeships' (2012) 728 final of 5 December 2012.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011350/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(12. december 2012)

Om: Kommissionens Sweep-undersøgelse og lokkende »gratis« spil for børn

Kommissionens seneste Sweep-undersøgelse af online-spil, bøger, videoer og musik afslører, at der er store problemer med, at visse spilhjemmesider lokker børn og unge til at købe tjenester, selv om der bliver reklameret med »gratis spil«.

1. Hvornår vil Kommissionen kunne garantere forældre og børn, at børns EU-rettigheder og EU-beskyttelse i onlinemiljøet reelt håndhæves? Med andre ord: Hvornår kan børn trygt færdes i onlinemiljøet uden risiko for at blive snydt af »gratis« onlinespil?

2. Jeg er bekendt med, at det er medlemsstaterne, der skal sikre denne håndhævelse, men hvad vil Kommissionen gøre for at sikre, at håndhævelsen finder sted?

3. Er der efter Kommissionens mening brug for nye og bedre regler på EU-niveau? Er sanktionerne for overskridelse af reglerne gode nok?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(14. februar 2013)

Det er af afgørende betydning, at EU's forbrugerbeskyttelsesregler håndhæves, for at forbrugerne kan nyde deres rettigheder i hverdagen, og virksomhederne kan konkurrere på lige vilkår. I forordning 2006/2004 ([1]) fastlægges samarbejdsmekanismer, som giver håndhævelsesmyndigheder i alle medlemsstater mulighed for at arbejde sammen.

Kommissionen har hvert år siden 2007 koordineret en håndhævelsesaktion (eller »sweep«). I en sweep-undersøgelse kontrollerer de nationale håndhævelsesmyndigheder samtidig en stikprøve af websteder for at sikre sig, at forbrugerlovgivningen bliver overholdt. De nationale myndigheder iværksætter derefter om nødvendigt en håndhævelsesaktion.

Formålet med den sweep-undersøgelse af websteder, der sælger spil, bøger, videoer og musik, der kan downloades, som blev foretaget i 2012, var at kontrollere, hvorvidt forbrugerbeskyttelsesreglerne i denne særlige sektor blev overholdt ([2]). Derudover er der på Kommissionens foranledning blevet iværksat en undersøgelse af websteder, der udbyder spil, der er målrettet børn og annonceres som gratis, men som kan indebære betaling på et senere tidspunkt. Direktiv 2005/29/EF ([3]) beskytter børn mod praksis, hvor spil i modstrid med sandheden bliver annonceret som gratis. De nationale håndhævelsesmyndigheder vil tage hensyn til resultaterne af denne undersøgelse i opfølgningen heraf. Som i tidligere år vil det sandsynligvis resultere i en høj grad af overholdelse i de kommende måneder.

Fra juni 2014 vil erhvervsdrivende i henhold til direktiv 2011/83/EU ([4]) skulle installere en særlig »knap« eller en tilsvarende funktion, som giver forbrugeren mulighed for at bekræfte, at denne har forstået, at ordren medfører en betalingsforpligtelse. Kommissionen vil inden længe fremlægge en rapport om anvendelsen af direktiv 2005/29/EF, bl.a. om dets anvendelse i forbindelse med sårbare forbrugere, herunder børn.

På forbrugertopmødet i marts 2013 vil der blive indledt en strategisk debat om, hvordan håndhævelsen på EU-niveau kan forbedres.

([1]) Forordning 2006/2004 om forbrugerbeskyttelsessamarbejde, EUT L 364 af 9.12.2004, s. 1.
([2]) Nærmere oplysninger om resultaterne af sweep-undersøgelsen kan findes på: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/sweep/digital_content/index_en.htm
([3]) Direktiv 2005/29/EF om virksomheders urimelige handelspraksis over for forbrugerne på det indre marked, EUT L 149 af 11.6.2005, s. 22.
([4]) Direktiv 2011/83/EU om forbrugerrettigheder, EUT L 304 af 22.11.2011, s. 64.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011350/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Commission's Sweep study on 'free' games for children that entice them to buy

The Commission's most recent Sweep study of online games, books, videos and music has found that there are serious problems with certain games websites enticing children and young people into purchasing services even when the advertisements refer to 'free games'.

1. When will the Commission be able to guarantee parents and children that children's rights and protection under EU rules in the online environment are enforced in practice? In other words, when will children be able to move safely around the online environment without risk of being swindled by 'free' online games?

2. I realise that there are some Member States which are intending to enforce these rules, but what will the Commission do to ensure that enforcement takes place?

3. Does the Commission consider that there is a need for new and better rules at EU level? Are the penalties for infringing these rules adequate?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

Enforcement of EU consumer protection rules is fundamental so that consumers can enjoy their rights on a daily basis and businesses can operate on a level playing field. Regulation 2006/2004 ([1]) establishes cooperation mechanisms that enable enforcement authorities from all Member States to work together.

Since 2007 the Commission has coordinated, every year, an enforcement action (or 'sweep'). In a sweep, national enforcement authorities check simultaneously a sample of websites for compliance with consumer law. The national authorities then take enforcement action, if appropriate.

The 2012 sweep on websites selling games, books, videos and music which can be downloaded aimed at checking the state of compliance with consumer protection rules in that specific sector. ([2]) In addition, the Commission contracted a study on websites offering games which are targeting children and are advertised for free, but may involve payment at a later stage. Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]) protects children against practices of falsely advertising free games. National enforcement authorities will take the results of this study into account during their follow-up action. As in previous years, it is likely that a high level of compliance will result in the coming months.

As from June 2014, Directive 2011/83/EU ([4]) will require traders to install a specific 'button' or similar function which allows the consumer to confirm that he understands that the order implies an obligation to pay. The Commission will shortly present a report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC, including its application in relation to vulnerable consumers including children.

The Consumer Summit in March 2013 will launch a strategic debate on how to improve enforcement at EU level.

([1]) Regulation 2006/2004 on consumer protection cooperation, OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p. 1.
([2]) Details to the findings of the sweep can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/sweep/digital_content/index_en.htm
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, OJ L 149, 11.06.2005, p.22.
([4]) Directive 2011/83/EU on consumer rights, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 64.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011351/12
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(12 december 2012)

Betreft: Mogelijk machtsmisbruik bij opslag en levering van metalen

Bij toenemende schaarste van grondstoffen is een juiste werking van de grondstoffenmarkt essentieel. Mij bereiken steeds meer berichten over zorgwekkende „metal warehousing practices" in onder andere Nederland ([1]).

Eigenaren van opslaghuizen, zoals bijvoorbeeld Trafigura, Glencore, Goldman Sachs en JP Morgan, lijken kunstmatige schaarste te creëren voor de levering van metalen om hun winsten te maximaliseren. Wie via de London Metal Exchange (LME) metalen koopt, moet soms wel 13 maanden wachten op levering en torenhoge opslagkosten betalen ([2]). Hierdoor lijkt de Europese industrie jaarlijks honderden miljoenen, zo niet miljarden euro's te veel te moeten betalen voor metalen. De LME heeft eerder dit jaar de minimale leveringsomvang per dag verhoogd, maar dat heeft de problemen niet opgelost.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het bestaan van zeer lange wachttijden en de torenhoge opslagkosten voor de levering van metalen zoals aluminium?

2. Zo ja, kan de Commissie een schatting maken van de kosten die deze praktijken voor de Europese industrie met zich meebrengen?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat hier sprake kan zijn van machtsmisbruik en is zij bereid hier onderzoek naar te doen?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(4 februari 2013)

De Commissie is het met het geachte Parlementslid eens wat het belang van goed functionerende grondstoffenmarkten betreft. Zij is op de hoogte van de gang van zaken waarop in de vraag van het geachte Parlementslid wordt gedoeld. De Commissie heeft echter niet genoeg aan de algemeen beschikbare informatie om een schatting te kunnen maken van de mogelijke kostenverhogingen die daaruit voortvloeien voor de Europese industrie.

Met het oog op de bescherming van de legitieme belangen van derden kan de Commissie geen verdere uitspraken doen, noch over lopende of toekomstige antitrustonderzoeken, noch over de uiteindelijke uikomst daarvan.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/a5f8007e-b86f-11e1-a2d6-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2EpHZD7Vx.
([2]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/18/us-lme-warehousing-idUSBRE89H0EW20121018.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011351/12
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Possible abuse of dominant position in the warehousing and supply of metals

Given the increasing scarcity of raw materials it is essential for the raw materials market to function correctly. I am receiving growing numbers of disturbing reports about metal warehousing practices in countries including the Netherlands ([1]).

Owners of warehouses, such as Trafigura, Glencore, Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan, seem to be creating artificial shortages in the supply of metals in order to maximise their profits. Those who purchase metals via the London Metal Exchange (LME) may have to wait up to 13 months for delivery and pay exorbitant warehousing costs ([2]). Consequently it seems that European industry is having to pay hundreds of millions, if not billions, of euros more than it should every year for metals. Earlier this year the LME increased the minimum amount released per day, but that has not resolved the problem.

1. Is the Commission aware of the existence of very long waiting times and exorbitant warehousing costs for the supply of metals such as aluminium?

2. If so, can the Commission estimate the costs of these practices to European industry?

3. Does the Commission agree that this could constitute abuse of a dominant position, and is it prepared to investigate?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member on the importance of well-functioning raw material markets. The Commission is aware of the events referred to in the Honourable Member's question. However, available public information does not allow the Commission to estimate possible cost increases to European industry.

In order to protect legitimate interests of third parties, the Commission cannot comment, neither on current or future antitrust investigations nor on their eventual outcome.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/a5f8007e-b86f-11e1-a2d6-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2EpHZD7Vx.
([2]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/18/us-lme-warehousing-idUSBRE89H0EW20121018.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-011352/12
an die Kommission
Jutta Haug (S&D)
(12. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Budget 2012 und Budget 2013

Der am 12. Dezember 2012 verabschiedete Nachtrags- und Berichtigungshaushalt 6/2012 weist 2,9 Mrd. EUR weniger an Zahlungen aus als der ursprüngliche Vorschlag der Kommission vom 23. Oktober 2012. Außerdem sind die bis zum 31. Dezember 2012 benötigten Zahlungen von ca. 6 Mrd. EUR im Haushalt 2012 nicht mehr vorhanden, und die Begleichung ist somit auf das Haushaltsjahr 2013 verschoben.

Deshalb wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung folgender damit zusammenhängender Fragen gebeten:

1. Nach welchen Kriterien wird die Kommission die bis zum 31. Oktober 2012 eingegangenen Rechnungen ordnen?

2. In welcher Reihenfolge werden diese abgearbeitet und bezahlt?

3. Wie wird dieses Abarbeiten konkret für das Programm Erasmus aussehen?

4. Wann wird absehbar sein, dass ein Nachtragshaushalt 2013 fällig ist?

Antwort von Herrn Lewandowski im Namen der Kommission
(4. Februar 2013)

Die Frau Abgeordnete legt in ihrer Anfrage dar, dass der Betrag von 6 Mrd. EUR, der mit dem Berichtigungshaushalt (BH) 6/2012 bereitgestellt wurde, nicht im Haushalt 2012 ausgewiesen sei und die betreffenden Zahlungen somit erst 2013 vorgenommen werden könnten. Tatsächlich wurde dieser Betrag von 6 Mrd. EUR jedoch nach Annahme des BH 6/2012 bereitgestellt, und die Kommission konnte bis zum 31. Dezember die fälligen Zahlungen insbesondere für bis 31. Oktober eingegangene, keiner Aussetzung unterliegende Zahlungsanträge aus dem Bereich der Kohäsionspolitik vornehmen.

Der Betrag von 6 Mrd. EUR umfasste unter anderem sämtliche im BH 6/2012 beantragten Mittel für das Programm „Lebenslanges Lernen“ (einschließlich Erasmus) und deckte den gesamten Bedarf für dieses Programm bis Ende 2012. Damit konnte die Unterdeckung bei dieser Haushaltslinie aufgefangen werden.

Der ursprünglich von der Kommission in ihrem Entwurf des Berichtigungshaushalts 6/2012 beantragte, aber letztendlich nicht bewilligte zusätzliche Betrag von 2,9 Mrd. EUR war zum einen für Zahlungen für ausgesetzte Strukturmaßnahmen (für die somit erst wieder nach Aufhebung der Aussetzung Zahlungen getätigt werden dürfen), und zum anderen für den Abschluss von Programmen aus dem vorherigen Programmzeitraum vorgesehen.

Zur Frage eines Berichtigungshaushalts für 2013 wurde im Rahmen der Einigung auf den Haushalt 2013 eine gemeinsame Erklärung vereinbart, der zufolge „die Kommission sich [verpflichtet], zu einem frühen Zeitpunkt im Jahr 2013 einen Entwurf eines Berichtigungshaushaltsplans vorzulegen, der allein dem Zweck dient, die im Jahr 2012 ausgesetzten Anträge — sobald die Aussetzungen aufgehoben sind — und die sonstigen ausstehenden rechtlichen Verpflichtungen unbeschadet der ordnungsgemäßen Ausführung des Haushaltsplans 2013 abzudecken“.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011352/12
to the Commission
Jutta Haug (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: 2012 budget and 2013 budget

Supplementary and amending budget 6/2012 adopted on 12 December 2012 contains EUR 2.9 billion less in payments than the original Commission proposal of 23 October 2012. Furthermore the payments of some EUR 6 billion required by 31 December 2012 no longer appear in the 2012 budget, and disbursement is thus postponed to the 2013 budget year.

In the light of the above, can the Commission please answer the following related questions:

1. What criteria will the Commission use to rank the invoices received by 31 October 2012?

2. In what order will these be processed and paid?

3. What form will this processing take specifically for the Erasmus programme?

4. When is a 2013 supplementary budget likely to be necessary?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

The Honourable Member states in her question that the amount of EUR 6 billion made available through the adoption of the Amending Budget (AB) 6/2012 did not appear in the 2012 budget and therefore that disbursement would not be possible until 2013. However, the EUR 6 billion were indeed made available after the adoption of the AB 6/2012, which allowed the Commission to make the payments required up to 31 December, in particular payment claims under cohesion policy received by the Commission before 31 October not subject to suspension.

The EUR 6 billion notably included the full amount requested in the AB 6/2012 for the Lifelong Learning Programme (including Erasmus), which covered all the needs estimated for Lifelong Learning until the end of 2012, and so the shortfall on this budget line could be addressed.

The additional amount of EUR 2.9 billion initially requested by the Commission in the Draft Amending Budget 6/2012, which was finally not approved, related to payments for the structural actions which were suspended -and thus which could not be paid until these suspensions are lifted- and to the closure of programmes from the previous programming period.

With respect to the question of an amending budget in 2013, a joint statement was agreed as part of the package on the 2013 budget, which states that, 'the Commission undertakes to present at an early stage in the year 2013 a draft amending budget devoted to the sole purpose of covering the 2012 suspended claims as soon as the suspensions are lifted, and the other pending legal obligations without prejudice to the proper implementation of the 2013 budget'.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011353/12
za Komisijo
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(12. december 2012)

Zadeva: Potovanje brez vizumov in razmere na srbsko-madžarski meji

V zadnjem času smo prejeli več neuradnih poročil (npr. zahteve državljanov, razprave s politiki in nevladnimi organizacijami, dejavnimi na tem območju) in poročila medijev, da so se zaradi pritiska številnih držav članic na države zahodnega Balkana (npr. Srbijo in Makedonijo), naj zmanjšajo število ljudi, ki neutemeljeno prosijo za azil, zelo poslabšale razmere glede potovanja brez vizumov tako za splošno prebivalstvo kot za konkretne manjšine (npr. Rome).

Še bolj zaskrbljujočo so navedbe, da mejni uradniki na meji med Srbijo in Madžarsko zahtevajo plačilo, da bi pospešili postopke mejnega nadzora in spregledali morebitne prosilce za azil. Po neuradnih informacijah vozniki avtobusov za vožnje iz Srbije zahtevajo 3 EUR na osebo, da bi podkupili mejne uradnike na srbsko-madžarski meji.

Iz zadnjih medijskih poročil (npr. „Sanje balkanskih Romov o življenju v Nemčiji“, Der Spiegel, 13. novembra 2012) je razvidno, da pripadniki romske skupnosti v Srbiji in Makedoniji redno plačujejo do 400 EUR, ki se uporabljajo kot podkupnina za mejne uradnike.

Poleg tega je po neuradnih informacijah Komisija pripravljena na mejo med Srbijo in Madžarsko namestiti osebje Frontexa, da bi preučili razmere. Ali lahko Komisija to potrdi?

Razmere na meji med Madžarsko in Srbijo so le eden od primerov in so le del celotne slike. Mehanizem za začasno odpravo (ali zaščitna klavzula), ki je del spremenjene Uredbe (ES) št. 539/2001, najverjetneje ne bo izveden pred marcem ali aprilom 2013. Glede na to me zanima, katere vmesne ukrepe (poleg zgoraj omenjenih) je Komisija pripravljena sprejeti, da bi preprečila neposredno in posredno diskriminacijo državljanov zahodnega Balkana in preprečila očitne kršitve pravice do potovanja brez vizumov, ki so neposredna posledica pritiska številnih držav članic na države zahodnega Balkana.

Odgovor komisarke Malmström v imenu Komisije
(18. marec 2013)

Potovanja brez vizuma za prebivalce držav zahodnega Balkana kljub nedavnemu porastu števila neutemeljenih prošenj za azil niso omejena. Velika večina potnikov je dobrovernih potnikov, ki uveljavljajo pravico do prostega gibanja v okviru brezvizumskega režima.

Komisija v tretjem poročilu o spremljanju po liberalizaciji vizumskega režima za pet držav zahodnega Balkana priporoča sklop ukrepov, ki bi pomagali ohranjati neokrnjenost brezvizumskega režima, vključno z okrepljenim operativnim sodelovanjem, preiskavo primerov tihotapljenja ljudi, poostrenim mejnim nadzorom, obveščevalnimi kampanjami in pomočjo za etnične manjšine.

Komisija je okrepila mehanizem za spremljanje po liberalizaciji vizumskega režima, in sicer v tesnem sodelovanju z agencijo Frontex in državami zahodnega Balkana. Države z brezvizumskim režimom vsak mesec predložijo poročilo o sprejetih ukrepih za zmanjšanje števila neutemeljenih prošenj za azil v državah članicah.

Agencija Frontex že usklajuje dejavnosti na srbsko-madžarski meji, kar je del njenih osrednjih aktivnosti. Madžarska je povabila nemške mejne policiste, naj v skladu z Zakonikom o schengenskih mejah pomagajo pri mejni kontroli oseb, ki nameravajo potovati v Nemčijo.

Organi držav članic Evropske unije morajo svoje dolžnosti opravljati popolnoma v skladu s schengenskim pravnim redom. Zakonik o schengenskih mejah v členu 6(2) mejnim policistom prepoveduje vse oblike diskriminacije med izvajanjem mejnih kontrol. Sodišče je s sodbo v zadevi Zakaria (C-23/12) potrdilo, da morajo države članice določiti ustrezna pravna sredstva, da bi v skladu s členom 47 Listine o temeljnih pravicah zagotovile varstvo oseb, ki uveljavljajo pravice iz člena 6 Zakonika.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011353/12
to the Commission
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Visa-free travel and the situation on the Serbian-Hungarian border

Recently we have been receiving a number of unofficial reports (e.g. claims by citizens, discussions with politicians and NGOs active in the region) as well as media reports that due to the pressure of a number of Member States on the countries of the western Balkans (e.g. Serbia and Macedonia) to reduce the number of people claiming unfounded asylum, visa-free travel for their citizens has been severely impaired both for the general population and for specific minorities (e.g. Roma).

Even more worryingly, indications have arisen that border personnel at the border between Serbia and Hungary have been demanding payment in order to speed up border control procedures and overlook potential asylum-seekers. According to unofficial information, bus drivers collect EUR 3 per person when travelling from Serbia in order to bribe the border control guards on the Serbian-Hungarian border.

Recent media reports (e.g. 'Balkan Roma Dream of Life in Germany', Der Spiegel of 13 November 2012) show that members of the Roma populations in Serbia and Macedonia regularly pay up to EUR 400, which is used as a bribe for the border guards.

Furthermore, unofficial information suggests that the Commission is prepared to deploy Frontex staff at the border between Serbia and Hungary in order to investigate the situation. Can the Commission confirm this report?

The situation on the border between Hungary and Serbia is just one case and represents a partial view of the issue. Implementation of the suspension mechanism (or the so-called safeguard clause), which is part of the amended Regulation (EC) No 539/2001, is unlikely before March or April 2013. I would therefore like to know what intermediary action (in addition to that mentioned above) the Commission is willing to take in order to prevent direct and indirect discrimination aimed at the citizens of the western Balkans and to prevent a clear breach of the right to visa-free travel which is arising directly from the pressure exerted by a number of Member States on the countries of the western Balkans.

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

Visa-free travel for citizens of the western Balkans has not been impaired despite a recent rise in the number of unfounded asylum applications. The overwhelming majority of travellers remain bona fide travellers exercising their right to free movement under the visa-free regime.

The Commission's third post-visa liberalisation monitoring report recommends a set of measures for the five Western Balkans States to maintain the integrity of the visa-free regime, including enhanced operational cooperation, investigating facilitators of irregular migration, stronger border controls, information campaigns and assistance for minority populations.

The Commission has reinforced its post-visa liberalisation monitoring mechanism, in close cooperation with Frontex and the western Balkans countries. The visa-free states submit monthly reports on the steps they have taken to reduce the number of unfounded asylum applications in Member States.

Frontex is already coordinating activities at the Serbian-Hungarian border as part of its 'focal points' operations. Hungary has invited German border guards to assist with border checks, in line with the Schengen Borders Code, on persons who intend to travel to Germany.

EU Member State authorities must carry out their duties fully in line with the Schengen *acquis*. The Schengen Borders Code, under Article 6(2), prohibits all forms of discrimination by border guards in carrying out border checks. In its C-23/12 Zakaria judgment, the Court of Justice confirmed that it is for Member States to provide appropriate legal remedies to ensure, in compliance with Article 47 of the Charter of fundamental rights, the protection of persons claiming the rights derived from Article 6 of this Code.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011354/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Emma McClarkin (ECR), Regina Bastos (PPE), Robert Rochefort (ALDE) et Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(12 décembre 2012)

Objet: Incendies domestiques

Les incendies domestiques tuent en moyenne 5 000 personnes chaque année dans l'UE et entraînent 10 fois plus de blessures; 80 % de ces incendies surviennent à la maison.

Les causes de ces incendies sont nombreuses et variées, mais les incendies impliquant des meubles capitonnés sont particulièrement insidieux: ils commencent généralement très discrètement mais atteignent rapidement des proportions mettant la vie en jeu, laissant aux personnes qui se trouvent dans leur maison peu de chance d'éteindre le feu ou de s'échapper. Il existe des normes strictes de sécurité d'incendie pour les meubles capitonnés dans certains États membres (y compris le Royaume-Uni et l'Irlande), mais de nombreux autres États membres n'ont pas abordé cette question. Compte tenu de la libre circulation des marchandises et de la volonté de l'UE d'approfondir le marché unique, elle devrait contribuer à protéger les consommateurs contre ces risques. Il semble crucial de s'assurer qu'ils sont conscients du risque d'incendie des meubles remplis de mousse fortement combustibles présents dans leurs maisons, et d'introduire des exigences harmonisées en matière de sécurité incendie pour les meubles domestiques capitonnés vendus dans l'UE en vue de garantir le plus haut degré de sécurité face aux incendies et de protection de la santé et de l'environnement.

En vertu de la directive sur la sécurité générale des produits, les produits mis sur le marché de l'UE doivent être sûrs. À l'heure actuelle, ce n'est clairement pas le cas pour les meubles capitonnés vendus dans l'Europe continentale. La Commission a déjà indiqué qu'elle évaluait les options possibles pour résoudre ce problème.

1. La Commission peut-elle indiquer où en est cette évaluation?

2. Peut-elle indiquer ce qu'elle entend faire pour veiller à ce que les consommateurs soient conscients des risques d'incendie posés par les meubles remplis de mousse et pour garantir un niveau élevé et uniforme de protection contre ces risques dans l'UE?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(1er février 2013)

En ce qui concerne l'évaluation des options susceptibles de renforcer la sécurité incendie des meubles capitonnés, la Commission renvoie les Honorables Parlementaires à sa réponse à la question écrite E-011339/2012 de M. Davies ([1]).

Pour ce qui est de la sensibilisation des consommateurs au risque d'incendie posé par les meubles remplis de mousse, les États membres semblent considérer l'actuel niveau de sécurité incendie comme suffisant pour leurs consommateurs. Seul le Royaume-Uni a notifié, par l'intermédiaire du système d'alerte rapide de l'UE pour les produits de consommation non alimentaires dangereux (RAPEX) ([2]), des mesures relatives à ce type de mobilier en raison de sa non-conformité aux normes nationales de sécurité, et cela à sept reprises depuis 2007. La Commission n'a pas connaissance de campagnes d'information des consommateurs actuellement en cours ou prévues dans les États membres.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex_search.cfm.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011354/12
aan de Commissie
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Emma McClarkin (ECR), Regina Bastos (PPE), Robert Rochefort (ALDE) en Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(12 december 2012)

Betreft: Woningbranden

Bij branden in en rond het huis komen in de EU naar schatting elk jaar 5 000 mensen om het leven en raken tienmaal zoveel mensen gewond. 80 % van deze branden gebeuren binnenshuis.

Woningbranden hebben vele en uiteenlopende oorzaken, maar branden met gestoffeerde meubels zijn bijzonder verraderlijk. Meestal beginnen zij klein, maar nemen zij snel een levensbedreigende omvang aan waardoor de mensen in de woning weinig kans hebben om het vuur te blussen of om te ontsnappen. In een aantal lidstaten (waaronder het VK en Ierland) bestaan er strenge brandveiligheidsnormen voor gestoffeerde meubels, maar vele andere lidstaten hebben deze kwestie nog niet aangepakt. Gezien het vrije verkeer van goederen en het streven van de EU om de interne markt te verdiepen, zou de EU ertoe moeten bijdragen de consumenten tegen deze risico's te beschermen. Het lijkt van cruciaal belang ervoor te zorgen dat de consumenten zich bewust zijn van het brandrisico van zeer brandbare, met schuim gevulde meubels in hun woning, alsmede om geharmoniseerde brandveiligheidseisen te introduceren voor in de EU verkochte gestoffeerde meubels om te zorgen voor een optimaal niveau van brandveiligheid en gezondheids- en milieubescherming.

Uit hoofde van de richtlijn inzake algemene productveiligheid moeten op de EU-markt gebracht producten veilig zijn. Dit is bij gestoffeerde meubels die op het vasteland van Europa worden verkocht, duidelijk niet het geval. De Commissie heeft eerder verklaard dat zij bezig is met een evaluatie van de mogelijke opties voor het aanpakken van deze kwestie.

1. Kan de Commissie ons vertellen hoever zij met deze evaluatie is gekomen?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven wat zij denkt te doen om de consumenten bewust te maken van de brandrisico's van met schuim gevulde meubels en om in de gehele EU een hoog en uniform niveau van bescherming tegen deze risico's te waarborgen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(1 februari 2013)

Met betrekking tot de evaluatie van mogelijke opties om de brandveiligheid van gestoffeerd meubilair te verhogen, verwijst de Commissie de geachte Parlementsleden naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-011339/2012 van de heer Davies ([1]).

Wat de bewustmaking van consumenten over het brandgevaar van gestoffeerd meubilair betreft, lijken de lidstaten van oordeel te zijn dat het huidige niveau van brandveiligheid voor hun consumenten volstaat. Het Verenigd Koninkrijk heeft als enige maatregelen aangemeld in het Europese snelle alarmsysteem RAPEX (voor niet-voedingsproducten voor consumenten) ([2]), omdat er zich sinds 2007 zeven gevallen hebben voorgedaan waarbij het meubilair niet voldeed aan de nationale veiligheidsnormen. De Commissie heeft geen weet van enige bestaande of geplande op consumenten gerichte informatiecampagne in de lidstaten.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex_search.cfm.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011354/12
à Comissão
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Emma McClarkin (ECR), Regina Bastos (PPE), Robert Rochefort (ALDE) e Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(12 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Incêndios domésticos

Calcula-se que os incêndios domésticos matam cerca de 5 000 pessoas por ano na UE e causam um número de feridos 10 vezes superior. 80 % destes incêndios ocorrem dentro de casa.

As causas destes incêndios são múltiplas e variadas, mas os incêndios que envolvem móveis estofados são particularmente traiçoeiros: geralmente, começam por ser pequenos, mas rapidamente atingem proporções fatais, deixando os ocupantes de uma casa com poucas possibilidades para apagar o fogo ou para escapar. Embora existam rigorosas normas de segurança contra incêndios aplicáveis aos móveis estofados em alguns Estados-Membros (incluindo o Reino Unido e a Irlanda), muitos outros Estados-Membros não se ocuparam desta questão. Atendendo à liberdade de circulação das mercadorias e à vontade da UE em aprofundar o mercado único, a UE deve contribuir para proteger os consumidores contra estes riscos. Parece crucial garantir que tomem consciência dos riscos de incêndio inerentes às peças de mobiliário que contêm espuma altamente combustível que existem nas suas casas, tal como impor requisitos harmonizados de segurança contra incêndios para o mobiliário doméstico estofado vendido na UE que garantam o mais alto nível de segurança contra incêndios e de proteção da saúde e do ambiente.

De acordo com a diretiva relativa à segurança geral dos produtos, os produtos colocados no mercado da UE precisam de ser seguros. No presente, esse não é claramente o caso dos móveis estofados vendidos no continente europeu. A Comissão declarou anteriormente que estava a avaliar as opções possíveis para resolver esta questão.

1. Pode a Comissão informar-nos em que situação se encontra presentemente essa avaliação?

2. Pode a Comissão indicar o que tenciona fazer para garantir que os consumidores tomem consciência dos perigos de incêndio que emanam dos móveis que contêm espuma e para garantir um nível elevado e uniforme de proteção contra estes riscos em toda a UE?

Resposta dada por Joe Borg em nome da Comissão
(1 de fevereiro de 2013)

No que respeita à avaliação das opções para um eventual reforço da segurança contra incêndios do mobiliário estofado, a Comissão remete os Senhores Deputados para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-011339/2012 do Senhor Deputado Chris Davies ([1]).

Quanto à sensibilização dos consumidores para o risco de incêndio associado ao mobiliário estofado com espuma, os Estados-Membros parecem considerar o atual nível de segurança contra incêndios como suficiente para os respetivos consumidores. Só o Reino Unido notificou medidas relativas a tal mobiliário no sistema comunitário de alerta rápido para produtos de consumo não alimentares (RAPEX) ([2]), devido à não-conformidade do mobiliário com as normas de segurança nacionais, em sete casos desde 2007. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de qualquer campanha, nem em curso nem planeada, para informar os consumidores nos Estados-Membros.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex_search.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011354/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Emma McClarkin (ECR), Regina Bastos (PPE), Robert Rochefort (ALDE) and Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Domestic fires

Domestic fires kill an estimated 5 000 people every year in the EU and cause 10 times that number of injuries. 80% of these fires occur in the home.

The causes of these fires are many and varied, but fires involving upholstered furniture are particularly treacherous: they generally start small but rapidly reach life-threatening proportions, leaving those in the house with little chance either to put out the fire or to escape. There are stringent fire safety standards for upholstered furniture in some Member States (including the UK and Ireland), but many other Member States have not addressed this issue. Given the freedom of movement for goods and the EU's will to deepen the single market, the EU should help to protect consumers from these risks. Ensuring that they are aware of the fire risk from the highly combustible foam-filled pieces of furniture that fill their homes seems crucial, as does the introduction of harmonised fire safety requirements for domestic upholstered furniture sold in the EU which ensure the highest level of fire safety and of health and environmental protection.

According to the General Product Safety Directive, products placed on the EU market need to be safe. At the moment, this is clearly not the case for upholstered furniture sold in mainland Europe. The Commission has previously stated that it is assessing the possible options for addressing this issue.

1. Can the Commission tell us where this assessment currently stands?

2. Can the Commission indicate what it intends to do to ensure that consumers are aware of the fire hazards posed by foam-filled furniture and to guarantee a high and uniform level of protection against these hazards across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

Concerning the assessment of the options to possibly increase the fire safety of upholstered furniture, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-011339/2012 by Mr Davies ([1]).

Concerning consumer awareness of the fire risk of foam-filled furniture, Member States appear to consider the current fire safety level as sufficient for their consumers. Only the United Kingdom has notified measures relating to such furniture in the EU rapid alert sytem RAPEX (for non-food consumer products) ([2]), due to the furniture being non-compliant with national safety standards in seven cases since 2007. The Commission is not aware of any consumer information campaign in the Member States, neither present nor planned.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/create_rapex_search.cfm.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011355/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) oraz Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(12 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zabójstwo chrześcijan w Nigerii

Na początku grudnia w Nigerii, Boko Haram, islamska sekta odpowiedzialna za śmierć tysiąca chrześcijan dokonała dwóch ataków terrorystycznych.

Zginęło dziewięciu chrześcijan, cztery kościoły zostały spalone. We wsi Kwaple uzbrojeni muzułmanie spalili 20 domów chrześcijan i kościół, a w miejscowości Gamboru spalili trzy świątynie. Muzułmanie najpierw podpalali domy i kościoły, następnie mordowali chrześcijan maczetami i rozstrzeliwali.

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel podjęła działania, aby ochraniać chrześcijan mieszkających w Nigerii?

2. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel planuje rozmowy z rządem nigeryjskim dotyczące rozwiązywania konfliktów na tle religijnym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(28 lutego 2013 r.)

Nasilające się zjawisko przemocy w niektórych częściach północnej Nigerii budzi coraz większy niepokój w kraju i za granicą, a jego ofiarą pada niewinna ludność cywilna, zarówno chrześcijanie, jak i muzułmanie, oraz instytucje państwowe. Współpracujemy z Nigerią, by stawić czoła wyzwaniom związanym z zapewnieniem trwałego bezpieczeństwa i uporać się z problemami sprzyjającymi radykalizacji postaw i przemocy. Współpraca ta obejmuje zarówno ciągły dialog polityczny na temat właściwych sposobów rozwiązania istniejących problemów, jak również ukierunkowane działania pomocowe. Niedawna misja w Nigerii miała na celu zbadanie szczegółowych form wspierania walki z terroryzmem. Naszym celem jest wsparcie starań władz nigeryjskich na rzecz zapewnienia praworządności i poszanowania praw człowieka.

UE już teraz realizuje szereg programów dotyczących pomocy społecznej, np. opieki nad matkami, oraz zasobów wodnych na północy kraju. W ramach działań finansowanych z 11. Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju rozważamy jednak możliwość położenia większego nacisku na programy zintegrowane, które pomogłyby w rozwiązaniu wielu problemów gospodarczych i społecznych leżących u źródeł przemocy.

W lipcu 2012 r. UE zapewniła ponadto wsparcie na rzecz budowania potencjału w zakresie mediacji w jednym z najbardziej niestabilnych regionów, wykorzystując środki udostępnione w ramach specjalnej inicjatywy Parlamentu Europejskiego (EEAS BL 2238). Przygotowujemy również inny projekt koncentrujący się na zapobieganiu konfliktom oraz na zatrudnieniu wśród młodzieży na tych terenach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011355/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) and Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Massacre of Christians in Nigeria

In early December 2012, Boko Haram, an Islamic sect responsible for the deaths of thousands of Christians, carried out two terrorist attacks.

Nine Christians were killed and four churches were burned down. Armed Muslims burned down 20 Christian homes and churches in the village of Kwaple and three churches in the Gambor area. The Muslims first set the houses and churches on fire, then set about killing the Christians with machetes and guns.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative taken steps to protect Nigeria's Christian community?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative planning talks with the Nigerian Government on resolving that country's religious conflicts?

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

The escalating violence in parts of northern Nigeria are a growing cause of concern for those inside and outside the country and targets innocent civilians, both christians and muslims, and the institutions of the state. We are working with Nigeria to help it tackle the challenges of creating durable security and dealing with the factors conducive to radicalisation and violence, through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate approaches to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions. A mission was recently in Nigeria to examine specific forms of support to fight terrorism. Our objective is to help the Nigerian authorities ensure the rule of law and the respect of human rights principles.

The EU already undertakes a number of programmes providing social assistance, e.g. through maternal care, and water resources in the North. We are considering, however, focusing more attention under the 11th EDF on integrated programmes that tackle the full range of economic and social challenges that give impetus to the violence.

In addition, in July 2012 the EU provided capacity building for mediation in one of the most fragile areas, using funds from a special initiative by the European Parliament (EEAS BL 2238). We are also preparing another project focusing on conflict prevention and youth employment for this area.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011356/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Proyecto de instalación de línea MAT en Castellón

Red Eléctrica Española proyecta una línea eléctrica de doble circuito de 400 kV de Almassora a Morella, cruzando diecisiete términos municipales situados en la provincia de Castellón. Se trata de una línea de Muy Alta Tensión (MAT) que tiene un fuerte impacto ambiental e importantes consecuencias para la salud de las personas.

Estas líneas MAT *están sustentadas por torres de más de 70 m de altura, con cortafuegos de 50 m y una distancia media entre las torres de 450 m, y su construcción conlleva un fuerte impacto ambiental y paisajístico en las zonas colindantes. Para el trazado propuesto en la provincia de Castellón, la línea MAT supondría cruzar numerosos enclaves de interés paisajístico y ecológico de la provincia, entre los que se cuentan varias zonas incluidas en de la red Natura 2000.*

El trazado que Red Eléctrica Española pretende realizar atraviesa también diferentes zonas pobladas de la provincia, sin respetar la distancia mínima de seguridad actualmente recomendada de 1m/kV*, es decir, un mínimo de 400 metros de distancia a cualquier casa habitada.*

El presente proyecto *vulnera diferentes normativas tanto a nivel nacional como a nivel europeo. En España incumple el Real Decreto Ley 13/2012 de 30 de marzo, que dispone que no pueden otorgarse nuevas autorizaciones para instalaciones de transporte de energía hasta la aprobación de una nueva planificación de la red de transporte de energía eléctrica.*

A nivel europeo la citada línea MAT incumple la *Directiva 85/337/CEE del Consejo, de 27 de junio de 1985, en los aspectos relativos a la evaluación de las repercusiones ambientales de dicho proyecto al plantear un itinerario cercano a zonas pobladas y diferentes zonas protegidas. También incumple la Directiva 92/43/CEE al atravesar zonas incluidas bajo la protección de Red Natura 2000.*

¿Está la Comisión informada sobre el proyecto? ¿considera la Comisión que el recorrido del citado proyecto cumple las normativas a las que se han hecho referencia, además del citado Decreto de la legislación española? ¿Qué acciones empleará la Comisión para impedir que la Red Eléctrica Española pueda realizar tal proyecto y afectar profundamente el medio social y ambiental que lo rodeará? ¿Iniciará la Comisión un procedimiento de infracción en caso de que dicho proyecto continúe adelante?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento del proyecto al que hace referencia Su Señoría y no puede dar una respuesta detallada en esta fase. Se pedirá a las autoridades españolas que proporcionen más información sobre este proyecto, con el fin de evaluar si cumple las disposiciones de la legislación comunitaria de medio ambiente y, en particular, la Directiva sobre la evaluación de impacto ambiental y la Directiva sobre hábitats.

El Real Decreto Ley 13/2012 y su aplicación son asuntos de competencia nacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011356/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Plan to install a very high voltage power line in Castellón

Red Eléctrica Española (the Spanish Power Grid) plans to install a 400 kV double-circuit power line between Almassora and Morella, crossing 17 municipalities in the province of Castellón. Very high voltage (VHV) lines have a huge environmental impact and major public health implications.

These VHV lines are supported by towers which are over 70 m tall, with 50 m firewalls and an average distance of 450 m between the towers. Their construction has a huge impact on both the surrounding environment and landscape. The planned VHV line would cross numerous enclaves of scenic and ecological interest in the province of Castellón, among which are several areas included in the Natura 2000 network.

The route proposed by Red Eléctrica Española also cuts through several populated areas throughout the province and fails to respect the current recommended minimum safety distance of 1 m/kV, that is, at least 400 metres away from any inhabited house.

This project violates several national and EU regulations. It is in breach of Spanish Royal Decree Law 13/2012 of 30 March 2012, which provides that no new energy transmission facilities be authorised until a new plan for the electricity transmission network is approved.

As regards EU legislation, this VHV line is in breach of Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. It is also in breach of Directive 92/43/EEC as it passes through areas protected under the Natura 2000 network.

Is the Commission aware of this project? Does it believe that the proposed route complies with the aforementioned regulations, including the abovementioned Spanish Decree Law? What steps will it take to prevent Red Eléctrica Española from implementing this project and from profoundly affecting its social and environmental surroundings? Will it initiate infringement proceedings should this project go ahead?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the project to which the Honourable Member refers and cannot provide a detailed reply at this stage. It will ask the Spanish authorities to provide more information on this project, to assess whether it complies with the applicable EU environmental legislation and more particularly with the Environmental Impact Assessment Directiveand the Habitats Directive.

The Royal Decree Law 13/2012 and its enforcement are matters of national competence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011358/12
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Food Information for Consumers Regulation

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 provides for the extension of explicit compulsory origin-labelling requirements to meats other than beef.

Can the Commission outline the state of play as to the introduction of these new rules?

Can the Commission also confirm whether proposals will be developed in order to introduce specific labelling for poultry meat, pig meat and sheep meat?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([1]) states in Article 26(8) that the Commission shall adopt implementing acts as regards unprocessed meat of poultry, pigs, sheep and goats by 13 December 2013 following an impact assessment.

The Commission is currently steering an external study to evaluate the impact of different options of origin labelling on the meat supply chain but also on consumers, administration and trade with third countries. The outcome of the study will feed the subsequent impact assessment.

The Commission implementing acts concerning the origin labelling for each of the four meats will rely on the above evidence.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011359/12
à la Commission
Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)
(12 décembre 2012)

Objet: Suite données à la résolution du Parlement européen du 15 décembre 2011 sur l'examen à mi-parcours de la stratégie européenne 2007-2012 pour la santé et la sécurité au travail (2011/2147 (INI))

Selon l'Agence européenne pour la sécurité et la santé au travail, 168 000 décès par an dans l'UE sont dus à des accidents et des maladies liés au travail. Sept millions de personnes sont également blessées dans des accidents. L'Agence évalue le coût financier des maladies et des accidents du travail à un niveau impressionnant de 5,9 % du PIB européen.

Le 15 décembre 2011, le Parlement a adopté, quasi unanimement, une résolution sur l'examen à mi-parcours de la stratégie européenne 2007-2012 pour la santé et la sécurité au travail (2011/2147 (INI)).

Ladite résolution comprend plusieurs demandes sur les plans politique et législatif. Dans ce document, le Parlement invite la Commission à:

— proposer un acte législatif européen pour protéger les lanceurs d'alerte;

— présenter une proposition au Parlement et au Conseil en 2012 pour une interdiction de fumer dans tous les lieux de travail, y compris les établissements de restauration en intérieur, et dans tous les transports publics et bâtiments publics fermés de l'Union;

— faire une proposition de révision de la directive 2004/37 sur les substances cancérogènes et mutagènes avant la fin de 2012 pour élargir son champ aux substances reprotoxiques;

— proposer des mesures législatives pour veiller à ce que les nanomatériaux soient couverts par la législation actuelle en matière de santé et de sécurité au travail;

— faire des propositions afin de s'assurer que chaque État membre met en œuvre rapidement l'accord-cadre de 2004 au niveau européen sur le stress au travail;

— s'assurer que la future proposition législative sur les troubles musculo-squelettiques couvre l'intégralité des travailleurs.

La Commission pourrait-elle faire rapport des mesures qu'elle a prises en 2012 pour répondre à ces requêtes? Peut-elle préciser dans quelle mesure elle a respecté les engagements pris dans son programme de travail de 2012? Enfin, étant donné l'urgence largement reconnue de la question, la Commission élaborera-t-elle une nouvelle stratégie sur la santé et la sécurité au travail au cours du premier trimestre de 2013?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(14 février 2013)

La Commission a l'intention de présenter, au cours du premier trimestre 2013, les résultats finaux de l'évaluation de la stratégie européenne 2007-2012 pour la santé et la sécurité au travail, d'une part, et lancer une consultation publique sur la voie à suivre, d'autre part. Le rapport contiendra une description et une évaluation des actions spécifiques menées à l'échelon de l'Union européenne et des États membres pour appliquer la stratégie. Il couvrira également les progrès accomplis dans la prise en considération des demandes du Parlement concernant les mesures concrètes et la législation, demandes formulées dans sa résolution sur l'examen à mi-parcours de la stratégie. Par contre, il n'abordera pas une éventuelle législation européenne protégeant les lanceurs d'alerte: la Commission, qui avait été invitée à soumettre une proposition à ce sujet, évalue pour l'instant les informations disponibles.

La Commission tiendra compte des points de vue exprimés par les parties prenantes lorsqu'elle définira ses futures priorités d'action dans le domaine de la santé et de la sécurité au travail.

Pour le reste, nous appelons l'attention de l'auteur de la question sur le fait que le rapport d'activité annuel des services de la Commission pour 2012 couvre l'état d'avancement du programme de travail de la Commission pour cette même année.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011359/12
to the Commission
Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)
(12 December 2012)

Subject: Follow-up to Parliament's resolution of 15 December 2011 on the mid-term review of the European strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work (2011/2147(INI))

According to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 168 000 deaths per year in the EU are due to accidents and diseases linked to work. Seven million people are also injured in accidents. The agency evaluates the financial cost of illness and work-related accidents at an impressive 5.9% of European GDP.

On 15 December 2011, Parliament adopted, almost unanimously, a resolution on the mid-term review of the European strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work (2011/2147 (INI)).

This resolution includes several policy and legislative demands. In it, Parliament calls:

— on the Commission to propose European legislation protecting whistleblowers;

— on the Commission to submit a proposal to Parliament and the Council in 2012 for a ban on smoking in all workplaces, including indoor catering establishments, on all public transport and in all enclosed public buildings within the EU;

— on the Commission to propose a revision of Directive 2004/37 on carcinogens and mutagens by the end of 2012 in order to expand its scope to include reprotoxic substances;

— for legislative action to ensure that nanomaterials are covered by the current OSH legislation;

— on the Commission to make proposals to ensure that each Member State quickly implements the 2004 European Framework Agreement on work-related stress;

— for the future legislative proposal on musculoskeletal disorders to cover all workers.

Could the Commission report on the measures it has taken in 2012 to meet these demands? Can the Commission clarify to what extent it has met the commitments made in its 2012 Work Programme? Finally, given the widely acknowledged urgency of the matter, will the Commission issue a new European strategy on health and safety at work during the first quarter of 2013?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission intends to make available the final results of the evaluation of the EU Strategy (2007-12) on health and safety at work during the first quarter of 2013 and launch a public consultation on the way forward. The report will include a description and evaluation of the specific actions carried out at EU and national level to implement the strategy. It will also cover progress to date regarding Parliament's requests regarding policy and legislation in its Resolution on the mid-term review of the strategy, with the exception of the call on the Commission to propose EU legislation to protect whistleblowers, for which the Commission is assessing the information available.

The Commission will take account of the views of the stakeholders when setting priorities for future policy action on health and safety at work.

The Honourable Member's attention is also drawn to the fact that the Commission services annual activity report on 2012 covers progress in carrying out the Commission's work programme for 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011360/12
to the Commission
Andrew Duff (ALDE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Accession of the EU to the European Convention on Human Rights

Following on from my previous Written Question P-010089/12, and given that the Commission (or in the case of foreign policy, the High Representative) will represent the Union before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), who will decide whether the Union becomes a co-respondent to proceedings in respect of a violation of Union law?

What decision-making procedure will be used in Council for reaching opinions as and when the Council is consulted by the Commission on proceedings before the ECtHR?

Is the Commission aware of the need to consult also with Parliament before making submissions to the ECtHR on matters concerning a provision of Union law or an international agreement to which Parliament has given its consent in accordance with Article 218 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

How will the rules ensure consistency in ECtHR proceedings between the submissions of the Commission and of a Member State where the Union is a co-respondent or where Member States collectively are co-respondents in a case concerning the possible violation of Union law?

Will the Commission remind the Council that Parliament needs to give its consent to the agreement on the accession of the EU to the ECHR?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(14 January 2013)

In proceedings before the ECtHR, the Union should be represented by a single agent appointed by the Commission. Prior to requesting that the Union become a co-respondent to the proceedings, the Commission should consult with the respondent Member State and with the author(s) of the provision of Union law which is called into question by an alleged violation of the ECHR.

It would be in the first place for the Council to take a position on its internal decision making procedure.

Since prior to requesting that the Union become a co-respondent, the Commission should consult *inter alia* with the author(s) of the provision of Union law at issue. Parliament would have to be consulted on equal footing with the Council regarding all legal acts that have been adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure. Moreover, the consultation mechanism would also allow to take account of the specific situation regarding Council acts needing Parliament's consent.

Such consistency should be ensured by the Commission consulting with *inter alia* the co-respondent Member State. Moreover, it should be provided that the positions expressed by the Union agent and by the respondent Member State on such an alleged violation of the Convention shall not contradict each other.

Yes, the Commission has already repeatedly reminded the Council that the Parliament needs to give its consent to the agreement on the accession of the EU to the ECtHR.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-011361/12
til Kommissionen
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(13. december 2012)

Om: Om partikelforurening i lufthavne

I forlængelse af mine spørgsmål af 8. marts 2010 (E-001326/2010), 13. januar 2011 (P-011302/2010) og 10. januar 2012 (P-012664/2011) om det alvorlige problem med arbejdsrelaterede kræfttilfælde som følge af partikelforurening i lufthavne og i forlængelse af Kommissionens besvarelse på mit spørgsmål af 27. april 2012 (P-004461/2012), bedes Kommissionen oversende det omtalte resumé fra Kommissionens fælles Forskningscenter samt oplyse, om det er blevet behandlet i »Det Videnskabelige Udvalg for Grænseværdier for Erhvervsmæssig Eksponering«, og i givet fald hvad resultatet af denne behandling blev. Endelig bedes Kommissionen redegøre for, hvad den videre vil foretage for at løse dette meget alvorlige sundhedsmæssige problem i de europæiske lufthavne.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(23. januar 2013)

Kommissionens Fælles Forskningscenter (JRC) har forberedt sonderende undersøgelser — baseret på den foreliggende videnskabelige litteratur — om aspekter af de sundhedsmæssige virkninger af erhvervsmæssig eksponering for en række stoffer i lufthavne. JRC fremlagde de endelige udkast til de sonderende undersøgelser på det 85. møde i Det Videnskabelige Udvalg for Grænseværdier for Erhvervsmæssig Eksponering (SCOEL) den 26. og 27. september 2012. Kommissionen sender en kopi af de pågældende undersøgelser direkte til det ærede medlem og til Parlamentets sekretariat.

JRC vil i forlængelse af drøftelserne i SCOEL fortsætte sit arbejde på dette område og vil beskæftige sig mere detaljeret med de erhvervsmæssige sundhedsvirkninger af eksponering for flybrændstof og det relevante forbrændingsprodukt. Den vil tillige vurdere de videnskabelige aspekter af erhvervsmæssig eksponering for udstødningsemissioner fra dieselmotorer, som også er af sundhedsmæssig relevans for arbejdstagere beskæftiget i lufthavne.

Kommissionens kompetente tjenestegrene følger dette arbejde på tæt hold for at kunne vurdere alvorligheden af de sundhedsproblemer, der henvises til, og behovet for yderligere tiltag på EU-plan.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011361/12
to the Commission
Søren Bo Søndergaard (GUE/NGL)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Particulate pollution in airports

Further to my questions of 8 March 2010 (E-001326(2010), 13 January 2011 (P-011302/2010) and 10 January 2012 (P-012664/2011) on the serious problem of work-related cancer resulting from particulate pollution at airports, and further to the Commission's answer to my question of 27 April 2012 (P-004461/2012), could the Commission please send me the review to which it refers by the Commission's Joint Research Centre? Can it state whether this has been examined by the Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits, and if so what the result of this examination was? Finally, can the Commission state what further action it proposes to take to resolve this very serious health issue at European airports?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2013)

The Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has prepared scoping studies, based on available scientific literature, on aspects of the health effects of occupational exposure to a range of substances at airports. The JRC presented the final drafts of the scoping studies at the 85th meeting of the Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL) on 26 and 27 September 2012. The Commission is sending a copy of the studies concerned direct to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

Further to the discussion within SCOEL, the JRC will continue to work on this issue and will address in more detail the occupational health implications of exposure to aviation fuels and its combustion product. It will also evaluate the scientific aspects of occupational exposure to diesel engine exhaust emissions, which are also relevant to the health of airport workers.

The competent Commission services are following this work closely to be able to assess the seriousness of the alleged health problems and the need for additional action at EU level.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011362/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Sviluppi sulla situazione ambientale del lago di Massaciuccoli

In risposta alla mia interrogazione (E-004886/2012) dello scorso maggio sullo stato di salute del lago di Massaciuccoli, la Commissione sosteneva che stava esaminando i piani di gestione previsti dalla direttiva quadro in materia di acque notificati dagli Stati membri e che avrebbe pubblicato i risultati della sua valutazione a novembre del 2012.

Può la Commissione indicare quali siano i risultati di questa sua valutazione ambientale?

Sono state riscontrate nuove anomalie o violazioni ambientali in quest'area particolarmente a rischio?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

Il «Piano per la salvaguardia delle risorse idriche europee» ([1]), adottato dalla Commissione nel novembre 2012, include una relazione sulla valutazione dei piani di gestione dei bacini idrografici trasmessi dagli Stati membri, che illustra lo stato delle acque nell'UE. Secondo i piani di gestione dei bacini idrografici comunicati dalle autorità italiane ([2]) a norma della direttiva quadro sulle acque (2000/60/CE ([3])), il lago di Massaciuccoli è designato come corpo idrico fortemente modificato, in cattivo stato e sottoposto a pressioni sia puntuali che diffuse. È quindi opportuno prendere misure per migliorare lo stato delle acque del lago.

Inoltre, gli Stati membri erano tenuti a comunicare i progressi nell'attuazione dei programmi di misure entro dicembre 2012. Di conseguenza, la Commissione procederà a una debita valutazione della relazione dell'Italia sui progressi compiuti al riguardo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([2]) La valutazione dei piani di gestione dei distretti idrografici dell'Italia è consultabile al seguente indirizzo internet: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/pdf/CWD-2012-379_EN-Vol17_IT_it.pdf
([3]) GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011362/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Developments in the environmental situation on Lake Massaciuccoli

In its answer to my Written Question E-004886/2012 of May 2012 on the state of health of Lake Massaciuccoli, the Commission stated that it was assessing the Water Framework Directive management plans reported by Member States and that it would publish its findings in November 2012.

What were the findings of the Commission's environmental assessment?

Were any new environmental problems or infringements detected at the lake, which is an area at particular risk?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2013)

In November 2012, the Commission adopted 'The Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources' ([1]), an integral part of which is a report on the assessment of the River Basin Management Plans, as reported by Member States, which indicates the status of EU waters. According to the River Basin Management Plans reported by the Italian authorities ([2]), as required by the Water Framework Directive (WFD 2000/60/EC) ([3]), the Lago di Massaciuccoli is classified as a heavily modified water body considered in bad status and affected by significant point and diffuse pressures. Measures should therefore be taken to improve the status of the waters of the lake.

Moreover, Member States were obligated to report on progress in the implementation of the programmes of measures by December 2012. As a result, Italy's progress report will be duly assessed by the Commission.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([2]) The assessment of Italian River Basin Management Plans is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/pdf/CWD-2012-379_EN-Vol17_IT_it.pdf
([3]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011363/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Nuevas amenazas a sindicalistas colombianos

El pasado 7 de noviembre llegó al domicilio de Rafael Esquivel, ex-presidente del Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Sistema Agroalimentario (Sinaltrainal), una nueva amenaza por parte del autodenominado Comando Unificado Delegado Anticomunista de las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC). Esta no es la primera vez que son amenazados representantes sindicales colombianos, ni la primera vez que se amenaza a los representantes de Sinaltrainal, y muchas de estas amenazas continúan cumpliéndose ya que el actual Gobierno de Colombia sigue sin garantizar la seguridad de los que luchan por los derechos de los trabajadores.

Recientemente, representantes sindicales de este sindicato fueron recibidos en el Parlamento Europeo donde expresaron, tanto en una audiencia pública como en una reunión de la Delegación para las Relaciones con los Países de la Comunidad Andina, la alarmante situación y dejaron constancia de la preocupación por su seguridad.

Las recientes amenazas, en un contexto de incremento de las movilizaciones y la lucha por la legítima defensa de los derechos de los trabajadores, van dirigidas hacia los trabajadores y ex-trabajadores de Nestlé que están participando en las últimas protestas y actividades organizadas en contra de la compañía.

Ante la completa indefensión que existe en Colombia en este tipo de casos, tal y como dramáticamente demuestra la larga lista de sindicalistas asesinados, más de 4 000 en los últimos 20 años, y desaparecidos en Colombia cuando defendían sus derechos, es necesaria una reacción firme ante la nueva petición de auxilio de los trabajadores de la compañía y una exigencia clara y rotunda al Gobierno colombiano de que cumpla y garantice los convenios 87 y 98 de la OIT, sobre los derechos de asociación y negociación colectiva. Así, la organización internacional ha condenado en repetidas ocasiones al Gobierno de Colombia por la no observancia de los citados convenios y, por tanto, por no garantizar la seguridad de los representantes sindicales.

¿Qué medidas concretas piensa exigir la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante al Gobierno colombiano para garantizar la seguridad y la integridad de los representantes sindicales de Sinaltrainal amenazados por las AUC? ¿Piensa la UE presionar a través de la congelación del Acuerdo Comercial Multipartes y de todas las relaciones comerciales hasta que las autoridades colombianas garanticen de manera efectiva la seguridad de todos los representantes sindicales y respete los convenios 87 y 98 de la OIT?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2013)

La UE insta sistemáticamente a Bogotá a que intensifique sus esfuerzos para proteger a los grupos más vulnerables de la población, incluidos los líderes y miembros de los sindicatos. La UE realiza este llamamiento tanto en el contexto de su diálogo político con las autoridades colombianas en general como en el del diálogo específicamente dedicado a los derechos humanos.

Como consecuencia también de los debates celebrados en el contexto de estos diálogos, el Gobierno colombiano ha renovado y ampliado de forma significativa, en los últimos años y meses, el programa especial de protección del Ministerio de Interior. Aproximadamente 1 100 sindicalistas están ahora amparados por este programa.

La UE proseguirá su diálogo con las autoridades acerca de la protección de las personas en situación de riesgo. En ese contexto, se planteará el caso del Sr. Esquivel y se solicitará información sobre las circunstancias de su caso y el curso dado a una solicitud de protección que éste podría haber presentado.

El Acuerdo Comercial, una vez aplicado, nos proporcionará un mecanismo adicional a través del cual la UE y la sociedad civil podrán colaborar con las autoridades de Colombia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011363/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — New threats to Colombian trade unionists

On 7 November 2012, Rafael Esquivel, the former president of the National Union of Food Industry Workers (SINALTRAINAL), received a new threat from the self-titled United Anti-Communist Command (*Comando Unificado Delegado Anticomunista*) of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). This is not the first time that Colombian trade union representatives have been threatened, nor is it the first time that these threats have targeted SINALTRAINAL representatives. Many of these threats continue to be carried out as the current Colombian Government cannot yet guarantee the safety of those fighting for workers' rights.

Representatives from this trade union recently attended the European Parliament where, at both a public hearing and at a meeting of the Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community, they explained the alarming situation and put on record the concerns for their safety.

In the light of increased action and the fight to legitimately defend workers' rights, recent threats have been directed towards workers and former workers of Nestlé, who are participating in the latest protests and actions organised against the company.

Given that those involved in such cases in Colombia are completely helpless, dramatically demonstrated by the long list of trade unionists who have been killed — over 4 000 in the past 20 years — and who have disappeared in Colombia for defending their rights, we need to react decisively to the new request for help from company employees and to make a clear and emphatic demand to the Colombian Government to comply with and guarantee International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions No 87 and 98, on the rights of association and collective bargaining. To this end, the international organisation has repeatedly condemned the Colombian Government for failing to observe such agreements and therefore failing to ensure the safety of union representatives.

What specific measures will the Vice-President/High Representative demand that the Colombian Government take to ensure the safety and well-being of SINALTRAINAL union representatives threatened by the AUC? Will the EU put pressure on the Government by freezing the Multiparty Trade Agreement and all trade relations until the Colombian authorities effectively guarantee the safety of all union representatives and respect ILO Conventions No 87 and 98?

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

The EU consistently urges Bogotá to step up its efforts to protect the most vulnerable population groups, including the leaders and members of trade unions. The EU does this in the context of its political dialogue with the Colombian authorities in general and in the context of the dialogue dedicated specifically to human rights.

As a result also of the discussions in the context of these dialogue, the Colombian Government has significantly revamped and expanded the Ministry of Interior's special protection programme in recent years and months. Over 1 100 trade unionists are now covered by this programme.

The EU will continue its dialogue with the authorities on the issue of protection for persons at risk. In this context, it will raise the case of Mr Esquivel, and enquire about the circumstances of his case, and the status of a request for protection that he may have made.

The Trade Agreement, once applied, will provide us with an additional mechanism through which the EU and civil society will be able to engage with the Colombia authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011364/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(13 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Urbanización de Ses Fontanelles (Palma)

La zona húmeda de Ses Fontanelles (Bahía de Palma) está ocupada en su totalidad por el hábitat de interés comunitario «estepas salinas mediterráneas (Limonietalia)», incluido con el código 1510 en el anexo I de la Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y la flora silvestres, modificada por la Directiva 2006/105/CE del Consejo, de 20 de noviembre de 2006. Según el artículo 4 de esta Directiva, los criterios enumerados en el anexo III debían servir para incluir una representación adecuada y suficiente de los hábitats prioritarios dentro de la red Natura 2000. La no inclusión de Ses Fontanelles es sin duda una anomalía clamorosa, ya que el hábitat 1510 es muy escaso en las Islas Baleares, y la zona en cuestión es probablemente la muestra más extensa, continua y hasta ahora mejor conservada de todo el archipiélago.

Entre las especies del género *Limonium* que están presentes en Ses Fontanelles, cabe destacar *Limonium barceloi,* que, en todo el mundo, solo se encuentra en esta zona. Además, Ses Fontanelles es también área de nidificación, paso e invernada de varias especies de pájaros estrictamente protegidas, por lo que se debería declarar zona de especial protección para las aves (ZEPA).

Sin embargo, el Consejo de Gobierno aprobó en julio un Decreto Ley de medidas urgentes para la Playa de Palma que, entre otras cosas, anula el apartado del Decreto Ley 1/2007 que protegía la zona de Ses Fontanelles. El Decreto Ley da, por lo tanto, vía libre a la construcción de viviendas y un centro comercial en Ses Fontanelles.

Sin embargo, el informe favorable de la Comisión Balear de Medio Ambiente podría vulnerar legislación básica del Estado español así como la normativa europea y, al mismo tiempo, la licencia de obras relativa a Ses Fontanelles y las obras que ya han comenzado podrían suponer una infracción clara de la legislación europea.

¿Está la Comisión informada del Decreto Ley que permite construir viviendas y un centro comercial en Ses Fontanelles, así como de que las obras ya han empezado? ¿Considera que es una vulneración del Derecho europeo? En caso de que sea así, ¿qué medidas tiene previsto aplicar?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de la aprobación del Decreto Ley 8/2012, de 13 de julio, de medidas urgentes para la Platja de Palma ([1]). Basándose en la información que obra en su poder, y teniendo presente que la zona de Ses Fontanelles no forma parte de la Red Natura 2000, la Comisión no cree que la aprobación del mencionado decreto vulnere la Directiva sobre los hábitats ([2]) ni ninguna otra norma de la UE y no tiene intenciones de tomar medida alguna al respecto.

([1]) http://boib.caib.es/pdf/2012101/mp38.pdf
([2]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011364/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Urbanisation of Ses Fontanelles (Palma de Mallorca)

The Ses Fontanelles wetlands (Bay of Palma) are occupied entirely by the habitat of Community interest 'Mediterranean salt steppes (Limonietalia)' (Code 1510), listed in Annex I to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as amended by Council Directive 2006/105/EC of 20 November 2006. Under Article 4 of this directive, the criteria listed in Annex III should include an adequate and sufficient representation of the priority habitats within the Natura 2000 network. The non-inclusion of Ses Fontanelles is certainly a glaring omission, since habitat 1510 is very scarce in the Balearic Islands, and the area in question is probably the most extensive, continuous and, up until now, best preserved example of it in the entire archipelago.

The *Limonium barceloi* is noteworthy among the *Limonium* species present in Ses Fontanelles, as it can only be found in this part of the world. Ses Fontanelles is also a breeding, passage and wintering area for several species of strictly protected birds, therefore it should be declared a special protection area for birds (SPA).

In July, however, the Governing Council adopted a decree law on urgent measures for Palm Beach, which, *inter alia*, repealed the section of Decree Law 1/2007 protecting the Ses Fontanelles area. The Decree Law therefore offered free rein to build homes and a shopping centre in Ses Fontanelles.

However, the favourable report by the Balearic Environment Commission may be in breach of basic Spanish law and EU legislation and, at the same time, the building permit for Ses Fontanelles and the works that are already underway may be in clear breach of EU legislation.

Is the Commission aware of the Decree Law that enables homes and a shopping centre to be built in Ses Fontanelles, and that the works have already begun? Does it believe this to be in breach of EU legislation? If so, what measures will it take?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the approval of the Decree Law 8/2012 on urgent measures for the Beach of Palma ([1]). In light of the information available to the Commission, and considering that the area of Ses Fontanelles is not included under the Natura 2000 network, the Commission does not consider the approval of the Decree Law 8/2012 to be in breach of the Habitats Directive ([2]) or other EU legislation and does not intend to take any measures on this issue.

([1]) http://boib.caib.es/pdf/2012101/mp38.pdf
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011365/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(13 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Reforma educativa en España, Estrategia UE 2020, igualdad y no discriminación

La reforma educativa propuesta por el Ministro de Educación de España se caracteriza por los elementos siguientes: define la educación como un factor productivo más; considera la educación infantil como una etapa asistencial y no educativa; recentraliza la política educativa con medidas como la definición de contenidos por parte del gobierno central; atenta directamente contra la normalización de la lengua catalana y la labor de cohesión social que ha significado el modelo de inmersión lingüística; consolida la segregación de alumnos por sexo, blindando por ley los conciertos con las escuelas que segregan; potencia una doble red entre centros educativos públicos y privados-concertados, alejando muchos niños y jóvenes de la igualdad de oportunidades; renuncia también al principio de igualdad de oportunidades desmontando el modelo de educación comprensiva en toda la etapa obligatoria con el adelanto de la diferenciación de itinerarios y la implementación de la reválida.

La reforma plantea un modelo adoctrinador e ideológico porque elimina la asignatura de Educación para la Ciudadanía y, en su lugar, impone la enseñanza de la religión católica como materia curricular. Se aleja de un modelo integrador y respetuoso basado en el laicismo y fomenta la discriminación religiosa.

Según Eurostat, el índice de abandono escolar en España en 2011 fue del 26,5 % (porcentaje de estudiantes de 18-24 años de edad que han abandonado la educación primaria y secundaria). Mientras que el objetivo de la UE para 2020 es reducir el porcentaje de abandono escolar a menos del 10 %.

Visto el artículo 165 TFUE que establece que la Unión contribuirá al desarrollo de una educación de calidad, ¿conoce la Comisión la propuesta? ¿Cree que el modelo de fomento de la educación concertada y privada reducirá el fracaso escolar? ¿Esta ley permite a España alcanzar sus objetivos de la estrategia UE 2020? ¿Considera la Comisión que la propuesta viola el principio de no discriminación por religión entre el alumnado, así como el principio recogido en los Tratados de igualdad entre hombres y mujeres? ¿Recomendará la Comisión a España la revisión de la propuesta de ley para garantizar una educación pública, de calidad, gratuita y libre?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de las reformas en materia de educación y formación en España, incluido el Anteproyecto de Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa. Como sabe Su Señoría, el artículo 165 del Tratado establece que los Estados miembros son los únicos responsables de los contenidos de la enseñanza y la organización de los sistemas educativos.

No obstante, con motivo del Semestre Europeo anual que promueve una gobernanza económica más estricta en el seno de la Unión Europea, la Comisión presenta recomendaciones específicas a los Estados miembros, también en el ámbito de la educación. Este proceso debería ayudar a la Unión Europea a alcanzar los objetivos de su Estrategia Europa 2020. La Comisión supervisa continuamente la manera en que los Estados miembros responden a sus recomendaciones y, por lo tanto, evaluará el Anteproyecto de Ley Orgánica del Gobierno español a la luz de las actuales recomendaciones por país. En caso necesario, la Comisión adoptará nuevas recomendaciones para España a finales de mayo de 2013.

Durante los dos últimos años, el Semestre Europeo ha subrayado que el abandono escolar prematuro sigue siendo uno de los aspectos más problemáticos para España. La Comisión observa que el Anteproyecto de Ley Orgánica del Gobierno español señala la reducción del abandono escolar prematuro como uno de sus objetivos principales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011365/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Education reform in Spain, EU 2020 strategy, equality and non-discrimination

The education reform proposed by the Spanish Education Minister includes the following elements: it defines education as yet another productive factor; it views pre-school education as childcare rather than an educational stage; it recentralises education policy through measures such as enabling the central government to define educational content; it directly undermines the standardisation of the Catalan language and the work of social cohesion which has led to the linguistic immersion model; it consolidates student segregation based on gender, legally protecting agreements with schools that segregate; it promotes a double system of public and subsidised private schools, depriving many children and young people of equal opportunities; furthermore it rejects the principle of equal opportunities by removing full compulsory education at all stages by implementing different pathways and a final examination.

The reform proposes an indoctrinating and ideological model which eliminates the subject of Education for Citizenship and, instead, makes teaching the Catholic religion part of the curriculum. It moves away from an inclusive and respectful model based on secularism and promotes religious discrimination.

According to Eurostat, the school dropout rate in Spain in 2011 was 26.5% (percentage of students aged 18-24 who dropped out of primary and secondary education). The EU's target for 2020 is to reduce the school dropout rate to less than 10%.

In view of Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which provides that the Union shall contribute to the development of quality education, is the Commission aware of this proposal? Does it believe that the model promoting subsidised and private education will reduce school failure? Does this law enable Spain to meet its EU 2020 objectives? Does the Commission believe that the proposal violates the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of religion among students as well as the principle enshrined in the Treaties regarding equality between men and women? Will it recommend that Spain revise the bill to ensure free, quality education that is available to all?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the education and training reforms in Spain, including the draft proposal for the Organic Law to Improve the Quality of Education. As the Honourable Member is aware, Article 165 of the Treaty states that Member States are solely responsible for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems.

Nonetheless, under the annual European Semester that promotes closer economic governance within the European Union, the Commission issues specific recommendations to Member States, including in the field of education. This process should help the European Union to achieve the objectives of its Europe 2020 strategy. The Commission continuously monitors how Member States respond to their recommendations, and therefore the Commission will evaluate the Spanish government's proposal for the Organic Law in the light of the country's current recommendations. If necessary, the Commission will issue new recommendations for Spain at the end of May 2013.

Over the last two years, the European Semester has underlined that early school leaving remains one of the most challenging issues for Spain. The Commission notes that the Spanish government's proposal for the Organic Law identifies the reduction of early school leaving as one of its main objectives.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011366/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) y Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Tasas judiciales en España

El 12 de diciembre de 2012, todos los juzgados de España pararon su actividad durante una hora en protesta contra la reforma de la Justicia presentada por el ministro Ruiz Gallardón, la cual incluye una subida inconcebible de las tasas judiciales: el coste de la presentación de un recurso de apelación pasa de 300 a 800 euros y el de uno de casación, ante el Tribunal Supremo, de 600 a 1 200 euros. La Asociación Libre de Abogados (ALA) ha asegurado que la Ley de tasas es «inconstitucional», que «dificulta sobremanera el acceso de la ciudadanía a la Justicia» y que «tendrá un efecto disuasorio en el acceso a la justicia en muchos casos, en especial para quienes tienen menos recursos», vulnerando así el derecho a acceso a la justicia y a la tutela judicial efectiva. En este mismo sentido, el Consejo General de la Abogacía Española, los sindicatos UGT, CCOO, USO, STAJ y CSI-F y el Consejo de Consumidores y Usuarios (que integra a once de estas organizaciones con implantación nacional) presentaron la Plataforma «Justicia Para Todos».

El Programa de Estocolmo establece un espacio de libertad, seguridad y justicia en la EU donde una Europa de la justicia debe «facilitar el acceso a la justicia para los ciudadanos, a fin de proteger mejor sus derechos en toda la UE». La Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE prevé, en su artículo 47, párrafo 3, que se conceda asistencia jurídica gratuita a quienes no dispongan de recursos suficientes, y existe la Directiva sobre la justicia gratuita en los litigios transfronterizos. A su vez, el recientemente adoptado «paquete de víctimas» garantiza el acceso a la justicia y derechos mínimos a las víctimas. Si bien esta Directiva está ligada al principio de libre circulación, cabe destacar que si no se aplica de igual manera para aquellos ciudadanos que habitan en España, se estará produciendo un caso de discriminación inversa.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre las reformas del señor Ruiz Gallardón? ¿Considera que estas reformas van en contra del espíritu del Programa de Estocolmo? ¿Considera que las reformas impiden ofrecer una justicia pública, de calidad y gratuita, con pleno acceso de la ciudadanía a la misma? ¿Considera que viola la Directiva de protección de las víctimas? ¿Cree que las reformas tienen un fin recaudatorio que criminaliza a las personas más vulnerables en nuestra sociedad? ¿Considera que el aumento de las tasas es consecuencia de la austeridad indiscriminada promovida por Europa vía los objetivos de déficit y deuda?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011367/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Joaquim Miranda (GUE/NGL)
(13 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Criterio de excesividad de las tasas judiciales

Las tasas judiciales aprobadas por el Ministro Gallardón son de aplicación en tres órdenes jurisdiccionales: civil, administrativo y laboral. No obstante, los temas penales (de momento) no llevan incorporada tasa judicial. Entendemos que pudieran responder que las tasas, al no aplicarse al orden penal, no vulneran ningún derecho. Asimismo, el TJUE ya tiene el criterio de que la aplicación de tasas judiciales no es contrario al acceso a la justicia, no obstante, el matiz que siempre se tiene en consideración es la desproporcionalidad de las cuantías.

En este sentido, el propio Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos (TEDH) y el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea (TJUE) ya se han pronunciado respecto a las tasas judiciales, entendiendo en la Sentencia Kreuz contra Polonia, de 19 de junio de 2001 (TEDH 2001, 398, Asunto 28249/95), que el requisito de abonar tasas judiciales en procesos civiles no infringe por sí solo el derecho de acceso a un tribunal protegido por el artículo 6, apartado 1, del Convenio de Roma. Sin embargo, la cuantía de las tasas no debe ser excesiva, a la luz de las circunstancias propias de cada caso, de tal modo que impida satisfacer el contenido esencial del derecho de acceso efectivo a la justicia.

Y el TJUE ha reconocido este criterio de la excesividad en virtud del derecho a una tutela judicial efectiva consagrado en el artículo 47 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales, tal y como ha expuesto la Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de 22 de diciembre de 2010 en el asunto DEB Deutsche Energiehandels-undBeratungsgesellschaftmbH (C-279/09). La exagerada cuantía del tributo y, más específicamente, su desproporción con respecto a la cuantía litigiosa en numerosos casos hace que la tasa no resulte desincentivadora, sino impeditiva del acceso a la Jurisdicción.

Entendemos que sería conveniente formular la pregunta de una forma genérica sobre el acceso a la justicia y las cuantías fijadas en la Ley de Tasas Judiciales, y respecto a su carácter a todas luces excesivo. En este sentido la pregunta que creemos debería formularse es:

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la Ley de Tasas Española y respecto a las cuantías que allí se establecen? ¿Considera que son excesivas?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011505/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Primacía del Derecho comunitario en tema de tasas judiciales

En una resolución del magistrado del Juzgado de lo Social n° 1 de Benidorm se ha acordado la no aplicación de la Ley de Tasas (Ley 10/2012, de 20 de noviembre) del Ministro Gallardón por ser contraria al Derecho de la Unión Europea, y que no será exigible su pago. El magistrado explica que el establecimiento de una tasa vinculada a la prestación de un servicio público, que puede llegar hasta 10 500 euros en el ámbito del recurso de suplicación, es un obstáculo contrario al Derecho a la tutela judicial efectiva y a un juez imparcial en los términos del artículo 47 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y la interpretación establecida, entre otras, en la Sentencia del TJUE de 6 de noviembre de 2012 sobre el asunto C-199/11.

La tasa entraría de lleno en la aplicación de la Directiva 93/13/CEE sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con consumidores, por lo que se puede considerar cláusula abusiva. Así, de acuerdo con lo previsto en los principios generales del Derecho de la Unión, y con la aplicación de la doctrina establecida, entre otras, en las sentencias de 15 de julio de 1964 (Asunto Costa vs ENEL) y de 7 de septiembre de 2006 (Asunto Cordero Alonso), se declara la primacía del Derecho de la Unión sobre el Derecho nacional, y, ante una lesión de los Derechos fundamentales de la Unión, la obligación del juez nacional de no aplicar la normativa nacional y restablecer el Derecho Fundamental mediante la aplicación del Derecho de la Unión.

¿Cual es la opinión de la Comisión sobre la primacía del Derecho comunitario sobre el Derecho interno en este caso? ¿Considera acertada, conforme a la doctrina expuesta, la resolución del Juzgado n° 1 de Benidorm? ¿Considera necesario unificar criterios en los diversos juzgados para evitar la desigualdad? ¿Considera necesario efectuar algún tipo de recomendación al Estado Español respecto a la primacía del Derecho comunitario?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-011601/12
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(19 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Vulneración en España del derecho de todos los ciudadanos a la tutela judicial efectiva

Esta semana ha entrado en vigor la aplicación en España de la nueva Ley de tasas judiciales por el ejercicio de la potestad jurisdiccional en los órdenes civil, contencioso-administrativo y social. Estas tasas, que oscilan entre los 100 y los 1 200 euros para los recursos de casación tanto en el ámbito civil como en el administrativo, se aplicarán no solo para las grandes empresas, como ocurría hasta ahora, sino a todos los ciudadanos, poniendo fin a las exenciones que antes tenían las personas físicas en los ámbitos civil y contencioso.

Esta nueva ley, que fija cuantías desproporcionadas, vulnera el derecho de todos los ciudadanos a la tutela judicial efectiva, recogido en el artículo 47 de la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales, ya que se dificulta a las personas con menos recursos el acceso a la justicia.

¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión para garantizar en España el derecho a la tutela judicial efectiva para quienes no dispongan de recursos suficientes? ¿No cree que la nueva ley española —tal y como han manifestado el fiscal general del Estado, el Consejo General del Poder Judicial, las asociaciones de jueces y de fiscales— incumple el artículo 47 de la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales? ¿Piensa hacer alguna recomendación al Gobierno español para garantizar la defensa de los consumidores y usuarios a través de procedimientos eficaces?

Respuesta conjunta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2013)

El acceso a la justicia es un derecho fundamental garantizado por el artículo 47 de la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y por el artículo 6, apartado 1, del Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos.

Como ya se señaló en la pregunta escrita 011367/2012, el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos ha dictaminado que el requisito de pagar tasas a los tribunales por la tramitación de una causa no constituye en sí mismo una violación del derecho fundamental de acceso a la justicia. Ahora bien, el carácter excesivo de una tasa puede constituir una restricción que vulnere la propia esencia del derecho fundamental de una persona a ser oída por un Tribunal ([1]).

El carácter excesivo de una tasa debería evaluarse a la luz de todos los elementos pertinentes de la legislación por la que se establece dicha tasa, incluidas las posibles excepciones que se apliquen a las personas que puedan acogerse a asistencia jurídica. La Comisión entiende que el Tribunal Constitucional de España examinará la Ley 10/2012 ([2]) mencionada por Sus Señorías. La Comisión llevará a cabo un estrecho seguimiento de este asunto.

([1]) Kreuz contra Polonia, 28249/95: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/Pages/search.aspx#{«fulltext»:[«28249/95»],"documentcollectionid": [«COMMITTEE»,"DECISIONS","COMMUNICATEDCASES","CLIN","ADVISORYOPINIONS","REPORTS","RESOLUTIONS"],"itemid":[«001-59519»]}.

([2]) Ley 10/2012, de 20 de noviembre, por la que se regulan determinadas tasas en el ámbito de la Administración de Justicia y del Instituto Nacional de Toxicología y Ciencias Forenses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011366/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) and Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Court fees in Spain

On 12 December 2012, every courthouse in Spain stopped operating for one hour in protest against the justice reform tabled by Minister Ruiz-Gallardón, which includes an unthinkable rise in court fees: the cost of lodging an appeal rose from EUR 300 to EUR 800 and the cost of lodging an appeal to the Supreme Court rose from EUR 600 to EUR 1 200. The Free Association of Lawyers (ALA) has called the Fees Act unconstitutional and says that it will seriously impede citizens' access to justice, acting as a deterrent to this access in many cases, particularly for those with fewer resources. This is in breach of the right to access to justice and to effective legal protection. In the same vein, the General Council of Spanish Lawyers, the unions UGT (General Workers' Union), CCOO (Workers' Commissions), USO (Socialist Workers' Union), STAJ (Administration of Justice Workers' Union) and CSI-F (Independent Workers' Union) and the Council of Consumers and Users (which includes 11 of these national organisations) launched the 'Justice for All' platform.

The Stockholm Programme establishes an area of freedom, security and justice in the EU where a Europe of law and justice should 'facilitate access to justice, so that people can enforce their rights throughout the Union'. Article 47(3) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union provides that legal aid shall be provided to those who lack sufficient resources and a directive on aid in cross-border disputes is also in force. In addition, the recently adopted 'Victims' Package' ensures access to justice and minimum rights for victims. While this directive is linked to the principle of free movement, failure to apply it equally to those citizens living in Spain would constitute reverse discrimination.

What is the Commission's view of Mr Ruiz-Gallardón's reforms? Does it believe that these reforms go against the spirit of the Stockholm Programme? Does it believe that they impede free and quality public justice and all citizens' right to access to justice? In its opinion, are the reforms in breach of the Victims' Package? Does it believe that the reforms aim to raise funds by criminalising the most vulnerable members of our society? Does it believe that the fees increase is a result of the indiscriminate austerity promoted by Europe through the deficit and debt targets?

Question for written answer E-011367/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Joaquim Miranda (GUE/NGL)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Court fees: excessiveness criterion

The court fees adopted by Minister Gallardón apply to three areas of jurisdiction: civil, administrative and labour. As it stands, however, court fees do not apply to criminal matters. The Spanish Government may argue that the fees do not breach any rights as they do not apply to criminal jurisdiction. The Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) also believes that applying court fees does not contravene access to justice. The factor that is always taken into account, however, is the disproportionality of the amounts.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) have already ruled on court fees to this effect, stating in the *Kreuz* v *Poland* judgment of 19 June 2001 (TEDH 2001, 398, Case 28249/95), that the obligation to pay court fees in civil proceedings does not in itself violate the right to a hearing guaranteed by Article 6(1) of the Rome Convention. Nevertheless, the fees must not be excessive, in view of the individual circumstances of each case, to ensure compliance with the right to effective access to justice.

The ECJ has also recognised this EXCESSIVENESS criterion in accordance with the right to effective judicial protection enshrined in Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, as demonstrated in the Judgment of the Court of Justice of 22 December 2010 in Case C-279/09 *Deutsche Energiehandels-undBeratungsgesellschaftmbH* v *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. The excessive amount owed and, more specifically, its disproportionality as regards the amount being disputed in many cases means that the fee does not act as a disincentive, but actually prevents access to jurisdiction.

We believe it appropriate to ask a generic question on access to justice and the amounts provided for in the Court Fees Act, given that they are clearly excessive. We therefore ask the Commission:

What is its opinion of the amounts set forth in the Spanish Fees Act? Does it believe that these amounts are excessive?

Question for written answer E-011505/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Primacy of Community law on the issue of court fees

A judge at the Benidorm No 1 Social Court has ruled that Minister Gallardón's Tax Law (Law 10/2012, of 20 November) is not applicable because it is contrary to European Union Law and that payment will not be enforced. The judge explained that setting fees of up to EUR 10500 for the provision of a public service with respect to appeals procedures is an obstacle contrary to the right to an effective remedy and to a fair trial set out in the article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the interpretation established, *inter alia*, in the EU Court of Justice Ruling of 6 November 2012 regarding Case C-199/11.

The tax falls entirely within the scope of Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in contracts concluded with consumers and can therefore be considered to be unfair. Thus, in accordance with the terms set out in the general principles of European Union Law, and with established case law, *inter alia* the rulings of 15 July 1964 (Costa v ENEL case) and of 7 September 2006 (Cordero Alonso case), European Union Law is deemed to have primacy over national law and faced with a breach of the Union's Fundamental Rights, the national Judge has a duty not to apply national law, but to re-establish the Fundamental Law by applying European Union Law.

What is the Commission's view on the primacy of EC law over national law in this case? Does it consider the ruling of Benidorm No 1 Social Court to be correct on the basis of the principles put forward? Does the Commission consider it necessary to amalgamate the criteria on which the various rulings are based in order to prevent inequality? Does the Commission deem it necessary to make any kind of recommendation to the Spanish State with regard to the primacy of European Union Law?

Question for written answer P-011601/12
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(19 December 2012)

Subject: Infringement in Spain of the right of all citizens to an effective remedy

Spain's new law on court fees for cases to be heard in civil, administrative law and labour courts came into force this week. Previously, only large companies were charged these court fees, which now range from EUR 100 to EUR 1 200 for appeals in both civil and administrative law cases. However this law has put an end to the exemptions granted to natural persons in civil and administrative law cases, making all members of the public liable to pay these fees.

The new law, which sets the fees at a disproportionate level, infringes the right laid down in Article 47 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights of all citizens to an effective remedy, as it makes it difficult for less well-off members of the population to obtain justice.

What action will the Commission take to ensure that people in Spain who cannot afford these fees are guaranteed the right to an effective remedy? Does it believe — as do Spain's Director of Public Prosecutions, the General Council of the Judiciary and associations of judges and public prosecutors — that the new Spanish law is in breach of Article 47 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights? Will it advise the Spanish Government in order to ensure that consumers and users are protected by effective procedures?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

Access to justice is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and by Article 6(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

As it is pointed out in WQ 011367/2012, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the requirement to pay fees to civil courts for a case to be proceeded does not constitute per se a violation of the fundamental right of access to justice. An excessive fee can however constitute a restriction that impairs the very essence of a person's fundamental right to be heard by a court ([1]).

([1]) Kreuz v. Poland, 28249/95: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/Pages/search.aspx#{'fulltext':['28249/95'],"documentcollectionid": ['COMMITTEE',"DECISIONS","COMMUNICATEDCASES","CLIN","ADVISORYOPINIONS","REPORTS","RESOLUTIONS"],"itemid":['001-59519']}.

The excessive nature of a fee should be assessed in light of all the relevant elements of the legislation establishing such a fee, including the possible exemptions for persons eligible for legal aid. The Commission understands that the Spanish Constitutional Court will examine the Law 10/2012 ([2]) referred by the Honourable Members. The Commission will follow closely this matter.

([2]) The Law: 'Ley 10/2012, de 20 de noviembre, por la que se regulan determinadas tasas en el ámbito de la Administración de Justicia y del Instituto Nacional de Toxicología y Ciencias Forenses'.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011368/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Περαιτέρω μείωση του ελληνικού γεωργικού εισοδήματος

Σύμφωνα με τις «πρώτες εκτιμήσεις», τις οποίες δημοσιοποίησε στις 12.12.2012 η Eurostat, σημειώθηκε στην ΕΕ27 αύξηση κατά το 2012 της τάξεως του 1% στο πραγματικό γεωργικό εισόδημα ανά εργαζόμενο (εν συνεχεία της αντίστοιχης αύξησης κατά 8% το 2011).

Η εν λόγω αύξηση αποτελεί απόρροια, σύμφωνα με τα δημοσιοποιηθέντα στοιχεία, της ανόδου του πραγματικού γεωργικού εισοδήματος κατά +0,5% (οφειλομένης κυρίως στην αύξηση της αξίας των γεωργικών εκροών ως προς τις πραγματικές τιμές παραγωγού), σε συνδυασμό με τη μείωση στην εισροή γεωργικής εργασίας κατά -0,5%.

Σε κατεύθυνση αντίθετη με τον ενωσιακό μέσο όρο, το ελληνικό πραγματικό γεωργικό εισόδημα ανά εργαζόμενο εμφανίζει περαιτέρω συμπίεση το 2012 κατά -2,0%.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Βάσει των στοιχείων που διαθέτει για τα επιμέρους κράτη μέλη σε ποιούς παράγοντες αποδίδει την περαιτέρω καθοδική πορεία του γεωργικού εισοδήματος στην Ελλάδα έναντι του αυξανόμενου μέσου ενωσιακού;

Μπορεί να μου παραθέσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία ως προς το κόστος γεωργικών εισροών (σπόροι, ζωοτροφές, ενέργεια και λιπαντικά, λιπάσματα και προϊόντα φυτοπροστασίας, χρηματοοικονομικές υπηρεσίες κ.α.), τις γεωργικές εκροές (τιμές παραγωγού), τον όγκο και την αξία της γεωργικής παραγωγής, τις εισαγωγές/εξαγωγές γεωργικών προϊόντων στην Ελλάδα έναντι του μέσου όρου στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με τις τελευταίες εκτιμήσεις της Eurostat, το γεωργικό εισόδημα ανά εργαζόμενο μειώθηκε περίπου κατά 2% στην Ελλάδα, το 2012 σε σύγκριση με το προηγούμενο έτος. Η εξέλιξη αυτή οφείλεται στη μείωση κατά -5% του πραγματικού γεωργικού εισοδήματος σε συνδυασμό με τη μείωση κατά 3% του εργατικού δυναμικού. Και οι δύο αυτές τιμές είναι υψηλότερες από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ, πράγμα το οποίο δείχνει αύξηση +0,5% του πραγματικού γεωργικού εισοδήματος και μείωση -0,5% του εργατικού δυναμικού. Στην ΕΕ-27, η κατάσταση του γεωργικού εισοδήματος σε σύγκριση με το προηγούμενο έτος αντικατοπτρίζει μείωση του όγκου παραγωγής (-5,4% για τη φυτική παραγωγή και -0,2% για τη ζωική παραγωγή) η οποία αντισταθμίζεται εν μέρει από τις υψηλές τιμές (+5% για την παραγωγή του γεωργικού τομέα). Η εξέλιξη του εισοδήματος στην Ελλάδα οφείλεται, αφενός, σε μείωση της πραγματικής αξίας σε βασικές τιμές τόσο της φυτικής (-1,4%) όσο και της ζωικής παραγωγής (-0,6%) και αφετέρου, σε αύξηση +2,1% της αξίας της ενδιάμεσης κατανάλωσης. Η μείωση των τιμών της φυτικής παραγωγής (-2,4%) σε συνδυασμό με τη μικρή αύξηση του όγκου παραγωγής των προϊόντων αυτών (+0,9%) συνέβαλαν στη μείωση κατά -1,1% της συνολικής αξίας της παραγωγής του γεωργικού τομέα σε σύγκριση με το 2011. Στην Ελλάδα, οι πραγματικές τιμές εκτινάχτηκαν για τις περισσότερες εισροές, ιδίως για τα λιπάσματα και τα βελτιωτικά εδάφους (+12,8%) καθώς και για την ενέργεια και τα λιπαντικά, (+7,7%), σημειώθηκε επίσης αύξηση της κατανάλωσης των εισροών αυτών κατά +1,2%.

Από τα δεδομένα για τις γεωργικές εμπορικές συναλλαγές κατά τους πρώτους 10 μήνες του 2012 προκύπτει ότι, σε σύγκριση με την ίδια περίοδο το 2011, η Ελλάδα είχε αρκετά καλές επιδόσεις: οι εισαγωγές της μειώθηκαν κατά 4% (περίπου 4,7 δισεκ. ευρώ) και οι εξαγωγές της αυξήθηκαν κατά 13% (3,6 δισεκ. ευρώ). Κατά την ίδια χρονική περίοδο, οι εισαγωγές γεωργικών προϊόντων της ΕΕ αυξήθηκαν κατά +3% (85 δισεκ. ευρώ) και οι εξαγωγές κατά +12% (97 δισεκ. ευρώ).

Λεπτομερή στοιχεία για το κόστος των εισροών, την απόδοση και την παραγωγή του γεωργικού τομέα είναι διαθέσιμα στο παράρτημα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011368/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papastamkos (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Further contraction of Greek farm incomes

According to 'initial estimates' published by Eurostat on 12 December 2012, real farm income per worker in the EU 27 rose by 1% in 2012 (following an 8% increase in 2011).

According to Eurostat, this was a result of a 0.5% increase in real farm income (principally due to increases in the value of farm output in terms of real producer prices), together with a 0.5% reduction in farm labour input.

However, in contrast to the EU average, real farm income per worker in Greece contracted by a further 2% in 2012.

In view of this:

Is the Commission, based on information regarding individual Member States, able to identify the causes of the further contraction of farm incomes in Greece, as opposed to the increase in the EU average?

Can it give comparative data regarding farm input costs (seed, fodder, fuel and lubricants, fertilisers and pesticides, financial services, etc.), farm output (producer prices), the volume and value of farm production and agricultural imports and exports in Greece, compared with the EU average?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

According to latest Eurostat estimates, farm income per worker dropped in 2012 by about 2% in Greece, in comparison to the previous year. This evolution is due to a drop in real farm income of -5% coupled with a 3% decrease in labour force. Both these values are higher than the EU average, which shows a +0.5% increase in real farm income and a decline of -0.5% in farm labour. The EU-27 farm income situation in comparison to the previous year reflects a drop in production volumes (-5.4% for crops and -0.2% for animals) which is partially compensated by high prices (+5% for the output of the agricultural industry). The income evolution for Greece is due to a fall in the real value at basic prices for both crop (- 1.4%) and animal output (-0.6%) on the one hand and an increase of +2.1% in the value of intermediate consumption on the other hand. The drop in prices for the crop output (-2.4%) together with a low increase in volumes (+0.9%) for these products contributed to the -1.1% fall in the total output value of the agricultural industry in comparison to 2011. Real prices spiked for most inputs in Greece, in particular for fertilisers and soil improvers (+12.8%) and energy and lubricants (+7.7%), for the latter volumes being up by +1.2%.

Agricultural trade data for the first 10 months of 2012 shows that, when compared to the same period of 2011, Greece performed quite well: its imports declined by 4% (to approx. EUR 4.7 billion) and its exports increased by 13% (to EUR 3.6 billion). Over the same period, EU agricultural imports increased by +3% (to EUR 85 billion) and exports by +12% (to EUR 97 billion).

Details on input costs, farm output as well as production are available in the annex.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011369/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(13 décembre 2012)

Objet: Publication des résultats de la consultation concernant le cadre législatif en matière de sûreté nucléaire

En février dernier, conformément au mandat du Conseil européen, la Commission européenne a lancé une consultation publique sur le cadre législatif en matière de sûreté nucléaire. Cette consultation était destinée à recueillir les avis des parties prenantes sur la nécessité d'adopter des mesures législatives supplémentaires en matière de sûreté nucléaire au niveau de l'Euratom et de déterminer les domaines dans lesquels le cadre législatif pourrait être renforcé.

Toutefois, dix mois se sont écoulés après la date limite de présentation des contributions et les résultats n'ont toujours pas été rendus publics.

Entre temps, dans sa communication sur les stress-tests adoptée en octobre, la Commission incluait déjà des éléments précis concernant le renforcement du cadre de sécurité. De même, les travaux préparatoires pour une révision de la directive sur la sûreté nucléaire sont en cours.

La Commission compte-t-elle publier les résultats de cette consultation publique et présenter, dans un avenir proche, les positions respectives des parties prenantes?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(31 janvier 2013)

La Commission a examiné les résultats de la consultation publique et en a tenu compte pour déterminer les mesures législatives supplémentaires nécessaires pour renforcer le cadre de sûreté nucléaire dans l'Union européenne (UE). Les résultats de la consultation seront publiés sur le portail internet de la Commission, «Votre point de vue sur l'Europe» ([1]), au cours du premier semestre 2013. Un résumé des résultats de la consultation et l'avis des parties prenantes seront également inclus dans l'analyse d'impact et l'exposé des motifs qui accompagneront la proposition législative de la Commission concernant la révision de la sûreté nucléaire dans l'UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011369/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Publication of the results of the consultation on the nuclear safety legislative framework

Last February, in accordance with the European Council's mandate, the Commission launched a public consultation on the European nuclear safety framework. This consultation was designed to seek the views of stakeholders on the need for additional nuclear safety legislative measures at Euratom level and to identify areas where the framework could potentially be reinforced.

However, ten months after the deadline for the submission of contributions, the results have still not been made public.

Meanwhile, in its communication on the stress tests adopted in October 2012, the Commission already included detailed elements concerning the strengthening of the safety framework. Likewise, the preparatory work for a revision of the nuclear safety directive is ongoing.

Does the Commission intend to unveil the results of this public consultation and describe stakeholders' positions in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The Commission has reviewed the results of the public consultation and taken them into consideration in determining additional legislative measures for the reinforcement of the nuclear safety framework in the European Union (EU). The results of the consultation will be published on the Commission's webportal, 'Your voice in Europe' ([1]), during the first half of 2013. A summary of the results of the consultation and stakeholders' views will also be included in the impact assessment and the explanatory memorandum which will accompany the legislative proposal of the Commission concerning the revision of nuclear safety in the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011370/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 december 2012)

Betreft: Onwettige toetreding van Kroatië

Volgens brieven van de voorzitter van de Kroatische ngo Juris Protecta en de voorzitter van de Kroatische vereniging van deurwaarders aan de leden van het Europees Parlement, is het Kroatische rechtsstelsel inefficiënt en kampt het met vele problemen, zoals corruptie, belangenverstrengeling en een grote invloed van de regeringspartijen. Deze problemen zijn bevestigd door andere onafhankelijke organisaties, zoals Transparency International, het Business Anti-Corruption Portal en Amnesty International ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze feiten?

2. Welke gerechtelijke stappen heeft de Commissie ondernomen, als hoedster van de Verdragen, wat betreft de toetreding van Kroatië, dat nog altijd niet voldoet aan de in de artikelen 2 en 49 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie vastgelegde voorwaarden, hetgeen overeenkomt met een schending van het Verdrag?

3. Kan de Commissie bewijzen dat de Kroatië voldoet aan de politieke toetredingscriteria waaraan een land moet beantwoorden voordat het lid kan worden van de Europese Unie?

4. Het definitieve monitoringverslag van de Commissie vóór de toetreding van Kroatië wordt in voorjaar 2013 verwacht. Verwacht de Commissie dat de in het alomvattende monitoringverslag van de Commissie gedane voorstellen voor de wijziging van het rechtsstelsel en de voorkoming van corruptie, die het land geschikt zouden maken voor EU-lidmaatschap, tijdens de komende maanden zullen worden uitgevoerd? Wat zullen de gevolgen voor Kroatië zijn indien dit niet gebeurt?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2013)

De rechtsstaat en de eerbiediging van de grondrechten zijn wezenlijke beginselen die ten grondslag liggen aan de EU. Als zodanig vormen zij sinds 2005 een belangrijk element van de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Kroatië. Met name in hoofdstuk 23, „rechterlijke macht en grondrechten" — een hoofdstuk dat speciaal aan dit gebied is gewijd — wordt specifiek aandacht geschonken aan het Kroatische rechtsstelsel.

In het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen heeft Kroatië belangrijke stappen ondernomen die onder andere hebben geleid tot een grotere onafhankelijkheid van de rechterlijke macht en tot een nieuw systeem voor de aanwerving van de leden van deze macht.

De Commissie heeft in haar advies betreffende het verzoek van de Republiek Kroatië om toetreding tot de Europese Unie van 12.10.2011 (COM(2011) 667 final) bevestigd dat Kroatië aan de politieke criteria voldoet.

Na de ondertekening door Kroatië van het toetredingsverdrag in december 2011 is de Commissie blijven toezicht houden op de vraagstukken die verband houden met de rechterlijke macht. Zij heeft haar laatste bevindingen bekendgemaakt in het uitgebreide monitoringverslag van 10 oktober 2012 over de stand van de voorbereidingen van Kroatië op de toetreding ([2]). Het volgende monitoringverslag, waarin grotendeels zal worden ingegaan op de problematiek van de rechtsstaat, zal in maart 2013 worden gepubliceerd.

([1]) http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/europe-central-asia/croatia/corruption-levels/judicial-system/; https://www.amnesty.org/en/region/croatia/report-2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011370/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Unlawful accession of Croatia

According to letters sent to the Members of the European Parliament by the president of the Croatian NGOJris Protecta and the president of the Croatian Association of Public Bailiffs, the Croatian judicial system is inefficient and suffers from many problems, including corruption, conflicts of interest and the huge influence wielded by the governing parties. These concerns have been confirmed by other independent organisations, such as Transparency International, the Business Anti-Corruption Portal and Amnesty International ([1]).

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. What kind of legal action did the Commission, as defender of the Treaties, take with regard to the accession of Croatia, which did not and still does not fulfil the conditions laid down in Articles 2 and 49 of the Treaty on European Union, thus violating the provisions of the Treaty?

3. Can the Commission prove that Croatia fulfils the political accession criteria that have to be met before the accession of a new Member State?

4. The Commission's final monitoring report before the accession of Croatia is expected in spring 2013. Does the Commission expect that the suggestions made in the Commission's Comprehensive Monitoring Report for modifying the judicial system and preventing corruption, which would make the country suitable for EU membership, to be implemented in the coming months? If they are not implemented, what will be the consequences for Croatia?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

The rule of law and respect for fundamental rights are important principles underpinning the EU. As such, they have represented important elements of the accession negotiations with Croatia since 2005. The Croatian judiciary, in particular, has been the key focus of Chapter 23 'Judiciary and fundamental rights' — a Chapter specifically dedicated to this area.

As a result of the accession negotiations, important steps were made by Croatia leading, *inter alia,* to the enhancement of the independence of the judiciary and a new system for the recruitment of the judiciary.

In its Opinion on the application for accession to the EU by the Republic of Croatia of 12.10.2011 (COM(2011) 667 final), the Commission confirmed that Croatia fulfils the political criteria.

Following Croatia's signing of the Accession Treaty, in December 2011, the Commission has continued the monitoring of issues relating to the judiciary and published its latest findings in the Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia's accession preparations, issued on 10 October 2012 ([2]). The next Monitoring Report, which will focus, to a large extent, on rule of law issues, will be published in March 2013.

([1]) http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/europe-central-asia/croatia/corruption-levels/judicial-system/; https://www.amnesty.org/en/region/croatia/report-2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011371/12
to the Council
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

I refer to the draft Council decision establishing a Multiannual Framework for 2013-2017 for the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (10449/2012 — C7-0169/2012 — 2011/0431(APP)).

The Council has proposed the following thematic area: 'Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance'.

Will the Council kindly provide its full definition of both 'racism' and 'xenophobia'?

Reply
(25 February 2013)

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) states that the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic origin and religion or belief.

Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives the Union competence to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based *inter alia* on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief. Article 67(3) of the TFEU states that the Union shall endeavour to ensure a high level of security *inter alia* through measures to prevent and combat crime, racism and xenophobia.

In furtherance of the protection of these common values, two acts were adopted:

— Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin which includes definitions of the respective meanings of direct and indirect discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin ([1]); and

— Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law ([2]) which defines a common EU-wide criminal law and criminal justice approach to combating racism and xenophobia.

This framework decision defines offences concerning racism and xenophobia and thus ensures that such behaviour constitutes an offence throughout the EU Member States. This serves as a minimum harmonisation of what is understood as 'racism and xenophobia' across the EU.

In accordance with Article 1 of the framework decision, 'each Member State shall take the measures necessary to ensure that the following intentional conduct is punishable:

(a) publicly inciting to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin;

(b) the commission of an act referred to in point (a) by public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material;

(c) publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group;

([1]) OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 12.
([2]) OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55.

(d) publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising the crimes defined in Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal appended to the London Agreement of 8 August 1945, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group.'

The Multiannual Framework of the Fundamental Rights Agency 2007-2012 ([3]) included a thematic area of 'racism , xenophobia and related intolerance.' Since the Agency was built upon the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, it has carried out useful studies and projects in the field of racism and xenophobia. The same thematic priority has been included in the Commission proposal ([4]) for a Council decision establishing a new Multiannual Framework for 2013-2017, which has not yet been formally adopted.

([3]) OJ L 63, 7.3.2008, p. 14.
([4]) 18645/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011372/12
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

I refer to the draft Council decision establishing a Multiannual Framework for 2013-2017 for the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (10449/2012 — C7-0169/2012 — 2011/0431(APP)).

The Commission has proposed the following thematic area: 'Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance'.

Will the Commission kindly provide its full definition of both 'racism' and 'xenophobia'?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

According to the founding Regulation of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, the Agency's Annual Framework 'shall determine the thematic areas of the Agency's activity, which must include the fight against racism, xenophobia and related intolerance' ([1]). The thematic area referred to by the Honourable Member falls thus automatically in the Agency's sphere of activity.

Racism and xenophobia are complex phenomena and it is not for the Commission to define the different forms and manifestations that they can take. The EC law, in particular the framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia, the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive ([2]), prohibit certain manifestations of racism and xenophobia, including the public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, and discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, or religion.

([1]) Article 5(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007 of February 2007 establishing the Fundamental Rights Agency.

([2]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55-58; Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180 , 19.7.2000, p. 22-26; Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000 p. 16-22.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011373/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(13 décembre 2012)

Objet: Compteurs intelligents pour l'eau

L'eau est un bien rare et précieux. Préserver cette ressource est devenu un enjeu essentiel pour garantir un mode de vie durable et économiquement viable.

À l'instar des compteurs intelligents appelés «Smart meters» pour le gaz et l'électricité, des technologies innovantes se font jour en Europe pour favoriser une gestion responsable de l'eau.

Le concept de «Smart Grid de l'eau» ou de «Smart Water Network» a ainsi fait son apparition avec pour objectif de créer un système intelligent de distribution d'eau.

Afin de favoriser un usage maitrisé et éco-responsable de l'eau à travers un meilleur approvisionnement et une gestion optimisée de la demande, comment la Commission envisage-t-elle d'accompagner le développement des compteurs intelligents dans ce domaine?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(6 février 2013)

La Commission européenne soutient le développement et le déploiement de compteurs intelligents pour la distribution d'eau et a donc lancé un premier appel à propositions en 2011 dans le cadre du 7e PC.

Cet appel à propositions concerne principalement des solutions TIC rationnelles et ayant fait leurs preuves, qui permettent d'adopter une approche globale en matière de gestion intégrée des ressources en eau. Cela comprend des systèmes sophistiqués de comptage, de prévision et de communication en temps réel de la consommation; des formules de gestion combinée de l'eau et de l'énergie, ainsi que la détection des fuites.

Cinq projets ont été retenus à la suite de cet appel à propositions et sont actuellement mis en œuvre. Un deuxième appel est ouvert jusqu'en avril 2013. Il est centré sur les systèmes de gestion de la demande, sur les incitations par les prix et sur l'utilisation rationnelle de l'eau.

Une aide future est également prévue au titre du programme «Horizon 2020», dont le portefeuille intégré d'activités concernera des outils et méthodologies innovants, et notamment des solutions TIC avancées.

En 2012, la Commission a mis en place un partenariat européen pour l'innovation concernant l'eau qui rassemble les acteurs de la chaîne d'approvisionnement en eau. Le plan de mise en œuvre stratégique du PEI a été adopté le 18 décembre 2012 ([1]).

([1]) Disponible à l'adresse suivante : http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/innovationpartnership/pdf/sip.pdf (en anglais)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011373/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Smart meters for water

Water is a scarce and precious resource. Preserving this resource has become an essential factor for securing a sustainable and economically viable lifestyle.

Like smart meters for gas and electricity, innovative technologies have emerged in Europe to promote the responsible management of water.

The concept of a 'Smart Grid' for water and the 'Smart Water Network' have thus been born with the aim of creating a smart water distribution system.

In order promote the controlled and environmentally responsible use of water through improving the supply and management of water demand, how does the Commission plan to support the development of smart meters in this industry?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

The European Commission supports development and deployment of the smart meters for water and has therefore launched a first call for proposals in 2011 under the FP7 programme.

The focus of this call for proposals was robust and proven ICT solutions, permitting a holistic approach toward Integrated Water Resources Management. This included advanced metering, forecasting and real-time communication of consumption; combined energy and water management schemes and detection of leakages.

From this call for proposals, five projects were selected and are currently being implemented. A second call is open until April 2013. Its focus is on demand management schemes, price incentives and water efficiency.

Future support is foreseen under HORIZON 2020 where the integrated portfolio of activities will address innovative tools and methodologies, including advanced ICT solutions.

The Commission established a European Innovation Partnership on Water in 2012 bringing together stakeholders from the water supply chain. The Strategic Implementation Plan of the EIP was adopted on 18th December 2012 ([1]).

([1])Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/innovationpartnership/pdf/sip.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011374/12
alla Commissione
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Programma operativo regionale Campania FESR 2007-2013 — Legge regionale Campania n. 12/2007

In esecuzione del POR Campania FESR 2007-2013 (decisione C/2007/4265 dell'11.9.2007), la Regione Campania con legge regionale n. 12/2007 e successivi provvedimenti amministrativi (bando disciplinare n.198 del 15.4.2008 e decreto dirigenziale n. 674 del 13.7.2009) ha ammesso agli aiuti per lo sviluppo e l'innovazione tecnologica 159 imprese.

Nelle modalità di assegnazione degli incentivi, in particolare nell'art. 10 del suddetto disciplinare, si stabilisce che «per gli adempimenti istruttori per la concessione delle agevolazioni e la gestione finanziaria delle relative somme previste dal disciplinare, la Regione individua un soggetto gestore, tra banche o società aventi comprovate esperienze in attività similari, in possesso dei necessari requisiti tecnici e organizzativi». Detta disposizione regolamentare ha determinato che tutti i soggetti interessati potevano accedere alle agevolazioni attraverso le banche individuate come soggetti gestori, provvedendo alla sottoscrizione di moduli e contratti predisposti e non modificabili, il cui contenuto era sicuramente noto alla Regione Campania.

Le imprese ammesse alle agevolazioni hanno dovuto dar prova concreta di interesse all'innovazione, sottoscrivendo un contratto di leasing finanziario con istituti di credito per acquistare macchinari destinati a incentivare l'innovazione tecnologica e creare occupazione.

A fine ottobre 2012, dopo circa tre anni dall'ammissione alle agevolazioni, la Regione Campania ha avviato procedimenti amministrativi di revoca degli incentivi senza fornire adeguate motivazioni ovvero utilizzando argomenti apparentemente contradditori e penalizzando comunque in maniera eccessiva imprese che rischiano il tracollo finanziario, per aver ormai contratto debiti cui dovranno far fronte.

1. Quali valutazioni la Commissione fa sulla legittimità e fondatezza dei procedimenti di revoca degli incentivi già erogati con decreto dirigenziale n. 674 del 13.7.2009 della Regione Campania?

2. Come intende richiamare l'attenzione della Regione Campania sul ritardato adempimento e come intende intervenire affinché le risorse impegnate non decadano?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

Come correttamente indicato dall'onorevole deputato, il programma del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale 2007-2013 per la Campania prevede la possibilità di sostenere lo sviluppo delle imprese e l'innovazione tecnologica a norma della legge n. 12/2007. Il bando disciplinare n. 198 del 15 aprile 2008 concedeva aiuti per lo sviluppo e l'innovazione tecnologica di 159 aziende. Il decreto dirigenziale n. 674 del 13 luglio 2009 era uno dei decreti che concedevano aiuti a una delle imprese in questione.

Tuttavia, nel corso di missioni di audit effettuate nel 2010 e nel 2011, la Commissione ha identificato irregolarità nella procedura di selezione condotta dall'organismo intermedio che eroga il sostegno, nella gestione finanziaria dei fondi e nell'applicazione della normativa UE in tema di appalti pubblici (direttiva 2004/18/UE ([1])).

Alla luce di queste risultanze la Commissione, per tutelare gli interessi finanziari dell'UE, ha ritenuto inammissibile l'intera spesa legata a queste operazioni. Di conseguenza le autorità regionali hanno dovuto sospendere tutti i pagamenti.

I fondi originalmente previsti per i progetti summenzionati saranno riassegnati ad altri progetti per l'innovazione delle imprese nel contesto del programma Campania.

([1]) GU L 134 del 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011374/12
to the Commission
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: ERDF Regional Operational Programme for Campania (2007-2013) — Campania Regional Law No 12/2007

When implementing the 2007-2013 ERDF Regional Operational Programme (ROP) for Campania (adopted by Commission Decision No C(2007) 4265 of 11 September 2007), the Campania Regional Government, by Regional Law No 12/2007 and subsequent administrative decisions (Procedural Announcement No 198 of 15 April 2008 and Executive Decree No 674 of 13 July 2009), granted aid for the development and technological innovation of 159 businesses.

The detailed rules for assigning incentives, in particular Article 10 of the above procedural document , stipulate that 'in terms of monitoring the granting of support and the financial management of the funds set out in the procedural document, the Campania Regional Government shall appoint a managing body, namely a bank or business with proven experience in similar activities, which has the required technical and organisational skills'. This regulation established that all interested parties would be able to access the support via the banks appointed as managing bodies, responsible for the signing of pre-prepared final versions of forms and contracts, the contents of which the Campania Regional Government was surely aware.

The businesses that were granted support had to provide concrete evidence of being involved in innovation, signing a financial leasing contract with credit institutions in order to purchase machinery designed to encourage technological innovation and create jobs.

At the end of October 2012, after around three years of granting support, the Campania Regional Government launched administrative procedures to suspend the incentives, without providing sufficient reasons, using apparently contradictory arguments and in any case excessively penalising businesses that are running the risk of financial ruin, having run up debts that they must now pay.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the validity and legitimacy of the procedures to suspend incentives that had already been granted by Campania Regional Government's Executive Decree No 674 of 13 July 2009?

2. How does the Commission intend to refocus the Campania Regional Government's attention on its delay in fulfilling its obligations, and how does it intend to intervene so that the resources committed are not wasted?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

As correctly indicated by the Honourable Member, the 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund programme for Campania provides for the possibility to support businesses' development and technological innovation under Law No 12/2007. Procedural Announcement No 198 of 15 April 2008 granted aid for the development and technological innovation of 159 businesses. The Executive Decree No 674 of 13 July 2009 was one of the decrees granting aid to one of the businesses concerned.

However, during audit missions carried out in 2010 and 2011, the Commission identified irregularities in the selection procedure carried out by the intermediary body granting support, the financial management of the funds and the application of the EU public procurement law (Directive 2004/18/EU ([1])).

Following these findings, the Commission considered all expenditure related to these operations ineligible in order to protect the EU's financial interest. As a result, the regional authorities had to suspend all payments.

The funds originally foreseen for the abovementioned projects will be reallocated to other business innovation projects within the Campania programme.

([1]) OJ L 134, 30.4.2004.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011375/12
Komisijai
Rolandas Paksas (EFD)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: Paramos skyrimas žuvininkystės sektoriui 2014-2020 m.

Remiantis Europos žuvininkystės fondo 2007-2013 m. pasiskirstymo tarp Europos Sąjungos šalių analize Lietuvos žuvininkystės sektoriui skirta tik 1,3 % Europos žuvininkystės fondo biudžeto lėšų. Lietuvos žuvininkystės sektoriaus įmonės negali vienodai konkuruoti su kitų ES valstybių narių modernizuotomis įmonėmis.

1. Kodėl Lietuvos žuvininkystės sektoriui buvo skirta tokia maža Europos žuvininkystės fondo dalis, nors gamybos apimtis neatsiliko nuo kaimyninių šalių?

2. Kokiais kriterijais remiantis bus skirstomos Europos jūrų reikalų ir žuvininkystės fondo lėšos 2014-2020 m.? Ar numatoma ES valstybių narių žuvininkystės sektoriaus būklę vertinti pagal užimtumo ir gamybos lygį?

3. Ar nustatant užimtumo lygį bus apskaitomas tiek visiškas, tiek dalinis užimtų darbuotojų skaičius atsižvelgiant į skirtingose šalyse taikomus skirtingus perskaičiavimo metodus?

4. Ar ketinama atsisakyti mažos apimties pakrantės žvejybai naudojamų laivų dalies kriterijaus, kadangi šis kriterijus koreliuoja su užimtumo lygio kriterijumi ir jį dubliuoja?

5. Akvakultūros plėtra yra vienas iš svarbiausių strateginių fondo prioritetų. Kodėl į darbuotojų skaičių žuvininkystės sektoriuje nėra įtraukiami asmenys, dirbantys gėlųjų vandenų akvakultūros srityje?

6. Ar siekiant plėtoti ekologinę akvakultūrą numatoma pailginti paramos teikimo laikotarpį bent 4 metais, kadangi tokiose valstybėse kaip Lietuva dėl klimato ir temperatūros režimo atskiruose vandens telkiniuose pagrindines prekines žuvis galima išauginti tik per 3-4 metus?

7. Ar sudarant 2014-2020 m. Europos jūrų reikalų ir žuvininkystės fondą kartu bus sudaromos galimybės kompensuoti 2007-2013 m. laikotarpio lėšas, kurių trūksta norint atlyginti milžinišką žalą, kurią akvakultūros ūkiams daro saugomi vandens paukščiai?

M. Damanaki atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 15 d.)

1. 2007-2013 m. Europos žuvininkystės fondo (EŽF) lėšų paskirstymas valstybėms narėms buvo pagrįstas anksčiau iš Žuvininkystės orientavimo finansinės priemonės (ŽOFP) 2004-2006 m. paskirtomis dalimis. Lietuvai tekusi viso 2004-2006 m. ŽOFP biudžeto dalis siekė 1,35 %.

2. Europos jūrų reikalų ir žuvininkystės fondo (EJRŽF) pasiūlyme Komisija nustato lėšų paskirstymo tarp valstybių narių kriterijus. Tarp siūlomų kriterijų – užimtumo lygis ir gamybos lygis žuvininkystės ir akvakultūros sektoriuose; nedidelių priekrantės žvejybos laivų dalis žvejybos laivyne. Tarp kitų kriterijų yra ir ankstesnis paskirstymas iš EŽF bei ankstesnis ŽOFP lėšų panaudojimas.

3. Nustatant užimtumo lygį naudojami visos darbo dienos ekvivalentais išreikšti duomenys.

4. Nedidelių priekrantės žvejybos laivų dalis matuojama bendrąja talpa. Todėl nėra dubliavimosi su užimtumo kriterijumi.

5. Atsižvelgta ir į asmenų, dirbančių gėlo vandens akvakultūros sektoriuje, užimtumą, nes užimtumo lygis akvakultūros sektoriuje apima užimtumą ir jūros, ir gėlo vandens akvakultūros sektoriuose.

6. EJRŽF pasiūlyme nenumatyta pagalbos teikimo laikotarpio ribų. Projekto įgyvendinimas gali trukti kelerius metus, tačiau projektą tinka finansuoti EJŽF lėšomis tada, kai išlaidos susidarė reikalavimų atitikimo laikotarpiu (nuo 2014 m. sausio 1 d. iki 2022 m. gruodžio 31 d.).

7. EJRŽF pasiūlyme numatyta parama įsigyti įrangai, kuria akvakultūros ūkiai būtų saugomi nuo laukinių saugomų plėšrūnų. Šis pasiūlymas dabar svarstomas Europos Parlamente ir Taryboje.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011375/12
to the Commission
Rolandas Paksas (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Granting of support for the fisheries sector 2014-2020

Analysis of the distribution of the European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013 among European Union Member States shows that Lithuania's fisheries sector was only allocated 1.3% of the budgetary resources of the European Fisheries Fund. Undertakings in Lithuania's fisheries sector are unable to compete on equal terms with modernised undertakings in the other EU Member States.

1. Why was Lithuania's fisheries sector allocated such a small proportion of the European Fisheries Fund when the volume of production has kept up with neighbouring countries?

2. According to what criteria will resources from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014-2020 be allocated? Are there plans to assess the state of the fisheries sector in EU Member States according to the level of employment and production?

3. When establishing the level of employment, will both full and partial numbers of employed workers be accounted for, taking into account the different conversion methods applied in different countries?

4. Is the criterion for vessels used for small-scale coastal fishing to be waived because this criterion correlates to the employment level criterion and duplicates it?

5. The development of aquaculture is one of the Fund's most important strategic priorities. Why are people working in the area of fresh-water aquaculture not included in the number of workers in the fisheries sector?

6. In countries like Lithuania, it takes a minimum of three to four years to produce the main commercial fish due to the climate and temperature regime in individual water bodies. Are there plans to extend the grant period for at least four years, in order to develop ecological aquaculture?

7. When establishing the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for 2014-2020, will there also be an opportunity to reimburse the missing funds for the period 2007-2013 in order to pay for the enormous damage done to aquaculture farms by protected waterfowl?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

1. The financial distribution of the European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013 (EFF) among Member States was based on the historical share of the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) (2000-2006). In the case of Lithuania the FIFG 2004-2006 share of the total FIFG budget was 1.35%.

2. In its proposal for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), the Commission sets out the criteria for the financial distribution among Member States. The proposed criteria include the level of employment and the level of production in fisheries and aquaculture; the share of small scale coastal fleet in the fishing fleet. Further criteria include both the historical allocation for EFF and the historical consumption of FIFG.

3. To determine levels of employment, the data expressed in full-time equivalent will be used.

4. The share of the small scale coastal fleet will be measured in terms of gross tonnage. Therefore there is no duplication with the employment criteria.

5. The number of workers employed in fresh-water aquaculture has also been taken into account because the level of employment in aquaculture includes both employment in marine and fresh-water aquaculture.

6. The EMFF proposal does not foresee any limitations as regards the grant period. Project implementation can last several years, but in order for a project to be eligible for a contribution from the EMFF, expenditure should be incurred during the eligibility period (1 January 2014 to 31 December 2022).

7. The EMFF proposal foresees support for the purchase of equipment to protect aquaculture farms from wild protected predators. This proposal is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and Council.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011376/12
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: Vyresnių žmonių aktyvumo skatinimas

Europos Komisija šių metų vasario mėn. patvirtino savo bandomąją iniciatyvą vyresnių žmonių aktyvumo ir sveikatos srityje, kaip vieną iš ES lygio priemonių, skirtų tinkamai pasirengti ateities demografiniams pokyčiams. Iš tiesų, senstanti Europos visuomenė yra viena opiausių Europos problemų, kuriai, įvertinus, kad 65 metų ir vyresnių Europos gyventojų skaičius per ateinančius 50 metų išaugs beveik dvigubai, turime pasirengti iš anksto. Vienas iš būtinų veiksmų, kurių jau ėmėsi daugelis valstybių narių, yra pensinio amžiaus ilginimas. Tačiau tiek ES, tiek valstybių narių lygiu vis dar trūksta aiškiai apibrėžtų priemonių paketo, kurio tikslai būtų skatinti aktyvų vyresnių žmonių dalyvavimą visuomenės bei profesiniame gyvenime.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad reikėtų remti ir programos „Veiklūs vyresnio amžiaus asmenys“ rengimą, kuri prisidėtų prie esamų ES programų, partneryščių ir iniciatyvų aktyvaus senėjimo srityje, siekiant mobilizuoti tikslinę vyresnio amžiaus asmenų grupę visoje Europoje, kad visuomenė galėtų geriau panaudoti jų gebėjimus, kad būtų atsižvelgiama į jų poreikius ir kad būtų pasiekta pažanga plėtojant naujoviškus sprendimus vyresnio amžiaus asmenų aktyvumo kultūrai ir tarpvalstybiniam kartų solidarumui skatinti visoje Europoje?

L. Andoro atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 11 d.)

Šiuo metu Komisija dar vienos pagyvenusių žmonių aktyvumo skatinimo programos siūlyti neketina. Vyresnių žmonių aktyvumą paskatinti galima tik imantis politinių priemonių pačiose įvairiausiose srityse – užimtumo, pensijų, švietimo, sveikatos, inovacijų, mokslinių tyrimų, transporto, IRT, būsto.

Pagyvenusių žmonių aktyvumo skatinimo projektai finansuojami pagal įvairias ES programas ir priemones. Vienas iš prioritetų – suderinti šias programas ir priemones su nustatytais aktyvumo didinimo prioritetais siekiant išvengti priemonių dubliavimo.

Komisija drauge su Regionų komitetu ir pagyvenusių žmonių tinklu „AGE Platform Europe“ parengė knygelę, kurioje pristatomos dabartinės finansavimo programos, kad valdžios institucijoms ir suinteresuotosioms organizacijoms, visų pirma regioninio ir vietos lygmens, būtų lengviau rengti pagyvenusių žmonių aktyvumo skatinimo iniciatyvas ([1]).

Europos inovacijų partnerystė vyresnių žmonių aktyvumo ir sveikatos srityje – ES lygmens programa, pagal kurią vyresnio amžiaus ES piliečiai skatinami būti sveiki, aktyvūs ir nepriklausomi. Be to, pagal šią iniciatyvą sukurta internetinė susitikimų vieta, kur vyresnio amžiaus žmonių aktyvumo didinimu besidomintys asmenys gali rasti naujienų, informacijos apie renginius, finansavimo galimybes ir iniciatyvas visoje Europoje ([2]).

Pagal Mokymosi visą gyvenimą programą (visų pirma pagal „Leonardo da Vinci“ ir „Grundtvig“ paprogrames) jau finansuoti šimtai projektų, kuriais senjorai skatinti dalyvauti darbo rinkoje, savanoriškoje ar švietimo veikloje ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6480&type=2&furtherPubs=no.
([2]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eipaha/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/grundtvig_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011376/12
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Promoting active ageing

In February, the European Commission approved its pilot initiative in the field of active ageing and health as one of the measures at EU level for proper preparation for future demographic change. Indeed, the ageing population in Europe is one of Europe's most pressing issues, and given that the number of Europeans aged 65 and over will almost double over the next 50 years, it is one that we have to prepare for in advance. Raising the age of retirement is one of the essential steps that many Member States have already taken. However, both at the EU and Member State level we still lack a clearly defined set of measures whose objectives would be to encourage the active involvement of older people in public and professional life.

Does the Commission not feel that we should also support the preparation of an 'Active older people' programme? This would contribute to existing EU programmes, partnerships and initiatives in the field of active ageing in order to mobilise the target group of older people throughout Europe. Society could then make better use of the abilities of older people, so that their needs would be taken into account and so that progress would be made in developing innovative solutions to promote a culture of active ageing and cross-border intergenerational solidarity throughout Europe.

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission is not planning to propose an additional programme dedicated to activating older people. Active ageing calls for policy interventions in many different areas such as employment, pensions, education, health, innovation, research, transport, ICT and housing.

Funding for projects promoting active ageing is available under a wide range of different EU programmes and financial instruments. One of the priorities is to align these programmes/instruments with the identified priorities on Active ageing avoiding overlaps between the different instruments.

The Commission has produced, in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions and the AGE Platform Europe, a brochure presenting existing funding programmes to help public authorities and stakeholder organisations, particularly at the regional and local level, to develop initiatives relating to active ageing ([1]).

The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA), is a EU-wide program to enable EU citizens to lead healthy, active and independent lives while ageing. In the context of the *EIP AHA* an online Marketplace has been launched to keep those interested in active ageing up to date on the latest news, events, funding opportunities and initiatives taking place across Europe ([2]).

The Lifelong Learning Programme, through its Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig strands, has funded hundreds of projects to facilitate participation of seniors in employment, volunteering or educational activities ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6480&type=2&furtherPubs=no
([2]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eipaha/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/grundtvig_en.htm

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011377/12
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: Tarptautinis ES bendradarbiavimas profesinio švietimo ir mokymo srityje

Pagal šiuo metu galiojančią daugiametę finansinę programą tarptautinis bendradarbiavimas su trečiosiomis šalimis švietimo ir mokslo srityje ir studentų mainai įmanomi tik aukštųjų mokyklų studentams. Savo pasiūlyme dėl būsimos švietimo, mokslo, jaunimo ir sporto programos „Erasmus visiems“, kuri bus vykdoma 2014-2020 metais, Komisija taip pat pasiūlė stiprinti tarptautinį programos matmenį tik aukštojo mokslo srityje.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad reikėtų apsvarstyti tarptautinio matmens švietimo ir mokslo srityje prieinamumą taip pat ir profesinių mokyklų studentams?

A. Vassiliou atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 8 d.)

Rengdama pasiūlymą „Erasmus visiems“, Komisija laikėsi nuomonės, kad tarptautinių mainų su trečiosiomis šalimis ir besimokančiųjų judumo srityje geriausia suteikti prioritetą mainams universitetų lygiu, kur tokių mainų valdymo gebėjimai jau įtvirtinti.

Kita vertus, Komisija pripažįsta, kad bendradarbiavimas su institucijomis partnerėmis daro teigiamą poveikį švietimo ir mokymo organizacijoms ir teikia naudą darbuotojams bei besimokantiesiems ir kituose švietimo sektoriuose. Todėl „Erasmus visiems“ numatyta nemažai lėšų strateginei partnerystei, kuria skatinama keistis patirtimi ir geriausia praktika. Tokia partnerystė pirmiausia skirta programoje dalyvaujančioms šalims, bet prie jos gali prisijungti ir trečiųjų šalių partnerių organizacijos, jei partnerystei jos suteikia aiškios pridėtinės vertės. Taigi profesinės mokyklos galės įgyti patirties ir plėtoti sėkmingam tarptautiniam bendradarbiavimui su partneriais už ES ribų reikalingus gebėjimus, o tai gali paskatinti darbuotojų ir studentų mainus.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011377/12
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: International EU cooperation in the field of vocational education and training

Under the current multi-annual financial framework, international cooperation with third countries in the field of education and training and student exchanges are only possible for university students. In its report on the future programme for education, training, youth and sport 'Erasmus for all', which will be executed during 2014-2020, the Commission proposed strengthening the programme's international dimension in the area of higher education alone.

Does the Commission not feel that we should also consider accessibility to international education and training for students of vocational schools?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

In formulating its proposal for 'Erasmus for All', the Commission took the view that in relation to international exchanges and learning mobility with third countries it was best to prioritise exchanges at university level where the capacity to manage such exchanges is already firmly established.

Nevertheless, the Commission recognises that the positive impact on education and training organisations of cooperation with partner institutions and the benefits brought to both staff and learners extend to other educational sectors also. For this reason, 'Erasmus For All' foresees significant funds for strategic partnerships which promote exchange of experience and best practice. These partnerships, while mainly targeted at countries participating in the programme, are also open to third country partner organisations, if they bring clear added-value to the partnership. In this way, vocational schools will be able to acquire the experience and develop the capacity needed for successful international cooperation with partners from beyond the EU, which may lead to exchanges of staff and students.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011378/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Pomoc rozwojowa a Wieloletnie Ramy Finansowe 2014-2020

W związku z trwającymi negocjacjami dotyczącymi Wieloletnich Ram Finansowych 2014-2020 pojawiło się zagrożenie, że środki na finansowanie pomocy rozwojowej i humanitarnej zostaną ograniczone. W listopadzie Przewodniczący Rady Europejskiej Van Rompuy przedstawił propozycję, w której środki na dział 4 (tzw. Heading 4) zostały zmniejszone o ponad 13 % w stosunku do wcześniejszej propozycji Komisji. Planowane jest również ograniczenie budżetu na Europejski Fundusz Rozwoju.

W 2015 r., czyli w pierwszych latach obowiązywania nowych WRM przypada termin realizacji Milenijnych Celów Rozwoju, które bez zwiększenia środków finansowych nie zostaną zrealizowane.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z zapytaniem:

Jakie rozwiązanie ma zamiar zaproponować Komisja, aby utrzymać finansowanie pomocy rozwojowej na co najmniej obecnym poziomie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(6 lutego 2013 r.)

Zdaniem Komisji kwota 70 mld euro przeznaczona w ramach wieloletnich ram finansowych na okres 2014-2020 na działania zewnętrzne jest odpowiednia. Największą część środków z tej puli przewidziano na pomoc rozwojową i humanitarną ([1]).

Aby osiągnąć oczekiwane rezultaty w zakresie pomocy rozwojowej, oprócz odpowiednich środków finansowych konieczna jest również skuteczna i efektywna współpraca w tej dziedzinie. W tym celu Komisja aktywnie wdraża program działań na rzecz zmian ([2]), starając się zoptymalizować unijny wkład w osiągniecie milenijnych celów rozwoju.

Komisja przypomina, że jej propozycja dotycząca finansowania instrumentów zewnętrznych została opracowana w taki sposób, aby zapewnić realizację ambitnych celów UE na arenie światowej, również w zakresie pomocy rozwojowej. Ponieważ Komisja podtrzymuje swoją propozycję, ostateczna decyzja w tej sprawie należy teraz do Rady i Parlamentu.

([1]) COM (2011) 500 final.
([2]) COM (2011) 637 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011378/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Development aid and the multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020

In the context of ongoing negotiations on the multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020, a danger has emerged that appropriations for finance development and humanitarian aid will face cuts. In November 2012, the President of the Council, Herman Van Rompuy, presented a proposal in which appropriations under Heading 4 were reduced by over 13% in comparison with the Commission's earlier proposal. Budget cuts are also planned for the European Development Fund.

2015 — the year after the new MFF comes into effect — is also the year in which the deadline for meeting the Millennium Development Goals falls. However, these goals will not be met without an increase in appropriations.

In this connection:

What solution does the Commission intend to propose with a view, at the very least, to maintaining appropriations for development aid at current levels?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

The Commission considers EUR 70 billion to be the appropriate amount for external action under the MFF 2014-2020 of which the largest share would be allocated to development and humanitarian aid ([1]).

Alongside adequate resources, efficient and effective development cooperation practices are essential to achieving high impact in terms of development outcomes. To this end, the Commission is actively implementing the Agenda for Change ([2]) in an effort to optimise the EU's contribution to the achievement of the MDGs.

The Commission recalls that its financial proposal for external instruments is designed to ensure that the EU delivers its ambitions in the world, including in the area of development. Since the Commission stands by its proposals, it is now up to the Council and the Parliament to decide.

([1]) COM(2011) 500 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 637 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011379/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Nasilające się ataki na chrześcijan w Nigerii

Do ostatnich niezwykle brutalnych incydentów w stosunku do chrześcijan doszło w leżącej na północy Nigerii miejscowości Chibok dnia 2 grudnia 2012 r. Niezidentyfikowani sprawcy wtargnęli do domów chrześcijan około godziny 21 i zabili 10 osób przy użyciu noży (chociaż posiadali broń automatyczną). Domy były wcześniej wyselekcjonowane i zamachowcy wiedzieli dokładnie, gdzie mieszkają chrześcijanie. Następnie podpalili domy i splądrowali sąsiedztwo.

Ponieważ napaści na chrześcijan w Nigerii trwają już od kilku lat i jednocześnie się nasilają, współistnienie muzułmanów i chrześcijan staje się tam powoli niemożliwe.

1. W jaki sposób Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza ustosunkować się do nasilającej się agresji wobec chrześcijan w Nigerii?

2. Jakie działania UE według Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel mogłyby poprawić sytuację nigeryjskich chrześcijan?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(14 lutego 2013 r.)

Nasilające się zjawisko przemocy w północnej części Nigerii budzi coraz większy niepokój w kraju i za granicą, a jego ofiarą padają niewinni cywile, zarówno chrześcijanie, jak i muzułmanie, oraz instytucje państwowe. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca współpracuje z Nigerią, by stawić czoła wyzwaniom związanym z zapewnieniem trwałego bezpieczeństwa i uporać się z problemami sprzyjającymi radykalizacji postaw i przemocy. Współpraca ta obejmuje zarówno ciągły dialog polityczny na temat właściwych sposobów rozwiązania istniejących problemów, jak również ukierunkowane działania pomocowe. Niedawna misja w Nigerii miała na celu zbadanie szczegółowych form wspierania walki z terroryzmem. Celem UE jest wsparcie starań władz nigeryjskich na rzecz zapewnienia praworządności i poszanowania praw człowieka.

UE już teraz realizuje szereg programów dotyczących pomocy społecznej, np. opieki nad matkami, oraz zasobów wodnych na północy kraju. W ramach działań finansowanych z 11. Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju (EFR) Komisja rozważa jednak możliwość położenia większego nacisku na programy zintegrowane, zdolne pomóc w rozwiązaniu szeregu problemów gospodarczych i społecznych leżących u źródeł przemocy. Jako uzupełnienie bieżących programów w dziedzinie zdrowia realizowanych w części północnych terytoriów Nigerii Komisja wprowadziła program zdrowotny skierowany do matek. Program ten również koncentruje się na obszarze północnej Nigerii i zostanie uruchomiony jeszcze w 2013 r. Ponadto Komisja pracuje nad projektem dotyczącym zaangażowania kobiet w działania na rzecz pokoju („Women's Engagement in Peace Building").

W lipcu 2012 r. UE zapewniła ponadto wsparcie na rzecz budowania potencjału w zakresie mediacji w jednym z najbardziej niestabilnych regionów, wykorzystując środki udostępnione w ramach specjalnej inicjatywy Parlamentu. Komisja przygotowuje również inny projekt koncentrujący się na zapobieganiu konfliktom i zatrudnieniu wśród młodzieży na tych terenach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011379/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Increasing attacks on Christians in Nigeria

The most recent in a series of exceptionally brutal attacks targeting the Christian community took place in the northern Nigerian town of Chibok on 2 December 2012. Unidentified attackers forced their way into the homes of Christians at around 21:00 and killed 10 people with knives (although they did have automatic weapons in their possession). The homes had been picked out earlier, and the attackers knew exactly which homes were inhabited by Christians. Afterwards, they set fire to the houses and looted the neighbourhood.

Given that attacks on Christians have been taking place in Nigeria for several years, and at an increasing rate, it is gradually becoming impossible for Muslims and Christians to coexist in peace.

1. How does the VP/HR intend to respond to the increasing violence against Christians in Nigeria?

2. What steps could the EU take, in the opinion of the VP/HR, to improve the situation ofNigerian Christians?

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

The escalating violence in parts of northern Nigeria is a growing cause of concern for those inside and outside the country and targets innocent civilians, both christians and muslims, and the institutions of the state. The HR/VP is working with Nigeria to help it tackle the challenges of creating durable security and dealing with the factors conducive to radicalisation and violence, through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate approaches to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions. A mission was recently in Nigeria to examine specific forms of support to fight terrorism. The EU's objective is to help the Nigerian authorities ensure the rule of law and the respect of human rights principles.

The EU already undertakes a number of programmes providing social assistance, e.g. through maternal care, and water resources in the North. The Commission is considering, however, focusing more attention under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) on integrated programmes that tackle the full range of economic and social challenges that give impetus to the violence. The Commission has launched a maternal health programme focusing on Northern Nigeria which will be launched later in 2013, in addition to its ongoing health programme which also targets part of Northern Nigeria. In addition, the Commission is working on a project on 'Women's Engagement in Peace Building'.

In addition, in July 2012 the EU provided capacity building for mediation in one of the most fragile areas, using funds from a special initiative by Parliament. The Commission is also preparing another project focusing on conflict prevention and youth employment for this area.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-011380/12
do Komisji
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: WTO – Gazprom

Pojawiła się nieoficjalne informacja, że władze rosyjskie zamierzają zaskarżyć przed Trybunałem WTO III Pakiet Energetyczny. Chodzi najprawdopodobniej o przepisy dotyczące tzw. *ownership unbundling*, wskutek których Gazprom musiałby sprzedać sieci energetyczne w krajach bałtyckich.

Czy Komisja posiada oficjalne informacje, że taka skarga jest przygotowywana?

Czy służby prawne Komisji przeprowadziły analizę, jakie szanse ma Rosja w ewentualnej rozprawie przed Trybunałem WTO?

Czy Komisja mogłaby poinformować o aktualnym stanie negocjacji dotyczących kwestii energetycznych i wdrażania zasad rynku wewnętrznego pomiędzy Rosją a Unią Europejską?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(21 stycznia 2013 r.)

1. Komisja regularnie omawia z Rosją kwestie związane z wdrażaniem zasad Światowej Organizacji Handlu (WTO). Do tej pory żadne postępowanie na forum WTO nie zostało wszczęte przez Rosję.

2. Władze rosyjskie wyraziły pewne obawy, które jednak są przede wszystkim związane ze szczególnymi zobowiązaniami w zakresie usług. Komisja przeanalizuje wszelkie ewentualne argumenty prawne przedstawione przez Rosję – co jednak do tej pory nie miało miejsca.

3. Komisja jest przekonana, że trzeci pakiet energetyczny UE jest zgodny z naszymi zobowiązaniami w ramach WTO i będzie go w sposób stanowczy bronić, o ile zostanie on zakwestionowany. W ramach dialogu energetycznego między UE a Rosją Komisja prowadzi regularne rozmowy z rządem rosyjskim i rosyjskimi przedsiębiorstwami na temat wdrożenia trzeciego pakietu energetycznego. Na ostatnim posiedzeniu Stałej Rady Partnerstwa ds. Energii (w dniu 12 grudnia 2012 r.) omówiono cały szereg zagadnień dotyczących współpracy energetycznej.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011380/12
to the Commission
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: WTO — Gazprom

Unofficial sources are reporting that the Russian authorities intend to lodge a complaint against the Third Energy Package with the WTO Tribunal. The complaint is most likely to concern provisions relating to 'ownership unbundling', which would require Gazprom to sell off energy networks in the Baltic States.

Does the Commission have official information on whether such a complaint is being prepared?

Have the Commission's legal services carried out an assessment of Russia's chances of succeeding in the event that a hearing is held before the WTO Tribunal?

Could the Commission say what the current state of negotiations is with regard to energy issues and the implementation of internal market rules between Russia and the European Union?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2013)

1. The Commission regularly discusses with Russia issues related to World Trade Organisation (WTO) implementation. No WTO action has been started by Russia.

2. Russian authorities have already mentioned some concerns more related to specific services commitments. The Commission will examine any legal argumentation submitted by Russia — which has not been the case so far.

3. The Commission is convinved that the EU's Third Energy Package is compatible with our WTO comitments and would vigorously defend it if it were to be challenged. Within the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, the Commission is in regular discussions with the Russian government and Russian companies concerning the implementation of the third energy package. At the last meeting of the Permanent Partnership Council on Energy (on 12 December 2012), the whole range of energy cooperation was discussed.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011381/12
do Komisji
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Trzeci pakiet energetyczny i klauzule „take-or-pay" („bierz lub płać")

Dyrektywa 2009/73/WE dotycząca wspólnych zasad rynku wewnętrznego gazu ziemnego weszła w życie w dniu 3 września 2009 r. i miała zostać transponowana do prawa krajowego we wszystkich państwach członkowskich do marca 2012 r.

Czy, mając powyższe na uwadze, Komisja mogłaby przedstawić swoją opinię prawną, czy włączanie klauzuli „take-or-pay" („bierz lub płać") do kontraktów na dostawy gazu (międzyrządowych lub komercyjnych) jest zgodne z obecnie obowiązującym w UE prawem?

Jeżeli takie klauzule są zgodne z prawem, na jakich warunkach są one do przyjęcia?

Jeżeli są one niezgodne z prawem UE, jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja w celu położenia kresu takim praktykom?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Güntera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(8 lutego 2013 r.)

Klauzule „bierz lub płać", które w niektórych przypadkach stanowią część umów długoterminowych na rynku gazu, nie są jako takie zakazane trzecim pakietem energetycznym i to niezależnie od tego, czy stanowią one część umowy międzyrządowej czy też prywatnej. Wszystkie umowy zawierane na unijnym rynku gazu muszą jednak być zgodne z dorobkiem prawnym UE, zwłaszcza z przepisami dotyczącymi konkurencji. Podobnie, jak ma to miejsce w przypadku wszelkich innych postanowień umownych, klauzule takie należałoby ocenić w kontekście konkretnych okoliczności faktycznych, ekonomicznych i prawnych w odniesieniu do każdej określonej sytuacji rynkowej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011381/12
to the Commission
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: The third energy package and take-or-pay clauses

Directive 2009/73/EC on the internal market in natural gas entered into force on 3 September 2009 and should have been transposed in all Member States by March 2012.

Against this background, could the Commission give its legal opinion as to whether the inclusion of 'take-or-pay' clauses in gas supply contracts (whether intergovernmental or commercial) are acceptable under current EU legislation?

If they are legal, under what conditions are they acceptable?

If they are not in line with EU legislation, what measures does the Commission intend to take to end this practice?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

Take-or-pay clauses, which sometimes form part of long-term contracts on the gas market, are as such not prohibited by the Third Energy Package. This is irrespective of whether they are part of an intergovernmental or private contract. All contracts on the EU gas market must, however, be in line with the EU acquis, in particular competition rules. As any other contractual terms, they would need to be assessed in the light of the concrete factual, economic and legal circumstances of each specific market situation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011382/12
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: The threatened demise of the honey bee in the EU and the role of neonicotinoid insecticides

Colony collapse disorder (CCD) is a syndrome that is characterised by the sudden loss of adult bees from the hive. Many possible explanations for CCD have been proposed, but no one primary cause has been found for certain. With CCD, whole-hive tests in the field are needed in order to determine the effects of a pesticide on bee colonies. To date, there are very few scientifically valid whole-hive studies that can be used to determine the effects of pesticides on bee colonies.

A recent study conducted in Europe, in which electronic localisation devices were fixed on bees, has shown that, even with very low levels of pesticide in the bee's diet, a high proportion of bees suffer from orientation disorder and are unable to return safely to the hive. The pesticide under study, thiamethoxam, is a neonicotinoid insecticide, and although it is still allowed in the UK it has been banned by national authorities in France, Germany, Italy and other Member States.

Is the Commission aware of this existential threat to Europe's population of honey bees , which serve a vital function in nature as pollinators and whose product, honey, makes a healthy contribution to our citizens' diet?

Is the Commission considering banning neonicotinoid pesticides on an EU-wide basis and, in its opinion, is there enough scientific evidence to justify such a ban?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent scientific publications in 'Science' regarding the possible link between sub-lethal doses of insecticides belonging to the chemical group of neonicotinoids and bee mortality.

The Commission asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to assess this new information and to review the risk assessment of neonicotinoids as regards their impact on bees. On 16 January 2013, EFSA published the conclusions on three neonicotinoids (namely Thiametoxam, Clothianidin, Imidacloprid). EFSA evaluated the specific uses as seed treatment and granules of clothianidin, thiametoxam and imidacloprid in all authorised crops in the EU (more than 20 in total). EFSA identified several data gaps and high risks for bees as regards the exposure to dust, to residue in pollen and nectar and to guttation in specific crops. The Commission will soon propose and discuss with the Member States measures to address the risks identified.

In addition the Commission is providing financial support to the research project Bee Doc studying the effect of pesticides and in particular neonicotinoid not only at the level of individual bee but also at the level of the colony.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011383/12
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: ES prieglobsčio politika: tolimesni veiksmai

Kurdama bendrą Europos prieglobsčio sistemą (BEPS) ir siekdama ją suderinti su pasikeitusiomis Europos Sąjungos pirminės teisės nuostatomis Europos Komisija pastaruoju metu priėmė nemažai teisės aktų prieglobsčio politikos srityje.

1. Ar artimiausiu metu Komisija planuoja priimti daugiau politinių dokumentų šioje srityje?

2. Kada Komisija planuoja pateikti 2012 m. Europos prieglobsčio paramos biuro (EASO) veiklos ataskaitą?

M. Malmström atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 12 d.)

Europos Komisija vertins, kaip priimami teisės aktai pagal atitinkamas iniciatyvas, įskaitant Dublino reglamento įgyvendinimo reglamentą. Artimiausiu metu Komisija ketina sutelkti dėmesį į nuoseklų naujosios bendros Europos prieglobsčio sistemos įgyvendinimą ir atidžiai stebėti, kaip valstybės narės perkelia ES nuostatas į nacionalinę teisę.

Europos prieglobsčio paramos biuro metinė ataskaita teikiama vadovaujantis steigimo reglamentu. Ją priima šios agentūros valdyba, o suinteresuotosioms šalims, įskaitant Europos Parlamentą, ją, kaip ir 2011 m., pristatys pati agentūra – Europos prieglobsčio paramos biuras.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011383/12
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: EU asylum policy: further action

In establishing a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and seeking to align it to the amended provisions of European Union primary law, the European Commission recently adopted numerous legislative acts in the field of asylum policy.

1. Does the Commission plan to adopt more policy documents in this field in the near future?

2. When does the Commission plan to present the 2012 European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Annual Report?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The European Commission will follow up the adoption of the legislation with relevant initiatives including the implementing regulation of the Dublin Regulation. It is the intention of the Commission to focus in the period ahead on the coherent implementation of the new Common European Asylum System and to monitor closely the transposition of the EU rules by the Member States.

The Annual Report of the European Asylum Support Office is a document required by the agency's Founding Regulation. It is adopted by the Management Board of the agency. It will be therefore for EASO to present it to relevant stakeholders, including the European Parliament, as was the case in 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011384/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: European Social Fund

1. With regard to the new proposal for a youth guarantee scheme to be funded from the European Social Fund (ESF), could the Commission explain how much of this fund will be available for British citizens?

2. Given that this proposal was only introduced recently, could the Commission clarify whether any item previously meeting ESF eligibility criteria will now receive less funding in order to provide cover for the youth guarantee scheme?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

1. In its Youth Employment Package ([1]), the Commission made a proposal for a Council Recommendation for Member States to establish a Youth Guarantee. Negotiations on the proposal have started in December 2012 with a view to its adoption in early 2013. TThe establishment of such Youth Guarantee schemes can be supported by EU structural funds, in particular the ESF.. The draft ESF Regulation proposed by the Commission ([2]) includes a dedicated investment priority targeting the sustainable labour market integration of young people not in employment, training or education. Exact amounts to be allocated to each priority will be determined in the negotiations about the future programmes with each Member State, including the UK.

2. The ESF is the main instrument to promote employment and social inclusion and therefore it is fully legitimate that the design of the ESF for the next programming period makes room for supporting of Youth Guarantee schemes.

In any event, it can be expected that Member States, and particularly those with high youth unemployment would identify young unemployed as a target group for future ESF funding. Member States' Partnership Contracts and Operational Programmes for the period 2014-2020 would be expected to address school-to-work transitions and hence provide for the possibility to introduce Youth Guarantee schemes.

The key issue is actually to make sure that Member States are serious about their commitments and that the ESF is provided with sufficient funding to match the agreed ambition on Europe 2020 employment and social targets.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.
([2]) COM(2011) 607 final/2 of 14 March 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011385/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Energy security

In its paper entitled 'Better Governance for the single market' (COM(2012)0259), the Commission identifies the energy sector as a key market.

Would the Commission agree with me that, given its own inability to date to formulate a coherent EU energy policy, the Member States' continued propensity to negotiate bilateral agreements with third-party states, and continued resistance to unbundling measures, this situation would be better addressed by a voluntary protocol outside the competence of the Commission, which could include those third-party states that are so vital to Europe's energy security but are outside the Commission's sphere of competence?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

In its communication on security of energy supply and international cooperation of 7 September 2011 ([1]) the Commission developed a comprehensive strategy on integrating markets with neighbouring countries, setting the global agenda for safe, competitive and low carbon energy and improving transparency and coordination at the EU level. The Council and Parliament endorsed this strategy.

Furthermore, the decision ([2]) on the information exchange for Member States' intergovernmental agreements in the energy sector will contribute to increasing transparency among the Member States and ensuring that EU internal market rules and energy security policy goals are respected in such agreements.

Consequently, the Commission does not see the need for a voluntary protocol on EU relations to third countries in the area of energy.

([1]) COM(2011)539.
([2]) Decision 994/2012/EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011386/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 décembre 2012)

Objet: Numéro d'appel d'urgence unique européen «112»: localisation des appels

En référence à l'article 26, paragraphe 5 de la directive 2009/136/CE (directive «service universel») concernant la localisation des appels destinés au numéro d'appel d'urgence unique européen «112», la Commission peut-elle décrire de quelle manière l'information de localisation fournie par Galileo sera utilisée par les services d'urgence européens et si une législation est prévue pour utiliser les services Galileo pour la localisation des appels au «112»?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(8 février 2013)

L'article 26, paragraphe 5, de la directive «Service universel» prévoit l'obligation pour les entreprises fournissant le service d'appel de mettre à la disposition de l'autorité traitant les appels d'urgence les informations relatives à la localisation de l'appelant. Cet article dispose que les autorités réglementaires compétentes définissent les critères relatifs à la précision et à la fiabilité des informations de localisation de l'appelant qui sont fournies. C'est donc aux États membres qu'il appartient d'imposer les critères relatifs à la localisation de l'appelant.

Mes services participent actuellement à des discussions avec des experts des États membres afin de contribuer à la diffusion des meilleures solutions pour la mise en œuvre de critères plus stricts en matière de localisation de l'appelant. L'utilisation de données GNSS (système mondial de navigation par satellite) pourrait permettre de définir la localisation de l'appelant de manière beaucoup plus précise que ne le fait l'identifiant cellulaire utilisé par la majorité des États membres. La Commission n'est toutefois pas en mesure de choisir une solution technologique plutôt qu'une autre pour améliorer cette précision.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011386/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Single European emergency call number 112 — location of calls

With reference to Article 26, paragraph 5 of Directive 2009/136/EC (Universal Service Directive) on the location of calls to the single European emergency call number 112, could the Commission state how location information provided by Galileo will be used by the European emergency services and if there is any legislation planned for using Galileo services to locate calls made to the 112 number?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Universal Service Directive (Article 26 paragraph 5) contains the obligation for undertakings providing the call to make caller location available to the authority handling emergency calls. It provides that competent regulatory authorities shall lay down criteria for the accuracy and reliability of the caller location information provided. Consequently, it is for Member States to impose caller location criteria.

Currently my services are involved in discussions with Member States' experts in order to help disseminate the best solutions for implementing more stringent caller location criteria. The use of GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) data could provide a much more accurate positioning than Cell ID used by the majority of Member States. However, the Commission is not in the position to opt for a particular technological solution for more accurate positioning.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011387/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 décembre 2012)

Objet: Projet d'amélioration gustative des aliments sans gluten

Un nouveau projet financé par l'Union européenne a été lancé suite à la demande des personnes intolérantes au gluten (une matière protidique que l'on trouve dans le blé, l'orge et le seigle) pour donner meilleur goût aux aliments sans gluten.

Des millions de personnes dans le monde seraient touchées par l'intolérance au gluten (maladie cœliaque); il s'agit d'une maladie chronique de l'intestin, et les personnes atteintes doivent éviter les aliments tels que le pain, les céréales et les pâtes. Les symptômes de la maladie comptent des douleurs d'estomac et des vomissements.

1. Possède-t-on des statistiques européennes officielles sur le nombre de personnes souffrant d'intolérance au gluten?

2. La Commission a-t-elle évalué les retombées financières de cette intolérance en termes médicaux et médicamenteux?

3. La Commission a-t-elle évalué les retombées financières de l'activité liée à la production et à la vente des produits spécifiquement sans gluten?

4. A-t-elle établi un calendrier concernant ce projet visant à redonner du goût aux aliments sans gluten?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(8 février 2013)

En 2004, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments a rendu un avis sur l'évaluation des aliments allergènes à des fins d'étiquetage ([1]). Elle y procédait également à une analyse de la maladie cœliaque et de l'intolérance aux céréales contenant du gluten en fournissant, notamment, des indications sur la prévalence de ces affections.

Afin que les consommateurs disposent d'informations adéquates pour choisir en connaissance de cause des produits ne portant pas préjudice à leur santé, le règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 ([2]) concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires exige que toutes les denrées alimentaires mentionnent sur leur étiquette les ingrédients à l'origine des allergies ou des intolérances les plus courantes, y compris les ingrédients contenant du gluten. En outre, le règlement (CE) n° 41/2009 ([3]) harmonise les conditions d'utilisation des mentions «sans gluten» ou «très faible teneur en gluten» sur l'étiquette d'une denrée alimentaire. Ces dispositions permettent de garantir que les personnes souffrant d'une intolérance au gluten sont dûment informées de la présence sur le marché de différentes denrées alimentaires adaptées à leurs besoins et à leur degré de sensibilité.

La question de l'évaluation des retombées financières, qui intéresse l'Honorable Parlementaire, n'entrait pas dans le cadre de l'adoption de ces mesures.

L'objectif du projet «Gluten Free», financé par la Commission, est de permettre aux petites et moyennes entreprises de fabriquer des produits de boulangerie et des pâtes alimentaires sans gluten de qualité supérieure dont le goût, la texture et la sensation laissée en bouche sont bien acceptés par les consommateurs. Ce projet s'est achevé à la fin de l'année 2012.

Si l'évaluation finale du projet, qui doit encore être réalisée, montre que celui-ci est un succès, les résultats et les recommandations en découlant seront largement diffusés auprès du public, notamment des PME concernées, au moyen de présentations sur les salons professionnels, d'ateliers, de séminaires, de courriers et de présentations sur le site web du projet. Les conclusions scientifiques seront elles aussi portées à la connaissance du public et publiées dans des ouvrages pertinents.

([1]) The EFSA Journal (2004) 32, pp. 1-197, http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/32.pdf
([2]) JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([3]) JO L 16 du 21.1.2009, p. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011387/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Project to improve the taste of gluten-free food

A new EU-funded project has been set up following demand from those intolerant to gluten (a protein composite found in wheat, barley and rye) for better tasting food.

An intolerance to gluten (coeliac disease) affects millions of people worldwide and is a chronic bowel disorder. Sufferers have to avoid foods such as bread, cereals and pasta. Symptoms of the disease include stomach ache and vomiting.

1. Are there any official European statistics on the number of people suffering from gluten intolerance?

2. Has the Commission assessed the financial impact of this intolerance on the medical and pharmaceutical industry?

3. Has the Commission assessed the financial impact of the activity related to the production and sale of gluten-free products?

4. Has it drawn up a schedule for this project on improving the taste of gluten-free food?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The European Food Safety Authority issued in 2004 an opinion on the evaluation of allergenic foods for labelling purposes ([1]). That opinion also analyses the coeliac disease and intolerance to gluten-containing cereals and provides, among others, quantitative information on the prevalence of such disease.

In order to provide consumers with adequate information to make informed choices which are safe for them, Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([2]) on food information to consumers requires for all food the mandatory labelling of ingredients causing the most common allergies or intolerances, including gluten-containing ingredients. In addition, Regulation (EC) No 41/2009 ([3]) harmonises conditions for labelling a food as 'gluten-free' or 'very low gluten'. This ensures that coeliacs are adequately informed on the presence of the market of different foods appropriate for their needs and for their level of sensitivity.

An assessment of the financial impacts of interest to the Honourable Member was not relevant in the context of the adoption of these measures.

The Gluten Free project, funded by the Commision, aims to enable Small and Medium Enterprises to produce premium gluten-free bakery products and pasta well accepted by the consumer in terms of taste, texture and mouth-feeling. This project finished at the end of 2012.

If the final assessment, still to be performed, proves that the project is successful, the results and consequent recommendations will be widely disseminated to the public and in particular to SMEs in the sector by means of trade fair presentations, workshops, seminars, mailings and presentations on the project website. At the same time, scientific findings will be published in relevant publications and presentations will be held.

([1]) The EFSA Journal (2004) 32, 1-197, http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/32.pdf
([2]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.
([3]) OJ L 16, 21.1.2009, p. 3.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011388/12
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: Teisėkūros pasiūlymas dėl pažangaus sienų valdymo

Europos Komisija savo 2011 m. spalio mėn. komunikate „Pažangus sienų valdymas. Galimybės ir perspektyvos“ (COM(2011) 0680 galutinis) dar kartą patvirtino savo įsipareigojimą Europos Parlamentui ir Tarybai pateikti pasiūlymų dėl teisėkūros procedūra priimamų aktų paketą dėl pažangios sienų valdymo sistemos sukūrimo.

Ar Komisija galėtų pasakyti, kada ji planuoja pateikti minėtą pasiūlymų dėl teisėkūros procedūra priimamų aktų paketą?

C. Malmström atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. vasario 1 d.)

Komisija pasiūlymus dėl atvykimo ir išvykimo sistemos ir registruotų keliautojų programos siekia pateikti 2013 m. pradžioje.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011388/12
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Legislative proposal on smart borders

In its communication of October 2011 entitled 'Smart borders — options and the way ahead' (COM(2011) 0680 final), the European Commission once again confirmed its commitment to present the European Parliament and the Council with a proposal for a package on establishing smart borders to be adopted by legislative procedure.

Could the Commission say when it plans to present the aforementioned proposal for a package adopted by legislative procedure?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Commission aims to present proposals for the Entry Exit System and the Registered Travellers Programme early in 2013.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011389/12
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: Stokholmo programos laikotarpio vidurio peržiūra

Europos Komisija savo 2010 m. komunikate dėl laisvės, saugumo ir teisingumo erdvės Europos piliečiams (Stokholmo programos) įgyvendinimo veiksmų plano (COM(2010) 0171 galutinis) įsipareigojo 2012 m. pateikti programos įgyvendinimo laikotarpio vidurio peržiūrą, kad užtikrintų, jog programa vis dar atitinka Europos ir pasaulio vystymosi tendencijas, tačiau iki šiol tai nebuvo padaryta.

Kada Komisija planuoja pateikti Stokholmo programos įgyvendinimo laikotarpio vidurio peržiūrą?

C. Malmström atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. sausio 29 d.)

Nuo 2009 m. gruodžio mėn. Stokholmo programa yra ES teisingumo ir vidaus reikalų srities veiksmų pagrindas. Ja siekiama kurti atvirą ir saugią Europą, tarnaujančią savo piliečiams ir juos apsaugančią. 2010 m. balandžio mėn. Komisijos patvirtintame programos įgyvendinimo veiksmų plane pagal politinius tikslus ir prioritetus numatyti konkretūs veiksmai.

Nemaža pažanga padaryta teikiant pasiūlymus dėl laisvės, saugumo ir teisingumo erdvės kūrimo. 2012 m. gruodį Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotoja V. Reding, o lapkritį – Komisijos narė C. Malmström dalyvavo Parlamento Pilietinių laisvių komiteto posėdyje, kad po dvejų su puse programos įgyvendinimo metų išdėstytų *status quo*. Jau įgyvendinama kitų ataskaitų teikimo mechanizmų, pavyzdžiui, rengiama metinė imigracijos ir prieglobsčio ataskaita, vidaus saugumo strategijos įgyvendinimo ataskaita ir dvimetės Šengeno bei ES visuotinio požiūrio į migraciją ir judumą ataskaitos.

Dėl šios priežasties, kaip rugsėjo mėn. paaiškinta Komisijos pirmininko pavaduotojos V. Reding ir Komisijos narės C. Malmström laiškuose Pilietinių laisvių komiteto pirmininkui, teikti oficialios laikotarpio vidurio atskaitos Komisija neplanuoja, nes tai dubliuotųsi su esamais ataskaitų teikimo mechanizmais. Prie šių laiškų buvo pridėtos lentelės, kuriose apibendrinami pateikti programos pasiūlymai.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011389/12
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Mid-term Review of the Stockholm Programme

In its 2010 Communication on an action plan implementing an area of freedom, security and justice for Europe's citizens (the Stockholm Programme) (COM(2010) 0171 final), the European Commission committed to presenting a mid-term review of the implementation of the programme in 2012 in order to ensure that the programme is still in keeping with European and global development trends, however, this has not yet been done.

When does the Commission plan to present a mid-term review of the implementation of the Stockholm Programme?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2013)

Since December 2009, the Stockholm Programme has provided the framework for the EU's action in the justice and home affairs area with the aim of creating an open and secure Europe which serves and protects our citizens. The action plan implementing the programme, adopted by the Commission in April 2010, translated the political aims and priorities into specific actions.

Good progress has been made in bringing forward proposals to build an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. Vice-President Reding and Commissioner Malmström appeared before Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee in December and November 2012 respectively to set out the status quo after two and a half years of implementation. A number of other reporting mechanisms are already in place, such as the Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum, the report on the implementation of the Internal Security Strategy, and the biannual reports on Schengen and on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.

For this reason, as explained in September in letters to the Chair of the Civil Liberties Committee from Vice-President Reding and Commissioner Malmström, the Commission does not plan to present a formal mid-term report, as this would duplicate existing reporting mechanisms. Tables summarising the proposals tabled under the programme were annexed to these letters.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-011390/12
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2012 m. gruodžio 13 d.)

Tema: Dėl direktyvų 2004/114/EB ir 2005/71/EB peržiūros

2004 m. buvo priimta Tarybos direktyva 2004/114/EB dėl trečiosios šalies piliečių įleidimo studijų, mokinių mainų, neatlygintino stažavimosi ar savanoriškos tarnybos tikslais sąlygų siekiant skatinti trečiosios šalies piliečius atvykti į Bendriją studijuoti, kad Europa taptų aukšto lygio studijų ir profesinio mokymo centru visame pasaulyje.

2005 m. buvo priimta Tarybos direktyva 2005/71/EB dėl konkrečios įleidimo trečiųjų šalių piliečiams atvykti mokslinių tyrimų tikslais tvarkos siekiant sustiprinti Europos mokslinių tyrimų politiką, nustatyti jos struktūrą ir iki 2010 m. tapti konkurencingiausia ir dinamiškiausia žiniomis pagrįsta ekonomika pasaulyje.

Strategijoje „Europa 2020“ ES patvirtino siekį užtikrinti pažangų ekonomikos augimą, kuris, be kita ko, apima ES veiklos rezultatų gerinimą mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų bei švietimo srityje.

Ar, atsižvelgdama į šiuos tikslus ir Lisabonos sutartį, Komisija planuoja artimiausiu metu siūlyti peržiūrėti minėtas dvi direktyvas?

C. Malmström atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. sausio 31 d.)

2011 m. Komisija pristatė Tarybos direktyvos 2004/114/EB dėl trečiosios šalies piliečių įleidimo studijų, mokinių mainų, neatlygintino stažavimosi ar savanoriškos tarnybos tikslais sąlygų ir Tarybos direktyvos 2005/71/EB dėl konkrečios įleidimo trečiųjų šalių piliečiams atvykti mokslinių tyrimų tikslais tvarkos įgyvendinimo ataskaitas. Ataskaitose nustatyta direktyvų trūkumų. Todėl artimiausiais mėnesiais Komisija pateiks direktyvos, kuria siekiama ištaisyti tuos trūkumus ir sujungti dvi minėtas direktyvas į vieną priemonę, pasiūlymą.

Pasiūlymu bus užtikrintos geresnės priėmimo sąlygos ir patobulintos bei geriau apibrėžtos teisės, taip pat užtikrintos geresnės procedūrinės garantijos. Pasiūlymu turėtų būti prisidedama prie to, kad ES būtų patrauklesnė aukštos kvalifikacijos asmenims, pavyzdžiui, studentams ir mokslininkams, siekiant strategijos „Europa 2020“ tikslų skatinami moksliniai tyrimai, technologinė plėtra ir inovacijos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011390/12
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: On the review of Directives 2004/114/EC and 2005/71/EC

Council Directive 2004/114/EC on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service was adopted in 2004 in order to promote the mobility of third-country nationals to the Community for the purpose of studies so that Europe becomes a world centre of excellence for studies and vocational training.

Council Directive 2005/71/EC on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research was adopted in 2005 in order to consolidate and give structure to European research policy, and make Europe become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010.

In the Europe 2020 strategy, the EU confirmed its objective of ensuring smart economic growth which includes, in particular, improving the EU's performance in the field of research, innovations and education.

Taking these goals and the Treaty of Lisbon into account, does the Commission plan to propose revising the two Directives mentioned in the near future?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

In 2011 the Commission presented implementation reports on Council Directive 2004/114/EC on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service and Council Directive 2005/71/EC on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research. The reports identified a number of weaknesses in the directives. As a consequence, the Commission will present in the coming months a proposal for a directive which aims at remedying these and merging the two Directives into a single instrument.

The proposal will provide for improved admission conditions, more advanced and better defined rights, as well as for better procedural guarantees. It should contribute to making the EU a more attractive destination for highly qualified individuals such as students and researchers, and stimulate research, development and innovative performance, in line with the objectives of EU 2020 strategy.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011391/12
do Komisji
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Gaz łupkowy – Raport Państwowego Instytutu Geologicznego (PIG)

Podczas listopadowej sesji plenarnej Parlament Europejski przyjął dwa raporty dotyczące gazu łupkowego. Głosowanie poprzedziła debata, w której Komisja potwierdziła, że do kalendarza prac na 2013 rok włączono inicjatywę, która ma zbadać skutki szczelinowania hydraulicznego na środowisko oraz zapewnić skuteczne zarządzanie ryzykiem.

1. Czy Komisja zapoznała się już z raportem Państwowego Instytutu Geologicznego pt. „Ocena oddziaływania na środowisko procesu szczelinowania hydraulicznego wykonanego w otworze Łebień LE-2H" z listopada 2011 r.?

2. Raport ten to jedyne jak na razie badanie wykonane w terenie i w oparciu o uwarunkowania geologiczne w UE. Czy w związku z tym w trakcie swoich prac nad wnioskiem przedstawiającym sposoby zarządzania ryzykiem Komisja weźmie pod uwagę konkluzje płynące z raportu przygotowanego przez Państwowy Instytut Geologiczny, czy ma zamiar czerpać swoje konkluzje jedynie z danych płynących spoza Europy?

3. Polska to kraj członkowski, który do tej pory ma największe doświadczenie w procesie poszukiwania gazu łupkowego. Wykonano już 33 odwierty, a proces szczelinowania hydraulicznego zastosowano w 9 odwiertach. Czy w związku z tym Komisja Europejska w trakcie przygotowania swoich konkluzji planuje badanie terenowe i wizyty na odwiertach w Polsce?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(4 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja zapoznała się z przeprowadzoną w 2011 r. przez Państwowy Instytut Geologiczny oceną procesu szczelinowania hydraulicznego prowadzonego w Polsce w miejscowości Łebień.

Komisja uprzejmie prosi Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytanie nr E-008337/2012 ([1]) wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie.

Komisja z pewnością weźmie pod uwagę sytuację, jaka ma miejsce w państwach członkowskich, jeśli chodzi o rozwój w zakresie niekonwencjonalnych paliw kopalnych, chociaż na obecnym etapie nie planuje wizyt na odwiertach poszukiwawczych gazu łupkowego. Zlecone przez Komisję badania uzupełniające stanowić będą wsparcie techniczne, społeczno-gospodarcze i prawne w związku z trwającą oceną skutków. W badaniach tych uczestniczyć będą eksperci o wieloletnim doświadczeniu w dziedzinie metod wydobycia paliw kopalnych i zarządzania ryzykiem przemysłowym. W ramach powołanej w ubiegłym roku technicznej grupy roboczej państw członkowskich prowadzone będą również dyskusje z właściwymi organami krajowymi. Konsultacje internetowe rozpoczęte przez Komisję w grudniu 2012 r. oraz planowana na pierwszy kwartał 2013 r. konferencja z udziałem zainteresowanych stron umożliwią dalszą wymianę wiedzy specjalistycznej i stanowić będą wkład w cały proces, o którym mowa.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011391/12
to the Commission
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Shale gas — report from the Polish Geological Institute (PGI)

During the November part-session, Parliament adopted two reports on shale gas. Voting was preceded by a debate during which the Commission confirmed that an initiative to study the environmental impact of hydraulic fracturing and to assure effective risk management had been included in its agenda for 2013.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the PGI's November 2011 report entitled 'environmental impact assessment of hydraulic fracturing carried out at the Łebień LE-2H well'?

2. This report is the only piece of research so far to have been carried out *in situ* and on the basis of geographical conditions in the EU. Will the Commission take into consideration the conclusions reached in the PGI report as it prepares its proposal on ways of managing risk, or does it intend to draw exclusively on conclusions reached on the basis data from outside Europe?

3. Poland is the Member State with the greatest experience to date of shale gas exploration.33 wells have already been drilled, and hydraulic fracturing has been carried out in ninewells. In this connection, does the Commission plan to carry out field research and visitsto wells in Poland as it prepares its conclusions?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

The Commission is familiar with the assessment conducted by the Polish Geological Institute for the hydraulic fracturing operation in Lebien, Poland, in 2011.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008337/2012 ([1]).

The Commission will definitely take into account the situation in Member States with regard to the development of unconventional fossil fuels, although it is not planning to visit shale gas exploration wells at this stage. It has commissioned complementary studies that will provide further technical, socioeconomic and legal support in the context of the ongoing impact assessment exercise and involve experts with long standing experience in the field of fossil fuels extraction practices and the management of industrial risks. Discussions will be pursued as well with competent national authorities within the Technical Working of Member States set up last year. The online consultation launched by the Commission in December 2012 and the stakeholders' conference planned in the first quarter of 2013 will allow for further exchange of expertise and input in the process.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011392/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Steuerabkommen zwischen Deutschland und der Schweiz

Ende November 2012 hat der deutsche Bundesrat ein geplantes Steuerabkommen mit der Schweiz abgelehnt. Mit dem Abkommen wäre von deutschen Bürgern in der Schweiz gebunkertes Schwarzgeld rückwirkend, jedoch anonym, pauschal versteuert worden. Nach dem Scheitern wird von verschiedenen Seiten vorgeschlagen, einen automatischen Informationsaustausch der Banken mit den Herkunftsländern der Bankkunden als Alternative einzurichten.

1. Welche Haltung vertritt die Kommission bezüglich des geplanten Steuerabkommens zwischen Deutschland und der Schweiz?

2. Sieht die Kommission in dem vorgeschlagenen automatischen Informationsaustausch eine adäquate Möglichkeit, Steuerstreitigkeiten zukünftig zu vermeiden?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(31. Januar 2013)

Den Mitgliedstaaten steht es grundsätzlich frei, internationale Abkommen zu schließen, sofern dabei sowohl die Rechtsvorschriften wie die Zuständigkeiten der EU respektiert werden. In ihrer Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge hat die Kommission das vorgeschlagene Abkommen zwischen Deutschland und der Schweiz geprüft und auf einige Aspekte hingewiesen, die bedenklich erschienen. Das Abkommen wurde entsprechend geändert. In der Folge hat die deutsche Volksvertretung die in der Anfrage erwähnte Haltung eingenommen.

Das von der Kommission bevorzugte Konzept zur Gewährleistung einer ordnungsgemäßen Besteuerung von Zinserträgen, die im Ausland und damit auch der Schweiz anfallen, ist allgemein bekannt. Die Kommission tritt dafür ein, mit den betreffenden Drittländern EU-Abkommen zu schließen, die für alle 27 Mitgliedstaaten von Nutzen sind. Solche Abkommen sind besser als bilaterale zwischenstaatliche Abkommen, die mit komplexen Investmentstrukturen, die in verschiedenen Rechtsordnungen angesiedelt sind, umgangen werden können. Zudem bevorzugt die Kommission die automatische Auskunftserteilung nach der allgemeinen Vorschrift der Richtlinie 2003/48/EG („Zinsbesteuerungsrichtlinie"). Die Kommission wird daher weiter für eine EU-weite Anwendung dieses Standards eintreten und alles tun, um zu gewährleisten, dass gegenüber benachbarten Drittländern, auch der Schweiz, möglichst gleichwertige Standards gelten.

Die Kommission hofft, dass die zunehmenden haushaltspolitischen Konsolidierungsanstrengungen in den Mitgliedstaaten die Aufmerksamkeit wieder darauf lenken werden, dass sich die Mitgliedstaaten im Rat auf Nachbesserungen bei der Zinsbesteuerungsrichtlinie einigen müssen und es außerdem eines Verhandlungsmandats für Nachbesserungen bei den von der EU mit der Schweiz und anderen Nachbarstaaten geschlossenen Zinsbesteuerungsabkommen ([1]) bedarf.

([1]) Für die bestehenden Abkommen zwischen der EU und den betreffenden Ländern („Zinsbesteuerungsabkommen") siehe ABl. L 359 vom 4.12.2004, S. 33 (Andorra); ABl. L 379 vom 24.12.2004, S. 84 (Liechtenstein); ABl. L 381 vom 28.12.2004, S. 33 (San Marino); ABl. L 385 vom 29.12.2004, S. 30 (Schweiz); ABl. L 19 vom 21.1.2005, S. 55 (Monaco).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011392/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Tax agreement between Germany and Switzerland

At the end of November 2012, the German Bundesrat rejected a planned tax agreement with Switzerland. The agreement would have meant that black money held in Switzerland and belonging to German citizens would be subject to retrospective, flat-rate taxation, but on an anonymous basis. Following this failure, various parties have suggested establishing an alternative arrangement involving the automatic exchange of information between the banks and the countries of origin of the bank customers.

1. What is the Commission's view of the planned tax agreement between Germany and Switzerland?

2. Does the commission believe that the proposed automatic exchange of information is an appropriate way to avoid tax disputes in the future?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

Member States are in principle free to enter into international agreements, provided such agreements comply with EC law, including in regard to EU competences. In its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission examined the proposed agreement between Germany and Switzerland and identified certain aspects which were of concern. The agreement was amended accordingly. Subsequently, the German Parliament adopted its position, as set out in the question.

The approach favoured by the Commission to ensure proper taxation of savings held abroad, including in Switzerland, is well known. The Commission favours EU agreements with the third countries concerned, benefitting all 27 Member States. Such an approach is better than bilateral agreements between states, which can be circumvented by complex investment structures involving multiple jurisdictions. The Commission also favours automatic exchange of information in line with the general rule set out in Directive 2003/48/EC ('Savings Taxation Directive'). The Commission will continue to promote the application of that standard across the EU and to ensure, as far as possible, that equivalent standards apply in the relationship with neighbouring third countries, including Switzerland.

The Commission hopes that the increasing fiscal consolidation efforts in the Member States will refocus attention on the need for Member States in Council to agree on improvements to the Savings Taxation Directive and, in parallel, a negotiating mandate for improvements to the EU Savings Taxation Agreements concluded with Switzerland and other states neighbouring the EU ([1]).

([1]) For the existing agreements between the EU and these countries ('Savings Taxation Agreements'), cf. OJ L 359, 4.12.2004, p. 33 (Andorra); OJ L 379, 24.12.2004, p. 84 (Liechtenstein); OJ L 381, 28.12.2004, p. 33 (San Marino); OJ L 385, 29.12.2004, p. 30 (Switzerland); OJ L 19, 21.1.2005, p. 55 (Monaco).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011393/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Steuerabkommen der Schweiz mit EU-Mitgliedstaaten

Ende November 2012 hat der deutsche Bundesrat ein geplantes Steuerabkommen mit der Schweiz abgelehnt. Mit dem Abkommen wäre von deutschen Bürgern in der Schweiz gebunkertes Schwarzgeld rückwirkend, jedoch anonym, pauschal versteuert worden. Medienberichten zufolge möchte die Schweiz trotz des ablehnenden Votums aus Deutschland bereits im Jahr 2013 vergleichbare Abkommen mit Großbritannien und Österreich abschließen.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob die Schweiz noch an weitere Länder herangetreten ist, um derartige Steuerabkommen abzuschließen?

2. Sieht die Kommission in den möglichen bilateralen Steuerabkommen die Gefahr, Steuerhinterziehung nachträglich zu legitimieren?

3. Welche Anstrengungen unternimmt die Kommission, um in der Frage von in der Schweiz gebunkertem Geld eine europäische Lösung herbeizuführen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(14. Februar 2013)

Vergleichbare Steuerabkommen hat die Schweiz mit dem Vereinigten Königreich und Österreich im Oktober 2011 bzw. April 2012 abgeschlossen. Beide Abkommen werden 2013 wirksam. Sie regeln nicht nur die Erhebung von Quellensteuer auf bestimmte heutige und künftige Einkommensströme, sondern sehen auch einen Mechanismus vor, durch den bestimmte Vermögenswerte, die in der Vergangenheit nicht angemeldet und nicht besteuert wurden, einer regulären Besteuerung zugeführt werden. Sofern die betreffenden Mitgliedstaaten das EU-Recht einhalten, ist es Sache dieser Mitgliedstaaten und nicht der Kommission zu beurteilen, inwieweit diese Abkommen Steuerhinterziehung möglicherweise nachträglich legitimieren.

Die Schweiz hat bekanntgegeben, dass sie derzeit in Verhandlungen mit Griechenland und Italien über vergleichbare Abkommen steht. Diesen und den übrigen Mitgliedstaaten hat die Kommission schriftlich mitgeteilt, welche Parameter zu beachten sind, damit gewährleistet ist, dass bei derartigen Abkommen die Rechtsvorschriften und Zuständigkeiten der EU respektiert werden. Die Kommission wird aufmerksam verfolgen, wie jedes tatsächlich abgeschlossene Abkommen dieser Art angewendet wird, und prüfen, ob es den genannten Kriterien entspricht.

Die Kommission tritt zur Gewährleistung einer ordnungsgemäßen Besteuerung von im Ausland anfallenden Zinserträgen weiter für einen Ansatz auf EU-Ebene ein, da dies für alle Mitgliedstaaten potenziell den größten Nutzen haben würde. Grundlagen dieses Ansatzes sind die automatische Auskunftserteilung zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten und auf EU-Ebene abgeschlossene Abkommen mit Nicht-EU-Ländern über vergleichbare Maßnahmen. Weitere Angaben hierzu enthält die Antwort auf die Anfrage E-011392/2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011393/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Tax agreements between Switzerland and EU Member States

At the end of November 2012, the German Bundesrat rejected a planned tax agreement with Switzerland. The agreement would have meant that black money held in Switzerland and belonging to German citizens would be subject to retrospective, flat-rate taxation, but on an anonymous basis. According to reports in the media, Switzerland intends to enter into similar agreements with the United Kingdom and Austria in 2013, despite the no vote in Germany.

1. Is the Commission aware of any other countries being approached by Switzerland to enter into such tax agreements?

2. Does the Commission believe that there is a danger that these prospective bilateral tax agreements will give retrospective legitimacy to tax evasion?

3. What is the Commission doing to find a European solution to the issue of money stashed away in Switzerland?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

In October 2011 and April 2012, tax agreements, similar to the one referred to, were signed by Switzerland with the United Kingdom and Austria, respectively. Both agreements become operable in 2013. As well as imposing withholding taxes on certain present and future income streams, the agreements provide a mechanism for regularising the taxation of certain previously undeclared and untaxed assets. Provided that the Member States concerned respect EC law, it is for those Member States, and not for the Commission, to judge the extent to which these agreements may or may not retrospectively legitimise tax evasion,

Switzerland has announced that it is conducting negotiations with Greece and Italy on similar agreements. These and the other Member States have been informed in writing by the Commission about the parameters to be respected in order to ensure that any such agreements respect EC law and competences. The Commission will closely follow the implementation of any agreement of this kind which is actually concluded with a view to checking that it is in line with such parameters.

The Commission continues to promote an EU approach to ensure proper taxation of savings held abroad, since this would bring greatest potential benefits to all Member States. This approach is based on automatic exchange of information between Member states and EU-level agreements on equivalent measures with non-EU countries. Further comments can be found in Question E-011392/2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011394/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Insolvenzen im Printmedienbereich

Mit der „Frankfurter Rundschau", der „Nürnberger Abendzeitung" und der „Financial Times Deutschland" sind allein in Deutschland im 2. Halbjahr 2012 bereits drei überregionale Zeitungen eingestellt worden. Auch die Nachrichtenagentur „dapd" hat Insolvenz angemeldet, und auch beim Nachrichtenmagazin „Der Spiegel" und beim „Berliner Verlag" müssen Medienberichten zufolge Einsparungen vorgenommen werden. In Österreich haben die Tageszeitungen „Kurier", „Die Presse", das „Wirtschaftsblatt" und „Der Standard" ebenfalls Sparmaßnahmen angekündigt.

1. Sind der Kommission ähnliche Entwicklungen in anderen Staaten der Europäischen Union bekannt? Wenn ja, welche Insolvenzen gab es im Printmedienbereich in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten im Jahr 2012?

2. Sieht die Kommission in den Insolvenzen eine Gefahr für die Heterogenität der Presselandschaft oder die öffentliche Meinungsbildung?

3. Verfolgt die Kommission eine kohärente Strategie, um europäische Printmedien zu unterstützen?

4. Sieht die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund der bisherigen Insolvenzen eine Gefahr, dass es im Printmedienbereich eine EU-weite Pleitewelle geben könnte?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(11. Februar 2013)

1. Die Kommission ist sich der finanziellen Schwierigkeiten bewusst, mit denen der Printmediensektor in der EU konfrontiert ist. Insolvenzen in diesem Sektor überwacht die Kommission jedoch nicht.

2. Angesichts der wirtschaftlichen Bedeutung der Medien und der großen technologischen Herausforderungen des Sektors hat die für die Digitale Agenda zuständige Vizepräsidentin der Kommission das EU-Forum zur Zukunft der Medien ins Leben gerufen, das Folgerungen und Empfehlungen zur Zukunft der Medienbranche in Europa vorgelegt hat. Ferner verfolgt die Kommission auch die Entwicklungen in den Bereichen Medienfreiheit und -pluralismus genau. Dazu hat sie das Zentrum für Medienpluralismus und -freiheit des Europäischen Hochschulinstituts beauftragt, den Umfang der EU-Zuständigkeiten in den Bereichen Medienfreiheit und -pluralismus zu analysieren. Der Bericht soll im Februar 2013 veröffentlicht werden. Daneben hat die Kommission eine hochrangige Gruppe unter dem Vorsitz der früheren lettischen Präsidentin Prof. Vike-Freiberga eingesetzt, die die zugrunde liegenden Fragen analysiert und die Kommission dazu berät. Die Empfehlungen der Gruppe wurden am 21. Januar 2013 veröffentlicht. Die Kommission prüft sie derzeit.

3. Es steht den Mitgliedstaaten frei, Printmedien zu unterstützen, sofern sie dabei die beihilferechtlichen Vorschriften des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union einhalten.

4. Durch die digitale Revolution ändert sich derzeit auch die europäische Medienlandschaft. Die Kommission beabsichtigt, die Medienbranche bei der Ermittlung der Risiken und Chancen neuer Geschäftsmodelle zu unterstützen, etwa durch das vorstehend genannte EU-Forum zur Zukunft der Medien. Daneben hat auch die Gemeinsame Forschungsstelle 2012 mehrere Studien zur Situation der Medienbranche, unter anderem in Bezug auf die Zeitungsindustrie, veröffentlicht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011394/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Insolvencies in the print media sector

In the second half of 2012, three national newspapers, the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, the *Nürnberger Abendzeitung* and the *Financial Times Deutschland* have been closed down in Germany alone. The 'DAPD' news agency has also filed for bankruptcy and media reports suggest that cuts have been made at current affairs magazine Der Spiegel and at newspaper and magazine publishers *Berliner Verlag*. Austrian daily newspapers *Kurier*, *Die Presse*, *Wirtschaftsblatt* and *Der Standard* have also announced costcutting measures.

1. Is the Commission aware of similar developments in other Member States of the European Union? If so, what insolvencies have occurred in the print media sector in EU Member States in 2012?

2. Does the Commission regard these insolvencies as a threat to the heterogeneous nature of the press or the shaping of public opinion?

3. Is the Commission pursuing a coherent strategy aimed at supporting European print media?

4. In the light of the insolvencies to date, does the Commission believe there is a danger of a wave of bankruptcies across Europe in the print media sector?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the financial difficulties facing the print media sector in the EU. However, the Commission does not monitor insolvencies occurring in the sector.

2. To reflect on the economic importance of the media and the major technological challenges the Vice-President and Member of the Commission responsible for Digital Agenda has established the EU Media Futures Forum, which presented its conclusions and recommendations on the futures of media industries in Europe. Also the Commission closely follows the situation of media freedom and media pluralism. The Commission has entrusted the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom of the European University Institute to conduct an analysis on the scope of EU competences in the field of media freedom and media pluralism. The policy report is to be published in February 2013. Also, the Commission has set up a High Level Group chaired by Prof. Vike-Freiberga, former President of Latvia, to reflect and advise on the underlying issues. The recommendations of the group were published on 21 January 2013. The Commission is currently assessing it.

3. It is up to the Member States to take decisions on the support of printed press, taking into account the rules on state aid in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

4. The media landscape in Europe is currently changing due to digital revolution. The Commission would like to assist media sector in identifying risks and opportunities related to the emergence of new business models, for instance through the abovementioned EU Media Futures Forum. Also, Joint Research Centre has published in 2012 several studies on the situation of media sector, including also on the situation of the newspaper publishing industry.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011395/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Possibile nesso tra prospezione di gas di scisto e terremoti

Quest'anno si è data molta attenzione alle prospettive future del gas di scisto, nonché ai vantaggi che questa risorsa naturale potrebbe portare all'UE in termini di riserve energetiche e di entrate. Tuttavia, in tutto il mondo si sono trovati nessi tra prospezione di gas di scisto ed eventi sismici.

L'anno scorso nell'Inghilterra nord occidentale le trivellazioni per l'estrazione del gas di scisto sono state interrotte in quanto l'operatore, Cuadrilla, ha riferito che il procedimento di «fracking» (fratturazione idraulica indotta) utilizzato aveva causato due piccoli terremoti. In un caso, quest'anno, e in altri tre negli Stati Uniti lo scorso anno, le autorità di regolamentazione o gli scienziati hanno potuto rintracciare un nesso tra l'attività sismica e il fracking o lo smaltimento di acque salmastre e reflue inquinate tramite iniezione nel sottosuolo.

C'è stato molto scetticismo sulla questione, con molte relazioni che dicono che i terremoti causati dal fracking sono troppo ridotti per essere motivo di preoccupazione. Tuttavia, dato che alcuni Stati membri sono notevolmente soggetti ad attività sismica — ne è un esempio il terremoto 2012 in Emilia Romagna, nel nord Italia, che è stato seguito da 800 scosse di assestamento — una pratica potenzialmente causa di altri terremoti può essere rischiosa.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dei suddetti esempi nel Regno Unito e negli Stati Uniti, in cui si è trovato che il fracking abbia causato eventi sismici? In caso affermativo, quali conclusioni ha tratto da questi incidenti?

2. La Commissione ha condotto una qualche analisi del potenziale nesso tra attività sismica e processo di fracking? In caso affermativo, quali sono le sue conclusioni? In caso contrario, la Commissione intende approfondire la questione, dati gli elevati livelli di attività sismica in taluni Stati membri?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(14 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei casi menzionati e presenta una relazione in materia. Uno studio, svolto a nome della Commissione europea nel 2012 ([1]), sui rischi provocati dalle operazioni di estrazione del gas di scisto attraverso la fratturazione idraulica, ha rilevato che:

(i) lo stesso processo di fratturazione idraulica può generare in determinate circostanze leggeri eventi sismici che possono arrivare fino alla magnitudo 3 della scala Richter, i quali non sono generalmente percepibili né causano danni strutturali in superficie;

(ii) l'iniezione nel sottosuolo di acque reflue a fini di smaltimento, come avvenuto negli Stati Uniti, potrebbe portare ad attività sismiche più consistenti, potenzialmente percepibili a livello del suolo. Il quadro normativo vigente dell'UE vieta quest'operazione. Le acque reflue devono essere trattate secondo le disposizioni dell'UE relative alla gestione dei rifiuti delle industrie estrattive ([2]).

Nel contesto della sua iniziativa del 2013, la Commissione analizzerà ulteriormente misure per prevenire, ridurre e gestire i rischi, tra cui l'eventuale sismicità indotta. Tale iniziativa intende fornire un quadro per l'estrazione sicura e stabile degli idrocarburi non convenzionali di cui si sta valutando l'impatto.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/pdf/fracking%20study.pdf
([2]) Direttiva 2006/21/CE del 15 marzo 2006 relativa alla gestione dei rifiuti delle industrie estrattive e che modifica la direttiva 2004/35/CE (GU L 102 dell'11.4.2006, pag.15). Per più ampi riferimenti si veda la valutazione giuridica della Commissione sul quadro normativo ambientale dell'UE in materia di operazioni relative al gas di scisto: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/pdf/legal_assessment.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011395/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Possible link between shale gas exploration and earthquakes

This year much attention has been given to the future prospects of shale gas and to the benefits this natural resource could bring the EU in terms of energy reserves and revenue. However, links have been found around the world between shale gas exploration and earthquakes.

Last year in northwest England, drilling for shale gas was halted as the operator, Cuadrilla, reported that the 'fracking' (induced hydraulic fracturing) process used had caused two small earthquakes. In one instance this year, and in three others in the United States last year, regulators or scientists could trace links between seismic activity and either fracking or the disposal of briny and polluted fracking wastewater through underground injection.

There has been much scepticism about this issue, with many reports saying that the earthquakes caused by fracking are too small to cause concern. However, given that some Member States are prone to seismic activity — such as the 2012 earthquake in Emilia-Romagna, in northern Italy, which was followed by 800 aftershocks — a practice that has the potential to cause more earthquakes may be risky.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is the Commission aware of the aforementioned instances in the UK and the US, in which fracking was found to have caused earthquakes? If so, what conclusions has it drawn from these incidents?

2. Has the Commission conducted any analysis of the potential relationship between seismic activity and the process of fracking? If so, what are its conclusions? If not, does the Commission intend to investigate the matter further, given the high levels of seismic activity in some Member States?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the aforementioned instances and reports on this matter. An analysis of the risks arising from shale gas operations involving hydraulic fracturing, conducted on behalf of the European Commission in 2012 ([1]), has found that:

(i) the hydraulic fracturing process itself can under some circumstances give rise to minor earth tremors up to a magnitude of 3 on the Richter Scale, which would not generally be at the level to be perceived by the public or to cause surface structural damage; and

(ii) the injection of waste water underground for the purpose of disposal, as experienced in the US, could lead to more significant underground movements, which can potentially be felt at ground level. This practice is prohibited under the applicable EU regulatory framework. Waste water must be treated according to the EU provisions on the management of waste from extractive industries. ([2])

Measures to prevent, reduce and manage risks, including of possible induced seismicity, will be further looked at by the Commission in the context of its 2013 initiative, aiming at delivering a framework for the safe and secure extraction of unconventional hydrocarbons, currently subject to an impact assessment.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/pdf/fracking%20study.pdf
([2]) Directive 2006/21/EC of 15 March 2006 on the management of waste from extractive industries and amending Directive 2004/35/EC (OJ L 102, 11.4.2006, p. 15). For more information, please refer to the Commission's legal assessment of the EU environmental legislative framework applying to shale gas practices: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/energy/pdf/legal_assessment.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011396/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Corruzione, un ostacolo ai diritti delle donne in Afghanistan

Questa settimana, il tema della corruzione è di nuovo sotto i riflettori in Afghanistan. Una giornalista afghana di 22 anni, che voleva divorziare dal marito, ha segretamente registrato la sua conversazione con un giudice afghano, in cui quest'ultimo chiedeva una tangente di 2000 dollari, o la sua mano in matrimonio, in cambio del suo aiuto nella causa di divorzio. Per sicurezza la giornalista si è ora nascosta in una casa sicura a Kabul. La corruzione è diventata parte della cultura politica attiva in Afghanistan, ed impedisce al paese di andare avanti verso una società più libera e più egualitaria.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del caso di questa giovane giornalista? Qual è la sua posizione in merito alle azioni del giudice in questione?

2. Nella valutazione della Commissione, quanto è diffusa la corruzione nel sistema giudiziario in Afghanistan? Quali ne sono gli aspetti più preoccupanti?

3. Come sta lavorando la Commissione nello specifico per combattere la corruzione in Afghanistan, considerato che se la corruzione è un ostacolo per la società afghana, sarà anche un ostacolo agli sforzi dell'UE per promuovere lo sviluppo e il buon governo in Afghanistan?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è al corrente di questa situazione e accoglie favorevolmente la decisione delle autorità afgane di intraprendere un'indagine seria al riguardo. La corruzione in tutte le sue forme rappresenta ancora un grave ostacolo al miglioramento dei metodi di governo in Afghanistan, in particolare del sistema giudiziario, mentre gli abusi nei confronti delle donne costituiscono un problema a livello mondiale contro il quale ci impegniamo a combattere.

L'accordo di Tokyo sul quadro di responsabilità reciproca definisce dettagliatamente da una parte gli impegni delle autorità afgane, dall'altra quelli della comunità internazionale. Tra i vari punti trattati, sottolinea la necessità di migliorare l'accesso alla giustizia per tutti, in particolar modo per le donne. Sulla stessa linea, nell'accordo di cooperazione in fase di negoziazione tra UE e Afghanistan le misure volte a migliorare la condizione femminile e a combattere la corruzione avranno un ruolo di rilievo.

L'Unione europea continuerà a fare pressione sulle autorità afgane affinché rispettino tutti gli impegni previsti dall'accordo di Tokyo. Un approccio sostenibile per affrontare questi problemi deve concentrarsi su un cambiamento sistemico più a lungo termine che promuova nuovi atteggiamenti e metodi all'interno dell'amministrazione afgana. In quest'ottica la riforma del settore giudiziario è essenziale. L'UE ritiene che i progressi al riguardo siano lenti, e non intende appoggiare l'Afghanistan in questo ambito fino a che il governo non approverà il decisivo piano di priorità nazionale «Giustizia per tutti». Parallelamente, la missione di polizia dell'UE si concentra, tra l'altro, sull'assistenza ai rapporti tra la polizia giudiziaria e quella civile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011396/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Corruption a barrier to women's rights in Afghanistan

This week the issue of corruption has again come under the spotlight in Afghanistan. A 22-year-old Afghan woman journalist seeking to divorce her husband secretly taped her conversation with an Afghan judge in which he demanded a USD 2 000 bribe or her hand in marriage in exchange for his help in her divorce case. For her own safety she is now hiding in a safe house in Kabul. Corruption has become part of the working political culture in Afghanistan, and it is holding the country back from moving forward into a freer and more equal society.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is the Commission aware of the case of this young journalist? What is its stance on the actions of the judge in question?

2. In the Commission's assessment, how widespread is corruption in the judicial system in Afghanistan? What aspects of it are the most concerning?

3. How, specifically, is the Commission working to fight corruption in Afghanistan, considering that if corruption is a barrier for Afghan society, it will also be a barrier to EU efforts to promote development and good governance in Afghanistan?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case in question and welcomes the decision by the Afghan authorities to launch a serious investigation into it. Corruption, in all its forms, remains a serious challenge for improving governance in Afghanistan, including in the judiciary, while the abuse of women is a worldwide problem which we are committed to tackling.

The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework Agreement defines detailed commitments for both the Afghan authorities and the international community. Among other areas, it stresses the need to improve access to justice for all, in particular for women. In the same vein, measures to improve the treatment of women and to combat corruption will figure prominently in the future EU-Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement which is currently being negotiated.

The European Union will continue to press the Afghan authorities to implement the Tokyo commitments in full. A sustainable approach addressing these problems needs to focus on systemic change in a longer term perspective, promoting new attitudes and approaches within the Afghan administration. The reform of the justice sector is instrumental in this regard. The EU finds that progress in this field has been slow, and it has withheld its support to Afghanistan in this area until the Government endorses the crucial National Priority Plan 'Justice for All'. In parallel, the EU's police mission is targeting its assistance on, inter alia, links between the judiciary and the civilian police.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011397/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Agevolazioni fiscali per le imprese in regola: nuove prospettive per la lotta contro la corruzione

Le imprese sono la spina dorsale di ogni economia. Tuttavia, esse subiscono oggi la concorrenza sleale di quelle imprese che praticano l'evasione fiscale e assumono manodopera in nero. Dall'evasione fiscale in sé scaturisce, di fatto, un concreto pericolo di alterazione degli assetti economico-finanziari in quanto falsa i naturali meccanismi di concorrenza del mercato. Le «unfair business practices» determinano gravissimi effetti di distorsione nelle dinamiche dei mercati legali proprio a causa della lesione del principio della concorrenza da esso implicato.

Al fine di compensare l'elevato tasso di evasione fiscale e per fronteggiare l'enorme dispersione di denaro pubblico per fenomeni di corruzione, in Italia il livello della pressione fiscale è ormai diventato insostenibile. Una recente inchiesta descrive l'evasione fiscale in Italia come una voragine da 138 miliardi di euro: tali dati hanno messo in crisi la competitività del sistema. Le prospettive di sviluppo delle aziende sono messe a repentaglio da un livello di tassazione che le depatrimonializza e le svuota dall'interno. Non si tratta soltanto di contrastare l'evasione e di pagare le tasse. Occorrerebbe, infatti, creare le condizioni per restituire competitività alle economie in sofferenza.

La libertà di concorrenza costituisce uno dei pilastri dell'UE con il suo indubbio valore sociale, perché — da un lato — consente ai consumatori di conseguire, attraverso la lotta che gli imprenditori si fanno, le migliori condizioni possibili sia di prezzo che di qualità dei prodotti e dei servizi, e — dall'altro lato — incentiva sviluppo e innovazione. La BCE ha finora finanziato in più occasioni le banche europee, ma il reale interrogativo rimane quello di capire perché tali risorse di liquidità vengano destinate alle banche e non impiegate per finanziare direttamente i piccoli e medi consumatori: dalle famiglie alle PMI.

Impresa e mercato, le due figure istituzionali del sistema economico non esistono se accanto a loro non c'è il («diritto per l'economia») secondo una definizione ormai entrata nel linguaggio tecnico. Recentemente è stata elaborata dalla Commissione europea una proposta di direttiva per la tutela degli interessi finanziari dell'UE che prevede sanzioni penali per i trasgressori responsabili di frode e di altre illecite attività. Come può ben vedersi, ancora una volta, si mira alla tutela degli interessi finanziari dell'UE attraverso strumenti dissuasivi e repressivi.

Può la Commissione esplicitare:

1. se non debbano predisporsi meccanismi incentivanti quali potrebbero essere le agevolazioni fiscali a vantaggio degli operatori economici che, nel breve — lungo periodo, dimostrino di essere in regola soprattutto con i loro adempimenti fiscali;

2. se sia più opportuno ripensare la regolamentazione del mercato, premiando gli imprenditori «virtuosi» e restituendo competitività al sistema economico?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione sostiene la necessità di aumentare la competitività delle imprese europee e di combattere la frode e l'evasione fiscale così come le pratiche fiscali dannose. Il 6 dicembre 2012 la Commissione ha adottato un piano d'azione ([1]) dettagliato per rafforzare la lotta alla frode fiscale e all'evasione fiscale insieme a due raccomandazioni sulla pianificazione fiscale aggressiva e sulla promozione della buona *governance* in materia fiscale.

Il piano d'azione contiene misure volte a combattere la frode e l'evasione fiscale oltre a disposizioni che intendono promuovere l'adempimento spontaneo degli obblighi tributari e migliorare l'amministrazione fiscale. Le misure proposte, tra cui figura un codice europeo del contribuente, uno sportello unico e un portale web che permetterebbe di accedere facilmente ad informazioni utili per i contribuenti, contribuirebbero a migliorare l'equità dei sistemi fiscali e allo stesso tempo a rafforzare la competitività.

([1]) COM(2012)722 definitivo.

Inoltre, la Commissione fa riferimento alla proposta della base imponibile consolidata comune per l'imposta sulle società (CCCTB), che intende ridurre considerevolmente gli oneri amministrativi, i costi di messa in conformità e le incertezze giuridiche a cui sono confrontate le imprese europee nel doversi conformare a 27 diversi sistemi nazionali per calcolare gli utili imponibili. La CCCTB non solo aumenterà la competitività all'interno dell'UE ma renderà più trasparente la reale situazione dell'imposta sulla società negli Stati membri, creando così una concorrenza fiscale più equa all'interno dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011397/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Tax benefits for compliant businesses: new measures for combating corruption

Businesses are the backbone of every economy. However, businesses are currently experiencing fierce competition from companies that avoid paying their taxes and use the black labour market. Tax evasion in fact gives rise to a real danger by upsetting economic and financial stability since it distorts the natural mechanisms governing competition in the marketplace. Unfair business practices can have extremely serious effects. They distort the dynamics of the legal markets precisely by damaging the principle of competition.

The level of tax pressure in Italy has now become unsustainable due to efforts to tackle the high level of tax evasion and contend with the incredible amount of public money wasted on corruption. A recent inquiry describes tax evasion in Italy as a black hole that has swallowed up EUR 138 billion. This has created severe problems in the system's competitiveness. Companies' development prospects are being put in jeopardy by a level of taxation which is causing them to relocate and is stripping them of their assets. This is not merely a question of combating tax evasion and paying taxes. We need to create the conditions to stimulate competitiveness within the economies that are suffering.

Freedom of competition is one of the pillars of the European Union with an unquestionable social value, because, firstly, when businesses compete with one another, it allows consumers to obtain the best possible conditions in terms of the price and quality of products and services and, secondly, it fosters development and innovation. So far, the European Central Bank has funded European banks on several occasions, but there is still the question of understanding why this liquidity is destined for banks and not used to fund small and medium-sized consumers directly: from families to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Enterprise and the market: the two institutional elements of the economy do not exist without the 'law governing the economy' according to a definition that has now entered into technical parlance. The European Commission recently drew up a proposal for a directive to safeguard the EU's financial interests which provides for criminal sanctions for those who commit fraud and are involved in other illegal activities. It is clear that, once again, the aim is to protect the EU's financial interests by using dissuasive and repressive instruments.

Can the Commission clarify:

1. whether incentives should be put in place, such as tax benefits in favour of economic operators who, over the short or long term, show that they are in order, particularly in terms of their tax arrangements;

2. whether it might be more appropriate to reconsider the regulation of the market, rewarding virtuous businessmen and women and boosting competition in the economy?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission supports the need to boost the competitiveness of EU business and to combat tax fraud and evasion and harmful tax practices. On 6 December 2012 the Commission adopted a detailed Action Plan ([1]) to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion together with two recommendations on aggressive tax planning and promotion of good governance on tax matters.

The action plan contains measures aimed at combating tax fraud and tax evasion in addition to measures aimed at enhancing voluntary tax compliance and improving tax administration. These proposed measures, which include a European taxpayer's code, one-stop shops and web-portals which provide easy access to the relevant information for taxpayers, contribute to improving the fairness of tax systems as well as strengthening competitiveness.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final.

Furthermore, the Commission also refers to the proposed Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), which aims to significantly reduce the administrative burden, compliance costs and legal uncertainties that businesses in the EU currently face in having to comply with up to 27 different national systems for determining their taxable profits. The CCCTB will not only boost EU competitiveness but also create more transparency with regard to the effective corporate tax situation in Member States, thus creating fairer tax competition within the EU.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011398/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Alterazione della flora batterica intestinale e patologie correlate

La metagenomica è la scienza che si occupa dell'analisi del genoma di tutti i microrganismi presenti nell'organismo. Questa scienza studia in particolare il metagenoma batterico, una comunità batterica che contiene al suo interno un enorme numero di geni oltre al genoma dell'ospite. Basti pensare che il corpo umano contiene dieci volte più cellule batteriche rispetto alle cellule normali.

Un recente studio ha dimostrato che un'alterazione della flora batterica o microbiota intestinale sarebbe la causa di patologie come l'aterosclerosi sintomatica ed eventi cardiocircolatori; infatti, è stato riscontrato che nei pazienti affetti da ictus era presente un'alterazione del microbiota. L'aterosclerosi è un'infiammazione cronica delle arterie, che al loro interno sono rivestite da pericolose placche di grassi, proteine e fibre che possono essere la causa scatenante di gravi eventi cardiocircolatori, come infarto del miocardio, angina pectoris e ictus. All'origine di questa patologia si avvalorano fattori come dieta scorretta, sedentarietà e stress. I ricercatori, partendo dall'ipotesi che molte malattie sono collegate alle modifiche del metagenoma, hanno dimostrato che è proprio il metagenoma batterico intestinale a essere correlato con aterosclerosi e quindi ictus. Infatti, nei pazienti colpiti da ictus, vi è un'alterazione del microbiota, e nei soggetti sani si trovano in maggior numero i geni necessari per la produzione di carotenoidi.

Le malattie cardiovascolari sono la principale causa di decesso: i servizi di sanità curano soprattutto patologie di questo tipo e la prevenzione è l'unica possibilità per ridurre in futuro il numero di pazienti, orientandoli verso uno stile di vita salutare (alimentazione corretta e attività sportiva). L'esame della microflora batterica di un paziente potrebbe inoltre permettere di sviluppare previsioni di rischio per le malattie cardiovascolari e l'assunzione di probiotici potrebbe favorire un corretto sviluppo della flora batterica.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può dire la Commissione se intende promuovere linee guida per orientare il cittadino verso un miglior stile di vita e finanziare programmi di ricerca che possano concentrarsi nello studio di nuovi probiotici specifici per la prevenzione di malattie cardiovascolari, a tutela della salute di tutti i cittadini in un'ottica di Europa 2020?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione ha sviluppato diverse azioni per incoraggiare stili di vita sani, in particolare un'alimentazione sana. A partire dal 2007 la Commissione ha promosso l'azione dell'UE volta a incoraggiare l'attività fisica e a promuovere un'alimentazione sana, come indicato nella strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([1]).

La strategia è attuata attraverso il Gruppo ad alto livello sulla nutrizione e l'attività fisica ([2]) e la Piattaforma d'azione europea per l'alimentazione, l'attività fisica e la salute ([3]). Nell'ambito del Gruppo ad alto livello la Commissione opera a stretto contatto con gli Stati membri su tematiche quali la riformulazione degli alimenti. Nella Piattaforma UE la Commissione incoraggia gli stakeholder dell'UE a impegnarsi a condurre azioni concrete in tema di alimentazione e di attività fisica. Negli ultimi sette anni ciò ha prodotto più di 300 impegni che sono reperibili nella base dati della Piattaforma. La Commissione non intende pubblicare nuove linee guida nel merito.

Per quanto concerne le azioni imperniate specificamente sui batteri intestinali, nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca dell'UE (FP7) è stato finanziato un progetto su ampia scala, il progetto MetaHIT, con una dotazione di 11,4 milioni di euro per caratterizzare più di 3,9 milioni di geni dei batteri intestinali e esaminare la loro funzione sulla salute e l'insorgenza delle malattie. L'ultimo invito a progetti nell'ambito della salute pubblicato da FP7 comprendeva tra le sue tematiche «metagenomica per applicazioni mediche personalizzate». Il progetto di ricerca unionale TORNADO «Molecular Targets Open for Regulation by the gut flora — New Avenues for improved Diet to Optimize European health» (Bersagli molecolari regolabili dalla flora intestinale — Nuovi percorsi per migliorare la dieta e ottimizzare la salute degli europei) intende determinare l'influenza dell'alimentazione sulla flora intestinale e evidenzia l'impatto della flora intestinale sul sistema immunitario o su altri organi ([4]).

([1]) COM(2007)279 def.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_it.htm
([4]) http://www.fp7tornado.eu/.

La ricerca sulle soluzioni dietetiche dovrebbe continuare a essere finanziata nell'ambito del programma Orizzonte 2020 ([5]), il prossimo programma quadro unionale di ricerca e innovazione.

([5]) COM(2011)811 def. — Proposta di decisione del Consiglio che stabilisce il programma specifico recante attuazione del programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011398/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Changes in gut flora and related pathologies

Metagenomics is the science that deals with genome analysis of all microorganisms living in an organism. In particular, this field involves the study of the bacterial metagenome, a bacterial community containing a huge number of genes, in addition to the genome of the host. Indeed, the human body contains 10 times more bacterial cells than normal cells.

A recent study discovered that a change in bacterial flora or gut microbiota could be the cause of pathologies such as symptomatic atherosclerosis and cardiac and circulatory problems. In fact, a change in microbiota was noted in patients affected by strokes. Atherosclerosis is the chronic inflammation of the arteries, which are lined with dangerous layers of fats, proteins and fibres which can be the initial cause of serious cardiac and circulatory problems, such as heart attacks, angina and strokes. Poor diet, a sedentary lifestyle and stress are factors that are at the root of these health issues. The research team, working on the theory that many diseases are linked to changes in the metagenome, demonstrated that the gut metagenome is indeed linked to atherosclerosis and therefore to strokes. In fact, they found that stroke patients had an altered microbiota, and that healthy subjects had greater numbers of the genes required to produce carotenoids.

Cardiovascular diseases are the leading causes of death in the world: health services most frequently treat this type of disease. Prevention is the only way to reduce numbers of patients affected in the future and this can be done by recommending a healthy way of life achieved through a balanced diet and exercise. Examining a patient's bacterial microflora may also be useful to predict a person's risk of suffering cardiovascular diseases and consuming probiotics may encourage the healthy development of bacterial flora.

Given the above, can the Commission state whether it intends to publish guidelines to recommend that EU citizens lead a healthier lifestyle, and to finance research programmes which could focus on studying specific new probiotics to prevent cardiovascular diseases, in order to protect the health of all citizens from the perspective of Europa 2020?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

The Commission has developed a number of actions that seek to support healthier lifestyles, in particular healthy eating. Since 2007, the Commission has promoted EU action to enhance physical activity levels and promote healthier diets as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health issues ([1]).

The strategy is implemented through the High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2]) and the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([3]). In the High Level Group, the Commission works closely with Member States on issues such as food reformulation. In the EU Platform, the Commission encourages EU stakeholders to commit to concrete actions on diet and physical activity. In the past seven years, this resulted in over 300 commitments which are available in the Platform database. The Commission does not intend to publish new guidelines on this issue.

As regards action focused specifically on intestinal bacteria, in the 7th EU Research Framework Programme (FP7) the large-scale project MetaHIT was funded with EUR 11.4 million to characterise over 3.9 million genes of intestinal bacteria and explore their function in health and disease. The last FP7 Health Call included amongst its themes 'metagenomics for personalised medicine applications'. The EU research project TORNADO 'Molecular Targets Open for Regulation by the gut flora — New Avenues for improved Diet to Optimize European health' aims to determine the influence of diet on gut flora and highlight the impact of gut flora on the immune system/other organ systems ([4]).

([1]) COM(2007)279 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.fp7tornado.eu/.

Research on dietary solutions should continue to be financed under Horizon 2020 ([5]), the next EU Framework Programme on Research and Innovation.

([5]) COM(2011)811 final — Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the Specific Programme Implementing Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011399/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Campagna «Scegliere con saggezza»: un modello anche per la strategia europea per la sanità?

Un recente articolo del Consumer Reports Magazine evidenzia un'iniziativa intitolata «Five medical tests you don't need» condotta dall'associazione di consumatori e dall'American Board of Internal Medicine e finalizzata a incoraggiare i medici e i cittadini a distinguere — fra le procedure diagnostico-terapeutiche — quelle necessarie da quelle non necessarie. L'obiettivo è migliorare la qualità dell'assistenza sanitaria, promuovendo l'utilizzo d'interventi in grado di produrre salute a basso costo. L'esperienza statunitense non è unica nel suo genere. Simili iniziative sono già state intraprese in altri paesi (ad esempio, Regno Unito, Danimarca, Australia) all'interno di programmi denominati di «disinvestment» e finalizzati a limitare l'utilizzo d'interventi o con un rapporto rischio-beneficio sfavorevole o rispetto ai quali esiste un'alternativa ugualmente efficace ma meno costosa.

L'iniziativa è sviluppata all'interno del programma «Choosing wisely» (scegliere con saggezza) che riconosce due importanti fattori di successo per qualunque intervento di riduzione degli sprechi e di miglioramento della qualità dell'assistenza:

— il coinvolgimento contestuale di professionisti e di cittadini;

— il metodo orientato all'operatività.

La collaborazione e la condivisione delle decisioni fra medici e utenti sono considerate condizioni essenziali per garantire che le scelte assistenziali:

— siano supportate da prove di efficacia;

— non siano causa di duplicazioni di accertamenti o di procedure;

— siano libere da rischi per il paziente;

— siano realmente necessarie.

Posto che:

— identificare i servizi caratterizzati da basso valore è considerato il primo passo di un percorso orientato a ridurne l'utilizzo e, quindi, a evitare sprechi di risorse;

— tale obiettivo può essere perseguito attraverso una combinazione di incentivi finanziari e di diffusione delle conoscenze;

— questa iniziativa riconosce il diritto del consumatore a essere tutelato anche in termini di disponibilità di informazioni chiare sull'utilità e sui costi delle diverse prestazioni sanitarie rispetto al più tradizionale approccio al mero diritto alla prestazione;

può la Commissione dire se:

1. l'esperienza di «Choosing wisely» possa costituire un valido modello di confronto nell'UE, offrendo spunti di riflessione in materia di sostenibilità della spesa sanitaria;

2. gli interventi incentrati prevalentemente sulla riduzione dei prezzi di acquisto di beni e servizi debbano esser affiancati da programmi di coinvolgimento dei professionisti e dei cittadini sul valore reale, in termini di salute, delle prestazioni erogabili;

3. un simile approccio possa rendere più equi ed efficaci i meccanismi di compartecipazione alla spesa sanitaria?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni specifiche sulla campagna «Scegliere con saggezza» (Choosing wisely) che interessa gli USA. Nonostante le differenze che sussistono nell'organizzazione dell'assistenza sanitaria negli USA e in Europa, la necessità di fare un uso prudente delle tecnologie mediche vale anche per l'Europa. Conformemente all'articolo 168, paragrafo 7, del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, l'organizzazione e la fornitura di servizi sanitari rientra nelle responsabilità degli Stati membri. Esiste però una serie di strumenti a livello di UE per aiutare gli Stati membri ad affrontare l'aspetto costi/benefici della spesa sanitaria.

A norma della direttiva sui diritti dei pazienti relativi all'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera ([1]) gli Stati membri hanno concordato di istituire una rete permanente di autorità competenti per la valutazione delle tecnologie sanitarie. L'obiettivo della rete è fornire ai decisori politici informazioni scientifiche sull'uso delle tecnologie nella sanità. La riduzione dei costi è soltanto uno dei risultati attesi, assieme al miglioramento dei risultati clinici, alla soddisfazione dei pazienti e all'incoraggiamento dell'innovazione.

Gli stakeholder verranno coinvolti nell'impostazione della rete. La Commissione sostiene la formazione degli stakeholder e ha invitato gli Stati membri a far uso di fondi strutturali per sviluppare le loro capacità.

Nel contesto del processo di riflessione «Verso sistemi sanitari moderni, adeguati e sostenibili» è stato istituito un sottogruppo guidato da uno Stato membro con l'incarico di occuparsi dell'uso efficace sul piano dei costi dei medicinali, a seguito delle conclusioni del Consiglio del giugno 2011 ([2]). I lavori di questo sottogruppo dovrebbero trattare del modo in cui le parti interessate come gli operatori sanitari e i pazienti possono impegnarsi a fare un uso responsabile dei medicinali.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:IT:PDF.
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/122395.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011399/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: The 'Choosing Wisely' campaign: an example to follow for the EU's health strategy?

An article published recently in Consumer Reports magazine described an initiative by the consumers' association and by the American Board of Internal Medicine entitled 'Five medical tests you don't need'. This initiative was designed to encourage doctors and patients to decide which diagnostic and therapeutic procedures are really necessary and which are not in fact required. The goal of this campaign is to improve the quality of healthcare, promoting the use of procedures that will improve health while keeping costs down. The U.S. experiment is not the first of its kind. Similar initiatives have already been carried out in other countries (the United Kingdom, Denmark and Australia, for example) as part of 'disinvestment' programmes that are designed to limit the use of procedures that either have an unfavourable risk-benefit ratio or where an equally effective but less costly alternative exists.

The initiative was developed as part of the 'Choosing Wisely' programme which recognises two important success factors for any intervention to reduce waste and improve the quality of care:

— collaboration between professionals and patients;

— a practical approach.

Collaboration and shared decisions between doctors and patients are considered to be essential conditions to ensure that healthcare choices:

— are supported by efficacy tests;

— do not duplicate tests or procedures;

— are risk-free for the patient;

— are truly necessary.

Given that:

— identifying low-value services is considered the first step along a path to reduce their use and, therefore, to avoid the waste of resources;

— this goal may be pursued using a combination of financial incentives and knowledge sharing;

— this initiative recognises the right of the consumer to be protected in terms of availability of clear information regarding the use and costs of various health services compared with the more traditional approach of simply being entitled to the service;

can the Commission state whether:

1. the Choosing Wisely experiment could be a valuable example for the EU, providing a starting point for a discussion on the sustainability of healthcare spending;

2. the interventions focused mainly on reducing the prices of acquiring goods and services should be backed up by programmes involving professionals and patients on the true value, in terms of health, of services provided;

3. a similar approach could make sharing healthcare spending systems fairer and more efficient?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission has no specific information about the 'Choosing wisely' campaign, which targets the US. Despite differences in the organisation of healthcare in the US and Europe, the need for prudent use of medical technologies applies also to Europe. According to Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union, the organisation and delivery of healthcare are Member States' responsibility. However, there is a series of instruments at EU level to help Member States address cost-efficiency of healthcare spending.

Under the directive on patients' rights in cross border care ([1]), Member States have agreed to set up a permanent network of competent authorities for assessing health technologies. The objective of the network is to provide scientific information to decision-makers on the use of technologies in healthcare. Cutting costs is only one of the outcomes, together with better clinical results, patient satisfaction and reward for innovation.

Stakeholders will be involved in providing guidance to the network. The Commission supports stakeholders' training and has invited Member States to use the structural funds to develop their capacities.

As part of the 'Reflection process — Towards modern, responsive and sustainable health systems', a Member State led sub-group on cost-effective use of medicines was established following Council Conclusions ([2]) of June 2011. The work of this sub-group is likely to cover how parties such as health professionals and patients can take up responsibility for the use of medicinal products.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/122395.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011400/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Leucemia acuta: possibilità di guarigione riducendo gli effetti collaterali

Le cellule normali che si ritrovano nel sangue (globuli rossi, globuli bianchi e piastrine) prendono origine da cellule immature — dette anche cellule staminali o blasti — che si trovano nel midollo osseo. Nelle persone affette da leucemia vi è una proliferazione incontrollata di queste cellule, che interferisce con la crescita e lo sviluppo delle normali cellule del sangue. Le leucemie sono comunemente distinte, sulla base della velocità di progressione della malattia, in acute e croniche; il trattamento di queste malattie deve essere spesso rapido al fine di salvare la persona, ma spesso sono diversi gli effetti collaterali provocati dai farmaci, in particolare dai farmaci chemioterapici. Una forma rara ma aggressiva di leucemia, la promielocitica, è diagnosticata in meno di un caso ogni 100.000 abitanti: presenta un decorso aggressivo, poiché all'esordio la malattia si manifesta con frequenti gravi emorragie e, senza rapida e accurata diagnosi e terapie adeguate, può essere fatale. Un recente studio condotto in Italia e Germania ha dimostrato l'efficacia di una cura con ridotti effetti collaterali; attualmente, questa tipologia di leucemia viene trattata con una combinazione di acido retinoico e chemioterapia. I ricercatori hanno osservato che un altro composto naturale, il triossido di arsenico, aveva una particolare efficacia proprio in questa malattia e presentava una migliore tollerabilità rispetto alla chemioterapia. Per tale motivo si è testata l'efficacia dell'acido retinoico e del triossido di arsenico. I risultati hanno messo in luce che in un primo follow-up a due anni, su 160 pazienti sopravvive il 98 % trattato con il composto naturale contro il 91 % di quelli trattati con chemioterapia.

Questi primi risultati mettono in luce la possibilità futura per i pazienti affetti da leucemia acuta di essere curati con terapie mirate e meno invasive, che possano eradicare le cellule maligne e al contempo ridurre gran parte degli effetti tossici che comportano i cocktail di farmaci chemioterapici per il paziente.

Può dire la Commissione se questo possa essere uno spunto per promuovere ulteriori studi che permettano di indagare quale componente sia maggiormente efficace anche per altre forme di leucemia, al fine di tutelare e preservare la salute e la vita dei pazienti non solo da gravi malattie, ma anche da effetti collaterali molto destabilizzanti, seppur a volte transitori, come quelli provocati dalla chemioterapia, che incidono fortemente anche sulla dimensione identitaria di ogni persona?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza degli ultimi sviluppi della ricerca sul triossido di arsenico nel trattamento della leucemia promielocitica (PML) riferiti dall'onorevole deputato ([1]).

Nell'ambito del Sesto e del Settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (rispettivamente per i periodi 2002-2006 e 2007-2013) è stata finanziata la ricerca su approcci terapeutici mirati alla cura di diversi sottotipi di leucemia, tra cui la leucemia mieloide acuta (LMA), la leucemia mieloide cronica (LMC) e la leucemia linfoblastica acuta (LLA). A tutt'oggi 36,5 milioni di EUR sono stati destinati alla ricerca di frontiera e traslazionale sulla comprensione, la diagnosi e il trattamento della leucemia, in settori quali, ad esempio: interazioni fra cellule leucemiche e midollo osseo (LSCMICROENV ([2])), trapianto di cellule staminali, messa a punto di biomarcatori e farmaci (EPITRON ([3]), MOLTALL ([4])), farmacoresistenza e meccanismi di leucemogenesi (HEM_ID ([5])), nonché sperimentazioni cliniche integrate per migliorare le terapie della leucemia (EUROPEAN LEUKEMIANET ([6]), INTREALL ([7])).

([1]) Zhang et al. (2010) Science 328: 240-43.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12587860.
([3]) http://www.epitron.eu/.
([4]) http://www.openaire.eu/it/component/openaire/project_info/default/201?id=205252.
([5]) http://www.hemid.eu/.
([6]) http://www.leukemia-net.org/.
([7]) http://www.intreall-fp7.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011400/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Acute leukaemia: prospect of recovery with fewer side effects

Normal cells found in the blood such as red and white blood cells and platelets originate from immature cells — which are also called stem cells or blast cells — that are found in bone marrow. An overproduction of these cells occurs in a person affected by leukaemia, and this interferes with the growth and development of normal blood cells. Leukaemia is differentiated, according to the speed with which the disease progresses, into acute and chronic forms. These diseases must often be treated quickly in order to save the person's life. However, there are often several side effects from the drugs, particularly from chemotherapy. A rare but aggressive form of leukaemia called promyelocytic leukaemia was diagnosed in less than one in 100 000 people. The disease starts aggressively. At the outset, the disease manifests itself with frequent and serious bleeding and, without a rapid and accurate diagnosis and suitable treatment, this disease can be fatal. A recent study carried out in Italy and Germany demonstrated the efficacy of treatment with reduced side effects; this type of leukaemia is currently treated using a combination of retinoic acid and chemotherapy. The research team noted that another natural compound — arsenic trioxide — was particularly efficient in treating this disease and was tolerated better than chemotherapy. For this reason, the efficacy of retinoic acid and arsenic trioxide was tested. The results highlighted that at the first follow-up after two years, 98% of 160 patients treated with the natural compound survived compared with 91% of patients treated with chemotherapy.

These initial results highlight the prospect for patients suffering from acute leukaemia to be cured using targeted and less invasive treatment methods, which are able to eradicate the malignant cells and at the same time reduce a large part of the toxic effects that the cocktail of chemotherapy drugs has on the patient.

Can the Commission state whether this could be a starting point for promoting further studies to research which components are the most effective for other forms of leukaemia as well, in order to protect and defend the health and life of patients not only from serious diseases but also from extremely debilitating side effects, even if this they are only short-lived, such as those caused by chemotherapy, and which also have a major effect on a person's identity?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of recent efforts undertaken on arsenic trioxide for the alleviation of promyelocytic leukaemia (PML) as mentioned by the Honourable Member ([1]).

Research on targeted therapeutic approaches for various leukaemia subtypes, including acute myeloid leukaemia (AML), chronic myeloid leukaemia (CML), acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL), has been funded across the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006; FP7, 2007-2013). So far, EUR 36.5 million has been devoted to frontier and translational research on the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of leukaemia. Areas addressed include for instance interactions between leukaemia cells and the bone marrow (LSCMICROENV ([2])), stem cell transplantation, biomarker and drug discovery (EPITRON ([3]), MOLTALL ([4])), drug resistance and leukemogenic signalling mechanisms (HEM_ID ([5])) and integrated clinical trials to improve leukaemia therapies (EUROPEAN LEUKEMIANET ([6]), INTREALL ([7])).

([1]) Zhang et al. (2010) Science 328: 240-43.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=12587860
([3]) http://www.epitron.eu/
([4]) http://www.openaire.eu/it/component/openaire/project_info/default/201?id=205252
([5]) http://www.hemid.eu/
([6]) http://www.leukemia-net.org/
([7]) http://www.intreall-fp7.eu/

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011401/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Zatrzymanie uchodźcy politycznego z Kazachstanu w Polsce

Meirman Szauenow, uchodźca polityczny z Kazachstanu, który uciekł do Polski w obawie przed prześladowaniami w kraju, został 3 grudnia 2010 r. zatrzymany na żądanie władz w Astanie.

Szauenow i jego rodzina uciekli do Polski w styczniu po tym, jak władze Kazachstanu rozpoczęły śledztwo w sprawie krwawych starć między policją a strajkującymi robotnikami w mieście Żanaozen. Policjanci zastrzelili wtedy co najmniej 17 osób. Szauenow wraz z bratem przypadkowo znaleźli się na miejscu starć z policjantami, zostali zatrzymani i dotkliwie pobici. Brat Szauenowa zmarł w wyniku obrażeń, jakich doznał.

Istnieje zagrożenie, że Polska wyda Szauenowa władzom Kazachstanu, a tam mogą go czekać brutalne śledztwo i tortury.

W związku z tym zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja posiada informacje na temat zatrzymania przez polskie władze Meirmana Szauenowa i czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w tej sprawie, by nie dopuścić do wydania uchodźcy politycznego w ręce władz autorytarnego reżimu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecylię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(11 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja nie posiada informacji na temat okoliczności tej sprawy.

Państwa członkowskie wiążą odpowiednie przepisy dyrektywy Rady 2004/83/WE z dnia 29 kwietnia 2004 r. w sprawie minimalnych norm dla kwalifikacji i statusu obywateli państw trzecich lub bezpaństwowców jako uchodźców lub jako osoby, które z innych względów potrzebują międzynarodowej ochrony oraz zawartości przyznawanej ochrony, jak również Karta praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej. W związku z tym podczas stosowania procedury ekstradycji wobec obywatela państwa trzeciego państwa członkowskie muszą zawsze przestrzegać zasady *non-refoulement*, wymagającej, aby żadna osoba nie była wydawana państwu, w którym może ona być prześladowana, torturowana, traktowana lub karana w nieludzki lub poniżający sposób.

Komisja monitoruje, w jaki sposób państwa członkowskie wywiązują się z tych obowiązków i jest umocowana postanowieniami traktatów do podjęcia działań w przypadku naruszeń.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011401/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Detention of Kazakh political refugee in Poland

Meirman Shauenov, a political refugee from Kazakhstan who fled to Poland from his homeland in fear of persecution, was arrested on 3 December 2012 at the request of the Kazakh Government in Astana.

Shauenov and his family fled to Poland in January 2012 after the Kazakh Government launched an investigation into the bloody confrontations that took place between striking workers and police in the city of Zhanaozen, where police shot at least 17 people dead. Shauenov and his brother accidentally found themselves at the scene of clashes with police. They were arrested and severely beaten, and Shauenov's brother later died of his injuries.

There is a risk that Poland will extradite Shauenov to Kazakhstan, where he may be subject to investigation and brutal torture at the hands of the authorities.

Does the Commission have information on Meirman Shauenov's detention by the Polish authorities, and does it intend to make representations on this matter with a view to preventing this political refugee from being extradited into the hands of an authoritarian regime?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the circumstances behind this case.

Member States are bound by the relevant provisions of Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third-country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted, as well as by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Therefore, when subjecting a third-country national to an extradition procedure, Member States must always respect the principle of non-refoulement requiring that no person is sent to a country where they may be subjected to persecution, torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The Commission monitors Member States' compliance with these obligations and is empowered by the Treaties to take action in case of violations.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011402/12
aan de Commissie
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(13 december 2012)

Betreft: Voortgang Aspartaamonderzoek EFSA

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het feit, dat bij de herevaluatie van zoetstof Aspartaam, uitgevoerd door EFSA, slechts een klein deel van de experts uit de aangewezen werkgroep betrokkenheid toont bij het onderzoek, en dat er bij sommige voortgangsbijeenkomsten slechts 3 van de 14 experts aanwezig waren? Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de notulen van de EFSA bijeenkomsten van de werkgroep Aspartaam ([1])?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het structurele hoge afwezigheidspercentage van experts behorende tot de werkgroep?

3. Vindt de Commissie dat EFSA het aspartaam-onderzoek voldoende serieus neemt en welk signaal denkt de Commissie dat de hoge afwezigheid geeft naar media en publiek toe?

4. Heeft de Commissie EFSA al om opheldering gevraagd over het hoge afwezigheidspercentage, zo ja wat was EFSA's reactie?

5. Welke acties onderneemt de Commissie om zeker te stellen dat er een secuur en serieus onderzoek uit de bus komt? Wat zal de Commissie doen als de betrouwbaarheid van het onderzoek door EFSA onvoldoende blijkt?

6. Kan de Commissie een lijst overleggen van alle ingezonden studies die EFSA heeft ontvangen? Welke studies worden meegenomen in het onderzoek? Wat zijn redenen om studies eventueel uit te sluiten van beoordeling?

7. Welke organisatie is verantwoordelijk voor het opstellen van een review over deze studies?

8. Wanneer zal EFSA de volledige review over de beoordeelde studies ontvangen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(11 januari 2013)

De Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid (EFSA) is met de Commissie overeengekomen uiterlijk in mei 2013 advies over aspartaam uit te brengen. Als onafhankelijk EU-agentschap is de EFSA zelf verantwoordelijk voor de wijze waarop zij haar werkzaamheden organiseert teneinde tijdig advies te kunnen uitbrengen. De Commissie heeft onlangs van de EFSA vernomen dat de EFSA begin 2013 een openbare raadpleging over haar ontwerpadvies zal houden, waarna het advies volgens afspraak in mei 2013 zal worden vastgesteld.

De Commissie beschikt niet over de lijst van de studies die in de evaluatie van de EFSA worden betrokken. Zij verwacht echter dat het EFSA-advies, zoals gebruikelijk, een volledige bibliografie zal bevatten.

([1]) Deze zijn te vinden op: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/fipwgs/documents/fipwgaspartame.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011402/12
to the Commission
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Progress of EFSA investigation into Aspartame

1. Is the Commission aware that during the re-evaluation of the sweetener Aspartame carried out by EFSA, only a small number of the experts appointed to the working group showed any commitment to the investigation, and that at some of the progress meetings only three of the 14 experts were present? Has the Commission noted the minutes of the EFSA meetings of the Aspartame working group ([1])?

2. What is the Commission's view of the structurally high rate of absenteeism of experts from the working group?

3. Does the Commission consider that EFSA is taking the Aspartame investigation seriously enough, and what message does it think the high absenteeism rate is sending to the media and the public?

4. Has the Commission asked EFSA for an explanation of the high absenteeism rate, and if so what was EFSA's response?

5. What measures is the Commission taking to ensure that a reliable and serious investigation takes place? What will the Commission do if the EFSA investigation proves to be insufficiently reliable?

6. Can the Commission supply a list of all the studies that have been submitted to EFSA? Which studies were included in the investigation? If any studies were excluded from consideration, what were the reasons for this?

7. Which organisation is responsible for carrying out a review of these studies?

8. When will EFSA receive the complete review of the studies that have been evaluated?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 January 2013)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has agreed with the Commission to deliver its opinion on aspartame by May 2013. As an independent EU agency it is responsible for organising its work in order to deliver opinions according to the agreed deadlines. The Commission has been recently informed by EFSA that it will hold a public consultation on the draft opinion early in 2013 to be followed by adoption of the opinion by the agreed deadline of May 2013.

The Commission does not have the list of studies which will be reviewed by EFSA. However, the Commission expects that as it is normal practice, EFSA's opinion will include a comprehensive bibliography in its opinion.

([1]) See: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/fipwgs/documents/fipwgaspartame.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011403/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αναγκαστικοί γάμοι παιδιών στην Τουρκία

Η Canan Arin, τουρκάλα δικηγόρος και ακτιβίστρια πρώτης γραμμής για την υπεράσπιση των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών στην Τουρκία, συνελήφθη στις 23 Ιουνίου 2012 επειδή κατήγγειλε τους καταναγκαστικούς γάμους παιδιών στην Τουρκία, και μάλιστα από την ηλικία των 6 ετών.

Η δίκη της ενώπιον Τουρκικού δικαστηρίου συνεχίζεται, η ίδια ζει υπό διαρκή απειλή, αλλά αρνείται να σιγήσει.

Τι προτίθεται να πράξει η ΕΕ για να τερματίσει τους καταναγκαστικούς γάμους παιδιών στην Τουρκία;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί με προσοχή το θέμα των πρόωρων και εξαναγκαστικών γάμων στην αξιολόγησή της για την πρόοδο που σημειώνει η Τουρκία προς την εκπλήρωση των πολιτικών κριτηρίων και γνωρίζει επίσης την υπόθεση της δικηγόρου Canan Arin.

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να παραπέμψει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην έκθεση προόδου του 2012 για την Τουρκία ([1]), όπου αναφέρεται σαφώς ότι το θέμα των πρόωρων και εξαναγκαστικών γάμων παραμένει ύψιστη πρόκληση για την χώρα.

Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να θέτει τα θέματα των δικαιωμάτων των παιδιών και των γυναικών στις τουρκικές αρχές σε κάθε κατάλληλη ευκαιρία.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011403/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Forced marriages of children in Turkey

Leading Turkish women's rights activist and lawyer, Canan Arin, was arrested on 23 June 2012 for speaking out against forced marriages of children in Turkey, some of the children concerned being as young as six years of age.

Although legal proceedings have been initiated against her in Turkey and she herself is under constant threat, she refuses to remain silent.

In view of this:

What action will the EU take to put an end to forced marriages of children in Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Commission follows closely the issue of early and forced marriages in its assessment of Turkey's progress towards meeting the political criteria, and is, also, aware of the case of lawyer Canan Arin.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its 2012 Progress Report on Turkey ([1]) where it is clearly mentioned that the issue of early and forced marriages remains a major challenge for the country.

The Commission will continue to raise children's and women's rights issues with the Turkish authorities on all appropriate occasions.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011404/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Η λεγόμενη «ιθαγένεια της Τουρκικής Δημοκρατίας της Βόρειας Κύπρου»

Το καθεστώς κατοχής στην Κύπρο ενθαρρύνει τούρκους επιχειρηματίες και καλλιτέχνες να υποβάλουν αίτηση για να τους χορηγηθεί η λεγόμενη «ιθαγένεια της Τουρκικής Δημοκρατίας της Βόρειας Κύπρου» και ενθαρρύνει περαιτέρω τις αιτήσεις «ιθαγένειας» τούρκων πολιτών που δεν έχουν ζήσει ποτέ υπό το αποσχισθέν καθεστώς. Μεταξύ αυτών συγκαταλέγονται γνωστοί τούρκοι ηθοποιοί όπως οι Polat Alemdar και Necati Sasmaz.

Βάσει των ανωτέρω, ποια δράση θα αναλάβει η Επιτροπή ώστε:

1. να τερματισθούν οι προκλήσεις αυτές·

2. να καταστεί σαφές στους Τουρκοκυπρίους ότι είναι προς το συμφέρον τους να εργαστούν υπέρ της επανένωσης της Κύπρου αντί της συνεχιζόμενης διαίρεσής της, δεδομένου ότι έτσι θα μπορούν να έχουν όλα τα πλεονεκτήματα των οποίων απολαύουν οι πολίτες της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, και κατά συνέπεια της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης;

Επιπλέον, μπορεί να αναφέρει η Επιτροπή σε ποιες ενέργειες θα προβεί για:

1. τον τερματισμό της συνεχιζόμενης προπαγάνδας και της μυθοπλασίας περί της δήθεν «απομόνωσης των Τουρκοκυπρίων» και

2. την αξιοποίηση των πλεονεκτημάτων που παρέχει τα τελευταία χρόνια η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία στους Τουρκοκυπρίους οι οποίοι επιμένουν να ζουν στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα, σε κατοικίες και ιδιοκτησίες που ανήκουν σε ελληνοκύπριους πρόσφυγες που απομακρύνθηκαν διά της βίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Όπως γνωρίζει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου η εφαρμογή του κεκτημένου έχει ανασταλεί και η δράση της Επιτροπής οριοθετείται από το πρωτόκολλο αριθ. 3 και από το πρωτόκολλο αριθ. 10 της πράξης προσχώρησης καθώς και από τα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου του Απριλίου 2004.

Το ζήτημα που έθιξε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος αποτελεί μέρος των θεμάτων που συζητήθηκαν κατά τις συνομιλίες υπό την αιγίδα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τη διευθέτηση του κυπριακού προβλήματος.

Τα θέματα που τέθηκαν, για άλλη μια φορά, τονίζουν την επείγουσα ανάγκη να επιτευχθεί συνολική διευθέτηση του κυπριακού ζητήματος. Τον Οκτώβριο του 2012, στην ανακοίνωση της για τη στρατηγική διεύρυνσης και τις κυριότερες προκλήσεις κατά το διάστημα 2012-2013, η Επιτροπή υπογράμμισε την ανάγκη για επανέναρξη των διαπραγματεύσεων με στόχο να οδηγηθούν σε αίσιο τέλος οι συνομιλίες, αξιοποιώντας την πρόοδο που έχει επιτευχθεί έως σήμερα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011404/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: So-called 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus citizenship'

The occupation regime in Cyprus is encouraging Turkish businessmen and artists to apply for what it calls 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus citizenship', and encouraging further 'citizenship' demands by Turkish citizens who have never lived under the breakaway regime. Among these are the well-known Turkish actors Polat Alemdar and Necati Sasmaz.

In light of the above, what action is the Commission taking in order to:

1. stop such provocations?

2. explain to Turkish Cypriots that it is to their own benefit to work towards the reunification of the island rather than its continued division, as they will then be able to enjoy fully all the benefits of citizenship of the Republic of Cyprus, and thereby of the European Union?

Furthermore, can the Commission state what action it is taking in order to:

1. bring an end to the persistent propaganda and mythmaking about the so-called 'Turkish Cypriot isolation' and

2. evaluate the benefits granted by the Republic of Cyprus in recent years to Turkish Cypriots who still insist on living in the occupied area, in homes and properties belonging to forcibly displaced Greek Cypriot refugees?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

As the Honourable Member is aware, in the northern part of Cyprus, the *acquis* is suspended and the Commission action is circumscribed by Protocol 3 and Protocol 10 to the Act of Accession and by the April 2004 Council Conclusions.

The subject raised by the Honourable Member is part of the issues discussed in the Cyprus settlement talks under the auspices of the United Nations.

The issues raised, once again, emphasise the urgency to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue. In its October 2012 Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013, the Commission underlined the necessity to re-launch the negotiations with the aim of reaching a swift conclusion of the talks, building on the progress achieved to date.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011405/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή του Πρωτοκόλλου της Άγκυρας

Ο τουρκοκύπριος ηγέτης καθώς και τούρκοι και τουρκοκύπριοι αξιωματούχοι, στην προσπάθειά τους να προαγάγουν τις πολιτικές διαχωρισμού και διαίρεσης της Κύπρου, αρνούνται συστηματικά να εφαρμόσουν το Πρωτόκολλο της Άγκυρας και επιπλέον χρησιμοποιούν προκλητικότατη ορολογία όταν αναφέρονται στην Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία.

Αναφερόμενοι σε αυτή, χρησιμοποιούν συστηματικά τους όρους «ελληνοκυπριακή κυβέρνηση», «Νότια Κύπρος» ή «Τουρκική Κύπρος».

Η χρήση των όρων αυτών αντιβαίνει στο διεθνές δίκαιο και στα ψηφίσματα της ΕΕ και του ΟΗΕ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Γιατί δεν τηρεί μια πιο αποφασιστική στάση ως προς το θέμα αυτό, καλώντας την Τουρκία:

— να εφαρμόσει το Πρωτόκολλο της Άγκυρας εντός συγκεκριμένης προθεσμίας και

— να σταματήσει να χρησιμοποιεί αυτή την προκλητική ορολογία και να επιδίδεται σε αυτές τις δραστηριότητες, δεδομένου ότι είναι αδιαμφισβήτητο ότι συνιστούν εμπόδιο σε οιαδήποτε πρόοδο, καθώς και στην επιτυχή ολοκλήρωση της διαδικασίας διαπραγματεύσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στα συμπεράσματα που περιέχονται στη στρατηγική της 2012 για τη διεύρυνση, η οποία υποβλήθηκε στο Κοινοβούλιο τον Οκτώβριο του 2012 και στην οποία επαναλαμβάνει ότι η Τουρκία πρέπει επειγόντως να συμμορφωθεί με την υποχρέωση της να εφαρμόσει πλήρως το πρόσθετο πρωτόκολλο και να σημειώσει πρόοδο στην πορεία εξομάλυνσης των διμερών σχέσεων με την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία. Η Επιτροπή καταλήγει στο συμπέρασμα ότι, μολονότι αυτό θα μπορούσε να προσδώσει νέα ώθηση στη διαδικασία προσχώρησης, εάν δεν σημειωθεί πρόοδος στους εν λόγω τομείς, συνιστά να διατηρήσει η ΕΕ σε εφαρμογή τα μέτρα που είχε λάβει από το 2006. Τα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου της 10ης Δεκεμβρίου 2012 απηχούν την ανωτέρω σύσταση, ενώ επισημαίνεται επίσης ότι είναι λυπηρό ότι η Τουρκία εξακολουθεί να μην έχει σημειώσει πρόοδο προς την κατεύθυνση της αναγκαίας εξομάλυνσης των σχέσεών της με την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία. Το Συμβούλιο επανέλαβε την έκκλησή του να υπάρξει πρόοδος χωρίς καμία περαιτέρω καθυστέρηση.

Το Συμβούλιο δήλωσε επίσης τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 ότι, όπως τονίζεται στο διαπραγματευτικό πλαίσιο, αναμένει από την Τουρκία να υποστηρίξει ενεργά τις διεξαγόμενες διαπραγματεύσεις στόχος των οποίων είναι η δίκαιη, συνολική και βιώσιμη επίλυση του κυπριακού προβλήματος στο πλαίσιο των Ηνωμένων Εθνών (ΟΗΕ), σύμφωνα με τις σχετικές αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών και με τις αρχές στις οποίες βασίζεται η Ένωση. Όπως ανέφερε, η δέσμευση της Τουρκίας και η συμβολή της με συγκεκριμένους όρους στην επίτευξη της σχετικής συνολικής διευθέτησης έχουν ζωτική σημασία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011405/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Implementation of the Ankara Protocol

The Turkish Cypriot leader and also Turkish and Turkish Cypriot officials, in an effort to promote their secessionist policies and division of the island, persistently deny the implementation of the Ankara Protocol and, in addition, use very provocative terminology when referring to the Republic of Cyprus.

They consistently refer to it as either 'the Greek Cypriot Administration', 'South Cyprus' or 'Turkish Cyprus'.

This contravenes international law, EU and UN resolutions.

I would like to ask the Commission:

Why it does not take a firmer stance on the issue by asking Turkey:

— to implement the Ankara Protocol within a specific time limit, and

— to cease such provocative terminology and activities as they certainly impose obstacles to any progress and to the successful conclusion of the negotiation process?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its conclusions in its 2012 Enlargement strategy presented to Parliament in October 2012, in which it reiterates that it is urgent that Turkey fulfils its obligation of fully implementing the Additional Protocol and makes progress towards normalisation of bilateral relations with the Republic of Cyprus. The Commission concludes that, while this could provide new momentum to the accession process, in the absence of progress in these areas, it recommends that the EU maintains its measures from 2006. The Council Conclusions of 10 December 2012 reflect this recommendation, noting also that Turkey has regretfully still not made progress towards the necessary normalisation of its relations with the Republic of Cyprus. The Council reiterated its call for progress without any further delay.

The Council in December 2012 also declared that, as emphasised by the Negotiating Framework, it expects Turkey to actively support the ongoing negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the United Nations (UN) framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded. It indicated that Turkey's commitment and contribution in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011406/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παράνομη εγκατάσταση στην κατεχόμενη Κύπρο

Το καθεστώς κατοχής στην Κύπρο μεταφέρει συστηματικά πληθυσμό από την Τουρκία στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου, στην προσπάθειά του να αλλοιώσει τη δημογραφική σύνθεση, ισχυριζόμενο ότι σε μια περιοχή 3 455 km^2 ζουν μόνο 300 χιλιάδες άνθρωποι, ότι η πυκνότητα του πληθυσμού είναι 87 κάτοικοι ανά km^2, ενώ στην Κωνσταντινούπολή ζουν 2 500 άνθρωποι ανά km^2, πράγμα που έχει ως αποτέλεσμα την τόνωση της τουρκικής οικονομίας.

Ποιες ενέργειες σκοπεύει να αναλάβει η ΕΕ για τον άμεσο τερματισμό της παράνομης αυτής εγκατάστασης στην κατεχόμενη Κύπρο;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Το ζήτημα στο οποίο αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου αποτελεί μέρος των διαπραγματεύσεων για τη συνολική διευθέτηση του Κυπριακού υπό την αιγίδα του ΟΗΕ.

Στην ανακοίνωσή της που υπέβαλε πρόσφατα για τη στρατηγική διεύρυνσης και τις κυριότερες προκλήσεις για το διάστημα 2012-2013 ([1]), η Επιτροπή επεσήμανε την ανάγκη επανέναρξης των διαπραγματεύσεων, με στόχο την ταχεία ολοκλήρωση των συνομιλιών, αξιοποιώντας την μέχρι τούδε πρόοδο.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_el.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011406/12
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Illegal settlement in occupied Cyprus

The occupation regime in Cyprus is systematically transferring settlers from Turkey to the occupied area of Cyprus in an effort to change its demographic structure — claiming that only 300 000 persons live in an area of 3 455 square km, which amounts to 87 persons per square km (as compared to Istanbul which has a population density of 2 500 persons per square km) — and thereby stimulate the growth of the Turkish economy.

What actions does the EU intend to take to bring this illegal settlement in occupied Cyprus to an immediate halt?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The issue the Honourable Member refers to is part of the negotiations on a comprehensive Cyprus settlement under the auspices of the United Nations.

In its recently presented Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013 ([1]), the Commission underlined the necessity to re-launch the negotiations with the aim of reaching a swift conclusion of the talks, building on the progress achieved to date.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011407/12
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(13 décembre 2012)

Objet: Moyens de protection du Parc des Virunga en RDC

Le Parlement européen a adopté aujourd'hui, en séance plénière, la résolution 2012/2907(RSP) sur la situation en République démocratique du Congo.

Dans cette résolution, les députés européens appellent notamment le gouvernement congolais à renoncer à octroyer tout permis d'exploitation pétrolière dans les limites du Parc des Virunga, classé au patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco en 1979 et dont l'exceptionnelle biodiversité est menacée.

1. Quelles sont les possibilités d'action de la Commission à cet égard?

2. De quels éventuels moyens de pression la Commission dispose-t-elle afin que l'appel de l'Unesco à la sauvegarde du Parc soit entendu?

3. Enfin, quels moyens la Commission met-elle en œuvre afin d'aider le gouvernement congolais à préserver la richesse naturelle du Parc des Virunga?

Réponse donnée par M Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(13 février 2013)

1.-2. L'Union européenne peut mener des actions de sensibilisation. Le dialogue politique entre l'Union européenne et le gouvernement de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) est en cours sur cette question. Dans ses échanges avec le gouvernement de la RDC, le chef de délégation n'a eu de cesse de réaffirmer la position de l'Union européenne quant au risque pour la réputation de la RDC si elle autorisait des opérations dans le parc qui seraient illégales selon la loi congolaise et selon les conventions internationales ratifiées par le pays.

Après avoir consulté les autres donateurs et les partenaires techniques, l'Union européenne a commandé une étude préparatoire pour une évaluation environnementale stratégique (EES) en RDC. L'appel d'offres pour le recrutement d'un consultant sera lancé en accord avec le gouvernement de la RDC. Le ministère de l'environnement a désormais également accès à l'expertise internationale pour soutenir le suivi technique du processus EES.

À la suite de ce dialogue, le gouvernement de la RDC a accepté de mener l'évaluation environnementale stratégique et aucune autorisation d'exploration ou d'exploitation pétrolière dans le parc n'a été octroyée à ce jour. La reprise du conflit dans l'est du pays, et notamment dans la région du parc des Virunga, a cependant temporairement ralenti le processus. Le gouvernement est conscient que l'exploration pétrolière dans la zone des Virunga pourrait mettre à mal la coopération en cours entre le gouvernement de la RDC et ses partenaires de l'aide au développement.

3. Un programme destiné à protéger le parc des Virunga est financé au titre du 10e Fonds européen de développement (FED). Un nouveau programme de soutien est par ailleurs en préparation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011407/12
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Means of protection for the Virunga Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo

In plenary today, Parliament adopted Resolution 2012/2907 (RSP) on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In this Resolution, MEPs call in particular for the Congolese Government to stop allowing oil exploitation within the boundaries of the Virunga Park, which was designated as a Unesco World Heritage site in 1979 and whose unique biodiversity is under threat.

1. What is the Commission's scope for action in this matter?

2. What means does the Commission have at its disposal to apply pressure so that Unesco's call to save the Park is heard?

3. Finally, what measures can the Commission implement to help the Congolese Government preserve the natural resources of the Virunga Park?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

1 and 2. The EU has the power of advocacy. The political dialogue between the EU and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Government is ongoing on this topic. In his exchanges with the Government of DRC, the Head of Delegation has repeatedly reaffirmed the EU's position on the reputational risk for the DRC if it were to allow operations in the Park which are illegal under DRC law and under international conventions ratified by DRC.

Following consultations with other donors and technical partners, the EU has commissioned a preparatory study for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in the DRC. The tender to recruit a consultant will be launched in agreement with the DRC Government. International expertise has also been made available to the Environment Ministry in order to support the technical follow-up to the SEA process.

As a result of this dialogue, the Government of DRC has agreed to conduct the SEA and no authorisation for oil exploration or exploitation in the Park has been granted so far. The resumption of the conflict in Eastern DRC, including in the Virunga area, has however temporarily slowed down the process. The Government is aware that oil exploration in the Virunga could undermine the ongoing cooperation between the Government of DRC and its development partners.

3. A programme to protect the Virunga Park is funded under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). Furthermore, a new support programme is also under formulation.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011408/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(13 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Osobny budżet dla państw ze strefy euro

W związku z najnowszą propozycją Przewodniczącego Komisji Europejskiej, Jose Barroso, dotyczącą pogłębienia unii gospodarczej i walutowej, Komisja Europejska przyjęła „Plan dla głębokiej i prawdziwej Unii walutowej i gospodarczej". Dokument ten to wkład Komisji Europejskiej na najbliższy szczyt przywódców państw Unii Europejskiej 13-14 grudnia, który będzie poświęcony pogłębianiu eurolandu. Komisja Europejska zaproponowała w nim m.in. stworzenie w ciągu 6-18 miesięcy nowego instrumentu budżetowego tylko dla państw euro, a także zasugerowała powołanie w Parlamencie Europejskim nowej „eurokomisji" wyłącznie dla eurostrefy.

Propozycja stworzenie osobnego, równoległego do budżetu całej Unii, własnego budżetu strefy euro potwierdza materializowanie się groźby „Europy dwóch prędkości" i może być interpretowana jako perspektywa Unii o dwóch poziomach solidarności, podwójnych instytucjach i podwójnych budżetach. W tym kontekście coraz częściej mówi się także o negatywnych skutkach wprowadzenia równoległego budżetu w stosunku do tradycyjnego budżetu Unii Europejskiej, zwiększeniu dystansu między państwami strefy euro a pozostałymi oraz o dodatkowych utrudnieniach w wejściu państw spoza euro do eurolandu.

Zwracam się z zapytaniem:

1. Jakie konsekwencje niesie za sobą wprowadzenie osobnego budżetu w stosunku do państw spoza strefy euro?

2. Jaka jest strategia Komisji w celu złagodzenia negatywnych skutków wprowadzenia równoległego budżetu tylko dla eurolandu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(8 lutego 2013 r.)

W swoim komunikacie zatytułowanym „Plan działania na rzecz pogłębionej i rzeczywistej unii gospodarczej i walutowej" ([1]) Komisja określiła harmonogram działań, które należy podjąć, by doprowadzić do utworzenia rzeczywistej UGW. Utworzenie budżetu strefy euro w oparciu o dwa źródła zasobów własnych stanowi część perspektywy średnio– i długoterminowej. W planie działania zachowano równowagę między większą odpowiedzialnością a wzmożoną solidarnością w strefie euro. Zaproponowano w nim ustanowienie instrumentu na rzecz konwergencji i konkurencyjności, który opierałby się na istniejących unijnych ramach nadzoru, stanowiłby podstawę do stopniowego budowania mechanizmu zdolności fiskalnej dla strefy euro i obejmowałby ustalenia umowne, którym towarzyszyłoby wsparcie finansowe. Celem ustaleń umownych dla państw członkowskich strefy euro jest polepszenie odpowiedzialności i wdrażania reform na poziomie krajowym.

Ustalenia te będą obowiązywały państwa strefy euro. Nowe działania ukierunkowane na dalszą integrację nie będą jednak miały „negatywnych konsekwencji" dla pozostałych państw członkowskich Unii Europejskiej, lecz poprawią ramy instytucjonalne UGW, a zatem przyniosą korzyści całej UE. Dalsze prace w tym zakresie, w tym dotyczące roli państw członkowskich nienależących do strefy euro, będą prowadzone w perspektywie czerwcowego szczytu Rady Europejskiej.

Z komunikatu Komisji w sprawie planu działania wynika wyraźna preferencja wprowadzenia, tam gdzie to możliwe, instrumentów dla wszystkich 27 (wkrótce 28) państw członkowskich. Należy zachować integralność UE i jednolitego rynku. Celem UE jest nadal utworzenie w pełni funkcjonującej UGW.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/archives/2012/11/pdf/blueprint_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011408/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(13 December 2012)

Subject: Separate budget for eurozone countries

Further to the most recent proposal made by the President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso, concerning deepening economic and monetary union, the Commission has adopted a 'blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union'. This document represents the Commission's input to the upcoming summit of the leaders of the EU Member States, which will be held on 13 and 14 December 2012 and which will focus on deepening the economic and monetary union of the eurozone. In its blueprint, the Commission has proposed the establishment, within the next 6-18 months, of a new financial instrument only for eurozone countries. It has also suggested that a new 'euro committee' could be set up in the European Parliament exclusively for the eurozone.

The proposal to create a separate budget for the eurozone that would be parallel to that of the EU as a whole bears out fears of a 'two-speed Europe' and could be interpreted as the emergence of an EU with two tiers of solidarity, two sets of institutions and two budgets. Against such a backdrop, there is increasing discussion of the harmful consequences of introducing a parallel budget, as opposed to maintaining the traditional EU budget, increasing the distance between eurozone countries and non-euro-zone countries, and the additional problems that non-eurozone countries would face in adopting the single currency.

1. What would the consequences of introducing a separate budget be for non-eurozone countries?

2. What is the Commission's strategy to alleviate the harmful consequences of introducing aparallel budget exclusively for the eurozone?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Commission's 'Blueprint for a deep and genuine economic and monetary union' ([1]) sets out a roadmap with actions to bring about a genuine EMU. The creation of a euro area budget based on own resources is part of the medium- and long term-perspective. The blueprint carefully balances both increased responsibility and increased solidarity within the euro area. It proposes to set up a Convergence and Competitiveness Instrument (CCI), building on the existing EU surveillance framework, laying the foundations for the gradual build-up of a fiscal capacity for the euro area and encompassing contractual arrangement underpinned by financial support. The contractual arrangements for euro area Member States aim to improve national ownership and reform implementation.

The contractual arrangements will apply to euro area countries. However, these new steps of further integration will not have 'harmful consequences' for the rest of the European Union, but will put on sounder footing the institutional set up for the EMU and thus be beneficial for the EU as whole. Further work on this issue, including the role of non-euro area countries will be conducted in the run up to the June European Council.

The Commission's blueprint Communication shows a clear preference, where possible, to move ahead with instruments for all 27 (soon to be 28) Member States. The integrity of the EU and of the single market must be preserved. A fully-fledged EMU remains an EU objective.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/archives/2012/11/pdf/blueprint_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011409/12
à Comissão
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(14 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Extinção da Rede Ecológica Nacional

A Ministra da Agricultura, do Mar, do Ambiente e do Ordenamento do Território de Portugal afirmou recentemente, segundo a imprensa portuguesa, que a Reserva Ecológica Nacional (REN), que reagrupa um conjunto de áreas com proteção especial, vai ser extinta, com o objetivo de «eliminar redundâncias e burocracias excessivas». Face a estas declarações, as organizações ambientalistas e de ordenamento do território portuguesas — a Liga para a Proteção da Natureza (LPN), a Quercus, a GEOTA e a FAPAS — anunciaram em comunicado que se vão retirar da Comissão Nacional da REN por considerarem que a REN «está a ser intencionalmente destruída e a proteção que a mesma conferia é votada à irrelevância».

Considerando o espírito da Diretiva 92/43/CEE do Conselho, de 21 de maio de 1992, relativa à preservação dos habitats naturais e da fauna e da flora selvagens, que criou a Rede Natura 2000, e considerando o objetivo da União Europeia, contido no artigo 3.°, n.° 3, do Tratado da União Europeia, de fomentar um «elevado nível de proteção e de melhoramento da qualidade do ambiente», considera a Comissão que a supressão da REN é compatível com a política de desenvolvimento sustentável promovida pela União Europeia?

Que pensa a Comissão do desmantelamento de uma instituição de utilidade pública que tem como objetivo controlar a expansão urbanística e preservar as áreas mais vulneráveis a riscos naturais e que carecem de proteção especial?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(7 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da recente decisão tomada pela Ministra portuguesa da Agricultura, do Mar, do Ambiente e do Ordenamento do Território, no que diz respeito à reserva ecológica nacional (REN). Esta reserva é uma rede de zonas protegidas estritamente pela legislação nacional e apenas parcialmente se sobrepõe à Rede Natura 2000. A legislação da UE em matéria de natureza continuará a ser aplicada aos sítios da rede Natura 2000 e às espécies abrangidas pelas diretivas da UE naquele domínio. Mesmo que a proteção das áreas da REN seja modificada na legislação nacional, esta modificação não tem impacto nas obrigações de Portugal, no âmbito da legislação ambiental da UE — como a Diretiva 92/43/CEE, relativa à preservação dos habitats naturais e da fauna e da flora selvagens ([1]), e a Diretiva 2009/147/CE, relativa à conservação das aves selvagens ([2]) —, ao perspetivar o desenvolvimento económico.

([1]) JO L 206 de 22.7.1992.
([2]) JO L 20 de 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011409/12
to the Commission
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(14 December 2012)

Subject: Elimination of the Portuguese National Ecological Network

According to the Portuguese press, the Portuguese Minister of Agriculture, the Sea, the Environment and Territorial Planning recently announced that the National Ecological Network (NEN), which links a number of specially protected areas, is to be dismantled in order to 'streamline and eliminate excessive bureaucracy'. In response to this announcement, the Portuguese environmental and territorial planning organisations — the Nature Protection League (Liga para a Proteção da Natureza (LPN)), Quercus, GEOTA and FAPAS — issued a statement announcing their withdrawal from the NEN National Committee on the grounds that 'it is being intentionally destroyed, with the protection it provided being consigned to irrelevance'.

In light of the spirit of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992, on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, under which the Natura 2000 network was created, and in view of the EU's objective, as stated in Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union, of working towards 'a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment', does the Commission consider discontinuing the NEN to be compatible with the sustainable with the EU's policy of sustainable development?

How does the Commission view the dismantling of an institution of public benefit whose aim is to control urban development and preserve those areas most vulnerable to natural risks and lacking special protection?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent decision taken by the Portuguese Minister of Agriculture, the Sea, the Environment and Territorial Planning, regarding the National Ecological Network (NEN). The National Ecological Network is a network of protected areas strictly under national law and only partially overlaps with the Natura 2000 network. The EU Nature legislation will continue to apply to sites designated under Natura 2000 and to species covered by the EU Nature Directives. Even if the protection of the NEN areas is modified under national legislation, it has no impact on the obligations of Portugal, under EU environmental legislation such as Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 2009/147/EC ([2]) on the conservation of wild birds, when considering economic development.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011410/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Studio obbligatorio di una seconda lingua

Quasi tutti gli studenti delle scuole primarie e secondarie dei paesi dell'UE sono tenuti a studiare almeno una lingua straniera moderna fino al loro ultimo anno di studi, e molti di essi ne studiano due. Tuttavia, l'Italia, la Repubblica d'Irlanda e il Regno Unito rappresentano delle eccezioni in quanto l'apprendimento di una lingua straniera a scuola non è obbligatorio.

L'invito rivolto agli studenti di studiare una lingua straniera non deriva solo da esigenze economiche, ma anche dalla necessità di una sicurezza e una diplomazia migliori; in particolare, occorre una maggiore conoscenza delle diverse lingue e culture al fine di comprendere meglio le minacce che incombono sullo Stato e di migliorare i risultati dei servizi diplomatici.

Le lingue rappresentano un notevole vantaggio per l'economia, e questo per due ragioni. In primo luogo, le competenze linguistiche accrescono le possibilità di un candidato di essere selezionato, il che tiene a freno la disoccupazione. Il Centro nazionale britannico delle lingue (CILT) riferisce sul proprio sito Internet che il 36 % dei datori di lavoro assume persone che parlano lingue straniere, il 49 % degli stessi non si ritiene soddisfatto delle conoscenze linguistiche dei diplomati e il 95 % dei datori di lavoro di Londra pensa che le competenze linguistiche siano importanti per l'economia della città.

In secondo luogo, un elevato numero di personale con competenze linguistiche accentua la capacità delle imprese di intrattenere scambi e di estendere i loro affari all'estero, aumentando a loro volta le esportazioni.

I problemi che affrontano gli studenti nel corso dell'apprendimento delle lingue dipendono dal metodo di insegnamento e non dalla capacità linguistica. Pertanto, occorre attuare nelle scuole nuovi metodi al fine di promuovere l'apprendimento delle lingue straniere.

Può la Commissione comunicare come intende incoraggiare e sostenere lo sviluppo e l'adozione di nuovi metodi volti a promuovere l'apprendimento delle lingue straniere in ogni singolo Stato membro?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2013)

L'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea stabilisce che l'Unione contribuisce, tra l'altro, «a sviluppare la dimensione europea dell'istruzione, segnatamente con l'apprendimento e la diffusione delle lingue degli Stati membri», ma ribadisce anche che essa rispetta appieno «la responsabilità degli Stati membri per quanto riguarda il contenuto dell'insegnamento e l'organizzazione dei sistemi di istruzione, nonché delle loro diversità culturali e linguistiche».

Il miglioramento delle competenze in lingue straniere costituisce per la Commissione una priorità e un fattore fondamentale per promuovere l'inclusione sociale e l'identità europea, incoraggiare la libera circolazione delle persone, aiutare i cittadini a cogliere le opportunità di apprendimento e di lavoro e aiutare le imprese ad avvantaggiarsi della crescente integrazione dei mercati internazionali.

Le risultanze dell'Indagine europea sulle competenze linguistiche ([1]) pubblicata nel giugno dell'anno scorso, indica che in Europa gli studenti hanno in generale un basso livello di competenze linguistiche e che molti di essi non apprendono una seconda lingua straniera. Per migliorare l'insegnamento delle lingue e monitorare i progressi la Commissione ha proposto di recente un parametro di riferimento delle competenze linguistiche nel documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione «Language competences for employability, mobility and growth» ([2]) (Competenze linguistiche per l'occupabilità, la mobilità e la crescita). Sulla base di valide prove esperienziali questo documento contiene consigli rivolti agli Stati membri sul modo per accrescere l'efficienza e l'efficacia della loro istruzione linguistica ed illustra le azioni che saranno adottate dalla Commissione per sovvenirvi.

([1]) Cfr. la relazione finale, http://ec.europa.eu/languages/eslc/docs/en/final-report-escl_en.pdf
([2]) Cfr. SWD(2012) 372 final, http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw372_en.pdf

Il miglioramento dell'insegnamento e dell'apprendimento delle lingue e la promozione della diversità linguistica rientrano anche tra le sei priorità del nuovo programma «Erasmus per tutti» (2014-2020). ([3])

([3]) Cfr. COM(2011) 788 final, 23.11.2011, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/doc/legal_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011410/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 December 2012)

Subject: Compulsory study of a second language

Nearly all primary and secondary school students in EU countries are obliged to study at least one modern foreign language up to their final year. Many students study two. However, Italy, the Republic of Ireland and the UK are the exceptions, where learning a foreign language in school is not compulsory.

The call for students to learn a foreign language stems not only from economic needs but also from the need for improved security and diplomacy; in particular, a better knowledge of different cultures and languages is needed in order to better understand threats to the state and to improve the performance of the foreign services.

Languages are extremely beneficial to the economy in two senses. Firstly, language skills improve a job candidate's chances of selection, which keeps unemployment down. The UK National Centre for Languages (CILT) reports on its website that 36% of employers recruit people with languages, 49% of employers are dissatisfied with school leavers' language skills and 95% of London employers think that language skills are important for the London economy.

Secondly, a high number of employees with language skills enhance companies' ability to engage in trade and to expand their business abroad, in turn enhancing exports.

The problems students face when learning languages are the fault of teaching methods, not language ability. Therefore, new methods need to be implemented in schools in order to boost the learning of foreign languages.

How does the Commission intend to encourage and support the development and adoption of new methods to boost the learning of foreign languages in every single Member State?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that the action of the European Union will, *inter alia*, aim at 'developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States,' but also underlines that it will fully respect 'the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.'

Improving foreign language competences is a priority for the Commission and a key step in promoting social inclusion and European identity, enhancing the free circulation of people, helping citizens to seize learning and professional opportunities and helping European enterprises to take advantage of the ongoing integration of international markets.

The findings of the European Survey on Language Competences ([1]), published in June last year, show that pupils in Europe generally have a low level of language competences, and many of them do not even learn a second foreign language. To improve language teaching and monitor progress, the Commission recently proposed a benchmark for language competences in the Staff Working Document 'Language competences for employability, mobility and growth' ([2]). Based on sound empirical evidence, this document contains advice to Member States on how to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their language education and presents the actions that will be taken by the Commission to support them.

Improvement of the teaching and learning of languages and promotion of linguistic diversity are also mentioned as one of the six priorities of the new 'Erasmus for All' programme (2014-2020) ([3]).

([1]) See Final Report, http://ec.europa.eu/languages/eslc/docs/en/final-report-escl_en.pdf
([2]) See SWD(2012) 372 final, http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw372_en.pdf
([3]) See COM(2011) 788 final, 23.11.2011, http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/doc/legal_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-011411/12
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(17. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Rindfleischeinfuhren aus Brasilien — Atypische Form von BSE

Die Weltorganisation für Tiergesundheit (OIE) hat am 7. Dezember 2012 die Entdeckung einer atypischen Form der Bovinen Spongiformen Enzephalopathie (bovine spongiform encephalopathy / BSE) in der brasilianischen Region Paraná bestätigt ([1]). Dort trat diese neue atypische Form bereits im Dezember 2010 bei einer 13 Jahre alten Mutterkuh auf. Nach einem ersten negativen Test auf BSE im April 2011 in einem Labor in Brasilien wurde die Probe an ein weiteres brasilianisches Institut gesandt, wo man im Juni 2012 — also 14 Monate nach der ersten Untersuchung und 19 Monate nach dem tatsächlichen Auftreten — BSE feststellte. Am 6. Dezember 2012 — zwei Jahre nach dem Tod der mit BSE infizierten Kuh — bestätigte die OIE durch den insgesamt dritten Test die Existenz einer neuen atypischen Form von BSE. Aufgrund dieser Erkenntnisse verhängten Japan, China und Südafrika einen Einfuhrstopp für brasilianisches Rindfleisch.

Vor diesem Hintergrund wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung folgender Fragen gebeten:

1. Laut der Marktzugangs-Datenbank der GD Handel importierte die EU27 alleine im Jahr 2011 18 000 Tonnen Rindfleisch aus Brasilien. Kann die Kommission darüber Auskunft geben, ob die Kontrollstellen der Mitgliedstaaten bei Rindfleischeinfuhren aus Brasilien nähere Untersuchungen veranlasst haben bzw. ob Kontrollen der Mitgliedstaaten zu gleichen oder ähnlichen Resultaten wie jenen der OIE geführt haben?

2. Welche konkreten Schritte erwägt die Kommission, um im Rahmen der aktuellen Entwicklungen die Gesundheit der europäischen Verbraucher und Verbraucherinnen sicherzustellen, wenn sich im Gegenzug der Ständige Ausschuss für die Lebensmittelkette und Tiergesundheit für eine Lockerung der BSE-Tests innerhalb der EU ausgesprochen hat?

3. Wie sieht die Kommission die Möglichkeit eines zeitlich befristeten WTO-konformen Einfuhrstopps für brasilianisches Rindfleisch zum Schutze der Europäerinnen und Europäer vor gesundheitsgefährdendem Rindfleisch? Wann könnte ein solcher Einfuhrstopp in Kraft treten?

4. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Auswirkungen der aktuellen Entwicklungen, vor allem die lange Erhebungszeit von zwei Jahren, vor dem Hintergrund der aktuellen Handelsverhandlungen mit dem Mercosur?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(25. Januar 2013)

Bei der vom Referenzlabor der Weltorganisation für Tiergesundheit (OIE) durchgeführten Untersuchung konnte die BSE-Form des in Brasilien aufgetretenen Falls nicht bestätigt werden. Außerdem gelten die von der OIE empfohlenen oder durch die Verordnung durchgesetzten Standards und Beschränkungen unabhängig von der BSE-Form. Die OIE erkennt keine atypische Form von BSE als eigenständige Einheit für die Zwecke ihrer internationalen Standards an. Daher berührt die Aussage der brasilianischen Behörden, es habe sich um einen Fall atypischer BSE gehandelt, nicht die Haltung der Kommission.

1. Das Einfuhrkontrollmuster der Mitgliedstaaten für Rindfleisch aus Brasilien wurde nicht geändert, da nur Gehirnproben auf BSE getestet werden können.

2. Die Kommission hat die OIE um erneute Bewertung des BSE-Status' Brasiliens ersucht. Wie dann in diesem Fall weiter vorgegangen wird, hängt von den Schlussfolgerungen dieser erneuten Bewertung ab.

3. Da von Rindfleisch kein BSE-Risiko ausgeht, sieht die Kommission keine weitere Beschränkung für brasilianisches Rindfleisch im Zusammenhang mit BSE vor. Sollte jedoch der BSE-Status Brasiliens von der OIE von „vernachlässigbares Risiko" auf „kontrolliertes Risiko" heruntergestuft werden, würden für bestimmte, von Rindern stammende Erzeugnisse, außer Rindfleisch, besondere Einfuhrbedingungen gelten.

([1]) http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/temp/reports/en_imm_0000012682_20121207_181754.pdf

4. Das Kapitel zu den gesundheitspolizeilichen und pflanzenschutzrechtlichen Maßnahmen des künftigen Abkommens mit den Mercosur-Staaten sieht vor, dass die zwischen den Parteien gehandelten Produkte die gesundheitspolizeilichen Bedingungen der einführenden Partei erfüllen müssen. Die derzeitige Lage in Brasilien dürfte die laufenden Verhandlungen mit dem Mercosur nicht beeinträchtigen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011411/12
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Beef imports from Brazil — atypical form of BSE

On 7 December 2012, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) confirmed the discovery of an atypical form of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the region of Paraná in Brazil ([1]). This atypical form had already arisen in a 13-year-old mother cow in December 2010. After an initial negative test for BSE in April 2011 at a laboratory in Brazil, the sample was sent to another institute in Brazil, where in June 2012 — i.e. 14 months after the first test and 19 months after the condition had arisen — the sample was found to be infected with BSE. On 6 December 2012 — two years after the death of the BSE-infected cow — the OIE confirmed, by means of the third test in total, the existence of a new atypical form of BSE. On the basis of this information, Japan, China and South Africa banned imports of Brazilian beef.

1. According to the 'market access database' of DG Trade, the EU-27 imported 18 000 tons of beef from Brazil in 2011 alone. Can the Commission indicate whether the Member States' inspectorates ordered more stringent checks on beef imported from Brazil or whether checks by the Member States yielded the same or similar results to those by the OIE?

2. What specific steps is the Commission considering with the aim of protecting the health of European consumers in the light of current developments, given that the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health has responded by advocating that BSE tests be relaxed within the EU?

3. What view does the Commission take of the possibility of a temporary import ban on Brazilian beef, in accordance with WTO rules, to protect European consumers against beef which might endanger their health? When could such an import ban enter into force?

4. What is the Commission's assessment of the impact of the current developments, particularly the long time — two years — taken to obtain the relevant information, against the background of the current trade negotiations with MERCOSUR?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

The analysis conducted by the reference laboratory of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) could not confirm the type of the Brazilian BSE case. Furthermore, the standards and restrictions recommended by the OIE or enforced by the regulation are the same regardless of the type of BSE. The OIE does not recognise an atypical form of BSE as a distinct entity for the purpose of its international standards. Therefore, the claim by the Brazilian authorities that this was an atypical BSE case does not affect the position of the Commission.

1. The import control pattern of beef imported from Brazil by the Member States has not been altered since testing for BSE can only be done on brain samples.

2. The Commission has asked the OIE for a reassessment of the Brazilian BSE status. Any further step with regards to this case will depend on the conclusions of this reassessment.

3. Considering that no risk of BSE is associated with bovine meat, the Commission does not foresee any future restriction on Brazilian beef in relation to BSE. However, if the BSE status of Brazil would be downgraded by the OIE from negligible risk to controlled risk, specific import conditions would apply to certain products of bovine origin other than bovine meat.

4. The SPS Chapter of the Agreement under negotiation with Mercosur foresees that the products traded between the Parties shall fully meet the sanitary conditions of the importing Party. The current situation in Brazil should not affect the ongoing negotiation with Mercosur.

([1]) http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/temp/reports/en_imm_0000012682_20121207_181754.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-011412/12
an die Kommission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(17. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Verbot des Inverkehrbringens von unter Einsatz von Tierversuchen hergestellten Kosmetika

Gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1223/2009 gilt ab März 2013 ein Verbot des Imports von unter Einsatz von Tierversuchen hergestellten Kosmetika in die EU. Im Rahmen des Hearings durch das Europäische Parlament am 13. November 2012 hat sich der damals noch designierte EU-Kommissar für Gesundheit Dr. Tonio Borg für die Einhaltung dieser Frist ausgesprochen. Medienberichten zufolge erwägt die Kommission jedoch immer noch die Verschiebung der Frist bzw. Ausnahmenregelungen.

1. Plant die Kommission tatsächlich die Einführung von Ausnahmen vom Verbot des Inverkehrbringens von unter Einsatz von Tierversuchen erzeugten Kosmetika, vor allem die Verschiebung der für März 2013 angesetzten Frist?

2. Welchen Umfang und welche Form sollen diese Ausnahmen laut den Plänen der Kommission annehmen?

3. Bis wann sollen diese Ausnahmen laut den Plänen der Kommission gelten?

4. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission diese Ausnahmen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(30. Januar 2013)

Gemäß den geltenden Rechtsvorschriften muss das Verbot des Inverkehrbringens von kosmetischen Mitteln, deren endgültige Zusammensetzung oder deren Bestandteile bzw. Kombinationen von Bestandteilen an Tieren getestet wurden, spätestens am 11. März 2013 vollständig umgesetzt werden, damit die Bestimmungen der Kosmetikrichtlinie ([1]) eingehalten werden. Um diese Frist verlängern oder eine Ausnahmeregelung einführen zu können, müsste die Kosmetikrichtlinie bzw. die Kosmetikverordnung ([2]), die ab 11. Juli 2013 an die Stelle der Kosmetikrichtlinie tritt, im Wege des ordentlichen Gesetzgebungsverfahrens geändert werden.

Die Kommission wird dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat in den nächsten Monaten mitteilen, zu welchen Schlussfolgerungen sie in dieser Angelegenheit letztendlich gelangt ist.

([1]) Richtlinie 76/768/EWG des Rates vom 27. Juli 1976 zur Angleichung der Rechtsvorschriften der Mitgliedstaaten über kosmetische Mittel, ABl. L 262 vom 27.9.1976.

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1223/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 30. November 2009 über kosmetische Mittel, ABl. L 342 vom 22.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011412/12
to the Commission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Ban on placing on the market cosmetics produced with the aid of animal testing

Pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009, it will be prohibited from March 2013 to import into the EU cosmetics produced with the aid of animal testing. At the hearing by the European Parliament on 13 November 2012, the then Commissioner-designate for health, Dr Tonio Borg, advocated that this date should be adhered to. However, according to reports in the media, the Commission is still considering deferring it or allowing exemptions.

1. Is the Commission indeed planning to allow exemptions from the ban on placing on the market cosmetics produced with the aid of animal testing, and particularly to defer the introduction of the ban to some time after March 2013?

2. How extensive does the Commission intend these exemptions to be, and what form are they expected to take?

3. Until when does the Commission intend that these exemptions should remain in force?

4. How does the Commission justify these exemptions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2013)

The existing legislation sets 11 March 2013 as the final date for the full application of the marketing ban in relation to cosmetic products where either the final formulation or the ingredients or combination of ingredients have been subject to animal testing in order to meet the requirements of the Cosmetics Directive ([1]). To defer this date or introduce a derogation mechanism would require an amendment by ordinary legislative procedure of the Cosmetics Directive, respectively the Cosmetics Regulation ([2]), which replaces the Cosmetics Directive as of 11 July 2013.

The Commission will report its final assessment of the situation to the European Parliament and the Council in the coming months.

([1]) Council Directive of 27 July 1976 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products, OJ L 262, 27.9.1976.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ L 342, 22.12.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011413/12
al Consiglio
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(17 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Utilizzo delle zone franche nei paesi dell'UE maggiormente colpiti dalla crisi economica

In data 15.3.2012 l'interrogante ha presentato alla Commissione europea l'interrogazione E-002893/2012 dal titolo «Utilizzo delle zone franche contro la crisi recessiva nell'UE», chiedendo alla Commissione di valutare la possibilità di istituire zone franche, in particolare in Grecia e, salvo differenze, anche nel resto del territorio dell'UE. La Commissione si è limitata a effettuare una valutazione della compatibilità delle zone franche rispetto alla normativa UE vigente in materia di concorrenza e di aiuti di Stato (risposta trasmessa in data 14.6.2012). Nella risposta fornita l'11 dicembre scorso dalla Commissione all'interrogazione del 27.12.2011 (E-008553/2012) si afferma che sono in atto riforme volte a migliorare l'ambiente di lavoro e aumentare la competitività, e si precisa che l'esperienza dei servizi della Commissione con le Zone Economiche Speciali è attualmente oggetto di revisione. L'ipotesi di istituire Zone Economiche Speciali per risolvere la crisi greca e la specifica attenzione dedicata a tale argomento sono testimoniate da proposte rigorose e autorevoli. Si vedano, ad esempio, il Piano anticrisi del Governo tedesco intitolato «Six-Point Growth Plan» (fonte: periodico «Der Spiegel» del 25.5.2012) o la proposta presentata nel settembre scorso dal Presidente del PE, M. Schulz, (cui successivamente ha fatto eco una identica proposta di Hans Peter Keitel, presidente della Federazione delle industrie tedesche — BDI), dove si propone di non limitare le Zone Economiche Speciali a particolari settori dell'economia greca, ma di includere tutto il paese in una sorta di «Zona Economica Speciale all'interno della zona euro», ossia una «Zona Economica Speciale — Grecia», amministrata da personale straniero dell'UE.

1. Alla luce delle predette autorevoli proposte, può dire il Consiglio se nella situazione attuale sia stata presa in considerazione la possibilità di istituire zone franche nell'UE? Nello specifico, queste zone franche verrebbero istituite nei soli paesi che abbiano fatto ricorso ad aiuti UE o anche negli altri Stati in recessione, come misura di incentivo per la crescita?

2. In caso di risposta affermativa, può indicare il Consiglio quali misure intende adottare per agevolare la creazione, da parte dei singoli governi nazionali, di ulteriori zone franche nei propri territori? Può inoltre dire il Consiglio se sarà valutata la possibilità di deroghe eccezionali all'attuale regime UE in materia di aiuti di Stato?

Risposta
(15 aprile 2013)

A norma dell'articolo 155, paragrafo 1, del regolamento (CE) n. 450/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2008, che istituisce il codice doganale comunitario (Codice doganale aggiornato) ([1]), gli Stati membri possono destinare talune parti del territorio doganale della Comunità a zona franca. Per ogni zona franca, lo Stato membro stabilisce l'area interessata e i punti di entrata e di uscita.

Ogni Stato membro può pertanto istituire, in qualsiasi momento, zone franche, a condizione che rispettino la normativa dell'UE.

La proposta di regolamento che istituisce il codice doganale dell'Unione, attualmente all'esame del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, non modifica le norme relative alla determinazione delle zone franche, che rimangono nella sfera di competenza degli Stati membri.

Per quanto concerne le regole di concorrenza, spetta alla Commissione europea assicurare che gli aiuti concessi da uno Stato membro o mediante fondi statali siano compatibili con il mercato interno.

([1]) GU L 145 del 4.6.2008, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011413/12
to the Council
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Setting up free zones in Member States hardest hit by the economic crisis

In my question of 15 March 2012 on using free zones as a means of combating the recession in the EU (E-002893/2012), I asked the Commission for its views on the feasibility of setting up free zones in Greece and, with due regard for the specific circumstances obtaining in each area, throughout the EU. In its answer of 14 June 2012, the Commission merely gave an assessment of the compatibility of such zones with EU competition and state-aid rules. In its answer of 11 December 2012 to Question E-008553/2012 of 27 September 2012 the Commission stated that reforms were being made with a view to improving the business environment and enhancing competiveness and that the relevant Commission departments were conducting a review of the experience gained with special economic zones. The serious thought being given to the idea of setting up special economic zones with a view to tackling the crisis in Greece is reflected in a number of authoritative proposals that have been made on the matter. These include the six-point growth plan put forward by the German Government (see *Der Spiegel* article of 25 May 2012) and the proposal made in September 2012 by the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz (which was followed by an identical proposal from the President of the Federation of German Industries (BDI), Hans Peter Keitel), not to confine the special economic zones scheme to specific sectors of the Greek economy but to make the whole of the country 'a sort of special economic zone within the eurozone' which would be administered by foreign EU personnel.

1. In the light of these proposals, can the Council say whether the feasibility of setting up free zones in the EU with a view to addressing the current situation has been looked into and whether such zones would be set up only in Member States in receipt of EU aid or also in the other Member States currently in recession, as a means of boosting growth?

2. If such a scheme is adopted, what steps will the Council take to facilitate the establishment by Member State governments of further free zones? Will due consideration be given to the option of granting special exemptions from EU state-aid rules?

Reply
(15 April 2013)

Pursuant to Article 155(1) of Regulation (EC) No 450/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008, laying down the Community Customs Code (Modernised Customs Code) ([1]), Member States may designate parts of the customs territory of the Community as free zones. For each free zone the Member State shall determine the area covered and define the entry and exit points.

Free zones could therefore be set up at any time by any Member State, as long as they abide by EC law.

The proposal for a regulation laying down Union Customs Code, which is currently being examined by the European Parliament and the Council, does not amend the rules concerning the designation of free zones, which remain under the remit of Member States.

As for competition rules, it is for the European Commission to ensure that aid granted by a Member State or through state resources is compatible with the internal market.

([1]) OJ L 145, 4.6.2008, p. 1.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor P-011414/12
za Komisijo
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(17. december 2012)

Zadeva: Poizvedovanje glede časa zaključka primera C-84/11

Pišem vam v povezavi s pritožbo št. CHAP(2011)03305, ki zadeva omejitve za ustanovitev lekarn, s katerimi se soočajo predvsem zasebno vodene lekarne v primerjavi z javnimi zavodi.

V pismu, ki ga je stranka v postopku prejela iz Generalnega direktorata Evropske komisije za notranji trg in storitve na dan 25. 1. 2012, v evidenci pod številko MARKT E1/NSE7gc – Ares(2012)37393, je zapisano, da bo odločitev o predstavljenem primeru odvisna od razsodbe Sodišča Evropske unije v podobnem primeru na Finskem (C-84/11 Susisalo e.a.).

Evropska unija je letos praznovala 20. obletnico enotnega trga in ponosni smo na pozitivne spremembe, ki jih je ta prinesel potrošnikom. Hkrati pa smo ugotovili, da še vedno obstaja veliko ovir, in ena od njih je dokončna vzpostavitev nediskriminacijske konkurence na trgu. Glede na to, da se omenjena pritožba vleče že nekaj let, je vzpostavitev dejanskega enotnega trga vprašljiva.

Zato vas sprašujem:

1. Kakšen je časovni okvir, v katerem pričakujete proceduralni zaključek primera C-84/11?

2. Na podlagi katerih podatkov se je Komisija odločila, da primer CHAP(2011)03305 veže na primer C-84/11? Slednji namreč ne zajema vseh vsebin prvega, saj se nanaša ne le na postopek izdajanja dovoljenj ter ozemeljske in demografske zahteve, temveč tudi na horizontalno in vertikalno vključevanje, financiranje in obdavčenje delovanja, izravnalno shemo zavarovanja ter lastništvo lekarn.

3. Ali boste o zaključku primera obvestili slovensko stranko v postopku CHAP(2011)03305?

Odgovor komisarja Barnierja v imenu Komisije
(14. februar 2013)

Službe Komisije so 19. januarja 2012 pritožniku poslale dopis, v katerem je bilo navedeno, da namerava Komisija glede na sodno prakso Sodišča v zvezi z omejitvami za ustanovitev lekarn zaključiti postopek v zadevi. Pritožnik je bil pozvan, naj pošlje kakršne koli nove informacije, ki bi lahko spremenile to oceno. Ker nadaljnje informacije niso bile predložene, je bil postopek v zadevi 24. aprila 2012 zaključen. Pritožnik je bil o tem obveščen.

Komisija je pritožnika opozorila na zadevo C-84/11, ki jo je takrat obravnavalo Sodišče. Čeprav se je ta zadeva nanašala na nekatere omejitve, je bilo temeljno vprašanje, ali je dejstvo, da se javna institucija, ki zagotavlja farmacevtske storitve, ugodneje obravnava od zasebne lekarne, združljivo s pravom EU.

Sodišče je v sodbi z dne 21. junija 2012 menilo, da evropska zakonodaja državam članicam ne preprečuje, da bi bila javna institucija deležna ugodnejše obravnave, če dejansko sodeluje pri opravljanju posebnih nalog za zagotovitev določene ravni varovanja javnega zdravja, kot so na primer izobraževanje, raziskovanje in nekatere posebne storitve v zvezi s pripravo posameznih redkih farmacevtskih pripravkov. Čeprav se je zadeva C-84/11 v primerjavi z zadevo CHAP (2011) 03305 nanašala le na nekatere omejitve, bi sedanji pristop Sodišča pomenil, da bi lahko ista utemeljitev veljala za druge omejitve, ki vplivajo na lekarne v zasebni lasti (kot v zadevi CHAP (2011) 03305).

Pritožnik v zadevi CHAP (2011) 03305 bo obveščen o sodbi Sodišča v zadevi C-84/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011414/12
to the Commission
Romana Jordan (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Enquiry concerning the conclusion of Case C-84/11

I am writing in connection with complaint No CHAP(2011)03305, which concerns the restrictions on setting up pharmacies that are encountered mainly by privately run pharmacies rather than public institutions.

In a letter which the party in the procedure received from the Commission Directorate-General for the internal market and Services on 25 January 2012, recorded in evidence under item No MARKT E1/NSE7gc — Ares(2012)37393, it is stated that a decision on the case will depend on the Court of Justice judgment in a similar case in Finland (C-84/11 Susisalo e.a.).

This year the European Union celebrated the 20th anniversary of the single market and we can be proud of the positive changes it has brought for consumers. But at the same time it is clear that many challenges remain, one of which is to fully establish non-discriminatory competition in the market. The very fact that this complaint procedure has been in progress for some years already raises questions about the nature of the single market.

I would therefore like to ask:

1. When do you expect the procedure in Case C-84/11 to be concluded?

2. On the basis of what information did the Commission decide to link case CHAP(2011)03305 to Case C-84/11? The latter case does not contain all the elements of the former, which refers not only to the procedure for issuing licences and territorial and demographic requirements, but also to horizontal and vertical inclusion, financing and taxation of operations, the insurance equalisation scheme and the ownership of pharmacies.

3. Will you inform the Slovene party in procedure CHAP(2011)03305 when the case is concluded?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

On 19 January 2012, the Commission services sent a letter to the complainant indicating that, in the light of the case law of the Court regarding restrictions to the establishment of pharmacies, the Commission was considering closing the case. The complainant was invited to transmit any new information likely to change this assessment. In the absence of any further information, the case was closed on 24 April 2012. The complainant was informed of the closure.

The Commission had drawn the attention of the complainant to Case C-84/11, at the time under examination by the Court. Even though this case concerned certain restrictions, the general underlying issue was that of the compatibility with EC law of a more favourable treatment of a public institution providing pharmaceutical services than of a private pharmacy.

In its judgment delivered on 21 June 2012, the Court held that European law does not preclude Member States from treating more favourably a public institution, provided it actually participates in the accomplishment of specific tasks to ensure a certain level of protection of public health, such as teaching, research, some special services relating to the manufacture of certain rare medicinal preparations. Even though only certain restrictions were at stake in Case C-84/11 as compared with CHAP case (2011) 03305, the Court's current approach would imply that the same rationale would apply to other restrictions affecting privately owned pharmacies (as raised in CHAP (2011) 03305).

The complainant in CHAP (2011) 03305 will be informed of the judgment of the Court in Case C-84/11.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-011415/12
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(17 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Pachetul de măsuri pentru încadrarea în muncă a tinerilor

În data de 5 decembrie Comisia Europeană a propus un Pachet de măsuri pentru încadrarea în muncă a tinerilor, ca răspuns la șomajul tot mai ridicat în rândul acestei categorii în foarte multe state membre.

În cadrul pachetului de măsuri, Comisia a propus, printre altele, și introducerea unei „garanții pentru tineri", prin care se garantează că toți tinerii până la 25 de ani beneficiază de o ofertă de muncă de calitate, de un program de formare continuă, de o ofertă de ucenicie sau de un stagiu în termen de patru luni de la ieșirea din sistemul de educație formală sau de la momentul pierderii locului de muncă.

Care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia intenționează să le ia pentru a încuraja statele membre să implementeze această recomandare?

Intenționează Comisia să acorde finanțare distinctă din cadrul Fondului Social European pentru implementarea „garanției pentru tineri"?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(5 februarie 2013)

În Pachetul său privind integrarea tinerilor pe piața muncii ([1]), Comisia recomandă ca statele membre să stabilească o garanție pentru tineret. Negocierile privind propunerea de recomandare a Consiliului au început deja în cadrul Consiliului în decembrie 2012, în vederea adoptării acesteia la începutul anului 2013. Comisia va monitoriza punerea în aplicare a schemelor de garantare pentru tineri ale statelor membre în cadrul semestrului european.

În plus, statele membre vor fi încurajate să mobilizeze fondurile structurale ale UE pentru a sprijini înființarea unor scheme de garantare pentru tineri în următoarea perioadă de programare (2014-2020). În această privință, propunerea de Regulament privind Fondul social european (FSE) pentru perioada 2014-2020 a Comisiei include o prioritate de investiții specifică a FSE în materie de integrare durabilă pe piața muncii a tinerilor care nu sunt încadrați în muncă și nici nu frecventează o formă de educație sau de formare. Negocierile între Comisie și statele membre privind contractele de parteneriat și programele operaționale corespunzătoare se vor concentra, de asemenea, pe sprijinul FSE pentru punerea în aplicare a schemelor de garantare pentru tineri.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final, 5 decembrie 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011415/12
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Package of measures for the recruitment of young people

On 5 December 2012, the Commission proposed a package of measures for the recruitment of young people in response to the increasing unemployment affecting them in many Member States.

As part of this package, the Commission recommended the adoption of a guarantee programme ensuring that all young people up to the age of 25 would be offered quality employment, continued education or training, apprenticeships or traineeships within four months of leaving formal education or becoming jobless.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to encourage the Member States to adopt this recommendation?

Does the Commission intend to earmark separate appropriations under the European Social Fund for the implementation of the guarantee programme for young people?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2013)

In its Youth Employment Package ([1]), the Commission recommends that the Member States establish a Youth Guarantee. Negotiations on the proposal for a Council Recommendation have started in the Council already in December 2012 with a view to the adoption in early 2013. The Commission will monitor the implementation of Member States' Youth Guarantee schemes within the framework of the European Semester.

In addition, Member States will be encouraged to mobilise EU Structural Funds to support the establishment of Youth Guarantee schemes in the next programming period (2014-2020). In this respect, the Commission's proposal for the European Social Fund (ESF) Regulation 2014-2020 includes a dedicated ESF investment priority for the sustainable labour market integration of young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training. The negotiations between the Commission and the Member States on the Partnership Contracts and the corresponding operational programmes will also focus on ESF support for the implementation of Youth Guarantee schemes.

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-011416/12
до Комисията
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)
(17 декември 2012 г.)

Относно: Последиците от изменението на климата

Последиците от изменението на климата поставят населението пред огромни предизвикателства. В бъдеще днешните деца и млади хора ще бъдат засегнати много повече, отколкото днешните възрастни. Те следва да бъдат добре подготвени за опазване на природната среда и за справяне с климатичните промени.

Комисията, като има предвид ангажиментите към децата и младите хора, залегнали в Договора от Лисабон и Хартата на основните права, член 6 от Рамковата конвенция на ООН по изменение на климата, член 24 от Хартата на основните права на Европейския съюз и доклада на Европейския парламент на тема „Към стратегия на ЕС за правата на детето“, споделя ли мнението, че държавите членки следва да положат допълнителни усилия за включване на устойчивото развитие и в частност на тези проблеми в училищните програми?

Има ли намерение Комисията да се ангажира по-пряко и значимо с младите хора по горепосочените въпроси, за да се преодолеят пречките, които не им позволяват да вземат участие при обсъждането и в процесите на вземане на решения на национално и европейско ниво?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Hedegaard от името на Комисията
(15 февруари 2013 г.)

В съответствие с разпоредбите на Договора определянето на съдържанието и организирането на системите на образование и обучение е отговорност изцяло на държавите членки.

Комисията се ангажира да предоставя информация относно последствията от изменението на климата и начина, по който действията в областта на климата могат да допринесат за постигане на посочените от научните среди цели за предотвратяване на опасното изменение на климата.

Информационната кампания на Комисията *A world you like With a climate you like* цели да информира всички европейски граждани, включително и учениците, за спешната необходимост от действия в областта на климата. Кампанията дава примери за решения и най-добри практики на граждани, предприятия и органи в целия Европейски съюз и показва как гражданите вече предприемат свои собствени мерки за намаляване на емисиите на въглероден диоксид, с което се допринася за климата и икономиката. Интерактивният уебсайт на кампанията, включващ и социална мрежа, е проектиран така, че да е интересен за младите хора. Уебсайтът е достъпен на всички 23 езика на ЕС и може да бъде използван от училищата като източник на информация при изготвянето на учебните програми и подготовката на учебните часове.

Освен това стратегията на ЕС за младежта засилва участието на младите хора в глобалните процеси на вземане на решения, изпълнение и проследяване на развитието на въпроси като изменението на климата. Повишаването на осведомеността относно изменението на климата бе един от приоритетите на програмата „Младежта в действие“ за 2010-2012 г.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011416/12
to the Commission
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Consequences of climate change

The consequences of climate change pose huge challenges for the population. The children and teenagers of today will be affected even more seriously than the current generation of adults. They need to be properly educated in how to protect the natural environment and in how to cope with climate changes.

In view of the commitments in respect of children and young people laid down in the Lisbon Treaty and Charter of Fundamental Rights, and in view of Article 6 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, of Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and of the European Parliament report 'Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child', does the Commission not consider that the Member States should redouble their efforts to include sustainable development, and the above issues in particular, in school curricula?

Does the Commission intend to engage more directly and meaningfully with young people on those issues, in order to overcome the obstacles that prevent them from taking part in the relevant discussions and decision-making processes at national and European level?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

In accordance with the Treaty, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States.

The Commission is committed to providing information about the consequences of climate change and how climate action can help meet the goals indicated by established science to avoid dangerous climate change.

The Commission's communication campaign *A world you like With a climate you like* seeks to inform all European citizens, including school students, of the urgent need for climate action. The campaign gives examples of solutions and best practices of citizens, businesses and authorities across the European Union, and shows how citizens are already taking their own low-carbon measures for the benefit of both the climate and the economy. The interactive campaign website — including social media — is designed to appeal to young people. The website is in all 23 EU languages and can be used by schools as a resource in designing curricula and lessons.

Moreover, the EU Youth Strategy enhances young people's participation in global processes of policy-making, implementation and follow-up on issues such as climate change. Awareness-raising on climate change was one of the priorities of the Youth in Action Programme 2010-2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011417/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Declaración del Parque de la Albufera (Valencia) como Parque Natural de la Humanidad

Recientemente los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) han informado de que la Alcaldesa de Valencia, Sra. Rita Barberá, ha trasladado al Comisario Europeo de Medio Ambiente, Janez Potocnik, su voluntad de que el Parque de la Albufera sea declarado Parque Natural de la Humanidad.

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de esta petición?

2. ¿Se ha iniciado algún trámite administrativo por parte de la Comisión para llevarla a la práctica?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de febrero de 2013)

Durante su última visita a España en noviembre de 2012, el Comisario de Medio Ambiente visitó la Albufera, donde la alcaldesa de Valencia, Rita Barberá, le manifestó su interés en que sea declarada patrimonio natural de la Humanidad.

Los lugares que constituyen patrimonio natural de la Humanidad son designados en virtud de la Convención sobre la protección del patrimonio mundial, cultural y natural ([1]). La Comisión Europea no tiene competencia en este asunto.

En Europa ya está reconocida la importancia de la Albufera como paraje natural. Ha sido incluida en la Directiva sobre hábitats ([2]) y en la Directiva sobre aves ([3]), y forma parte, en consecuencia, de la Red Natura 2000.

([1]) Convención sobre la protección del patrimonio mundial, cultural y natural, Unesco, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/archive/convention-es.pdf
([2]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([3]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20/7 de 26.1.2010).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011417/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Parque de la Albufera (Valencia) a Natural Heritage Site

The media department of the Community of Valencia (Spain) recently announced that the Mayoress of Valencia, Ms Rita Barberá, had sent a request to the European Commissioner for the Environment, Janez Poto, for the Parque de la Albufera to be declared a Natural Heritage Site

1. Is the Commission aware of this request?

2. Has the Commission begun any administrative procedure for implementing this request?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

During his last visit to Spain on November 2012, the Commissioner responsible for Environment, paid a visit to the Albufera, where the Mayor of Valencia, Rita Barberá, expressed her interest in the Albufera becoming a Natural Heritage Site.

Natural Heritage Sites are designated by the World Heritage Convention ([1]). The European Commission has no competence in this matter.

In Europe, the importance of the Albufera as a natural site has already been recognised. It has been designated under the provisions of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]) and the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC ([3]), and it is therefore part of the Natura 2000 network.

([1]) Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Unesco, 1972, http://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf

([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).

([3]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011418/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Fondos FEDER destinados a la Comunidad Valenciana

Recientemente los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) han relatado la existencia de algunos expedientes abiertos por la Comisión de Control Presupuestario del Parlamento Europeo y que afectan a los fondos FEDER destinados a la Comunidad Valenciana para el periodo 2007-2013.

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la existencia de dichos expedientes?

2. ¿Cuáles son las razones de que se hayan realizado los citados expedientes?

3. ¿Cuál es el contenido de los mismos?

4. ¿Qué cantidades han sido exigidas para su devolución o no han sido enviadas a la Comunidad Valenciana?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión y el Tribunal de Cuentas Europeo fueron los iniciadores de las auditorías de los organismos por medio de las cuales se detectaron deficiencias significativas en relación con los fondos del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) destinados a la Comunidad Autónoma de Valencia. Como consecuencia de ello, la Comisión de Control Presupuestario decidió realizar una visita sobre el terreno a España del 19 al 21 de junio de 2012. En el transcurso de dicha visita, se prestó especial atención a los dos organismos que habían sido objeto de auditorías: el Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (Impiva) y la Agencia Valenciana de Turismo (AVT).

Las auditorías habían revelado la existencia de deficiencias en el sistema de gestión y control que habían dado lugar a la certificación de gastos irregulares. Con respecto al Impiva, la Comisión ya había informado a las autoridades españolas, el 27 de julio de 2011, de su decisión de suspender los pagos intermedios del FEDER si no se aplicaban medidas correctoras. En cuanto a la AVT, las autoridades españolas decidieron retirar a este organismo de cualquier función que tuviera que ver con los fondos FEDER en Valencia.

Las autoridades regionales adoptaron todas las medidas correctoras necesarias para que los servicios de la Comisión pudieran reanudar los pagos al Impiva. Dichas medidas incluyeron correcciones financieras para retirar los gastos irregulares y salvaguardar así el presupuesto de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011418/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: ERDF funds to the Community of Valencia

The media in the Community of Valencia (Spain) have recently reported the existence of certain files opened by the European Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control involving ERDF funds to the Community of Valencia for 2007-2013.

1. Is the Commission aware of the existence of these files?

2. What is the reason for these files?

3. What do they contain?

4. What amounts have been ordered to be returned, or have not been sent to the Community of Valencia?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission and the European Court of Auditors were the initiators of the audits of the bodies spotting significant deficiencies concerning European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funds for the autonomous community of Valencia. As a result, the Committee on Budgetary Control decided to carry out an on-the-spot visit to Spain between 19-21 June 2012. During the visit, special attention was paid to the two main bodies concerned by the audits: the Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (IMPIVA) and the Agencia Valenciana de Turismo (AVT).

The audits have shown deficiencies in the management and control system which led to the certification of irregular expenditure. With regard to IMPIVA, the Commission had already informed the Spanish authorities on 27 July 2011 about its decision to suspend ERDF interim payments if no remedial actions were taken. With regard to AVT, the Spanish authorities decided to withdraw this body from any role involving ERDF funds in Valencia.

The regional authorities carried out all the corrective measures to enable the Commission services to resume payments for IMPIVA. These measures included financial corrections to withdraw irregular expenditure in order to safeguard the EU budget.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011419/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Devolución de ayudas concedidas a los estudios «Ciudad de la Luz» (Alicante)

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) se han hecho eco de una información señalando que el gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana propietario de los estudios cinematográficos «Ciudad de la Luz» situados en Alicante, han de devolver a la Unión Europea 256 millones de euros de ayudas recibidas.

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de esta información publicada en los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana?

2. ¿Cuáles son las razones por las que se pide esa devolución?

3. ¿Cuál es la cantidad exacta en euros que se pide que devuelva el Gobierno valenciano a la UE?

4. ¿Cuáles son los plazos vigentes para esa devolución?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de marzo de 2013)

Las informaciones divulgadas por los medios de comunicación a que alude Su Señoría se refieren sin duda a la decisión, tomada por la Comisión el 8 de mayo de 2012, de solicitar a las autoridades españolas que recuperen las ayudas abonadas a Ciudad de la Luz ([1]). La Comisión llegó a la conclusión de que la subvención de 265 millones de euros concedida por el Gobierno valenciano a los estudios cinematográficos Ciudad de la Luz no se atuvo a las condiciones de mercado y el beneficiario debe restituir dicha cantidad.

La ayuda debe recuperarse de Ciudad de la Luz, no de la Generalidad Valenciana, como da a entender Su Señoría. Los fondos recuperados los retendrán las autoridades españolas y no deberán abonarse a la UE. Todos los datos figuran en la Decisión de la Comisión ([2]).

En el plazo de dos meses a partir de la fecha de la Decisión, las autoridades españolas especificaron la manera en que iban a dar cumplimiento a lo establecido en esa Decisión. La ayuda debía recuperarse en el plazo de cuatro meses a partir de la fecha de la Decisión. Las autoridades españolas han notificado recientemente una propuesta de venta de los activos de Ciudad de la Luz, que la Comisión está examinando ahora.

([1]) Comunicado de prensa IP/12/459.
([2]) Asunto SA 22668; http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=3_SA_22668.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011419/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Withdrawal of aid for the 'Ciudad de la Luz' film studios (Alicante)

Media in the Autonomous Community of Valencia (Spain) reported recently that the Regional Government of Valencia, which owns the 'Ciudad de la Luz' film studios in Alicante, must repay EUR 256 million in subsidies back to the European Union.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts published by media in the Autonomous Community of Valencia?

2. Why is repayment of this money being requested?

3. How much exactly (in euro) is the Valencian Regional Government being asked to repay?

4. What are the time periods for repayment?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2013)

The media reports referred to by the Honourable Member no doubt refer to the Commission's decision on 8 May 2012 to ask the Spanish authorities to recover the aid paid to Ciudad de la Luz. ([1]) The Commission concluded that EUR 265 million in public funding granted by the Valencia Regional Government to the Ciudad de la Luz film studio complex was not provided on market conditions and needs to be paid back by the beneficiary.

The aid is to be recovered from Ciudad de la Luz, not from the Valencia Regional Government as the Honourable Member suggests. The recovered funds would be retained by the Spanish authorities. They would not need to be paid to the EU. The full details are available in the Commission decision. ([2])

Within two months of the decision, the Spanish authorities submitted details of how they would comply with this decision. The aid was due to have been recovered within four months of the decision. The Spanish authorities have recently notified a proposal to sell the assets of Ciudad de la Luz, which the Commission is currently examining.

([1]) Press release IP/12/459.
([2]) Case SA 22668; http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=3_SA_22668.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011420/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (Impiva) como mentor de Eurochile

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) han informado de que la Comisión Europea, a través de la Agencia ejecutiva de competitividad e innovación (EACI), ha nombrado al Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (Impiva) como mentor para Chile con el fin de dinamizar la cooperación empresarial y tecnológica entre Chile y Europa.

El Impiva, según esta información, sería el responsable de asistir a la fundación empresarial Eurochile en su aprendizaje sobre la metodología y las herramientas comunes de la «*Enterprise Europe Network*».

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de este nombramiento?

2. ¿Cuáles son los términos en que se ha establecido esta colaboración entre Impiva y Eurochile?

3. ¿Cuáles son los recursos financieros destinados a este proyecto?

4. ¿Qué actividades contempla el desarrollo de la colaboración entre Impiva y Eurochile?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de marzo de 2013)

1. EuroChile es una organización asociada de la Red Enterprise Europe, conforme a lo dispuesto en el Programa Marco de Competitividad e Innovación ([1]), y ayuda a las PYME europeas a encontrar socios comerciales en Chile.

Esto es coherente con la Comunicación de la Comisión «Pequeñas empresas en un mundo grande: una nueva asociación que ayude a las PYME a aprovechar oportunidades globales» ([2]), en la que se contemplan mercados emergentes, como los de América Latina. A fin de ayudar a las organizaciones de terceros países a integrarse mejor en la Red, la Agencia Ejecutiva de Competitividad e Innovación (AECI), de acuerdo con la Comisión, ha establecido un sistema de tutoría, que será facilitada por socios de la Red en la EU; la relación entre el Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (Impiva) y EuroChile forma parte de este sistema.

2. La relación de tutoría entre el Impiva y EuroChile se estableció sobre una base voluntaria, a raíz de una solicitud de tutores realizada por la AECI. El objetivo es ayudar al socio chileno a mejorar los servicios de apoyo que presta a las PYME europeas en asociación con las PYME locales.

3. EuroChile no recibe financiación del presupuesto de la UE para su participación en la Red. Se firmó un acuerdo de cooperación con la organización sobre la base de que dispone de sus propias fuentes de financiación. Además, no se han asignado fondos específicos a la iniciativa sobre tutoría. No obstante, los socios de la Red de la UE pueden solicitar el reembolso de los costes que pueden ser objeto de cofinanciación de la UE. Este es el caso del Impiva.

4. Las actividades del sistema de tutoría incluyen formación, actos conjuntos, reuniones entre socios, reuniones de tutoría, contactos por teléfono o Skype y correo electrónico, así como la posibilidad de un intercambio de personal. Los temas tratados abarcan la promoción de la Red, el uso de las herramientas de tecnologías de la información para los servicios de búsqueda de socios comerciales y los procesos seguidos por la Red para facilitar la transferencia transnacional de tecnología.

([1]) Decisión n° 1639/2006/CE, de 24 de octubre de 2006.
([2]) COM(2011) 702 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011420/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (IMPIVA) as mentor for Eurochile

Media in the Autonomous Community of Valencia (Spain) reported recently that the Commission, through the Executive Agency for Competition and Innovation (EACI), has appointed the Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Industria de la Generalitat Valenciana (IMPIVA) to act as a mentor for Chile, in a move to make business and technological cooperation between Chile and Europe more dynamic.

The press report says that the IMPIVA (a Valencian regional government body for small and medium-sized industry) will be tasked with helping to train the Eurochile Business Foundation in use of the methodology and common tools of the Enterprise Europe Network.

1. Is the Commission aware of this appointment?

2. On what terms has this collaboration between IMPIVA and Eurochile been established?

3. What funds have been allocated to this project?

4. What activities are envisaged under this collaboration between IMPIVA and Eurochile?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

1. EuroChile is a partner organisation of the Enterprise Europe Network, in accordance with the provisions of the CIP Framework Programme ([1]) and helps European SMEs to find business partners in Chile.

This is also consistent with the Commission's Communication 'Small Business Big world — a new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities', which includes emerging markets such as Latin America ([2]). To assist organisations from third countries to better integrate into the Network, the EACI, in agreement with the Commission, has established a mentoring scheme to be delivered by Network partners in the EU; the relationship between IMPIVA and EuroChile is part of this scheme.

2. The mentoring relationship between IMPIVA and EuroChile was established on a voluntary basis, following a request for mentors made by EACI. The aim is to help the Chilean partner improve the support services it delivers to European SMEs in partnership with local ones.

3. EuroChile receives no funding from the EU budget for its participation in the Network. A Cooperation Agreement was signed with the organisation on the basis that it has its own source of funding. In addition, there are no dedicated funds allocated to the mentoring initiative. Network partners in the EU may however claim reimbursement for costs that are eligible for co-financing by the EC. This is the case for IMPIVA.

4. Activities under the mentoring scheme include training, joint events, meetings between partners, mentoring meetings, contacts via telephone or Skype and e-mail as well as the possibility of a staff exchange. The topics covered range from Network promotion, the use of IT tools for business partnering services and the processes used by the Network to facilitate transnational technology transfer.

([1]) Decision No 1639/2006/EC (24 October 2006).
([2]) COM(2011) 702 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011421/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Retirada de ayudas al proyecto «Life» sobre medusas en Denia (Alicante)

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) han dado cuenta de que el Gobierno de España ha retirado su apoyo al proyecto europeo *«Life»* mediante el que se estaba investigando desde el año 2010 el comportamiento de las medusas en las aguas marítimas de Denia (Alicante).

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de estos hechos?

2. ¿Qué efectos puede tener esta negativa del Gobierno español a seguir participando en este proyecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de que el Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente español tiene la intención de retirar la cofinanciación que aporta al Proyecto LIFE08 NAT/ES/00064-Cubomed, por lo que ha estado en estrecho contacto tanto con este Ministerio como con el beneficiario encargado de la coordinación, con el fin de alcanzar posibles soluciones que garanticen la continuación de la contribución financiera del Ministerio al citado proyecto, por un lado, y de encontrar, en caso necesario, fuentes de financiación alternativas, por otro. La Comisión espera que el proyecto pueda llevarse felizmente a término y que el Ministerio mantenga su ayuda financiera.

En cuanto a las consecuencias que la retirada de la contribución del Ministerio pueda tener en el proyecto, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-880/11 y E-5466/12 de Raül Romeva i Rueda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011421/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Withdrawal of funding for the Life project on jellyfish in Denia (Alicante)

Media in the Autonomous Community of Valencia (Spain) reported recently that the Spanish Government has withdrawn its support for the EU Life project under which research has been carried out since 2010 into the behaviour of jellyfish in the sea off Denia (Alicante).

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. What effects might the Spanish Government's decision not to continue participating in this project have?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The Commission is aware that the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment intended to withdraw its co-financing from the Project LIFE08 NAT/ES/00064- CUBOMED. The Commission has been in close contact with the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment and the coordinating beneficiary to find possible solutions to ensure the continuation of the Ministry's financial contribution to the project and to find, if needed, alternative sources of funding. The Commission hopes for a successful implementation of the project and a continuation of the Ministry's financial support.

As to the consequences that the withdrawal of the Ministry's contribution could have on the project, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-880/11 and E-5466/12 by Raül Romeva i Rueda.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011422/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Proyecto «Comunidad interregional de aprendizaje para promover el éxito escolar»

Recientemente la Consejería de Educación, Formación y Empleo del Gobierno Autónomo de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) ha informado de su intención de desarrollar un proyecto con dos regiones alemanas y holandesas denominado «Comunidad interregional de aprendizaje para promover el éxito escolar». Este proyecto que tendría duración de dos años consiste en mejorar la cultura de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje e identificar los indicadores del abandono escolar temprano.

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de este proyecto europeo interregional?

2. ¿Colabora la Comisión de alguna manera en la puesta en marcha y el ejercicio de este proyecto?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión acoge con satisfacción la intención de la Comunidad Valenciana de cooperar con otras regiones de Europa para fomentar el rendimiento escolar. Esta forma de cooperación entre países ha resultado muy beneficiosa en el pasado para todos los países y regiones participantes.

La Comisión no tiene noticia de este proyecto y, por tanto, no participa en su aplicación. Según la información de que disponemos, la Comunidad Valenciana no ha solicitado financiación europea para apoyar el proyecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011422/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Interregional learning community for the promotion of educational achievement

The Ministry for Education, Training and Employment of the government of the autonomous community of Valencia (Spain) has recently announced its intention to develop a project with two regions in Germany and the Netherlands entitled 'Interregional learning community for the promotion of educational achievement'. The project will last for two years and is designed to improve the educational and learning culture in the regions in question and to identify the causes of early school leaving.

1. Is the Commission aware of this European interregional project?

2. Is the Commission involved in the implementation and running of this project in anyway?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission welcomes the intention of the autonomous community of Valencia to cooperate with other regions in Europe in order to promote educational achievement. This form of cooperation between countries has in the past proven to be very beneficial for all countries and regions involved.

The Commission is not aware of this project and therefore not involved in its implementation. To our information the community of Valencia has not applied for European funding to support the project.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011423/12
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Ejecución de los programas Feader en la Comunidad Valenciana (España)

A la luz de la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-009739/2012, se solicita copia de la información presentada en Madrid en noviembre 2012 sobre la situación del riesgo de liberación de compromisos respecto del PDR de la Comunidad Valenciana.

Se solicita asimismo copia de la declaración de gastos recibida por la Comisión Europea durante los tres primeros trimestres del 2012 y del volumen de fondos Feader que deben declararse en el trimestre octubre-diciembre 2012 para el programa de Valencia.

Y por último copia de esta misma información relativa al mismo periodo de 2011.

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de febrero de 2013)

Los servicios de la Comisión calculan el riesgo potencial de liberación de compromisos derivado de la aplicación del artículo 29, apartado 1, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1290/2005 ([1]) (norma N+2) por medio de distintas hipótesis, sobre la base de la declaración de gastos más actualizada ya efectuada (tercer trimestre de 2012), la última previsión de gastos enviada por las autoridades españolas a través de la base SFC (julio de 2012) y la declaración de gastos correspondiente al mismo período del año anterior (cuarto trimestre de 2011). Se contemplan dos situaciones hipotéticas:

Primera hipótesis: el importe del Feader que quedaba por gastar en 2012 se compara con las previsiones recibidas en julio de 2012. No hay ningún riesgo potencial de liberación de compromisos en el caso de Valencia.

Importe Feader por declarar en el cuarto trim. 2012 (EUR)	Previsiones EM cuarto trim. 2012 (EUR)	Riesgo potencial de liberación de compromisos (EUR)
6 309 575	18 491 920	0

Segunda hipótesis: el importe del Feader que quedaba por gastar en 2012 se compara con la declaración de gastos del cuarto trimestre de 2011 presentada en 2011. Existe un riesgo según la norma N+2:

Importe Feader por declarar en el cuarto trim. 2012 (EUR)	Cuarto trim. 2011 (EUR)	Riesgo potencial de liberación de compromisos (EUR)
6 309 575	159 113	6 150 461

La ejecución del programa de desarrollo rural de Valencia se ha ralentizado a partir del último trimestre de 2011, tal como indican las últimas declaraciones: primer trimestre de 2012: 205 563 euros; segundo trimestre de 2012: 205 103 euros; tercer trimestre de 2012: 1 862 510 euros.

Las declaraciones de 2011 ascienden a: primer trimestre de 2011: 6 156 569 euros; segundo trimestre de 2011: 7 485 961 euros; tercer trimestre de 2011: 4 957 373 euros; cuarto trimestre de 2011: 159 113 euros.

Cabe señalar que el resultado a finales de 2012 dependerá de la declaración de gastos real del cuarto trimestre de 2012, que se presentará en enero de 2013.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1290/2005 del Consejo, de 21 de junio de 2005, sobre la financiación de la política agrícola común, DO L 209 de 11.8.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011423/12
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Implementation of EAFRD programmes in the Autonomous Community of Valencia

In light of the answer given to Written Question E-009739/2012, could the Commission provide a copy of the information submitted in November 2012 in Madrid about the potential risk of decommitment of budget commitments to the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for the Autonomous Community of Valencia?

Could it also provide a copy of the declaration of expenditure that the Commission received for the first three quarters of 2012 and details on the amount of EAFRD funds allocated to the Valencia RDP which should be declared for the last quarter of 2012?

Could this information also be provided for the same periods in 2011?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The potential risk of decommitment due to the application of Article 29.1 of Regulation 1290/2005 ([1]) (N+2 rule), is calculated by the Commission services using different hypothesis, on the basis of the most updated declaration of expenditure already done (Q3-2012), the latest forecast of expenditure sent by the Spanish authorities by SFC (July 2012) and the declaration of expenditure for the same period of the previous year (Q4-2011). Two hypothetical scenarios are thus considered:

First: the EAFRD amount still to be spent in 2012 is compared with the forecast received in July 2012. There is no potential risk of decommitment for Valencia.

EAFRD amount to be declared in Q4-2012 (EUR)	Forecast MS Q4/2012 (EUR)	Potential risk of de-commitment (EUR)
6 309 575	18 491 920	0

Second: the EAFRD amount still to be spent in 2012 is compared with the declaration of expenditure Q4-2011 presented in 2011. A N+2 risk exists:

EAFRD amount to be declared in Q4-2012 (EUR)	Q4-2011 (EUR)	Potential risk of de-commitment (EUR)
6 309 575	159 113	6 150 461

The execution of the RDP of Valencia has slowed down from the last term of 2011, as revealed by the last declarations: Q1-2012: EUR 205 563; Q2-2012: EUR 205 103; Q3-2012: EUR 1 862 510.

The declarations in 2011 amounted to: Q1-2011: EUR 6 156 569; Q2-2011: EUR 7 485 961; Q3-2011: EUR 4 957 373; Q4-2011: EUR 159 113.

It should be noted that the result at the end of 2012 will depend on the real declaration of expenditure for the last quarter of 2012, Q4-2012, which will be submitted in January 2013.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005, of 21 June 2005, on the financing of the common agricultural policy, OJ L 209, 11.8.2005.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011424/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Compensación a los autores por las copias privadas

La Directiva 2001/29/CE, de 22 de mayo, que se aprobó con la finalidad de armonizar aspectos relativos a los derechos de autor, permite que los Estados regulen el derecho de reproducción de las obras creativas siempre que los autores reciban una compensación «equitativa». Las alternativas ofrecidas por los países miembros son diversas, por lo que puede afirmarse que no se ha conseguido esa deseada «armonización» por el Derecho comunitario europeo. Hace meses que la Comisión anunció la realización de un estudio para promover la efectiva armonización de esta normativa.

Recientemente, el Gobierno del Reino de España ha modificado el sistema de compensación a los autores (Real Decreto-Ley 20/2012, de 30 de noviembre) de tal modo que la cuantía de la compensación procederá de los presupuestos generales del Estado.

Por ello, pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿En qué fase se encuentra el análisis y estudio que anunció hace meses para armonizar el régimen de compensación a los autores? ¿Ha concretado la Comisión alguna conclusión?

2. ¿Qué opinión le merece a esa Comisión el cambio de modelo de indemnización establecido por el Gobierno español? ¿Considera que realmente se puede compensar de manera equitativa a los autores a través de la financiación pública derivada de los presupuestos generales del Estado?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de marzo de 2013)

La Directiva 2001/29/CE ([1]) dispone que los Estados miembros podrán establecer una excepción para las copias privadas a condición de que los titulares reciban una compensación equitativa. De conformidad con el considerando 35 del preámbulo de la Directiva, al determinar la forma de la compensación equitativa, deben tenerse en cuenta las circunstancias de cada caso concreto y el posible daño que el acto en cuestión haya causado a los titulares de los derechos. Los Estados miembros que hayan decidido aplicar la excepción a las copias privada tienen cierta libertad para determinar, dentro de los límites impuestos por el Derecho de la UE, la forma, las modalidades de financiación y de percepción y la cuantía de dicha compensación equitativa. En la mayoría de los Estados miembros, la compensación equitativa se realiza en forma de canon impuesto sobre los productos que se utilizan normalmente para sacar copias privadas.

Unos regímenes de cánones diversos redundan en detrimento del mercado interior, ya que crean obstáculos al comercio, en especial de equipos electrónicos y medios de comunicación. El proceso de mediación encabezado por el Sr. Vitorino se inició en abril de 2012 para abordar esos efectos perjudiciales, entre otras cosas. El Sr. Vitorino presentó sus recomendaciones al Miembro de la Comisión responsable de Mercado Interior y Servicios el 31 de enero de 2013. Partiendo de esas recomendaciones, la Comisión adoptará una decisión sobre las posibles medidas de seguimiento.

Al mismo tiempo, la Comisión sigue de cerca los cambios que se han introducido recientemente en la legislación española. A raíz de las denuncias presentadas por varias organizaciones representativas de los titulares de los derechos de autor, la Comisión ha iniciado un diálogo con las autoridades españolas a fin de detectar las disposiciones del ordenamiento español que podrían oponerse al Derecho de la UE.

([1]) Directiva 2001/29/CE relativa a la armonización de determinados aspectos de los derechos de autor y derechos afines a los derechos de autor en la sociedad de la información.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011424/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Compensation for rightholders for private reproductions

Under Directive 2001/29/EC of 22 May 2001, which was adopted with the aim of harmonising certain aspects of rightholders' rights, Member States may regulate reproduction rights for artistic and creative works so long as authors receive 'fair' compensation. Compensation systems continue to differ from one Member State to another, which means that Community law has failed to achieve the stated objective of 'harmonisation'. Months ago, the Commission announced that a study would be carried out to promote the effective harmonisation of this legislation.

The Spanish Government recently modified the compensation system for rightholders (Royal Decree-Law 20/2012 of 30 November), which means that compensation will now be funded from the national budget.

Can the Commission say:

1. What stage has been reached in the analysis and study announced months ago into the harmonisation of compensation rules for rightholders? Has the Commission arrived at a conclusion?

2. What does the Commission think of the new compensation system put in place by the Spanish Government? Does the Commission really believe that rightholders will receive fair compensation if they are paid using public money from the national budget?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

Directive 2001/29/EC ([1]) provides that Member States may allow an exception for private copying on condition that rightholders receive fair compensation. In accordance with Recital 35 in the preamble the directive, when determining the form of the fair compensation, account should be taken of the particular circumstances of each case and of the possible harm to the rightholders resulting from the act in question. Member States which have decided to implement the private copying exception have a certain freedom to determine, within the limits imposed by EC law, the form and detailed arrangements for financing and collection and the level of fair compensation. In most of these Member States fair compensation takes the form of levies imposed on goods that are typically used for private copying.

Disparate levy schemes have detrimental effects on the internal market, as they create barriers to trade, in particular in electronic equipment and media. The mediation process led by Mr Vitorino was initiated in April 2012 *inter alia* to address these detrimental effects. Mr Vitorino presented his recommendations to the Member of the Commission responsible for Internal Market and Services on 31 January 2013. On their basis the Commission will take a decision as to the possible follow-up.

At the same time, the Commission follows closely the changes which have been recently introduced to the Spanish law. Following the complaints lodged by several organisations representing rightholders, the Commission has started a dialogue with the Spanish authorities in order to identify provisions of Spanish law that could be in a potential conflict with EC law.

([1]) Directive 2001/29/EC on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011425/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Sustracción de órganos en China

Pese a las peticiones al Alto Comisionado de Naciones Unidas para los derechos humanos, la sustracción de órganos a detenidos sigue teniendo lugar en China. La mayoría a practicantes de Falun Gong, disidentes políticos, minorías uigures y tibetanas. Según una estimación elaborada por Amnistía Internacional, cerca de 2 000 presos han sido ejecutados en China cada año. Así pues, las prisiones y los centros de trabajo en China, en colaboración con hospitales afiliados al ejército y la policía china, eligen donantes de órganos entre los cientos de miles de detenidos para sus clientes (muchos provenientes del extranjero), matando prácticamente a aquellos cuyos órganos se han identificado como compatibles. Existen varios casos donde los pacientes fueron a China con previo aviso, como es el caso del Dr. Lavee, que tenía un paciente que necesitaba un corazón y fue notificado 2 semanas antes de la operación. Recientemente, este año, el Viceministro de salud chino Huang Jiefu señaló que los presos no son una buena fuente de órganos debido a que tienen enfermedades infecciosas. Además el Partido Comunista Chino (PCCh) ha admitido indirectamente que en China existe un mercado negro y una amplia red de sustracción de órganos en vida. Aunque se cree que en realidad se está intentando cubrir la verdadera dimensión de los crímenes y se pretende un lavado de cara por parte del Gobierno chino.

1. Estas prácticas atentan contra el derecho a la vida reconocido en el art. 2 de la Carta, contra la dignidad humana (art. 1 de la Carta), así como contra la prohibición de penas o tratos inhumanos o degradantes (art. 4 de la Carta). ¿Piensa la Comisión abrir una línea de investigación? ¿Está dispuesta a cerrar un diálogo con China?

2. La UE ya ha levantado su voz en el pasado contra las violaciones de los derechos humanos fuera de la UE. ¿Por qué la UE es reticente a actuar con transparencia y clarificación a través de las investigaciones con respecto a China?

3. En Europa, muchos hospitales y universidades enseñan a médicos chinos que posiblemente después regresen a China a aplicar dichos conocimientos de la medicina europea en la sustracción no ética de órganos. ¿Qué opina la UE al respecto? ¿Cree que dichos médicos y profesores son inconscientemente cómplices de estos crímenes contra la humanidad?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011617/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Extracción de órganos a detenidos en China

Pese a los esfuerzos realizados y las peticiones al Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los derechos humanos, se siguen extrayendo órganos a detenidos en China. La mayoría a practicantes de Falun Gong, disidentes políticos, minorías uigures y tibetanas. Informes oficiales publicados por las autoridades chinas documentaron 18 500 casos de trasplante de órganos entre 1994 y 1999. Según una estimación de Amnistía Internacional, cerca de 2 000 presos han sido ejecutados en China cada año. Aunque se ejecuten 2 000 presos, no todos esos prisioneros son elegibles para convertirse en donantes (debido a infecciones u otras enfermedades, por ej. la hepatitis, etc). Por lo tanto el número de donantes de órganos reales es aún más pequeño, y el suministro de órganos aún más inverosímil. Las prisiones y los centros de trabajo en China, en colaboración con hospitales afiliados al ejército y la policía china, eligen donantes de órganos entre los cientos de miles de detenidos para sus clientes (muchos del extranjero), matando prácticamente a aquellos cuyos órganos se han identificado como compatibles. Existen varios casos donde los pacientes fueron a China con previo aviso, como es el caso de un médico, que tenía un paciente que necesitaba un corazón y fue notificado 2 semanas antes de la operación. El Viceministro de salud chino, Huang Jiefu, señaló este año que los presos no son una buena fuente de órganos debido a que padecen enfermedades infecciosas, y el Partido Comunista Chino (PCCh) ha admitido indirectamente que en China existe un mercado negro y una amplia red de extracción de órganos en vida. Aunque se cree que en realidad se está intentando cubrir la verdadera dimensión de los crímenes y se pretende un lavado de cara por parte del Gobierno chino.

Estas prácticas atentan contra el derecho a la vida reconocido en el art. 2 de la Carta, contra la dignidad humana (art. 1 de la Carta), así como contra la prohibición de penas o tratos inhumanos o degradantes (art. 4 de la Carta). ¿Piensa la Comisión investigar estos casos? ¿Piensa cerrar un diálogo con China?

En el pasado la UE ya ha levantado su voz contra las violaciones de los derechos humanos fuera de la UE. ¿Por qué la UE es reticente a actuar con transparencia y claridad a través de las investigaciones con respecto a China?

Muchos hospitales y universidades europeos enseñan a médicos chinos, que después pueden regresar a China, a aplicar dichos conocimientos de la medicina europea en la extracción no ética de órganos. ¿Qué opina la Comisión al respecto? ¿Cree que dichos médicos y profesores son inconscientemente cómplices de estos crímenes?

Respuesta conjunta de la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de febrero de 2013)

La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta comparte la preocupación de Su Señoría en relación con la extracción y el tráfico de órganos. En sus contactos con China, la UE insiste en su oposición a la pena de muerte e insta a China, mientras dicha pena de muerte siga en vigor, a respetar plenamente las debidas garantías procesales en los delitos castigados con la pena capital. A la UE le inquieta el secretismo de las estadísticas de la pena de muerte y del trasplante de órganos, lo que imposibilita hacerse una idea exacta de la procedencia de los órganos trasplantados, y ha expresado su preocupación a China en relación con las prácticas que le constan de extracción de órganos de reos ejecutados, sobre todo porque el requisito legal de obtener el acuerdo escrito del donante no contempla adecuadamente la cuestión del consentimiento previo del donante en el caso de las personas que van a ser ejecutadas. La Unión Europea ha tomado nota de la declaración realizada por el viceministro chino de Sanidad en marzo de 2012 que informa de que China tiene previsto abolir la donación de órganos de los presos condenados a muerte en el plazo de cinco años. La UE respaldará todos los esfuerzos de China por promover la donación voluntaria. La UE ya ha abordado esta cuestión en anteriores rondas de diálogo sobre derechos humanos con China y seguirá haciéndolo.

En cuanto a la lucha internacional contra el tráfico de órganos, la Directiva 2011/36/UE ([1]) sobre la prevención de la trata de seres humanos establece que será un delito la trata de seres humanos a fines de extracción de órganos. El artículo 10 de la presente Directiva dispone que los Estados miembros ejerzan su competencia extraterritorial cuando el delito lo haya cometido uno de sus ciudadanos.

([1]) Directiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 abril de 2011, relativa a la prevención y lucha contra la trata de seres humanos y a la protección de las víctimas y por la que se sustituye la Decisión marco 2002/629/JAI del Consejo (DO L 101 de 15.4.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011425/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Organ harvesting in China

Despite repeated appeals to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, organs are still being removed from prisoners in China. The majority of organ removals are performed on Falun Gong practitioners, political dissidents and people from the Uyghur and Tibetan minorities. Amnesty International estimates that around 2 000 prisoners are executed in China every year. Prisons and labour camps in China collaborate with military hospitals and the Chinese police and choose organ donors from the hundreds of thousands of prisoners for their clients (many of whom are from other countries). Practically all those whose organs are identified as a match for someone are killed. On several occasions patients were informed in advance that a match had been found and travelled to China. One such case was reported by Dr Lavee, whose patient needed a new heart and who was informed two weeks before the operation that one had been found. Last year, the Chinese Deputy Health Minister, Huang Jiefu, said that prisoners were not a proper source of organs because they carried infectious diseases. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has also admitted in a roundabout way that there is a black market for organs in China and an extensive live organ harvesting network. It is generally thought, however, that attempts are being made to cover up the real scale of the crimes and that the Chinese government is trying to clean up its image.

1. These practices violate Article 2 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which enshrines the right to life, Article 1 on human dignity and also Article 4 on the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Will the Commission open an enquiry into this? Is the Commission prepared to end dialogue with China?

2. The EU has already spoken out in the past about human rights violations that have taken place outside the EU. Why is the EU reluctant to be open and transparent in relation to investigations concerning China?

3. Many hospitals and universities in Europe teach Chinese doctors, who may then return to China and apply this knowledge of European medicine in unethical organ removal procedures. What is the Commission's view on this? Does the Commission consider that these doctors and teachers are unwittingly becoming accomplices in these crimes against humanity?

Question for written answer E-011617/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 December 2012)

Subject: Removal of organs from detainees in China

Despite the efforts made and the petitions to the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights, organs are still being removed from detainees in China, the majority from Falun Gong followers, political dissidents, Uighur and Tibetan minorities. Official reports published by the Chinese authorities documented 18 500 cases of organ transplants between 1994 and 1999. According to estimates by Amnesty International, some 2 000 prisoners have been executed in China per year. Although 2 000 prisoners are executed, not all of them are suitable as donors (due to infections and other diseases, such as hepatitis, etc.). The number of real organ donors is therefore even smaller, and the supply of organs even more unrealistic. Prisons and labour camps in China, in collaboration with hospitals affiliated to the Chinese police and army, select organ donors from amongst hundreds of thousands of detainees for their clients (many from abroad), in practice killing those whose organs have been identified as compatible. There have been various cases of patients going to China with prior notice, as in the case of a doctor who had a patient needing a heart and who was notified two weeks before the operation. The Chinese Deputy Minster for Health, Huang Jiefu, said this year that prisoners were not a good source of organs because they have infectious diseases, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has admitted indirectly that there is a black market in China and a wide live organ removal network. However in reality it is believed that attempts are being made to hide the true scale of these crimes and that the Chinese government is attempting a whitewash.

These practices violate the right to life enshrined in Article 2 of the Charter, human dignity (Article 1 of the Charter), and the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 4 of the Charter). Does the Commission intend to investigate these cases? Does it intend to close a dialogue with China?

The EU has spoken out in the past against human rights violations outside of the EU. In the case of China, why is the EU reluctant to act transparently and clearly by means of investigations?

Many European hospitals and universities teach Chinese doctors, who can then return to China to apply their knowledge of European medicine in the unethical removal of organs. What is the Commission's opinion? Does it believe that these doctors and teachers are unwittingly accomplices to these crimes?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The HR/VP shares the Honourable Member's concern regarding organ harvesting and trafficking. In contacts with China, the EU stresses its opposition to the death penalty and urges China, so long as the death penalty remains in force, to ensure full due process rights in capital cases. The EU is concerned at the secrecy that surrounds both death penalty and organ transplant statistics, which makes it impossible to gain an accurate picture of the source of transplanted organs; it has expressed its concerns to China about its reported practice of harvesting organs from executed prisoners, especially as the legal requirement to obtain the written agreement of the donor does not adequately address the issue of donor consent by persons facing execution. The EU has taken note of a statement by the Chinese Vice-Minister of Health in March 2012 that China intends within the next five years to abolish organ donation from prisoners condemned to death; the EU will encourage any efforts by China to promote voluntary organ donation. The EU has already addressed this issue in past rounds of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue and will continue to do so.

Concerning the international fight against organ trafficking, Directive 2011/36/EU [1] on preventing trafficking in human beings provides that trafficking in persons for the purpose of the removal of organs shall be a criminal offence. Article 10 of this directive requires the Member States to exercise extra-territorial jurisdiction when the offence is committed by one of their own nationals.

[1] Directive 2011/36/EU of Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011426/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Falun Gong

Con motivo del 18° Congreso del Partido Comunista Chino (PCCh), la campaña contra los practicantes de Falung Gong se ha intensificado notablemente. Dicha campaña se prolonga desde 1999, pero las actividades contra Falun Gong y la severidad con las que se llevan a cabo, parecen haber aumentado este año debido a los preparativos del Congreso. Según Levi Browde, director ejecutivo del Centro de Información de Falun Dafa, las fuerzas de seguridad del partido utilizaron el concepto de «salvaguardar» el evento como excusa para perseguir a Falun Gong y tratar de reactivar la campaña.

Así pues, por ejemplo, en el distrito de Tianxin en la ciudad de Changsha, provincia de Hunan, se celebraron una serie de eventos a gran escala en un estadio deportivo, destinados a la preparación para «dar la bienvenida al 18° Congreso del Partido» y se llamó a los reclutas para reprimir la pacífica práctica de Falun Gong.

La primera orden era erradicar los yuanes escritos con lemas contra el partido o con lemas en apoyo a Falun Gong. Los voluntarios tenían que hacer un barrido de los edificios donde viven y desmontar cualquier signo o grafiti relacionado con Falun Gong. Además, tenían que tratar de «convertir» a sus amigos practicantes de Falun Gong, todo ello al servicio del 18° Congreso Nacional del Partido Comunista.

Esto es solo un ejemplo de las prácticas llevadas a cabo por el PCCh, ya que el Centro de Información de Falun Dafa (CIFD) documentó una serie de casos de muertes violentas de practicantes de Falun Gong durante los últimos meses, justo en medio de la actual campaña del partido.

1. Estas prácticas no sólo van en contra de las libertades de pensamiento, conciencia y religión, sino que atentan contra el derecho a la vida. ¿Tiene conocimiento la UE de estas acciones?

2. ¿Piensa tomar medidas al respecto?

3. ¿Estaría dispuesta la UE a cerrar todo diálogo con el Gobierno chino?

4. ¿Tiene la UE mecanismos de protección para los practicantes de Falung Gong que son disidentes del gobierno?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de febrero de 2013)

1. A la UE le siguen preocupando profundamente las graves restricciones impuestas por las autoridades chinas a la práctica de Falun Gong, así como las noticias de detenciones arbitrarias, encarcelamiento y tortura de seguidores del movimiento Falun Gong.

2. En el diálogo UE-China sobre derechos humanos de 29 de mayo de 2012, la UE reiteró sus reservas ante las largas penas de prisión impuestas a miembros practicantes del movimiento Falun Gong únicamente por haber expresado sus creencias y subrayó su preocupación por las noticias de incomunicación prolongada de dichos miembros, sometidos a reeducación en campos de trabajo. Como respuesta, China declaró que los miembros de Falun Gong habían sido encarcelados por haber cometido actos prohibidos por la ley.

3. La UE considera que el diálogo UE-China sobre derechos humanos constituye un canal importante para abordar temas de derechos humanos en China. La Unión Europea ha tomado nota de las recientes especulaciones en el sentido de que el sistema de reeducación por el trabajo podrá ser reformado y planteará este asunto en la próxima ronda de diálogo.

4. La UE aborda periódicamente la persecución de miembros concretos de Falun Gong en sus contactos con las autoridades chinas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011426/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Falun Gong

The campaign against Falun Gong practitioners was stepped up significantly in preparation for the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC). This campaign has been ongoing since 1999, although the number of actions taken against the Falun Gong and their severity seemed to increase in 2012 owing to preparations for the congress. Levi Browde, executive director of the Falun Dafa Information Centre, claimed that the Communist party's security forces used the need to 'safeguard' the event as a pretext for persecuting Falun Gong practitioners in an attempt to revive their campaign against them.

In the city of Changsha, in the Tianxin district of the Hunan province, a series of large-scale events were held in a sports stadium in preparation for the opening of the 18th Congress, and recruits were called on to repress the peaceful practices of Falun Gong.

The first task was to get rid of any yuans bearing slogans insulting the Communist party or in support of Falun Gong. Volunteers had to make a sweep of the buildings where they lived and take down any signs or remove any graffiti associated with Falun Gong. They were also supposed to try to convert any of their friends who practised Falun Gong. This was all in the name of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

These are only a few examples of the action taken by the CPC. Indeed, the Falun Dafa Information Centre has documented a series of violent deaths of Falun Gong practitioners in recent months, in the midst of the party's present campaign against the practice.

1. These actions not only breach the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, but alsoviolate the right to life. Is the Commission aware of these actions by the CPC?

2. Does it intend to take any action?

3. Would the Commission be prepared to end all dialogue with the Chinese government?

4. Does the EU have any safeguards for Falun Gong practitioners who are opponents of thegovernment?

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

1. The EU remains profoundly concerned at the severe restrictions imposed by the Chinese authorities upon the practice of Falun Gong, as well as at reports of arbitrary arrest, detention and torture of Falun Gong practitioners.

2. At the EU-China human rights dialogue on 29 May 2012, the EU reiterated its concerns at long prison sentences imposed on Falun Gong practitioners solely for having expressed their beliefs and underlined its anxiety at reports of prolonged solitary confinement of practitioners in Re-Education through Labour camps. In response, China noted that Falun Gong adherents had been imprisoned for engaging in criminal acts forbidden by law.

3. The EU believes that the EU-China human rights dialogue constitutes an important channel for discussion of human rights issues in China. The EU has taken note of recent speculation that the Re-education through Labour system may be reformed and will raise this in the next session of the dialogue.

4. The EU regularly raises cases of persecution of individual Falun Gong practitioners with the Chinese authorities.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011427/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(17. december 2012)

Om: Vandrammedirektivet

Kommissionen offentliggjorde 14. november 2012 sin første evaluering af implementeringen af vandrammedirektivet i medlemsstaterne.

I forlængelse heraf bedes Kommissionen oplyse, hvad årsagen er til, at den ikke har vurderet pålideligheden af ålegræsværktøjet i dens evaluering af de danske vandplaner?

Endvidere bedes Kommissionen meddele, om den på grundlag af evalueringen finder, at danske myndigheder har fejlfortolket centrale dele af vandrammedirektivet og derfor ikke har implementeret direktivet korrekt, når der sammenlignes med den implementering, Tyskland har gennemført i Sydslesvig, som har samme dyrkningsgrad og arealanvendelse som i Danmark.

Ydermere bedes Kommissionen forklare, hvorfor den i sin evaluering ikke reagerer på, at Danmark har klassificeret kulturtekniske anlæg i forbindelse med drænsystemer i højeste miljøklasse, når der i vandrammedirektivet står, at disse skal klassificeres som stærkt modificerede.

Endelig bedes Kommissionen oplyse, hvad baggrunden er for, at den undlader at adressere den meget korte høringsfase på kun otte dage i december 2011, hvor vandplanerne var i offentlig høring i Danmark? I tillæg hertil bedes Kommissionen oplyse, hvorfor den i evalueringen ikke har konsulteret interessenter i civilsamfundet, f.eks. erhvervsorganisationer og miljøorganisationer.

Svar afgivet på Kommisionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(12. februar 2013)

Kommissionen har afsluttet sin indledende vurdering af de vandområdeplaner, som Danmark har indberettet, og den offentliggjorde et resumé heraf sammen med sine generelle konklusioner i november 2012.

Fra januar 2013 vil Kommissionen indlede en dialog med alle de medlemsstater, der har indberettet vandområdeplaner for at afklare, om og i hvilket omfang kravene i vandrammedirektivet (2000/60/EF ([1])), er opfyldt. Dialogen med Danmark vil især handle om de elementer, som det ærede medlem omtaler.

I december 2012 underrettede den danske miljøminister Kommissionen om Natur- og Miljøklagenævnets beslutning om at ophæve de danske vandområdeplaner, der var blevet vedtaget i december 2011 og derefter indberettet til Kommissionen. Ministeren oplyste, at klagenævnets beslutning næppe ville få indflydelse på planernes indhold. Kommissionen anmodede ministeren om at fortælle, om der var planer om at ændre ved indholdet i planerne, og om der kunne forventes forsinkelser i forbindelse med vedtagelsen heraf. Kommissionen søger yderligere oplysninger/præciseringer om ovennævnte punkter og også om Kommissionens konklusioner vedrørende vurderingen af vandområdeplanerne.

Efter afslutningen af denne dialog vil Kommissionen afgøre, om der er behov for yderligere foranstaltninger.

([1]) EFT L 327 af 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011427/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: The Water Framework Directive

On 14 November 2012, the Commission published its first evaluation of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive in the Member States.

In relation to this, could the Commission state the reason why it did not assess the reliability of the eelgrass tool in its evaluation of the Danish water management plans?

Could the Commission also state whether, on the basis of the evaluation, it believes the Danish authorities have misinterpreted central elements of the Water Framework Directive and have therefore not implemented the directive correctly, as compared to the implementation by Germany in South Schleswig, which has the same level of cultivation and land use as Denmark?

Could the Commission also explain why, in its evaluation, it does not respond to the fact that Denmark has placed agrotechnical installations linked to drainage systems in the highest environmental class when the Water Framework Directive states that these should be classed as heavily modified?

Lastly, could the Commission state why it fails to address the very short consultation phase, lasting a mere eight days in December 2011, during which the water management plans were available for public consultation in Denmark? Could the Commission also state why, in its evaluation, it did not consult interested parties in civil society, for example professional organisations and environmental organisations?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission has completed its initial assessment of the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) reported by Denmark and has published a summary of this assessment, including general conclusions, in November 2012.

As from January 2013, the Commission will gradually start a dialogue with all Member States that have reported RBMPs in order to clarify whether and to what extent the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC ([1])) have been met. The dialogue with Denmark will notably cover the elements mentioned by the Honourable Member.

In December 2012, the Danish Minister for Environment informed the Commission of the decision by the Danish Environmental Board of Appeal to repeal the Danish RBMPs adopted in December 2011 and subsequently reported to the Commission. The Minister informed that the Board's decision is not likely to affect the content of the plans. The Commission asked the Minister to clarify whether changes to the content of the plans are envisaged and whether any delays in their adoption are foreseen. The Commission seeks further explanation/clarification on the aforementioned points and also on the conclusions drawn by the Commission on the assessment of the RBMPs.

After this said dialogue, the Commission will decide whether or not there is a need for further action.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011428/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(17. december 2012)

Om: Husdyrgødning

I henhold til den danske husdyrgødningsbekendtgørelse, der trådte i kraft den 1. august 2012 (Bekendtgørelsen nr. 764 af 28. juni 2012)), må der ikke udbringes fast husdyrgødning i perioden fra 15. november til 1. februar. Samme bekendtgørelse regulerer, at det kun er muligt at udbringe fast husdyrgødning på arealer, hvor der efterfølgende skal være forårssåede afgrøder, i perioden fra 1/11 til 15/11 på lerjord og fra høst til 15/11 på økologiske bedrifter.

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, om de danske myndigheders bekendtgørelse er i overensstemmelse med gældende EU-lovgivning, herunder om det er et EU-krav, at der ikke må udbringes fast husdyrgødning i perioden fra 15. november til 1. februar?

I bekræftende fald bedes Kommissionen oplyse, om de danske myndigheder forud for offentliggørelsen af husdyrgødningsbekendtgørelsen arbejdede med en fortolkning af nitratdirektivet, som gav mulighed for udbringning af fast gødning frem til 15. december, men at Kommissionen ikke anerkendte de danske myndigheders fortolkning af nitratdirektivet. Såfremt Kommissionen kan bekræfte dette forhold, bedes den oplyse, hvilke forhold, herunder miljøfaglige forhold, der lå til grund for Kommissionens tilsidesættelse af de danske myndigheders fortolkning af nitratdirektivet.

I særlige regnfulde somre, som f.eks. i 2012, er markarbejdet i Danmark først blevet afsluttet sent på efteråret. Derfor har det for mange danske landmand ikke været muligt at udbringe fast gødning inden den 15. november. Dermed vil udbringningen først blive gennemført efter 1. februar 2013, hvilket medfører inoptimal jordbehandling på særligt lerjorde, omkostninger til oplagring af gødningen samt en negativ miljøpåvirkning.

Finder Kommissionen på den baggrund, at nitratdirektivet er hensigtsmæssigt implementeret i dansk lovgivning for så vidt angår reguleringen af udbringningen af fast husdyrgødning på landbrugsarealer, og vil Kommissionen tage initiativ til at indlede en dialog med de danske myndigheder om en udbringningsperiode for fast husdyrgødning, der slutter senere end 15. november?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(13. februar 2013)

Formålet med nitratdirektivet ([1]) er at nedbringe vandforurening forårsaget af nitrater, der stammer fra landbruget, og at forebygge yderligere forurening af denne art. For at nå direktivets målsætninger skal medlemsstaterne i henhold til direktivet vedtage handlingsplaner, herunder fastlægge særlige perioder, hvor gødning af jorden er forbudt. Handlingsplanerne revideres jævnligt af medlemsstaterne for at sikre, at de fortsat er i overensstemmelse med nitratdirektivets målsætninger. Medlemsstaterne kan i den forbindelse vælge at ændre gødningsperioderne såvel som andre bestemmelser, så disse afspejler den bedst tilgængelige videnskabelige viden eller nye relevante oplysninger som f.eks. vandovervågningsdata.

Det påhviler medlemsstaterne at fastsætte den nøjagtige periode, hvor gødning er forbudt, under hensyntagen til den samlede dyrkningsperiode for afgrøder samt andre faktorer som f.eks. gødningstype. Det danske forbud mod anvendelse af fast husdyrgødning i perioden 15. november 2012 til 1. februar 2013 er i overensstemmelse med disse kriterier. Det vil medføre en stor risiko for vandforurening, hvis husdyrgødning fortsat anvendes indtil midten af december, eftersom næringsstofferne i vandet ikke vil blive optaget af planterne, fordi vækstperioden på dette tidspunkt allerede er slut. Det vil således uundgåeligt føre til forurening af vandløb som følge af udvaskning og afstrømning.

Kommissionen overvejer på nuværende tidspunkt ikke at indgå drøftelser med de danske myndigheder om en ændring af gødningsperioden for husdyrgødning.

([1]) Direktiv 91/676/EØF, EFT L 375 af 31.12.1991.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011428/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Livestock manure

In accordance with the Danish Order on livestock manure, which entered into force on 1 August 2012 (Order No 764 of 28 June 2012), solid livestock manure must not be applied during the period from 15 November to 1 February. The same order stipulates that solid livestock manure can only be applied to areas on which spring-sown crops are subsequently to be sown during the period from 1 November to 15 November on clay soil and from the harvest until 15 November on organic farms.

Can the Commission state whether the Danish authorities' order complies with current EU legislation, including whether it is a requirement of EC law that solid livestock manure not be applied during the period from 15 November to 1 February?

If so, could the Commission state whether, prior to publication of the Order on livestock manure, the Danish authorities worked with an interpretation of the Nitrates Directive that allowed the application of solid manure up until 15 December, but that the Commission did not recognise the Danish authorities' interpretation of this directive? If the Commission is able to confirm that this was the case, could it explain what its reasons were, including environmental ones, for disregarding the Danish authorities' interpretation of the Nitrates Directive?

In particularly wet summers, like 2012 for example, work in the fields in Denmark does not finish until late into the autumn. For many Danish farmers, therefore, it was not possible to apply solid manure before 15 November. As a result, the manure will not be applied until after 1 February 2013, which will mean a less than optimal treatment of the soil, particularly for clay soils, the incurring of costs for storage of the manure and a negative impact on the environment.

In view of this, does the Commission consider the Nitrates Directive to have been appropriately implemented in Danish law as regards regulation of the application of solid livestock manure on agricultural land, and will the Commission take the initiative to enter into talks with the Danish authorities concerning an application period for solid livestock manure that ends later than 15 November?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Nitrates Directive ([1]) aims to reduce water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and to prevent further such pollution. To reach its objectives, the directive requires Member States to adopt Action Programmes, including specific periods during which fertilisers application is prohibited. Action Programmes are regularly reviewed by Member States to ensure they remain in line with the Nitrates Directive objectives. During this review, Member States may choose to modify application periods, as well as other provisions, to reflect the best available scientific knowledge or new relevant information such as water monitoring data.

It falls to Member States to determine the exact period covered by the application ban, considering the entire non-growing period of crops as well as other factors, such as i.a. the type of fertiliser. The Danish prohibition of solid livestock manure application during the period 15 November 2012 to 1 February 2013 is in line with these criteria. Continued livestock manure application until mid December would cause high risks of water pollution, as the nutrients in it would not be taken up by plants, as the growing season would have ended already, and would inevitably contaminate waters through leaching and run off.

The Commission does not currently consider entering into talks with the Danish Authorities as concerns a change of the application period for lifestock manure.

([1]) Directive 91/676/EEC, O. J. L 375, 31.12.1991.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011430/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: SWIFT — Kontrolle bei der Weitergabe europäischer Bankdaten

Hinsichtlich der Weitergabe von Bankdaten an die USA im Rahmen des SWIFT-Abkommens wurde Europol als Instanz zum Schutz der Daten bestimmt, um einen nicht eingegrenzten Massentransfer von Daten zu verhindern. Ein europäisches Analysesystem sollte dafür sorgen, dass die Daten gezielter und nicht mehr in so großem Umfang übermittelt werden.

Nun ist dem aktuellen Prüfbericht zu entnehmen, dass seitens Europol bislang sämtliche Anfragen aus der USA seit Inkrafttreten des Abkommens positiv beschieden wurden, obgleich die USA entgegen den Vorgaben keinerlei Angaben zum Datenvolumen gemacht haben.

Welche Nachbesserungen sind in diesem Zusammenhang noch geplant?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(26. Februar 2013)

Gemäß Artikel 4 des TFTP-Abkommens hat Europol zu überprüfen, ob die an bezeichnete Anbieter gerichteten Ersuchen der Vereinigten Staaten um in der EU gespeicherte Daten mit dem Abkommen konform sind. Dazu gehört auch die Prüfung, ob die einzelnen Anträge spezifisch genug sind, damit möglichst wenige Daten angefragt werden müssen. Zu diesem Zweck führt Europol eine Überprüfung auf der Grundlage einer operativen Bewertung durch.

Die zweite Überprüfung gemäß Artikel 13 des TFTP-Abkommens wurde im Oktober 2012 im US-Finanzministerium in Washington und am Sitz von Europol in Den Haag durchgeführt. Im Rahmen der Überprüfung wurde die Rolle von Europol gemäß Artikel 4 des Abkommens bewertet. Im Überprüfungszeitraum (1. Februar 2011 bis 30. September 2012) erhielt Europol 21 Anträge vom US-Finanzministerium. In drei Fällen bat Europol um zusätzliche Auskünfte, die es in der Folge auch erhielt. In keinem Fall hatte die Überprüfung die Ablehnung eines Antrags zur Folge. Ausgehend von zwei beispielhaft durchgeführten Untersuchungen einschlägiger Unterlagen und Gesprächen mit den Bediensteten von Europol und dem US-Finanzministerium kam das Überprüfungsteam zu dem Schluss, dass die Überprüfung durch Europol gemäß Artikel 4 des Abkommens gut funktioniert und den vereinbarten hohen Standards entspricht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011430/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: SWIFT — checks on transfers of European banking data

With regard to the transfer of banking data to the US under the SWIFT agreement, Europol was designated as the data protection body in order to prevent the unrestricted mass transfer of data. The aim of a European analysis system was to ensure that the data transfers were more targeted and less extensive than before.

It is now evident from the latest inspection report that, to date, Europol has responded positively to all requests from the US since the agreement entered into force, even though the US has not provided any information concerning data volume as it is required to.

What further improvements are planned in this connection?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

Pursuant to Article 4 of the TFTP Agreement, Europol is responsible for verifying whether the US requests to the Designated Provider for obtaining EU stored data are in conformity with the Agreement, including whether the requests are tailored as narrowly as possible in order to minimise the amount of data requested. To this end Europol carries out a verification based on an operational assessment.

The second joint review under Article 13 of the TFTP Agreement was conducted at the US Treasury Department in Washington and at Europol premises in The Hague in October 2012. As a part of the review the role of Europol under Article 4 of the Agreement was assessed. During the review period from 1 February 2011 until 30 September 2012, Europol received 21 requests from the US Treasury Department. In three cases Europol asked the US side for supplementary information which it then received. In no cases did the verification lead to a rejection of the request. Based on the examination of two examples of relevant documentation and interviews conducted with the Europol and the US Treasury Staff, the review team concluded that the verification mechanism of Europol pursuant to Article 4 of the Agreement is functioning well and follows the high standards agreed upon.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011431/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Datenschutz bei Datenübermittlung an die USA

15 EU-Staaten haben nach Angaben der Kommission im Gegenzug für visafreie Einreise in die USA ein sog. Abkommen zur Prävention und Bekämpfung schwerer Kriminalität (PCSC bzw. Visa-Waiver-Programm) abgeschlossen. Durch diese Abkommen werden nach Angabe der Kommission die im Rahmenbeschluss von 2008 festgelegten Datenschutzbestimmungen nicht eingehalten. Derzeit laufen seitens der Kommission Verhandlungen mit den USA über ein Abkommen, das ausgetauschte Daten besser schützen soll.

Nun sind dies nicht die einzigen Daten, die in die USA übermittelt werden. Hinzu kommen etwa noch die Daten aus dem Flugpassagierdatenabkommen (PNR) und die im Rahmen des SWIFT-Abkommens übermittelten Bankdaten.

1. Welche EU-Staaten nehmen am US-amerikanischen Visa-Waiver-Programm teil?

2. Gibt es abgesehen vom PNR- und dem SWIFT-Abkommen noch weitere Abkommen zwischen EU und USA, in der die Datenübermittlung geregelt wird?

3. Gibt es noch weitere bilaterale Abkommen, in denen die USA EU-Staaten zur Datenübermittlung gedrängt hat?

4. Werden bei den Verhandlungen der Kommission über den Datenschutz sämtliche an die USA übermittelten Daten behandelt, oder beziehen sich die Verhandlungen lediglich auf bestimmte Abkommen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(22. Februar 2013)

Der Bericht über das Gegenseitigkeitsprinzip bei der Visumfreiheit befasst sich ganz allgemein mit dem Problem der Konformität der Abkommen über die Befreiung von der Visumpflicht mit dem EU-Besitzstand und damit auch mit den EU-Datenschutzbestimmungen. Bei der Vereinbarung von Visabefreiungen gilt ein zweigleisiges Verfahren: Die Mitgliedstaaten dürfen einzeln Abkommen über Visabefreiungen schließen, solange diese mit den EU-Rechtsvorschriften im Einklang stehen.

Die Kommission konnte nicht feststellen, dass im Rahmen des Programms für visumfreies Reisen geschlossene bilaterale Abkommen zu unlösbaren Datenschutzproblemen geführt haben und deshalb neu verhandelt werden müssten.

1. Außer Bulgarien, Polen, Rumänien und Zypern sind alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten am US-Programm für die visumfreie Einreise („US Visa Waiver Program“) beteiligt.

2. Neben dem PNR- und dem SWIFT-Abkommen unterzeichneten die EU und die USA außerdem ein Rechtshilfeabkommen, das ebenfalls die Übermittlung bestimmter Daten vorsieht.

3. Außer den im Siebten Bericht über die Aufrechterhaltung der Visumpflicht bei Nichtbeachtung des Grundsatzes der Gegenseitigkeit durch bestimmte Drittländer (KOM(2012)681) genannten Abkommen sind der Kommission keine weiteren Abkommen bekannt, die unter das Programm für visumfreies Reisen fallen.

4. Die Kommission verhandelt derzeit mit den USA über ein umfassendes Datenschutzabkommen. Angestrebt wird ein Abkommen, das Sicherheitsvorkehrungen und Datenschutzgarantien enthält, die für alle Datenübermittlungen zwischen der EU oder ihren Mitgliedstaaten und den USA im Bereich der Zusammenarbeit zu Strafverfolgungszwecken gelten sollen, so dass ein hohes Maß an Datenschutz für den Einzelnen gewährleistet ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011431/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Data protection in data transfers to the USA

According to information from the Commission, 15 Member States have signed 'preventing and combating serious crime' (PCSC) agreements (as part of the visa-waiver programme) with the USA in return for visa-free travel for their citizens. Again according to the Commission, the provisions of the framework Decision 2008/977/JHA of 2008 on data protection are not being complied with. The Commission is currently engaged in negotiations with the USA with a view to finding an agreement offering better protection for transferred data.

These are not however, the only data that is transferred to USA; there are also passenger name records (PNR), as well as the banking data transferred under the SWIFT agreement.

1. Which Member States participate in the US visa waiver programme?

2. Aside from the PNR and SWIFT agreements, are there any other agreements between the EU and the USA governing data transmission?

3. Are there any other bilateral agreements in which the USA has pressured Member States to transfer data?

4. Will the Commission's negotiations concern all data transferred to the USA, or will they only refer to certain specific agreements?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The report on visa reciprocity referred in general terms to the issue of compliance of the Visa Waiver agreements with the EU acquis, including in the field of data protection. According to the so-called 'two-track approach', Member States can conclude individually Visa Waiver agreements to the extent that these agreements are compatible with the EU acquis.

The Commission has not come to the conclusion that the bilateral agreements concluded in the context of the Visa Waiver Programme raise unsolvable data protection concerns and must necessarily be renegotiated.

1. All Member States participate in the US visa waiver program, apart from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Poland and Romania.

2. Apart from the PNR and TFTP Agreements, the EU concluded a Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement with the US which also provides for some data transmission.

3. The Agreements mentioned the Seventh Report on certain third countries' maintainance of visa requirements in breach of the principle of reciprocity [COM(2012)681] are the only Agreements known to the Commission which relate to the visa waiver programme.

4. The Commission is currently negotiating a comprehensive data protection and privacy agreement with the US. What is envisaged is that this Agreement will provide a high level of protection to individuals by including safeguards and data protection guarantees that should be applicable to all data transfers between the EU or its Member States and the US in the field of law enforcement cooperation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011432/12
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Entwicklungshilfe und Kinderarbeit

Da Kinderarbeit verboten ist, werden Kinderarbeiter in Ländern der Dritten Welt leider besonders leicht ausgebeutet. Die tatsächlichen Gegebenheiten vor Ort führen allzu leicht dazu, dass — wenn man Kindern die Arbeit nimmt — man ihnen oft auch die Möglichkeit zu leben, zu essen und sich zu bilden nimmt. Eine Studie ([1]) kommt zu dem Schluss, dass Boykott-Aufrufe etc. die Kinder nur aus den Fabriken auf die Felder (oft der eigenen Familie) treiben.

In den Entwicklungsländern stehen Familien aufgrund der großen Kinderzahl oft in wirtschaftlicher Abhängigkeit von Kinderarbeit. Es entsteht ein Teufelskreis, da in einer vielköpfigen Familie der von den Kindern geleistete Arbeitsbeitrag überlebensnotwendig wird. Die Studie sieht also einen klaren Zusammenhang zwischen Kinderarbeit und Geburtenraten und plädiert dafür, hier anzusetzen.

1. Mit welchen Maßnahmen wird im Rahmen der EU-Entwicklungshilfe versucht, die Geburtenrate einzudämmen, um so Armut und Kinderarbeit zu bekämpfen?

2. Ist im Rahmen der anstehenden Überarbeitung der EU-Entwicklungshilfe eine stärkere Ausrichtung auf die Eindämmung der Geburtenrate geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(18. Februar 2013)

Die Kommission setzt sich auf verschiedene Weise für die Bekämpfung der Kinderarbeit ein. Dabei stützt sie sich auf das in den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates vom Juni 2010 zur Kinderarbeit und in der Mitteilung über eine EU-Agenda für die Rechte des Kindes dargelegte Konzept.

Auch wird die Kinderarbeit als Teil der Handel und nachhaltige Entwicklung betreffenden Kapitel in allen jüngst ausgehandelten Handelsvereinbarungen zwischen der EU und Drittländern explizit angesprochen. Die Ratifizierung und Umsetzung der Übereinkommen der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation (IAO) 138 (Mindestalter) und 182 (schlimmste Formen der Kinderarbeit) in den Rechtsvorschriften der einzelnen Staaten und in der Praxis sowie deren Durchsetzung werden in dem Kapitel über Handel und nachhaltige Entwicklung speziell behandelt.

Die Einrichtung von Sozialschutzsystemen und die Verbesserung der Lebensbedingungen armer und ländlicher Gesellschaften sind ebenfalls sehr wichtig bei der Bekämpfung der Kinderarbeit. Wohlhabendere Gesellschaften weisen in der Regel kleinere Familien auf, so dass die Armutsminderung der beste Weg zu geringeren Geburtenraten ist.

Die EU finanziert keine Projekte, die eine Senkung der Geburtenraten zum Ziel haben, da es ein auf der Internationalen Konferenz über Bevölkerung und Entwicklung festgelegtes Recht von Einzelpersonen und Paaren ist, frei zu entscheiden, wie viele Kinder sie wollen und in welchem Zeitabstand.

Es ist allerdings auch offenkundig, dass in Entwicklungsländern ein großer ungedeckter Bedarf an Familienplanungsdiensten besteht. Der Bevölkerungsfonds der Vereinten Nationen (UNFPA) schätzt die Zahl der Frauen, die Schwangerschaften verhüten oder die Geburtenabstände vergrößern wollen, auf 222 Millionen. Die EU finanziert Gesundheitsprogramme, die auf die Verbesserung des Zugangs zu Sexualerziehung, Dienstleistungen im Bereich der reproduktiven Gesundheit und freiwilliger Familienplanung hinzielen.

([1]) http://diepresse.com/home/wirtschaft/economist/1319691/Wenn-Kinder-fuer-ihr-Recht-auf-Arbeit-kaempfen?_vl_backlink=/home/wirtschaft/economist/1297471/index.do&direct=1297471.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011432/12
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Development aid and child labour

Because child labour is banned, it is unfortunately particularly easy to exploit child workers in third world countries. The realities of life there can all too easily mean that relieving children of work often also means relieving them of their means of living, eating and learning. A study ([1]) has come to the conclusion that actions such as boycotts only drive children out of the factories and into the fields (often their own families' fields).

Having a large number of children often makes families in the developing countries economically dependent on child labour. This creates a vicious circle, as these large families need the income from their children's work to survive. The study demonstrates a clear correlation between child labour and birth rates, and argues that this is where action should start.

1. What development aid measures is the EU employing to try to combat poverty and child labour by lowering the birth rate?

2. EU development aid is due to be reviewed. Has consideration been given to gearing this more towards lowering the birthrate?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Commission works in several ways to fight against child labour, based on the approach outlined in the June 2010 Council Conclusions on Child Labour ([2]) and in the 2011 Communication on an EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child ([3]).

In addition, child labour is explicitly addressed as part of the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapters within all recently negotiated trade agreements between the EU and third countries. Ratification and implementation in domestic legislation and in practice of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 138 (minimum age) and 182 (worst forms of child labour), as well as enforcement are specifically addressed under the Trade Sustainable Development Chapter.

Setting up social protection systems and increasing the livelihood of poor and rural societies is also very important in the fight against child labour. Wealthier societies tend to have smaller families making poverty reduction the best way to lower birth rates.

The EU does not fund projects aiming at lowering birth rates, since it is a fundamental right stated in the International Conference on Population and Development that individuals and couples can freely decide how many children to have and how often.

It is, however, evident that there is a big unmet need for family planning in developing countries: according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), there are estimated to be 222 million women who currently would like to prevent pregnancy or space their births. The EU funds health programmes that aim at improving access to sexual education, reproductive health services and voluntary family planning.

([1]) See http://diepresse.com/home/wirtschaft/economist/1319691/Wenn-Kinder-fuer-ihr-Recht-auf-Arbeit-kaempfen?vl_backlink=/home/wirtschaft/economist/1297471/index.do&direct=1297471
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/115180.pdf
([3]) COM(2011)60 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011433/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: 1,4 δισ. ευρώ από την Ελλάδα στην Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Ανασυγκρότησης και Ανάπτυξης για επενδύσεις στα Βαλκάνια

Σύμφωνα με ανακοίνωση της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Ανασυγκρότησης και Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΑΑ) «από τον Ιανουάριο του 2012, το ύψος των κοινών επενδύσεων της Ελλάδας με την ΕΤΑΑ έφτασε τα 3,5 δισ. ευρώ, εκ των οποίων η ΕΤΑΑ έχει μερίδιο 2,1 δισ. ευρώ και η Ελλάδα 1,4 δισ. ευρώ». Με δεδομένο ότι, εδώ και τρία χρόνια, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, το ελληνικό χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα και οι ευρωπαϊκοί θεσμοί (Επιτροπή, ΕΤΕπ) απέτυχαν να διοχετεύσουν ρευστότητα στην ελληνική οικονομία παρά τις επανειλημμένες υποσχέσεις τους, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: Τι ποσά έχουν διατεθεί από την Ελλάδα μέσω της ΕΤΑΑ για επενδύσεις στην Ανατολική Ευρώπη την τριετία (2010-2012); Πως σχολιάζει το γεγονός ότι η Ελλάδα σπεύδει να χρηματοδοτήσει την ενίσχυση επιχειρήσεων σε άλλες χώρες τη στιγμή που οι ελληνικές επιχειρήσεις κλείνουν η μια μετά την άλλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Παρά τις ακραίες οικονομικές δυσχέρειες που αντιμετωπίζει αυτή την περίοδο η Ελλάδα, και παρόλη τη συρρίκνωση, συνεχίστηκαν τόσο οι δημόσιες επενδύσεις όσο και ο τραπεζικός δανεισμός στον ιδιωτικό τομέα και η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση παρείχε πολύ μεγάλα χρηματικά ποσά (από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της ΕΕ) ή δάνεια (από την ΕΤΕ).

Η Ελλάδα δεν χορήγησε πόρους μέσω της ΕΤΑΑ για επενδύσεις στην Ανατολική Ευρώπη. Ωστόσο, η Ελλάδα συμμετέχει στην ΕΤΑΑ σε ποσοστό 0,65% και ως μέλος συνεισέφερε αναλογικά στο μετοχικό κεφάλαιο της ΕΤΑΑ, που χρησιμοποιείται ως βάση ώστε η Τράπεζα να προβεί σε επενδύσεις στην περιοχή των εργασιών της.

Οι ελληνικές ιδιωτικές επιχειρήσεις συγχρηματοδότησαν με την ΕΤΑΑ ορισμένα ειδικά σχέδια. Μεταξύ 2010 και 2012 συνεπενδύθηκε από την ΕΤΑΑ και Έλληνες χορηγούς ή εγγυητές συνολικό ποσό ύψους 655 εκατομ. ευρώ σε σχέδια για επιχειρήσεις στην περιοχή εργασιών της ΕΤΑΑ. Οι επενδύσεις αυτές αφορούσαν κυρίως θυγατρικές ελληνικών επιχειρήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011433/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: EUR 1.4 billion from Greece to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for investments in the Balkans

According to a statement by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), since January 2012, the amount of joint investment by Greece and the EBRD has amounted to EUR 3.5 billion, of which the EBRD has accounted for EUR 2.1 billion and Greece EUR 1.4 billion. Given that, for three years, neither the Greek Government, nor the Greek financial system, nor the European institutions (Commission, EIB) have managed to inject liquidity into the Greek economy despite repeatedly pledging to do so, will the Commission say: what amounts did Greece allocate through the EBRD for investments in Eastern Europe during the three-year period 2010-2012? How does it view the fact that Greece is rushing to finance aid to enterprises in other countries at a time when Greek enterprises are closing one after the other?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2013)

Despite the extreme financial difficulties faced by Greece in this period, both public investment and bank lending to the private sector have continued, albeit shrinking, and the European Union has provided very large amounts of money in the forms of either grants (from the EU structural funds) or loans (from the EIB).

Greece had not allocated any dedicated funds through the EBRD for investments in Eastern Europe. Greece does, however, hold a 0.65% shareholding of the EBRD and as a member has contributed pro rata to the capital stock of the EBRD, which is used as a basis for the Bank to make investments across its region of operations.

Greek private sector companies have co-financed with EBRD a number of specific projects. A total EUR 655 mn was co-invested by the EBRD between 2010 and 2012 in projects in the EBRD's region of operations with Greek sponsors or guarantors. These investments were mainly into subsidiaries of Greek companies.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011434/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Έγκριση αποζημίωσης για εντομολογική προσβολή

Το 2010 οι καλλιέργειες βαμβακιού της Θεσσαλίας αλλά και άλλων περιοχών της Ελλάδας προσβλήθηκαν από το πράσινο σκουλήκι (Heliothis armigera). Η αρμόδια ελληνική αρχή υπέβαλε στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή το σχετικό φάκελο ώστε οι παραγωγοί να αποζημιωθούν από το Πρόγραμμα Πολιτικής Σχεδίασης Έκτακτης Ανάγκης, ωστόσο, όπως έγινε γνωστό, ο φάκελος αυτός επιστράφηκε στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση, καθώς, σύμφωνα με την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, δεν ήταν πλήρης. Δεδομένου ότι το πρόβλημα αυτό παρουσιάσθηκε και κατά τις επόμενες παραγωγικές περιόδους, χωρίς ουδέποτε οι παραγωγοί να έχουν αποζημιωθεί για τη ζημιά που υπέστησαν,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιοι ήταν οι λόγοι που την οδήγησαν στην απόρριψη του σχετικού φακέλου; Υπήρξαν παραλείψεις από πλευράς ελληνικής κυβέρνησης στη στοιχειοθέτηση του αιτήματος, και αν ναι, τι είδους; Έχει η ελληνική πλευρά το δικαίωμα να καταθέσει εκ νέου το φάκελο, εφ' όσον ο φάκελος είναι πλήρης;

2. Ποιος άλλος τρόπος υπάρχει ώστε να αποζημιωθούν οι έλληνες βαμβακοπαραγωγοί για τη ζημιά που υπέστησαν; Ποιες είναι οι ενέργειες που απαιτούνται από ελληνικής πλευράς ώστε να αποζημιώνονται οι παραγωγοί σε παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις εκτεταμένων ζημιών από εντομολογικές προσβολές ή ασθένειες στο μέλλον;

Απάντηση του κ. Cioloş εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή ενημέρωσε την Ελλάδα ότι οι πληροφορίες που παρασχέθηκαν στο πλαίσιο της κοινοποίησης της κρατικής ενίσχυσης για την αποζημίωση γεωργών για ζημίες λόγω δυσμενών καιρικών συνθηκών κατά το έτος 2010 δεν επέτρεψαν να συναχθεί το συμπέρασμα ότι η συγκεκριμένη ασθένεια οφείλεται σε δυσμενείς καιρικές συνθήκες, όπως απαιτείται από τις κοινοτικές κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις στον τομέα της γεωργίας και δασοκομίας 2007-2013 ([1]). Η Ελλάδα προτίμησε να αποσύρει από την κοινοποίησή της σχετικά με την προαναφερθείσα κρατική ενίσχυση το τμήμα της ενίσχυσης που αφορούσε την εν λόγω ασθένεια.

2. Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να κοινοποιήσει την εν λόγω ενίσχυση στο πλαίσιο των κρατικών ενισχύσεων για την καταπολέμηση ζωικών και φυτικών ασθενειών, εφόσον πληρούνται οι προϋποθέσεις που προβλέπονται στο σημείο V.B.4 των προαναφερθεισών κατευθυντήριων γραμμών και στο άρθρο 10 του κανονισμού απαλλαγής (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1857/2006 ([2]).

Εξάλλου, στο πλαίσιο της στήριξης της αγροτικής ανάπτυξης από το Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΓΤΑΑ) ([3]), προβλέπονται ενισχύσεις για την αποκατάσταση του γεωργικού παραγωγικού δυναμικού που έχει πληγεί από φυσικές καταστροφές και την εφαρμογή των κατάλληλων δράσεων πρόληψης. Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να προβλέψει επίσης μέτρα υπέρ της αγροτικής ανάπτυξης, για την οποία χορηγείται κοινοτική στήριξη, σχετικά με τον εκσυγχρονισμό των γεωργικών εκμεταλλεύσεων, τις συμβουλευτικές υπηρεσίες και την κατάρτιση, ώστε να αντιμετωπιστούν καλύτερα οι κίνδυνοι και οι κρίσεις. Τα μέτρα αυτά περιλαμβάνονται επίσης στην πρόταση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τη στήριξη της αγροτικής ανάπτυξης για τη νέα περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2014-2020 ([4]).

([1]) ΕΕ C 319 της 27.12.2006, σ. 1 (σημείο V.B.4, υποσημείωση 31).
([2]) ΕΕ L 358 της 16.12.2006, σ. 3.
([3]) ΕΕ L 277 της 25.10.2005, σ. 1.
([4]) COM(2011) 627 τελικό/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011434/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Approval of compensation for pest attack

In 2010 the cotton crop in Thessaly and other areas of Greece was ravaged by the cotton bollworm (*Heliothis armigera*). The Greek authority responsible provided the Commission with documentation so that producers could be compensated under the civil emergency planning programme; however, as is known, that application was returned to the Greek Government since, according to the Commission, it was incomplete. Since this problem recurred during subsequent production periods, without producers ever having been compensated for the damage they had incurred, will the Commission say:

1. Why did it reject the application? Were there any omissions by the Greek Government in documenting the application, and if so, what kind of omissions? Is the Greek side entitled to resubmit the application, providing it is complete?

2. What other way is there to compensate Greek cotton farmers for the damage they have incurred? What steps are required of the Greek side to enable producers to be compensated in similar cases of extensive damage caused by insects or diseases in future?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(20 février 2013)

1. La Commission a informé la Grèce que les renseignements fournis dans le cadre de sa notification de l'aide d'État destinée à indemniser les agriculteurs pour des pertes à cause de mauvaises conditions climatiques pendant l'année 2010 n'ont pas permis de conclure que la maladie en question résulte de mauvaises conditions climatiques, comme il est exigé par les lignes directrices de la Communauté concernant les aides d'État dans le secteur agricole et forestier 2007-2013 ([1]). La Grèce a préféré retirer de sa notification concernant l'aide d'État susmentionnée la partie de l'aide se référant à la maladie en question.

2. La Grèce peut notifier l'aide en question au titre des aides d'État en faveur de la lutte contre des animaux et des végétaux, dans le cas où les conditions prévues au point V.B.4 des lignes directrices susmentionnées et dans l'article 10 du Règlement d'exemption (CE) nº 1857/2006 ([2]) sont réunies.

Par ailleurs, dans le cadre du soutien au développement rural par le Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (Feader) ([3]), des aides sont prévues concernant la reconstitution du potentiel de production agricole endommagé par des catastrophes naturelles et la mise en place de mesures de prévention appropriées. Des mesures en faveur du développement rural bénéficiant du soutien communautaire concernant la modernisation des exploitations agricoles, les services de conseil et de formation peuvent aussi être prévues par la Grèce afin de mieux faire face aux risques et aux crises. Ces mesures sont également incluses dans la proposition de la Commission concernant le soutien au développement rural pour la nouvelle période de programmation 2014-2020 ([4]).

([1]) JO C 319, 27.12.2006, p.1 (point V.B.4, bas de page 31).
([2]) JO L 358 du 16.12.2006, p. 3.
([3]) JO L 277 du 25.10.2005, p. 1.
([4]) COM(2011)627 final/2.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011435/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προβλήματα από την κατάργηση Εφοριών (Δ.Ο.Υ) στη νησιωτική Ελλάδα

Έντονες αντιδράσεις από τους Οργανισμούς Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης (Δήμους, Περιφέρειες) κι από φορείς και κατοίκους της νησιωτικής Ελλάδας έχει προκαλέσει η απόφαση της κυβέρνησης, στα πλαίσια της συμφωνίας με την Τρόικα, να καταργήσει τις εφορίες (Δ.Ο.Υ.) στα νησιά. Η απόφαση αυτή θα έχει άμεσες αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στη ζωή των κατοίκων της νησιωτικής Ελλάδας, αφού χιλιάδες νησιώτες, θα είναι υποχρεωμένοι να ταλαιπωρούνται με πολυέξοδες μετακινήσεις προς τις μητροπολιτικές Δ.Ο.Υ. για τη διεκπεραίωση των οικονομικών τους υποθέσεων. Με δεδομένο ότι, α) μια τέτοια απόφαση καταργεί στην πράξη κάθε έννοια αποκέντρωσης και εντείνει την απομόνωση των νησιωτικών περιοχών, πολύ περισσότερο όταν οι κεντρικές υπηρεσίες δηλώνουν αδυναμία ομαλής μηχανογραφικής μετάβασης των υπό συγχώνευση υπηρεσιών, με αποτέλεσμα την πλήρη αποδιοργάνωση των φοροελεγκτικών υπηρεσιών, β) ότι στον ελληνικό χώρο πέραν των νησιών με έντονο το πρόβλημα της απομόνωσης, υπάρχουν νησιά με έντονη τουριστική κίνηση και οικονομική δραστηριότητα και μια τέτοια απόφαση καταργεί επί της ουσίας τον φορολογικό έλεγχο και δημιουργεί μια ειδική οικονομική ζώνη φοροαπαλλαγής και ασυδοσίας γ) το άρθρο 174 της ΣΛΕΕ αναφέρει ότι η Ένωση προωθεί την οικονομική, κοινωνική και εδαφική συνοχή και ιδιαίτερα των νησιωτικών, διασυνοριακών και ορεινών περιοχών που πλήττονται από σοβαρά και μόνιμα φυσικά και δημογραφικά προβλήματα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πως σχολιάζει το αναμφισβήτητο γεγονός ότι με την απόφαση αυτή, εντείνεται η απομόνωση των νησιών και η ανισότητα πρόσβασης στις δημόσιες υπηρεσίες και η άνιση μεταχείριση των κατοίκων τους;

2. Τι μέτρα θα λάβει σε συνεργασία με τις ελληνικές αρχές για την αναθεώρηση αυτής της απόφασης η οποία έχει παρθεί αποκλειστικά και μόνο με αμφίβολης αποτελεσματικότητας κριτήρια μείωσης των δαπανών;

3. Τι μέτρα θα λάβει προκειμένου αποφάσεις που δήθεν λαμβάνονται για μείωση δαπανών να μην αξιοποιούνται για ασύστολη φοροδιαφυγή;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η αναδιοργάνωση των φορολογικών υπηρεσιών, που άρχισε στις αρχές του 2011, έχει ως στόχο την ενίσχυση της αποτελεσματικότητας και την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς.

Η αναδιοργάνωση αυτή αποβλέπει στη συγκέντρωση και τη συγχώνευση των τοπικών φορολογικών υπηρεσιών σε όλη τη χώρα, περιορίζοντας περίπου σε 120 τον συνολικό αριθμό των εφοριών (ΔΟΥ) που θα παραμείνουν σε λειτουργία ([1]), χωρίς ασφαλώς να υπάρχει πρόθεση δημιουργίας ανισότητας πρόσβασης στις δημόσιες υπηρεσίες για τους κατοίκους των νησιών. Έχει ήδη δρομολογηθεί μεγάλη επέκταση των ηλεκτρονικών υπηρεσιών, καθώς και η δημιουργία τοπικών σημείων επαφής για την παροχή συνδρομής στους φορολογούμενους (κυρίως για τη συμπλήρωση της δήλωσης). Επιπλέον, η απλούστευση της φορολογικής νομοθεσίας που βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη είναι πιθανό να μειώσει την ανάγκη για επαφές με τη φορολογική διοίκηση.

Όσον αφορά την καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής, οι ευρωπαϊκές βέλτιστες πρακτικές συνηγορούν υπέρ ενός βελτιωμένου δικτύου τοπικών εφοριών, με ηλεκτρονικές υπηρεσίες και τηλεφωνικά κέντρα για τη διευκόλυνση των επαφών με τους φορολογούμενους, και ένα καλό σύστημα αξιολόγησης κινδύνου ώστε να έχουν τη δυνατότητα οι ειδικευμένες ομάδες ελέγχου και είσπραξης να αναζητούν τους φορολογούμενους που δεν συμμορφώνονται με τις υποχρεώσεις τους.

Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με τις ελληνικές αρχές, μεταξύ άλλων διαμέσου της Ομάδας δράσης για την Ελλάδα, για να στηρίξει τη χώρα στη διαδικασία εκσυγχρονισμού του φορολογικού συστήματος και της φορολογικής διοίκησης, καθώς και για την πάταξη της φοροδιαφυγής και της διαφθοράς.

([1]) Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου μπορεί να ανατρέξει στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας που περιέχεται στην πρώτη επανεξέταση του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας, σελίδα 196, διαθέσιμο στον δικτυακό τόπο: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011435/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Problems caused by the dismantling of tax offices on Greek islands

The government's decision, taken as part of its agreement with the Troika, to dismantle tax offices on the islands has met with strong opposition from local (municipal, regional) authorities and from organisations and residents of the islands. This decision will have a direct negative impact on the lives of the inhabitants of the Greek islands, since thousands of islanders will be forced to incur onerous travel expenses to visit metropolitan tax offices to process their financial affairs. A) Such a decision will in effect emasculate any notion of decentralisation and aggravate the isolation of the island regions, particularly since the central services have announced the impossibility of a smooth IT migration of the services being merged, resulting in the complete disorganisation of the tax inspection services; B) apart from those Greek islands facing severe problems of isolation, there are islands generating strong tourist and economic activity, and such a decision will essentially remove tax controls, creating a special economic zone of tax exemption and impunity; C) Article 174 TFEU states that the Union shall pursue economic, social and territorial cohesion, particularly of island, cross-border and mountain regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How does it view the undeniable fact that this decision will aggravate the isolation of the islands and inequality of access to public services and the unequal treatment of their inhabitants?

2. What measures will it take, in cooperation with the Greek authorities, to review this decision which has been taken solely on the basis of cost-cutting criteria which are of questionable effectiveness?

3. What measures will it take to ensure that decisions ostensibly taken to reduce costs are not exploited for the purposes of brazen tax evasion?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The objective of restructuring the tax services which has started in early 2011 is to foster efficiency and fight corruption.

This reorganisation is designed to centralise and merge local tax offices all over the country leaving in total about 120 functioning offices ([1]), without any intent of creating inequality of access to public services for islands' inhabitants. A strong extension of electronic services, as well as the creation of local points of contact for assistance to taxpayers (notably in filing) is currently underway. In addition, the simplification of tax legislation currently underway will likely reduce the need for contacts with the tax administration.

Concerning the fight against tax evasion, European best practice points towards a streamlined network of local tax offices, with electronic services and call centres to facilitate contacts with taxpayers, and a good risk assessment system to enable specialized audit and collection teams to go after non-compliant taxpayers.

The Commission is working closely with the Greek authorities, also through the Task Force for Greece (TFGR), to support them in the process of modernisation of the tax system and tax administration, as well as in the fight to tax evasion and corruption.

([1]) The Honourable Member of the European Parliament may refer to the memorandum of understanding included in the First review of the Second Programme page. 196 available at http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011436/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δηλωθέντα εισοδήματα και αναλογία συνολικών φόρων σε φυσικά και νομικά πρόσωπα στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τα πρόσφατα δημοσιοποιημένα στοιχεία της Γενικής Γραμματείας Πληροφοριακών Συστημάτων του Ελληνικού Υπουργείου Οικονομικών για το οικονομικό έτος 2010 (φορολογικές δηλώσεις 2011), οι μισθωτοί και οι συνταξιούχοι δήλωσαν το 70,22% του συνολικού δηλωθέντος εισοδήματος καταβάλλοντας το 55,09% του αντίστοιχου συνολικού φόρου, τα υπόλοιπα φυσικά πρόσωπα (κυρίως ελεύθεροι επαγγελματίες) δήλωσαν το 18,79% και κατέβαλαν το 15,44% του συνολικού φόρου ενώ τα νομικά πρόσωπα (κυρίως επιχειρήσεις) δήλωσαν το 11% και κατέβαλαν το 29,47% του φόρου.

Από την διαμορφωθείσα αναλογία, η οποία αναμένεται να αλλάξει επί τα χείρω για τους μισθωτούς και τους συνταξιούχους λόγω των εξελίξεων στο ελληνικό φορολογικό σύστημα την τελευταία διετία, προκύπτει μια σαφής και ιδιαίτερα επώδυνη επιβάρυνση των μισθωτών και των συνταξιούχων ως προς την ανάληψη των φορολογικών βαρών υπονομεύοντας την κοινωνική συνοχή, την ώρα που η εντεινόμενη φοροδιαφυγή φαίνεται να συρρικνώνει σημαντικά τα έσοδα του κράτους. Με δεδομένο ότι το φορολογικό σύστημα πρέπει να αποτελεί αφενός ένα εργαλείο απονομής κοινωνικής δικαιοσύνης και αφετέρου μοχλό ανάπτυξης και στήριξης των χαμηλών και μεσαίων οικονομικών στρωμάτων ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί την αναλογία συμμετοχής των φυσικών και νομικών προσώπων, καθώς και τις επιπτώσεις που αυτή μπορεί να επιφέρει στην κοινωνική σταθερότητα και δικαιοσύνη;

2. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τις αντίστοιχες αναλογίες στα κράτη μέλη;

3. Πώς σχολιάζει το γεγονός ότι οι μισθωτοί και οι συνταξιούχοι υποχρεούνται να καλύπτουν την απώλεια των δημόσιων εσόδων από την εκτεταμένη φοροδιαφυγή;

4. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια από τα ευρωπαϊκά Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία και ποιό είναι το μέγιστο ποσό που μπορεί να αντλήσει η Ελλάδα προκειμένου να ενισχύσει και να αναβαθμίσει τους μηχανισμούς ελέγχου της φοροδιαφυγής;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή, από την έναρξη του προγράμματος, θεωρούσε ότι χρειάζονταν μείζονες μεταρρυθμίσεις του ελληνικού φορολογικού συστήματος και της φορολογικής της διοίκησης, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστούν τα προβλήματα που έθιξε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος. Παρά τη σημειωθείσα πρόοδο απαιτείται περαιτέρω προσπάθεια.

Τον Ιανουάριο του 2013, οι ελληνικές αρχές θέσπισαν φορολογική μεταρρύθμιση, με την απλοποίηση του φόρου εισοδήματος φυσικών και νομικών προσώπων, ώστε να αυξηθεί η συμμόρφωση και να μειωθεί η διοικητική επιβάρυνση τόσο στον ιδιωτικό όσο και στον δημόσιο τομέα. Με τη μείωση των φοροαπαλλαγών, των ειδικών φορολογικών καθεστώτων ή των φορολογικών δαπανών επιτυγχάνεται καλύτερη κατανομή των φορολογικών βαρών. Η φορολογική επιβάρυνση μετατοπίζεται από τον φόρο εισοδήματος και τους εταιρικούς φόρους στους έμμεσους φόρους και στους φόρους ακίνητης περιουσίας. Οι φορολογικές βάσεις διευρύνονται και εισάγονται χαμηλοί φορολογικοί συντελεστές. Ο εταιρικός φόρος μεταφέρεται από τα μερίσματα στα κέρδη, ενώ νέα μέτρα πρόκειται να ληφθούν πριν από το καλοκαίρι.

Η Ελλάδα αναμορφώνει τη φορολογική της διοίκηση. Η ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα συνδράμει τις ελληνικές αρχές για την αναβάθμιση της ικανότητας της φορολογικής διοίκησης και την περιστολή της φοροδιαφυγής. Χρειάζεται αποφασιστικότητα για την έγκαιρη και πλήρη εφαρμογή αυτής της μεταρρύθμισης, ώστε να διασφαλιστεί ότι η πλήρης αξιοποίηση των οφελών της θα οδηγήσει σε δικαιότερη κατανομή των συνολικών φορολογικών βαρών.

Η χρηματοδότηση μέσω της ευρωπαϊκής περιφερειακής πολιτικής χρησιμοποιείται για να βοηθήσει στην αναμόρφωση της ελληνικής φορολογικής διοίκησης. Για παράδειγμα, το λογισμικό Elenxis που χρησιμοποιείται στην ελληνική φορολογική διοίκηση χρηματοδοτείται μέσω του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος ψηφιακής σύγκλισης του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου. Εφόσον παραστεί ανάγκη υπάρχουν ακόμα διαθέσιμα κονδύλια στο πλαίσιο της τρέχουσας προγραμματικής περιόδου (2007-2013) για τη χρηματοδότηση διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων. Προέρχονται, αφενός, από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης και, αφετέρου, από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011436/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Declared income and the ratio of overall tax revenue from natural and legal persons in Greece

According to data published recently by the General Secretariat for IT Systems of the Greek Ministry of Finance for the financial year 2010 (income tax returns 2011), employees and retirees declared 70.22% of the total declared income, paying 55.09% of the corresponding total tax, while other natural persons (mostly the self-employed) declared 18.79% and paid 15.44% of the total tax. Legal persons (mostly businesses) declared 11% and paid 29.47% of the total tax.

The ratio that emerges, which is expected to change for the worse for employees and pensioners because of developments in the Greek tax system over the last two years, shows that employees and pensioners are clearly bearing the brunt of a tax burden which is undermining social cohesion, at a time when increasing tax evasion seems to be substantially reducing state revenue. Given that the tax system should be both a tool for the administration of social justice and a driver for growth and source of support for low and middle-income groups, will the Commission say:

1. How does it view the ratio of income declared by natural and legal persons respectively, and the impact that this may have on social stability and justice?

2. Does it have any data on the respective figures in other Member States?

3. How does it view the fact that employees and pensioners are required to offset the loss of government revenue due to widespread tax evasion?

4. Is any funding available from the European Structural Funds and what is the maximum amount that Greece may receive in order to strengthen and enhance its tax evasion control mechanisms?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

The Commission has from the onset of the programme considered that major reforms in the Greek tax system and tax administration were crucial to address the problems raised by the Honourable Member. Despite progress, further effort is needed.

The Greek Authorities adopted a tax reform in January 2013. The personal and corporate income taxes became simpler, to increase compliance and reduce the administrative burden on both private and public sector. Through reduction of exemptions, special tax regimes or tax expenditures, the weight of taxation is better shared. Tax burden is shifted from income and corporate taxes to indirect and property taxes. Tax bases are broadened to allow for low rates. The corporate income tax is reshaped from dividends to profits taxation. Further steps are to be taken before the summer.

The Hellenic Republic is putting in place a reform of its tax administration. The Task Force for Greece assists the Greek authorities to upgrade the administrative capacity and curb tax evasion. Determination is needed to implement this reform timely and in full to ensure its full benefits to result in a more equal repartition of the overall tax burden.

Funding through the European regional policy is being utilised to help in the overhaul of the Greek tax administration. For example, the Elenxis software used in the Greek tax administration is being funded through the European Social Fund's Digital Convergence Operational Programme. Funds are still available under the present programming period (2007-2013) for the financing of structural reforms, if needed. They emanate from both the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011437/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δραματική αύξηση της παιδικής και εφηβικής κατάθλιψης στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τα αποτελέσματα του τελευταίου Ετήσιου Πανελλήνιου Ιατρικού Συνεδρίου, οι νοσηλείες των παιδιών παρουσιάζονται αυξημένες κατά 12% την τελευταία διετία στην Ελλάδα. Από τις εξετάσεις στις οποίες υποβάλλονται διαφαίνεται ότι τα συμπτώματα που παρουσιάζουν (κεφαλαλγίες, κοιλιακά άγχη, πόνοι στα άκρα κ.α.) σε πολλές περιπτώσεις δεν οφείλονται σε κάποιο νόσημα αλλά σε ψυχογενείς παράγοντες όπως η κατάθλιψη. Αφενός οι σχετικές έρευνες και αφετέρου οι παιδοψυχίατροι, παιδίατροι και ψυχολόγοι από την εμπειρία τους σε πλειάδα περιστατικών εντοπίζουν υψηλά ποσοστά καταθλιπτικών φαινομένων σε παιδιά και εφήβους οικογενειών με σοβαρή οικονομική δυσχέρεια είτε λόγω ανεργίας είτε λόγω σημαντικής απώλειας εισοδημάτων και υπερχρέωσης. Οι ψυχικές διακυμάνσεις σε παιδιά και εφήβους αποδίδονται εσφαλμένα σε συναισθηματικές και ψυχολογικές εναλλαγές κατά τη διάρκεια της ανάπτυξης του παιδιού και της μετάβασής του από το ένα ηλικιακό στάδιο στο άλλο γεγονός που δημιουργεί πρόσθετες δυσκολίες στην αναγκαία έγκυρη διάγνωση των καταθλιπτικών τάσεων.

Τα παιδιά και οι έφηβοι «σωματοποιούν» τις καταθλιπτικές τάσεις παρουσιάζοντας έντονο και απροσδιόριστο άγχος, νευρικότητα, επιθετικότητα, μυϊκούς πόνους κ.α. ως αποτέλεσμα της κακής επικοινωνίας και του τεταμένου ενδοοικογενειακού περιβάλλοντος, που διαμορφώνεται εξαιτίας οικονομικών δυσκολιών και επώδυνων επαγγελματικών εξελίξεων. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο και με δεδομένη την εμβληματική δέσμευση της ΕΕ για την ενίσχυση της κοινωνικής προστασίας σε παιδιά και εφήβους ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για τη διακύμανση των ποσοστών παιδικής και εφηβικής κατάθλιψης την τελευταία τετραετία;

2. Έχει λάβει γνώση εξειδικευμένων ερευνών στις οποίες να αποδεικνύεται συσχέτιση της οικονομικής κρίσης και της αύξησης των ποσοστών παιδικής και εφηβικής κατάθλιψης;

3. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια από τα ευρωπαϊκά Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία και ποιό το μέγιστο συνολικό ποσό που θα μπορούσε να λάβει ως χρηματοδότηση η Ελλάδα προκειμένου να αναβαθμίσει το πλέγμα ψυχοκοινωνική υποστήριξης και συμβουλευτικής καθοδήγησης παιδιών και εφήβων με καταθλιπτικά συμπτώματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τα ποσοστά της παιδικής και εφηβικής κατάθλιψης στην τελευταία τετραετία. Ωστόσο, σε μερικές χώρες παρατηρούνται μακροπρόθεσμες αυξήσεις, όσον αφορά τη διάγνωση κατάθλιψης σε αυτές τις ηλικιακές ομάδες, οι οποίες ίσως να συνδέονται με τη μεγαλύτερη ικανότητα και προθυμία των ιατρών να διαγνώσουν τέτοιες διαταραχές, καθώς και με τη μεγαλύτερη ευαισθητοποίηση από την πλευρά των γονέων. Ο ρόλος της οικονομικής κρίσης δεν είναι απόλυτα σαφής. Ορισμένες μελέτες δείχνουν ότι οι οικονομικές δυσχέρειες έχουν καταστροφικές συνέπειες στην ψυχική υγεία των παιδιών και των εφήβων, ιδίως μέσω των αλλαγών της γονικής συμπεριφοράς ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή είναι πρόθυμη να υποστηρίξει την παγίωση της αναδιάρθρωσης του τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας στην Ελλάδα. Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να χρησιμοποιήσει τα κονδύλια που προέρχονται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο, βάσει του άξονα της προτεραιότητας 5 του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού 2007-13». Ο «άξονας προτεραιότητας 5» στοχεύει στην υποστήριξη της ανάπτυξης της πρωτοβάθμιας υγειονομικής περίθαλψης, της προστασίας της δημόσιας υγείας και της αναδιάρθρωσης του τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας, με συνολικό προϋπολογισμό που ανέρχεται σε περίπου 225 εκατομμύρια ευρώ. Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, το ποσοστό απορρόφησης του εν λόγω άξονα προτεραιότητας ήταν 12,4%.

([1]) Παράδειγμα: T. Solantaus κ.ά.: Η ψυχική υγεία των παιδιών σε περιόδους οικονομικής ύφεσης: επανάληψη και επέκταση του οικογενειακού προτύπου της Φινλανδίας βάσει της οικονομικής πίεσης. *Developmental Psychology* 06/2004, σελ. 412-29.

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση και η Επιτροπή έχουν ξεκινήσει συζητήσεις σχετικά με την επικείμενη συμφωνία εταιρικής σχέσης και τα θεματικά επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα, τα οποία θα καθορίσουν τις προτεραιότητες των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων για την περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2014-2020. Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση, σε συνεργασία με την Επιτροπή, θα αποφασίσει για την κατανομή και χρήση των κονδυλίων αυτών, σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις των κανονισμών και των προτεραιοτήτων που έχουν συμφωνηθεί.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011437/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Dramatic increase in child and adolescent depression in Greece

According to the findings of the most recent Annual Panhellenic Medical Conference, hospitalisations of children have increased by 12% over the last two years in Greece. Tests indicate that their symptoms (headaches, stomach ache, pain in the extremities, etc.) are in many cases due not to a physical ailment, but to psychogenic factors such as depression. Both research and the abundant experience of child psychiatrists, paediatricians and psychologists have identified high levels of depressive phenomena in children and adolescents from families facing severe economic hardship either because of unemployment or because of a significant loss of income and overindebtedness. Psychological changes in children and adolescents are incorrectly attributed to emotional and psychological changes during the development of the child and the transition from one stage to another, which creates additional difficulties in reliably diagnosing depressive tendencies.

Children and adolescents exhibit somatic symptoms of depressive tendencies, showing intense and unspecified anxiety, nervousness, aggression, muscle ache, etc. as a result of poor communication and a tense domestic environment, caused by financial difficulties and painful professional developments. In this context, and given the EU's emblematic commitment to strengthening social protection for children and adolescents, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any statistics for fluctuations in rates of childhood and adolescent depression over the last four years?

2. Is it aware of specific research demonstrating a correlation between economic crisis and an increasing incidence of childhood and adolescent depression?

3. Is any funding available from the European Structural Funds and what is the maximum overall amount that Greece could receive as funding to upgrade its network of psychosocial support and counselling for children and adolescents exhibiting depressive symptoms?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

The Commission has no statistical data on the rates of childhood and adolescent depression during the last four years. However, long-term increases in the diagnoses of depression in this age group are reported in some countries and may be linked with a greater ability and willingness of doctors to diagnose such disorders, and a higher sensitivity of parents. The role of the economic crisis is not fully clear. Some studies indicate that economic hardship can have a detrimental impact on the mental health of children and adolescents, in particular through changes in parenting styles ([1]).

The Commission is keen to support the consolidation of the mental health reform in Greece. Greece could use funding from the European Social Fund, Priority Axis 5 of the Operational Programme 'Human Resource Development 2007-13'. This 'priority 5' axis aims to support the development of primary healthcare, the protection of public health and the reform of the mental health sector with a total budget of approximately EUR 225 million. In December 2012, the absorption of this Priority Axis was 12.4%.

The Greek Government and the Commission have now initiated discussions on the upcoming Partnership Agreement and thematic Operational Programmes, which will set out the priorities for Structural Funds in the programming period 2014-2020. The Greek Government, in cooperation with the Commission, will decide about the distribution and use of funds, in line with the provisions of the regulations and agreed priorities.

([1]) Example: T. Solantaus et al: Children's mental health in times of economic recession: replication and extension of the family economic stress model in Finland. *Developmental Psychology* 06/2004, pp. 412-29.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011438/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ραγδαία και συνεχιζόμενη συρρίκνωση της απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα. Ελλειμματική σχέση εργαζόμενων-μη απασχολούμενων

Σύμφωνα με τα πρόσφατα στοιχεία της Eurostat για την απασχόληση στην ΕΕ το Γ' Τρίμηνο του 2012, οι νόμιμες θέσεις εργασίας στην Ελλάδα — συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της τουριστικής περιόδου — συρρικνώνονται με ετήσιο ρυθμό 8,9%, ποσοστό υπερδιπλάσιο από το —4,1% που σημειώνεται σε Ισπανία και Πορτογαλία (βρίσκονται στη 2η θέση) και υπερπολλαπλάσιο από τους αντίστοιχους ευρωπαϊκούς μέσους όρους στην Ευρωζώνη και την «Ευρώπη των 27» που δεν ξεπερνούν το —0,7 και —0,5 αντίστοιχα. Ταυτόχρονα, η ανεργία στη χώρα μας με βάση την τελευταία μέτρηση της Ελληνικής Στατιστικής Αρχής (ΕΛ.ΣΤΑΤ) για το μήνα Σεπτέμβριο αγγίζει το 26% με τους εργαζόμενους να υπολείπονται και να αποτελούν το 80% των μη απασχολούμενων. Με δεδομένη την αναγκαιότητα ανάσχεσης της ανεργίας και των επιπτώσεών της στην κοινωνική συνοχή, τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία και την πραγματική οικονομία ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει — ως μέλος και της Τρόικας — τα ποσοστά ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα και τις πολιτικές που ακολουθούνται για την αντιμετώπισή της; Πρόκειται να προτείνει κάποια αναθεώρηση σε μέτρα των Μνημονίων που εντείνουν την ύφεση τροφοδοτώντας ουσιαστικά την αύξηση της ανεργίας;

2. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για τη σχέση εργαζόμενων-μη απασχολούμενων στα κράτη μέλη και πώς σχολιάζει την ελλειμματική αυτή σχέση που δείχνει να παγιώνεται στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας;

3. Ποιοί ήταν οι αρχικοί στόχοι για το ποσοστό ανεργίας στο πλαίσιο των Μνημονίων και ποιά απόκλιση εμφανίζουν σε σχέση με τα πραγματικά δεδομένα;

4. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη συνολική απώλεια θέσεων εργασίας — ως ποσοστό % — στα κράτη μέλη την τελευταία τριετία;

5. Πώς αξιολογεί το γεγονός ότι η ελαστικοποίηση των εργασιακών σχέσεων όχι μόνο δε συγκράτησε την απασχόληση αλλά συνέβαλε στην πρωτοφανή συρρίκνωση της αγοράς εργασίας και των εισοδημάτων από την απασχόληση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή και τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ, από κοινού με το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο, παρέχουν άνευ προηγουμένου υποστήριξη στην Ελλάδα μέσω του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής. Αυτό βοηθά την Ελλάδα να διορθώσει τις δημοσιονομικές, χρηματοοικονομικές και εξωτερικές ανισορροπίες, να εκσυγχρονίσει τις αγορές προϊόντων και εργασίας, να καταστήσει το δημόσιο τομέα πιο αποδοτικό και πιο αποτελεσματικό και να βελτιώσει το επιχειρηματικό περιβάλλον, με απώτερο στόχο την τόνωση της ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης.

Ορισμένα από τα προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα είναι μακροχρόνια. Ακόμη και όταν η οικονομία αναπτυσσόταν με ταχύ ρυθμό, η απασχόληση ως ποσοστό του ενεργού πληθυσμού εξακολουθούσε να βρίσκεται κάτω από το μέσο όρο της ΕΕ, εξαιτίας των ποσοστών συμμετοχής στην αγορά εργασίας που παρέμεναν κάτω από το μέσο όρο και των ποσοστών ανεργίας που ήταν υψηλότερα από το μέσο όρο, ιδίως μεταξύ των νέων, των γυναικών και των ηλικιωμένων εργαζομένων.

Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν θέσει σε εφαρμογή σημαντικές μεταρρυθμίσεις των αγορών εργασίας, προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών, ενώ παράλληλα προωθούν τη δημοσιονομική και οικονομική βιωσιμότητα, που αποτελούν προαπαιτούμενους όρους για την ισχυρή και διατηρήσιμη ανάπτυξη. Στόχος όλων αυτών των ενεργειών είναι να υποστηρίξουν τις προσπάθειες για τη δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης και για την αύξηση του διαθέσιμου εισοδήματος έστω και εάν οι επιπτώσεις τους μπορούν να προσμετρηθούν μόνο με ορίζοντα ένα παρατεταμένο χρονικό διάστημα, ενώ βραχυπρόθεσμα μπορεί να προκαλέσουν απότομη αύξηση της ανεργίας, δεδομένου ότι οι εργαζόμενοι στρέφονται προς νέα επαγγέλματα.

Στο πλαίσιο της Πρωτοβουλίας με τίτλο «Ευκαιρίες για τους νέους» που δρομολόγησε η Επιτροπή, η Ελλάδα έχει λάβει μέτρα για την καταπολέμηση των δραματικών επιπέδων ανεργίας των νέων με προϋπολογισμό ύψους 608 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ (το 85% του οποίου προέρχεται από συνεισφορές της ΕΕ), προορισμός του οποίου είναι να βοηθήσει περίπου 350 000 νέους. Ταυτόχρονα, σχεδιάζεται να ληφθούν μέτρα για την ενίσχυση των δικτύων κοινωνικής προστασίας.

Για στοιχεία σχετικά με την απασχόληση και την ανεργία στην ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στον δικτυακό τόπο της Eurostat ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/introduction.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011438/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Rapid and sustained contraction of employment in Greece: fewer persons in employment than the non-active population

According to recent Eurostat figures on employment in the EU, in the third quarter of 2012, registered jobs in Greece — including during the tourist season — are shrinking at an annual rate of 8.9%, which is more than double the figure of 4.1% for Spain and Portugal (in second place after Greece) and many times more than the average in the eurozone and the EU-27, where the figure is no more than 0.7% and 0.5%, respectively. At the same time, unemployment in Greece, according to the latest survey of the Greek Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) for September, was running at 26%, with those in employment being in a minority and representing 80% of the non-active population. Given the need to halt unemployment and address its impact on social cohesion, social security funds and the real economy, will the Commission say:

1. In its capacity also as a member of the Troika, how does it view unemployment rates in Greece and the policies pursued to tackle it? Does it intend to propose a review of the measures contained in the Memoranda that are aggravating the recession and, in essence, fuelling the rise in unemployment?

2. Does it have available any statistical data on the ratio of employed persons to the non-active population in the Member States and how does it view the fact that the non-active population is more numerous than the number of those in employment in Greece, which appears to be developing into a permanent feature of the Greek labour market?

3. What were the original targets for the unemployment rate in the Memoranda and how far do the actual data diverge from these targets?

4. Does it have any information on total job losses — in percentage terms — in Member States over the last three years?

5. How does it view the fact that the flexibilisation of labour relations has not only failed to maintain employment, but has contributed to an unprecedented contraction of the labour market and income from employment?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Commission and the euro area Member States together with the International Monetary Fund are providing unprecedented support to Greece through the Economic Adjustment Programme. This helps Greece to correct the fiscal, financial and external imbalances, modernise the product and labour markets, make the public sector more efficient and more effective, and improve the business environment, with a view to spur growth and employment.

Some of the problems faced by Greece are long-standing. Even when the economy was expanding fast, employment as a share of working-age population was below the EU average on account of below-average labour market participation rates and above-average unemployment rates, in particular among young, women and elderly workers.

Under the Economic Adjustment Programme, the Greek authorities are undertaking important reforms of labour, product and service markets as well as promoting fiscal and financial sustainability, which are preconditions for a strong and sustainable growth. All these efforts should help job creation and higher disposable income even if their effects can only be measured over an extended time span, and in the short term they may imply a spike in unemployment, as workers move to new occupations.

Under the Youth Opportunities Initiative launched by the Commission, Greece has taken steps to tackle the dramatic levels of youth unemployment with a budget of EUR 608 million (85% of which EU contribution) envisaged to help approximately 350 000 youngsters. In parallel, measures are being designed to strengthen social safety nets.

For data on employment and unemployment in the EU, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Eurostat website ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/introduction.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011439/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ένταση και αύξηση φαινομένων μαθησιακών δυσκολιών στην Ελλάδα

Οι μαθησιακές δυσκολίες αποτελούν ένα ζήτημα αιχμής για την ευρωπαϊκή εκπαιδευτική πραγματικότητα. Η έγκαιρη ανίχνευση και η αντίστοιχη εκπαιδευτική στήριξη είναι τα δύο απαραίτητα «συστατικά» για την αποτελεσματική αντιμετώπιση τυχόν δυσμενών επιπτώσεών των δυσκολιών αυτών τόσο στην εκπαιδευτική διαδικασία, όσο και στη συνολικότερη κοινωνική συμπεριφορά του παιδιού. Σύμφωνα με τα πορίσματα του τελευταίου Ετήσιου Πανελλήνιου Ιατρικού Συνεδρίου, η οξεία κοινωνικοοικονομική κρίση που πλήττει τα ελληνικά νοικοκυριά και οι συνέπειές της στο οικογενειακό περιβάλλον φαίνεται να σχετίζονται άμεσα με την αύξηση αλλά και την ένταση φαινομένων μαθησιακών δυσκολιών. Ταυτόχρονα, εντοπίζεται στη χώρα μας σημαντική καθυστέρηση στη σχετική διάγνωση που, μεταξύ άλλων, οφείλεται στην υποστελέχωση των ειδικών κέντρων, με το μέσο χρόνο αναμονής και ολοκλήρωσης των συγκεκριμένων εξετάσεων να ξεπερνά τον ενάμιση χρόνο. Οι μαθησιακές δυσκολίες είναι από τους βασικότερους παράγοντες που «ενοχοποιούνται» για τη σχολική εγκατάλειψη, καθώς συνδέονται δυνητικά με τη σχολική αποτυχία, την απογοήτευση ή και περιθωριοποίηση των μαθητών. Με δεδομένο ότι η καταπολέμηση της σχολικής διαρροής συνιστά διακηρυγμένο στόχο της ΕΕ και η καθολική διασφάλιση του δικαιώματος στην εκπαίδευση είναι θεμελιώδης αξία του Ευρωπαϊκού Οικοδομήματος, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για τη διακύμανση των ποσοστών των μαθησιακών δυσκολιών στα κράτη μέλη την τελευταία τετραετία;

2. Υπάρχουν επιστημονικές μελέτες που να εξετάζουν τη συσχέτιση των επιπτώσεων της κρίσης με την αύξηση των μαθησιακών δυσκολιών; Αν όχι, προτίθεται να προχωρήσει στη διενέργεια αντίστοιχων ερευνών σε συνεργασία με Πανεπιστημιακά Ιδρύματα και Ερευνητικά Ινστιτούτα;

3. Ποιός είναι ο μέσος χρόνος ολοκλήρωσης των απαιτούμενων εξετάσεων για τη διάγνωση των μαθησιακών δυσκολιών στα κράτη μέλη και ποιά η μέση ηλικία ανίχνευσή τους;

4. Υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα κονδύλια από τα Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία για την Ελλάδα και ποιό είναι το μέγιστο ποσό που μπορεί να αντληθεί για την αναβάθμιση του κρατικού υποστηρικτικού πλαισίου και την ενίσχυση του εμπλεκόμενου ανθρωπίνου δυναμικού;

5. Πώς κρίνει το ενδεχόμενο να αφιερωθεί η Πανευρωπαϊκή Ημέρα Λογοθεραπείας (6η Μαρτίου) 2013 στη σχέση μαθησιακών δυσκολιών και οικονομικής κρίσης;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τον τρόπο με τον οποίο η κρίση επηρεάζει τις συνθήκες διαβίωσης των οικογενειών στην Ευρώπη και την ικανότητα των κρατών μελών να διατηρούν προγράμματα στήριξης για μαθητές με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες ή ειδικές εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες. Το 2012, οι περισσότερες χώρες διατήρησαν τους μηχανισμούς στήριξης των σπουδαστών και/ή των οικογενειών τους, αλλά πολλές χώρες ανέφεραν μείωση των χρηματοδοτήσεων που διατίθενται για την υποστήριξη ατόμων στο πλαίσιο της εκπαίδευσης ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της την ύπαρξη μελέτης για τη διερεύνηση της επίδρασης της κρίσης στον αριθμό των μαθητών με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες ή ειδικές εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες Σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο δεν υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα δεδομένα όσον αφορά με τις διακυμάνσεις στα ποσοστά των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών», δεδομένου ότι αυτός ο όρος ορίζεται με διαφορετικό τρόπο στα διάφορα κράτη μέλη. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία για την Ανάπτυξη της Εκπαίδευσης στον τομέα των ειδικών αναγκών διεξήγαγε πολλές μελέτες κατά τα τελευταία έτη για να συγκρίνει την κατάσταση σε διαφορετικά κράτη μέλη, για παράδειγμα, στον τομέα της παιδικής μέριμνας (www.european-agency.org).

Τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία μπορούν, καταρχήν, να στηρίξουν τα συστήματα εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της εκπαίδευσης των εκπαιδευόμενων που βρίσκονται σε μειονεκτική θέση. Η διάθεση των κονδυλίων για έργα υπέρ των μειονεκτούντων μαθητών είναι απόφαση που πρέπει να λαμβάνεται από τις εθνικές αρχές σύμφωνα με τις προτεραιότητες του αντίστοιχου προγράμματος, την κατάλληλη διαδικασία επιλογής και τον διαθέσιμο προϋπολογισμό.

([1]) Παρακολούθηση της εκπαίδευσης και της κατάρτισης 2012, SWD(2012)373 τελικό.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ημέρα Λογοθεραπείας 2013 υπενθυμίζει σε όλα τα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη την ανάγκη για υποστήριξη των ατόμων με διαταραχές στην ομιλία, την γλώσσα και την επικοινωνία και σε περιόδους κρίσης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011439/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Increase in extent and severity of learning difficulties in Greece

Learning difficulties are a major problem facing European education today. Early detection and appropriate educational support are the two necessary 'components' of any effective approach to tackle the adverse effects of these difficulties both in the educational process and the overall social behaviour of children. According to the findings of the latest Annual Panhellenic Medical Conference, there seems to be a direct correlation between the acute socioeconomic crisis affecting Greek households and its impact on the family environment and the extent and severity of learning difficulties. At the same time, there are considerable delays in establishing this diagnosis in Greece, due inter alia, to the understaffing of specialist centres, with average waiting times for the specific tests to be conducted and completed now exceeding one and a half years. Learning difficulties are among the main factors 'to blame' for pupils dropping out of school, and may be linked to school failure and the frustration and marginalisation of pupils. Given that combating the phenomenon of school drop-out is a declared objective of the EU and generally ensuring the right to education is a fundamental value of the European project, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any statistics on fluctuations in the rates of learning difficulties in Member States over the last four years?

2. Are there any scientific studies examining the correlation between the effects of the crisis and an increase in learning difficulties? If not, will it conduct research into this matter in collaboration with universities and research institutes?

3. What is the average time to complete the tests needed to establish a diagnosis of learning difficulties in the Member States and what is the average age of detection?

4. Is any funding available from the Structural Funds for Greece and what is the maximum amount that Greece may receive for upgrading the state support framework and strengthening the human resources involved?

5. How does it view the proposal to dedicate European Day of Speech Therapy (March 6) this year, 2013, to the relationship between learning difficulties and the economic crisis?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of how the crisis affects the living conditions of families in Europe and the capacity of Member States to maintain support schemes for learners with learning difficulties or special educational needs. In 2012, the majority of countries maintained their support mechanisms for learners and/or their families, but several countries reported a decrease in the funding available to support people in education. ([1])

The Commission is not aware of any study examining the effects of the crisis on the number of learners with learning difficulties or special educational needs. At the European level there is no data available on fluctuations in the rates of 'learning difficulties' as this term is defined differently across Member States. The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education has conducted several studies in recent years to compare the situation in different Member States, for instance, in the area of early childhood intervention (www.european-agency.org).

Structural Funds can, in principle, support education and training systems including the education of disadvantaged learners. The allocation of funds to projects for the benefit of disadvantaged learners is a decision to be taken by the national authorities in line with the priorities of the respective programme, the appropriate selection procedure and the available budget.

The European Day of Speech Therapy 2013 reminds all stakeholders of the need to support people with speech, language and communication disorders, also in times of crisis.

([1]) Education and Training Monitor 2012, SWD(2012) 373 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011440/12
adresată Comisiei
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE)
(17 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informația de localizare a apelantului pentru numărul de urgență 112

Articolul 26 alineatul (5) din Directiva 2009/136/CE (Directiva privind serviciul universal) prevede că „autoritățile de reglementare competente prevăd criteriile de acuratețe și fiabilitate ale informațiilor furnizate privind localizarea apelantului". Poate Comisia să menționeze ce autoritate va defini în cele din urmă criteriile obligatorii de acuratețe și fiabilitate pentru apelurile la numărul 112 pentru fiecare stat membru? Intenționează Comisia să definească cerințe europene unificate sau fiecare stat membru va avea libertatea de a-și stabili propriile cerințe? Ce interval de timp se are în vedere pentru definirea acestor cerințe de acuratețe și fiabilitate?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(1 februarie 2013)

Directiva privind serviciul universal [articolul 26 alineatul (5)] include obligația ca întreprinderile în cauză să pună la dispoziția autorității care tratează apelurile de urgență informații privind localizarea apelantului. Ea include, de asemenea, obligația ca autoritățile de reglementare competente să prevadă criteriile de acuratețe și fiabilitate ale informațiilor furnizate privind localizarea apelantului. În consecință, statele membre au responsabilitatea să impună criterii privind localizarea apelantului și pot să atribuie această sarcină oricărei autorități competente doresc. În prezent, după cum se indică în raportul anual al COCOM privind implementarea numărului 112 din 11 februarie, marea majoritate a întreprinderilor furnizează identificatorul celulei pentru localizarea apelantului. Între timp, sectorul industrial a semnalat existența unor soluții tehnologice care ar putea oferi o poziționare mai precisă.

Comisia este angajată în discuții cu statele membre pentru a se asigura că soluțiile tehnologice disponibile sunt puse în aplicare în mod eficient.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011440/12
to the Commission
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Caller location information for 112 emergency number

Article 26(5) of Directive 2009/136/EC (the Universal Service Directive) states that 'competent regulatory authorities shall lay down criteria for the accuracy and reliability of the caller location information provided'. Can the Commission indicate which authority will eventually define mandatory accuracy and reliability requirements for 112 calls for each Member State? Does the Commission intend to define unified European requirements, or will it leave it to each Member State draw up its own requirements? What timeframe is envisaged for defining such accuracy and reliability requirements?

Answer given by Mrs Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Universal Service Directive (Article 26 (5)) contains the obligation for undertakings concerned to make caller location available to the authority handling emergency calls. It also provides that competent regulatory authorities lay down criteria for the accuracy and reliability of the caller location information provided. Consequently, it is for Member States to impose caller location criteria and they may allocate this task to the competent authority of their choice. At present, as reported in the annual COCOMimplementation report of 11 February, the vast majority of undertakings provide cell ID as caller location. Meanwhile, the industry reported the existence of technological solutions which could provide more accurate positioning.

The Commission is engaged in discussions with Member States with a view to ensuring the available technological solutions are effectively implemented.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011441/12
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17. december 2012)

Om: REACH, EASA og chromtrioxid

Forslag om at føje forskellige chromater, herunder chromtrioxid til REACH's (bilag XIV) godkendelsesliste over særligt problematisk stoffer (SVHC) har skabt bekymring inden for EU's flyselskaber og vedligeholdelses-, reparations- og eftersynstjenester (MRO). Nogle af disse chromater er afgørende for opretholdelse af flysikkerheden og overholdelse af lovgivningen. Der er frygt for, at en optagelse på godkendelseslisten vil medføre, at chromtrioxid ikke længere bliver tilgængeligt.

Der findes øjensynligt ingen brugbare alternativer, især til vedligeholdelse af ældre fly.

Kan Kommissionen i denne forbindelse besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Er Kommissionen bekendt med, at Det Europæiske Luftfartssikkerhedsagentur (EASA) modsatte sig forslaget om at føje chromtrioxid til REACH-godkendelseslisten (fordi branchen betragter det som en væsentlig ingrediens i korrosionsbeskyttelse til fly)?

2. Hvad var begrundelsen for at tilsidesætte EASA's indsigelse?

3. Blev EASA hørt, inden den omhandlede beslutning blev truffet? I benægtende fald, hvorfor ikke?

4. Er Kommissionen bekendt med brugbare alternativer til chromtrioxid til flyvedligeholdelse?

5. Hvilke kemikalier, om nogen, foreslår Kommissionen anvendt i stedet for chromtrioxid?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(13. februar 2013)

Kommissionen er opmærksom på den kritiske anvendelse af chrom(VI)-forbindelser, herunder chromtrioxid i luft- og rumfartssektoren, med henblik på at opfylde EASA's sikkerhedsstandarder vedrørende flys luftdygtighed. Talrige interessenter har henvist til disse standarder under den offentlige høring, som ECHA ([1]) holdt, og bagefter i bemærkninger fremsat til Kommissionen.

Optagelsen af disse stoffer i bilag XIV til REACH-forordningen ([2]) vil ikke medføre et forbud mod brugen af disse stoffer, men vil gøre deres markedsføring og brug betinget af krav om godkendelse som fastsat i afsnit VII i REACH. Der skal tages hensyn til de socioøkonomiske virkninger, såsom dem, der relaterer til fordelene ved at bruge stoffet af hensyn til flysikkerheden, ved vurderingen af de individuelle ansøgninger, i overensstemmelse med artikel 60 i REACH.

Under udarbejdelsen af ændringen til bilag XIV baserede Kommissionen sig på henstillingen fra ECHA og tog hensyn til bemærkninger fra interessenter under den offentlige høring og information, Kommissionen har modtaget.

Et af målene med godkendelseskravene i REACH er, at særligt problematiske stoffer gradvist erstattes af passende alternativer, når disse er teknisk og økonomisk gennemførlige. Derfor skal ansøgere i deres ansøgning om godkendelse inkludere en analyse af alternativer, som vurderer brugbarheden og tilgængeligheden af potentielle alternativer til den særlige anvendelse af et stof i bilag XIV. Den kendsgerning, at der ikke, for nuværende, findes nogen passende alternativer, er derfor ikke en relevant betragtning for, om et stof skal optages i bilag XIV.

([1]) Det Europæiske Kemikalieagentur.

([2]) Igangværende for øjeblikket. Udkastet er tilgængeligt her: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&ESw69lW1liJCyGC0nDxHnHRv2Eqv147LucLOe5USPHlytOqcXifribHkwKQ4Eb38tpvVNTdXoWt1PLNDwNflDw==

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011441/12
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: REACH, EASA and chromium trioxide

Proposals to add various chromates, including chromium trioxide, to the REACH (Annex XIV) authorisation list of substances of very high concern (SVHC) have raised concerns within the EU airline and aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) industry. Some of these chromates are vital for maintaining aircraft safety and complying with the legislation. There are fears that adding them to the authorisation list will lead to chromium trioxide no longer being available.

It seems that no viable alternatives are available, especially for the maintenance of legacy aircraft.

In this connection, could the Commission answer the following:

1. Is the Commission aware that the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) objected to the proposal to add chromium trioxide to the REACH authorisation list (bearing in mind that the industry considers it to be an essential ingredient for corrosion protection of aeroplanes)?

2. What were the reasons for disregarding the EASA's objection?

3. Was the EASA consulted before the relevant decisions were taken? If not, why not?

4. Is the Commission aware of any viable alternative to chromium trioxide for use in aircraft maintenance?

5. What chemicals, if any, does the Commission propose to use instead of chromium trioxide?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the critical use of a number of chromium VI compounds, including chromium trioxide in the aerospace sector, in order to meet safety standards concerning airworthiness of aircrafts established by EASA. Reference to those standards was made by numerous stakeholders in the public consultation carried out by ECHA ([1]) and afterwards in submissions to the Commission.

The inclusion of those substances in Annex XIV to the REACH Regulation ([2]) would not result in a ban of the use of those substances, but would make their placing on the market and use subject to the authorisation requirement laid down in Title VII of REACH. Socioeconomic impacts, such as those relating to the benefits from the use of the substance for the safety of aircraft, are to be considered when assessing the individual applications for authorisation, in accordance with Article 60 of REACH.

While drafting the amendment of Annex XIV, the Commission based itself on the recommendation submitted by ECHA, taking into consideration comments from stakeholders during the public consultation and information provided to the Commission.

One of the objectives of the REACH authorisation requirement is to progressively replace substances of very high concern by suitable alternatives where they are technically and economically feasible. To that end applicants for authorisation have to include in their application an analysis of alternatives which assesses the suitability and availability of potential alternatives to the Annex XIV substance for the particular use. Therefore the fact that there are no suitable alternatives available at the present time is not a relevant consideration for the purposes of including a substance in Annex XIV.

([1]) the European Chemicals Agency
([2]) currently underway. The draft is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&3xnjTuZwf6uXJAJWLq2GFRCvUhwVvLx02XYDkHHbBxyBuE2177sL3dMBpRfefPrJ

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011442/12
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17. december 2012)

Om: REACH og luftfartssektoren

Den europæiske luftfartssektor har udtrykt bekymring vedrørende dele af REACH-forordningen, herunder tilføjelsen af visse kemiske forbindelser, som sektoren mener, det er nødvendigt at anvende for at opretholde et højt sikkerhedsniveau.

Kommissionen anmodes i denne forbindelse om at besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Har Kommissionen analyseret, i hvilket omfang REACH har skadet konkurrenceevnen inden for EU's luftfartsektor og sektoren for vedligeholdelse, reparation og eftersyn (MRO) — da deres konkurrenter uden for EU ikke er tynget af REACH — og hvilke konklusioner nåede den frem til?

2. Mener Kommissionen, at gennemførelsen af REACH kan føre til tab af arbejdspladser inden for luftfarten og MRO?

3. Er Kommissionen blevet kontaktet af sektoren angående dette spørgsmål?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(1. marts 2013)

1. Kommissionen er bevidst om den kritiske anvendelse af chromtrioxid og andre chrom(VI)-forbindelser i luftfartssektoren. Indbefatningen af disse stoffer i bilag XIV til REACH-forordnigen, der er under udarbejdelse, vil ikke føre til et forbud mod anvendelsen af disse stoffer, men gøre deres markedsføring og anvendelse omfattet af godkendelseskravet fastlagt i afsnit VII i REACH-forordningen. Samfundsøkonomiske virkninger, såsom dem der vedrører konkurrenceevnen for en sektor eller for beskæftigelsen, skal tages i betragtning ved vurderingen af de individuelle ansøgninger om godkendelse i overensstemmelse med artikel 60 i REACH-forordningen.

2. Ansøgere, der indgiver en ansøgning inden den sidste ansøgningsfrist, kan fortsat anvende stoffet eller markedsføre det til de(n) anvendelse(r), der ansøges om godkendelse for, indtil beslutningen vedrørende ansøgningen om godkendelse træffes og efterfølgende i tilfælde af en positiv beslutning, hvilket gør det muligt at bevare kontinuiteten i deres aktiviteter. Godkendelse kan opnås af stoffets producent eller importør og dækker de anvendelser, som producenten/importøren leverer til, og som således omfatter downstreambrugere.

3. Under proceduren for ændring af bilag XIV til REACH-forordningen har Kommissionen modtaget input, navnlig via den offentlige høring, der blev gennemført af Det Europæiske Kemikalieagentur, fra forskellige aktører, herunder den pågældende sektor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011442/12
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: REACH and the airline industry

The European airline industry has raised concerns regarding parts of the REACH regulation, including the transfer of certain chemical compounds it considers necessary to maintain high safety standards.

In this connection, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Has the Commission analysed what negative impacts REACH has had on the competiveness of the EU airline and maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) industries — since their non-EU competitors are not burdened by REACH — and what were the conclusions?

2. Does the Commission consider that the implementation of REACH could lead to job losses in the airline and MRO industries?

3. Has the Commission been approached by the industry with regard to this issue?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(1 March 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the critical use of chromium trioxide and other chromium VI compounds in the aerospace sector. The inclusion of those substances in Annex XIV to the REACH Regulation, currently underway, would not result in a ban of the use of those substances, but would make their placing on the market and use subject to the authorisation requirement laid down in Title VII of REACH. Socioeconomic impacts, such as those relating to the competitiveness of a sector or on employment, are considered when assessing the individual applications for authorisation, in accordance with Article 60 of REACH.

2. Applicants who make an application before the latest application date may continue to use the substance or place it on the market for the use(s) applied for until a decision on the application for authorisation is taken, and thereafter in case of a positive decision, thus allowing to maintain the continuity of their activities. Authorisation may be obtained by the manufacturer or importer of the substance, covering the uses for which he supplies it, thereby covering downstream users.

3. In the process of amending Annex XIV of REACH, the Commission has received input, mainly via the public consultation conducted by the European Chemicals Agency, from different stakeholders including the industry concerned.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011443/12
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17. december 2012)

Om: Potentiel mangel på medicin i Europa

Der er bekymring for, at mangel på lægemidler kan blive en uforudset bivirkning af ikrafttrædelsen af direktivet om forfalskede lægemidler (direktiv 2011/62/EU) i juli 2013. Dette skyldes, at alle importerede aktive farmaceutiske ingredienser (API) fra da af skal forsynes med en skriftlig bekræftelse fra det eksporterende lands kompetente myndighed om, at API'erne er fremstillet i overensstemmelse med gældende GMP-standarder (Good Manufacturing Practice). Flere personer har udtrykt bekymring over, at dette kan føre til mangel på godkendte API'er i Europa og dermed en mangel på lægemidler.

Kommissionen bedes i denne forbindelse besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Hvordan vurderer Kommissionen den potentielle mangel på lægemiddel efter direktivets ikrafttrædelse?

2. Er der tegn på, at der kan opstå lægemiddelmangel, og hvilke foranstaltninger vil Kommissionen i givet fald træffe?

3. Har Kommissionen modtaget henvendelser om dette emne og i givet fald fra hvem?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(8. februar 2013)

1. Kommissionen henviser det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-011583/2011 ([1]).

2. Kommissionen er ikke opmærksom på konkrete tegn herpå, men er blevet gjort opmærksom på risikoen. For så vidt angår trufne foranstaltninger, henviser Kommissionen det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel P-009858/2012 ([2]).

3. Kommissionen har modtaget henvendelser om dette emne fra medlemsstater og interesserede parter, der er involveret i fremstilling, levering og køb af virksomme stoffer til humanmedicinske lægemidler, og er i tæt, fortsat kontakt med dem og med myndighederne i tredjelande.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq&tabActif=tabLast&action=0.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq&tabActif=tabLast&action=0.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011443/12
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Potential shortage of drugs in Europe

There are concerns that possible shortages of medicinal products could be an unforeseen side-effect of the entry into force of the Falsified Medicines Directive (2011/62/EU) in July 2013. This is because all imported active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) from then on will need written confirmation from the exporting country's competent authority that the API was produced in accordance with applicable GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) standards. Some people have raised concerns over whether this could lead to a shortage of approved APIs in Europe, and hence a shortage of drugs.

In connection with this, can the Commission answer the following:

1. How does the Commission view the potential drug shortage following the entry into force of the directive?

2. Are there signs that a drug shortage will occur, and if so, what action will the Commission take?

3. Has the Commission been approached about this issue and, if so, by whom?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011583/2011 ([1]).

2. While the Commission is not aware of concrete signs, it has been made aware of the risk. Regarding the actions taken, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-009858/2012 ([2]).

3. The Commission has been approached on this file by Member States and by stakeholders involved in the manufacturing, supplying and purchasing of active substances for medicinal products for human use and is in close, continued contact with them as well as with third country authorities.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?action=0&tabType=wq&tabActif=tabLast.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?action=0&tabType=wq&tabActif=tabLast.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011444/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: EU funding of Palestinian groups

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the use of EU funding by Palestinian groups.

He claims that the watchdog organisation Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) alleges that money given in aid to the Palestinians is in fact being given to convicted terrorists.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. Whether any of the money given by the EU to the Palestinians ends up in the hands of Palestinian prisoners or those charged with terrorism offences?

2. If so, what is being done to stop this?

3. If money is given to convicted terrorists, does the EU plan to review aid funding to the Palestinian territories?

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

The allocation of funds to the Palestinian people is decided on an annual basis following the decision of the Budgetary Authority. As part of its bilateral assistance package, the EU provides direct financial support to the recurrent expenditure of the Palestinian Authority (PA). A strict and extensive mechanism of audit and verification is in place which allows the European Union to verify the precise destination of every single Euro committed through the PEGASE Mechanism, including notably a check on each individual potential beneficiary for each payment on a recognised database of terror suspects.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011445/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: UK Communications Data Bill

In response to my Written Question E-000512/2011 about the UK Government's Intercept Modernisation Programme, the Commission responded that it would 'follow this process closely to ensure that the legislation that will be proposed will be consistent with the obligations of the UK under EC law, including that relating to data protection'.

Since then, the British Government has announced that the Intercept Modernisation Programme would be replaced by the communications Capabilities Development Programme.

1. Could the Commission confirm whether the proposed Communications Capabilities Development Programme would be compatible with EU data protection laws?

2. If it is incompatible with EC law, what steps does the Commission intend to take?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission continues to follow discussions in the United Kingdom and elsewhere concerning the retention and use of communications data. As stated in the written evidence provided by the Commission to the to the United Kingdom parliament's joint committee on the draft Communications Data Bill ([1]), it would not be appropriate for the Commission to speculate with regard to draft national legislation which is still under discussion on the potential merits and drawbacks of the proposed measures, nor on the compatibility or otherwise of those measures with EC law.

([1]) http://www.parliament.uk/documents/joint-committees/communications-data/written%20evidence%20Volume.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011446/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Funding for proposed institute to promote good managerial practices in the Third World

I have been contacted by a constituent who wishes to establish an institute or think tank in Brussels to propagate good managerial practices in the Third World, particularly Africa.

My constituent, William Hopper, and his brother Kenneth have written a bestseller entitled 'The Puritan Gift: Reclaiming the American Dream amidst Global Financial Chaos'. The book describes how a small group of American engineers taught good, contemporary management methods to Japanese manufacturers during the US occupation of Japan (1945-1952), a process which led to the subsequent Asian economic miracles.

Instruction was provided to the Japanese under three headings, normally abbreviated to CCS (Civil Communications Section), MTP (Management Training Programme) and TWI (Training Within Industry) and was designed, respectively, for senior, middle and lower management. These courses are even now being recreated at the PSG Institute of Management in Peelamedu, Coimbatore, India, for use in that country. The Hoppers intend to work closely with the PSG Institute to create the new body in Brussels ([1]).

Is the Commission able to suggest who the project managers should contact in order to secure possible EU funding for this educational project?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2013)

The Commission does not provide funding for the establishment of institutes or think tanks for the provision of courses to developing countries based on an initiative from an industrialised country alone. In line with the principles of aid effectiveness, the Commission funds measures to develop the education sector in developing countries, e.g. through broad sector policy support, capacity building cooperation projects and the mobility of academics and students.

For more information on education in developing countries, the Honourable Member can contact DG Development and Cooperation: Education, Health, Research, Culture Unit; tel.: +32-2-2996380.

([1]) More information on the Hoppers and the PSG Institute can be found at www.puritangift.com and at http://www.psgim.ac.in.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011447/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații actualizate în urma întrebării cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011134/2010 privind utilizarea și rezultatele obținute datorită fondurilor de preaderare din domeniile sistemului judiciar și al combaterii corupției din Turcia

În urma răspunsului oferit la întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011134/2010, ar putea Comisia oferi informații actualizate răspunzând la întrebările următoare:

1. Care este valoarea la care se ridică și care sunt proiectele specifice cărora le-au fost destinate fondurile de preaderare pe care le-a alocat UE spre a fi utilizate în domeniul prevenirii, monitorizării și combaterii corupției din Turcia începând din momentul în care aceasta a dobândit statutul de țară candidată? La ce valoare se ridică, în prezent, sumele din fondurile alocate care au fost deja angajate și plătite beneficiarilor? Care a fost cuantumul precis al cofinanțărilor acordate de autoritățile interne? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rugăm să oferiți date statistice anuale referitoare la fiecare proiect în parte, separate pe fiecare an în parte și care să acopere intervalul 2000-2012.

2. Care este valoarea la care se ridică și care sunt proiectele specifice cărora le-au fost destinate fondurile de preaderare pe care le-a alocat UE spre a fi utilizate în vederea reformei sistemului judiciar din Turcia începând din momentul în care aceasta a dobândit statutul de țară candidată? La ce valoare se ridică, în prezent, sumele din fondurile alocate care au fost deja angajate și plătite beneficiarilor? Care a fost cuantumul precis al cofinanțărilor acordate de autoritățile interne? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rugăm să oferiți date statistice anuale referitoare la fiecare proiect în parte, separate pe fiecare an în parte și care să acopere intervalul 2000-2012.

3. Vă rugăm să puneți la dispoziție fișele proiectelor implementate anterior anului 2007 în domeniul prevenirii, monitorizării și combaterii corupției din Turcia, precum și ale proiectelor destinate reformei sistemului judiciar al acestei țări.

4. Care sunt rezultatele concrete, valoarea adăugată și impactul obținut prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare în vederea finanțării măsurilor de combatere a corupției și de reformă a sistemului judiciar? Vă rog să oferiți informații referitoare și la conformitatea proiectelor finanțate cu normele de eligibilitate.

5. În ce mod intenționează Comisia să susțină din punct de vedere financiar continuarea reformelor din sistemul judiciar și a măsurilor de combatere a corupției din Turcia pe durata exercițiului financiar 2014-2020? Care sunt prioritățile de acțiune care se au în prezent în vedere?

6. Ce inițiative concrete pregătește în prezent Comisia pentru a evalua fondurile de preaderare cheltuite în cadrul fiecărui proiect în Turcia?

Răspuns dat de dl Füle în numele Comisiei
(20 februarie 2013)

Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte răspunsurile oferite la întrebările anterioare cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009861/2010, E-011133/2010, E-011134/2010, E-011448/2012, E-011449/2012, E-011661/2012, E-011662/2012, E-011663/2012, E-011664/2012 și E-011665/2012, precum și la scrisoarea din data de 11 aprilie 2011 adresată domnului de Magistris, președinte al Comisiei pentru control bugetar.

În ceea ce privește evaluarea proiectelor finanțate prin instrumente de preaderare, o practică obișnuită a Comisiei constă în colectarea de dovezi cu privire la cooperarea trecută pentru a alimenta procesul viitor de elaborare a politicilor și de programare. Cu toate acestea, având în vedere numărul mare și amploarea relativ restrânsă a proiectelor, ca regulă generală și dat fiind raportul cost/beneficiu negativ, nu sunt lansate evaluări specifice ale proiectelor. Cu toate acestea, proiectele sunt în mod regulat monitorizate de autoritățile naționale și de delegația UE și se pot obține, la cerere, informații legate de proiecte specifice.

În general, evaluările complete sunt lansate cu o perspectivă mai largă, de regulă la nivel sectorial și intermediar, precum și la nivel de țară. În ceea ce privește în mod specific statul de drept, tocmai au fost finalizate o evaluare dintr-o perspectivă largă pentru Balcanii de Vest și o evaluare concentrată asupra sistemului judiciar din Turcia, care vor fi comunicate distinsului membru împreună cu documentele de însoțire. De asemenea, o evaluare *ex-post* a asistenței financiare acordate Turciei în perioada 2002-2006 a fost lansată recent și se preconizează că va fi finalizată în ultimul trimestru al anului 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011447/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Updated information further to Written Question E-011134/2010 on the use and results of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Turkey

Further to its answer to Written Question E-011134/2010, could the Commission provide updated information in reply to the following questions:

1. To what amount, and to which specific projects, has the EU allocated pre-accession funds to be used in the area of preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Turkey since it acquired the status of a candidate country? At present, what amounts from the funds allocated have already been committed and paid out to the beneficiaries? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide statistical data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2000 to 2012.

2. To what amount, and to which specific projects, has the EU allocated pre-accession funds for the reform of the judicial system in Turkey since it acquired the status of a candidate country? At present, what amounts from the funds allocated have already been committed and paid out to the beneficiaries? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide statistical data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2000 to 2012.

3. Please make available the project fiches for the projects implemented prior to 2007 in the area of preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Turkey and for the reform of the country's judicial system.

4. What are the effective results, the added value and the impact obtained through the allocation of pre-accession funds to finance measures to fight corruption and reform the judicial system? Please also provide information on compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules.

5. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judiciary and the fight against corruption in Turkey during the budgetary period 2014-2020? What priorities for action are currently envisaged?

6. What concrete initiatives is the Commission working on for the evaluation of pre-accession funds spent on individual projects in Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The Commission kindly refers the Honourable Member to its answers to previous written questions E-009861/2010, E-011133/2010, E-011134/2010, E-011448/2012, E-011449/2012, E-011661/2012, E-011662/2012, E-011663/2012, E-011664/2012, E-011665/2012 and to the letter sent to Mr de Magistris, chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, of 11 April 2011.

Concerning the evaluation of projects funded from pre-accession instruments, the Commission routinely gathers evidence on past cooperation to feed the future policy making and programming process. However, given the high number and the relative small size of projects, as a rule and in view of the negative cost/benefit ratio no specific project evaluations are launched. Projects are however subject to regular monitoring by the national authorities and the EU Delegation and information related to specific projects can be obtained on demand.

Full-fledged evaluations are generally launched with a broader perspective, typically at sector, interim and country level. With specific regard to Rule of Law, a broad, perspective evaluation for the western Balkans, and another focused on Judiciary in Turkey have just been finalised and will be communicated to the Honourable Member together with accompanying documentation. Also, an *ex-post* evaluation of financial assistance in Turkey in the period 2002-2006 has just been launched and is foreseen to be finalised in the last quarter of 2013.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011448/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații actualizate în urma întrebării cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011133/2010 privind utilizarea și rezultatele obținute datorită fondurilor de preaderare din domeniile sistemului judiciar și al combaterii corupției din Croația

În urma răspunsului oferit la întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011133/2010, ar putea Comisia oferi informații actualizate răspunzând la întrebările următoare

1. Care este valoarea la care se ridică și care sunt proiectele specifice cărora le-au fost destinate fondurile de preaderare pe care le-a alocat UE spre a fi utilizate în domeniul prevenirii, monitorizării și combaterii corupției din Croația începând din momentul în care aceasta a dobândit statutul de țară candidată? La ce valoare se ridică, în prezent, sumele din fondurile alocate care au fost deja angajate și plătite beneficiarilor? Care a fost cuantumul precis al cofinanțărilor acordate de autoritățile interne? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să oferiți date statistice anuale referitoare la fiecare proiect în parte, separate pe fiecare an în parte și care să acopere intervalul 2005-2012.

2. Care este valoarea la care se ridică și care sunt proiectele specifice cărora le-au fost destinate fondurile de preaderare pe care le-a alocat UE spre a fi utilizate în vederea reformei sistemului judiciar din Croația începând din momentul în care aceasta a dobândit statutul de țară candidată? La ce valoare se ridică, în prezent, sumele din fondurile alocate care au fost deja angajate și plătite beneficiarilor? Care a fost cuantumul precis al cofinanțărilor acordate de autoritățile interne? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să oferiți date statistice anuale referitoare la fiecare proiect în parte, separate pe fiecare an în parte și care să acopere intervalul 2005-2012.

3. Vă rugăm să puneți la dispoziție fișele de proiect ale proiectelor implementate înainte de 2007 în domeniul prevenirii, monitorizării și combaterii corupției din Croația, precum și ale proiectelor destinate reformării sistemului judiciar al acestei țări.

4. Care sunt rezultatele concrete, valoarea adăugată și impactul obținut prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare în vederea finanțării măsurilor de combatere a corupției și de reformă a sistemului judiciar? Vă rog să oferiți, de asemenea, informații referitoare la conformitatea proiectelor finanțate cu normele de eligibilitate.

5. Cum intenționează Comisia să susțină financiar continuarea reformelor din sistemul judiciar și combaterea corupției din Croația după 1 iulie 2013?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011449/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații actualizate cu privire la întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009861/2010 privind utilizarea și rezultatele fondurilor de preaderare în domeniul sistemului judiciar și lupta împotriva corupției în fosta Republică Iugoslavă a Macedoniei

În contextul întrebării cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009861/2010, rugăm Comisia să furnizeze informații actualizate ca răspuns la următoarele întrebări:

1. Ce sume din fondurile de preaderare au fost alocate de UE și pentru ce proiecte specifice în domeniul prevenirii, monitorizării și combaterii corupției în Macedonia, din momentul în care aceasta a dobândit statutul de țară candidată? Ce sume din fondurile alocate au fost deja angajate și plătite beneficiarilor? Care au fost sumele exacte cofinanțate de autoritățile interne? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rugăm să furnizați date statistice anuale pentru fiecare proiect, separat pentru fiecare dintre anii din perioada 2006-2012.

2. Ce sume din fondurile de preaderare au fost alocate de UE și pentru ce proiecte specifice în domeniul reformei sistemului judiciar din Macedonia din momentul în care aceasta a dobândit statutul de țară candidată? Ce sume din fondurile alocate au fost deja angajate și plătite beneficiarilor? Care au fost sumele exacte cofinanțate de autoritățile interne? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rugăm să furnizați date statistice anuale pentru fiecare proiect, separat pentru fiecare dintre anii din perioada 2006-2012.

3. Vă rugăm să puneți la dispoziție fișele de proiect pentru proiectele implementate înainte de 2007 în domeniul prevenirii, monitorizării şi combaterii corupției din Macedonia şi pentru reforma sistemului judiciar al țării.

4. Care sunt rezultatele concrete, valoarea adăugată şi impactul obținut prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare pentru a finanța măsuri de combatere a corupției şi reforma sistemului judiciar? Vă rugăm să furnizați, de asemenea, informații referitoare la conformitatea proiectelor finanțate cu normele de eligibilitate.

5. Cum intenționează Comisia să sprijine financiar continuarea reformei sistemului judiciar şi lupta împotriva corupției în Macedonia în decursul exercițiului bugetar 2014-2020? Care sunt domeniile prioritare de acțiune preconizate în momentul de față?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011661/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații privind utilizarea fondurilor de preaderare în domeniul sistemului judiciar și al luptei împotriva corupției în Albania, precum și rezultatele obținute

În urma Raportului Comisiei pe 2012 privind progresele înregistrate de Albania, solicit răspunsuri la următoarele întrebări:

1. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru prevenirea, monitorizarea și combaterea corupției în Albania din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

2. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru reforma sistemului judiciar în Albania din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

3. Ce rezultate efective, valoare adăugată și impact au fost obținute în lupta împotriva corupției și în reforma sistemului judiciar prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent)? Vă rog să prezentați, de asemenea, informații privind respectarea, de către proiectele finanțate, a normelor de admisibilitate (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent).

4. În ce mod urmărește Comisia să sprijine financiar continuarea reformei sistemului judiciar și a luptei împotriva corupției în Albania în perioada bugetară 2014-2020? Ce acțiuni prioritare sunt avute în vedere în prezent?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011662/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații privind utilizarea fondurilor de preaderare în domeniul sistemului judiciar și al luptei împotriva corupției în Bosnia și Herțegovina, precum și rezultatele obținute

În urma Raportului Comisiei pe 2012 privind progresele înregistrate de Bosnia și Herțegovina, solicit răspunsuri la următoarele întrebări:

1. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru prevenirea, monitorizarea și combaterea corupției în Bosnia și Herțegovina din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

2. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru reforma sistemului judiciar din Bosnia și Herțegovina din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

3. Ce rezultate efective, valoare adăugată și impact au fost obținute în lupta împotriva corupției și în reforma sistemului judiciar prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent)? Vă rog să prezentați, de asemenea, informații privind respectarea, de către proiectele finanțate, a normelor de admisibilitate (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent).

4. În ce mod urmărește Comisia să sprijine financiar continuarea reformei sistemului judiciar și a luptei împotriva corupției în Bosnia și Herțegovina în perioada bugetară 2014-2020? Ce acțiuni prioritare sunt avute în vedere în prezent?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011663/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații privind utilizarea fondurilor de preaderare în domeniul sistemului judiciar și al luptei împotriva corupției în Muntenegru, precum și rezultatele obținute

În urma Raportului Comisiei pe 2012 privind progresele înregistrate de Muntenegru, solicit răspunsuri la următoarele întrebări:

1. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru prevenirea, monitorizarea și combaterea corupției în Muntenegru din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

2. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru reforma sistemului judiciar din Muntenegru din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

3. Ce rezultate efective, valoare adăugată și impact au fost obținute în lupta împotriva corupției și în reforma sistemului judiciar prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent)? Vă rog să prezentați, de asemenea, informații privind respectarea, de către proiectele finanțate, a normelor de admisibilitate (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent).

4. În ce mod urmărește Comisia să sprijine financiar continuarea reformei sistemului judiciar și a luptei împotriva corupției în Muntenegru în perioada bugetară 2014-2020? Ce acțiuni prioritare sunt avute în vedere în prezent?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011664/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații privind utilizarea fondurilor de preaderare în domeniul sistemului judiciar și al luptei împotriva corupției în Serbia, precum și rezultatele obținute

În urma Raportului Comisiei pe 2012 privind progresele înregistrate de Serbia, solicit răspunsuri la următoarele întrebări:

1. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru prevenirea, monitorizarea și combaterea corupției în Serbia din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

2. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru reforma sistemului judiciar din Serbia din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

3. Ce rezultate efective, valoare adăugată și impact au fost obținute în lupta împotriva corupției și în reforma sistemului judiciar prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent)? Vă rog să prezentați, de asemenea, informații privind respectarea, de către proiectele finanțate, a normelor de admisibilitate (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent).

4. În ce mod urmărește Comisia să sprijine financiar continuarea reformei sistemului judiciar și a luptei împotriva corupției în Serbia în perioada bugetară 2014-2020? Ce acțiuni prioritare sunt avute în vedere în prezent?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011665/12
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Informații privind utilizarea fondurilor de preaderare în domeniul sistemului judiciar și al luptei împotriva corupției în Kosovo (în conformitate cu Rezoluția 1244 (1999) a Consiliului de Securitate al ONU), precum și rezultatele obținute

În urma Raportului Comisiei pe 2012 privind progresele înregistrate de Kosovo ([1]) și Raportul special 18/2012 al Curții de Conturi Europene intitulat „Asistența acordată Kosovo de către Uniunea Europeană în domeniul statului de drept",solicit răspunsuri la următoarele întrebări:

1. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru prevenirea, monitorizarea și combaterea corupției în Kosovo din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

2. Care este cuantumul fondurilor de preaderare pe care UE le-a alocat pentru reforma sistemului judiciar din Kosovo din 2007 și căror proiecte specifice? Din fondurile alocate, care este cuantumul sumelor deja angajate și plătite destinatarilor? Care a fost cuantumul exact al sumele cofinanțate de autoritățile naționale? Pentru fiecare dintre aceste întrebări, vă rog să prezentați date concrete pentru fiecare proiect, anual, separat pentru fiecare an începând din 2007 (inclusiv) până în prezent.

3. Ce rezultate efective, valoare adăugată și impact au fost obținute în lupta împotriva corupției și în reforma sistemului judiciar prin alocarea de fonduri de preaderare (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent)? Vă rog să prezentați, de asemenea, informații privind respectarea, de către proiectele finanțate, a normelor de admisibilitate (pentru fiecare proiect din 2007 până în prezent).

4. În ce mod urmărește Comisia să sprijine financiar continuarea reformei sistemului judiciar și a luptei împotriva corupției în Kosovo în perioada bugetară 2014-2020? Ce acțiuni prioritare sunt avute în vedere în prezent?

Răspuns comun dat de dl Füle în numele Comisiei
(20 februarie 2013)

Comisia dorește să invite distinsa deputată în Parlamentul European să consulte răspunsurile sale la întrebările E-9861/10, E-11133/10, E-11134/10 și la scrisoarea domnului de Magistris ([2]) din 11 aprilie 2011.

Informațiile statistice detaliate referitoare la anumite proiecte, incluzând sumele deja angajate sau plătite, cofinanțarea de către autoritățile naționale și rezultatele-cheie, vor fi oferite printr-o scrisoare separată, în afara procedurii privind întrebările parlamentare, într-o etapă ulterioară, întrucât aceste informații sunt considerabile, depășesc cadrul acestei proceduri și necesită timp suplimentar pentru a fi colectate.

([1]) În conformitate cu Rezoluția 1244 (1999) a Consiliului de Securitate al ONU.
([2]) Președintele Comisiei pentru control bugetar a Parlamentului European.

În toate țările beneficiare aceste proiecte sunt implementate în conformitate cu normele de eligibilitate UE ([3]). Proiectele sunt analizate din punctul de vedere al conformității acestora cu prioritățile stabilite în cadrul parteneriatelor de aderare/europene și al documentelor indicative de planificare multianuală. Toate proiectele sunt supuse revizuirii și aprobării de către statele membre în cadrul Comitetului IPA.

În ceea ce privește prioritățile de acțiune pentru perioada 2014-2020, acestea sunt în prezent discutate atât la nivelul țării beneficiare, cât și la nivel regional și vor fi reflectate în respectivele documente de strategie pentru fiecare țară sau pentru mai multe țări.

Comisia confirmă că atât consolidarea statului de drept, cât și lupta împotriva corupției rămân priorități cruciale în cadrul Strategiei de extindere și va continua să sprijine proiectele în aceste domenii de activitate în perioada bugetară următoare. Asistența din cadrul noului instrument financiar IPA II va urmări realizarea a patru obiective specifice. Primul obiectiv, sprijin pentru reforme politice, include consolidarea instituțiilor democratice, a statului de drept și lupta împotriva corupției. În plus, după 1 iulie 2013, în aceste domenii specifice vor exista fonduri disponibile pentru Croația în cadrul Facilității de tranziție.

([3]) Articolul 19 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1085/2006 al Consiliului din 17 iulie 2006 de instituire a unui instrument de asistență pentru preaderare (IPA).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011448/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Updated information further to Written Question E-011133/2010 on the use and results of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Croatia

Further to its answer to Written Question E-011133/2010, could the Commission provide updated information in reply to the following questions:

1. To what amount, and to which specific projects, has the EU allocated pre-accession funds to be used in the area of preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Croatia since it acquired the status of a candidate country? What amounts from the funds allocated have already been committed and paid out to the beneficiaries? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide statistical data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2005 to 2012.

2. To what amount, and to which specific projects, has the EU allocated pre-accession funds for the reform of the judicial system in Croatia since it acquired the status of a candidate country? What amounts from the funds allocated have already been committed and paid out to the beneficiaries? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide statistical data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2005 to 2012.

3. Please make available the project fiches for the projects implemented prior to 2007 in the area of preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Croatia and for the reform of the country's judicial system.

4. What are the effective results, the added value and the impact obtained through the allocation of pre-accession funds to finance measures to fight corruption and reform the judicial system? Please also provide information on compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules.

5. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judiciary and the fight against corruption in Croatia after 1 July 2013?

Question for written answer E-011449/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Updated information further to Written Question E-009861/2010 on the use and results of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Macedonia

Further to its answer to Written Question E-009861/2010, could the Commission provide updated information in reply to the following questions:

1. To what amount, and to which specific projects, has the EU allocated pre-accession funds to be used in the area of preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Macedonia since it acquired the status of a candidate country? What amounts from the funds allocated have already been committed and paid out to the beneficiaries? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide statistical data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2006 to 2012.

2. To what amount, and to which specific projects, has the EU allocated pre-accession funds for the reform of the judicial system in Macedonia since it acquired the status of a candidate country? What amounts from the funds allocated have already been committed and paid out to the beneficiaries? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide statistical data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2006 to 2012.

3. Please make available the project fiches for the projects implemented prior to 2007 in the area of preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Macedonia and for the reform of the country's judicial system.

4. What are the effective results, the added value and the impact obtained through the allocation of pre-accession funds to finance measures to fight corruption and reform the judicial system? Please also provide information on compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules.

5. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judiciary and the fight against corruption in Macedonia during the budgetary period 2014-2020? What priorities for action are currently envisaged?

Question for written answer E-011661/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 December 2012)

Subject: Information on the use of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Albania, and on the results obtained

Following the Commission's 2012 Progress Report on Albania, I request answers to the following questions:

1. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Albania since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

2. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for the reform of the judicial system in Albania since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

3. What effective results, added value and impact have been obtained in the fight against corruption and the reform of the judicial system through the allocation of pre-accession funds (for each project from 2007 to the present)? Please also provide information regarding the compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules (for each project from 2007 to the present).

4. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reform of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Albania during the budgetary period 2014-2020? Which priorities for action are currently envisaged?

Question for written answer E-011662/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 December 2012)

Subject: Information on the use of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and on the results obtained

Following the Commission's 2012 Progress Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, I request answers to the following questions:

1. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

2. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for the reform of the judicial system in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

3. What effective results, added value and impact have been obtained in the fight against corruption and the reform of the judicial system through the allocation of pre-accession funds (for each project from 2007 to the present)? Please also provide information regarding the compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules (for each project from 2007 to the present).

4. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the budgetary period 2014-2020? Which priorities for action are currently envisaged?

Question for written answer E-011663/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 December 2012)

Subject: Information on the use of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Montenegro, and on the results obtained

Following the Commission's 2012 Progress Report on Montenegro, I request answers to the following questions:

1. What amount of pre-accession funding has the allocated for preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Montenegro since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

2. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for the reform of the judicial system in Montenegro since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

3. What effective results, added value and impact have been obtained in the fight against corruption and the reform of the judicial system through the allocation of pre-accession funds (for each project from 2007 to the present)? Please also provide information regarding the compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules (for each project from 2007 to the present).

4. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Montenegro during the budgetary period 2014-2020? Which priorities for action are currently envisaged?

Question for written answer E-011664/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 December 2012)

Subject: Information on the use of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Serbia, and on the results obtained

Following the Commission's 2012 Progress Report on Serbia, I request answers to the following questions:

1. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Serbia since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

2. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for the reform of the judicial system in Serbia since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

3. What effective results, added value and impact have been obtained in the fight against corruption and the reform of the judicial system through the allocation of pre-accession funds (for each project from 2007 to the present)? Please also provide information regarding the compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules (for each project from 2007 to the present).

4. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Serbia during the budgetary period 2014-2020? Which priorities for action are currently envisaged?

Question for written answer E-011665/12
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(20 December 2012)

Subject: Information on the use of pre-accession funds in the areas of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Kosovo (under UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)), and on the results obtained

Following the Commission's 2012 Progress Report on Kosovo ([1]) and the European Court of Auditors Special Report 18/2012 entitled 'European Union Assistance to Kosovo related to the rule of law', I request answers to the following questions:

1. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for preventing, monitoring and combating corruption in Kosovo since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for each project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

2. What amount of pre-accession funding has the EU allocated for the reform of the judicial system in Kosovo since 2007, and to which specific projects? Of the allocated funds, what amounts have already been committed and paid out to the recipients? What were the exact amounts co-financed by domestic authorities? For each of these questions, please provide concrete data for every project on a yearly basis, separately for each year from 2007 (included) to the present.

3. What effective results, added value and impact have been obtained in the fight against corruption and the reform of the judicial system through the allocation of pre-accession funds (for each project from 2007 to the present)? Please also provide information regarding the compliance of the financed projects with the eligibility rules (for each project from 2007 to the present).

4. How does the Commission plan to financially support the continuation of the reforms of the judicial system and the fight against corruption in Kosovo during the budgetary period 2014-2020? Which priorities for action are currently envisaged?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The Commission kindly refers the Honourable Member to its answers to Questions E-9861/10, E-11133/10, E-11134/10 and to the letter to Mr de Magistris ([2]) of 11 April 2011.

Detailed statistical information relating to specific projects, including committed and disbursed amounts, co-financing by national authorities and key results will be provided in a separate letter outside the Parliamentary Question procedure and at a later stage, as this is a rather substantial set of information going beyond the remit of the present procedure and requiring additional time to collect.

In all beneficiary countries, the projects are implemented in line with EU eligibility rules ([3]). Projects are examined in terms of their compliance with the priorities of the Accession/European Partnerships and the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Documents. All projects are submitted for review and approval by Member States in the IPA Committee.

As regards the priorities for action in the period 2014-2020, these are currently being discussed both at the level of the beneficiary country and at regional level, and will be reflected in the respective (Multi) Country Strategy Papers.

([1]) Under UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
([2]) Chairman of the EP Committee on Budgetary Control.
([3]) Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA).

The Commission confirms that the strengthening of the rule of law and the fight against corruption remain high priorities of the Enlargement Strategy and will continue to support projects in these areas in the next budgetary period. Assistance under the new financial instrument IPA II will pursue four specific objectives. The first objective, support for political reforms, includes strengthening of democratic institutions, the rule of law and the fight against corruption. In addition, after 1 July 2013, there will be funds available in these specific areas for Croatia under the Transition Facility.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-011450/12
до Комисията
Slavi Binev (EFD)
(17 декември 2012 г.)

Относно: Свободата на предоставяне на професионални услуги в Белгия: последващи действия във връзка с въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-000957/2011

Както отбелязах миналата година, брюкселската адвокатска колегия се опитва да принуди адвокатите, които не са белгийски граждани, да се запишат и да плащат в съответствие с така наречения електронен списък, в пряко нарушение на решението на Съда на Европейския съюз по делото „Gebhard“, т.е. ако не са установени, но предоставят услуги.

За да наложи това, брюкселската адвокатска колегия започва необосновано наказателно производство съгласно член 227 от белгийския Наказателен кодекс, изисквайки прокурорът да завежда дела срещу чуждестранни адвокати от ЕС за „злоупотреба със званието адвокат“, ако те не са регистрирани по електронния списък, а са регистрирани и квалифицирани само в своята страна по произход, за това, че предоставят услуги в Брюксел.

Както отбелязах, на пръв поглед е очевидно, че адвокат от ЕС никога не може да „s'attribuer le titre d'avocat“, т.е. незаконно да твърди, че е адвокат. Месар може. Адвокат — не. Той е и продължава да бъде адвокат. Белгийските наказателни съдилища напълно потвърдиха позицията ми по този въпрос.

Тази дейност на адвокатската колегия явно има една-единствена цел: да защитава белгийските адвокати от конкуренцията на техните колеги от ЕС и да печели пари чрез незаконни средства.

В момента белгийската адвокатска колегия отказва да заплати обезщетението за нанесени вреди и загуби (тоест адвокатските хонорари за защитата в белгийския наказателен съд), произтичащи от клеветническите и неоснователни твърдения на адвокатската колегия за извършено престъпление.

Това, изглежда, е още едно нарушение на свободата на предоставяне на услуги и по него би могло да се проведе разследване чрез процедура за нарушение.

Информирана ли е Комисията за този проблем и как възнамерява да потърси решение за него?

Отговор, даден от на г-н Barnier от името на Комисията
(18 февруари 2013 г.)

С Директивата относно установяването на адвокатите ([1]) и Директивата за адвокатските услуги ([2]), (наричана по-долу „директивата“) се определят два различни режима за осъществяване от адвокат, придобил квалификацията си в ЕС, на адвокатска дейност в държава членка, различна от тази, в която той е придобил своята квалификация — място на стопанска дейност (регламентирано от първата директива) и временно предоставяне на услуги (регламентирано от втората директива). Адвокат, придобил квалификацията си в държава членка, различна от Белгия, който желае временно да предоставя услуги в Белгия съгласно режима на директивата, може да направи това, като използва само професионалното звание, предоставено му в държавата членка, в която е придобил професионалната си квалификация, и изразено на езика на тази държава членка (член 3). Адвокат, придобил квалификацията си в чужда държава, не може да предоставя временно услуги в Белгия, като използва белгийското професионално звание „avocat“. Това звание може да се използва единствено от адвокати, придобили квалификацията си в Белгия (член 1, параграф 2), или от чуждестранни адвокати, които са се включили в професионалното съсловие в Белгия. В този контекст адвокатите, придобили квалификацията си в чужда държава, не могат да използват белгийското звание „avocat“ като „превод“ на националното си звание, тъй като това би означавало неправомерна употреба на белгийското звание.

([1]) Директива 98/5/ЕО на Европейския парламент и на Съвета от 16 февруари 1998 г. относно улесняване на постоянното упражняване на адвокатската професия в държава членка, различна от държавата, в която е придобита квалификацията (ОВ L 77, 14.3.1998 г., изменена с Директива 2006/100/ЕО на Съвета от 20 ноември 2006 г. за адаптиране на някои директиви в областта на свободното движение на хора поради присъединяването на България и Румъния (ОВ L 363, 20.12.2006 г.).

([2]) Директива на Съвета 77/249/ЕИО на Съвета от 22 март 1977 г. относно улесняване на ефективното упражняване от адвокатите на свободата на предоставяне на услуги (ОВ L 78, 26.3.1977 г., изменена с Директива 2006/100/ЕО на Съвета от 20 ноември 2006 г. за адаптиране на някои директиви в областта на свободното движение на хора поради присъединяването на България и Румъния (ОВ L 363, 20.12.2006 г.).

Държавите членки запазват правомощията си да преследват, включително чрез наказателното производство, използването на техните професионални звания от лица, на които не са предоставени тези национални звания. В това отношение член 227 от белгийския Наказателен кодекс е в съответствие с правилата на ЕС. Освен това, както бе посочено в отговора на писмо E-000957/2011, с решението по дело Gebhard ([3]) не се признава, че адвокати от други държави членки могат да предлагат услуги, като използват званието на приемащата държава членка.

Службите на Комисията досега не са получили конкретна информация, указваща наличието на практики от страна на белгийските власти, които могат да бъдат несъвместими с правилата на ЕС, разгледани по-горе.

([3]) Дело C-55/94 Reinhard Gebhard/Consiglio dell'Ordine degli Avvocati e Procuratori di Milano, решение на Съда от 30.11.1995 г. (ECR I-04165).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011450/12
to the Commission
Slavi Binev (EFD)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Freedom to provide professional services in Belgium: Follow-up to Written Question E-000957/2011

As I pointed out last year, the Brussels bar is trying to force non-Belgian lawyers to sign up and pay under the so-called e-list in direct violation of the ECJ's Gebhard judgment, i.e. they are not established but provide services.

To enforce this, the Brussels bar is initiating unfounded criminal proceedings under Article 227 of the Belgian Criminal Code, asking the state prosecutor to prosecute foreign EU attorneys for 'abuse of the title of attorney' if they are not registered under the e-list but are registered and qualified attorneys in their home country only, for providing services in Brussels.

As I pointed out, it is obvious at first glance that an EU attorney can never 's'attribuer le titre d'avocat', i.e. illegitimately claim to be an attorney. A butcher can. An attorney cannot. He is and remains an attorney. The Belgian criminal courts fully confirmed my position on this matter.

This bar activity obviously has only one goal: to protect Belgian lawyers from EU competition and make money through illegitimate means.

At the moment, the Belgian bar rejects the reimbursement of damages (i.e. the attorney fees for defence in the Belgian criminal court) arising from the bar's defamatory and unfounded criminal allegations.

This again seems to be a violation of the freedom to provide services and could be investigated through an infringement proceeding.

Is the Commission aware of the issue and how does the Commission plan to address it?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2013)

The Lawyers' Establishment Directive ([1]) and the Lawyers' Services Directive ([2]) (Directive) set out two distinct regimes for practice by an EU qualified lawyer in a Member State other than the one in which s/he obtained his/her qualification — permanent establishment (regulated by the former directive) and temporary provision of services (regulated by the latter). A lawyer qualified in a Member State other than Belgium and wishing to provide temporary services in Belgium under the regime of the directive may do so using only the professional title of the Member State in which s/he received his/her qualification expressed in the language of that Member State (Art. 3). The foreign qualified lawyer may not provide temporary services in Belgium using the Belgian professional title of 'avocat.' This title may only be used by Belgian qualified lawyers (Art. 1(2)), or foreign lawyers who have been integrated into the profession in Belgium. In this context, foreign qualified lawyers may not use the Belgian title of 'avocat' as means of 'translating' their national title, since this would amount to an unlawful use of the Belgian title.

Member States remain competent to pursue, including through criminal proceedings, any use of their professional titles by individuals who do not hold these national titles. In this regard, Article 227 of the Belgian Criminal Code is in line with EU rules. Furthermore, as indicated in the reply to E-000957/2011, the Gebhard ([3]) judgment does not recognise that lawyers from other Member States may provide services under the host Member State title.

The Commission services have so far not received specific information indicating practices on the part of the Belgian authorities that may be inconsistent with the EU rules discussed above.

([1]) Directive 98/5/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 1998 to facilitate practice of the profession of lawyer on a permanent basis in a Member State other than that in which the qualification was obtained, OJ L 77, 14.3.1998, amended by Council Directive 2006/100/EC of 20 November 2006 adapting certain Directives in the field of freedom of movement of persons, by reason of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, OJ L 363, 20.12.2006.

([2]) Council Directive 77/249/EEC of 22 March 1977 to facilitate the effective exercise by lawyers of freedom to provide services, OJ L 78, 26.3.1977, amended by Council Directive 2006/100/EC of 20 November 2006 adapting certain Directives in the field of freedom of movement of persons, by reason of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, OJ L 363, 20.12.2006.

([3]) Case C-55/94 Reinhard Gebhard v Consiglio dell'Ordine degli Avvocati e Procuratori di Milano, Judgment of the Court of 30 November 1995 (ECR I-04165).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011451/12
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Property tax

Can the Commission state whether the following situation contravenes European legislation?

A British couple who are permanently resident in Scotland own a holiday home in County Leitrim, Ireland. As well as paying a substantial property tax on their home in Scotland, they are subject to a Non-Principal Private Residence (NPPR) Charge on their Irish holiday home and have paid this for the last two years.

They are now being told by the Irish Government that as well as paying the NPPR Charge on their Irish holiday home, they are liable for the newly introduced Household Charge which applies to all Irish residents and each property they own, with some exceptions. Irish residents will pay both charges on any second or subsequent properties, but in no circumstances will an Irish resident be required to pay both charges on the only house they own in the state.

Therefore an anomaly is created whereby non-Irish owners are subject to a 'double taxation' of both charges on the same property which no other property owner in the Irish state is liable to pay.

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

The Commission considers that the Irish legislation concerning Household Charge and Non-Principal Private Residence (NPPR) Charge is not in breach of EC law for the following reasons.

The Household Charge applies to all owners of residential property, irrespective of their nationality and residence status. This is also valid for the NPPR Charge which is imposed on any owner of a second residential property, both resident and non-resident in Ireland.

Considering that residents and non-residents who own a second residential property in Ireland are equally subject to both charges there is no discriminatory treatment with regard to the non-residents having a main residence in one Member State and a secondary residence in Ireland.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011452/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(17. december 2012)

Om: Bovin spongiform encephalopati (BSE) og specificeret risikomateriale (RSM)

Kan Kommissionen, eftersom dens besvarelse af forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-008858/2012 og E-008859/2012 udelukkende bestod af en oversigt over de gældende EU-forskrifter, redegøre for de specifikke områder, der omhandles i forespørgslerne?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(13. februar 2013)

Per dags dato, og i overensstemmelse med klassifikationen udstedt af Verdensorganisationen for Dyresundhed (OIE), er der kun fem medlemsstater (Belgien, Danmark, Østrig, Finland og Sverige), der er officielt klassificerede som værende lande med ubetydelig BSE-risiko ifølge EU-lovgivningen. Under hensyntagen til dette begrænsede antal medlemsstater, fastsætter EU-lovgivningen, at alle medlemsstater, uanset deres BSE-status, skal fjerne og destruere specificeret risikomateriale for at strømline gennemførelsen af medlemsstaternes offentlige kontrol.

Kommissionen bekræfter, at tredjelande, som er klassificerede som havende kontrolleret eller ikke-fastsat BSE-risiko, har tilladelse til at eksportere kødprodukter, som ikke indeholder specificeret risikomateriale, til EU. Der findes ingen liste over specificeret risikomateriale for lande, der er klassificeret som et land med ubetydelig BSE-risiko. I sidstnævnte tilfælde er der ingen BSE-relaterede importbegrænsninger for kvægprodukter.

Kommissionen vil overveje muligheden af, at foreslå medlemsstaterne en ændring af EU-lovgivningen, med hensyn til specificeret risikomateriale i medlemsstater med ubetydelig BSE-risiko. For at undgå at forstyrre handelen med slagtekvæg inden for EU, og for at sikre korrekt overholdelse af BSE-beskyttelsesforanstaltningerne i hele EU-markedet, vil dette dog kun blive overvejet, når et betydeligt antal medlemsstater bliver klassificerede som lande med ubetydelig BSE-risiko.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011452/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and specified risk material (SRM)

As the Commission's answers to Written Questions E-008858/2012 and E-008859/2012 were merely a summary of the existing EU regulatory texts, would the Commission address the specific issues raised in the questions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

To date and in line with the classification issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), only five Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden) are officially classified as negligible BSE risk countries according to Union legislation. Taking into account this limited number of Member States, the Union legislation provides that all Member States, regardless of their BSE status, have to remove and destroy specified risk material in order to streamline the implementation of official controls by Member States.

The Commission confirms that third countries which are classified as controlled or undetermined BSE risk countries are authorised to export meat products to the Union which do not contain specified risk materials. No list of specified risk materials exists for countries classified as negligible BSE risk countries. In this latter case, no BSE related restrictions are imposed upon imports of products of bovine origin.

The Commission will reflect on the possibility to propose to Member States an amendment of the Union legislation related to specified risk material in Member States with a negligible BSE risk. However, in order to avoid any disturbance of the trade of bovine animals for slaughter within EU and to ensure the correct application of the BSE protective measures throughout the EU market, this would only be considered when a substantial number of Member States will be classified as country with a negligible BSE risk.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-011453/12
a Bizottság számára
Gyürk András (PPE)
(2012. december 17.)

Tárgy: A közös érdekű infrastrukturális projektek kiválasztási eljárásának átláthatósága

A transzeurópai energiainfrastruktúrával kapcsolatos iránymutatásokról szóló rendelet tervezete szerint a Bizottság hatáskört kap a közös érdekű projektek uniós listájának összeállítása céljából felhatalmazáson alapuló jogi aktusok elfogadására. A 12 regionális csoport által javasolt projektek értékelését a Bizottság által egy e feladatra kiválasztott tanácsadó cég fogja elvégezni.

1. Miképpen kívánja a Bizottság biztosítani, hogy valamennyi közös érdekű projekt egyenlő elbírálásban részesüljön a kiválasztási eljárás során?

2. Milyen szerepe lesz a tanácsadó cégnek a közös érdekű projektek kiválasztási eljárásában?

3. Miképpen kívánja a Bizottság biztosítani a tanácsadó cég által a közös érdekű projektek kiválasztása céljából elvégzett számítások pontosságát és átláthatóságát?

Günther Oettinger válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. február 12.)

Tekintettel a rendelet 2013 tavaszára tervezett elfogadására, már megkezdődött a közös érdekű infrastrukturális projektek (PCI) azonosítása. A projektgazdák és az átvitelirendszer-irányítók által benyújtott PCI-kérelmeket jelenleg bírálják el a regionális csoportok, amelyekben a tagállamok, az átvitelirendszer-irányítók, a projektgazdák, a nemzeti szabályozó hatóságok és az Energiaszabályozók Együttműködési Ügynöksége (ACER) képviselői, valamint a Bizottság vesz részt, a gáz- és a villamossági ágazat egy-egy tanácsadó cégének támogatásával.

A regionális csoportok tagjai gondoskodnak arról, hogy – a rendeletben foglalt rendelkezések szerint – minden projektet azonos objektív kritériumok és azonos módszerek alapján vizsgáljanak meg. Az egyenlő elbírálás felügyeletét a folyamatban szerepet játszó különböző felek látják el.

Az összesített információk megvitatása és értékelése, valamint végső soron a közös érdekű infrastrukturális projektek kiválasztása a Bizottság és vele együtt a munkacsoportok tagjainak feladata. A tanácsadó cégek a munkacsoportok utasításait követik. Összegyűjtik és összevonják a projektgazdák és az átvitelirendszer-irányítók által benyújtott számos adatot és információt, és azokat feltöltik az értékelő táblázatokba.

Az eljárás átláthatóságát biztosítja az, hogy a projektek értékelésének alapjául szolgáló adatokat és számításokat a munkacsoportok minden tagja számára elérhetővé teszik. Mind a Bizottság, mind pedig az Energiaszabályozók Együttműködési Ügynöksége (ACER) ellenőrzi a munkacsoport által elfogadott módszerek helyes alkalmazását. Minden csoporttagnak megvan a lehetősége – és az eddigi tapasztalatok szerint meg is ragadja a lehetőséget – arra, hogy az adatok helyességét ellenőrizze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011453/12
to the Commission
András Gyürk (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Transparency of the selection procedure for infrastructure projects of common interest (PCIs)

According to the draft regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure, the Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts that establish the Union list of projects of common interest (PCIs). The candidate projects proposed by the 12 regional groups will be evaluated by a consulting firm selected for this task by the Commission.

1. How will the Commission ensure that all candidate PCIs are treated equally during the selection procedure?

2. What role will the consulting firm play in the PCI selection?

3. How will the Commission ensure the accuracy and transparency of the calculations which are prepared by the consulting firm for the purpose of PCI selection?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

In view of the adoption of the regulation envisaged for spring 2013, the preparatory process for the identification of projects of common interest (PCI) has already started. In this context, PCI applications submitted by project promoters and transmission system operators (TSOs) are currently being assessed by regional groups comprising representatives of Member States, TSOs, project promoters, national regulatory authorities, the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) and the Commission, supported by two consultant firms for the gas and electricity sectors respectively.

Regional group members ensure that an assessment is carried out for all projects based on the same objective criteria and the same methodology, in line with the provisions of the regulation. Oversight for equal treatment is ensured by the various parties involved in the process.

It is for the Commission, together with the working group members, to discuss and assess the consolidated information and eventually select PCIs. The consultant firms follow the instructions of the working groups. They gather and consolidate the wide range of data and information provided by project promoters and TSOs and feed them into the evaluation tables.

Transparency in the process is ensured by making the data and calculations on which the project assessments are based available to all working group members. The Commission as well as the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER), verifies the accurate application of the methodology agreed by the working group. Each member has the possibility and, as experience has shown, takes the opportunity, to verify the accuracy of the data.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011454/12
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(17 décembre 2012)

Objet: Destruction de sites Natura 2000 en Slovaquie

Les tourbières de Rojkov (vieilles d'environ 17 000 ans) sont les plus anciennes connues en Slovaquie et présentent un caractère hautement spécifique et unique en termes d'évolution, de biogéographie et d'écologie. Elles possèdent un intérêt exceptionnel pour les domaines de la biologie, de la paléontologie, de la conservation et de la culture, qui va bien au-delà des frontières de la Slovaquie et de l'Europe centrale. Le site de Rojkov abrite cinq habitats d'importance communautaire ainsi que des génotypes scientifiquement uniques et d'autres espèces végétales et animales tout aussi importantes, notamment *pupilla alpicola* (une relique de la dernière période glaciaire) et *vertigo angustior* (une espèce d'importance communautaire).

Le site de Rojkov est menacé par le projet autoroutier de la D1 Turany-Hubová, qui a déjà pour conséquence des opérations de déforestation et des travaux de construction illégaux dans les zones avoisinantes.

Vingt scientifiques de toute l'Union européenne ont écrit à la Commission pour attirer son attention sur le risque grave que représente ce projet pour les habitats et les espèces de la tourbière de Rojkov. Ils soulignent que ce site est irremplaçable d'un point de vue scientifique et sur le plan de la préservation de la nature, et que les dommages qui lui sont causés ne peuvent être compensés par la protection d'une autre tourbière.

Ces scientifiques sont également d'avis que même les toutes dernières mesures d'atténuation proposées par le gouvernement slovaque ne sont pas à même de répondre aux répercussions négatives spécifiées. Ils maintiennent que le projet Turany-Hubová demeure susceptible d'avoir des effets négatifs importants sur les objectifs de conservation sur le site en question ainsi que sur l'intégrité du site Natura 2000 Veľká Fatra.

En tenant compte de l'avis unanime de ces 20 scientifiques, la Commission peut-elle expliquer pourquoi l'évaluation appropriée réalisée par les autorités slovaques conclut que le projet Turany-Hubová n'aura pas d'effets préjudiciables sur les habitats et les espèces présents sur le site de Rojkov?

La Commission peut-elle également expliquer pourquoi les autorités slovaques ont ignoré un tracé alternatif, identifié au cours d'une précédente étude d'évaluation de l'impact environnemental, qui est moins coûteux et mois dommageable pour l'environnement que l'itinéraire qu'elles ont retenu?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(12 février 2013)

Lors d'une réunion avec les autorités slovaques en décembre 2012, la commission a reçu un exemplaire d'une évaluation appropriée complémentaire concernant le projet d'autoroute D1 entre Turany et Hubová, réalisée par une équipe d'experts indépendants. Cette évaluation reconnaît pleinement que les tourbières de Rojkov sont sensibles aux modifications du régime hydraulique de leurs sources et que le tunnel de Rojkov pourrait avoir une incidence sur le drainage ou empêcher l'écoulement naturel de l'eau. Elle analyse les risques potentiels et conclut que l'exploitation du tunnel de Rojkov n'affectera pas les tourbières si certaines mesures spécifiques sont prises lors des travaux de construction. L'évaluation recense les principaux risques pendant la période de construction et propose plusieurs mesures (notamment une surveillance environnementale permettant de prévenir ou de gérer d'éventuels accidents) visant à réduire les effets négatifs identifiés à un niveau «insignifiant». Les conclusions de l'évaluation et les mesures supplémentaires qui y sont considérées comme nécessaires devraient être intégralement reprises dans le projet final d'autoroute.

Selon l'article 6, paragraphe 3, de la directive Habitats 92/43/CEE [1], il n'est pas nécessaire d'envisager d'autres solutions si une évaluation appropriée permet de conclure que le projet ne portera pas atteinte à l'intégrité des sites Natura 2000. Il appartient aux autorités slovaques de choisir la variante la plus appropriée du projet et de justifier ce choix.

[1] JO L 206 du 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011454/12
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Destruction of Slovakian Natura 2000 sites

The Rojkov Fen is the oldest known fen in Slovakia (around 17 000 years old), and is highly specific or unique in terms of evolution, biogeography and ecology. Its outstanding biological, paleontological, conservation and cultural significance reach far beyond the borders of Slovakia and central Europe. Rojkov hosts five habitats of Community importance, as well as scientifically unique genotypes or otherwise important plant and animal species, including *Pupilla alpicola* (a relic from the Late Glacial period) and *Vertigo angustior* (a species of Community importance).

Rojkov is under threat from the D1 Turany-Hubová motorway project, which has already resulted in deforestation, and illegal construction works in nearby areas.

Twenty scientists from across the EU have written to the Commission, pointing out the serious risks posed by this project to the habitats and species in the Rojkov Fen. These scientists have highlighted to the Commission the fact that the Rojkov Fen is irreplaceable from a scientific and nature conservancy point of view, and that damage to the Rojkov Fen cannot be compensated for by protecting a different fen.

These scientists have also advised that even the latest proposed mitigation measures proposed by the Slovak Government are not likely to address the specified negative impacts. They maintain that the Turany-Hubová project is still likely to have significant negative effects on the conservation objectives at the site and also on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site Veľká Fatra.

Given the consensus opinion of these 20 scientists, can the Commission explain why the appropriate assessment produced by the Slovak authorities finds that there will be no adverse affect on the habitats and species found in Rojkov from the Turany-Hubová project?

Can the Commission also explain why the Slovak authorities have ignored an alternative route, identified in a previous environmental impact assessment process, which is cheaper and less environmentally damaging than the route preferred by the authorities?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

At a meeting with Slovak authorities in December 2012, the Commission received a copy of an additional appropriate assessment of the D1 Turany — Hubová motorway project, prepared by a team of independent experts. The assessment fully recognises the sensitivity of the Rojkov fen to changes of the regime of its source waters and the fact that the Rojkov Tunnel could have an impact on drainage or obstruction of the natural water flow. It analyses possible risks and concludes that the operation of the Rojkov tunnel will not affect the fen provided that certain specific measures are implemented in constructing the tunnel. The assessment identifies main risks within the construction period and proposes several measures (including environmental supervision preventing or handling possible accidents) in order to minimise the identified adverse effects to a level of 'insignificant'. The conclusions of the assessment, and the additional necessary measures it identifies should be fully incorporated in the final motorway project.

According to Art.6.3. of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]), the consideration of alternatives is not required if the appropriate assessment concludes that the project will not affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. It is for the Slovak authorities to select the most appropriate variant of the project and to justify this choice.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011455/12
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(17 décembre 2012)

Objet: Mise en œuvre de la législation européenne sur le site du Delta du Danube, classé «Natura 2000», en Roumanie

Bien que la Roumanie se soit engagée à protéger les habitats naturels et les espèces sauvages présents sur son territoire, elle a autorisé l'aménagement d'une plage à Sulina, localité située dans le Delta du Danube, site classé «Natura 2000», sans que les évaluations appropriées n'aient été conduites au préalable. Le 31 mai 2012, la Commission a adressé un second avis motivé à la Roumanie, lui demandant d'appliquer correctement la directive «Habitats». En juillet 2012, dans sa réponse à ma question écrite E-005141/2012, la Commission a déclaré qu'elle examinera tout manquement supposé à la législation de l'UE dans le domaine de l'environnement porté à sa connaissance.

1. La Commission peut-elle indiquer quelle réponse elle a reçu à l'avis motivécomplémentaire qu'elle a adressé en mai 2012 concernant Sulina?

2. La Commission peut-elle indiquer quelles mesures sont prises pour mettre en œuvre la directive «Habitats» en Roumanie?

3. Peut-elle indiquer quand elle envisage de saisir la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne pour non-respect, par la Roumanie, du droit applicable en la matière?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(22 février 2013)

1. La réponse à l'avis motivé complémentaire sur le projet de développement Sulina Beach ne traite pas l'ensemble des préoccupations soulevées par la Commission. Ces préoccupations ont été de nouveau abordées avec les autorités roumaines à l'occasion d'une réunion technique en novembre 2012. À la suite de cette réunion, la Commission espère que l'évaluation appropriée sera soigneusement révisée sur la base de données plus fiables. Elle souhaite également voir les conclusions de ladite évaluation révisée se traduire par des mesures supplémentaires pour assurer la conformité avec toutes les dispositions de l'article 6 de la directive «Habitats» (directive 92/43/CEE ([1])). Cela prendra du temps, notamment pour rassembler des données plus fiables sur les habitats et les espèces concernées par le projet. Dans l'intervalle, la Commission croit savoir que la biodiversité de la zone concernée par le projet fera l'objet d'une surveillance et que d'autres projets de développement seront évités.

2. Il incombe aux États membres de veiller à ce que la législation de l'UE soit mise en œuvre sur leur territoire.

3. La Commission restera en contact avec les autorités roumaines et continuera à suivre ce projet de près. Elle n'hésitera pas à prendre des mesures supplémentaires, si nécessaire.

([1]) JO L 206 du 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011455/12
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Implementation of EU legislation at the Danube Delta Natura 2000 site in Romania

Despite Romania's undertaking to protect the country's habitats and wildlife, it has permitted beach developments at Sulina, located within the Danube Delta Natura 2000 site, without performing the appropriate preliminary assessment. On 31 May 2012 the Commission sent a second reasoned opinion to the Romanian Government, asking it to implement the Habitats Directive correctly. In July 2012, in its response to my Written Question E-005141/2012, the Commission stated that it would examine any alleged failures to comply with EU environmental legislation that were brought to its attention.

1. Can the Commission state what response it has received to the supplementary reasoned opinion concerning Sulina it sent in May 2012?

2. Can the Commission say what steps are being taken to implement the Habitats Directive in Romania?

3. Can the Commission state when it plans to refer Romania's non-compliance in this matter to the EU Court of Justice?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

1. The response received to the additional reasoned opinion on the Sulina Beach Development project did not address all the concerns raised by the Commission. These concerns were raised again with the Romanian authorities at a technical meeting in November 2012. Following this meeting, the Commission expects that the appropriate assessment will be carefully revised on the basis of more reliable data. It also wants to see the conclusions of this revised appropriate assessment translated into further steps to ensure full compliance with the article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]). This will take time, in particular to collect better data about the habitats and species affected by the project. In the meantime, the Commission understands that the project area will be subject to biodiversity monitoring and further developments will be avoided.

2. It falls to Member States to ensure that EU legislation is implemented on their territory.

3. The Commission will remain in contact with the Romanian authorities and follow this project closely. It will not hesitate to take further action if required.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011456/12
to the Commission
Edward McMillan-Scott (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Payment of developers' debts in Cypriot property cases

Purchasers of property in the Elena Gardens development in Xylofagou, Cyprus, have recently been told by the Cypriot Government that they will, in effect, have to pay off the debts of developers who have gone into liquidation without completing building work. SNK Venus Homes Exclusive Ltd went into liquidation after taking GBP 840 000 from a purchaser without completing the construction of his villa, and leaving some four or five other buildings incomplete as well. The property purchasers had been assured, by both lawyers and the Cypriot Government, that they were covered by something called 'specific performance', which protects the purchaser in all circumstances and ensures that they are registered as the legal owner of the property to which their contract refers. The Cypriot Government has allowed banks to lend large amounts of money to developers using, as security, properties already sold to unsuspecting purchasers and registered with the land registry. The developers have since defaulted on these loans and, in the case of SNK Venus Homes Exclusive Ltd, gone into liquidation as a result. Property owners who refuse to pay back the developers' debt to the banks risk having any properties they may own in other EU countries repossessed to cover monies the banks recklessly lent developers against properties they did not own in the first place.

Whilst national property rights are indeed a matter of subsidiarity, could the Commission:

1. Explain what can be done at EU level in such cases to protect innocent property buyers from across the EU?

2. State whether Cyprus, in this particular case, has contravened the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC), specifically Article 7 on 'misleading omissions', which states that a commercial practice shall be regarded as misleading if 'in its factual context, taking account of all its features and circumstances and the limitations of the communication medium, it omits material information that the average consumer needs, according to the context, to take an informed transactional decision and thereby causes or is likely to cause the average consumer to take a transactional decision that he would not have taken otherwise'?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the problems faced by purchasers of immovable properties in Cyprus, because of the practices of developers and banks.

The Commission, indeed, agrees with the Honourable Member that the lack of pre-contractual information to property buyers about the existence of developers' mortgages on the Cypriot properties offered for sale, is an aspect which can be assessed in the light of Article 7 of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive concerning misleading omissions. It is however the primary competence of the national authorities and courts to investigate any potentially misleading practices of individual companies operating on their territory.

Answers to written questions 8121/2012, E-6765/2012, E-9932/2012 and 10363/2012 ([1]) provide an update on the various actions initiated by the Commission in order to address the problems reported and ensure that EU consumers are adequately protected.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011457/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Utilisation of the CE mark

The CE mark is a tool which can be very useful in the promotion and marketing of European goods, in that it highlights that such goods conform to the standards set down by the relevant directives.

1. What is the Commission doing to improve and incentivise the extent to which the CE marking system is utilised within the EU?

2. What is the Commission doing to strengthen the use and standing of the CE mark with regard to exports from the internal market?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

1. The CE marking is the visible part of a system of product conformity assessment and market surveillance. The Commission is constantly reinforcing this system and encouraging the increased use of the CE marking within the EU.

The Commission has drawn up guidance documents to help both national authorities and economic operators. This has led to the correct implementation of procedures leading to the affixing of the CE marking.

The Commission also ran an information campaign between January 2010 and March 2012 which raised awareness among economic operators and citizens generally of the CE marking and their related rights and obligations. The campaign included the creation of a website dedicated to 'CE marking' in all EU/EFTA languages ([1]).

Under the supervision and guidance of the Commission, Member States are setting up more efficient national market surveillance programmes which will enable better monitoring of the use of the CE marking.

The Commission has made available to Member States the ICSMS tool ([2]) in order to provide them with a platform for cooperation on a wide range of matters concerning CE marking and market surveillance. This will contribute greatly to ensuring the compliance of products with Union rules, as signified by the CE marking.

2. The CE marking is affixed to a product that is intended to be placed on the European market, regardless whether it was made in Europe. The CE marking is not affixed to products that will be exported to third countries.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cemarking.
([2]) Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance, www.icsms.org.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011458/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Air traffic control en-route charges

Air traffic control en-route charges are defined according to the maximum take-off weight (MTOW) of the aircraft. The Eurocontrol Central Route Charges Office (CRCO) is responsible for collecting the charges on behalf of the Eurocontrol Member States.

1. Is it true that one airline has been cheating the system through declaring lower maximum take-off weights than the ones actually operated?

2. If so, what action will the Commission take against this airline?

3. If so, how will the other competing airlines be compensated, bearing in mind the fact that they have paid more (through the cost recovery system) as a consequence of this one airline cheating the system?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the situation described by the Honourable Member. Based on information received from Eurocontrol's Central Route Charges Office (CRCO), which has the responsibility to collect charges on behalf of Eurocontrol's Member States, it seems that several airlines would have declared maximum take-off weights (MTOW) values which are not consistent with the applicable rules. Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1794/2006 laying down a common charging scheme for air navigation services describes how the weight factor value is used with respect to the calculation of route charges.

2. The Commission is in contact with Eurocontrol's CRCO to understand the size of the problem and its cause. The Commission is informed that the CRCO is currently reviewing the fleet declaration of all airlines with respect to provision of MTOW data.

Within the EU, it is the responsibility of Member States to ensure the full and correct implementation of the charging scheme. For the Commission it is important that a level playing field between airspace users is guaranteed. It will draw the issue to the attention of Member States and invite them to make sure that the correct values of MTOW are communicated to the CRCO.

3. The matter of underpayment by certain users is on the agenda of the relevant Committee of Eurocontrol in March. Member States are invited to find a solution within the route charges system. Depending on the outcome of this process, the Commission will assess the need for further action within the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011460/12
à la Commission
Harlem Désir (S&D)
(17 décembre 2012)

Objet: Responsabilité sociale des entreprises (RSE): précision du concept de «diligence raisonnable»

Le 24 novembre 2012, 112 travailleurs sont morts dans l'incendie d'une usine de sous-traitance textile à Dhaka, au Bangladesh. Cette usine ne respectait pas les normes de protection des travailleurs qui produisaient des vêtements pour plusieurs entreprises européennes, dont C&A, Carrefour et H&M. Cet évènement tragique s'ajoute à de nombreux exemples d'atteintes aux Droits de l'homme et aux droits sociaux commis par des filiales ou des entreprises sous-traitantes de multinationales. Il rappelle que les déclarations d'intentions en matière de RSE ne suffisent pas en l'absence de vérifications indépendantes et de mesures de régulation fortes.

Les principes directeurs de l'OCDE, de l'OIT et des Nations unies relatifs aux entreprises et aux Droits de l'homme constituent une base essentielle pour la responsabilité sociale des entreprises.

Comme l'a indiqué la Commission européenne dans sa dernière communication sur la RSE, en octobre 2011, «une meilleure application des principes directeurs des Nations unies contribuera à la réalisation des objectifs de l'Union relatifs à des questions spécifiques afférentes aux Droits de l'homme et à des normes fondamentales en matière de travail».

Ces principes directeurs font de la «diligence raisonnable» dans le domaine des Droits de l'homme l'outil central pour concrétiser leur responsabilité sociale. Selon ce principe, elles sont tenues de prendre des mesures anticipatives afin de prévenir toute violation des Droits de l'homme. La diligence raisonnable doit s'appliquer tant aux pratiques d'une entreprise qu'à celles de ses filiales et de ses chaînes d'approvisionnement, c'est-à-dire à sa sphère d'influence. L'application effective de ce principe doit permettre de rendre les entreprises multinationales responsables des dommages provoqués sur l'ensemble de leurs chaînes de production, y compris dans des pays à faible législation sociale.

La Commission a-t-elle l'intention, dans les prochaines étapes de la mise en œuvre des principes directeurs des Nations unies relatifs aux entreprises et aux Droits de l'homme, de rendre contraignant le concept de diligence raisonnable, de manière à assurer un plus grand respect des Droits de l'homme et des droits sociaux par les entreprises multinationales?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(6 février 2013)

Dans sa communication de 2011 sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises, la Commission s'était engagée à publier un rapport dans lequel elle exposerait ses vues sur les priorités de l'Union européenne quant à la poursuite de l'application des Principes directeurs des Nations unies sur les entreprises et les Droits de l'homme. Ce rapport permettrait d'examiner en détail la question de la diligence dans le domaine des Droits de l'homme (ou «diligence raisonnable»), ainsi que d'autres questions importantes.

Dans la même communication, la Commission déclarait attendre des entreprises qu'elles assument la responsabilité qui leur incombe de respecter les Droits de l'homme, conformément aux Principes directeurs évoqués ci-dessus. Actuellement, elle élabore des recommandations sur les Droits de l'homme à l'intention de trois secteurs d'activité (cabinets de recrutement, TIC, et pétrole et gaz), de même qu'un guide introductif des Droits de l'homme pour les petites et moyennes entreprises.

Pour l'heure, elle n'a pas l'intention de contraindre les entreprises à faire preuve de la diligence requise en matière de Droits de l'homme.

Pour ce qui est du respect des droits sociaux, elle encourage, dans l'ensemble de ses politiques, la ratification et l'application effective des conventions de l'Organisation internationale du travail (OIT) et, en particulier, des normes fondamentales du travail, et elle coopère avec cette organisation. Par ailleurs, l'Union européenne a intégré les droits sociaux dans le cadre stratégique pour les Droits de l'homme et la démocratie qu'elle a adopté en 2012.

S'agissant de l'incendie survenu dans une usine au Bangladesh, la Commission renvoie également à sa réponse à la question écrite E-010829/2012 ([1]) et à sa contribution au débat en plénière du 16 janvier 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+PV+20130116+ITEM-014+DOC+XML+V0//FR.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011460/12
to the Commission
Harlem Désir (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Corporate social responsibility (CSR): clear interpretation of the concept of 'reasonable care'

On 24 November 2012, 112 workers died in a fire in a textile outsourcing factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This factory did not comply with the rules on the protection of workers, who made clothing for several European firms, including C&A, Carrefour and H&M. This tragedy is the latest in a long line of violations of human and social rights by subsidiaries of or companies with outsourcing contracts for multinationals. It serves to remind us that statements of intent in the area of CSR are not enough in the absence of independent checks and rigorous regulation.

Corporate social responsibility must be based on the guiding principles of the OECD, the ILO and the United Nations on business and human rights.

As the European Commission pointed out in its last communication on CSR in October 2011, 'Better implementation of the UN Guiding Principles will contribute to EU objectives regarding specific human rights issues and core labour standards'.

These guiding principles make 'reasonable care' in human rights the key to putting social responsibility into practice. According to this principle, they are required to take proactive measures to prevent any violation of human rights. Reasonable care must apply both to a company's own activities and to those of its subsidiaries and supply chains, i.e. to its entire sphere of influence. Effective implementation of this principle must make it possible to make multinational companies responsible for the harm done to the entirety of their production chain, including in countries with poor social legislation.

Does the Commission intend, in the next stages of the implementation of the UN's guiding principles on business and human rights, to make reasonable care binding, with a view to ensuring greater respect for human and social rights by multinational companies?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

In its 2011 communication on corporate social responsibility (CSR), the Commission committed to publish a report on how it sees EU priorities for the further implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. That report will be an opportunity to explore the issue of human rights diligence (or 'reasonable care'), as well as other relevant issues.

In its communication on CSR the Commission also expressed its clear expectation that enterprises should meet the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, as defined in the UN Guiding Principles. It is currently developing human rights guidance for three business sectors (employment and recruitment agencies, ICT, and oil and gas), as well as an introductory guide to human rights for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Currently, the Commission does not have plans to propose a legally binding requirement on enterprises to carry out human rights due diligence.

As regards respect for social rights, the Commission promotes the ratification and effective implementation of the Conventions of the International Labour Organisations (ILO), in particular the core labour standards, in all its policies and cooperates with the ILO to this regard. The European Union has further included social rights in the EU Strategic Framework on Human rights and Democracy adopted in 2012.

Regarding the factory fire in Bangladesh, the Commission would also refer to its response to Written Question E-010829/2012 ([1]) and to its contribution to the plenary debate on 16 January 2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+PV+20130116+ITEM-014+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011461/12
à la Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(17 décembre 2012)

Objet: Vins et spiritueux — négociations commerciales avec le Canada

La Commission européenne a entamé depuis de longs mois des négociations avec le Canada en vue de conclure un accord commercial approfondi (CETA). Ces négociations semblent entrer dans leur phase finale.

Les vins et spiritueux représentent une part importante des exportations de l'Union européenne vers le Canada. En effet, la valeur de ces exportations a atteint, en 2011, 920 millions d'euros (690 millions pour les vins et 230 millions pour les spiritueux). Ces produits sont déjà couverts, depuis 2004, par un accord bilatéral spécifique pour les vins et spiritueux.

Aujourd'hui, un certain nombre de pratiques au sein des provinces canadiennes s'avèrent discriminatoires vis-à-vis des vins européens et entraînent une concurrence déloyale. Deux exemples:

— des frais de service additionnels sont appliqués aux vins et spiritueux européens;

— à la différence des vins canadiens, les vins européens ne peuvent pas être commercialisés hors des points de vente des monopoles provinciaux (*Liquor Boards*).

Alors qu'il est indispensable que l'accord soit équilibré pour tous les secteurs d'activité, la Commission peut-elle nous informer de l'avancement des négociations avec le Canada et des résultats attendus concernant les vins et spiritueux?

La Commission compte-t-elle inclure dans le CETA les dispositions de l'accord bilatéral pour les vins et spiritueux de 2004?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(22 février 2013)

La Commission est pleinement consciente de l'importance des exportations de l'Union européenne de vins et spiritueux au Canada, ainsi que d'un nombre de pratiques discriminatoires appliquées par certaines provinces canadiennes. En raison de leur incidence sur les exportations de l'Union, ces pratiques constituent un sujet important dans le cadre des négociations sur le CETA.

L'une des priorités lors de ces discussions est d'examiner l'application discriminatoire, par certains monopoles provinciaux des coûts de services différentiels sur les importations de vins et spiritueux de l'Union.

Il est vrai que les vins de l'Union européenne peuvent être vendus uniquement dans les magasins des monopoles provinciaux et non dans ce que l'on appelle les points de vente privés. Cette restriction est conforme aux dispositions pertinentes de l'accord UE-Canada sur le commerce des vins et des spiritueux de 2004.

Enfin, il est exact qu'il est prévu d'inclure l'accord UE-Canada sur les vins et spiritueux de 2004 dans le CETA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011461/12
to the Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Wines and spirits- trade talks with Canada

The European Commission began talks with Canada many months ago, with a view to reaching a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). These negotiations are now apparently entering the final stages.

Wines and spirits account for a major share of the European Union's exports to Canada. In 2011, these totalled EUR 920 million (690 million for wine and 230 million for spirits). Wines and spirits have been covered by a specific bilateral agreement since 2004.

Currently however, the Canadian provinces are applying a number of practices that are discriminatory towards European wines and are leading to unfair competition. Two examples:

— additional service charges are applied to European wines and spirits;

— in contrast to Canadian wines, European wines may be sold only by provincial liquor boards.

As it is essential that the agreement be balanced for all sectors of activity, can the Commission inform us of the state of play in the negotiations with Canada and the expected outcome for wine and spirits?

Does the Commission intend to include the provisions of the 2004 bilateral agreement on wine and spirits in the CETA?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the importance of EU exports of wines and spirits to Canada as well as of a number of discriminatory practices applied by certain Canadian provinces. Because of their impact on EU exports, these practices represent an important subject in the CETA negotiations.

One of the priorities in these discussions is to address the discriminatory application by certain provincial liquor boards of the cost of service differentials on imported EU wines and spirits.

It is true that EU wines can only be sold in the stores of the provincial liquor boards and not in the so-called private outlets. This limitation is in conformity with the relevant provisions of the 2004 EU/Canada Agreement on Trade in Wines and Spirits.

Finally, it is correct that the inclusion of the 2004 EU/Canada Agreement on Wines and Spirits in the CETA is foreseen.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011462/12
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(17 décembre 2012)

Objet: Date des Journées européennes de la mer

Les 21 et 22 mai 2013 est prévue la sixième édition des Journées européennes de la mer à La Valette. Ces journées ont pour objectif de mettre en avant les opportunités offertes par les mers et les océans ainsi que leur rôle crucial pour les citoyens et pour une croissance durable. Elles ont également vocation à engager le débat et la concertation sur l'aménagement de l'espace maritime, la production d'énergie et la gestion durable des mers et des océans.

En tant que codécideur sur la politique de la pêche, la politique maritime intégrée et la politique de cohésion, le Parlement européen est directement concerné par ces questions. Or, les mardi 21 et mercredi 22 mai 2013 sont des journées de séance plénière à Strasbourg, auxquelles les députés européens sont tenus d'assister pour remplir leur devoir de vote. En fixant ces dates, la Commission européenne, organisatrice de l'évènement, prive le Parlement européen de toute représentation.

Dans ces conditions:

1. La Commission envisage-t-elle de modifier les dates des Journées européennes de la mer 2013 afin d'éviter une semaine de session du Parlement européen?

2. Plus généralement, la Commission entend-elle prendre davantage en compte le calendrier du Parlement européen lors de l'organisation d'évènements sur des sujets relevant de sa compétence?

Réponse donnée par Mme Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(21 février 2013)

1. En réalité, comme le sait l'Honorable Parlementaire, la date de la conférence de la Journée maritime européenne est choisie conformément à la déclaration tripartite conjointe établissant une «Journée maritime européenne» signée par la Commission européenne, le Parlement européen et le Conseil de l'Union européenne le 3 décembre 2007. Cette déclaration prévoit qu'une «Journée maritime européenne» soit organisée chaque année le 20 mai et qu'elle donne lieu à des activités de sensibilisation et de création de réseaux autour de cette date. La «Journée maritime européenne» est effectivement organisée depuis 2008 vers cette date et se tiendra en 2013 pour la cinquième année consécutive.

2. La Commission européenne attache une grande importance à la participation du Parlement européen à la Journée maritime européenne (JME). Pour des raisons d'ordre logistique, il n'est malheureusement pas possible de changer les dates de cet événement cette année. La Commission réaffirme néanmoins sa volonté d'assurer la participation des députés européens à la conférence de la JME dans les meilleures conditions possibles. À l'avenir, elle coopèrera étroitement avec le Parlement européen pour l'organisation de ces manifestations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011462/12
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Date of the European Maritime Day event

The 6th European Maritime Day event is to be held in Valletta on 21 and 22 May 2013. The aim of this event is to highlight the opportunities offered by the seas and oceans and emphasise their key role for citizens and sustainable development. It is also intended to spark debate and dialogue on maritime spatial planning, energy production and sustainable development of the seas and oceans.

As a co-legislator on fisheries policy, the integrated maritime policy and cohesion policy, the European Parliament is directly concerned by these questions. However, the dates of Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 23 May 2013 fall during a plenary session in Strasbourg, which MEPs are required to attend in order to fulfil their duty to vote. By choosing these dates, the European Commission, which is organising the event, is therefore denying the European Parliament any representation.

In view of this:

1. Is the European Commission considering changing the dates of the European Maritime Day event so that it does not coincide with a week when the European Parliament is in session?

2. More generally, does the European Commission intend to take more account of the European Parliament's schedule when organising events on subjects that fall within its remit?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

1. In fact, as the Honourable Member is aware, the date of European Maritime Day Conference is based on the Joint Tripartite Declaration establishing a 'European Maritime Day' that was signed jointly by the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, on 3 December 2007 and which sets out that 'European Maritime Day' is to be celebrated May 20th each year, date around which awareness raising and networking activities are to be organised. Indeed, European Maritime Day has been organised around this date since 2008, EMD 2013 being the fifth consecutive event of this nature.

2. The European Commission attaches great importance to the involvement of the European Parliament in European Maritime Day (EMD). It is unfortunately not possible for logistical reasons to change the dates for the event this year. The Commission however reaffirms its commitment to ensuring participation of MEPs in the EMD conference under the best possible conditions, and will work closely with the European Parliament for future events.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011463/12
a la Comisión
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D) y Eric Andrieu (S&D)
(17 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Protección de las indicaciones geográficas en las ferias de la UE del sector agroalimentario

Considerando que:

— El artículo 13 del Reglamento (CE) n° 510/2006, sobre la protección de las indicaciones geográficas y de las denominaciones de origen de los productos agrícolas y alimenticios, garantiza una amplia protección a las DOP y a las IGP;

— Las denominaciones de origen protegidas y las indicaciones geográficas protegidas de los vinos, con arreglo al Reglamento (CE) n° 1234/2007 (Reglamento único para las OCM), y las indicaciones geográficas de las bebidas espirituosas, con arreglo al Reglamento (CE) n° 110/2008, se benefician de una protección sustancialmente idéntica;

— El Reglamento (CE) n° 1234/2007 (Reglamento único para las OCM) prevé la protección de oficio de las denominaciones de origen protegidas y de las indicaciones geográficas protegidas de los vinos (artículo 118, decimocuarto, apartado 4);

— La propuesta de Reglamento (UE) n° 353/2010 (COD) del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, sobre los regímenes de calidad de los productos agrícolas y alimenticios, aprobada por el hemiciclo de Estrasburgo el 13 de septiembre de 2012, adoptada por el Consejo de la Unión Europea el 13 de noviembre de 2012 y actualmente en proceso de publicación en el DOUE, extiende la protección a los servicios reforzando la eficacia de las disposiciones de control de los usos indebidos, las imitaciones y las evocaciones, e introduce expresamente la protección de oficio (artículo 13, apartado 3);

— En el marco de las ferias y exposiciones internacionales de alimentación que se celebran en la EU y con una tendencia creciente en los últimos años (por ejemplo Anuga 2009, Anuga 2011 y SIAL 2012), se han hallado diversos productos portadores de denominaciones que transgreden las indicaciones geográficas según la normativa vigente; si bien se ha conseguido la protección judicial invocada por los grupos ante los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales, no puede decirse lo mismo de las intervenciones de las autoridades competentes de los Estados miembros dirigidas a garantizar el respeto de las indicaciones geográficas en el mercado, por más que lo hayan solicitado los grupos;

¿Qué medidas pretende adoptar la Comisión para asegurar la protección de oficio de las indicaciones geográficas también en el marco de las ferias y exposiciones del sector agroalimentario, de los vinos y las bebidas espirituosas, que se celebran en el territorio de la UE?

¿Cómo planea garantizar la Comisión el cumplimiento de los principios anteriormente mencionados por parte de los organizadores de las ferias y exposiciones del sector agroalimentario, de los vinos y las bebidas espirituosas en la EU?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de febrero de 2013)

La protección de oficio, contemplada en el artículo 13, apartado 3, del Reglamento (UE) n° 1151/2012 ([1]) y en el artículo 118 *quaterdecies*, apartado 4, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1234/2007 ([2]), no puede garantizar que no vayan a producirse casos de uso ilegal de denominaciones de origen protegidas (DOP) o de indicaciones geográficas protegidas (IGP). Estas disposiciones se dirigen a los Estados miembros y les obligan a adoptar una actitud proactiva, llevando a cabo una investigación en regla, según lo establecido en el Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 ([3]).

([1]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1151/2012 sobre los regímenes de calidad de los productos agrícolas y alimenticios, DO L 343 de 14.12.2012.
([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1234/2007 por el que se crea una organización común de mercados agrícolas y se establecen disposiciones específicas para determinados productos agrícolas, DO L 29 de 16.11.2007.
([3]) Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 sobre los controles oficiales efectuados para garantizar la verificación del cumplimiento de la legislación en materia de piensos y alimentos y la normativa sobre salud animal y bienestar de los animales, DO L 165 de 30.4.2004.

Cabe subrayar que la Comisión no tiene una autoridad directa sobre los organizadores de ferias y exposiciones. Lo único que está a su alcance es iniciar un procedimiento de infracción contra un Estado miembro, en lo concerniente a su modo general de conducirse, si éste no aplica correctamente las disposiciones sobre la protección de oficio. En la práctica, la Comisión podría considerar la posibilidad de abrir un procedimiento de infracción por incumplimiento de estas disposiciones solamente si se demuestra, de conformidad con los requisitos contenidos en la jurisprudencia del Tribunal de Justicia en lo que concierne a la carga de la prueba, que las medidas o actuaciones reglamentarias, administrativas o judiciales de los Estados miembros para prevenir o poner fin al uso ilegal de DOP e IGP han sido inadecuadas. No obstante, los casos de uso ilegal de DOP e IGP pueden no desembocar en la puesta en marcha del procedimiento de infracción, siempre y cuando el Estado miembro adopte las medidas adecuadas.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011463/12
an die Kommission
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D) und Eric Andrieu (S&D)
(17. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Schutz der geografischen Angaben im Rahmen von Landwirtschafts- und Lebensmittelmessen in der EU

Artikel 13 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 510/2006 zum Schutz von geografischen Angaben und Ursprungsbezeichnungen für Agrarerzeugnisse und Lebensmittel sieht einen umfassenden Schutz für g.U. (geschützten Ursprungsbezeichnungen) und g.g.A. (geschützten geografischen Angaben) vor.

Die geschützten Ursprungsbezeichnungen und geschützten geografischen Angaben von Weinen gemäß Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1234/2007 (einheitliche GMO-Verordnung) und die geografischen Angaben von Spirituosen gemäß Verordnung (EG) Nr. 110/2008 werden praktisch in gleicher Weise geschützt.

Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1234/2007 (einheitliche GMO-Verordnung) sieht den Schutz von Amts wegen von geschützten Ursprungsbezeichnungen und geschützten geografischen Angaben von Weinen (Artikel 118m Absatz 4) vor.

Mit dem Entwurf der Verordnung (EU) des Parlaments und des Rates Qualitätsregelungen für Agrarerzeugnisse und Lebensmittel (2010/0353 (COD)), die vom Parlament am 13. September 2012 gebilligt, vom Rat am 13. November 2012 angenommen und in Kürze im Amtsblatt der Europäischen Union veröffentlicht wird, wird der Schutz auf Dienstleistungen ausgeweitet, die Wirksamkeit der Kontrollen zur Verhinderung von widerrechtlicher Aneignung, Nachahmung und Anspielung verbessert und ausdrücklich der Schutz von Amts wegen eingeführt (Artikel 3 Absatz 3).

In den vergangenen Jahren hat es auf internationalen Lebensmittelmessen und -ausstellungen in der EU (z. B. Anuga 2009, Anuga 2011 und SIAL 2012) eine zunehmende Zahl von Fällen mit Erzeugnissen gegeben, die gegen nach geltendem Recht geschützte geografische Angaben verstoßen haben. Während die Erzeugerverbände vor nationalen Gerichten erfolgreich den rechtlichen Schutz erwirken konnten, trifft dies auf die Anstrengungen der zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten, dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass alle Marktteilnehmer die geografischen Angaben achten, nicht zu.

Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission zu ergreifen, um den Schutz geografischer Angaben von Amts wegen im Rahmen von Messen und Ausstellungen mit landwirtschaftlichen Erzeugnissen, Lebensmitteln, Weinen und Spirituosen in der EU zu gewährleisten?

Wie gedenkt die Kommission dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass die oben aufgeführten Grundsätze auch von den Veranstaltern solcher Messen und Ausstellungen in der EU eingehalten werden?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(15. Februar 2013)

Der in Artikel 13 Absatz 3 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1151/2012 ([1]) und in Artikel 118m Absatz 4 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1234/2007 ([2]) genannte *Ex-officio*-Schutz kann nicht garantieren, dass geschützte Ursprungsbezeichnungen oder geschützte geografische Angaben nicht widerrechtlich verwendet werden. Diese Vorschriften sind an die Mitgliedstaaten gerichtet und verpflichten sie dazu, proaktiv zu handeln, indem sie gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 ([3]) angemessene Kontrollen durchführen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1151/2012 über Qualitätsregelungen für Agrarerzeugnisse und Lebensmittel, ABl. L 343 vom 14.12.2012.
([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1234/2007 über eine gemeinsame Organisation der Agrarmärkte und mit Sondervorschriften für bestimmte landwirtschaftliche Erzeugnisse, ABl. L 299 vom 16.11.2007.
([3]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 882/2004 über amtliche Kontrollen zur Überprüfung der Einhaltung des Lebensmittel- und Futtermittelrechts sowie der Bestimmungen über Tiergesundheit und Tierschutz, ABl. L 165 vom 30.4.2004.

Es muss betont werden, dass die Kommission keinen direkten Einfluss auf die Messeveranstalter hat. Sie kann lediglich ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen einen Mitgliedstaat einleiten, sollte dieser die Vorschriften im Rahmen des *Ex-officio*-Schutzes im Hinblick auf die allgemeine Durchführung nicht korrekt angewandt haben. Die Kommission kann die Einleitung eines Vertragsverletzungsverfahrens aufgrund eines Verstoßes gegen diese Bestimmungen nur dann in Betracht ziehen, wenn in Übereinstimmung mit der Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs der Europäischen Union bezüglich der Beweislast nachgewiesen wird, dass die gesetzlichen, administrativen oder rechtlichen Schritte oder Maßnahmen, um die widerrechtliche Verwendung von geschützten Ursprungsbezeichnungen und geschützten geografischen Angaben zu vermeiden oder zu beenden, nicht angemessen sind. Wenn eine widerrechtliche Verwendung von geschützten Ursprungsbezeichnungen und geschützten geografischen Angaben vorliegt, wird jedoch kein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren eingeleitet, solange die Mitgliedstaaten geeignete Maßnahmen treffen.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011463/12
à la Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D) et Eric Andrieu (S&D)
(17 décembre 2012)

Objet: Protection des indications géographiques lors des foires agroalimentaires organisées dans l'UE

L'article 13 du règlement (CE) nº 510/2006 relatif à la protection des indications géographiques et des appellations d'origine des produits agricoles et des denrées alimentaires garantit une large protection aux appellations d'origine protégées (AOP) et aux indications géographiques protégées (IGP).

Les appellations d'origine protégées et les indications géographiques protégées des vins au sens du règlement (CE) nº 1234/2007 (règlement OCM unique) et les indications géographiques des boissons spiritueuses visées dans le règlement (CE) nº 110/2008 bénéficient d'une protection sensiblement identique.

Le règlement (CE) nº 1234/2007 (règlement OCM unique) prévoit la protection d'office des appellations d'origine protégées et des indications géographiques protégées des vins (article 118 quaterdecies, paragraphe 4).

La proposition de règlement (UE) du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative aux systèmes de qualité applicables aux produits agricoles et aux denrées alimentaires (2010/0353(COD)), approuvée par le Parlement européen le 13 septembre 2012, adoptée par le Conseil des ministres de l'Union le 13 novembre 2012 et actuellement en cours de publication au Journal officiel de l'Union européenne, élargit la protection aux services en renforçant l'efficacité des dispositions de contrôle visant les usurpations, les imitations et les évocations, et introduit expressément une protection d'office (article 13, paragraphe 3).

Lors de foires et expositions alimentaires internationales organisées dans l'Union, on a pu noter la présence, en nombre croissant ces dernières années (par exemple lors des salons Anuga 2009, Anuga 2011 et SIAL 2012), de divers produits portant des appellations qui contreviennent aux indications géographiques au sens de la réglementation en vigueur. Si la protection juridictionnelle invoquée par les groupements de producteurs devant les juges nationaux a donné des résultats, on ne peut en dire autant des interventions des autorités compétentes des États membres visant à assurer le respect des indications géographiques sur le marché, malgré les demandes instantes des groupements concernés.

Cela étant, quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour garantir la protection d'office des indications géographiques, y compris dans le cadre de foires et d'expositions consacrées au secteur agroalimentaire, aux vins et aux spiritueux, qui ont lieu sur le territoire de l'UE?

Comment la Commission entend-elle veiller à ce que les principes susmentionnés soient également respectés par les organisateurs de foires et d'expositions consacrées au secteur agroalimentaire, aux vins et aux spiritueux dans l'UE?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(15 février 2013)

La protection d'office octroyée par l'article 13, paragraphe 3, du règlement (UE) nº 1151/2012 ([1]) et par l'article 118 *quaterdecies*, paragraphe 4, du règlement (CE) nº 1234/2007 ([2]) n'offre aucune garantie contre des cas d'utilisation illégale d'appellations d'origine protégées ou d'indications géographiques protégées. Ces dispositions s'adressent aux États membres, qui sont contraints à mener des enquêtes en bonne et due forme conformément au règlement (CE) nº 882/2004 ([3]) et à adopter ainsi une démarche préventive.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 1151/2012 relatif aux systèmes de qualité applicables aux produits agricoles et aux denrées alimentaires, JO L 343 du 14.12.2012.
([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 1234/2007 portant organisation commune des marchés dans le secteur agricole et dispositions spécifiques en ce qui concerne certains produits de ce secteur, JO L 299 du 16.11.2007.
([3]) Règlement (CE) n° 882/2004 relatif aux contrôles officiels effectués pour s'assurer de la conformité avec la législation sur les aliments pour animaux et les denrées alimentaires et avec les dispositions relatives à la santé animale et au bien-être des animaux, JO L 165 du 30.4.2004.

Il importe de préciser que la Commission n'a aucun pouvoir direct sur les organisateurs des foires. Elle ne peut engager une procédure d'infraction contre un État membre que si celui-ci n'applique pas comme il se doit les dispositions relatives à la protection d'office eu égard à son comportement en général. Concrètement, la Commission pourrait envisager d'engager une procédure en infraction pour violation de ces dispositions uniquement s'il est avéré, conformément aux exigences de la jurisprudence de la Cour de justice eu égard à la charge de la preuve, que les démarches ou mesures réglementaires, administratives ou judiciaires adoptées par l'État membre pour prévenir ou mettre un terme à l'utilisation illégale d'AOP ou d'IGP ont été inappropriées. Toutefois, l'existence d'une utilisation illégale d'AOP ou d'IGP ne peut entraîner l'engagement d'une procédure d'infraction tant que l'État membre prend les mesures qui s'imposent.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011463/12
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D) e Eric Andrieu (S&D)
(17 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Tutela delle indicazioni geografiche nelle fiere dell'UE del settore agroalimentare

Premesso che:

— l'articolo 13 del regolamento (CE) n. 510/2006, relativo alla protezione delle indicazioni geografiche e delle denominazioni d'origine dei prodotti agricoli e alimentari, garantisce alle denominazioni di origine protette (DOP) e alle indicazioni geografiche protette (IGP) un'ampia protezione;

— le denominazioni di origine protette e le indicazioni geografiche protette dei vini di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 (regolamento unico OCM) e le indicazioni geografiche delle bevande spiritose di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 110/2008 beneficiano di una protezione sostanzialmente identica;

— il regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 (regolamento unico OCM) prevede la protezione ex-officio delle denominazioni di origine protette e delle indicazioni geografiche protette dei vini (articolo 118 quaterdecies, paragrafo 4);

— la proposta di regolamento (UE) del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sui regimi di qualità dei prodotti agricoli e alimentari — 2010/0353 (COD) — approvata dal Parlamento europeo il 13 settembre 2012, adottata dal Consiglio dei Ministri dell'Unione il 13 novembre 2012 e attualmente in corso di pubblicazione sulla Gazzetta ufficiale dell'Unione europea, amplia la protezione ai servizi rafforzando l'efficacia delle disposizioni di controllo contro le usurpazioni, imitazioni ed evocazioni, e introduce espressamente la protezione ex-officio (articolo 13, paragrafo3);

— nell'ambito di fiere ed esposizioni alimentari internazionali che si tengono nell'Unione sono stati rinvenuti, con crescente incremento negli ultimi anni (ad esempio, Anuga 2009, Anuga 2011 e SIAL 2012), diversi prodotti recanti denominazioni in violazione di indicazioni geografiche (IG) ai sensi della normativa vigente; mentre la tutela giurisdizionale invocata dai gruppi davanti ai giudizi nazionali si è rilevata fruttuosa, altrettanto non può dirsi per gli interventi delle autorità competenti degli Stati membri volti ad assicurare il rispetto delle IG sul mercato, benché sollecitate dai gruppi;

Quali misure intende adottare la Commissione per assicurare la protezione ex-officio delle IG anche nell'ambito di fiere ed esposizioni rivolte al settore agroalimentare, dei vini e delle bevande spiritose, che hanno luogo sul territorio dell'UE?

Come intende la Commissione garantire l'osservanza dei principi di cui sopra anche da parte degli organizzatori di fiere ed esposizioni rivolte al settore agroalimentare, dei vini e delle bevande spiritose nell'UE?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(15 febbraio 2013)

La tutela *ex officio* di cui agli articoli 13, paragrafo 3, del regolamento (UE) n. 1151/2012 ([1]) e 118 quaterdecies, paragrafo 4, del regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 ([2]), non può garantire che non si verifichino casi di utilizzo illegittimo delle Denominazioni di Origine Protette (DOP) o delle Indicazioni Geografiche Protette (IGP). Queste disposizioni sono dirette agli Stati membri e li obbligano ad adottare un atteggiamento proattivo, svolgendo adeguate indagini conformemente al regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 ([3]).

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1151/2012 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 novembre 2012, sui regimi di qualità dei prodotti agricoli, GU L 343 del 14.12.2012.

([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 del Consiglio, del 22 ottobre 2007, recante organizzazione comune dei mercati agricoli e disposizioni specifiche per taluni prodotti agricoli, GU L 299 del 16.11.2007.

([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normativa in materia di mangimi e di alimenti e alle norme sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, GU L 165 del 30.4.2004.

Occorre sottolineare che la Commissione non ha poteri diretti sugli organizzatori di fiere ed esposizioni. Essa può soltanto avviare un procedimento d'infrazione contro uno Stato membro per quanto riguarda il suo comportamento in generale, qualora non applichi correttamente le disposizioni sulla tutela *ex officio*. In pratica, la Commissione potrebbe considerare la possibilità di avviare un procedimento d'infrazione per inadempimento alla luce di queste disposizioni soltanto nel caso in cui venisse dimostrato, in conformità con i requisiti stabiliti dai precedenti giurisprudenziali della Corte di giustizia relativamente all'onere della prova, che i provvedimenti normativi, amministrativi o giudiziari emanati dallo Stato membro per prevenire o porre fine all'utilizzazione illegittima di DOP o di IGP erano inadeguati. Tuttavia, l'esistenza di un uso illegittimo di DOP o di IGP può non sfociare nell'avvio di un procedimento d'infrazione purché lo Stato membro adotti le opportune misure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011463/12
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Iratxe García Pérez (S&D) and Eric Andrieu (S&D)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Protection of geographical indications in the context of agricultural and food fairs in the EU

Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs guarantees comprehensive protection for protected denominations of origin (PDOs) and protected geographical indications (PGIs).

Protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications for wines, as dealt with in Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 (Single CMO Regulation), and geographical indications for spirit drinks, as dealt with in Regulation (EC) No 110/2008, enjoy very similar protection.

Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 (Single CMO Regulation) provides for automatic protection for protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications for wines (Article 118m(4)).

The proposal for a European Parliament and Council regulation on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, 2010/0353(COD), which was approved by Parliament on 13 September 2012, adopted by the Council on 13 November 2012 and will shortly be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, broadens the scope of protection to cover services, enhances the effectiveness of the checks designed to prevent misuse, imitation or evocation and explicitly introduces automatic protection (Article 13(3)).

In recent years an increasing number of cases have come to light at international food fairs and exhibitions held in the EU (for example Anuga 2009, Anuga 2011 and SIAL 2012) involving products named in violation of geographical indications protected under current law. Although the efforts made by producer associations to secure legal protection by means of applications to national courts have proved successful, the same cannot be said of the efforts made by the competent authorities of the Member States to ensure that all market operators respect geographical indications.

What steps does the Commission plan to take in order to guarantee automatic protection of geographical indications in the context of fairs and exhibitions involving agricultural products and foodstuffs, wines and spirit drinks held in the EU?

How does the Commission intend to ensure that the principles outlined above are also observed by the organisers of such fairs and exhibitions?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2013)

The *ex officio* protection provided for by Articles 13(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 ([1]) and 118m(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([2]), may not guarantee that cases of unlawful use of Protected Designations of Origin or Protected Geographical Indications names will not occur. Those provisions are directed to Member States and oblige them to behave in a proactive way, by conducting proper investigation in line with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([3]).

It is worth stressing that the Commission has no direct power on fairs organisers. It may only initiate an infringement procedure against a Member State should the latter not correctly apply the provisions on the *ex officio* protection with respect to its general conduct. In practice, the Commission could consider opening an infringement procedure for breach of those provisions only if it is shown, in line with the requirements of the Court of Justice's case law as regards the burden of proof, that the Member States' regulatory, administrative or judicial steps or measures to prevent or stop the unlawful use of PDO and PGI names have been inappropriate. However, the occurrence of unlawful use of PDO PGI names may not lead to the initiation of an infringement procedure as long as the Member State takes the appropriate action.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011464/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(17 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: La tutela dei felini

Sempre più spesso le cronache danno notizia di caccia illegale e di bracconaggio nei confronti di felini ed altri animali, tanto in Africa che in Asia. Il WEB raccoglie molti siti che propongono la sottoscrizione di petizioni contro questi fenomeni d'illegalità che, da un lato, danneggiano l'equilibrio faunistico ambientale e, dall'altro, ledono l'economia locale impoverendo il patrimonio animalistico e deteriorando l'attività commerciale con operazioni sommerse, come il bracconaggio. In alcuni paesi, come il Botswana, si legifera per rendere illegale la caccia a partire dal 2014. In altri paesi, invece, dove gli animali non sono protetti, assistiamo a gravi massacri nell'indifferenza generale — come in Namibia — contro grandi colonie di otarie da pelliccia.

Tra protezioni saltuarie e occasionali e indifferenze quasi generalizzate, la caccia illegale e il bracconaggio continuano a imperversare in molti paesi, cosicché il prezzo del corno dei rinoceronti, così come quello dell'avorio, ad esempio, continuano a salire, benché il Congo abbia introdotto norme per la protezione degli elefanti e l'Africa del Sud pratichi la deregolamentazione del prezzo dell'avorio con la sua collocazione o il suo ritiro dal mercato. Tra regole e non regole, tra controlli e lassismo, tra trasparenza e attività sommersa, la tutela dei felini come di altre specie di animali è sempre più misconosciuta, lasciando libera la caccia e non contrastando con rigore il bracconaggio.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto si prega la Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Non ritiene essa che sia possibile impegnarsi maggiormente per impedire le stragi di felini o di altri animali di cui si ha saltuariamente notizia?

2. Intende essa intervenire presso le istituzioni internazionali per suggerire l'opportunità di regolamentazioni ad hoc nei vari paesi in cui gli animali sono sottoposti alla caccia volontaria o al bracconaggio, senza rispetto per gli equilibri ecologici?

3. È essa disposta a sollevare tale problematica in occasione di negoziati con i governi dei paesi in cui la tutela dei felini e di altri animali non è ancora garantita?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(12 febbraio 2013)

L'Unione europea si adopera con grande impegno per garantire che le convenzioni internazionali per la protezione delle specie a rischio di estinzione siano correttamente attuate da tutte le Parti. Questo vale, in particolare, per la Convenzione sul commercio internazionale delle specie minacciate di estinzione (CITES), intesa a tutelare dal commercio insostenibile circa 5 000 specie animali, e per la Convenzione sulle specie migratorie (CMS). La Convenzione CITES vieta il commercio di grandi felini asiatici e numerose azioni sono state intraprese per porre fine al bracconaggio e al commercio illegale di tali specie, in conformità con la risoluzione CITES 12.5.

Se le Parti non attuano correttamente le disposizioni di tali convenzioni internazionali, l'UE si impegna a richiamare l'attenzione dei paesi interessati a livello bilaterale o nel quadro delle convenzioni internazionali.

Inoltre l'UE ha recentemente concluso una convenzione di sovvenzione di 1,7 milioni di EUR con l'Interpol per intensificarne le attività di lotta ai reati contro le specie selvatiche e rafforzare il coordinamento tra agenzie internazionali in questo settore. Maggiori informazioni sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1428_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011464/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Protection of the cat family

Increasingly often, news reports are being published about the illegal hunting and poaching of wild cats and other animals, in both Africa and Asia. There are many websites that enable people to sign petitions against these illegal activities which, on the one hand, damage the wildlife balance, and on the other, harm the local economy by depleting the animal heritage and undermining businesses through clandestine operations such as poaching. In some countries, such as Botswana, laws are being passed to make it illegal to hunt from 2014. In other countries, however, where animals are not protected, we are seeing serious massacres of large colonies of fur seals being carried out amid public indifference — in Namibia, for example.

Amid intermittent and occasional protective measures and almost universal indifference, illegal hunting and poaching continue to be rampant in many countries. This means that the price of rhino horn and ivory, for instance, is continuing to rise, even though the Congo has adopted elephant protection legislation and South Africa is deregulating the price of ivory by placing it on, or withdrawing it from, the market. In this chaos of rules and non-rules, monitoring and laxity, transparency and clandestine activity, the protection of wild cats and other animal species is increasingly being disregarded, leaving hunters free to hunt and failing to combat poaching with the necessary rigour.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Could it not do more to prevent the slaughters of wild cats or other animals which we occasionally hear about?

2. Will it make representations to international institutions to suggest the possibility of ad hoc rules in the various countries in which animals are voluntarily hunted or poached, with no respect for the ecological balance?

3. Is the Commission prepared to raise this issue in negotiations with the governments of countries in which the protection of wild cats and other animals is not yet guaranteed?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2013)

The EU is very active in ensuring that international Conventions for the protection of endangered species are properly implemented by all Parties. This is notably the case for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which ensures the protection of about 5000 animal species against unsustainable trade, and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). Trade in Asian big cats is prohibited by the CITES Convention and numerous actions have been taken to halt poaching and illegal trade for those species, in accordance with CITES Resolution 12.5.

In case Parties fail to adequately implement the provisions of those international Conventions, the EU is committed to bring those problems to the attention of the countries concerned bilaterally or within the framework of international Conventions.

In addition, the EU recently concluded a EUR 1.7 million grant agreement with Interpol to boost its activities with regard to wildlife crime and reinforce coordination between international agencies on that matter. More information is available under the following link: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1428_en.htm.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011465/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(17 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Il Sahel e i Tuareg

L'inviato speciale delle Nazioni Unite per il Sahel ha previsto di riunire a Roma, per un incontro di approfondimento, l'ONU, l'Unione africana, la Francia, il Regno Unito e l'Algeria, ovvero gli interlocutori principali per la crisi in corso in quella regione sub sahariana. Non sono stati invitati i movimenti ribelli che in Mali rappresentano tanto il problema che la sua soluzione. È in Mali che si è radicato un movimento terrorista e jihadista, diretta conseguenza della destabilizzazione dell'area provocata dalla guerra di Libia. «Al Qaida — scrive un quotidiano italiano — si è visto regalare dalla Nato, per il modo dissennato con cui ha condotto la guerra contro il colonnello Gheddafi, non soltanto un'alleanza insperata con alcune tribù Tuareg in armi, ma anche l'agibilità e il controllo di un'immensa regione, il Sahel, territorio dalle caratteristiche perfette per il radicamento di un santuario terrorista.» Hillary Clinton e François Hollande sono entrambi coscienti della gravità estrema di questa realtà incombente. «Abbiamo avuto l'Afghanistan, ora è indispensabile che non nasca mai un Sahelistan», dichiarava qualche mese fa Laurent Fabius, lanciando un primo allarme alla comunità internazionale.

Nulla si è fatto finora per evitare il peggio, e pare che il timore di qualsiasi azione sia rappresentato proprio dai cinque milioni di Tuareg, che sono di religione islamica ma non arabi, e con i regimi arabi sono in una situazione di endemica tensione. I Tuareg sono berberi e hanno una propria identità ribelle alle capitali arabe e una loro lingua. Gheddafi aveva inserito i Tuareg libici in posizioni di privilegio del suo regime e ne aveva arruolato a migliaia nelle sue Forze armate. L'autonomismo berbero, compreso quello della Cabilia, è la più grande contraddizione interna ai paesi arabi del Maghreb, inclusa la Tunisia. Caduto Gheddafi, si è innescato un effetto domino di destabilizzazione che ha dato vita a un Sahelistan, con migliaia di Tuareg perfettamente armati che si sono riversati in Mali e hanno fornito un apporto militare importante alla rivolta tuareg, sconfiggendo l'esercito del Mali e conquistando tre aeroporti internazionali: Timbuctu, Gao e Kidal, ora in mano ai terroristi, così come tutta la regione dell'Azawad, diventata ora un santuario jihadista. La missione militare internazionale dell'ONU stenta a muoversi, bloccata probabilmente da negoziati diplomatici riservati con rappresentanti non jihadisti.

Si chiede al Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Intende mettere a frutto gli insegnamenti derivanti dalle disastrose conseguenze della guerra libica, per evitare gli errori commessi con i talebani dell'Afghanistan, rinviando di summit in summit ogni decisione?

2. È consapevole che le forze «infernali» messe in moto dalla guerra a Tripoli stanno riuscendo nell'impresa di trasformare i Tuareg in una forza più pericolosa dei talebani, in una regione a ridosso del Mediterraneo e dei pozzi petroliferi libici e algerini?

3. Ha la diplomazia europea contatti con rappresentanti dei Tuareg?

4. Hanno ancora autorevolezza d'ascolto, in questo contesto, le opinioni della presidenza USA?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2013)

In quanto membro del «Gruppo internazionale di sostegno e follow-up della situazione in Mali», l'UE si è impegnata, a fianco della comunità internazionale, sin dall'inizio della crisi, in linea con l'impostazione strategica dell'Unione africana e con le risoluzioni pertinenti dell'ONU, in cui viene espressa la volontà di offrire ai ribelli tutte le possibilità di dialogo purché rinuncino al separatismo e agli atti di terrorismo. L'UE è favorevole a un dialogo inclusivo con tutti gli interlocutori rappresentativi del nord e sosterrà un dialogo nazionale inclusivo nell'ambito della roadmap adottata di recente per ripristinare l'ordine costituzionale. L'UE intende anche partecipare alla stabilizzazione e alla ricostruzione per garantire una soluzione duratura alla crisi.

Il conflitto nel Mali settentrionale non può essere ridotto a un problema puramente etnico. Il governo maliano e la comunità internazionale intendono lottare contro chi intende distruggere il nuovo Stato o utilizzare il proprio controllo su parte di esso per svolgere attività terroristiche o criminali. Vista l'importanza strategica che il Sahel riveste per la sua vicinanza con l'UE, ci stiamo adoperando con il massimo impegno per ripristinare la pace e lo Stato di diritto nella regione.

Il SEAE e alcuni Stati membri hanno avuto contatti con rappresentanti dell'MNLA e di altri gruppi per facilitare una soluzione negoziata, a riprova del sostegno della comunità internazionale all'integrità territoriale del Mali.

Sono frequenti gli scambi con gli Stati Uniti, che condividono la posizione della comunità internazionale e sostengono l'impegno europeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011465/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The Sahel and the Tuareg

The United Nations Special Envoy for the Sahel has proposed that the UN, the African Union, France, the United Kingdom and Algeria (the main parties in the dialogue on the ongoing crisis in the sub-Saharan region) meet in Rome for in-depth discussions. Despite the fact that the rebel movements in Mali are both the cause of and the solution to the country's problems, they have not been invited to attend the meeting. The war in Libya and the resulting destabilisation of the region has enabled a terrorist and jihadist movement to take root in the country. According to an article in an Italian newspaper, the ill-considered way in which NATO ran the war against Colonel Gaddafi has played into Al Qaida's hands — it has not only paved the way for an unexpected alliance between Al Qaida and some armed Tuareg groups, but it has also effectively enabled Al Qaida to take control of the vast Sahel region, which is a perfect haven for terrorists. Hillary Clinton and François Hollande are both aware that conflicts in the Sahel could have disastrous consequences. A few months ago, Laurent Fabius said that the problems encountered in Afghanistan should serve as a warning to the international community of the importance of preventing the emergence of a Sahelistan.

No decisive action has yet been taken for fear of provoking unrest among the 5 million Tuaregs, who are non-Arab Muslims at loggerheads with Arab regimes. The Tuareg are a Berber people who have their own language and an identity distinct from that of Arabs. Gaddafi placed Libyan Tuaregs in positions of power in his regime and enlisted thousands into the Libyan army. The issue of Berber self-rule (in the Kabylia region among others) is the biggest source of internal conflict in the Arab Maghreb countries, including Tunisia. The death of Gaddafi had a destabilising effect across the region which has paved the way for the emergence of a Sahelistan — thousands of well-armed Tuaregs have flooded into Mali and have provided substantial military support for the Tuareg revolt there, defeating the Malian army and seizing the international airports in Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal. These airports are now in terrorist hands, and the entire Azawad region has become a jihadist stronghold. The UN international military mission is making little headway, most likely because of the impasse reached in the diplomatic negotiations to which only non-jihadists have been invited.

1. Does the Vice-President/High-Representative intend to draw lessons from the disastrous aftermath of the war in Libya in order to prevent any repeat of the errors made in dealings with the Taliban, where decisions were repeatedly put off?

2. Is she aware that the disastrous train of events set in motion by the war in Libya is transforming the Tuareg into a more dangerous group than the Taliban, in a region worryingly close to the Mediterranean and to Libyan and Algerian oil wells?

3. Have European diplomats been in contact with representatives of the Tuaregs?

4. Are the views of the US President still taken seriously?

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

As a member of the 'International Support and Follow-up Group of the Situation in Mali' the EU has involved itself alongside the International Community since the beginning of the crisis in Mali. Thus, it has been in line with the African Union Strategic concept as well as the relevant UN Resolutions, who have expressed the will to ensure all means of dialogue with the rebells, provided they renounce separatism and terrorist behaviour within this framework. The EU is favourable to an inclusive dialogue with all representative stakeholders of the North. In the context of the recently adopted Roadmap to restore constitutionnal rule, the EU will support an inclusive national dialogue. The EU intends also to support the stabilisation and reconstruction in order to ensure a durable settlement of the crisis.

It would be wrong to characterise the conflict in nothern Mali as a solely ethnic one. The struggle by the Malian Government and the International Community is against those who would break up a new state or use their control of part of it to pursue terrorist or criminal activities. The Sahel is an area of strategic interest to the EU, given its proximity. This is why we are sparing no effort to restore peace and the rule of law in this region.

The EEAS and some Member States have been in contact with MNLA representatives as well as other groups. These contacts have aimed at facilitating the negociated settlement and underlined the support of the International Community to the territorial integrity of Mali.

The USA have endorsed the same vision as the international community and support European involvment. Exchanges are frequent.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011466/12
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) oraz Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(17 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Ofiary pakistańskiej ustawy o bluźnierstwie

Dnia 3 grudnia 2012 r. w Nankana Sahib koło Lahaur odbył się pogrzeb 22-letniego muzułmanina, zmarłego w areszcie najprawdopodobniej w wyniku pobicia przez policjantów.

Niepełnosprawny umysłowo mężczyzna został bez dowodu winy posądzony o znieważenie islamu, przetrzymywano go w więzieniu przez 2 tygodnie. Prawdopodobnie zmarł w wyniku pobicia przez policję, rodzina boi się wysuwać oskarżenia.

Również 3 grudnia bieżącego roku w Lahaur ofiarą terrorystycznego zamachu padła szwedzka misjonarka protestancka, pracująca w Pakistanie od 38 lat. 72-letnia Bargeeta Almby została ostrzelana przez dwóch mężczyzn, gdy jechała samochodem. Przewieziono ją w ciężkim stanie do szpitala.

1. Czy Komisja rozważa wprowadzenie sankcji przeciw reżimowi w Pakistanie?

2. Czy zostaną podjęte jakieś działania w relacjach z pakistańskim rządem, które pomogą zapobiec podobnym tragediom?

3. Czy Komisja zamierza w jakiś sposób wesprzeć rodziny, organizacje, do których należały ofiary terroru religijnego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(13 lutego 2013 r.)

Przypadek 22-letniego Nadeema Yousufa dobitnie świadczy o tym, że przepisy o bluźnierstwie stwarzają pole do nadużyć. UE prowadzi z władzami Pakistanu stały dialog w kwestiach praw człowieka i jasno wyraża swoje poglądy w sprawie przepisów dotyczących bluźnierstwa (zob. odpowiedź na pytania E-10472/2012 i E-004204/2012).

Bulwersujący atak na Birgittę Almeby nie ma związku z przepisami o bluźnierstwie. Do ataku nie przyznała się żadna grupa. Przyjmuje się, że był to atak terrorystyczny o podłożu religijnym. Biorąc pod uwagę coraz częstsze przypadki przemocy z pobudek religijnych, wymierzonej w przedstawicieli mniejszości religijnych i etnicznych w Pakistanie, Birgitta Almeby stała się ofiarą ataku prawdopodobnie ze względu na swoje zachodnie pochodzenie.

UE musi dokładać wszelkich starań, aby wspierać ogromną większość Pakistańczyków, którzy odrzucają ekstremizm i przemoc oraz pragną, aby ich kraj był bardziej, a nie mniej, demokratyczny. Sankcje przyniosłyby przeciwny skutek.

W następstwie przyjęcia planu zaangażowania pomiędzy UE a Pakistanem przewiduje się regularne rozmowy sektorowe poświęcone zwalczaniu terroryzmu. Przewiduje się poruszanie w ramach tych rozmów kwestii egzekwowania prawa i wzmocnienia systemu wymiaru sprawiedliwości w sprawach karnych, w tym skuteczniejszego oskarżania w procesach sądowych o terroryzm.

Szacuje się, że w ubiegłej dekadzie akty terroryzmu pochłonęły w Pakistanie ok. 45 tys. ofiar śmiertelnych. W niedawnych zamachach bombowych w Quetta poniosło śmierć prawie stu członków społeczności szyickiej. Jakkolwiek UE nie ma środków pozwalających na wsparcie ofiar przemocy i ich rodzin w Pakistanie ani w innych miejscach, to apeluje do swoich partnerów o wymierzenie sprawiedliwości sprawcom tych czynów. UE wspiera projekty zmierzające zarówno do poprawy dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości, jak i do usprawnienia egzekwowania prawa w Pakistanie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011466/12
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) and Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Victims of Pakistan's blasphemy law

On 3 December 2012, a 22-year-old Muslim was buried in Nankana Sahib, near Lahore. He died while under arrest, most probably as a result of being beaten by police officers.

The mentally disabled man was convicted, without proof, of insulting Islam and held in prison for two weeks. He probably died as a result of being beaten by the police, and his family is scared to make a complaint.

Also on 3 December 2012, a Swedish protestant missionary who had worked in Pakistan for 38 years was the victim of a terrorist attack. The 72-year-old Bargeeta Almby was fired on by two men as she drove her car. She was taken to hospital in a serious condition.

1. Is the Commission considering the introduction of sanctions against the Pakistani regime?

2. Will steps be taken vis-à-vis the Pakistani Government to help prevent similar tragedies from occurring?

3. Does the Commission intend to provide some sort of support to the families and organisations to which the victims of religious terrorism belonged?

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

The case of 22-year-old Nadeem Yousuf, is an important reminder that the blasphemy laws are open to abuse. The EU engages in regular dialogue with Pakistan on human rights, and has made its views on the blasphemy laws clear (see replies to E-10472/2012 and E-004204/2012).

The appalling attack on Bargeeta Alemby is unrelated to the blasphemy laws. No group has claimed responsibility and it is presumed to have been a sectarian terrorist attack. Her identity as a westerner may have made her a target, given the increasing incidence of sectarian violence on religious and ethnic minorities in Pakistan.

The EU must do whatever it can to support the vast majority of Pakistanis who reject extremist violence and want to see more democracy, not less, in their country. Sanctions would have the opposite effect.

Following adoption of the EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan regular sector dialogues on counter-terrorism are scheduled. 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.

Fatalities from terrorist violence in Pakistan are estimated to be approximately 45,000 in the past decade. Recent bomb attacks in Quetta have led to the deaths of nearly 100 of the Shia community. While the EU does not have resources to support victims of violence and their families in Pakistan, or indeed elsewhere, it does encourage its partners to ensure that perpetrators of violence are held to account, and that justice is done. The EU is supporting projects which are intended both to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011467/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(17 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Crise económica faz aumentar violência doméstica

Considerando que:

— As condições socioeconómicas influenciam negativamente as situações de violência doméstica; que a crise económica e as medidas de austeridade potenciam esta forma de criminalidade, uma vez que a pressão económica ou a falta de emprego são situações que podem proporcionar mais um fator que conduz à agressão;

— Os casos de violência doméstica incidem maioritariamente sobre mulheres; que, no entanto, números recentes apontam para um aumento dos casos de violência dirigidos a idosos, que se veem privados ainda das reformas a que têm direito;

— Em 2011, contabilizaram-se em Portugal 14 508 queixas às diversas forças policiais e que os números mais recentes dão conta de um aumento de casos de agressões nos primeiros seis meses de 2012;

— Segundo o diretor executivo da Associação de Apoio à Vítima (APAV), se verifica um aumento do número de vítimas e uma escalada de violência nos métodos usados e nos resultados produzidos (com o consequente aumento do número de vítimas mortais) e que, paradoxalmente, se regista uma diminuição do número de queixas em consequência da maior dependência financeira das famílias em cenários de crise económica;

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está previsto algum tipo de intervenção numa perspetiva integrada destas duas problemáticas?

2. Existem meios para implementar um plano europeu de atuação concertado e protocolado de apoio à vítima?

3. Que tipo de apoios extraordinários poderão ser concedidos, de forma a envolver e rentabilizar todos os recursos de ajuda já existentes?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(19 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão está empenhada em dar uma resposta política forte para combater todas as formas de violência contra as mulheres, incluindo a violência doméstica, como confirmado no Programa de Estocolmo e na Estratégia para a igualdade entre homens e mulheres (2010-2015) ([1]). No domínio da justiça penal, a Diretiva recentemente adotada que estabelece normas mínimas relativas aos direitos, ao apoio e à proteção das vítimas da criminalidade ([2]) («Diretiva Vítimas») garante a estas últimas o direito a serem tratadas com respeito, a reconhecimento, a prestarem e receberem informações, bem como a receberem apoio e proteção. A diretiva visa também garantir que as necessidades das vítimas sejam avaliadas de forma personalizada e que as necessidades das vítimas mais vulneráveis, nomeadamente as vítimas de violência doméstica, sejam objeto de tratamento adequado.

A Diretiva Vítimas inclui disposições que visam assistir e encorajar as vítimas aquando da denúncia de um crime e exige que os Estados-Membros garantam o acesso aos serviços de apoio às vítimas, mesmo no caso de a vítima não ter feito uma denúncia formal. No âmbito da ajuda que presta aos Estados-Membros relativamente à transposição da diretiva para o direito nacional (até novembro de 2015), a Comissão trabalha sobre a questão do apoio às vítimas, juntamente com organizações especializadas neste domínio. Contudo, a Comissão não tenciona adotar um plano de ação nesta matéria.

A Comissão também desenvolve atividades em favor da emancipação das mulheres, promove campanhas de sensibilização e o intercâmbio de boas práticas e procura melhorar a recolha de dados sobre a violência contra as mulheres, a fim de compreender toda a extensão do fenómeno. O programa Daphne III prevê a concessão de apoio financeiro a projetos transnacionais que visem a prevenção e o apoio às vítimas de atos de violência no terreno.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:PT:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0057:0073:PT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011467/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(17 December 2012)

Subject: Economic crisis leads to an increase in domestic violence

The socioeconomic climate is having an adverse effect where domestic violence is concerned; the economic crisis and austerity measures are leading to an increase in this type of crime, as economic pressure and unemployment can result in other factors that spark aggression.

Women are the targets of most domestic violence cases; however, recent figures show an increase in cases of violence against the elderly, who are even deprived of the pensions they are entitled to.

In 2011 in Portugal 14 508 complaints were made to various police forces, and the latest figures reveal an increase in assault cases in the first six months of 2012.

According to the Executive Director of the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV), there has been an increase in the number of victims and an escalation of violence in terms of the methods used and the resulting outcomes (with a consequent increase in the number of fatalities). Paradoxically, there has been a decrease in the number of complaints made as a result of families' greater financial dependence during the economic crisis.

1. Will the Commission intervene using an integrated approach to these two issues?

2. Are there ways to coordinate, formalise and implement an EU action plan on victim support?

3. What kind of special assistance may be granted in order to utilise and make the most of all existing aid resources?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

The Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, as confirmed in the Stockholm Programme and the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) ([1]). In the area of criminal justice, the recently adopted Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime ([2]) (the 'Victims Directive') ensures that victims will have the rights to respect and recognition, to provide and receive information, to support and protection. It also aims to ensure that needs of victims are individually assessed and that the most vulnerable, including victims of domestic violence, receive treatment appropriate to their requirements.

The Victims Directive includes provisions to assist and encourage victims when reporting crime and requires Member States to guarantee access to victim support services even without the victim having made a formal complaint. In the process of assisting Member States to implement the directive into national law (by November 2015), the Commission works on the issue of victim support together with victim support organisations. However, it does not envisage an action plan on victim support.

The Commission also works for the empowerment of women, awareness raising, the promotion of exchanges of good practices and the improvement of data collection in order to capture the whole extent of the phenomenon. The Daphne III Programme provides financial support for transnational projects aimed at the prevention and support to victims of violence on the ground.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:EN:PDF..
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf