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 339 E/01)

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(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010880/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Aliança Europeia para as Famílias — Grupo de apoio técnico

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-008643/2012, o Comissário László Andor declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «recentemente a Aliança Europeia para as Famílias foi reforçada através de um grupo de apoio técnico que desenvolveu um quadro de avaliação de boas práticas destinado a aumentar o potencial de aprendizagem mútua».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Quantos elementos compõem o grupo de apoio técnico e qual a sua formação e competências? Que funções desempenhará no futuro o grupo de apoio técnico no quadro da Aliança Europeia para as Famílias? Que objetivos pretende atingir com o quadro de avaliação de boas práticas? Que características deste pode destacar?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(30 de janeiro de 2013)

O contrato de apoio técnico para a Aliança Europeia foi atribuído à RAND Europe, na sequência de um concurso público cujos detalhes estão acessíveis ao público ([1]). A RAND fornece conteúdos de natureza estratégica ao sítio Web e gere a base de dados com boas práticas em matéria de políticas. Para este efeito, a RAND desenvolveu um quadro que permite uma avaliação baseada em dados factuais por toda a UE. Esta meta-avaliação abrangente baseia-se num exame sistemático da literatura e é sancionada por uma vasta rede independente de peritos. Para promover a partilha de informação e a aprendizagem mútua, a RAND separa as práticas em relação às quais não existem provas concludentes de eficácia das que são consideradas emergentes, promissoras e das que granjearam estatuto de «melhores práticas». O quadro de avaliação é explicado no sítio da Web ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=631&langId=en&callId=92&furtherCalls=yes
([2]) http://europa.eu/familyalliance/practices-that-work/evidence-based-family-practices/evidence-criteria_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010880/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: European Alliance for Families — Technical Support Group

In answer to my Question E-008643/2012, Member of the Commission László Andor said on behalf of the Commission that: 'Just recently, the European Alliance for Families has been reinforced through a technical support group which developed an evaluation framework for good practices in order to increase the mutual learning potential'.

Can the Commission therefore say:

What is the make-up of the technical support group and what are its skills and expertise? What role will the Group play within the Alliance in future? What are the objectives for the evaluation framework for good practices? How would it describe the framework?

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

The technical support contract for the European Alliance was awarded to RAND Europe, following a call for tenders, the details of which are publicly available ([1]). RAND provides policy content to the website and manages a database with good policy practices. For this purpose RAND has developed a framework that allows for an evidence based evaluation of good practices across the EU. This comprehensive meta-evaluation is based on a systematic review of the literature and sanctioned by an EU wide independent network of experts. To promote information sharing and mutual learning RAND separates practices for which robust evidence of effectiveness is lacking from what are considered emerging, promising and best practices. The evaluation framework is explained on the website ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=626&langId=en&callId=322&furtherCalls=yes
([2]) http://europa.eu/familyalliance/practices-that-work/evidence-based-family-practices/evidence-criteria_en.htm

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-010881/12
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(29. marraskuuta 2012)

Aihe: EU:n suhde miehitykseen ja miehittäjiin

Euroopan unionin sisällä ja sen tuntumassa on alueita, joiden katsotaan olevan miehitettyjä. Esimerkkinä voidaan mainita Turkki, joka miehittää Kyproksen pohjoisosia, Venäjä, joka miehittää Abhasiaa, sekä Marokko, joka miehittää Länsi-Saharaa.

Tämän perusteella tiedustelen, mikä on EU:n linja suhtautumisessa miehitykseen ja miehittäjävaltoihin? Suhtautuuko EU kaikkiin miehittäjävaltoihin samalla tavalla?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(18. maaliskuuta 2013)

EU korostaa jatkuvasti sitä, että valtioiden on kyseisten alueiden osalta noudatettava kansainvälistä oikeutta, erityisesti kansainvälistä humanitaarista oikeutta, ihmisoikeuksia ja Yhdistyneiden kansakuntien peruskirjaa.

EU tukee aktiivisesti rauhanomaisia pyrkimyksiä ratkaista pitkittyneet konfliktit lähialueillaan. EU on osa Lähi-idän kvartettia, ja se kannustaa palestiinalaisia ja israelilaisia osapuolia aloittamaan suorat neuvottelut kestävän rauhan aikaansaamiseksi kahden valtion periaatteen pohjalta. EU tukee Kyprosta koskevia neuvotteluja, joiden tarkoituksena on saavuttaa oikeudenmukainen, kattava ja kestävä ratkaisu Kyproksen ongelmaan YK:n valvonnan alaisuudessa. Kuten neuvosto totesi 11. joulukuuta 2012 antamissaan päätelmissä, se odottaa Turkilta konkreettisia toimia kyseisen kattavan ratkaisun aikaansaamiseksi. EU seuraa Länsi-Saharan tilannetta tiiviisti ja on keskustellut siitä kaikkien sidosryhmien kanssa. EU on kehottanut kaikkia asianomaisia osapuolia jatkamaan neuvotteluja YK:n valvonnassa. Neuvosto toisti viimeksi 15. lokakuuta 2012 antavansa tukensa Georgian itsenäisyydelle ja alueelliselle koskemattomuudelle sen kansainvälisesti tunnustettujen rajojen sisäpuolella. EU jatkaa edelleen pyrkimyksiä Georgian tilanteen vakauttamiseksi ja siellä meneillään olevan konfliktin ratkaisemiseksi. Niihin kuuluvat toimiminen yhtenä Geneven neuvottelujen puheenjohtajista, EU:n erityisedustajan toimet sekä EU:n tarkkailuvaltuuskunnan jatkuva läsnäolo kentällä. EU käsittelee pitkittyneitä konflikteja ja aluekysymyksiä kolmansien maiden kanssa käymässään poliittisessa vuoropuhelussa, kuten viimeksi Venäjän federaation kanssa 20. ja 21. joulukuuta 2012 järjestetyssä EU-Venäjä-huippukokouksessa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010881/12
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: The EU's attitude towards occupation and occupiers

Both within the European Union and in its vicinity, there are regions which are regarded as occupied. Examples include northern parts of Cyprus (occupied by Turkey), Abkhazia (occupied by Russia) and Western Sahara (occupied by Morocco).

What is the EU's policy on occupation and States which are responsible for it? Does the EU adopt the same attitude towards all occupying States?

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

The EU consistently emphasises the need for States to respect international law, in particular international humanitarian law, human rights law and the United Nations (UN) Charter, in respect of the territories concerned.

The EU actively supports the efforts to peacefully resolve the protracted conflicts in its Neighbourhood. The EU is part of the Quartet on the Middle East and encourages the parties, the Palestinians and the Israelis, to engage in direct negotiations in order to achieve a lasting peace based on the two-state solution. The EU supports the negotiations in Cyprus aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem under UN auspices. The Council, as stated in its conclusions on 11 December 2012, expects Turkey to contribute in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement. The EU follows the Western Sahara issue closely and has discussed it with all stakeholders. The EU has called upon all the parties concerned to continue negotiations under the auspices of the UN. The Council reiterated, most recently on 15 October 2012, its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. The EU remains engaged in stabilisation and conflict resolution efforts in Georgia, including by continuing its engagement as co-chair in the Geneva discussions, the efforts of the EU Special Representative (EUSR), and the continued presence on the ground of the EU Monitoring Mission. The EU addresses the issue of protracted conflicts and territorial issues in its political dialogue with third countries, for example with the Russian Federation, most recently at the EU-Russia summit on 20-21 December 2012.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-010882/12
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(29. marraskuuta 2012)

Aihe: GMO-organismien poistaminen luonnosta

Jätin syyskuun lopulla 2012 komissiolle kirjallisen kysymyksen E-008846/2012. Kysymyksessä viitattiin Seralinin ym. julkaisemaan tutkimukseen, jossa tutkittiin geenimuunnellun maissin pitkäaikaisvaikutuksia. Antamassaan vastauksessaan komissio viittaa vastauksiin, jotka se antoi kirjallisiin kysymyksiin P-008278/2012 ja E-008334/2012 ([1]).

Komission vastauksessa otetaan kuitenkin vain kantaa jatkotutkimuksiin, kun taas esittämäni kysymys liittyy laajemmin niihin keinoihin ja työkaluihin, joiden avulla komissio on mahdollisesti varautunut GMO-organismien eristämiseen ja poistamiseen luonnosta, jos organismit osoittautuvat ihmisten, eläinten ja luonnon hyvinvoinnin kannalta haitallisiksi. Kysymys koski niin ikään sitä, onko komissio varautunut tällaiseen erityisen strategian avulla.

Toisin sanoen:

1. Jos nyt tarvittavissa EU:n omissa jatkotutkimuksissa – joihin komissio viittaa vastauksessaan kirjallisiin kysymyksiin P-008278/2012 ja E-008334/2012 ([2]) – todetaan geenimanipuloinnin olevan vaarallista sekä ihmisten että eläinten terveydelle, millaiset keinot ja työkalut komissiolla on varmistaa, että kaikki GMO-organismit voidaan poistaa luonnosta?

2. Onko komissiolla olemassa tätä varten erityistä strategiaa?

Komission jäsenen Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(21. tammikuuta 2013)

1. Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomainen esitti 28. marraskuuta 2012 Séralinin ym. julkaisemaa tutkimusta koskevan lopullisen tarkastelun. Se on samoilla linjoilla kuin se riippumaton arviointi, jonka jäsenvaltioiden valtuuttamat kuusi kansallista elintä ovat laatineet. Ne toteavat, että tutkimuksen suunnittelussa ja menetelmissä on vakavia puutteita, eikä muuntogeenisen maissin NK 603 aiempia turvallisuusarviointeja ole tarpeen tarkastella uudelleen eikä näitä päätelmiä tarvitse ottaa huomioon glyfosaatin meneillään olevassa arvioinnissa. Komissio on pannut nämä päätelmät tarkasti merkille.

2. Asetuksen (EY) N:o 1829/2003 ([3]) 34 artiklassa ja direktiivin 2001/18/EY ([4]) 20 ja 23 artiklassa esitetään tarkat säännöt ja menettelyt muuntogeenisten organismien lupien keskeyttämiseksi tai peruuttamiseksi kiireellisesti, jos uusista tai täydentävistä tiedoista käy ilmi, että niistä aiheutuu vakava riski terveydelle ja ympäristölle.

Luvanhaltijat ja jäsenvaltiot ovat vastuussa siitä, että markkinoilta todella poistetaan sellaiset muuntogeeniset organismit, joiden lupa on peruutettu. Näiden toimien helpottamiseksi on asetuksella (EY) N:o 1830/2003 ([5]) perustettu järjestelmä muuntogeenisten organismien jäljittämiseksi, ja havaitsemismenetelmiä on käytössä kutakin markkinoilla olevaa muuntogeenistä organismia varten. Jäsenvaltioiden on lisäksi ilmoitettava toteuttamistaan toimista toisilleen direktiivin 2001/18/EY 4 artiklan 5 kohdassa ja asetuksen (EY) N:o 178/2002 ([6]) 53 ja 54 artiklassa esitettyjen menettelyjen mukaisesti.

([1]) Ks. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) Ks. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([3]) EUVL L 268, 18.10.2003.
([4]) EYVL L 106, 17.4.2001.
([5]) EUVL L 268, 18.10.2003.
([6]) Asetus (EY) N:o 178/2002, annettu 28 päivänä tammikuuta 2002, elintarvikelainsäädäntöä koskevista yleisistä periaatteista ja vaatimuksista, Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomaisen perustamisesta sekä elintarvikkeiden turvallisuuteen liittyvistä menettelyistä, EYVL L 31, 1.2.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010882/12
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Eliminating GMOs from nature

At the end of September 2012, I tabled Written Question E-008846/2012 to the Commission. In my question I cited research published by Séralin et al., examining the long-term effects of GM maize. In its answer, the Commission referred to the answers it had given to Written Questions P-008278/2012 and E-008334/2012 ([1]).

However, the Commission's answer only adopts a position on follow-up research projects, whereas the question I had tabled concerned, more generally, what measures and instruments the Commission had at its disposal to ensure that GMO organisms could be isolated and eliminated from nature if the organisms were found to be damaging to the welfare of human beings, animals and nature. The question also concerned whether the Commission was prepared for this thanks to a special strategy.

In other words,

1. If it is found in the official follow-up research by the EU which is now needed — to which the Commission refers in its answers to Written Questions P-008278/2012 and E-008334/2012 ([2]) — that genetic manipulation endangers both human and animal health, what measures and instruments does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that all GMO organisms can be eliminated from nature?

2. Does the Commission have a special strategy for this?

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

1. On 28 November 2012 the European Food Safety Authority issued a final review on the study by Séralini et al., which is in agreement with the independent assessment of six national agencies mandated by Member States. They conclude that there are serious shortcomings in the study in terms of design and methodology, and that there is no need to re-examine the previous safety evaluations of the GM maize NK 603 or to consider these findings in the ongoing assessment of glyphosate. The Commission has taken careful note of these conclusions.

2. Articles 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 ([3]), and Article 20 and 23 of Directive 2001/18/EC ([4]), set out precise rules and procedures for urgently suspending or removing authorisations of GMOs if new or additional information demonstrates that they represent a severe risk for health and the environment.

The authorisation holders and the Member States are responsible for effectively removing from the market the GMOs for which the authorisation has been withdrawn. In order to facilitate these actions, a GMO traceability system has been established under Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003 ([5]), and methods of detection are available for each GMO present on the market. Furthermore Member States must inform each other about actions taken, through procedures set out in Articles 4.5 of Directive 2001/18/EC and Articles 53 and 54 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([6]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([3]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([4]) OJ L 106, 17.4.2001.
([5]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([6]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety. OJ L 31, 1.2.2002.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010883/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Interpretación arbitraria de políticas favorables al empleo por parte de la DG ECFIN

El pasado día 5 de septiembre, la Dirección General de Asuntos Económicos y Financieros de la Comisión Europea (DG ECFIN) publicaba el informe titulado *Labour Market Development in Europe, 2012* («Desarrollo del mercado laboral en Europa, 2012»). Dicho informe supone un verdadero ataque a los derechos laborales en los Estados miembros.

El informe fundamenta su análisis en una base de datos denominada Labref, que la Comisión viene desarrollando desde 2005 junto con el Comité Económico y Social Europeo y en el que están representados los ministerios de Economía de los 27 Estados miembros. Esta base de datos recoge información sobre nueve diferentes ámbitos de las políticas de los mercados laborales, entre ellos, las políticas activas de empleo, los beneficios de desempleo, los impuestos sobre el trabajo, etc.

El informe analiza las reformas que los Estados miembros han llevado a cabo en el ámbito de las políticas laborales. Pero el procedimiento para representar estas reformas de las políticas en el ámbito laboral en términos cuantitativos —necesarios para elaborar las operaciones estadísticas— implica una serie de reducciones y simplificaciones sorprendentes. En los modelos que la Comisión desarrolla, todas las reformas políticas en dicho ámbito se resumen en dos tipos: «favorables al empleo» y «no favorables al empleo». Si bien dicha elección de la metodología de simplificación de las reformas que están llevando a cabo los 27 Estados miembros puede resultar, ya de por sí, burda e incluso insultante para los complejos efectos que acarrean para millones de personas, no es este el mayor problema del informe sobre el «Desarrollo del mercado laboral en Europa, 2012». Este pretende tener, en efecto, un carácter científico que ayude a la Comisión y a los Estados miembros a formular una política bien informada y de calidad en el ámbito laboral, pero resulta ser un panfleto propagandístico de los objetivos políticos de la DG ECFIN en materia de reformas en el ámbito laboral. Dicho informe clasifica como «favorables al empleo» todas las políticas que reducen los derechos sociales y laborales (excepto las relacionadas con las políticas activas de empleo y permisos de maternidad). Esta clasificación es absolutamente arbitraria, carece de soporte científico y los datos empíricos muestran una realidad opuesta al sentido del informe, ya que dichas políticas «favorables al empleo» están generando más paro donde han sido aplicadas.

¿Qué datos empíricos ha contrastado la Comisión para la clasificación de las políticas laborales según el informe mencionado? ¿Considera necesario la Comisión que se proceda a reformular el informe ante el claro sesgo político que induce en la información que ofrece? ¿Sobre la base de qué datos empíricos puede concluirse que elevar la edad de jubilación puede ser favorable al empleo?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de enero de 2013)

El informe sobre la evolución del mercado de trabajo en Europa de 2012 es un documento de análisis elaborado por la DG ECFIN que no se ha sometido a la aprobación del Colegio.

La clasificación de las «reformas favorables al empleo» del apéndice 1 del informe no debe interpretarse como si fueran recomendaciones políticas, sino como una clasificación basada en la bibliografía económica existente (véase la página 66 del informe) para establecer indicadores al efecto de resumir el efecto previsto de las reformas de forma análoga a como se hace en otras instituciones internacionales, tales como la OCDE y el Banco Mundial. Por ejemplo, las reformas que disminuyen los costes laborales figuran entre las que pueden aumentar el empleo (favorables al empleo).

Además, no es la primera vez que la base de datos sobre las reformas empleada en este análisis se utiliza para evaluar la incidencia de las políticas en materia de mercado de trabajo.

La bibliografía económica y el análisis empírico también indican una clara relación entre los cambios en la edad legal de jubilación y los índices de participación en el mercado de trabajo de los trabajadores de más edad ([1]).

La Comisión respeta plenamente los derechos de los trabajadores, que se consagran en todas las legislaciones, sobre todo en el Tratado y en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE.

([1]) Véase, por ejemplo: Arpaia, Roeger, Varga, in't Veld: «Quantitative Assessment of Structural Reforms: Modelling the Lisbon Strategy»; Arpai,a Mourre (2005): «Labour Market Institutions and Labour Market Performance. A Survey of the Literature»; Arpaia, Dybczak, Pierini (2009): «Assessing the short-term impact of pension reforms on older workers' participation rates in the EU: a diff-in-diff approach»; Brugiavini, A. (2001), «Early retirement in Europe», European Review, Vol. 9, N. 4; Diamond, P. (2005): «Pension for an Aging Population», National Bureau of Economic Research, WP N. 11877; BCE (2007), «Labour Supply and Employment Rates in the Euro Area Countries. Developments and Challenges», Task Force of the Policy Committee of the European System of Central Banks, Occasional Paper, No. 87; S. Blöndal and S. Scarpetta (1999): «The retirement decision in OECD countries», WP 202.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010883/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Arbitrary interpretation of 'employment-friendly' policies by DG ECFIN

On 5 September 2012, the Commission's Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) published its report 'Labour Market Development in Europe, 2012'. This report basically attacks labour rights in the Member States.

The report bases its analysis on a database called LABREF, which the Commission has been developing since 2005 together with the European Economic and Social Committee, and in which the Ministries of the Economy of the 27 Member States are represented. This database collects information on nine different areas of labour market policy, such as active employment policies, unemployment benefits, taxes on labour, etc.

The report analyses the labour market policy reforms Member States have implemented. But converting information on these labour market reforms into quantitative terms — in order to produce statistics — has entailed some surprising reductions and simplifications. All the labour market reforms have been summarised in the Commission's tables as either 'employment friendly' or 'not employment friendly'. But while simplifying the 27 Member States' reforms in this way may be clumsy and even insulting in regard to the complex effects these reforms bring in their wake for millions of people, this is not the biggest problem with this report. 'Labour Market Development in Europe, 2012' claims to be a scientific report which will help the Commission and the Member States in formulating well-informed and quality labour market policies, but it is really an advertising leaflet for DG ECFIN's political objectives on labour market reform. The report classifies as 'employment friendly' all those policies that cut down social and labour rights (apart from those connected with active employment policies and maternity leave). This is a completely arbitrary classification, it has no scientific backing, and empirical data show results that are completely the opposite: where these 'employment friendly' policies have been implemented they are creating more unemployment.

What empirical data did the Commission check in classifying labour market policies as described in this report? Does the report need to be reformulated in view of the evident political bias to be inferred in the information given therein? What empirical data is there for the conclusion that raising the retirement age may be 'employment friendly'?

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

The report on Labour Market Developments in Europe 2012 is an analytical paper produced by DG ECFIN that has not been subject to adoption by the College.

The classification of 'employment friendly reforms' included in Appendix 1 of the report should not be interpreted as policy recommendations, but as a taxonomy based on existing economic literature (see page 66 of the report) to build indicators summarising the intended effect of the reforms in analogy with what is done by other international institutions such as the OECD or World Bank. For instance, reforms reducing labour costs are listed among those likely to increase employment (employment-friendly).

This is also not the first time the reform database employed in this analysis is used to assess the impact of labour market policies.

Economic literature and empirical analysis also show a clear relationship between changes in statutory retirement age and labour market participation rates of older workers ([1]).

The Commission fully respects the rights of workers, as set out in all legislations, notably the Treaty and the charter of Fundamental rights of the EU.

([1]) See e.g.: Arpaia, Roeger, Varga, in't Veld: 'Quantitative Assessment of Structural Reforms: Modelling the Lisbon strategy'; Arpai,a Mourre (2005): 'Labour Market Institutions and Labour Market Performance. A Survey of the Literature'; Arpaia, Dybczak, Pierini (2009): 'Assessing the short-term impact of pension reforms on older workers' participation rates in the EU: a diff-in-diff approach'; Brugiavini, A. (2001), 'Early retirement in Europe', European Review, Vol. 9, N. 4; Diamond, P. (2005): 'Pension for an Aging Population', National Bureau of Economic Research, WP N. 11877; ECB (2007), 'Labour Supply and Employment Rates in the Euro Area Countries. Developments and Challenges', Task Force of the Policy Committee of the European System of Central Banks, Occasional Paper, No 87; S. Blöndal and S. Scarpetta (1999): 'The retirement decision in OECD countries', WP 202.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010884/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Posición de la Comisión en las negociaciones sobre los desahucios en España

Según un artículo del periódico español de tirada nacional El País publicado el pasado día 15 de noviembre, un portavoz oficial del Comisario Rehn ha declarado lo siguiente: «El asunto de los desahucios ha sido discutido en numerosas ocasiones en el pasado entre la Comisión y las autoridades españolas y estábamos informados de las medidas que se han adoptado hoy».

Según dichas declaraciones la Comisión está negociando con el Gobierno de España el tema de los desahucios de cara a garantizar las condiciones del Memorando de Entendimiento sobre Condiciones de Política Sectorial Financiera firmado el pasado 20 de julio.

El Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea se ha pronunciado recientemente sobre la posible incompatibilidad de la actual Ley de desahucios española con la Directiva Europea 93/13/CEE del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 1993. Esta sentencia puede resultar definitiva para decretar definitivamente el abuso que el sector bancario opera en España con respecto a los desahucios. Dichos abusos, que se sitúan fuera de la normativa europea, deben ser detenidos y perseguidos por su carácter contrario al Derecho europeo y no ser supeditados a las condiciones del citado memorando firmado por el Gobierno español. La condicionalidad contenida en dicho documento solo se expresa sobre las hipotecas ejecutadas pero no sobre el proceso de ejecución de las hipotecas, que por tanto tiene que resultar acorde con la legislación vigente.

La actual reforma aprobada por el Gobierno apenas resulta efectiva al exigir fuertes requisitos que pocos casos cumplen, de forma que resulta una reforma completamente insatisfactoria para la mayoría de la sociedad española. El Gobierno de España no reconoce públicamente las negociaciones citadas con respecto al tema de los desahucios y es por ello que preguntamos a la Comisión.

— ¿Cuál ha sido la posición mantenida por la Comisión frente al Gobierno de España a la hora de negociar sobre el tema de las ejecuciones hipotecarias?

— ¿Dichas negociaciones han contemplado la necesidad de hacer cumplir la Directiva Europea 93/13/CEE del Consejo y por tanto modificar radicalmente la ley hipotecaria española para hacerla acorde al derecho comunitario? ¿Dispone la Comisión de datos o previsiones sobre el alcance efectivo de dicha reforma, en número de ejecuciones afectadas y volumen de deuda no ejecutado?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2013)

Conforme a lo dispuesto en el Memorando de Entendimiento sobre la asistencia financiera para la recapitalización de las instituciones financieras, las autoridades españolas informaron a sus interlocutores internacionales de las medidas sobre desahucios propuestas y de sus posibles repercusiones de calado en la consecución de los objetivos de los programas. Habida cuenta del alcance y la naturaleza de dichas medidas, no se prevé que vayan a repercutir de forma significativa en la ejecución del programa ni en la realización de sus objetivos. En esas consultas, que se llevaron a cabo en el marco del programa de asistencia financiera, no se abordó la compatibilidad de las medidas propuestas con la Directiva 93/13/*CEE del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 1993* ([1]).

([1]) Directiva 93/13/CEE del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 1993, sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con los consumidores, DO L 95 de 21.4.1993.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010884/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Commission's position in the negotiations on evictions in Spain

According to an article published in Spanish national newspaper El País on 15 November 2012, an official spokesperson for Commissioner Rehn said that: 'The issue of evictions has been discussed on many previous occasions by the Commission and the Spanish authorities, and we were aware of the measures that have been adopted today'.

This demonstrates that the Commission is holding negotiations with the Spanish Government on the issue of evictions in the context of the conditions laid down in the memorandum of understanding on Financial-Sector Policy Conditionality of 20 July 2012.

The Court of Justice of the European Union recently issued an opinion on the possible incompatibility of Spain's current evictions law with Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993. This could provide the basis for declaring that the Spanish banking sector's actions in ordering evictions are unlawful. The banks' actions are contrary to EC law and should therefore be stopped and challenged in the courts. The aforementioned memorandum should not be used as a justification for evictions. The document refers only to the concept of foreclosures, and not to the foreclosure process itself, which should therefore comply with current legislation.

The reform measures adopted by the Spanish Government are largely ineffective, because their requirements are too stringent and do nothing to improve the lot of most Spaniards. The Spanish Government has not acknowledged the negotiations publicly. I therefore ask the Commission:

— *What position has it adopted in its negotiations with the Spanish Government on the issue of foreclosures?*

— *Has there been discussion of the need to enforce Council Directive 93/13/EEC and make substantial changes to Spain's law on mortgages to bring it into line with Community legislation? Can the Commission provide information and forecasts concerning the actual impact of the reform, in terms of the number of foreclosures and the banks' mortgage exposure?*

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

In line with the provisions of the memorandum of understanding on the Financial Assistance for the recapitalisation of financial institutions, Spanish authorities informed international partners about the proposed measures on evictions regarding any possible material impact on the achievement of the programme objectives. Given the scope and nature of the measures, they are not expected to impact on the implementation of the programme or the achievement of its objectives in a material way. These consultations were carried out in the context of the financial assistance programme and did not cover compatibility of the proposed measures with Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993 ([1]).

([1]) Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts, OJ L 95, 21.4.1993.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010885/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Proceso judicial contra agencias de calificación financiera

El proceso de investigación abierto en Italia por la Fiscalía de Trani contra las agencias de calificación financiera Standard & Poor's (S&P) y Fitch continúa adelante con las demandas presentadas por dos asociaciones de consumidores italianas. Debido a este proceso el sistema de calificación de la deuda soberana en los Estados miembros está siendo puesto en cuestión al poder haber sido objeto del supuesto delito de manipulación de mercado.

Similares demandas han sido interpuestas en otros países, como por ejemplo en Australia, donde su Corte Federal de Justicia ha condenado a S&P por recomendar un producto financiero que originó pérdidas millonarias. Esta condena se suma a un largo historial de acusaciones que acumulan las principales compañías certificadoras financieras y que debe, cuanto menos, poner en cuestión la fiabilidad de sus métodos de evaluación financiera.

En el caso italiano el citado Fiscal sostiene que los responsables de S&P pusieron en marcha «artificios» para provocar la desestabilización del valor de la deuda soberana italiana y un debilitamiento del euro entre mayo de 2011 y enero de 2012. Según el fiscal S&P suministraba de forma intencionada información tendenciosa y distorsionada en los mercados financieros sobre la fiabilidad crediticia italiana para desincentivar la compra y reducir el valor de los títulos de deuda. En el caso de Fitch, los responsables de la compañía han sido acusados de manipulación de mercado con agravantes, al haber emitido anuncios sobre una calificación a la baja de los títulos de deuda italiana entre el 10 y 18 de enero de este año que se produjo en realidad 11 días después. Según el fiscal «fueron divulgados con el mercado abierto informaciones que debían permanecer reservadas».

Estos dos procedimientos judiciales actualmente en curso en Italia, deberían sembrar la voz de alarma sobre los mecanismos de evaluación de estas compañías que supuestamente podrían haber generado considerables pérdidas en las arcas públicas de Italia y de otros muchos Estados miembros azotados por la crisis de la deuda soberana.

¿Está la Comisión siguiendo el citado proceso judicial? En caso de una sentencia en contra de las agencias, ¿considera la Comisión que se debería investigar potenciales fraudes en la calificación de otras deudas soberanas? ¿Qué medidas tomaría la Comisión en caso de existir infracciones en las calificaciones que hayan llevado a perjudicar los intereses de países con crisis de deuda soberana?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de las investigaciones en curso de las autoridades competentes italianas sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia en relación con posibles violaciones de las normas sobre abuso de mercado y las operaciones con información privilegiada ([1]) asociadas a su rebaja de la calificación crediticia italiana. No obstante dicho procedimiento, el Reglamento sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia ([2]) ha atribuido facultades de supervisión de las agencias de calificación crediticia a la Autoridad Europea de Valores y Mercados (AEVM), que verifica la conformidad de las agencias de calificación registradas y autorizadas con el Reglamento sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia.

Con este fin, la Comisión no obsta al resultado de cualquier investigación acerca de las agencias de calificación crediticia. Además, corresponde a las autoridades competentes (las autoridades nacionales competentes en materia de abuso del mercado y de operaciones con información privilegiada y la AEVM en lo relativo al Reglamento sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia, respectivamente) adoptar medidas de supervisión, cuando proceda, teniendo en cuenta las competencias que se les han atribuido.

A esto se añade que las nuevas normas sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia, sobre las que se alcanzó un acuerdo político entre el Consejo y el Parlamento Europeo el 27 de noviembre de 2012, contemplan requisitos dirigidos a aumentar la transparencia de las calificaciones de la deuda soberana, entre los que se cuentan el requisito impuesto a las agencias de calificación crediticia de hacer público un calendario de publicación de sus calificaciones de la deuda soberana, así como un informe completo de investigación sobre las calificaciones de deuda soberana. Estas nuevas normas también contribuirán al tratamiento de las cuestiones expuestas por Su Señoría.

([1]) Directiva 2003/6/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 28 de enero de 2003, sobre las operaciones con información privilegiada y la manipulación del mercado (abuso del mercado).

([2]) Reglamento (UE) n° 513/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de mayo de 2011, por el que se modifica el Reglamento (CE) n° 1060/2009 sobre las agencias de calificación crediticia (DO L 145 de 31.5.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010885/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Judicial proceedings against credit rating agencies

An investigation by prosecutors in the Italian port of Trani into two credit rating agencies, Standard & Poor's (S&P) and Fitch, is set to continue after complaints were submitted by two Italian consumer associations. The agencies are accused of market manipulation, and their system for determining Member States' sovereign debt ratings is therefore being called into question.

Similar complaints have been lodged in other countries, including Australia, where the Federal Court of Justice has ruled against S&P for recommending a financial product that caused losses running into millions. This ruling is the most recent addition to a series of accusations levelled against the main ratings agencies, and should, at the very least, raise questions about the reliability of their ratings methods.

Italian prosecutors are accusing S&P executives of intentionally deceiving investors in order to force down the value of Italian sovereign debt and to weaken the euro in the period between May 2011 and January 2012. S&P is alleged to have deliberately released biased and distorted information about Italy's creditworthiness onto the financial markets in order to discourage investors from buying Italian debt and to decrease its value. Fitch executives have been accused of aggravated market manipulation for making statements between 10 and 18 January 2012 about the agency's forthcoming downgrade of Italy's credit rating, which took place 11 days later. Prosecutors are arguing that information that should have remained confidential was released when markets were open.

The two ongoing investigations in Italy should set alarm bells ringing about the ratings mechanisms employed by the agencies. There is evidence to suggest that their actions have been very costly for Italy and other Member States affected by the sovereign debt crisis.

Is the Commission following the investigation? In the event of a ruling against the agencies, does the Commission think that fraud investigations should be launched concerning other countries' sovereign debt ratings? What measures will the Commission take if agencies have acted fraudulently to the detriment of countries affected by the sovereign debt crisis?

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

The Commission is aware of ongoing investigations over credit rating agencies by the Italian competent authorities with regard to possible violations of the rules on market abuse and insider dealing ([1]) linked to their downgrades of Italy's credit rating. Notwithstanding these proceedings, the CRA regulation ([2]) has attributed supervisory powers over credit rating agencies to the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), which verifies compliance of registered and authorised rating agencies with the CRA regulation.

To this end, the Commission will not preclude the outcome of any ongoing investigations with regard to credit rating agencies. Furthermore, it is up to the competent authorities, respectively national competent authorities for market abuse and insider dealing and ESMA for the CRA regulation, to take supervisory action where appropriate in view of its attributed competences.

In addition, the new rules on rating agencies for which a political agreement was reached between the Council and the European Parliament on 27 November 2012, include requirements to enhance transparency of sovereign debt credit ratings, which cover requirements for rating agencies to publish a calendar for the publication of sovereign ratings and to publish a full research report for sovereing ratings. These new rules will also contribute to address the issues outlined by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Directive 2003/6/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on insider dealing and market manipulation (market abuse).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 513/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies, OJ L 145, 31.5.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010886/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Recrudecimiento de los combates en la República Democrática del Congo

El pasado día 20 de noviembre el grupo guerrillero denominado M23 tomó el control de la ciudad congolesa de Goma en la zona este de la República Democrática del Congo (RDC), en pleno centro de la militarizada zona de los Grandes Lagos.

La entrada de la guerrilla en la ciudad, con aproximadamente un millón de habitantes, ha provocado la huída de parte de la población por miedo al M23, *así como al rapto de mujeres y niños por parte de esta guerrilla según informes de la ONU. La Monusco es la misión militar de la ONU en la RDC que dispone de 19 000 efectivos en el terreno que no han intervenido en el conflicto para «evitar víctimas civiles».*

Esta es la primera vez que los rebeldes de la guerrilla M23 han entrado en la ciudad de Goma desde el fin oficial de la guerra en el año 2003, lo que hace temer una posible reactivación del conflicto. La citada guerrilla ha sido acusada de ser apoyada y financiada en sus actividades por el presidente del Ruanda Paul Kagame, que pertenece a la misma etnia que compone la mayoría del M23, los Tutsis. Este apoyo internacional supone un acto de desestabilización de una zona ya muy golpeada por la violencia. Desde el año 1996, cuando explotó la crisis de los Grandes Lagos, el conflicto ha provocado más de 5 millones de muertes y la violación y abuso sexual de decenas de miles de mujeres.

Este nuevo golpe de la guerrilla M23 resulta una nueva amenaza a la región, que puede hacer renacer el conflicto en toda su dureza. Pese al fin oficial de dicha guerra, esta nunca ha terminado realmente, al haber existido continuamente grupos armados en el país que han violado repetidamente los derechos humanos en la región.

Este conflicto ha sido alimentado por las empresas multinacionales que exportan tierras raras como el coltán, cuyas reservas mundiales se encuentran casi en su totalidad en la región. El consumo mundial de determinado material informático depende de la capacidad de suministrar dichas tierras raras gracias a las multinacionales que allí intervienen sea por vías legales o ilegales.

¿Qué medidas piensa emplear la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante para garantizar una salida pacífica y negociada al conflicto? ¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que se deben esclarecer las responsabilidades de Paul Kagame en el conflicto? ¿Dispone de información sobre las empresas europeas que operan en la zona, especialmente aquellas vinculadas al coltán?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de febrero de 2013)

La UE apoya los esfuerzos de la comunidad internacional y ha mantenido múltiples contactos a todos los niveles con las principales partes interesadas para encontrar una solución duradera al conflicto que afecta a la parte oriental de la República Democrática del Congo (RDC), afrontando las raíces profundas de la crisis tanto en su vertiente nacional como regional. A este respecto, la UE sigue también activamente las actuales conversaciones de paz entre el Gobierno de la RDC y el movimiento M23, que se están celebrando en Kampala, bajo los auspicios de la Conferencia Internacional para la Región de los Grandes Lagos (ICGLR, en sus siglas en inglés).

La UE ha reiterado en varias ocasiones que la soberanía y la integridad territorial de la RDC deben respetarse y que cualquier tipo de apoyo al M23 es inaceptable. La UE está ultimando la aplicación de sanciones contra los dirigentes del M23, tal como se indica en la Resolución 2078 del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas.

La parte de la RDC en la producción mundial de coltán se estima en menos del 20 % y la gran mayoría del sector minero en Kivu es artesanal. Según nuestras informaciones, ninguna empresa de la UE participa directamente en la producción de coltán en la RDC y aunque el tráfico de coltán (así como de otros minerales, pero también de terrenos, madera, carbón y el crimen organizado) contribuye a financiar grupos armados en Kivu, este no es un elemento fundamental.

La UE trabaja activamente para mejorar la gobernanza empresarial y la transparencia financiera de sus empresas, así como la *Iniciativa regional contra la explotación ilegal de los recursos naturales de la Conferencia Internacional de la Región de los Grandes Lagos (ICGLR),* que se propone crear un mecanismo destinado a certificar que los minerales producidos en la región no proceden de una zona de conflictos, sobre la base de las directrices de la OCDE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010886/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Renewed fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 20 November 2012, the M23 guerrilla group took control of the Congolese city of Goma situated in the heart of the Great Lakes militarised zone to the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

According to UN sources, the entry of the M23 guerrillas into the city of approximately one million inhabitants has caused part of the population to flee in fear of their lives and has been accompanied by the abduction of women and children. The UN military mission in the DRC (Monusco), which has over 19 000 troops on the ground, has not intervened in the conflict in order to 'avoid civilian casualties'.

This is the first time that the M23 guerrilla rebels have entered the city of Goma since the official end of the war in 2003, leading to fears of a possible resumption of hostilities. It is alleged that the guerrillas are being supported and financed by Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda and, like most the M23 guerrillas, a Tutsi. This international assistance is leading to the destabilisation of an area already greatly afflicted by violence. Since 1996, when the crisis in the Great Lakes region first erupted-, the conflict has caused over 5 million deaths, with tens of thousands of women being subjected to rape and sexual abuse.

This fresh attack by the M23 guerrilla poses the threat of a full-scale resumption of fighting in the region. Although the war is officially over, the troubles have never fully ceased, as evidenced by the continued violations of human rights by armed groups in the area.

The conflict has been fuelled by multinationals which export rare minerals such as coltan, of which the world's entire reserves are situated almost entirely in this region. Worldwide demand for certain electronic devices depends on the supply of this rare mineral by multinationals operating legally or illegally in the area.

What measures are being envisaged by the Vice-President/High Representative to guarantee a peaceful and negotiated end to the conflict? Does she consider that it will be necessary to establish the degree of responsibility of Paul Kagame for the troubles? Does she have information concerning European companies with operations in the area, particularly those linked to the production and supply of coltan?

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

The EU supports the efforts of the international community and has deployed multiple contacts at all levels with the main stakeholders to find a lasting solution to the conflict in eastern DRC tackling both the regional and the DRC domestic roots of the crisis. In this regard the EU is also an active observer of the ongoing peace talks between the DRC government and the M23 movement that are taking place in Kampala under the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) auspices.

The EU reiterated on several occasions that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC must be respected and that any support to the M23 is unacceptable. The EU is about to implement sanction measures against the M23 leadership as highlighted in UNSC resolution 2078.

The DRC world production share of coltan is estimated to be less than 20% and the large majority of the mining sector in the Kivus is artisanal. To our knowledge no EU company is directly involved in coltan production in the DRC and though coltan trafficking contributes to fund armed groups in the Kivus (as well as other minerals, but also land, timber, charcoal, racketing), it is not central to its underlying causes.

The EU actively develops efforts to improve corporate governance and financial transparency of the EU enterprises as well as the Regional Initiative on Illegal exploitation of Natural Resources of the ICGLR, which intends to set-up a mechanism aiming at certifying conflict free minerals sourced in the region on the basis of the OECD guidelines.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-010887/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(29. november 2012)

Om: Genforhandling af Europarådets databeskyttelseskonvention

Det fremgår af en pressemeddelelse af 19. november 2012 (»Commission to renegotiate Council of Europe Data Protection Convention on behalf of EU«), at Kommissionen har vedtaget en henstilling, som giver den bemyndigelse til at forhandle om en modernisering af Kategori K08, Europarådets konvention om databeskyttelse, på vegne af Den Europæiske Union.

Kommissionen fremlagde imidlertid i januar 2012 et forordningsforslag om generel persondatabeskyttelse i EU, og forhandlingerne om forslaget er i gang i såvel Rådet for Den Europæiske Union og Europa-Parlamentet, uden at der dog er udsigt til en aftale inden for den nærmeste fremtid.

Jeg vil derfor spørge Kommissionen om følgende:

Hvorfor indleder Kommissionen forhandlinger om fastsættelse af regler om databeskyttelse, inden man er nået til enighed om EU-forordningen herom (KOM(2012)0011), og hvordan vil Kommissionen undgå at foregribe beslutninger i forhandlingerne om ovennævnte konvention i spørgsmål, som der også debatteres og forhandles om i forbindelse med forordningsforslaget?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(1. februar 2013)

EU har længe deltaget aktivt i Europarådets arbejde med databeskyttelse. Selv om EU ikke er part i konventionen om beskyttelse af det enkelte menneske i forbindelse med elektronisk databehandling af personoplysninger (konvention nr. 108) ([1]), har Kommissionen observatørstatus. Siden begyndelsen af Europarådets arbejde med modernisering af kategori K08 har Kommissionen deltaget aktivt i debatten, bl.a. for at sikre, at der er overensstemmelse mellem den aftalte modernisering af kategori K08 og udviklingen i EU's databeskyttelsesregelværk.

Kategori K08, der er åben for tredjelandes tiltrædelse, fastsætter almindelige principper og regler for databeskyttelse. Navnlig indeholder den foreslåede forordning om beskyttelse af fysiske personer i forbindelse med behandling af personoplysninger og om fri udveksling af sådanne oplysninger ([2]) et omfattende og detaljeret regelsæt, der er tilpasset databeskyttelsessystemet i EU's medlemsstater.

I henhold til artikel 3, stk. 2, i TEUF har Unionen enekompetence til at indgå internationale aftaler, for så vidt de kan berøre fælles regler eller ændre deres rækkevidde. Anvendelsesområdet for sådanne regler kan blive påvirket eller fordrejet, når de internationale forpligtelser falder ind under anvendelsesområdet for de fælles regler eller et område, der i vid udstrækning er reguleret af sådanne regler.

På baggrund af ovenstående har Kommissionen vedtaget forhandlingsdirektiver for EU's tiltrædelse af Kategori K08 og for deltagelse i forhandlingerne om modernisering af nævnte konvention.

([1]) Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data [CETS No.: 108].
([2]) Generel forordning om databeskyttelse, KOM(2012)0011 endelig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010887/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Renegotiation of the Council of Europe Data Protection Convention

According to a press release of 19 November 2012 ('Commission to renegotiate Council of Europe Data Protection Convention on behalf of EU'), the Commission has adopted a recommendation that will allow it to negotiate the modernisation of Convention 108, the Council of Europe's convention on data protection, on behalf of the European Union.

However, in January 2012 the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation on protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data (General Data Protection Regulation), and the negotiations on this proposal are under way both in the Council of the EU and in the European Parliament, without any prospect of an agreement in the near future.

I should therefore like to ask the Commission:

Why is the Commission opening negotiations on setting data protection rules before agreement has been reached on the EU regulation on this topic (COM(2012)0011), and how will the Commission avoid anticipating decisions in the negotiations on the abovementioned Convention on issues which are also being debated and negotiated in connection with the proposal for a regulation?

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

The EU has for a long time actively participated in the Council of Europe (CoE) works in the area of data protection. Although the EU is not a party to Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention 108) ([1]), the Commission enjoys observer status. Since the beginning of the CoE works on the modernisation of the Council of Europe Convention 108, the Commission has been participating actively in the discussion, *inter alia* in order to ensure compatibility between the negotiated modernisation of Convention 108 and the evolving EU data protection *acquis*.

The Convention 108, which is open to accession by third countries, establishes general principles and rules in the field of data protection. In particular, the proposed Regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data ([2]) lays down a comprehensive and detailed framework tailored to the data protection system of the EU Member States.

According to Article 3(2) TFEU, the Union has exclusive competence for the conclusion of an international agreement in so far as its conclusion may affect common rules or alter their scope. The scope of such rules may be affected or distorted where the international commitments fall within the scope of the common rules or in any event within an area largely covered by such rules.

In view of the above, the European Commission adopted negotiating directives for the EU accession to the Convention 108 and the participation to the negotiations on the modernisation of the said Convention.

([1]) Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data [CETS No.: 108].
([2]) General Data Protection Regulation, COM(2012) 11 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010888/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(29. November 2012)

Betrifft: Zunahme der Armut auch in Österreich

Im Oktober hat die Armutskonferenz die immer weiter klaffende Schere zwischen Arm und Reich in Österreich aufgezeigt.

Die Hälfte der Haushalte in Österreich verfügt über ein Nettovermögen von durchschnittlich etwa 15 000 EUR, 30 % über ein Vermögen von durchschnittlich 175 000 EUR, 15 Prozent gar von 497 000 EUR und 5 % von durchschnittlich stolzen 2,5 Millionen EUR.

Die hohe Zahl der in Armut lebenden Menschen kommt Österreich teuer zu stehen — etwa aufgrund chronischer Krankheiten, einer geringeren Lebenserwartung oder einer geringeren Bildung.

Auch wenn sich die Folgen der Wirtschaftskrise laut dem jüngsten Sozialbericht in Österreich im EU-Vergleich „relativ moderat" auf den Lebensstandard der Bevölkerung auswirken, zeugt das Gespräch mit den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern von einem dramatischen Bild der Armut. So gibt es sehr viele Menschen (vorwiegend Alleinerziehende, Rentner, Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund und Arbeitslose) die mit weniger als 900 EUR netto das Auskommen finden müssen — und die Sozialmärkte boomen.

1. Ist der Kommission diese Entwicklung in Österreich bekannt, und wie beurteilt sie diese im Hinblick auf die derzeitige Wirtschaftskrise in Europa?

2. Welche Strategien empfiehlt die Kommission den Staaten Mitteleuropas in der Folge, um nicht auch „abzurutschen" und dadurch noch mehr Menschen in die Armut zu „schicken"?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(1. Februar 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass das Einkommensgefälle in Österreich in den vergangenen zehn Jahren zugenommen hat — auch wenn es noch deutlich unter dem EU-Durchschnitt liegt. Allerdings nahmen die Einkommensungleichheiten bereits vor Einsetzen der Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise zu.

Auch wenn Österreich bei den Arbeitsmarktindikatoren und den meisten Indikatoren zur sozialen Inklusion insgesamt eher gut abschneidet, so leben in diesem Land fast 1,4 Mio. Menschen in Armut oder sozialer Ausgrenzung.

Die Europäische Union begegnet dieser Herausforderung hauptsächlich mithilfe des Europäischen Sozialfonds (ESF). In Österreich wird mit dem ESF die Eingliederung in den Arbeitsmarkt und die soziale Inklusion armutsgefährdeter Gruppen unterstützt. Seit 2007 hat die Kommission in Österreich über 62 Mio. EUR für die soziale Inklusion von Menschen bereitgestellt, die sich am Rande des Arbeitsmarkts befinden, und über 161 Mio. EUR für die Wiedereingliederung arbeitsloser Personen in den Arbeitsmarkt.

Die Kommission überwacht die Entwicklungen in den Bereichen Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung im Rahmen des Europäischen Semesters sowie im Ausschuss für Sozialschutz durch den Austausch mit den Mitgliedstaaten. Das für 2020 gesetzte Armutsreduktionsziel — die Zahl der von Armut und sozialer Ausgrenzung betroffenen oder bedrohten Personen soll um mindestens 20 Millionen gesenkt werden — spiegelt deutlich das Engagement der Mitgliedstaaten wider, die Armut in der gesamten EU einzudämmen. In der Initiative „Europäische Plattform zur Bekämpfung der Armut und der sozialen Ausgrenzung" laufen verschiedene Strategien zur Armutsverminderung zusammen. Im anstehenden Maßnahmenpaket zu sozialen Investitionen soll eine neue Agenda für sozialpolitische Maßnahmen festgelegt werden, damit die Mitgliedstaaten die Reformen durchführen können, die notwendig sind, um — längerfristig gesehen — stärker, geschlossener und wettbewerbsfähiger aus der Krise hervorzugehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010888/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Poverty is on the increase in Austria too

In October, the Conference on Poverty revealed the ever-widening gap between the rich and poor in Austria.

Half of all households in Austria have an average net asset value of about EUR 15 000, 30% have an average asset value of EUR 175 000, 15% of EUR 497 000 and 5% of a hefty EUR 2.5 million on average.

Austria pays a heavy price for the large number of people living in poverty, for example in the form of chronic illnesses, shorter life expectancy or poorer education.

Even though, according to the latest social report, the consequences of the economic crisis have only a 'relatively moderate' impact on the living standards of the population in Austria compared with the EU as a whole, talking to citizens reveals a dramatic picture of poverty. Many people (mainly single parents, pensioners, people with a migrant background and the unemployed) have to make ends meet with less than EUR 900 net and discount shops and food banks are doing a roaring trade.

1. Is the Commission aware of this development in Austria and what is its position on this in the context of the current economic crisis in Europe?

2. What strategies does the Commission recommend to the countries of Central Europe to help them avoid a 'slide' which would condemn even more people to poverty?

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

The Commission is aware that income inequality in Austria has been on a relatively increasing trend in the last decade, while still considerably below EU average. Increasing inequality was, however, a trend already before the start of the financial and economic crisis.

In spite of Austria's rather favourable overall performance regarding the labour market and most social inclusion indicators, almost 1.4 million people in Austria live in poverty or social exclusion.

The European Union plays its part in addressing this challenge principally through the European Social Fund (ESF). The ESF in Austria supports the labour market integration and social inclusion of groups at higher risk of poverty. The Commission has made available more than EUR 62 million since 2007 for the social inclusion of people at the margins of the labour market and more than EUR 161 million for labour market integration of unemployed persons in Austria.

The Commission monitors developments in the area of poverty and social exclusion through the European Semester, as well as in the Social Protection Committee through cooperative exchanges with the Member States. The 2020 poverty-reduction target — at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion by the end of the decade — is a tangible expression of Member States' commitment to reducing poverty throughout the EU. The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion brings together various policies that contribute to the reduction of poverty. The upcoming Social Investment Package sets out a new agenda for social policies to help Member States make the reforms necessary to emerge out of the crisis and become stronger, more cohesive and more competitive in the long run.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010889/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(29. November 2012)

Betrifft: Mehr als 13,5 Millionen junge Europäer ohne berufliche Zukunft

Die Lage junger Menschen in Europa wird immer dramatischer, wenn man die Arbeitslosenraten in dieser jungen Generation ansieht.

2011 waren 94 Millionen Europäer zwischen 15 und 29 Jahre alt; aktuelle Zahlen zeigen, dass 7,5 Millionen Europäer zwischen 15 und 24 Jahren und etwa 6 Millionen zwischen 25 und 29 Jahren arbeitslos waren und über keine Aus- oder Weiterbildung verfügen.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, welche erschreckenden Ausmaße die Arbeitslosigkeit unter jungen Europäern erreicht hat? Wenn ja, was wird sie tun, um diesen jungen Europäern Möglichkeiten für eine berufliche Zukunft zu bieten?

2. Zu welchen aktuellen Ergebnissen ist die Kommission im Hinblick auf die Auswirkungen gekommen, die so hohe Arbeitslosenraten in diesem Lebensstadium junger Europäer in Bezug auf Wirtschaftseinbußen in Europa und in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten haben werden?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(31. Januar 2013)

1. Die Kommission weiß durchaus um die von der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochene hohe Arbeitslosenrate, unter der junge Menschen in der gesamten EU leiden. Was die Reaktion der Kommission darauf betrifft, verweisen wir die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Antwort zur schriftlichen Anfrage E-010325/2012 sowie auf die vor Kurzem veröffentlichte Mitteilung „Neue Denkansätze für die Bildung: bessere sozioökonomische Ergebnisse durch Investitionen in Qualifikationen“ und das jüngst verabschiedete Paket für Jugendbeschäftigung; darin sind u. a. ein Vorschlag für eine Empfehlung des Rates zur Einführung einer Jugendgarantie und die Ankündigung einer europäischen Ausbildungsallianz enthalten.

2. Laut einer vor Kurzem von der Europäischen Stiftung für die Verbesserung der Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen durchgeführten Studie ([1]) entstehen aufgrund der Leistungen, die arbeitslosen jungen Menschen gezahlt werden, und aufgrund der entsprechenden entgangenen Einkünfte, Steuern und Beiträge zur sozialen Sicherheit Kosten in der Höhe von geschätzt 1,21 % des Gesamt-BIP aller Mitgliedstaaten ohne Malta. Dies bedeutet für die EU einen jährlichen Verlust von 153 Mrd. EUR. In jungen Jahren arbeitslos zu sein kann bei den betroffenen Menschen eine dauerhafte „Narbe“ hinterlassen, da sie ein höheres Risiko tragen, sowohl was eine zukünftige Arbeitslosigkeit als auch soziale Ausgrenzung, Armut und gesundheitliche Probleme betrifft.

Die Kostenschätzung beruht auf der Anzahl junger Menschen zwischen 15 und 29 Jahren, die weder einen Arbeitsplatz haben noch eine schulische oder berufliche Ausbildung absolvieren. Die Studie enthält auch eine Aufschlüsselung der Kosten für jeden einzelnen Mitgliedstaat.

([1]) Eurofound (2012), NEETs — Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe, Amt für Veröffentlichungen der Europäischen Union, Luxemburg, http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010889/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: More than 13.5 million young Europeans deprived of their professional future

The situation of young people in Europe seems to be getting more and more dramatic, if one looks at the unemployment rate of this young generation.

There are 94 million Europeans aged between 15 and 29; according to the latest figures, 7.5 million Europeans aged between 15 and 24, and about 6 million aged between 25 and 29 were unemployed in 2011, without education or training.

1. Is the Commission aware of the drastic numbers of unemployed young Europeans? If so, how does it intend to proceed in order to give these young Europeans a path to a professional future?

2. What are the Commission's latest findings regarding the impact that such a high unemployment rate at this stage in the lives of those young Europeans will have in terms of economic losses in Europe and in the individual Member States?

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

1. The Commission is well aware of the high unemployment affecting young people across the EU, as described by the Honourable Member. As regards the Commission's response, including the recent Communication on 'Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socioeconomic outcomes' and the recently adopted Youth Employment Package, which include among others a proposal for a Council recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee, and the announcement of a European Alliance for Apprenticeships, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010325/2012.

2. A recent study ([1]) by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions estimated the cost of benefits paid to unemployed young people and of earnings, taxes and social security contributions lost as a consequence at 1.21% of the combined GDP of all the Member States, except Malta. This is equal to an annual loss to the EU of EUR 153 billion. Being unemployed at an early age may also durably 'scar' the young people concerned, who face a higher risk in terms not only of future unemployment, but also of social exclusion, poverty and health problems.

The cost estimate is based on the number of young people aged 15 to 29 who are not in employment, education or training. The study also gives a breakdown of the cost by individual Member State.

([1]) Eurofound (2012), NEETs — Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, at: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010890/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Reduction in red tape for the auto sector

Under its 'industrial strategy', the Commission proposes reducing red tape to help make the auto sector more competitive.

Can the Commission quantify the scale of the cuts required to achieve the objectives of its industrial strategy?

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

The Commission put forward in October 2012 a comprehensive strategy to re-industrialise Europe ([1]) that highlights in particular the need to ensure a simplified, predictable and stable regulatory framework that will favour the EU industry's competitiveness.

Specifically, under the CARS 2020 Action Plan ([2]) adopted on 8 November 2012, the Commission proposed a series of concrete measures in order to improve the competitiveness of the EU automotive industry. One of the four pillars of this Action Plan proposes actions aiming at improving market conditions through smart regulation, notably with a fitness-check of the type-approval legislation, a competitiveness proofing for the major legislative initiatives and exploring the possibility and added value of a proportionate economic analysis for some implementing acts of the vehicle legislation.

Although an analysis of the quantity of scale of cuts in red tape needed is not as such encompassed in the abovementioned initiatives, the issue of red tape is indeed addressed, as streamlined European legislation will impose less red tape for the automotive industry.

([1]) COM(2012)582.
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010891/12
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(29 novembre 2012)

Objet: Élévation du niveau des mers

Le 28 novembre dernier, des chercheurs du Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du Climat (GIEC) ont, dans le cadre de la conférence de Doha, rendu publique une étude concernant l'élévation générale du niveau des mers.

Les résultats de cette étude montrent qu'en moyenne, le niveau général des mers a augmenté de 3,2 millimètres par an entre 1990 et 2011, en raison du réchauffement climatique, ce qui représenterait une élévation 60 % supérieure aux 2 millimètres par an anticipés par le GIEC en 2007.

Ce nouveau rapport établit donc que le niveau des mers augmenterait beaucoup plus vite que ne le prévoyaient les projections des Nations unies et montre que les prévisions du GIEC concernant une hausse estimée du niveau des mers de 18 à 59 centimètres d'ici à la fin du siècle ne seraient plus d'actualité.

D'autres études scientifiques, comme celle dirigée par l'Institut de recherche sur l'impact du changement climatique de Postdam en Allemagne, montrent que l'élévation du niveau des mers pourrait donc atteindre, voire dépasser, un mètre.

Les régions côtières de l'Union européenne seraient donc menacées par cette hausse du niveau des mers plus rapidement que ne le prévoyaient les précédentes études. Il paraît opportun de se pencher sur la véracité des résultats mis en avant par ces nouvelles études et sur les possibles impacts dans ces régions souvent très peuplées et regroupant d'importantes activités économiques.

Dans ce contexte, la Commission est invitée à répondre aux questions suivantes:

1. Envisage-t-elle de vérifier la véracité de ces données?

2. Si ces données s'avéraient réalistes, envisagerait-elle de lancer une consultation sur les conséquences éventuelles d'une élévation du niveau des mers jusqu'à un mètre, ou plus, au sein de l'Union?

3. Prévoit-elle la mise en place de plans d'aides aux régions côtières les plus menacées par l'élévation du niveau des mers?

Réponse donnée par Mme Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(25 janvier 2013)

1-2. Les rapports d'évaluation du GIEC examinent et évaluent les informations présentées au niveau mondial concernant le changement climatique et servent de référence pour l'élaboration des politiques relatives aux causes et aux effets du changement climatique. Le 5e rapport (RE5) sera publié en 2013-2014, après le processus d'approbation par les gouvernements et par l'Union européenne. Le projet de l'Union Ice2sea ([1]) vise à atténuer les incertitudes qui planent sur les projections de l'élévation du niveau de la mer et contribue au RE5; selon les estimations, l'élévation du niveau de la mer en Europe d'ici à 2100 serait comprise entre 0,4 et 0,6 m. Les politiques de l'Union relatives au changement climatique, notamment en ce qui concerne l'adaptation à l'élévation du niveau de la mer, seront élaborées sur la base des nouveaux éléments apportés par le RE5 et les activités de recherche ultérieures en la matière. Au niveau local, l'évolution du niveau de la mer peut s'écarter fortement de la moyenne mondiale. L'initiative de l'UE intitulée «Connaissance du milieu marin 2020» ([2]) vise à réduire les incertitudes concernant ces changements locaux de manière à contribuer au processus d'adaptation qui comprend une évaluation rigoureuse des risques et une composante participative au processus décisionnel.

([1]) Ice2sea: estimation de la future contribution de la calotte glacière continentale à l'élévation du niveau de la mer, financé par le 7e programme-cadre de l'Union pour la recherche et le développement technologique, contrat n° 226375.

([2]) Connaissance du milieu marin 2020: de la cartographie des fonds marins à la prévision océanographique COM(2012)473.

3. La stratégie d'adaptation de l'Union, qui doit être adoptée au printemps 2013, aura pour objectif de renforcer la préparation de l'ensemble du territoire de l'Union afin de faire face aux conséquences du changement climatique. La Commission a proposé que cette stratégie devienne, dès 2014, une des principales priorités de tous les canaux de financement de l'Union concernés grâce à l'introduction d'un nouveau principe prévoyant qu'au moins 20 % du budget de l'Union pour 2014-2020 soient consacrés à des mesures en rapport avec le climat. L'Union européenne finance déjà l'adaptation dans les zones côtières par l'intermédiaire de fonds européens, tels qu'Interreg ([3]), les programmes-cadres de recherche de l'Union ([4]) ou le FEDER ([5]) ainsi qu'en intégrant les besoins d'adaptation dans la législation concernée (politique maritime intégrée, stratégie marine) ou en révisant la recommandation sur la gestion intégrée des zones côtières.

([3]) Parmi les exemples de projets, on peut citer Beachmed (http://www.beachmed.it/www), Coastadapt (http://coastadapt.org/), Coastance (http://www.coastance.eu/) et Safecoast (www.safecoast.org).

([4]) Parmi les exemples de projets financés par les programmes-cadres, on peut citer Ice2Sea (http://www.ice2sea.eu/), Theseus (http://www.theseusproject.eu/), Medsea (http://medsea-project.eu/).

([5]) Des informations sur les activités de l'Union dans les zones côtières, notamment des projets tels que celui intitulé «Effects of sea level rise on coastal areas of eastern Aegean» peuvent être consultées sur la plateforme de l'Union Ourcoast (http://ec.europa.eu/ourcoast/).
De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur la plateforme Climate-ADAPT (http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010891/12
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Rising sea levels

On 28 November, researchers from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a study on the general rise in sea levels within the framework of the Doha Conference.

The results of this study show that, on average, general sea levels have increased by 3.2 mm per year between 1990 and 2011 as a result of climate change, which represents an increase that is 60% higher than the 2 mm per year estimated by the IPCC in 2007.

This new report therefore establishes that sea levels will rise much more quickly than the United Nations' forecasts suggested and shows that the IPCC's predictions of an estimated increase in sea levels of 18 to 59 cm by the end of the century is no longer accurate.

Other scientific studies, such as the one led by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany, show that the rise in sea levels could therefore reach, or even exceed, one metre.

The EU's coastal regions would therefore be threatened by this rise in sea levels, which is happening more quickly than previous studies forecasted. It would be wise to look into the accuracy of the results put forward by these new studies and the possible impact for these regions, which are often densely populated and are hubs of important economic activity.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it intend to verify the accuracy of these data?

2. If these data are found to be accurate, does it intend to launch a consultation on the possible consequences of a rise in sea levels of up to one metre, or more, within the European Union?

3. Does it intend to put in place support plans for the coastal regions most threatened by the rise in sea levels?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

1-2. The IPCC Assessment Reports review and assess the information produced worldwide relevant to climate change, and are the policy-making reference information about climate change causes and effects. The 5th report (AR5) will be published in 2013-14, after an endorsement process by governments, including the EU. The EU-project Ice2sea ([1]) aims at reducing the uncertainty in the projections of sea level rise and feeds into the AR5; it estimates a sea-level rise in the range of 0,4-0,6m in Europe by 2100. EU Climate Change policies, including on adaptation to sea level rise, will be framed upon new evidence from AR5 and relevant research afterwards. At a local level sea-level change can be very different from the global average. The EU's Marine Knowledge 2020 initiative ([2]) aims to reduce uncertainty in these local changes so as to contribute to an adaptation process which includes a sound evaluation of risks and a participatory component to the decision making.

([1]) Ice2sea: Estimating the future contribution of continental ice to sea-level rise, funded by the 7th EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, Contract No 226375.
([2]) Marine Knowledge 2020; from seabed mapping to ocean forecastion COM(2012)473.

3. The EU Adaptation Strategy, to be adopted in spring 2013, will aim to enhance the preparedness of the entire EU territory to respond to the impacts of climate change.. As from 2014, the Commission has proposed that it becomes one of the key priorities of all relevant EU funding channels through a new principle stipulating that at least 20% of the EU's budget for 2014-2020 be spent on climate-relevant measures. The EU is already supporting adaptation in coastal areas through EU funds, such as Interreg ([3]), the EU Research Framework Programmes ([4]) or ERDF ([5]), and through integration of adaptation needs into relevant legislation (Integrated Maritime Policy, Marine Strategy) or the revision of the recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

([3]) Examples include projects such as BEACHMED (http://www.beachmed.it/), COASTADAPT (http://coastadapt.org/), COASTANCE (http://www.coastance.eu/), SAFECOAST (http://www.safecoast.org/).

([4]) Examples of projects financed through the framework Programmes include Ice2Sea (http://www.ice2sea.eu/), THESEUS (http://www.theseusproject.eu/), MEDSEA (http://medsea-project.eu/).

([5]) Information on EU activities in coastal areas, including projects such as the one entitled 'Effects of sea level rise on coastal areas of eastern Aegean' can be found in the EU OURCOAST platform (http://ec.europa.eu/ourcoast/). Further information available at the Climate-ADAPT platform (http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010892/12
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(29 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Fiscal Compact e Trattati UE

Un noto giurista italiano, già Ministro delle Finanze, professor Giuseppe Guarino, sostiene in un suo recente saggio come il regolamento 1175/2011 (Patto di Stabilità e Crescita rivisto), che ha poi dato origine a quello che é comunemente noto come «*Fiscal Compact*», sarebbe in realtà illegittimo in quanto in contrasto con i Trattati europei.

Secondo questa tesi, infatti, sia questo regolamento 1175/2011 che il precedente 1466/97 che ha sostituito, non sarebbero compatibili con l'articolo 126 del Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (TFUE). Quest'ultimo è l'adattamento post-Lisbona del precedente articolo 104 C del Trattato sull'Unione europea, il quale fissava i cosiddetti «parametri di Maastricht», stabiliti nell'allegato protocollo sulla procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi e mai modificati neanche dopo Lisbona.

Secondo questo protocollo (N.12), i valori di riferimento conformi alla disciplina di bilancio sarebbero un rapporto non superiore al 3 % fra il disavanzo pubblico e il prodotto interno lordo di uno Stato membro e una soglia del 60 % con riferimento al rapporto tra debito pubblico e PIL.

Il «Trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance nell'Unione economica e monetaria» (TSCG o Fiscal Compact), approvato a Marzo 2012, prevede invece una disciplina di pareggio di bilancio per gli Stati che vi partecipano, non consentendo cioè il limite massimo del 3 % nel rapporto tra deficit e PIL.

I regolamenti sono atti di legislazione ordinaria e pertanto dovrebbero sottostare ai Trattati, come del resto la legge ordinaria di uno Stato è sottoposta alla Costituzione.

Il *Fiscal Compact* costituisce inoltre un trattato di diritto internazionale, che non potrebbe modificare quanto previsto dall'articolo 126 del TFUE, la cui modifica dovrebbe avvenire solamente a norma dell'articolo 48 del trattato sull'Unione europea (TUE).

Alla luce di tutto questo e in considerazione del fatto che lo stesso patto di bilancio europeo prevede che questo sia applicabile solo se compatibile con i Trattati UE, non ritiene la Commissione che esista appunto tale incompatibilità?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione

(6 febbraio 2013)

Il Patto di stabilità e crescita delinea l'ambito della sorveglianza che l'Unione esercita sulla situazione di bilancio degli Stati membri. La parte preventiva è il sistema di sorveglianza multilaterale istituito dal regolamento (CE) n. 1466/97. Il trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance nell'unione economica e monetaria ([1]) è un accordo intergovernativo istituito da alcuni Stati membri per rafforzare il pilastro economico dell'unione economica e monetaria. Il titolo III, ossia il «patto di bilancio» («Fiscal Compact») rafforza alcuni elementi del Patto di stabilità e crescita.

Secondo l'argomentazione di fondo del saggio citato dall'onorevole deputato, la parte preventiva del patto di stabilità e crescita e il patto di bilancio, nella misura in cui introducono l'obbligo per gli Stati membri di conseguire e mantenere l'obiettivo di bilancio a medio termine, in teoria più rigoroso del valore di riferimento del disavanzo del 3 %, eccedono il requisito della norma.

La Commissione non condivide questa valutazione. La regola del pareggio di bilancio prevede un obiettivo di bilancio a medio termine in pareggio a garanzia preventiva del rispetto del limite del 3 %. Il primo scopo di tale obiettivo è quindi proprio quello di disporre di un margine di sicurezza adeguato contro il superamento del valore di riferimento del disavanzo. In altri termini, e in linea con il testo del trattato, il valore di riferimento del disavanzo va inteso non come obiettivo, ma come limite da non superare nelle normali fluttuazioni del ciclo economico. Su queste basi gli Stati membri perseguono un obiettivo che, tenuto conto delle normali fluttuazioni suddette, dovrebbe essere più ambizioso del valore di riferimento. Altrimenti, almeno nella fase negativa del ciclo, è prevedibile che gli Stati membri superino tale valore, in patente violazione del trattato.

([1]) Vedi http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/639226/10_-_tscg.it.12.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010892/12
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Fiscal compact and EU treaties

A well-known Italian jurist and former Minister of Finance, Professor Giuseppe Guarino, has argued in a recent essay that regulation 1175/2011 (the revised Stability and Growth Pact), which then became what is commonly known as the 'fiscal compact', is actually illegal as it is in breach of the EU treaties.

According to this argument, both Regulation 1175/2011 and its predecessor 1466/97, which it superseded, are not compatible with Article 126 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The latter article is the post-Lisbon adaptation of the previous Article 104c of the Treaty on European Union, which established the so-called Maastricht criteria set out in the annexed Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure. These criteria were never changed, even after Lisbon.

According to this protocol (No 12), the reference values necessary in order to comply with budgetary discipline are, for each Member State, a ratio of government deficit to gross domestic product no higher than 3% and a ratio of government debt to gross domestic product of 60%.

The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (the TSCG, or fiscal compact), adopted in March 2012, conversely, provides for a 'balanced budget rule' for participating states, i.e. disregarding the maximum limit of 3% deficit to GDP ratio.

Regulations are acts of ordinary legislation and should therefore be subject to the treaties, in the same way in which the ordinary law of a state is subject to the Constitution.

The fiscal compact is, moreover, a treaty of international law, which should not be able to alter the provisions of Article 126 TFEU, to which changes should be made only in accordance with Article 48 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU).

In the light of the above, and in view of the fact that the EU budgetary pact itself provides that it should be applicable only if compatible with the EU Treaties, does the Commission not agree that such incompatibility does indeed exist?

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

The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) is the Union framework for surveillance of the budgetary situation of the Member States (MS). Its preventive part is the multilateral surveillance system organised by Regulation (EC) No 1466/97. The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Convergence in the EMU (TSCG) ([1]) is an intergovernmental agreement set up by some MS to stenghten the economic pillar of the EMU. Its Title III (the 'Fiscal Compact') reinforces elements of the SGP.

The main contention of the essay quoted by the Honorable Member is that the preventive part of the SGP and the Fiscal Compact, by introducing the obligation for MS to attain and maintain a medium-term budgetary objective (MTO), in principle more demanding than the deficit reference value of 3%, exceed what could be legally required.

The Commission does not share this assessment. The balanced budget rule provides for a balanced medium term budgetary objective to guarantee the 3% limit *ex ante*. The first aim of the MTO is thus precisely that of providing an adequate safety margin against the breaching of the deficit reference value. In other words, and consistent with the wording of the Treaty, the deficit reference value should not be intended as an objective but a limit that should not be trespassed under normal cyclical fluctuations. This demands that MS pursue an objective that, taking into account normal cyclical fluctuations, should be more demanding than the reference value. Otherwise, at least in the negative phase of the cycle, it could be expected that MS would breach the reference value, which is clearly in contradiction with the Treaty.

([1]) See http://www.european-council.europa.eu/media/579087/treaty.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010894/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio às cooperativas em dificuldades

A Coopofa — Cooperativa de Consumo Popular de Faro — é uma instituição que, ao longo das últimas décadas, tem vindo a prestar um importante conjunto de serviços sociais à população deste concelho algarvio. Parte indissociável da história do Concelho dos últimos 30 anos, esta instituição tem vindo a ser severamente afetada pela crise económica e social e pela forte quebra no consumo dela decorrente.

Os problemas financeiros acumulados exigem uma intervenção imediata, de forma a permitir uma estabilização de tesouraria, e uma ação de médio prazo que permita perspetivar o desenvolvimento futuro da cooperativa, partindo das difíceis condições atuais.

Ora, as restrições ao crédito hoje existentes em Portugal, para as micro, pequenas e médias empresas e para o movimento cooperativo, dificultam bastante esta necessária intervenção, ameaçando o futuro da Coopofa.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. A que instrumentos de apoio ao nível da UE poderão recorrer as cooperativas em dificuldades, tendo em conta as atuais restrições ao crédito?

2. Que medidas tem a UE para apoiar o setor cooperativo e mais especificamente as cooperativas de consumo?

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

O programa Algarve 21 do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional 2007-2013 fixa os objetivos, as prioridades e o tipo de despesas elegíveis. O eixo 1 «Competitividade, Inovação e Conhecimento» prevê intervenções em prol das PME. Os objetivos específicos visam, nomeadamente, a modernização do tecido produtivo regional, com vista a melhorar a competitividade e a reforçar o enquadramento geral da inovação empresarial.

No quadro do princípio de gestão partilhada da política de coesão, a Comissão sugere ao Senhor Deputado que contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão responsável pelo programa Algarve 21:

CCDR Algarve
Praça da Liberdade, 2
8000-164 FARO
Tel.: +351289 895 200
Fax: +351 289 895 299
E-mail: geral@ccdr-alg.pt
Sítio Web: www.ccdr-alg.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010894/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Support for cooperatives in difficulties

The COOPOFA — the Faro Popular Consumption Cooperative — has provided a significant number of social services to people living in this part of the Algarve in recent decades. It has played a key part in the history of the district over the past 30 years, but has been severely affected by the economic and social crisis and the resulting collapse in consumption.

The financial problems have mounted up and urgent intervention is required to stabilise its accounts, along with medium-term action that will make it possible to plan the future development of the cooperative, in the light of the current difficult conditions.

However, the current credit restrictions in Portugal, which affect micro, small and medium-sized undertakings as well as the cooperative movement, are hampering the necessary intervention, with the result that the future of the COOPOFA cooperative is under threat.

1. What EU support instruments might be available to assist cooperatives that are facing difficulties, bearing in mind the current credit restrictions?

2. What measures exist in the EU to support the cooperative sector, and in particular consumption cooperatives?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(4 février 2013)

Le programme Algarve 21 du Fonds européen de développement régional 2007-2013 — fixe les objectifs, les priorités et le type de dépenses éligibles. L'axe 1 «Compétitivité, Innovation et Connaissance» prévoit des interventions auprès des PME. Les objectifs spécifiques visent notamment la modernisation du tissu productif régional pour une meilleure compétitivité et l'amélioration de l'environnement général de l'innovation entrepreneuriale.

Dans le cadre du principe de gestion partagée de la politique de cohésion, la Commission suggère à l'Honorable Parlementaire de s'adresser directement à l'autorité de gestion responsable du programme Algarve 21:

CCDR Algarve
Praça da Liberdade, 2
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Tel.: +351 289 895 200
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E-mail: geral@ccdr-alg.pt
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(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010895/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Despoluição da Ria Formosa — Investimentos em falta

A Ria Formosa, um rico e complexo sistema lagunar do sul de Portugal, apresenta uma grande importância do ponto de vista económico e social. O pleno aproveitamento do seu enorme potencial exige, no entanto, a preservação das suas excecionais características naturais, incluindo ao nível da qualidade da massa de água.

Nos últimos anos, avolumaram-se os motivos de preocupação quanto à qualidade da água da Ria. A poluição das águas tem sido apontada como uma das causas da degradação do ecossistema lagunar, com impactos ao nível da mortalidade dos bivalves, o que se tem repercutido negativamente na apanha de marisco — uma importante atividade económica em vários dos concelhos que circundam a Ria.

O problema é atribuído à insuficiência das Estações de Tratamento de Águas Residuais (ETAR) existentes, em especial durante o período estival. Segundo pescadores locais, o problema é reconhecido pela «Águas do Algarve S.A.», que admite não haver verbas disponíveis para os investimentos necessários.

Acresce o problema da falta de dragagens periódicas e da abertura das barras, de forma a permitir a renovação da massa de água.

Em face do exposto, e em aditamento a uma pergunta anteriormente feita à Comissão sobre a situação da Ria Formosa (E-1991/10), solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que verbas do atual Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (2007-2013), ainda não utilizadas por Portugal, poderão apoiar a realização dos investimentos em falta nas ETAR algarvias de forma a impedir a poluição da Ria Formosa? Quais as percentagens de cofinanciamento previstas?

2. Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar as intervenções de dragagem e de abertura das barras?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão

(31 de janeiro de 2013)

No período em curso, o programa «Valorização do Território» prevê, ao abrigo da sua prioridade II do Fundo de Coesão (sistemas ambientais e sistemas para a prevenção, gestão e controlo de riscos), o financiamento de instalações de drenagem e tratamento de águas residuais, assim como ações de proteção da costa, incluindo planos de ordenamento para zonas costeiras, tendo simultaneamente em conta as questões de risco associadas com as dinâmicas das zonas costeiras.

O programa «Valorização do Território» está a financiar várias ações do programa «Polis Litoral Ria Formosa», gerido pela «Sociedade para a Requalificação e Valorização da Ria Formosa, S.A.», em particular as medias para a correção da erosão, a proteção costeira, planos e estudos de reabilitação, assim como obras de emergência na ilha de Armona com um orçamento de 3,8 milhões de euros do Fundo de Coesão. Além disso, o programa está a contribuir com 11,6 milhões de euros para o financiamento das instalações de abastecimento e tratamento de água no município de Faro (geridas pela FAGAR — Faro, Gestão de Águas e Resíduos, E.M.) e 5,5 milhões de euros para a construção, expansão e extensão de redes de abastecimento de água em Tavira (geridas pela Tavira Verde — Empresa Municipal de Ambiente EM).

Em conformidade com o princípio da gestão partilhada, as autoridades nacionais são responsáveis pela execução dos programas, incluindo critérios de seleção de projetos e outros procedimentos. Assim, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão sobre as possibilidades de financiamento:

Programa Operacional Temático Valorização do Território
Avenida D. João II, lote 1.07.2.1 — 2.º
1998-014 Lisboa
Telf. (+351) 211 545 000
E-mail: povt@povt.qren.pt
www.povt.qren.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010895/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Decontamination of Ria Formosa — investment lacking

Ria Formosa, a rich and complex lagoon system in the south of Portugal, is of immense economic and social importance. Harnessing its enormous potential to the full none the less requires the preservation of its exceptional natural features, including the quality of its water.

In recent years there have been growing grounds for concern about water quality in Ria Formosa. Water pollution has been cited as one of the causes of the degradation of the lagoon ecosystem, with consequences for the mortality of bivalves. This in turn has had a negative impact on shellfishing, a key economic activity in several of the municipalities around the lagoon.

The problem has been attributed to the fact that there are not enough waste water treatment plants, especially during the summer period. According to local fishermen, the problem has been recognised by the water company Águas do Algarve S.A., which admits to not having the funds for the necessary investments.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that there is no regular dredging and opening of the inlets such as would allow the water in the lagoon system to be renewed.

In light of the above, and following on from a previous question to the Commission on the situation in Ria Formosa (E-1991/10), can the Commission say:

1. What funds from the current multiannual financial framework (2007-13) not yet used by Portugal could be allocated to support the investment needed in waste water treatment plants in the Algarve in order to halt pollution in Ria Formosa? What are the applicable co financing rates?

2. What programmes or measures could be used to support dredging and opening of the inlets?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission

(31 January 2013)

In the current period, the programme 'Valorização do Território' foresees under its priority II of the Cohesion Fund (environmental systems and systems for the prevention, management and monitoring of risks), the financing of drainage and waste water treatment facilities as well as coastal protection actions, including spatial planning of coastal zones, while taking into account the risk issues associated with the dynamics of coastal zones.

The programme 'Valorização do Território' is funding several actions for the programme 'Polis Litoral Ria Formosa', managed by the 'Sociedade para a Requalificação e Valorização da Ria Formosa, S.A.', especially measures for the correction of erosion, coastal protection, rehabilitation studies and plans, as well as emergency works on the island of Armona, with a budget of EUR 3.8 million from the Cohesion Fund. Furthermore, the programme is contributing EUR 11.6 million to the financing of water supply and water treatment facilities in the municipality of Faro (managed by FAGAR — Faro, Gestão de Águas e Resíduos, E.M.) and EUR 5.4 million to the construction, expansion and extension of the water supply and treatment networks in Tavira (managed by Tavira Verde — Empresa Municipal de Ambiente EM).

Due to the shared management principle, the national authorities are responsible for the implementation of programmes, including project selection and other procedures. Therefore, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority regarding funding possibilities:

Programa Operacional Temático Valorização do Território
Avenida D. João II, lote 1.07.2.1 — 2º
1998-014 Lisboa
Tel (+351) 211 545 000
E-mail: povt@povt.qren.pt
www.povt.qren.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010896/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Apoios ao desenvolvimento do Interior Algarvio

Numa visita recente ao concelho de Alcoutim, durante a qual tive oportunidade de reunir com diversas entidades locais (populações, autarcas, empresários), foram-me transmitidas preocupações quanto ao crescente isolamento e desertificação desta região do interior algarvio. Esta tendência tem vindo a agravar-se, sendo esse agravamento indissociável do programa FMI-UE em curso e da forte contração do investimento (público e privado), do encerramento de serviços públicos e da crescente asfixia financeira das autarquias locais que o mesmo tem vindo a provocar.

Durante a visita foram igualmente discutidas algumas das potencialidades de desenvolvimento da região e os investimentos necessários à sua concretização.

Tendo em conta o conjunto de propostas feitas pelos agentes locais, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que financiamentos comunitários podem apoiar a construção da ponte Alcoutim-Espanha (Sanlúcar de Guadiana)? Qual o cofinanciamento comunitário previsto?

2. Que financiamentos comunitários podem apoiar a construção de uma ligação rápida à capital de distrito (Faro)? Qual o cofinanciamento comunitário previsto?

3. Que programas e medidas podem apoiar a construção de uma central de processamento de biomassa?

4. Que financiamentos comunitários foram canalizados para apoiar a construção do empreendimento «Finca Rodilha» (grupo Montechoro), envolvendo a construção de um hotel, projeto que não chegou a avançar?

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

1. A construção de uma ponte de ligação entre Alcoutim e Sanlúcar de Guadiana pode ser elegível para cofinanciamento pelo fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) ao brigo do programa de cooperação transfronteiriça Cooperação Territorial Europeia entre Espanha e Portugal. No entanto, ainda não foi proposto qualquer projeto de construção dessa ponte.

2. O eixo 3 do programa Algarve 21 para o período de 2007-2013 «Valorização Territorial e Desenvolvimento Urbano» inclui uma rubrica «Acessibilidade e Mobilidade», que prevê ações destinadas a consolidar/reforçar a rede de acessibilidades intra e inter-regionais. Porém, não está previsto o financiamento da referida ligação.

3. O eixo 2 do programa Algarve 21 «Proteção e Qualificação Ambiental» prevê intervenções destinadas a reduzir, reutilizar e reciclar resíduos, bem como a supervisão, a informação e a promoção ambiental e a eficiência energética.

4. O projeto «Finca Rodilha» não beneficiou de qualquer financiamento do FEDER .

Os Fundos Estruturais e de Coesão são geridos, em virtude do princípio de gestão partilhada, de maneira descentralizada pelas autoridades nacionais e regionais, pelo que a Comissão sugere ao Senhor Deputado que contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão competente para mais informações:

CCDR Algarve
Praça da Liberdade, 2
8000-164 FARO
Tel.: +351 289 895 200
E-mail: geral@ccdr-alg.pt
Sítio web: www.ccdr-alg.pt

Programma transfronteiriço Espanha-Portugal
Subdirectora General de Fondos de Cohesión y de Cooperación Territorial
Tel.: 00 34 91 583 55 54
Fax.: 00 34 583 73 40
E-mail.: sgfcc@sgpg.meh.es
Sítio web: http://www.meh.es/es-ES/Paginas/Home.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010896/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Support for the development of the Algarve hinterland

While on a recent visit to the municipality of Alcoutim, in the course of which I was able to meet with a number of local bodies (citizens, local authorities and businesspeople), I was told of concerns about the increasing isolation and desertification of this inland region of the Algarve. This trend is becoming more pronounced, with the worsening situation directly linked to the current IMF-EU programme and the sharp decrease in investment (both public and private), cuts in public services and growing financial strangulation of local authorities caused by it.

During the visit, aspects of the region's development potential and the investment needed in order to realise it were also discussed.

Bearing in mind all the proposals put forward by local people, could the Commission say:

1. What Community funding could be used to support the construction of a bridge linking Alcoutim with Sanlúcar de Guadiana (Spain)? What amount of Community co-funding can be provided?

2. What community funding can be used to support construction of a rapid link with the district capital (Faro)? What amount of Community co-funding can be provided?

3. What programmes and measures can be used to support the construction of a biomass processing plant?

4. What Community funding was used to support the 'Finca Rodilha' hotel-building venture (Montechoro Group), on which no progress has been made?

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

1. The construction of a bridge linking Alcoutim with Sanlúcar de Guadiana could be eligible for co-financing by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the European Territorial Cooperation cross-border cooperation programme between Spain and Portugal. However no project has been proposed so far for the construction of such a bridge.

2. Axis 3 of the Algarve 21 programme for the period 2007-2013 'Exploitation of territorial and urban development.' includes an 'Accessibility and Mobility' section which provides for actions to consolidate/strengthen the intra- and inter-regional accessibility network. However, no provision is made to finance such links.

3. Axis 2 of the Algarve 21 programme, 'Environmental protection and development' provides for action to reduce, re-use and recycle waste and to ensure monitoring, information and environmental promotion as well as energy efficiency.

4. To date, the 'Finca Rodilha' project has not received any ERDF financing.

Since, in accordance with the principle of shared management, the Structural and Cohesion Funds are managed in a decentralised manner by the national and regional authorities, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member of Parliament contact the competent Managing Authority directly for more information:

CCDR Algarve
Praça da Liberdade, 2
8000-164 FARO
Tel.: +351 289 895 200
E-mail: geral@ccdr-alg.pt
Web: www.ccdr-alg.pt

Spain-Portugal cross-border programme
Subdirectora General de Fondos de Cohesión y de Cooperación Territorial
Tel.: 00 34 91 583 55 54
Fax.: 00 34 583 73 40
E-mail.: sgfcc@sgpg.meh.es
Web: http://www.meh.es/es-ES/Paginas/Home.aspx

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010897/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Investimentos e reprogramação das verbas do FEP em Portugal

Em Portugal, o setor das pescas carece de investimentos a diversos níveis. Desde logo, ao nível das infraestruturas, em especial as que possam apoiar a atividade da pequena pesca costeira e da pesca artesanal. Mas também ao nível da formação — imprescindível à entrada de jovens na atividade e ao rejuvenescimento do setor — e do apoio ao desenvolvimento das comunidades costeiras.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o montante total das verbas ainda disponíveis do Fundo Europeu das Pescas para Portugal? Qual a data-limite para a sua utilização e quais as percentagens de cofinanciamento previstas?

2. Foi efetuada pelo governo português alguma reprogramação dessas verbas? Qual a afetação de verbas prevista com essa reprogramação?

3. Tem conhecimento da paragem de todos os cursos de formação do Promar (recentemente denunciada pelo Sindicato dos Trabalhadores da Pesca do Sul), alegadamente por falta de verbas?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(31 de janeiro de 2013)

No quadro do Fundo Europeu das Pescas ([1]), o valor total das dotações disponíveis para Portugal é de 246,4 milhões de euros. Até à data, aproximadamente 66 % das dotações foram atribuídas a projetos aprovados pelas autoridades portuguesas, o que significa que cerca de 33 % permanecem disponíveis para financiar novos projetos. O prazo de autorização e pagamento aos beneficiários termina em 31 de dezembro de 2015.

Em geral, o cofinanciamento dado pelo do FEP é estabelecido em função de eixos prioritários; nas regiões abrangidas pelo objetivo de «convergência» a contribuição máxima cobre 75 % da despesa pública nas regiões elegíveis, e 50 % nas regiões não elegíveis (Lisboa e Madeira). Além disso, as últimas alterações ao Regulamento FEP introduzidas pelo Regulamento (UE) n.° 387/2012, permitem o aumento da taxa de cofinanciamento em dez pontos percentuais, para o cofinanciamento de novas despesas públicas declaradas até 31 de dezembro de 2013.

A revisão do programa operacional está agora em curso, incluindo uma reafetação dos recursos financeiros com vista a potenciar a melhor utilização possível dos fundos.

Não foi enviada qualquer confirmação à Comissão de que os cursos de formação financiados ao abrigo do programa operacional do FEP, referidos pelo Senhor Deputado, tenham sido interrompidos pelas autoridades portuguesas responsáveis pela gestão do programa. Convida-se o Senhor Deputado a contactar a autoridade portuguesa de gestão do programa FEP para receber informações mais pormenorizadas a este respeito.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1198/2006 do Conselho, de 27 de julho de 2006 (JO L 223 de 15.8.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010897/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Investment and reprogramming of EFF funds in Portugal

In Portugal the fisheries sector is in need of investment on several fronts. The most pressing need is for investment in infrastructure, particularly to support small-scale coastal fishing and non-industrial fishing. But there is also a need for investment in training — essential for bringing young people in and revitalising the sector — and for investment to support the development of coastal communities.

Can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What is the total amount still available from the European Fisheries Fund for Portugal? What is the deadline for using it and what are the applicable co-financing rates?

2. Has the Portuguese Government reprogrammed any of these amounts? To what have the reprogrammed amounts been allocated?

3. Is the Commission aware that all training courses funded under the operational programme PROMAR have been stopped (as recently criticised by the *Sindicato dos Trabalhadores da Pesca do Sul* -Trade Union for Fisheries Workers in the South), allegedly owing to lack of funds?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

In the framework of the European Fisheries Fund ([1]), the total appropriations for Portugal are EUR 246,4 million. So far, approximately 66% has been committed to projects approved by the Portuguese authorities, which means that around 33% of appropriations remain available for new projects. The deadline to commit and pay EFF funding to the beneficiaries is set at 31 December 2015.

Overall the co-financing of the EFF is established per priority axis, with the maximum rates set at 75% of public expenditure in the regions eligible under the Convergence objective and 50% of public expenditure in regions not eligible under the Convergence objective (Lisbon and Madeira). Furthermore, the last amendments to the EFF Regulation introduced by Regulation (EU) No 387/2012, allows increasing the co-financing rate of ten percentage points above the referred co-financing rate to newly declared public expenditure until 31 December 2013.

The revision of the operational programme is ongoing, including a reallocation of financial resources which serves to increase the best utilisation of funds.

The Commission has not received confirmation that the training courses funded under the EFF operational programme, mentioned by the Honourable Member, have been stopped by the Portuguese authorities responsible for the management of the programme. The Honourable Member is invited to contact the Portuguese Managing Authority of the EFF programme to receive more detailed information in this regard.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 (OJ L 223, 15.8.2006).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010898/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Investimentos necessários à legalização de pequenos alambiques tradicionais

A produção de aguardente de medronho é uma atividade típica da região do Algarve, que aproveita um recurso comum nas zonas serranas e mais interiores da região: o medronheiro.

Este produto típico contribuiu para o desenvolvimento e a atividade de pequenas empresas, na sua maioria familiares, numa região em que o turismo tem um peso considerável e que tem vindo a ser afetada sobremaneira pela recessão e pelo desemprego.

A nova legislação relativa aos alambiques veio criar dificuldades a muitos proprietários de pequenos alambiques tradicionais, tendo em conta os investimentos necessários e os elevados custos envolvidos, o que tem levado ao encerramento de muitos deles.

Pergunto à Comissão que programas e medidas poderão apoiar os investimentos necessários para a legalização de pequenos alambiques tradicionais?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(30 de janeiro de 2013)

Os investimentos necessários para melhorar as condições em que operam os alambiques tradicionais podem ser financiados no âmbito do Feader, recorrendo, por exemplo, à medida 311 (Diversificação de atividades não agrícolas) ou à medida 312 (Criação e desenvolvimento de microempresas). Estas medidas estão previstas ao abrigo do subprograma 3 (Dinamização das zonas rurais), que faz parte do programa de desenvolvimento rural para o Continente, gerido pelos grupos de ação local (GAL).

As informações sobre se este tipo de atividades que está previsto na estratégia local de desenvolvimento da respetiva região, bem como as informações sobre as condições de elegibilidade, deverão ser solicitadas à autoridade de gestão do programa ou os GAL responsáveis, utilizando para isso o endereço abaixo mencionado.

Uma lista dos GAL e a sua cobertura regional está também disponível no sítio web do programa.
Maria Gabriela Ventura, Gestora do Proder
Rua Padre António Vieira, 1 — 8.° andar
1099-073 Lisboa
Linha Verde: 800 500 064
Telefone: 00 351 21 381 9318/19/20
Correio eletrónico: st.proder@gpp.pt
Sítio web: http://www.proder.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010898/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Cost of legalising small traditional stills

The production of arbutus spirit is a traditional activity in the Algarve region which makes use of a resource widely available in the region's mountain areas and hinterland: the arbutus shrub.

This typical product has contributed to the development and activity of small enterprises, most of them family-based, in a region where tourism is important and which has been severely affected by the recession and unemployment.

The new law on stills has created problems for many owners of small traditional stills, because of the investment required and the high costs involved, and has caused a number of them to close down.

Could the Commission say what programmes or measures could be used to support the investments required for the legalisation of small traditional stills?

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

The investments required to improve the operational conditions of the traditional stills may be supported under EAFRD, e.g. through Measures 311 (Diversification of non-agricultural activities) or 312 (Development of micro-enterprises). These measures are foreseen under Subprogram 3 (Revitalization of rural areas), of the Rural Development Program Mainland, managed by the Local Action Groups (LAGs).

Information on whether this type of activities is foreseen in the Local Development Strategy of the respective region and on the eligibility conditions should be requested to the Programme Managing Authority and or the concerned LAGs, at the following address.

A list of LAGs and their regional coverage is also available at the Programme website.
Maria Gabriela Ventura, Gestora do Proder
Rua Padre António Vieira, 1 — 8º andar
1099-073 LISBOA
Green line: 800 500 064
Tel.: 00 351 21 381 9318/19/20
Email : st.proder@gpp.pt
Website: http://www.proder.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010899/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Incêndios na Serra do Caldeirão — recuperação da área ardida

Numa visita recente à freguesia de Santa Catarina Fonte do Bispo, no concelho de Tavira, no sul de Portugal, pude testemunhar as consequências devastadoras dos incêndios que percorreram a região no verão passado. Cerca de 70 % da área total da freguesia, composta por floresta e matos autóctones (sobreiro, alfarrobeira, medronhais), ardeu. Os incêndios que atingiram a Serra do Caldeirão queimaram uma área total aproximada de 24 mil hectares.

É essencial proceder à reflorestação da área ardida. Todavia, são várias as dificuldades enfrentadas pelas autoridades locais: uma população envelhecida, uma dimensão média da propriedade muito pequena, o elevado número de proprietários. São fatores que dificultam a recuperação/reflorestação da área ardida. Seria muito importante que o cadastro florestal fosse concluído e que a partir daí se avançasse para o emparcelamento — essencial para uma estratégia de reflorestação bem sucedida.

A persistência da situação atual comporta riscos imediatos, ao nível, por exemplo, da possível contaminação de linhas de água e da estabilidade das vertentes, dado que com as chuvas e a erosão algumas vertentes menos consolidadas poderão desabar.

As verbas até agora anunciadas pelo governo português são muito insuficientes para acorrer ao conjunto de necessidades que se colocam.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

Que programas e medidas poderão apoiar a concretização de um plano de recuperação da área ardida, envolvendo designadamente:

1. A recuperação do património atingido (habitacional e outro, áreas de lazer, etc.);

2. A conclusão do cadastro e emparcelamento, a reflorestação, a proteção de linhas de água e a implementação de medidas de prevenção estrutural para evitar futuros incêndios?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(31 de janeiro de 2013)

Relativamente à primeira questão, a Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta à pergunta escrita E-7976/2012 ([1]), colocada pelo Deputado Nuno Melo (PPE).

No que diz respeito à segunda questão, o registo e a delimitação florestal são da competência de cada Estado-Membro; no entanto, a proteção das linhas de água e a implementação de medidas preventivas dos incêndios florestais podem ser financiadas no âmbito da política de desenvolvimento rural: o apoio da UE está disponível para o restabelecimento do potencial silvícola e para a introdução de medidas de prevenção (medida 226), bem como para o restabelecimento do potencial de produção agrícola (medida 126). O programa de desenvolvimento rural para Portugal Continental prevê estas medidas. Por último, o Regulamento LIFE + oferece possibilidades de financiamento (subvenções de ações), para a prevenção dos incêndios florestais e a sensibilização neste domínio.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010899/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Wildfires in the Serra do Caldeirão — recovery of the burned area

During a recent visit to Santa Catarina Fonte do Bispo, in the municipality of Tavira, in southern Portugal, I witnessed the devastating impact of the wildfires which raged through the region last summer. Around 70% of the parish's total area, made up of native scrub and woodland (cork oak, carob and arbutus), was burned. The wildfires decimated a total area of approximately 24 000 hectares in the Serra do Caldeirão.

It is essential that this area be reforested. The local authorities still face a number of difficulties: an ageing population, very small average property sizes and a large number of property owners. These factors make it difficult to regenerate/reforest the burnt area. It is extremely important to complete the forest register so that the area can be divided up into sectors — an essential prerequisite for a successful reforestation strategy.

If not addressed, the present situation poses immediate risks, such as the possible pollution of water sources and the danger of landslides, as heavy rains and erosion may cause less stable slopes to collapse.

The funding offered so far by the Portuguese Government is quite inadequate to deal with the full extent of the problem.

In light of the above, can the Commission say what programmes and measures can be used to support the implementation of a recovery plan for the burnt area, with particular attention to:

1. Restoring the affected assets (housing and other assets, leisure areas, etc.);

2. Completing the forest register and demarcation, reforestation, protection of water sources and implementation of structural preventive measures to prevent future wildfires?

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

As regards the first question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-7976/2012 ([1]) by Mr Nuno Melo (PPE).

As for the second question, the forest register and demarcation are in the competence of the Member State; however as regards reforestation, protection of water sources and implementation of structural preventive measures to prevent forest fires, they can be financed in the framework of Rural Development policy, EU support is available for restoring forestry potential and prevention actions (Measure 226) and restoring the agricultural production potential (Measure 126). The Rural development programme of Mainland Portugal foresees these measures. Finally, the LIFE+ Regulation offers funding possibilities (action grants) in the field of forest fire prevention and awareness raising in this field.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010900/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Alunos com fome em Portugal

De acordo com números divulgados pelo Secretário de Estado do Ensino e Administração Escolar, em Portugal há 10 800 alunos com carências alimentares. Destes, apenas cerca de metade (5 547) estão abrangidos pelo Programa Escolar de Reforço Alimentar.

Em face desta realidade — indissociável da aplicação do programa FMI-UE e do empobrecimento generalizado a que tem conduzido — pergunto à Comissão:

1. Procede a Comissão à avaliação das consequências sociais da aplicação do chamado memorando da troika, designadamente no que se refere ao aumento dos casos de fome? Pensa tomar alguma medida na sequência destes números?

2. Que apoios específicos para o combate à fome estão a ser canalizados para Portugal pela UE? Concretamente, quais as instituições e os montantes envolvidos?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(11 de fevereiro de 2013)

Desde o início, o Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal tem procurado proteger as pessoas mais necessitadas. Tal reflete-se, nomeadamente, em várias disposições que isentam os grupos com rendimentos mais baixos das medidas de redução das despesas públicas e/ou de aumentos de impostos. Nas suas análises periódicas da execução do Programa, a Comissão também avaliou, juntamente com as autoridades portuguesas e as outras instituições membros da troica, as consequências económicas e sociais do Programa. Estas avaliações deram origem a várias revisões do memorando de entendimento com vista a reforçar os instrumentos destinados aos grupos mais vulneráveis.

Além disso, a UE presta ajuda específica através do programa de ajuda alimentar às pessoas mais necessitadas. Para 2013, Portugal recebeu uma dotação no montante de 19,5 milhões de EUR a título deste programa ([1]), que terminará quando for concluído o plano anual para 2013.

A UE também apoia dois programas escolares: o regime de distribuição de leite nas escolas, que incentiva os alunos a consumirem leite e produtos lácteos ([2]), e o regime de distribuição de fruta nas escolas, que fornece frutas e produtos hortícolas às crianças nos estabelecimentos de ensino ([3]). Em 2010 e 2011, Portugal recebeu quase 1,3 milhões de EUR de ajuda da UE no âmbito do regime de distribuição de leite nas escolas e 2,9 milhões de EUR no âmbito do regime de distribuição de fruta nas escolas.

Relativamente ao futuro, a Comissão Europeia adotou, em outubro de 2012, uma proposta de regulamento relativo ao Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas mais Carenciadas. Este Fundo apoiará os programas dos Estados-Membros de distribuição de géneros alimentícios às pessoas mais carenciadas, assim como de bens de consumo básicos aos sem-abrigo e às crianças mais necessitadas. A proposta foi transmitida ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho. A Comissão previu um orçamento de 2,5 mil milhões de EUR para o Fundo durante o período 2014-2020, no âmbito da sua proposta de junho de 2011 relativa ao QFP ([4]).

([1]) Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 1020/2012 da Comissão.
([2]) Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 657/2008 da Comissão.
([3]) Regulamento de Execução (UE) n.° 288/2009 da Comissão.
([4]) Quadro financeiro plurianual.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010900/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Schoolchildren going hungry in Portugal

According to figures released by the State Secretary for Education and School Administration there are 10 800 undernourished schoolchildren in Portugal. Only about half of them (5 547) qualify for the school nutrition programme *Programa Escolar de Reforço Alimentar*.

In this situation, which is inextricably linked to the application of the IMF EU programme and the resulting widespread impoverishment, can the Commission say:

1. Whether it intends to assess the social consequences of applying the Troika Memorandum, in particular as regards the growing numbers facing hunger? Will it take any action as a result of the figures?

2. What specific help is the EU giving Portugal to combat hunger? Can the Commission give details of the institutions and sums involved?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

From the outset, the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal has aimed to protect the most deprived people. This is reflected, for instance, in various provisions that exempt the groups with the lowest income from public expenditure cuts and/or increases in taxes. In its regular reviews of the implementation of the Programme, the Commision has also assessed, together with the Portguese authorities and the other Troika institutions, the economic and social consequences of the Programme. These assessments have led to several revisions in the memorandum of understanding with a view to reinforcing instruments directed towards the most vulnerable groups.

Moreover, the EU provides specific help through the Food Aid programme for the most deprived persons (MDP). For 2013, Portugal has received an allocation of EUR 19.5 million under the scheme ([1]). The MDP will end with the completion of the 2013 annual plan.

The EU also offers two school programmes, the School Milk Scheme (SMS) encouraging pupils to consume milk and milk products ([2]) — and the School Fruit Scheme which provides fruit and vegetables to school children ([3]). In 2010/2011 Portugal received almost EUR 1.3 million of EU aid under the SMS and 2.9 million under the SFS.

As for the future, in October 2012, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation on a Fund for European Aid to the MDP. The Fund would support Member State schemes providing food to the most deprived people and basic consumer goods to homeless people and materially-deprived children. The proposal has been transmitted to the European Parliament and the Council. The Commission foresaw a budget of EUR 2.5 billion for the Fund during the period 2014-2020 as part of its June 2011 proposal for a MFF ([4]).

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1020/2012.
([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 657/2008.
([3]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 288/2009.
([4]) Multiannual Financial Framework.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010901/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(29 noiembrie 2012)

Subiect: Sprijinul acordat persoanelor fără adăpost

Apropierea iernii și posibilitatea unor perioade mai lungi cu temperaturi scăzute creează probleme persoanelor fără adăpost și cu condiții precare de locuit, atât din punctul de vedere al spațiului de locuit, cât și din punct de vedere sanitar.

Pe fondul actualei crize financiare cu care se confruntă Europa, administrațiile locale și regionale din statele membre au dificultăți la implementarea așa-ziselor „planuri de ieșit din iarnă", pentru asigurarea de locuințe pentru persoanele fără adăpost și cu condiții precare de locuit, mai ales în cazul familiilor cu copiii.

În ce măsură Comisia poate sprijini eforturile administrațiilor locale și regionale la implementarea acestor programe?

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

Comisia împărtășește pe deplin preocuparea distinsei membre a Parlamentului European în ceea ce privește situația dificilă a persoanelor fără adăpost în perioada rece care va urma.

Deși acest domeniu ține de competența statelor membre, Comisia le ajută pe acestea din urmă în diverse moduri. La 1 martie 2013, președinția irlandeză va organiza o reuniune ministerială informală pentru a discuta problema lipsei de adăpost. Comisia își va prezenta în curând pachetul privind investițiile sociale, care, printre altele, va cuprinde un document de lucru al serviciilor sale referitor la lipsa de adăpost.

Uniunea cofinanțează o serie de măsuri, în special prin intermediul fondurilor structurale. Fondul european de dezvoltare regională și Fondul social european sprijină o amplă gamă de măsuri în domeniul accesului la locuințe și al incluziunii sociale.

În octombrie anul trecut, Comisia a propus crearea unui Fond de ajutor european pentru cele mai defavorizate persoane, menit să sprijine în special programele naționale prin furnizarea de alimente sau bunuri de bază persoanelor fără adăpost, concomitent cu o serie de măsuri însoțitoare în vederea incluziunii sociale a acestora.

Programul Progress a oferit sprijin financiar ONG-urilor de la nivelul UE (cum ar fi Dynamo International, PICUM și FEANTSA) care apără interesele persoanelor fără adăpost. Acest program a sprijinit și proiectele de experimentare a politicilor transnaționale pentru persoanele fără adăpost (precum *HOPE in stations*[1] și *Housing First*[2]). Programul UE pentru schimbări sociale și inovare socială, propus să urmeze programului Progress, va continua să profite de pe urma acestor rezultate.

([1]) http://www.socialinnovationeurope.eu/directory/organisation/agence-nouvelle-des-solidarit%C3%A9s-actives-ansa
([2]) http://www.servicestyrelsen.dk/housingfirsteurope

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010901/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Support for homeless people

The approach of winter and the prospect of long periods of cold weather poses problems for homeless people and for people in poor housing, in respect of both accommodation and health.

In the light of the current financial crisis affecting Europe, local and regional authorities in the Member States are finding it difficult to implement winter shelter programmes to guarantee accommodation for homeless people and people in poor housing, particularly in the case of families with children.

To what extent can the Commission support the efforts being made by local and regional authorities to implement these programmes?

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

The Commission fully shares the Honourable Member's concern at the plight of the homeless in the coming period of cold weather.

Although competence in this area lies with the Member States, the Commission assists the latter in various ways. The Irish Presidency is organising on the 1st March 2013 an informal ministerial meeting to discuss homelessness. The Commission will soon present its Social Investment Package, which among other things will contain a staff working document on homelessness.

The Union co-finances a number of measures, in particular through the Structural Funds. The European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund support a wide range of measures in the area of access to housing and social inclusion.

Last October the Commission proposed the establishment of a Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, which would in particular support national schemes providing food or basic goods to homeless people and accompanying measures for their social inclusion.

The Progress programme has provided financial support to EU-level NGOs (such as Dynamo International, PICUM and FEANTSA) that defend the interests of the homeless. It has also supported transnational policy experimentation projects for the homeless (such as HOPE in stations ([1]) and Housing First ([2])). The proposed successor to Progress, the EU Programme for Social Change and Innovation, will continue to build on these results.

([1]) http://www.socialinnovationeurope.eu/directory/organisation/agence-nouvelle-des-solidarit%C3%A9s-actives-ansa.
([2]) http://www.servicestyrelsen.dk/housingfirsteurope.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010902/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(29. November 2012)

Betrifft: Gerechtere Verteilung der Asylanten in der EU — überdurchschnittliche Belastung in Österreich

Die aktuelle Debatte über die steigende Anzahl von Asylbewerbern, die nach Österreich kommen, sorgt zunehmend für Angst und Verunsicherung in der österreichischen Bevölkerung. So werden Stimmen nach einer gerechteren Verteilung der Asylbewerber innerhalb Europas laut, da der jetzige Verteilungsschlüssel nicht gerecht sei. Laut Statistiken liegt der EU-Durchschnitt bei 600 Asylbewerbern pro einer Million Einwohner — Österreich (8 Millionen Einwohner) weist hingegen mit rund 1 800 Asylwerbern beinahe das Dreifache auf. So gibt es ca. 20 km von Wien entfernt ein Erstaufnahmelager für Asylanten in Traiskirchen (ca. 18 000 Einwohner), das in diesen Tagen eine massive Überbelegung von fast 1 500 Personen aufweist. Die Vereinbarung mit dem Bundesministerium für Inneres, wonach dort nicht mehr als 480 Personen untergebracht sein dürfen, scheint obsolet, und die Anrainer bekommen die Folgen einer völlig verfehlten Asylpolitik zu spüren.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu der Tatsache, dass die Asylantenzahlen in Österreich im Durchschnitt dreimal so hoch sind wie in anderen EU-Ländern?

2. Warum gibt es keinen gerechteren Schlüssel bei der europaweiten Verteilung der Asylanten bzw. wie beurteilt das die Kommission?

3. Wie kann die Asylpolitik in der EU allgemein effizienter gestaltet werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(21. Januar 2013)

Was die Zahl der Personen angeht, die internationalen Schutz beantragen, lag Österreich 2011 in der EU absolut gesehen an achter Stelle und im Verhältnis zur Einwohnerzahl an sechster Stelle. Sowohl die absolute Zahl als auch die Pro-Kopf-Zahl der Antragsteller in Österreich sind deutlich niedriger als noch vor einigen Jahren. 2003 wurden in Österreich 32 260 Anträge gestellt, 2011 waren es hingegen 14 420. Einige Faktoren erklären, weshalb sich Antragsteller zu bestimmten Zeiten häufiger für das eine als für das andere Land entscheiden, so z. B. historische Bindungen, die geographische Lage, bestehende Diasporas sowie wirtschaftliche und soziale Kriterien.

Die Kommission hat Änderungen an den Rechtsvorschriften, die dem Gemeinsamen Europäischen Asylsystem zugrunde liegen, vorgeschlagen, um die Wahrscheinlichkeit zu verringern, dass Personen, die internationalen Schutz beantragen, wegen Unterschieden bei der Art und Qualität von Aufnahmebedingungen oder bei den Aufnahmechancen einen Mitgliedstaat dem anderen vorziehen. Die Verhandlungen über die vorgeschlagenen Änderungen im Rat und im Europäischen Parlament stehen vor dem Abschluss. Zudem helfen Solidaritätsmaßnahmen der Kommission denjenigen Mitgliedstaaten, deren Asylsystem besonders stark belastet ist. Die Maßnahmen umfassen unter anderem Pilotprojekte zur Umsiedlung von Personen, die internationalen Schutz genießen, von einem Mitgliedstaat in andere Mitgliedstaaten, wie auch Unterstützung über das neu eingerichtete Europäische Unterstützungsbüro für Asylfragen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010902/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: More equitable distribution of asylum-seekers in the EU — an above-average burden on Austria

The current debate on the increasing number of asylum-seekers arriving in Austria is adding to fear and uncertainty amongst the Austrian people. Given that the present distribution pattern is unfair, there have been calls for a more equitable distribution of asylum-seekers within Europe. According to statistics, the EU average is 600 asylum-seekers per million residents; Austria (with a population of 8 million) has a rate of around 1 800 asylum-seekers per million which is almost three times the EU average. Some 20 km from Vienna, in Traiskirchen (ca. 18 000 residents), the centre for newly arrived asylum-seekers is at present hugely overcrowded with almost 1 500 people. The agreement with the Federal Ministry for the Interior, according to which no more than 480 people could be received at that centre, now appears to be obsolete and the locals are feeling the effects of a failed asylum policy.

1. What is the Commission's position on the fact that the number of asylum-seekers in Austria is on average three times higher than that of other EU Member States?

2. Why is there not a more equitable pattern in the distribution of asylum-seekers across Europe? What is the Commission's assessment of this?

3. How can the policy on asylum in the EU be made generally more efficient?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2013)

In 2011, Austria received the eighth largest number in absolute terms, and the sixth largest number in per capita terms of applicants for international protection in the EU. Both the absolute number and the number per capita of applicants applying in Austria are significantly lower than a few years ago. In 2003, Austria received 32,260 applicants compared with 14,420 in 2011. There are factors that explain why applicants choose certain Member States at particular times, such as historical links, geographical location, location of diaspora populations, economic and social factors.

Revisions to the legislation underpinning the Common European Asylum System were proposed by the Commission with a view to decreasing the likelihood that applicants for international protection would choose one Member State over another because of differences in the nature and quality of reception conditions or in terms of the probability of being granted international protection. Negotiations on these revisions in the Council and the European Parliament are close to conclusion. The Commission has also put in place solidarity measures to assist Member States facing particular pressures on their asylum systems. These include pilot projects on relocation of beneficiaries of international protection from one Member State to others and providing assistance from the newly established European Asylum Support Office.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010903/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στήριξη ελληνικών εξαγωγών

Οι ελληνικές εξαγωγές αποτελούν ένα πολύ σημαντικό παράγοντα της οικονομίας της χώρας μας και αυτή τη χρονική στιγμή περισσότερο από ποτέ έχει δημιουργηθεί η ανάγκη για ενίσχυση της ρευστότητας των εξαγωγικών αυτών επιχειρήσεων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Υπάρχει κάποιος προγραμματισμός, ώστε να υπάρξει χρηματοδότηση των ελληνικών εξαγωγών προς τις ευρωπαϊκές χώρες καθώς και εξασφάλιση δανειακών κεφαλαίων από την Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Ανάπτυξης και Ανασυγκρότησης (EBRD);

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Ως γενικός κανόνας, η κρατική ενίσχυση των εξαγωγικών δραστηριοτήτων έχει απαγορευτεί, με σκοπό να αποφευχθεί η στρέβλωση της ελληνικής αγοράς. Ωστόσο, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την δριμεία οικονομική αναταραχή της ελληνικής οικονομίας και την στενότητα ιδιωτικής ασφαλιστικής κάλυψης για τις εξαγωγές από την Ελλάδα, η Επιτροπή αποφάσισε να εξαιρέσει την Ελλάδα από τον κατάλογο των χωρών με εμπορεύσιμους κινδύνους, σύμφωνα με την ανακοίνωση της 21ης Απριλίου 2012 προς τα κράτη μέλη ([1]).

Πρόσφατα, οι ελληνικές αρχές συζήτησαν τη χορήγηση ενός είδους δανείου ή εγγύησης είτε από την ΕΤΕπ ή το ΕΤΕ, που θα καλύπτει εξαγωγικές πιστώσεις ή πιστωτικές επιστολές που χορηγήθηκαν από ελληνικές τράπεζες σε ελληνικές εταιρείες εξαγωγών. Αυτό είχε ως αποτέλεσμα τη χορήγηση ενός χαρτοφυλακίου εγγυήσεων περί τα 500 εκατομμύρια ευρώ από την ΕΤΕπ σε 4 μεγάλες ελληνικές τράπεζες, την Εθνική Τράπεζα Ελλάδος, την Alpha Bank, την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς και την Eurobank. Το εν λόγω προϊόν της ΕΤΕπ «Πρόγραμμα ενίσχυσης της χρηματοδότησης του εμπορίου για τις ΜΜΕ και τις εταιρείες μεσαίας κεφαλαιοποίησης — TFEP» αναμένεται να είναι διαθέσιμο στις ελληνικές τράπεζες και τις ΜΜΕ στις αρχές του 2013. Η ΕΤΑΑ, σύμφωνα με το καταστατικό της, δεν επιτρέπεται να συνάψει πράξεις χρηματοδότησης με την Ελλάδα.

Επιπλέον, το πρόγραμμα «Ανταγωνιστικότητα και Επιχειρηματικότητα 2007-2013» παρέχει βοήθεια σε έργα που ενισχύουν την παραγωγικότητα των επιχειρήσεων. Δύο συγκεκριμένα προγράμματα βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη: «Παραγωγή υπό νέους όρους» και «Προσανατολισμός στα αποτελέσματα εσόδων και ανταγωνιστικότητα των επιχειρήσεων», ο προϋπολογισμός των οποίων ανέρχεται μέχρι στιγμής σε 200 εκατομμύρια ευρώ και 24 εκατομμύρια ευρώ σε πιστοποιημένες δαπάνες, όσον αφορά το πρώτο πρόγραμμα και προϋπολογισμό 30 εκατομμύρια ευρώ και 6,6 εκατομμύρια ευρώ μέχρι στιγμής σε πιστοποιημένες δαπάνες για το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα.

([1]) Η ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής, της 21/4/2012 προς τα κράτη μέλη δυνάμει του άρθρου 93 παράγραφος 1 της Συνθήκης ΕΚ για την εφαρμογή των άρθρων 92 και 93 της Συνθήκης στη βραχυπρόθεσμη ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων ορίζει ότι οι εμπορεύσιμοι κίνδυνοι δεν μπορούν να καλυφθούν από ασφάλιση εξαγωγικών πιστώσεων με την στήριξη των κρατών μελών. Οι εμπορεύσιμοι κίνδυνοι είναι εμπορικοί και πολιτικοί κίνδυνοι σχετικά με κρατικούς και μη κρατικούς οφειλέτες που είναι εγκατεστημένοι στις χώρες που αναφέρονται στο παράρτημα της ανακοίνωσης, με μέγιστη περίοδο κινδύνου μικρότερη των δύο ετών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010903/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Greek export aid

Greek exporters make a major contribution to the national economy and, now more than ever, it has become necessary to increase their liquidity.

In view of this:.

— Can the Commission say whether any funding programme exists to promote Greek exports to European countries or whether any loan facility can be obtained from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)?

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

As a general rule, state aid for export activities is prohibited in order to avoid distortion of the internal market. However, having regard to the exceptional economic disturbance to the Greek economy and the scarcity of private insurance cover for exports from Greece, the Commission decided to exclude Greece from the list of marketable risks countries in its communication of 21 April 2012 to the Member States ([1]).

Recently, the Greek authorities discussed a type of loan or guarantee to be issued either by the EIB or the EIF, covering export credits or letters of credit issued by Greek banks to Greek exporting enterprises. This resulted in an EIB guarantee portfolio of up to EUR 500 million aimed at 4 major Greek banks, NBG, Alpha, Piraeus and Eurobank. This EIB product, 'Trade Finance Enhancement Programme for SMEs and Mid Caps — TFEP', is expected to be available to Greek banks and SMEs in early 2013. The EBRD, by its statute, is not allowed to engage in financial operations in Greece.

In addition, the programme for Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship 2007-2013 provides assistance to projects enhancing the productiveness of enterprises. Two specific projects are ongoing: 'Manufacturing under the new conditions' and 'Outturn orientation and competitiveness of the enterprises' with a budget of EUR 200 million and EUR 24 million in certified expenses so far for the first project and a budget of EUR 30 million and certified expenses of EUR 6.6 million so far for the second project.

([1]) The communication of the Commission of 21.4.2012 to the Member States pursuant to Article 93(1) of the EC Treaty applying Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty to short-term export-credit insurance stipulates that marketable risks cannot be covered by export-credit insurance with the support of Member States. Marketable risks are commercial and political risks on public and non-public debtors established in countries listed in the annex to that Communication, with a maximum risk period of less than two years.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010904/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση Μικρομεσαίων Επιχειρήσεων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με ρεπορτάζ των Financial Times, οχτώ μήνες μετά την υπογραφή της συμφωνίας χρηματοδότησης για τη δημιουργία του ειδικού ταμείου εγγυήσεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων για την Ελλάδα (το οποίο σκοπό είχε να αντιμετωπίσει το πρόβλημα ρευστότητας στην Ελλάδα, καθώς, ακόμα και υγιείς επιχειρήσεις παραπονούνται ότι δεν μπορούν να λειτουργήσουν, αφού οι τράπεζες αρνούνται να εκδώσουν εγγυητικές επιστολές ή να χρηματοδοτήσουν την αγορά πρώτων υλών), το ταμείο αυτό δεν έχει χορηγήσει ούτε ένα δάνειο σε μικρές και μεσαίες επιχειρήσεις, όπως είναι η αποστολή του.

Αξιωματούχοι της ΕΤΕπ φαίνεται να δηλώνουν ότι το ταμείο θα λειτουργεί πριν από το τέλος του χρόνου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Πού οφείλεται αυτή η εξαιρετικά μεγάλη καθυστέρηση και πότε πραγματικά θα γίνει η έναρξη της λειτουργίας του ταμείου αυτού;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-9855/12 του κ. Παπανικολάου ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010904/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Financing SMEs in Greece

According to a report in the *Financial Times*, eight months after the signing of the financing agreement for the creation of a special European Investment Bank guarantee fund for Greece (which was designed to address the liquidity problem in Greece, as even healthy companies complain that they are unable to function because banks are refusing to issue them with letters of credit or to finance the purchase of raw materials), this fund has not granted a single loan to small and medium enterprises — the task for which it was set up.

EIB officials seem to indicate that the fund will become operational before the end of the year.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What is the reason for this extremely long delay and when will this fund actually become operational?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to Written Question E-9855/12 by Mr Papanikolaou ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010905/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση κινηματογραφικών ταινιών από την Επιτροπή

Υπάρχουν κινηματογραφικές ταινίες που είναι αξιόλογες και έχουν συγχρηματοδοτηθεί στο παρελθόν από κοινοτικές πρωτοβουλίες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιες είναι οι πρωτοβουλίες που βρίσκονται σήμερα σε ισχύ αναφορικά με την ενίσχυση της παραγωγής κινηματογραφικών ταινιών και ποιο το συνολικό ποσό που έχει διατεθεί γι' αυτές;

— Έχει συγχρηματοδοτηθεί ποτέ μια ταινία η οποία θα αφορά σε εγκλήματα κατά της ανθρωπότητας και σε γενοκτονίες, όπως την αρμενική, αλλά και τη γενοκτονία των Ελλήνων της Μικράς Ασίας και του Πόντου από το τουρκικό κράτος; Έχει συγχρηματοδοτηθεί κάποια ταινία για το απεχθές έγκλημα του ολοκαυτώματος των Εβραίων αλλά και ευρωπαϊκών λαών που αντιστάθηκαν στον Χίτλερ μεταξύ των οποίων εξέχουσα θέση έχει, φυσικά, ο ελληνικός λαός που πλήρωσε με 400 000 νεκρούς και με την καταλήστευση του εθνικού πλούτου της Ελλάδας;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Το πρόγραμμα MEDIA (2007-2013) ενισχύει οικονομικά την ευρωπαϊκή κινηματογραφική βιομηχανία όσον αφορά τη δημιουργία, τη διανομή και την προώθηση των ταινιών της, καθώς και την κατάρτιση των επαγγελματιών του εν λόγω τομέα. Επιπλέον, το πρόγραμμα βοηθά στη χρηματοδότηση νέων τεχνολογιών και πλατφορμών για τη διανομή οπτικοακουστικού υλικού όλων των ειδών. Το πρόγραμμα συγχρηματοδοτεί, επίσης, το πανευρωπαϊκό δίκτυο των MEDIA Desks. Το πρόγραμμα MEDIA διαθέτει προϋπολογισμό που ανέρχεται στα 755 εκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Το πρόγραμμα MEDIA Mundus (2011-2013) διερευνά τρόπους ενίσχυσης της αμοιβαία επωφελούς παγκόσμιας συνεργασίας μεταξύ επαγγελματιών της οπτικοακουστικής βιομηχανίας που προέρχονται από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και από τρίτες χώρες. Το πρόγραμμα MEDIA Mundus προσφέρεται σε επαγγελματίες του εν λόγω τομέα από όλο τον κόσμο. Ο προϋπολογισμός του ανέρχεται στα 15 εκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Από το 2014 και μετά, και τα δύο προγράμματα θα αποτελούν πτυχές του νέου προγράμματος «Δημιουργική Ευρώπη».

Η γενοκτονία των Αρμενίων έχει αποτελέσει το αντικείμενο αρκετών ευρωπαϊκών ταινιών, οι περισσότερες από τις οποίες έχουν υποστηριχθεί από το πρόγραμμα MEDIA, όπως: La Masseria Delle Allodole (μυθοπλασία), Le voyage en Arménie (μυθοπλασία), The Flowers of Kirkuk (μυθοπλασία, σε εξέλιξη), The Art of Arshile Gorky (ντοκιμαντέρ, σε εξέλιξη), Grandma's Tattoos (ντοκιμαντέρ, σε εξέλιξη).

Το Ολοκαύτωμα παρουσιάζεται τακτικά σε ευρωπαϊκές ταινίες, αρκετές από τις οποίες έχουν υποστηριχθεί από το πρόγραμμα MEDIA, όπως: Die Fälscher (μυθοπλασία), La Rafle (μυθοπλασία), The Pianist (μυθοπλασία), La Finestra di Fronte (μυθοπλασία), Sophie Scholl (μυθοπλασία), Sorstalansag (μυθοπλασία), Elle s'appelait Sarah (μυθοπλασία), La Destruction des Juifs d'Europe (σειρά ντοκιμαντέρ, σε εξέλιξη).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010905/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Commission funding for the film industry

There are a number of remarkable films in existence which have received EU funding in the past. In view of this:

— Can the Commission say what initiatives are currently being taken to support the film industry, indicating the total budget earmarked for this purpose?

— Has funding ever been provided for a film dealing with crimes against humanity or acts of genocide, for example the Armenian genocide or the genocide by the Turkish army of the Greeks in Asia Minor and the Black Sea? Has EU funding been provided for any films concerning the Holocaust, the abhorrent crime committed against the Jews and against European peoples opposing Hitler, the Greeks having played a major role in the resistance at a cost of 400 000 lives and the plundering of their national heritage?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2013)

The MEDIA Programme (2007-2013) supports the European film industry financially in the development, distribution and promotion of its films, and with training for professionals. In addition, the programme helps fund new technologies and platforms for the delivery of audiovisual content of all kinds. The programme also co-finances the Europe-wide network of MEDIA Desks. The MEDIA programme has a budget of EUR 755 million.

The MEDIA Mundus Programme (2011-2013) explores ways to reinforce global cooperation between EU and non-European professionals from the audiovisual industry to their mutual benefit. MEDIA Mundus is open for professionals in the field from all over the world. It has a budget of EUR 15 million.

From 2014 onwards, both programmes will be a strand of the new Creative Europe Programme.

The Armenian genocide has been the subject of several European films, most of which have been supported by the MEDIA programme, such as: La Masseria Delle Allodole (fiction), Le voyage en Arménie (fiction), The Flowers of Kirkuk (fiction, in development), The Art of Arshile Gorky (documentary, in development), Grandma's Tattoos (documentary, in development).

The Holocaust features regularly in European films, a number of which have been supported by the MEDIA programme, such as: Die Fälscher (fiction), La Rafle (fiction), The Pianist (fiction), La Finestra di Fronte (fiction), Sophie Scholl (fiction), Sorstalansag (fiction), Elle s'appelait Sarah (fiction), La Destruction des Juifs d'Europe (documentary series, in development).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010906/12
προς το Συμβούλιο
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αποτίμηση της τελωνειακής ένωσης με την Τουρκία

Τον Δεκέμβριο του 1995 ενεκρίθη η συμφωνία τελωνειακής ένωσης μεταξύ της Τουρκίας και της ΕΕ η οποία, ως γνωστόν, ωφέλησε την Τουρκία και έβλαψε χώρες όπως την Ελλάδα, την Πορτογαλία, την Ισπανία κ.λπ. που παράγουν προϊόντα, εν πολλοίς, ανταγωνιστικά προς τα τουρκικά.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

— έχει αποτιμηθεί το κόστος της συμφωνίας αυτής και οι αρνητικές πλευρές της για τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ τώρα που συμπληρώνονται 17 χρόνια από την υπογραφή της;

— σκοπεύει να προτείνει μεταρρύθμισή της προκειμένου να γίνει δικαιότερη για τα κράτη της ΕΕ που έχουν βλαφτεί;

Απάντηση
(18 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει σχετικά με τα συγκεκριμένα θέματα που θίγει ο αξιότιμος κ. Βουλευτής. Ωστόσο, το Συμβούλιο, στη θέση που καθόρισε στις 22 Ιουνίου του 2012, ενόψει της 50ής συνόδου του Συμβουλίου Σύνδεσης με την Τουρκία, επισήμανε ότι η Τουρκία εξακολουθεί να έχει διάφορες ανεκπλήρωτες υποχρεώσεις. Όσον αφορά την πρώτη ερώτηση του αξιότιμου κ. Βουλευτή, θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι η Επιτροπή έχει δρομολογήσει αξιολόγηση της τελωνειακής ένωσης, την οποία διεξάγει ήδη η Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα.

Το ζήτημα της υλοποίησης της τελωνειακής ένωσης θα εξακολουθήσει να παρακολουθείται εκ του σύνεγγυς ιδίως μέσα στα πλαίσια της μικτής επιτροπής τελωνειακής ένωσης ΕΕ-Τουρκίας, της οποίας η 28η συνεδρίαση πραγματοποιήθηκε στις Βρυξέλλες στις 29 και 30 Ιουνίου 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010906/12
to the Council
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Assessment of customs union with Turkey

In December 1995, Turkey and the EU concluded a customs union agreement greatly benefiting Turkey at the expense of countries such as Greece, Portugal, Spain, etc., which are in competition with Turkey in respect of many products.

In view of this:

— Has the Council assessed the cost of this agreement and the unfavourable consequences for EU Member States 17 years on from the signing thereof?

— Will it recommend that the agreement be amended so as to introduce fairer provisions regarding EU Member States which have suffered as a result of it?

Reply
(18 February 2013)

The Council has not discussed the specific issues raised by the Honourable Member. However, the Council, in its position adopted on 22 June 2012, in view of the 50th meeting of the Association Council with Turkey, stated that there remains a number of unfulfilled commitments by Turkey. Regarding the Honourable Member's first question, it should be noted that the Commission has launched an evaluation of the Customs Union, which is already being conducted by the World Bank.

The issue of the implementation of Customs Union will continue to be closely followed especially in the framework of the EU-Turkey Customs Union Joint Committee, the 28th meeting of which took place in Brussels on 29 and 30 June 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010908/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: The EU Youth in Action Programme and the Belarusian Republican Youth Union (BRSM)

The Commission has just launched an extension of the EU Youth in Action Programme to cover the countries of the Eastern Partnership which includes Belarus.

The largest youth group in Belarus is the Belarusian Republican Youth Union (BRSM). This successor to the Communist Komsomol is used by Belarusian dictator Alyaksandr Lukashenka to further his repressive political regime and promote his cult of personality.

1. Can the Commission assure me that no funds will be allocated to the BRSM or any of its affiliates?

2. Will the political nature of the organisation be taken into consideration when the call for proposals is launched, and will affiliation with the BRSM be included in the exclusion criteria?

3. If the Commission cannot guarantee either of the above, will it consider excluding Belarus from the Eastern Partnership Youth Window completely?

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

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument strengthens the support which the EU already provides through the Youth in Action Programme for cooperation with neighbouring countries, in the context of the Eastern Partnership.

The funds in question are intended for the same actions as those of the Youth in Action Programme in the field of cooperation with neighbouring countries. They provide support for transnational projects involving partners from the EU and partners from neighbouring countries, and are not to be taken as operating grants for structures such as the BRSM.

The exclusion criteria taken into consideration when analysing the projects submitted are the same as those for the Youth in Action Programme (Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation). These criteria can be consulted at:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2002R1605:20071227:EN:PDF.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010909/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(29 november 2012)

Betreft: EU-lidmaatschap van het IMF

In zijn meest recente verklaring noemde de heer Barroso, de voorzitter van de Commissie, de mogelijkheid dat de Europese Unie een permanente rol krijgt toebedeeld in het bestuur van het Internationaal Monetair Fonds, hetgeen nauw samenhangt met lidmaatschap van het IMF ([1]). In artikel II van de statuten van het Internationaal Monetair Fonds is vastgelegd dat het lidmaatschap openstaat voor landen, maar daarin wordt niet gerept over internationale organisaties.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze verklaring van de heer Barroso?

2. Zo ja, beschouwt de Commissie de Europese Unie als een land?

3. Als de Commissie de EU niet als een land beschouwt, hoe staat zij dan tegenover dubbel stemrecht in de raad van gouverneurs? Is zij van zins dit probleem op te lossen door lidstaten te dwingen zich terug te trekken uit het IMF? Welke suggestie doet de Commissie voor situaties waarin het stemgedrag van een lidstaat afwijkt van dat van de EU?

4. Wat vindt de Commissie van de financiële verplichtingen van de EU ten opzichte van het IMF, aangezien de EU niet beschikt over een adequaat financieel instrument? Is zij van plan hiervoor de financieringsbron van de lidstaten, dat wil zeggen belastinggeld, te gebruiken?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(29 januari 2013)

De Commissie is van oordeel dat de voortgang naar een diepere Economische en Monetaire Unie extern tot uitdrukking moet komen, met name middels voortgang in de richting van gezamenlijke externe economische vertegenwoordiging van de eurozone. Wegens de huidige fragmentatie van haar vertegenwoordiging in internationale financiële instellingen en fora, heeft de eurozone geen invloed en leiderschap evenredig met haar economische gewicht, als vastgesteld in de Blauwdruk voor een hechte Economische en Monetaire Unie van de Commissie. De focus moet worden gelegd op het IMF, dat middels zijn kredietverleningsinstrumenten en toezicht een zeer belangrijke institutionele pijler in de mondiale economische governance is.

Een versterking en consolidatie van de externe vertegenwoordiging van de eurozone moet gericht zijn op stroomlijning en, indien mogelijk, unificering van de externe vertegenwoordiging in het IMF. Tegen deze achtergrond zal de Europese Commissie te gelegener tijd stappen zetten om de vertegenwoordiging van de eurozone in het IMF te versterken.

([1]) http://www.library.sso.ep.parl.union.eu/lis/site/newsContent.form?agId=2&q=ct_f%3A%28 %22Financial%22 %29&src=3&id=5144752.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010909/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: EU membership of the IMF

In his most recent statement, Mr Barroso, the Commission President, raised the possibility of the European Union obtaining a permanent place in the governance of the International Monetary Fund, which is closely related to membership of the IMF ([1]). Article II of the Agreement of the International Monetary Fund states that membership is open to countries, but does not mention international organisations.

1. Is the Commission familiar with this statement by Mr Barroso?

2. If so, does the Commission consider the European Union a country?

3. If the Commission does not consider the EU a country, how does it view double voting in the Board of Governors? Does it intend to solve this problem by forcing the Member States to withdraw from the IMF? What is the Commission's suggestion for situations where one of the Member States votes differently from the EU?

4. What does the Commission think about the EU's financial liabilities vis-à-vis the IMF, given that the EU does not possess an appropriate financial instrument? Does it intend to use the Member States' source of funding, i.e. taxpayers' money, in this connection?

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

The Commission is of the view that the progress towards a deeper Economic and Monetary Union will have to be reflected externally, notably through progress towards united external economic representation of the euro area. Due to the current fragmentation of its representation in international financial institutions and fora, the euro area does not have an influence and leadership commensurate with its economic weight, as laid out in the Commission's blueprint for a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union. The focus should be on the IMF, which through its lending instruments and surveillance is a key institutional pillar in global economic governance.

A strengthening and consolidation of the euro area's external representation should aim at streamlining and, where possible, unifying the external representation in the IMF. Against this background, the European Commission will in due course take steps to strengthen the euro area representation in the IMF.

([1]) http://www.library.sso.ep.parl.union.eu/lis/site/newsContent.form?agId=2&q=ct_f%3A%28%22Financial%22%29&src=3&id=5144752.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010911/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(29 november 2012)

Betreft: Christenen ter dood veroordeeld wegens anti-islamfilm

Zeven christelijke Egyptenaren zijn ter dood veroordeeld wegens hun aandeel in het verschijnen van de anti-islamfilm „Innocence of Muslims".

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Christenen ter dood veroordeeld voor anti-islamfilm" ([1])?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat zeven christelijke Egyptenaren ter dood zijn veroordeeld vanwege hun aandeel in het verschijnen van „Innocence of Muslims"? Verwerpt de Commissie dit? Zo ja, is de Commissie er dan toe bereid onmiddellijk alle EU-geldstromen naar Egypte stop te zetten? Zo neen, hoe kan de EU een dergelijk land nog financieel ondersteunen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(11 februari 2013)

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van deze vonnissen. De EU is principieel fel gekant tegen de doodstraf en de afschaffing ervan is een van de hoofddoelstellingen van haar mensenrechtenbeleid. De EU is de leidende institutionele partij en belangrijkste donor in de strijd tegen de doodstraf. Die verbintenis staat duidelijk vermeld in de EU-richtsnoeren over de doodstraf, de allereerste richtsnoeren op het gebied van de mensenrechten ooit, goedgekeurd door de Raad in 1998. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter heeft ook aangegeven het wereldwijd afschaffen van de doodstraf een „persoonlijke prioriteit" te vinden. De afschaffing van de doodstraf komt ter sprake in alle bilaterale contacten met de Egyptische regering, in het bijzonder in de politieke dialogen tussen de EU en Egypte.

De EU is van oordeel dat samenwerking en politieke dialoog de meest geschikte manieren zijn om democratische hervormingen in Egypte aan te moedigen. Zij meent bovendien dat het opschorten van hulp momenteel niet gerechtvaardigd is. In principe kunnen alle EU-samenwerkingprogramma's worden opgeschort als het begunstigde land zijn verplichtingen niet nakomt inzake eerbiediging van de mensenrechten, de democratische beginselen en de rechtsstaat, en bij ernstige corruptie. De EU volgt en analyseert de situatie ter plekke nauwlettend en onderhoudt nauwe contacten met de Egyptische regering, de oppositie, het maatschappelijk middenveld en andere belanghebbenden om indien nodig en in het licht van de veranderende politieke context de juiste maatregelen te kunnen treffen.

Met de EU-programma's wordt steun verleend aan de Egyptische bevolking — en in het bijzonder de meest kwetsbare inwoners. In 2012 heeft de EU onder meer steun verleend op belangrijke vlakken als het scheppen van werkgelegenheid, de inzetbaarheid van jongeren en beroepsopleidingen. De hulp zal in veel gevallen via de lokale overheden of via ngo's ([2]) worden gekanaliseerd.

([1]) http://www.nu.nl/buitenland/2969126/christenen-dood-veroordeeld-anti-islamfilm.html
([2]) ngo's = niet-gouvernementele organisaties.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010911/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Christians sentenced to death for anti-Islam film

Seven Egyptian Christians have been sentenced to death for their part in the production of the anti-Islam film entitled 'Innocence of Muslims'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report entitled 'Christians sentenced to death for anti-Islam film' ([1])?

2. What view does the Commission take of the fact that seven Egyptian Christians have been sentenced to death for their part in the production 'Innocence of Muslims'? Does the Commission condemn this? If so, is it prepared to halt all EU funding for Egypt immediately? If not, how can the EU justify continued financial support for such a country?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the sentences. The EU holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty; its abolition is a key objective for the Union's human rights policy. The EU is the leading institutional actor and largest donor to the fight against the death penalty. This commitment is outlined clearly in the EU Guidelines on the death penalty, the first ever human rights guidelines adopted by Council, in 1998. The HR/VP has also indicated that abolishing capital punishment worldwide is a 'personal priority'. The abolition of the death penalty is raised in all relevant bilateral contacts with the Egyptian Government, notably in the context of the EU-Egypt political dialogues.

The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage democratic reforms in Egypt. Moreover, the EU does not consider that suspension of assistance would be justified currently. In principle, all EU cooperation programmes can be suspended if the beneficiary country breaches an obligation relating to the respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law and in serious cases of corruption. The EU is continuously monitoring and analysing the situation on the ground in close contact and dialogue with the Egyptian Government, opposition, civil society representatives and other key stakeholders in order to take the necessary and appropriate measures according to the evolution of the political context.

The EU programmes support the Egyptian people and the most vulnerable among them. In 2012, for instance, the EU provided support in key areas such as Job Creation, Youth Employability and Vocational Training. Support will be channelled in many cases through the local administration or NGOs ([2]).

([1]) http://www.nu.nl/buitenland/2969126/christenen-dood-veroordeeld-anti-islamfilm.html
([2]) NGOs = Non-governmental organisations.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010912/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI) en Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(29 november 2012)

Betreft: Amerikaanse president ondertekent anti-ETS-wet

Op 28 november 2012 heeft de Amerikaanse president Obama de „European Union Emissions Trading Scheme Prohibition Act" ondertekend ([1]). De Verenigde Staten hebben hun luchtvaartmaatschappijen daarmee bij wet verboden om te participeren in de Europese CO_2-taks.

1. Heeft deze Amerikaanse wet, die eerder al in het Huis van Afgevaardigden en de Senaat is aangenomen, volgens de Commissie een rol gespeeld bij de opschorting van ETS?

2. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de ondertekening van deze anti-ETS-wet door president Obama een overwinning is van het soevereine recht van nationale staten over de ongebreidelde bemoeienis van de EU? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat deze wet het failliet bevestigt van de ongelimiteerde klimaatambities die de EU via ETS aan de rest van de wereld probeert op te dringen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat ETS voor de luchtvaart nooit door de EU kan worden ingevoerd, omdat de VS hier met deze wet pal voor is gaan liggen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(28 januari 2013)

1. Neen.

2. Neen, omdat de EU-regeling voor het verhandelen van emissierechten (ETS) de nationale soevereiniteit ongemoeid laat en het Thune-wetsvoorstel de rechtsgeldigheid van de ETS-wetgeving van de EU niet aantast.

3. Neen. Het moet benadrukt worden dat, hoewel het „Thune-wetsvoorstel" de Amerikaanse minister van Vervoer de discretionaire bevoegdheid verleent om Amerikaanse luchtvaartmaatschappijen te verbieden om de EU-wetgeving na te leven, het voorstel de minister eveneens aanstuurt om werk te maken van een wereldwijd akkoord over de emissies in de luchtvaart. De Commissie is er dan ook van overtuigd dat op de algemene vergadering van de ICAO in september 2013 aanzienlijke vooruitgang kan worden geboekt in het bereiken van een wereldwijd akkoord over marktgebaseerde maatregelen.

4. Neen. Amerikaanse luchtvaartexploitanten moeten zich houden aan de EU-wetgeving en de rechtsstaat eerbiedigen; volgens een uitspraak van het Europees Hof van Justitie van 21 december 2011 immers is de opname van de luchtvaartsector in de ETS verenigbaar met het internationale recht en wordt de nationale soevereiniteit er niet door ingeperkt. Zelfs als het „stop de klok"-voorstel door de medewetgevers wordt aangenomen zoals voorgesteld, zal de ETS-wetgeving van toepassing blijven voor exploitanten in de VS voor zover zij vluchten uitvoeren waarvoor geen vrijstelling geldt.

([1]) http://www.europolitics.info//external-policies/obama-signs-anti-eu-emissions-trading-bill-art345643-44.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010912/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI) and Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: US President signs anti-ETS law

On 28 September 2012, the US President Obama signed the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme Prohibition Act ([1]) prohibiting US airlines from complying with the European CO_2 emissions scheme.

1. Does the Commission consider this American legislation, already adopted in the House of Representatives and the Senate, to have been in any way instrumental regarding the postponement of the ETS?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the signature of the anti-ETS law by President Obama is a victory for the sovereign right of nation states over unbridled interference by the EU? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that this law confirms the failure of the EU to use the ETS to impose its unlimited climate regulation ambitions on the rest of the world? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it will never be possible for the EU to introduce ETS provisions governing air transport because of direct US opposition to such a measure? If not, why not?

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

1. No.

2. No, because the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) doesn't affect any nation's sovereignty and the Thune bill doesn't affect the legal situation of the EU ETS legislation.

3. No. It is important to highlight that, although the 'Thune bill' gives the U.S. Transportation Secretary the discretion to prohibit U.S. airlines' compliance with EC law, it also directs the Secretary to work for a global agreement on aviation emissions. The Commission remains therefore confident that a substantial progress towards a global agreement on market based measures is within reach at the ICAO Assembly in September 2013.

4. No. U.S. aircraft operators must respect EU legislation and the rule of law based on the European Court of Justice's ruling, dated 21st December 2011, which clarified that the inclusion of aviation in the ETS is compatible with international law and does not infringe other States' sovereignty. Even if the 'stopping the clock' proposal is adopted by the co-legislators as proposed, the ETS legislation will continue to apply to US operators to the extent that they operate non-exempted flights.

([1]) http://www.europolitics.info//external-policies/obama-signs-anti-eu-emissions-trading-bill-art345643-44.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-010913/12
do Komisji
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(29 listopada 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wprowadzenie w ramach Dyrektywy CDR IV okresu przejściowego dla polskich banków spółdzielczych

Biorąc pod uwagę rozmiar, złożoność i różne modele biznesowe oraz fakt, iż wprowadzenie nowych zasad płynności krótkoterminowej (LCR) może mieć istotny wpływ na działalność polskich banków spółdzielczych, chciałabym zapytać Komisję Europejską o możliwość wprowadzenia dla tych instytucji, w ramach Dyrektywy CRD IV okresu przejściowego do dnia 31 grudnia 2018 r.

Dodatkowo pragnę zapytać, czy podczas przygotowywania aktu delegowanego wprowadzającego wymóg pokrycia płynności krótkoterminowej dla UE, zgodnie z art. 481(2), określającym szczegółowo ogólny wymóg określony w art. 401(1), Komisja weźmie pod uwagę specyfikę wszystkich zainteresowanych instytucji, w szczególności banków spółdzielczych, które odgrywają istotną rolę dla społeczności lokalnych.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(1 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja dostrzega znaczenie banków spółdzielczych i cenny wkład, jaki wnoszą one w życie społeczności lokalnych.

Ostateczna definicja i kalibracja wskaźnika pokrycia płynności krótkoterminowej (LCR) wymaga jeszcze ustalenia. Zgodnie z wnioskiem Komisji dotyczącym rozporządzenia w sprawie wymogów kapitałowych ([1]), który jest obecnie przedmiotem negocjacji z Parlamentem Europejskim i Radą, wprowadzenie LCR odbędzie się w drodze aktu delegowanego przyjętego przez Komisję, a wskaźnik ten wejdzie w życie w 2015 r. zgodnie z art. 444.

Przyjmując akt delegowany dotyczący LCR, Komisja weźmie pod uwagę uzgodnione na szczeblu międzynarodowym standardy w zakresie nadzoru płynnościowego, takie jak wymogi dotyczące płynności zawarte w pakiecie Bazylea III, które muszą jeszcze zostać w pełni sprecyzowane. Komisja weźmie również pod uwagę sprawozdania, które ma opracowywać Europejski Urząd Nadzoru Bankowego zgodnie z art. 481 ust. 1. W swych sprawozdaniach EUNB ocenia w szczególności, czy jest prawdopodobne, że LCR będzie miał znaczny, szkodliwy wpływ na działalność i profil ryzyka instytucji unijnych lub na rynki finansowe bądź na gospodarkę i kredyty bankowe. W ten sposób uwzględnione zostaną szczególne cechy banków spółdzielczych.

Wreszcie, zamiarem jest wprowadzenie LCR w 2015 r., lecz na obecnym etapie nie można stwierdzić, czy dla banków spółdzielczych należy wprowadzić specjalny okres przejściowy do dnia 31 grudnia 2018 r. Wydaje się to raczej mało prawdopodobne, ponieważ celem jest stworzenie jednolitych reguł dających równe szanse wszystkim bankom. Należy jednak zauważyć, że zgodnie ze sformułowanymi w pakiecie Bazylea III zasadami dotyczącymi płynności przewiduje się ogólnie stopniowe wprowadzanie LCR w okresie od 2015 do 2019 r.

([1]) COM(2011) 452 final z dnia 20.07.2011 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010913/12
to the Commission
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Introduction of a transitional period for Polish cooperative banks under CRD IV

In view of the scale and complexity of the new rules on short-term liquidity (LCR), the diversity of business models and the fact that the introduction of the rules could have a major impact on the activities of Polish cooperative banks, I would like to ask the Commission about the possibility of introducing a transitional period until 31 December 2018 in the Capital Requirements Directive (CRD) IV for these institutions.

I would also like to ask whether during the preparation of the delegated act introducing liquidity coverage requirements for the EU, in accordance with Article 481(2) laying down in detail the general requirement laid down in Article 401(1), the Commission will take into account the particularities of all the institutions concerned, especially cooperative banks, which play a vital role in local communities.

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

The Commission recognises the importance of cooperative banks and the valuable contribution they make to local communities.

The final definition and calibration of the short term liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) has still to be determined. Under the Commission proposal for the Capital Requirements Regulation ([1]) , which is currently being negotiated with European Parliament and the Council, the LCR will be implemented by a delegated act adopted by the Commission and will enter into force in 2015 in accordance with Article 444.

In adopting the delegated act for the LCR, the Commission will take into account internationally agreed standards for liquidity supervision such as the Basel III liquidity requirements which have still to be fully specified. The Commission will also take into account the reports to be prepared by the European Banking Authority under Article 481(1). In particular, in its report EBA shall consider whether the LCR is likely to have a material detrimental impact on the business and risk profile of Union institutions or on financial markets or the economy and bank lending. In this way the particularities of cooperative banks will be taken into account.

Finally, the intention is to implement the LCR in 2015, but at this stage it is not possible to say whether a specific transitional period for cooperative banks until 31 December 2018 should be introduced. Rather this would seem unlikely since the objective is to create a single rulebook with a level playing field for all banks. However, it should be noted that under the Basel III liquidity rules, a general progressive implementation of the LCR from 2015 to 2019 is envisaged.

([1]) COM(2011)452 final, 20.7.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010914/12
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(29. November 2012)

Betrifft: Notifizierung der Landesimplementierungs- und Ausführungsgesetze des Ersten Glücksspieländerungsstaatsvertrags in Deutschland

Gegen Deutschland läuft aufgrund der Europarechtswidrigkeit des Glücksspielstaatsvertrags (GlüStV) ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren (Nr. 2007/4866). Die Länder haben den GlüStV daher novelliert. Auch beim neuen, sogenannten Ersten Glücksspieländerungsstaatsvertrag (GlüÄndStV) bestehen allerdings wieder erhebliche Zweifel, ob dieser mit europäischem Recht vereinbar ist.

In ihrer Notifizierungsmitteilung 2011/0188/D rügte die Kommission bereits das Fehlen der materiellen Daten zur Untermauerung der Rechtfertigungsgründe für Glücksspielangebotsrestriktionen. Weder Geeignetheit noch Erforderlichkeit geschweige denn Verhältnismäßigkeit der Beschränkungen konnten daher bislang abschließend von der Kommission geprüft werden.

Ferner lässt der Erste GlüÄndStV den Ländern weitgehende Regelungsspielräume in den ausgestaltenden, landeseigenen Implementierungs- und Ausführungsgesetzen. Dies gibt Anlass zur Sorge, dass die Länder damit die EU-rechtswidrigen Bestimmungen des früheren GlüStV faktisch in die Implementierungs- und Ausführungsgesetze des Ersten GlüÄndStV verlagern.

Die vollständige Notifizierung des Ersten GlüÄndStV einschließlich der zugehörigen Implementierungs- und Ausführungsgesetze als Gesamtkonstrukt ist daher dringend notwendig. Dies trifft insbesondere auf die neuen Spielautomaten-Regelungen zu. Die Kommission hatte dies in ihrer Notifizierungsmitteilung, Punkt 2.10, bereits gefordert, bislang jedoch erfolglos.

1. Hat die Kommission bereits Kenntnis von den Implementierungs- und Ausführungsgesetzen des Ersten GlüÄndStV der deutschen Länder erlangt?

2. Besteht laut Richtlinie 98/34/EG die Verpflichtung, die Landesimplementierungs- und Ausführungsgesetze des Ersten GlüÄndStV bei der bevorstehenden Überprüfung der Europarechtskonformität der novellierten deutschen Glücksspielrechtslage bei der Kommission zu notifizieren?

3. Falls ja, welche Konsequenzen hätte eine Unterlassung dieser Notifizierungspflicht?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(1. Februar 2013)

1. Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass der Erste Staatsvertrag zur Änderung des Staatsvertrags zum Glücksspielwesen in Deutschland am 1. Juli 2012 in Kraft getreten ist. Bisher wurde der Vertrag von 15 Bundesländern angenommen. Zur Umsetzung des Vertrags müssen die Bundesländer Durchführungsrechtsakte erlassen. Alle 15 Bundesländer haben bereits solche Rechtsakte erlassen oder tun dies gerade.

2. Gemäß der Richtlinie 98/34/EG müssen die Rechtsakte der Bundesländer zur Umsetzung und Ausführung des Ersten Staatsvertrags zur Änderung des Staatsvertrags zum Glücksspielwesen in Deutschland im Entwurfsstadium notifiziert werden, wenn sie technische Vorschriften und/oder Vorschriften für die Dienste der Informationsgesellschaft enthalten, die in den Geltungsbereich der vorgenannten Richtlinie fallen.

3. Würde der Entwurf solcher Vorschriften nicht notifiziert, wäre dies ein Verstoß gegen die Richtlinie 98/34/EG. In diesem Fall könnte die Kommission ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren einleiten. Im Übrigen hat der Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union in der Rechtssache C 194/94, CIA Security, festgestellt, dass technische Vorschriften, die nicht nach Maßgabe der Richtlinie 98/34/EG notifiziert wurden, grundsätzlich nicht durchsetzbar sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010914/12
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: Notification of the state transposition and implementation laws of the First Modification to the German State Treaty on Gambling

Infringement proceedings (No 2007/4866) have been initiated against Germany because the State Treaty on Gambling (GlüStV) violates EC law. The federal states have therefore amended the GlüStV. There are considerable doubts, however, about whether the new, so-called First Modification to the German State Treaty on Gambling (GlüÄndStV) is compatible with EC law.

In its notification message 2011/0188/D, the Commission complained about the lack of substantive data underpinning the reasons justifying restrictions on gambling. So far, the Commission has not been able to conclusively examine whether the restrictions are either appropriate or necessary, not to mention proportionate.

Furthermore, the First Modification to the German State Treaty on Gambling allows the federal states a great deal of discretion in relation to the framing of the state transposition and implementation laws. This gives rise to concerns that the federal states are in fact shifting the provisions of the earlier State Treaty on Gambling, which were found to violate EC law, to the transposition and implementation laws of the First Modification to the German State Treaty on Gambling.

For this reason, there is an urgent need for full notification of the First Modification of the State Treaty on Gambling, including the associated transposition and implementation laws as a general construct. This relates in particular to the new regulations on gaming machines. The Commission already requested this in point 2.10 of its notification message, however, so far to no avail.

1. Is the Commission already aware of the transposition and implementation laws of the First Modification to the German State Treaty on Gambling of the German federal states?

2. According to Directive 98/34/EC, is there not an obligation to notify the Commission of the state transposition and implementation laws of the First Modification to the State Treaty on Gambling in the context of the forthcoming examination of whether the amended German gambling laws conform to EC law?

3. If so, what are the consequences of failure to fulfil this notification obligation?

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

1. The Commission is aware that the First State Treaty amending the State Treaty regarding Gambling in Germany entered into force on 1 July 2012. 15 Federal States have so far approved the Treaty. In order to implement the Treaty the Federal States need to adopt implementing acts at Federal State level. All 15 Federal States have adopted or are in the process of adopting such acts.

2. Federal States laws that transpose and implement the modification of First State Treaty amending the State Treaty regarding Gambling in Germany need to be notified under the directive 98/34/EC in their draft stage, subject to the condition that they contain technical regulations and/or rules on information society services falling within the scope of the above directive.

3. A failure to notify draft technical regulations and/or rules on inforlmation society services falling within the scope of Directive 98/34/EC would represent a breach of this directive. Such breach would result in a possibility for the Commission to launch infringement proceedings, as appropriate. Moreover, the Court of Justice of the European Union established in Case C-194/94 CIA Security principle of unenforceability of technical regulations not notifed under Directive 98/34/EC.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010915/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 novembre 2012)

Objet: Cybersécurité européenne

Les menaces et les attaques informatiques contre les organes gouvernementaux, administratifs, militaires et internationaux se multiplient. Elles sont de plus en plus fréquentes, au niveau mondial et de l'Union.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle reconnaître sans ambiguïté les libertés numériques en tant que droits fondamentaux et conditions indispensables à l'exercice universel des Droits de l'homme?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle encourager les États membres à faire la distinction, au sein de leur législation, entre incidents informatiques civils et militaires?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle établir un livre blanc sur la défense du cyberespace établissant des définitions et critères clairs permettant d'opérer une distinction entre les différents niveaux d'attaques informatiques dans les domaines civil et militaire, en fonction de leur motivation et de leurs effets, ainsi qu'entre les différents niveaux de réaction, y compris la recherche et la détection de leurs auteurs et les poursuites à l'encontre de ces derniers?

4. Pourquoi la Commission n'a-t-elle pas encore créé un poste pour la coordination de la cybersécurité dans l'Union européenne? A-t-elle l'intention de le faire?

5. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle promouvoir une utilisation globalement sûre de l'internet, des systèmes d'information et des technologies de la communication, et sensibiliser les particuliers et les entreprises à cette question? Une initiative publique paneuropéenne à vocation pédagogique ou la promotion de la sécurité informatique dans les programmes scolaires ne sont-elles pas des pistes à lancer par l'institution européenne?

6. Concernant le secteur privé, comment la Commission compte-t-elle encourager le secteur privé et les acteurs de la société civile à inclure la gestion des crises informatiques dans leurs plans de gestion des crises et d'analyse des risques? La Commission le fait-elle pour elle-même?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(24 janvier 2013)

La Commission partage le point de vue de l'Honorable Parlementaire selon lequel les atteintes à la cybersécurité, qu'elles soient accidentelles ou malveillantes, représentent des défis considérables pour la prospérité de notre économie et le bien-être de la société.

Pour répondre de manière globale à ce problème, la Commission prépare actuellement une stratégie de l'UE sur la cybersécurité, qui devrait définir des perspectives et présenter des mesures permettant, d'une part, de garantir la sécurité et la résilience de l'environnement numérique et, d'autre part, de prévenir efficacement la cybercriminalité, tout en assurant le respect et la promotion des droits fondamentaux inscrits dans la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne, tant dans l'UE qu'en dehors.

La priorité actuelle de la Commission, qui est aussi l'un des principaux objectifs de cette stratégie, consiste à faire en sorte qu'il n'existe aucun maillon faible dans l'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010915/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(29 November 2012)

Subject: European cyber security

Cyber threats and attacks against governmental, administrative, military and international bodies are on the rise. They are more and more frequent, both globally and within the EU.

1. Does the Commission intend to unambiguously recognise digital freedoms as fundamental rights and essential conditions for the universal exercise of human rights?

2. Does the Commission intend to encourage Member States to make a distinction, within their legislation, between civil and military cyber incidents?

3. Does the Commission intend to draft a White Paper on defending cyberspace, establishing clear definitions and criteria allowing for a distinction to be made between the various levels of cyber attacks in civil and military fields, depending on their motivation and consequences, and also between the different response levels, including the search for and detection of perpetrators and proceedings against them?

4. Why has the Commission still not created a post for the coordination of cyber security in the European Union? Does it intend to do so?

5. How does the Commission intend to promote the overall safe use of the Internet and information and communication technology systems and make individuals and companies aware of this issue? Should European institutions not be launching a Europe-wide public initiative for educational purposes or the promotion of cyber security in school curricula?

6. With regard to the private sector, does the Commission intend to encourage the private sector and civil society actors to include the management of cyber crises in their crisis management and risk analysis plans? Is the Commission doing so itself?

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

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member on the fact that cybersecurity threats, be it accidental or malicious, pose significant challenges to the prosperity of our economy and society.

To address this problem in a comprehensive way an EU Cybersecurity Strategy is currently being elaborated. The strategy would outline a vision and present policy actions to ensure a safe and resilient digital environment — and effectively prevent cybercrime, while respecting and promoting fundamental rights, as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, both in the EU and abroad.

The current priority of the Commission and a key objective of the strategy is to ensure that there are no weak links across the EU.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010916/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Situación de los inmigrantes en Grecia

Desde hace tiempo los diputados del Parlamento Europeo estamos preocupados por cómo está empeorando la situación de los inmigrantes en la República de Grecia. Muestra de ello han sido algunos debates, así como ciertas preguntas dirigidas a la Comisión Europea (entre otras, O-000007/2012, O-000087/2012).

Las asociaciones de protección de derechos humanos insisten en el agravamiento de la situación y en el progresivo deterioro de las condiciones de los campos de refugiados y de los centros de detención, en la ocupación de barrios enteros que se convierten en dormitorios al aire libre, en el aumento de la inmigración ilegal, y, sobre todo, en el incremento de la violencia por grupos armados que parecen querer reproducir tristes acontecimientos de la República de Weimar. La intimidación a artistas, homosexuales y otros colectivos se multiplica día a día.

Por ello, pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿Qué medidas está adoptando para colaborar con las autoridades griegas y evitar la inmigración ilegal?

2. ¿No considera que deben incrementarse los medios y las ayudas, tales como el Fondo Europeo para los Refugiados, para conseguir que las condiciones de los inmigrantes sean mínimamente dignas y respetuosas con la protección de los derechos fundamentales?

3. ¿No advierte la Comisión la urgencia de atender a este problema de manera unitaria desde las instituciones de la Unión Europea, en lugar de descargar la responsabilidad únicamente sobre el Gobierno griego, que tiene en estos momentos muchos otros frentes abiertos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de enero de 2013)

La Comisión se ha comprometido a ayudar a Grecia a gestionar sus fronteras exteriores de manera eficiente y a buscar una solución para la elevada afluencia de inmigrantes irregulares.

Es importante mantener las operaciones actuales de Frontex en la frontera greco-turca (operación Poseidón en las fronteras marítimas y terrestres) y seguir prestando ayuda financiera y operacional, a través del Fondo para el Retorno y el Fondo para las Fronteras Exteriores, para que Grecia establezca un sistema efectivo de gestión de las fronteras y el retorno. Asimismo, la pronta celebración del acuerdo de readmisión recientemente rubricado por la UE y Turquía contribuirá a mejorar la situación.

La Comisión está preocupada por la situación de los inmigrantes en Grecia, incluidos los solicitantes de asilo, especialmente en lo que respecta a las condiciones de acogida existentes en los centros de internamiento, y en diversas ocasiones ha comunicado su preocupación a las autoridades griegas. La Comisión facilita ayuda financiera a Grecia a través de los Fondos SOLID para mejorar las condiciones y garantizar el respeto del Derecho de la UE y de los derechos fundamentales. Asimismo la Comisión ha reiterado a las autoridades griegas la necesidad de esforzarse para conseguir la máxima absorción de esos fondos.

Las autoridades griegas están revisando su Plan de Acción nacional sobre Migración y Asilo. Ello incluirá medidas destinadas a solucionar las deficiencias existentes y detectará aquellos ámbitos en los que sea necesario el apoyo de los Estados miembros, los organismos de la Unión y las organizaciones internacionales para facilitar la reforma de la política griega en materia de migración y asilo. La Comisión continúa animando a todas las partes concernidas a facilitar ayuda a Grecia, y participa activamente en la coordinación de este proceso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010916/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Situation of immigrants in Greece

For some time, Members of the European Parliament have been concerned at the deteriorating situation of immigrants in Greece. This is borne out by certain debates and by a number of questions asked of the Commission (for example, Questions O-000007/2012 and O-000087/2012).

Human rights organisations emphasise that the situation is worsening and that conditions are gradually deteriorating in refugee camps and detention centres, with whole neighbourhoods being occupied and turned into open-air dormitories; there is an increase in illegal immigration and, above all, in violence perpetrated by armed groups which seem intent on reproducing the tragic events of the Weimar Republic. Intimidation of artists, homosexuals and other groups is increasing on a daily basis.

Can the Commission say:

1. What measures it is adopting in order to collaborate with the Greek authorities and prevent illegal immigration?

2. Whether it considers that measures and assistance, such as from the European Refugee Fund, should be stepped up, in order to provide immigrants with minimally decent conditions which respect their fundamental human rights?

3. Whether it recognises the urgent need for the EU institutions to take a unified approach to tackling this problem, instead of laying responsibility for it solely at Greece's door, at a time when the country has many other issues to address?

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

The Commission is committed to support Greece in efficiently managing its external borders and addressing the high influx of irregular migrants.

It is important to maintain the current Frontex operations at the Greek/Turkish border (Land and Sea Poseidon operations), and to continue, through the External Borders and Return Funds, financial and operational assistance to Greece in its building of an effective return and border management system. The rapid conclusion of the readmission agreement that has recently been initialled by the EU and Turkey will also make an important contribution to improving the situation.

The Commission is concerned about the situation of migrants, including asylum-seekers, in Greece, in particular regarding the level of reception conditions available in detention facilities and has shared these concerns with the Greek authorities several times. The Commission provides financial assistance to Greece, via the SOLID Funds, aimed at improving standards and ensuring respect of EC law and fundamental rights. The Commission has also emphasised to the Greek authorities the need to make efforts to ensure maximum absorption of these funds.

The Greek authorities are in the process of revising their national Action Plan on Migration and Asylum. This will include measures aimed at addressing current deficiencies and will identify areas where the support of Member States, Union agencies and international organisations is needed to facilitate the reform of the Greek asylum and migration policy. The Commission continues to encourage relevant stakeholders to provide support to Greece and is actively involved in coordinating this process.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010917/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. November 2012)

Betrifft: Ausschöpfung der Notenskala an Hochschulen

Der deutsche Wissenschaftsrat hat auf seiner Herbsttagung Anfang September 2012 festgestellt, dass an deutschen Hochschulen die „Notenskala kaum ausgeschöpft" wird und in bestimmten Fachbereichen zunehmend die Tendenz besteht ([1]), überproportional viele gute oder sehr gute Noten zu vergeben.

1. Sind der Kommission derartige Entwicklungen auch aus anderen EU-Staaten bekannt? Wenn ja, in welchen Mitgliedstaaten und in welchen Fachbereichen gibt es nach Informationen der Kommission eine solche Entwicklung?

2. Gibt es Pläne, eine Vergleichsstudie über die Entwicklungen bei der Notenvergabe an Hochschulen in der Europäischen Union in Auftrag zu geben?

3. Gibt es, beispielsweise im Rahmen des European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), Bestrebungen, die Notenvergabekriterien von Hochschulen innerhalb der Europäischen Union anzupassen und besser vergleichbar zu machen?

4. Sieht die Kommission eine Gefahr für Bildungsstandards in der EU und den Wert von EU-Hochschulabschlüssen, falls überproportional viele gute Noten vergeben werden?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(25. Januar 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass die Notenvergabe in den einzelnen nationalen Bildungssystemen unterschiedlich gehandhabt wird. Diese Unterschiede wurzeln in den pädagogischen und kulturellen Traditionen des jeweiligen Systems. Die Kommission hält es für wichtig, dass diese Unterschiede transparent dargestellt werden, so dass die in den einzelnen Ländern, Einrichtungen und Fachbereichen vergebenen Noten über die Landesgrenzen hinaus eingeschätzt werden können.

Der von der Kommission veröffentlichte Leitfaden für das Europäische System zur Anrechnung, Übertragung und Akkumulierung von Studienleistungen (ECTS) „ECTS Users' Guide" enthält eine ECTS-Benotungstabelle, die die Universitäten für einen einzelnen Studiengang oder eine Gruppe gleichartiger Studiengänge verwenden sollen. Wird die Tabelle der Aufstellung der Leistungsnachweise und den Diplomzusätzen der jeweiligen Studierenden beigefügt, so erleichtert sie die Einschätzung der einzelnen Noten. Auf der Tagung des Bologna-Prozesses im April 2012 in Bukarest forderten die Minister eine Aktualisierung des ECTS-Leitfadens, bei der auch die Benotung überprüft wird. Die Kommission unterstützt in diesem Zusammenhang die Arbeit einer Gruppe nationaler Sachverständiger, die den Bildungsministern bis Ende 2014 einschlägige Vorschläge unterbreiten soll.

Im Rahmen des Erasmus-Programms gewährt die Kommission eine Finanzhilfe für das Projekt eines Konsortiums unter der Leitung der Universität Gent (Belgien), das die Benotungskulturen in Europa transparenter machen soll. Im Rahmen dieses Projekts sollen unter anderem Berichte über die Benotungssysteme in den einzelnen EU-Ländern erstellt werden. Ferner werden Empfehlungen für eine effiziente Nutzung der Benotungstabellen innerhalb der EU angestrebt. Das Projekt ist kürzlich angelaufen und endet im zweiten Halbjahr 2014.

([1]) http://www.spiegel.de/unispiegel/studium/wissenschaftsrat-beklagt-zu-gute-noten-an-deutschen-unis-a-866427.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010917/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Utilisation of the grading system at higher education institutions

In its autumn conference at the beginning of September 2012, the German Council of Science and Humanities found that the 'grading system is underutilised' at German higher education institutions and that, in certain subjects, there was an increasing tendency [1] to award a disproportionately high number of good or very good grades.

1. Is the Commission aware of similar developments in other EU Member States? If so, in which Member States and in which subjects does such a development apply according to the information available to the Commission?

2. Are there plans to commission a comparative study of developments in the grades awarded at higher education institutions in the European Union?

3. For example, are efforts being made as part of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) to adjust the criteria for awarding grades in higher education institutions within the European Union and to make them easier to compare?

4. Does the Commission recognise the risk to educational standards in the EU and to the value of academic diplomas gained in the EU if a disproportionately high number of good grades is awarded?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

The Commission is aware of differences between grading practices in national education systems. These differences are rooted in the pedagogical and cultural traditions of the different systems. The Commission believes that it is important to make these differences transparent so that grades attributed in all countries, institutions or subject areas can be properly understood across borders.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) Users' Guide published by the Commission proposes an 'ECTS Grading Table', which universities are recommended to use for each degree programme or group of homogeneous programmes. When included in the Transcript of Records and Diploma Supplements of the students, the table facilitates the interpretation of each grade awarded. At the Bucharest meeting of the Bologna Process in April 2012, Ministers asked for the ECTS Guide to be updated and the topic of grading will be part of this review. The Commission is facilitating the work of a group of national experts on this topic which is due to make proposals to Education Ministers at the end of 2014.

In the framework of the Erasmus programme, the Commission has awarded a grant to a consortium, under the lead of the University of Gent (Belgium), which aims to improve the understanding of grading cultures in Europe. One of the outputs of this project will be a set of country reports on grading systems in Europe. The project will also formulate recommendations on the effective use of grading tables across Europe. The project has just started and will be finalised in the second half of 2014.

[1] http://www.spiegel.de/unispiegel/studium/wissenschaftsrat-beklagt-zu-gute-noten-an-deutschen-unis-a-866427.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010918/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. November 2012)

Betrifft: EU-Unterstützung für Erdbebenfolgen in Myanmar

Am 11. November 2012 kam es in Myanmar nahe der Stadt Shwebo zu einem schweren Erdbeben. Bei dem Beben der Stärke 6,6 auf der Richterskala wurde eine Vielzahl von Menschen verletzt oder getötet. Medienberichten zufolge wurden zudem einige kulturell wertvolle Sehenswürdigkeiten zerstört oder beschädigt.

1. Gab es vonseiten der Regierung von Myanmar eine offizielle Anfrage für Hilfsleistungen der Europäischen Union?

2. Leistet die Europäische Union in Myanmar nach dem Erdbeben finanzielle oder materielle Hilfe? Wenn ja, in welchem Umfang? Wenn nicht, wird dies noch erfolgen?

3. Leistet die Europäische Union in Folge des Erdbebens in Myanmar Hilfe beim Wiederaufbau von Kulturstätten? Wenn ja, in welcher Form? Wenn nicht, wird dies noch erfolgen?

Antwort von Frau Georgieva im Namen der Kommission
(25. Januar 2013)

1. Es gab kein Ersuchen um Hilfsleistungen.

2. Nein, nach dem Erdbeben war keine internationale Hilfe notwendig, da der entsprechende Bedarf durch die nationalen und regionalen Hilfsorganisationen — gemeinsam mit dem Roten Kreuz Myanmar — gedeckt wurde. Allerdings hat die GD ECHO (Humanitäre Hilfe und Katastrophenschutz) der Europäischen Kommission gemeinsam mit internationalen Hilfsorganisationen, darunter dem Büro der Vereinten Nationen zur Koordinierung der humanitären Hilfe (UNOCHA), die Lage überwacht und bewertet. Dabei wurde festgestellt, dass keine zusätzliche Unterstützung notwendig war.

Es sei darauf hingewiesen, dass ein Projekt, das in Myanmar im Rahmen des von der Kommission aufgelegten Programms DIPECHO (Katastrophenvorsorge) durchgeführt wird, auch Maßnahmen im Hinblick auf das Erdbebenrisiko umfasst. Das Projekt („Erhöhung der Sicherheit der Küsten- und Stadtbevölkerung in Myanmar durch Katastrophenvorsorge“) wurde im Juni 2012 eingeleitet und umfasst auch Maßnahmen zur Bewertung des Erdbebenrisikos entlang der Verwerfungslinie in der Provinz Sagaing. Es wird von einem Konsortium unter Leitung von ActionAid-UK durchgeführt und zu 80 % von der EU finanziert (1,65 Mio. EUR). Es handelt sich hierbei um die erste wissenschaftliche Forschungsarbeit zur Verwundbarkeit durch seismische Aktivität entlang dieser Verwerfungslinie. Ziel ist es, für die Bevölkerung der betroffenen Städte praktische Leitlinien zur Erdbebenvorsorge und -bewältigung zu erarbeiten.

3. Nein, die Europäische Union leistete keine Hilfe beim Wiederaufbau von Kulturstätten in Myanmar. Auch hier gab es kein Hilfeersuchen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010918/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: EU assistance in the aftermath of the earthquake in Myanmar

A serious earthquake occurred on 11 November 2012 in Myanmar, near the city of Shwebo. The quake, which measured 6.6 on the Richter scale, injured or killed a large number of people. According to media reports, a number of important cultural sites were also destroyed or damaged.

1. Has the Government of Myanmar made an official request for assistance from the European Union?

2. Is the European Union providing financial or material assistance to Myanmar in the aftermath of the earthquake? If so, how much? If not, is this going to happen?

3. Is the European Union providing assistance for the restoration of cultural sites in Myanmar in the aftermath of the earthquake? If so, in what form? If not, is this going to happen?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(25 January 2013)

1. There was no request for external assistance.

2. No, there was no need for international assistance after the earthquake, as the needs were — met by the national and regional relief services together with the Myanmar Red Cross. The situation was, nevertheless, monitored and assessed by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department, DG ECHO, together with international relief organisations, including UN-OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). It was found that no extra support was required.

It is worth noting that the Commission currently includes earthquake risk/preparation in its Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) programme in Myanmar. The project ('Safer coastal and urban communities through Disaster Risk Reduction in Myanmar') began in June 2012 and covers earthquake risk along the fault line in the affected Sagaing Province. It is being implemented by a consortium led by ActionAid-UK, with over 80% of EU funding (EUR 1.65 M). This is the first vulnerability research on seismic activities on this fault line, and seeks to identify practical guidelines for the population of each city on how to prepare for and respond to earthquakes.

3. No, the European Union is not providing assistance for restoration of cultural sites in Myanmar, and no request was made in this context.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010919/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Embalmment and preservation of human corpses

Will the Commission explain the current state of discussions regarding the future use of formaldehyde and say when it is expected that decisions will be made that can provide an indication as to its future availability?

Can the Commission confirm that full attention is being paid to the current use of formaldehyde and products that use it as an active ingredient for the purpose of embalmment and the preservation of body parts? Can it also confirm the absolute necessity of ensuring that there is no disruption in the supply of products needed for this purpose?

Can the Commission state what alternatives to products using formaldehyde are currently available and can achieve the same objectives?

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

Formaldehyde for use as an embalming agent is currently under evaluation under the review programme for existing active substances established by Directive 98/8/EC concerning the placing of biocidal products on the market ([1]).

In the meantime, formaldehyde for use as an embalming agent can be placed on the market subject to Member States rules.

Upon completion of this evaluation and the possible approval of formaldehyde for use as an embalming agent, Member States will then have to grant, amend or cancel (as the case may be) authorisations to place products containing formaldehyde to be used as an embalming agent on their market in accordance with the provisions of the directive.

This process is a continuous one, therefore there should be no disruption in the supply of products if the substance is approved.

Concerning the possible alternatives, there are currently 7 other substances under evaluation for the same use, including iodine, bronopol and some quaternary ammonium compounds.

([1]) OJ L 123, 24.4.1998.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010920/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Attacco di manifestanti anti-israeliani ai danni di una sinagoga in Venezuela

Il 23 novembre 2012 varie agenzie di stampa hanno riferito che molti dei 50 manifestanti radunatisi all'esterno della più grande sinagoga della capitale del Venezuela, Caracas, avevano lanciato petardi all'interno dell'edificio, interrompendo le attività nella sinagoga e seminando il panico tra i fedeli

Secondo la Confederazione venezuelana delle associazioni israelite, altri manifestanti avevano scandito slogan antisemiti e accusato gli ebrei per le violenze in Medio Oriente. Questa confederazione ebraica ha chiesto al presidente Hugo Chavez di garantire la sicurezza nelle sinagoghe.

Nel 2009 un gruppo di persone si era introdotto nella stessa sinagoga, distruggendo oggetti religiosi e scrivendo slogan antisemiti con la vernice spray all'interno dell'edificio. Fatto ancor più preoccupante, era stata rubata una banca dati computerizzata contenente nomi e indirizzi di ebrei. Lo stesso anno erano state interrotte le relazioni tra Israele e il Venezuela a seguito del conflitto a Gaza.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza di questo incidente?

2. Qual è la sua posizione per quanto concerne il trattamento riservato ai cittadini ebrei da parte del governo venezuelano?

3. È disposto il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a sollevare la questione di fronte al governo venezuelano?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza degli incidenti in questione. Stando alle notizie stampa cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, il 23 novembre scorso circa 50 persone hanno manifestato contro le incursioni aeree israeliane nella Striscia di Gaza fuori la più grande sinagoga di Caracas, in Venezuela. Già nel 2009, dopo che il governo venezuelano aveva interrotto le relazioni diplomatiche con Israele per protesta contro l'offensiva militare nella Striscia di Gaza, un gruppo di persone aveva fatto irruzione nella stessa sinagoga. Successivamente le autorità hanno arrestato undici persone, tra cui otto funzionari di polizia, accusate di essere coinvolte nell'incidente.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha più volte sostenuto che tutti i gruppi religiosi del mondo devono potersi riunire e praticare il proprio culto liberamente. L'Unione europea condanna ogni forma di intolleranza e violenza verso le persone per motivi religiosi o di credo, indipendentemente da dove si verificano. Qualsiasi discriminazione o violenza per motivi religiosi è contraria ai valori promossi dall'UE. L'Unione è pronta a intensificare la collaborazione con le autorità per combattere l'intolleranza e tutelare i diritti umani.

Nella dichiarazione all'indomani delle elezioni presidenziali venezuelane dell'8 ottobre 2012, l'AR/VP ha esortato il presidente Chavez a coinvolgere tutti i settori della società venezuelana per rafforzare le istituzioni del paese e promuovere le libertà fondamentali, l'inclusione e lo sviluppo economico sostenibile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010920/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Anti-Israel demonstrators targeting a synagogue in Venezuela

On 23 November 2012, various news agencies reported that many of the 50 people who had come to demonstrate outside the largest synagogue in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, had hurled fireworks into the building. This disrupted activities inside the synagogue and created panic among worshippers.

According to the Venezuelan Confederation of Israelite Associations, other protesters shouted anti-Semitic slogans and condemned Jews for the violence in the Middle East. This Jewish confederation has asked President Hugo Chavez to ensure security at synagogues.

In 2009, a group of intruders broke into the same synagogue, shattering religious objects and spray painting anti-Semitic slogans in the building. More worryingly, a computer database with the names and addresses of Jews was stolen. In the same year, relations were cut between Israel and Venezuela, as a result of the conflict in Gaza.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this incident?

2. What is the position of the VP/HR regarding the Venezuelan Government's treatment of Jewish citizens?

3. Is the VP/HR prepared to raise this issue with the Venezuelan Government?

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

The HR/VP is aware of these incidents. As the Honourable Member indicates, according to press reports, on 23 November about 50 people protested Israel's airstrikes in the Gaza Strip outside the largest synagogue in Caracas, Venezuela. Already in 2009, after the Venezuelan government severed diplomatic ties with Israel in protest over its military offensive on the Gaza Strip, a group of intruders broke into the same synagogue. Authorities later arrested 11 people, including eight police officers, for alleged involvement.

The HR/VP has often underlined the need for all religious groups around the world to be able to gather and worship freely. The EU condemns all forms of intolerance and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place. Any discrimination or violence against an individual because of his/her religious belief runs against the values that the EU upholds. The EU stands ready to enhance its cooperation with governments to combat intolerance and protect human rights.

In her statement following the 8 October 2012 Presidential elections in Venezuela, the HR/VP noted that President Chavez must reach out to all segments of Venezuelan society to strengthen the country's institutions, and promote fundamental freedoms, inclusion and sustainable economic development.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010921/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: EU taxpayers and European Green Capital 2013

The Commission has announced that the French city of Nantes has been awarded the title of European Green Capital 2013.

— How can the Commission justify awarding the title to Nantes, given that a controversial two-runway airport is under construction on protected swampland near the city? This airport will see the expulsion of farmers and their families from the proposed site.

— Would the Commission agree that the 'European Capitals', whether they are capitals of culture, the environment or sport, are discredited vanity projects which should be cut to save money for beleaguered EU taxpayers?

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

The city of Nantes was appointed as the European Green Capital for 2013, based on the analysis of a group of independent environmental experts in 2010 and of 12 indicators covering climate change and energy performance, sustainable local transport, air quality and noise levels, green urban areas and sustainable land use, promotion of nature and biodiversity, waste management, water consumption and waste water treatment, eco-innovation and sustainable employment as well as the environmental management practice of the local authority

(List available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/applying-for-the-award/evaluation-process/index.html).

The Commission believes the European Green Capital Award (EGCA) initiative is a cost-effective way of having pioneering EU cities share their knowledge of global standards for urban sustainability and their innovative solutions to environmental challenges with the rest of Europe.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010922/12
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Procedura infrazione acquavite «da vino»

La Commissione, con parere motivato adottato in esito alla procedura d'infrazione n. 2010/2162, ha dichiarato illegittima la produzione in Francia di acquaviti e/o distillati classificati «da vino», ottenuti dai sottoprodotti della vinificazione consegnati alle distillerie in tutto o in parte in assolvimento dell'obbligo di cui all'articolo 103 tervicies del regolamento CE 491/2009.

Essa ha espresso il parere motivato in data 28 febbraio 2012, richiedendo alle autorità francesi di prendere opportune misure per l'interruzione di tale illegittima produzione entro un termine di due mesi.

Le autorità francesi hanno riconosciuto l'illegittimità della produzione di tali acquaviti ottenute dai sottoprodotti della vinificazione anziché dal vino e hanno accettato di imporre la cessazione di tale produzione a partire dal 1° agosto 2012.

Si chiede alla Commissione quali misure ha adottato, o intende adottare, per assicurare l'osservanza del divieto imposto nel parere motivato e, nello specifico, per impedire che tali acquaviti non conformi al regolamento n. 110/08 siano immesse sul mercato con l'illegittima denominazione di «acquaviti di vino»?

Può rendere noto se ha autorizzato la commercializzazione dei prodotti in oggetto oltre il termine stabilito di due mesi a partire dal 28 febbraio 2012?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione conferma che le autorità francesi, come indicato dall'onorevole parlamentare, hanno risposto al parere motivato in data 24 aprile 2012. In tale occasione, hanno comunicato la decisione di revocare, a partire dal 1° agosto 2012, l'autorizzazione per commercializzare acquaviti e distillati ottenuti da vini di decantazione delle fecce con le denominazioni «acquaviti di vino» e «distillati di vino». È opportuno precisare che l'invio di un parere motivato si è rivelato necessario poiché, in seguito alla lettera di costituzione in mora trasmessa dalla Commissione, che dava avvio al procedimento di infrazione, le autorità francesi hanno messo fine a tale pratica solo per i prodotti ottenuti dalle vinacce e non per quelli ottenuti dalle fecce.

In risposta a un'ulteriore richiesta della Commissione di garanzie sull'efficacia della decisione annunciata, le autorità francesi hanno apportato chiarimenti sull'organizzazione amministrativa e tecnica della misura di revoca dell'autorizzazione, precisando che intendono garantire l'effettiva cessazione di tale pratica mediante controlli sui documenti di accompagnamento e sull'attività delle distillerie (l'obiettivo previsto di programmazione dei controlli è di 3 distillerie su 4 all'anno).

Verranno inoltre riviste le griglie di controllo affinché, nell'ambito delle ispezioni nelle distillerie, si ponga maggiore attenzione alla verifica della cessazione sistematica di questa pratica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010922/12
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Infringement procedure on spirits 'from wine'

The Commission, in a reasoned opinion adopted at the end of infringement procedure No 2010/2162, declared unlawful the production in France of spirits and/or distillates classified as being obtained 'from wine', but which have been made from the by-products of distillation delivered to distilleries in full or in part in line with the requirement laid down in Article 103v of Regulation (EC) No 491/2009.

The Commission delivered this reasoned opinion on 28 February 2012, calling on the French authorities to take appropriate measures to stop this unlawful production within two months.

The French authorities accepted that production of these spirits from the by-products of distillation, instead of from wine, is unlawful and agreed to ban such production from 1 August 2012.

What steps has the Commission taken or will it take to verify compliance with the prohibition imposed in the reasoned opinion and, specifically, to prevent spirits that do not conform to Regulation No 110/08 being unlawfully introduced onto the market as 'spirits from wine'?

Has the Commission authorised marketing of the spirits concerned after the deadline of two months from 28 February 2012?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(31 janvier 2013)

La Commission confirme que, comme indiqué par l'Honorable Parlementaire, les autorités françaises ont communiqué, par note du 24 avril 2012, leur réponse à l'avis motivé en la matière. Par la note en cause, ces autorités informent donc la Commission de leur décision de mettre fin à l'autorisation de la commercialisation, sous la dénomination « eau-de-vie de vin » et « distillat de vin », des eaux-de-vie et distillats produits à partir des vins de décantation des lies, à compter du 1er août 2012. Il convient de noter que l'envoi d'un avis motivé s'était avéré nécessaire car l'envoi par la Commission d'une lettre de mise en demeure, ouvrant la procédure d'infraction, n'avait eu pour effet que d'amener les autorités françaises à faire cesser leur pratique pour les produits obtenus à partir des marcs tout en la maintenant pour ceux obtenus à partir des lies.

En réponse à une demande ultérieure de la Commission de donner des assurances sur l'effectivité de la décision annoncée, les autorités françaises ont donné des éclaircissements sur l'encadrement administratif et technique de la mesure de retrait d'autorisation. Ainsi les autorités françaises ont précisé qu'elles entendent assurer le suivi de la cessation de la pratique au moyen de la surveillance des documents d'accompagnement et du contrôle de l'activité des distilleries (le cadre de contrôle prévoit un objectif de programmation de contrôle de 3 distilleries sur 4 par an).

Un aménagement des grilles de contrôle sera effectué afin qu'une attention particulière soit portée sur la vérification de la cessation de la pratique de façon systématique lors de tout contrôle en distillerie.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010924/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 november 2012)

Betreft: Waarnemersstatus Palestijnen

Eind deze maand ligt het vraagstuk rond de verhoging van de status van Palestina voor in de Verenigde Naties. Sinds 1974 is Palestina, als entiteit, waarnemer bij de VN. President Abbas wil die status in de Algemene Vergadering verhogen tot niet-lidstaat.

Een dergelijke statuswijziging is echter in strijd met de Oslo-akkoorden van 1993. In die akkoorden werden bepaalde onderwerpen uitdrukkelijk van bespreking uitgesloten, zoals de status van Jeruzalem, het nederzettingenbeleid en de vaststelling van de grenzen. Afgesproken werd dat over deze onderwerpen nog nader tussen beide partijen zou worden onderhandeld. Deze onderhandelingen zouden uiteindelijk moeten leiden tot een wederzijdse erkenning van elkaars soevereiniteit.

1. Deelt de Commissie deze visie op de Oslo-akkoorden van 1993?

2. Acht de Commissie de eenzijdige aanvraag van de Palestijnen bij de VN tot statuswijziging verenigbaar met de Oslo-akkoorden van 1993?

Antwoord van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(11 februari 2013)

De Europese Unie was getuige van de interimovereenkomst over de Westelijke Jordaanoever en de Gazastrook („Oslo II"). Bij de stemming over resolutie A/RES/67/19 inzake het verlenen van de status van niet-lidstaat met waarnemersstatus bij de Verenigde Naties aan Palestina op 29 november 2012 in de Algemene Vergadering van de VN stemde een meerderheid van de EU-lidstaten (veertien) voor de resolutie, met twaalf onthoudingen en één stem tegen. De Europese Unie heeft bij de Palestijnse leiders erop aangedrongen deze nieuwe status constructief te gebruiken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010924/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Palestine's observer status

At the end of this month the issue of raising Palestine's status at the United Nations is to be debated. Since 1974, Palestine, as an entity, has been an observer at the UN. President Abbas wants that status to be upgraded in the General Assembly to non-member state.

This change in status is, however, contrary to the 1993 Oslo Accords. Certain topics were specifically excluded from discussion in these Accords, such as the status of Jerusalem, the settlement policy and the demarcation of borders. It was agreed that these issues were still to be negotiated in greater detail between the two parties. These negotiations were intended to eventually lead to the mutual recognition of each party's sovereignty.

1. Does the Commission agree with this view of the 1993 Oslo Accords?

2. Does the Commission consider that the unilateral request by the Palestinians at the UN for a change in status is compatible with the 1993 Oslo Accords?

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

The European Union was a witness to the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip ('Oslo II'). In the vote on resolution A/RES/67/19 on the granting of non-member observer State status in the United Nations to Palestine on 29 November 2012 in the UN General Assembly, a majority of EU member states (14) voted in favour of the resolution, with 12 abstaining and one voting against. The European Union has called on the Palestinian leadership to use constructively this new status.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010925/12
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D) şi Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(30 noiembrie 2012)

Subiect: Sectorul produselor lactate

În anul 2008 s-a ajuns la un acord în cadrul Consiliului privind abolirea cotelor de lapte după 2015. Mai multe state membre au fost de acord asupra unui compromis, cu condiția ca toți producătorii din Uniune să beneficieze de măsuri adecvate, care să asigure o tranziție lină către o piață liberalizată a produselor lactate.

Din cauza concurenței de pe piață și a scăderii cererii, laptele provenit de pe piața Uniunii este adeseori vândut la prețuri foarte mici, iar producătorii de lapte nu își mai pot acoperi costurile de producție.

Regulamentul privind relațiile contractuale în sectorul laptelui propune soluții numai pentru câteva dintre problemele cu care se confruntă producătorii, multe dintre aspecte rămânând practic nerezolvate și ducând la proteste vehemente din partea acestora, cum au fost cele din ultimele zile.

Având în vedere că în 2015 se va liberaliza piața laptelui, ce măsuri va adopta Comisia, astfel încât să se evite apariția unor crize precum cea din 2008 și să se ofere stabilitate și predictibilitate acestui sector?

Răspuns dat de domnul Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(31 ianuarie 2013)

„Pachetul privind laptele", care a urmat concluziilor grupului de experți la nivel înalt pentru sectorul laptelui, are ca scop tocmai îmbunătățirea poziției producătorilor de lapte în lanțul de aprovizionare cu produse lactate și pregătirea sectorului pentru un viitor mai sustenabil și mai orientat spre piață după eliminarea sistemului de cote în 2015. Deoarece pachetul a început să se aplice în întregime de abia de la 3 octombrie 2012, este prea devreme pentru a trage concluzii despre eficacitatea sa în ceea ce privește stabilitatea sectorului european al produselor lactate.

Pe lângă instrumentele introduse de pachetul privind laptele, pentru sectorul produselor lactate sunt disponibile și alte măsuri: măsuri tip „plasă de siguranță" sub forma unor instrumente de gestionare a pieței și mecanisme de soluționare a crizelor, plăți directe pentru producători și măsuri de dezvoltare rurală.

În plus, având în vedere raportul prevăzut pentru 2014 în pachetul privind laptele, Comisia a lansat în această vară o cerere de oferte pentru a obține o analiză prospectivă referitoare la cea mai probabilă evoluție a sectorului, bazată pe punctele de vedere ale unor experți independenți, în viitorul context fără cote. Studiul, care urmează să fie finalizat până în vara anului 2013, va aborda în special următoarele două teme:

a) echilibrul pieței și competitivitatea;

b) producția durabilă de lapte, inclusiv dimensiunea sa teritorială.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010925/12
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D) and Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Milk products sector

In 2008, agreement was reached in the Council to abolish milk quotas as from 2015. Several Member States agreed to a compromise deal, on condition that all EU producers were covered by suitable measures to ensure a smooth transition towards an open market for dairy products.

Owing to competition on the market and the fall in demand, milk products originating from the EU market are sometimes sold at very low prices, and dairy producers are unable to cover their production costs.

The regulation on contractual relations in the milk sector only provides solutions for some of the problems faced by producers, leaving many aspects unresolved in practice and sparking fierce protests from producers, such as those seen recently.

Since the milk market is to be fully opened to competition in 2015, what steps will the Commission take to avert a crisis such as that in 2008 and ensure the stability and predictability of the milk sector?

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

The Milk Package, which followed the conclusions of the High Level Experts' Group on Milk, precisely aims at improving the position of milk producers in the dairy supply chain and preparing the sector for a more market-oriented and sustainable future, following the end of the quota system in 2015. Being fully applicable only since 3 October 2012, it is too early to judge its effectiveness on the stability of the European dairy sector.

Apart from the instruments introduced by the Milk Package, a number of other measures are available for the dairy sector: safety net measures in the form of market management tools and crisis mechanisms, direct payments for producers and rural development measures.

In addition in the light of the report foreseen in the Milk Package for 2014, the Commission has launched this summer a call for tender to obtain a prospective analysis on the most likely evolution of the sector based on the viewpoints of a number of independent experts in the future context without quotas. The study, which is expected to be finalised by the summer 2013, will address the following two themes in particular:

a) market balance and competitiveness;

b) sustainable milk production including its territorial dimension.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-010926/12
komissiolle
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(30. marraskuuta 2012)

Aihe: Tiedonkeruun yhtenäistäminen EU:n alueella koskien ihmiskaupan uhreja

Maailman talouskriisi on lisännyt ihmiskauppaa kaikkialla, eikä Eurooppa ole tässä poikkeus. Euroopan unionin jäsenvaltioita on niin ihmiskaupan lähtö- kuin myös kohdemaina. Monet uhreista on houkuteltu toiseen maahan lupauksilla paremmasta elämästä ja ulospääsyllä kurjuudesta. Nämä lupaukset ovat usein perusteettomia ja johtavat henkilön hyväksikäyttöön orjatyössä tehtaassa tai prostituoituna.

Vaikka ihmiskauppa koskettaa jokaista unionin jäsenvaltiota, on sen tilastoiminen ja sitä koskeva tiedonkeruu kuitenkin hyvin pirstaloitunutta, ja tämän seurauksena ratkaisun löytäminen tulee entistä haasteellisemmaksi. Tällä hetkellä Euroopan unionissa ei ole ihmiskaupan uhreista yhtenäistä tiedonkeruuta, joka kattaisi kaikki unionin jäsenvaltiot.

Millaisiin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä, jotta EU:n jäsenvaltioista olisi mahdollista saada keskitettyä tilastotietoa ihmiskaupasta ja ihmiskaupan uhreista ja että unionin alueella yhtenäistettäisiin tiedonkeruuta ihmiskaupasta?

Cecilia Malmströmin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(10. tammikuuta 2013)

EU:n tasolla on myönnetty, että tehokas vastaaminen politiikan tarpeisiin edellyttää ihmiskauppaa koskevaa vertailukelpoista tietoa. Tätä korostetaan myös rikollisuuden mittaamista EU:ssa käsittelevässä komission tiedonannossa ([1]), johon sisältyy vuosia 2011-2015 koskeva toimintasuunnitelma tiedon keräämiseksi useiden indikaattorien perusteella. Kuten ihmiskaupan hävittämiseen tähtäävässä EU:n strategiassa ([2]) todetaan, komissio luo yhdessä jäsenvaltioiden kanssa EU:n laajuisen järjestelmän iän ja sukupuolen mukaan eriteltyjen tietojen keräämistä ja julkaisemista varten. Sisäisen ihmiskaupan virtojen ja suuntausten ymmärtäminen on tärkeä osa tätä työtä.

Komission syyskuussa 2011 keräämien tietojen analyysin alustavat tulokset osoittavat, että vuosina 2008-2010 naispuolisten uhrien osuus oli 79 prosenttia (joista 12 prosenttia tyttöjä) ja miespuolisten uhrien osuus 21 prosenttia (joista 3 prosenttia poikia). Useimmat jäsenvaltiot ilmoittivat, että valtaosa uhreista on lähtöisin muista EU-maista, lähinnä Romaniasta, Bulgariasta. Komissio aikoo tehdä vuoden 2013 alussa toteutettavaksi tarkoitetusta analyysista saatavien yksityiskohtaisempien tulosten pohjalta yhteistyötä kansallisten raportoijien kanssa varmistaakseen, että vuodet 2011 ja 2012 kattavassa seuranta-aloitteessa kerätään vertailukelpoisia ja luotettavia tietoja. Tulosten pitäisi olla tiedossa vuonna 2014.

Komissio viittaa lisäksi vastauksiin, jotka se on antanut kirjallisiin kysymyksiin E-006480/12, E-006490/12, E-006553/12, E-006561/12, E-006593/12, E-006675/12, E-006590/12 ja E-007118/12.

([1]) Rikollisuuden mittaaminen EU:ssa: tilastollinen toimintasuunnitelma vuosiksi 2011-2015, KOM(2011) 713 lopullinen.
([2]) Ihmiskaupan hävittämiseen tähtäävä EU:n strategia vuosiksi 2012-2016, COM(2012) 286 lopullinen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010926/12
to the Commission
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Harmonisation of data collection on victims of human trafficking in the EU

The global economic crisis has increased trafficking in human beings everywhere, and Europe is no exception. Some Member States of the European Union are both countries of origin and countries of destination for trafficking. Many of the victims are lured into travelling abroad by the promise of a better life and an escape from poverty. These promises are often baseless and lead to the person being exploited as slave labour in a factory or as a prostitute.

Although the traffic in human beings affects every Member State of the Union, the compilation of statistics and collection of data on this topic is very fragmented, and as a result it is becoming more challenging to find a solution. At present there is no EU-wide harmonised data collection, covering all the Member States, on the victims of human trafficking.

What measures does the Commission propose to take to enable centralised statistics on human trafficking and its victims to be obtained from the EU Member States, and to enable data collection on the traffic in human beings to be harmonised throughout the Union?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2013)

The need for comparable data on trafficking in human beings to effectively respond to policy needs has been recognised in the EU and was emphasised in the Commission Communication on measuring crime in the EU ([1]) that included an Action Plan for 2011-2015 to collect data on a number of indicators. As set out in the EU Strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings ([2]), the Commission, together with the Member States, will develop an EU-wide system for the collection and publication of data broken down according to age and gender. Understanding the flows and trends of internal trafficking will be an important part of this work.

Preliminary analysis of the first data collection exercise undertaken by the Commission in September 2011 reveals that in 2008-2010 female victims accounted for 79% (of whom 12% girls) and male victims for 21% (of whom 3% were boys). Most Member States reported that most victims come from within the EU, mainly from Romania and Bulgaria. Based on more detailed results of the analysis expected at the beginning of 2013, the Commission will work with national rapporteurs to ensure comparable, reliable data are collected in the follow-up initiative covering the years 2011 and 2012. Results are expected in 2014.

The Commission further refers to its answers to written questions E-006480/12, E-006490/12, E-006553/12, E-006561/12, E-006593/12, E-006675/12, E-006590/12 and E-007118/12.

([1]) Measuring Crime in the EU: Statistics Action Plan 2011- 2015 COM(2011) 713 final.
([2]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012)286 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010927/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Daimler's attempt to defy EC law on mobile air conditioning

The Commission will be aware of the legislation requiring from 1 January 2011 the use in new types of car of a refrigerant in mobile air conditioning systems with a global warming potential (GWP) that does not exceed 150.

Further to Commissioner Tajani's answer of 1 August 2012 to Written Question P-006586/2012, in which it was made clear that due to the apparent shortage of available refrigerants the Commission was refraining from launching infringement procedures before 31 December 2012, the Commission will now be aware not only that the manufacturers claim that refrigerant HFC1234yf is currently available in sufficient quantities to meet all demands, but that they have never failed to meet the demand for any order of the refrigerant once firmly placed.

The Commission will also be aware that Daimler, after years of prevarication and obfuscation about how it intends to comply with the legislation on mobile air conditioning, has carried out a spurious test intended to demonstrate that under circumstances anticipated by no other manufacturer it is possible to ignite HFC1234yf at extremely high temperatures, and that it is now claiming that use of the product is unsafe. In a press release issued on behalf of Daimler on 29 November 2012, the VDA (German Association of the Automotive Industry) demanded at least another six months' moratorium on implementation of the directive and declined even to commit to implementation after this period.

Daimler, which claims to be a leader in the field of engineering, appears to have found itself utterly incapable and inadequate to the task of meeting the requirements of the legislation, although its competitors appear to have few such problems.

Daimler has, in effect, issued a challenge to the Commission and to EC law, and is clearly seeking to gain a competitive advantage at the expense of other car manufacturers. Will the Commission make it clear now that it will not be deterred by the actions of this criminal company, but from 1 January 2013 will commence infringement actions against any Member State that fails to verify that car production conforms to the requirements of the legislation?

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

Directive 2006/40/EC stipulates that, as of 1 January 2011, Mobile Air Conditioning Systems (MAC) of newly approved vehicle types have to be filled with a refrigerant with a low global warming potential (GWP). The directive does not prescribe any particular refrigerant or system to fulfil this obligation. Exclusively due to supply problems of the gas HFO 1234yf, the Commission has agreed not to launch infringement procedures in cases where the vehicle production would continue to be done with the R134a coolant. The Commission established that this would apply strictly until the problems of supply were solved and that with the limit of 31 December 2012.

As of 1 January 2013 all economic operators will need to fully comply with Directive 2006/40/EC. In practice, this means a ban on MAC systems using a gas with a GWP exceeding 150 in newly type-approved vehicles, that is, M1 and N1 vehicles type-approved after 1 January 2011. The ban includes MAC systems using the gas R134a.

If one or more Member States fail to implement the directive after 1 January 2013, the Commission will take the necessary steps to ensure full compliance with EC law. This information was transmitted by the Commission to the Member States' representatives at the meeting of the Technical Committee for Motor Vehicles on 19 December 2012. Following this, the German authorities have proposed the Commission that an individual solution be found for the manufacturer which encountered safety problems with the use of the gas HFO 1234yf in its vehicles. This request is still being analised by the Commission.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010928/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Votación en la Asamblea General de la ONU sobre Palestina como Miembro Observador

El jueves 29 de noviembre se vota en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas una moción sobre la concesión a Palestina del estatuto de miembro observador. Esta es una oportunidad histórica para avanzar hacia la única solución posible del conflicto entre Israel y Palestina: la creación definitiva del Estado palestino con las fronteras previas a 1967.

Uno de los problemas principales para la resolución del conflicto es la impunidad permanente con la que el Gobierno de Israel actúa en territorios ocupados. El reconocimiento a Palestina como Miembro Observador, puede resultar fundamental para la denuncia y persecución efectiva de los crímenes de guerra cometidos por Israel. Este reconocimiento a Palestina supondría un verdadero avance en el respeto universal a los derechos humanos y un paso más hacia el final de la impunidad de los crímenes de guerra en la región. Estos crímenes, el incumplimiento de las Resoluciones del Consejo de Seguridad y de la propia Carta de las Naciones Unidas, el impedimento a realizar lo establecido en acuerdos internacionales firmados como el de Anápolis y que recogen lo necesario para una hoja de ruta en la creación del Estado palestino, el mantenimiento de un bloqueo ilegal sobre la Franja de Gaza, etc., son muchas de las agresiones que en la actualidad están quedando totalmente impunes y que con el estatus de miembro observador pueden ser denunciadas ante la Corte Penal Internacional.

En ese contexto, la creación definitiva del Estado palestino con las fronteras del 67 y Jerusalén Este como capital, resulta la única solución legal y legítima al conflicto como ha afirmado hoy mismo la Sra. Ashton. Con respecto a dichas declaraciones realizadas por la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante preguntamos lo siguiente.

¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante exigir a Israel el desmantelamiento de infraestructuras y asentamientos construidos dentro de las fronteras del Estado palestino? ¿Qué medidas concretas piensa desarrollar para el reconocimiento de Palestina como miembro de pleno derecho en las Naciones Unidas? ¿Considera la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel hasta que respete las fronteras del Estado palestino?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de febrero de 2013)

En lo que se refiere a los asentamientos israelíes en los territorios palestinos ocupados, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha pedido con frecuencia a Israel que paralice toda la construcción de asentamientos y desmantele los enclaves construidos desde marzo de 2001, en cumplimiento de las obligaciones de Israel con arreglo a la Hoja de Ruta. En los casos de expansión de los asentamientos, ha pedido insistentemente a Israel que diese marcha atrás. En las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores, celebrado el 10 de diciembre de 2012, sobre el proceso de paz en Oriente Medio (PPOM), se reafirmó la política de la UE en la cuestión de los asentamientos y se repitió que para la UE «todo asentamiento es ilegal bajo el Derecho internacional y representa un obstáculo para la paz». La UE se comprometió asimismo a seguir de cerca la situación y sus repercusiones generales, y a actuar en consecuencia.

Por lo que se refiere al asunto del reconocimiento de Palestina, la UE ha expresado en reiteradas ocasiones su apoyo y su deseo en favor de que Palestina se convierta en miembro de pleno derecho de las Naciones Unidas como parte de una solución para el conflicto israelo-palestino. La UE ha trabajado sin tregua para alentar los esfuerzos de la Autoridad Palestina en favor de la creación de un Estado, y seguirá haciéndolo. En este contexto, resulta fundamental una solución negociada al conflicto cuyo fruto sea la convivencia de dos Estados en condiciones de paz y seguridad.

La posición de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta con respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel ya se expuso en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E 010294/2011 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010928/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Vote in the UN General Assembly on Palestine as an observer state

On Thursday 29 November the United Nations General Assembly will vote on a motion to grant Palestine observer state status. This is a historic opportunity to move ahead towards the only possible solution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine: the definitive creation of a Palestinian state with pre-1967 borders.

One of the main obstacles to the resolution of this conflict is the permanent impunity with which Israel behaves in the Occupied Territories. Recognition of Palestine as an observer state could be of fundamental importance in denouncing and effectively prosecuting the war crimes committed by Israel. Such recognition of Palestine would be a real landmark in universal respect for human rights and a further step towards an end to impunity for war crimes in the region. These crimes, together with the failure to comply with the UN Security Council's resolutions and the UN Charter, obstruction of the implementation of international agreements such as those signed in Annapolis, which recognise the need for a road map towards the creation of a Palestinian State, and the continued illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip, are among the many acts of aggression which currently remain unpunished and which, with observer state status, could be taken before the International Criminal Court.

In this context, the definitive creation of the State of Palestine with pre-1967 boundaries and East Jerusalem as its capital is, as Ms Ashton has today stated, the only legal and legitimate solution to the conflict. With these declarations by the Vice-President/High Representative in mind, I wish to ask:

Does the VP/HR intend to call on Israel to dismantle the infrastructure and settlements which it has built within the frontiers of the Palestinian State? What concrete measures does she intend to develop to achieve the recognition of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations? Is she considering the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement until such time as the latter country respects the frontiers of the Palestinian State?

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

Regarding Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, the High Representative/Vice-President has frequently called on Israel to freeze all settlement construction and dismantle those outposts erected since March 2001, in line with Israel's obligations under the Roadmap. Where settlements have been expanded she has consistently called on Israel to reverse such decisions. The 10 December 2012 Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) reaffirmed EU policy towards the issue of settlements, once again reiterating that the EU considers that 'settlements are illegal under international law and constitute and obstacle to peace'. The EU also expressed its commitment to 'closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and act accordingly'.

As regards the matter of the recognition of Palestine, the EU has repeatedly expressed its support and wish for Palestine to become a full member of the United Nations as part of a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The EU has also consistently worked to advance the Palestinian Authority's state-building efforts and will continue to do so. In this context, a negotiated solution to the conflict, leading to two states living side by side in peace and security is essential.

The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to previous Written Question E-010294/2011 ([1]).

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010929/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 novembre 2012)

Objet: Promotion de l'entrepreneuriat social

Les entreprises de l'économie sociale emploient plus de 11 millions de personnes dans l'Union, ce qui représente 6 % de l'ensemble de la main-d'œuvre et 10 % de l'ensemble des entreprises européennes, soit 2 millions d'entreprises. Elles apportent dès lors une contribution importante au modèle social européen et à la stratégie Europe 2020.

1. La Commission a annoncé, à l'époque, vouloir présenter une proposition en vue de la simplification du règlement relatif au statut de la société coopérative européenne. Qu'en est-il?

2. La Commission s'était engagée (COM(2004)0018) à mettre en œuvre douze initiatives visant à soutenir le développement des coopératives. Cependant, jusqu'ici, peu de progrès semblent avoir été accomplis à cet égard. Qu'en est-il? Un rapport d'évaluation a-t-il été rédigé?

3. Conformément à l'initiative de 2004, la Commission envisage-t-elle des mesures supplémentaires visant à améliorer les conditions de fonctionnement des coopératives, mutuelles, associations et fondations, de façon à soutenir le développement de l'économie sociale en général?

4. Le Parlement a demandé à la Commission qu'une étude comparative soit engagée et menée en coopération avec les entreprises sociales, concernant les différents cadres juridiques nationaux et régionaux dans l'ensemble de l'Union, et les conditions de fonctionnement des entreprises sociales et leurs caractéristiques, y compris leur taille et leur champ d'activité, en ce qui concerne les systèmes nationaux de certification et d'étiquetage. La Commission va-t-elle accéder à la demande du Parlement sur ce sujet?

5. La Commission partage-t-elle la position du Parlement quant à l'opportunité du développement d'un «label social européen» destiné aux entreprises sociales, afin d'assurer un meilleur accès aux marchés publics novateurs sur le plan social, sans enfreindre les règles de concurrence? Suggère-t-elle que les entreprises portant un tel label fassent l'objet d'une surveillance régulière quant au respect des dispositions définies dans le label? Si oui, la Commission compte-t-elle en faire la promotion?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(22 février 2013)

1. Dans le «plan d'action: droit européen des sociétés et gouvernance d'entreprise» ([1]) présenté par la Commission, il est indiqué que ([2]) la complexité du règlement relatif au statut de la société coopérative européenne est considérée comme l'un des facteurs qui expliquent la faible utilisation de cet instrument (25 sociétés coopératives européennes seulement ont été constituées jusqu'en juillet 2012), l'autre étant le manque de sensibilisation à l'existence de cet instrument et la compréhension insuffisante de ses avantages pour les PME. La Commission envisage actuellement diverses options pour résoudre ces problèmes.

2. Toutes les actions prévues dans la communication de 2004 ont été achevées et les informations pertinentes se trouvent sur le site web de la Commission consacré à l'économie sociale ([3]).

3. En ce qui concerne l'idée d'un statut européen des mutuelles, la Commission procédera à une consultation publique sur les recommandations d'une étude ([4]) qu'elle a financée afin de disposer d'une position solide pour les prochaines étapes. Le besoin d'un statut européen des organisations à but non lucratif sera discuté après l'adoption par le Conseil du projet de statut de la fondation européenne.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/modern/index_fr.htm
([2]) Le sujet a été discuté lors de deux grandes conférences qui se sont tenues à Bruxelles en avril 2012 et à Nicosie en septembre 2012 dans le contexte de l'année internationale des coopératives des Nations unies. Voir aussi la consultation:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/public-consultation/past-consultations/index_fr.htm
et le document:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0072:FIN:FR:PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/co-operatives/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/mutuals/prospects_mutuals_fin_en.pdf

4.-5. La Commission prévoit de lancer bientôt une étude visant à établir la cartographie des entreprises sociales en Europe, qui donnera une vue d'ensemble détaillée de leurs caractéristiques, de leur modèle d'entreprise, de leur poids économique, de leurs cadres juridiques ainsi que des systèmes de label existants. Cette étude, avec le futur avis du Comité économique et social européen à ce sujet et les travaux en cours sur la mesure de l'incidence des entreprises sociales, fournira aussi à la Commission des informations pour les prochaines étapes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010929/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Promoting social entrepreneurship

Social economy enterprises employ over 11 million people in the EU, which accounts for 6% of the entire workforce and 10% of all European enterprises, that is 2 million enterprises. They therefore provide an important contribution to the European social model and the Europe 2020 strategy.

1. At the time, the Commission announced its intention to present a proposal for simplification of the regulation on the Statute for a European Cooperative Society. What progress has been made in this regard?

2. The Commission undertook (COM(2004)0018) to put in place 12 initiatives aimed at supporting the development of cooperatives. However, so far, little progress seems to have been made in this regard. Where are we on this? Has an evaluation report been drafted?

3. In accordance with the 2004 initiative, does the Commission plan to propose additional measures aimed at improving the operating conditions of cooperatives, mutual societies, associations and foundations in order to support the development of the social economy in general?

4. Parliament has asked the Commission to undertake and lead a comparative study, in cooperation with social enterprises, on the different national and regional legal frameworks throughout the EU, and the operating conditions and characteristics of social enterprises, including their size and field of activity, with regard to national certification and labelling systems. Will the Commission agree to Parliament's request on this matter?

5. Does the Commission share Parliament's position with regard to the development of a 'European social label' intended for social enterprises in order to ensure better access to innovative public contracts in social terms without breaching competition rules? Would it suggest that enterprises holding such a label should be subject to regular monitoring to ensure that the provisions defined in this label are respected? If so, does the Commission intend to promote this?

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

1. In the 'Commission's Action Plan: European company law and corporate governance' ([1]) it is stated that ([2]) the complexity of the SCE Regulation is considered to be one factor explaining the weak use of this instrument (only 25 SCEs incorporated until July 2012), the other being the lack of awareness of the existence of this instrument and of understanding of its benefits for SMEs. The Commission is currently considering different options to address these difficulties.

2. All actions foreseen in the communication of 2004 were completed and the relevant information is in Commission's website on social economy ([3]).

3. Concerning the idea of a European Mutual statute, the Commission will proceed to a public consultation on the recommendations of a study ([4]) that it financed in order to be able to take a solid position as to the next steps. The need for a possible European statute for non-profit organisations will be discussed after the adoption by the Council of the draft European Foundation statute.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/modern/index_en.htm#actionplan2012.
([2]) The subject was discussed in two large conferences held during the 2012 UN International Year of Cooperatives in Brussels April 2012, Nicosia September 2012 See also consultation http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/public-consultation/past-consultations/index_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/smes/1_en_act_part1_v7_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/mutuals/prospects_mutuals_fin_en.pdf

4 and 5. The Commission is planning to launch soon a mapping study on social enterprises in Europe that will give a detailed overview of their characteristics, business model, economic weight, legal frameworks as well as existing labelling systems. This study, along with the future opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the subject and the ongoing work on impact measurement of social enterprises will also inform the Commission as to the next steps.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010930/12
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(30 novembre 2012)

Objet: Dates d'ouverture de chasse dans les États membres

Chaque année, l'État français doit faire face à un contentieux sur les dates d'ouverture de la chasse aux oiseaux migrateurs et au gibier d'eau.

Ainsi, le Conseil d'État français doit, tous les ans, statuer sur cette question relative à l'application de la directive 2009/147/CE du 30 novembre 2009 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages. Le 7 novembre 2012, le Conseil d'État a annulé un arrêté du ministre de l'écologie, du développement durable, des transports et du logement relatif au prélèvement autorisé de l'oie cendrée, de l'oie rieuse et de l'oie des moussons au cours du mois de février. Les prélèvements étaient limités à quinze oies par département pour treize départements pour la période allant du 1er au 10 février 2012.

La Commission peut-elle nous dire quelle est la situation dans les autres États membres concernant les dates d'ouverture de chasse aux oiseaux migrateurs et l'application de la directive 2009/147/CE?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(21 janvier 2013)

Les périodes d'ouverture de la chasse doivent respecter les dispositions de l'article 7 de la directive «Oiseaux» ([1]). Il n'existe pas d'obligation concernant la durée de la période pendant laquelle elles sont applicables. La situation varie considérablement d'un État membre à l'autre. Les périodes d'ouverture sont fixées chaque année dans certains États membres tels que la France, l'Italie et le Portugal, tandis qu'elles sont établies plus d'un an à l'avance dans de nombreux autres États membres, soit pour une durée déterminée (tous les trois à cinq ans) comme au Danemark et en Belgique, soit lorsque cela est jugé nécessaire comme en République tchèque, en Estonie, en Hongrie, en Lettonie, en Pologne, en Slovaquie, en Slovénie, en Suède et en Roumanie.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 30 novembre 2009 concernant la conservation des oiseaux sauvages (version codifiée), JO L 20 du 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010930/12
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Opening of the hunting season in the Member States

Each year, France is faced with a legal dispute about the opening dates of the hunting season for migratory birds and waterfowl.

Accordingly, every year, the French *conseil d'Etat* must has to give a ruling on this matter in the light of Directive 2009/147/CE of 30 November 2009 concerning the conservation of wild birds. On 7 November 2012, the *conseil d'Etat* annulled an order from the Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing on the authorised culling of the Greylag Goose, the White-Fronted Goose and the Bean Goose during the month of February. The cull was limited to fifteen geese per *département* for thirteen *départments* for the period from 1 to 10 February 2012.

Would the Commission state what is the situation in the other Member States on the opening dates of the hunting season for migratory birds and the application of Directive 2009/1477/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2013)

The open hunting periods have to respect the provisions of Article 7 of the Birds Directive ([1]). There is no requirement regarding the length of the period during which they are applicable. The situation varies a great deal between Member States. Open seasons are decided annually in some Members States such as France, Italy, and Portugal whereas they are set for more than one year in advance in many other Member States, either for a fixed period (every three to five years) such as in Denmark and Belgium, or when deemed necessary as in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Romania.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010931/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Amianto: smaltimento e nuove tecniche di inertizzazione

Da decenni, ormai, lo smaltimento dell'amianto è uno dei problemi centrali sul quale scienziati e politici dibattono al fine di trovare una soluzione univoca, considerati gli effetti nocivi delle fibre di amianto sul corpo umano che si manifestano decenni dopo l'esposizione. Studi recenti hanno stimato che tra il 2015 e il 2020 ci sarà un picco di patologie correlate all'asbesto (asbestosi e mesotelioma) e che possono esserne colpiti oltre 300 000 cittadini. Lo smaltimento corretto dei materiali contenenti fibre di amianto è quindi prioritario e deve essere effettuato secondo i criteri disposti dalle normative nazionali e comunitarie in materia.

Al dipartimento di Chimica dell'Università di Bologna hanno sperimentato un sistema di trasformazione di manufatti cemento-amianto, utilizzando siero di latte esausto. La tecnica prevede due passaggi fondamentali: inizialmente vengono poste in un reattore in vetroresina a temperatura ambiente una tonnellata di eternit (cemento + amianto) e 10 tonnellate di siero di latte; dalla loro reazione si libera CO_2 e si producono acqua, ioni calcio e fibre di amianto, che si depositano sul fondo; la seconda fase prevede che le fibre vengano trattate per quattro ore a una temperatura di 150-180 gradi e venga prodotta una soluzione di ioni metallici recuperabili per via elettrochimica nonché fosfati, silicati e batteri morti utilizzabili come fertilizzanti. Attualmente, in alcuni Paesi del nord Europa, l'amianto viene smaltito utilizzando trattamenti termici a temperature elevate, che implicano anche emissioni di gas inquinanti nell'atmosfera, oppure vengono seguiti procedimenti fisici che prevedono l'impiego di reagenti acidi e producono scorie difficilmente smaltibili.

Considerato che:

— l'amianto è dannoso per la salute umana e l'inalazione delle sue fibre può causare patologie anche decenni dopo l'esposizione professionale e ambientale o familiare;

— la ricerca scientifica cerca di trovare un metodo efficace per rendere inerte l'amianto;

— in Italia, ad esempio, nel solo 2009 sono state prodotte 378 914 tonnellate di rifiuti contenenti amianto;

l'interrogante si rivolge alla Commissione per sapere:

— se intenda concorrere attivamente alla riduzione della presenza ambientale di contaminazione da amianto;

— se sia al corrente delle nuove tecniche sperimentate per rendere l'amianto inerte;

— se intenda incentivare la ricerca scientifica, anche nell'ottica di Europa 2020, al fine di trovare metodi che comportino il minor impatto possibile sull'ambiente e sulla salute umana e possano costituire la soluzione definitiva allo smaltimento di tale materiale.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

Attualmente la Commissione non prevede piani o programmi destinati in modo particolare allo smaltimento dei rifiuti costituiti da amianto.

Le attività di ricerca e dimostrazione sulle tecnologie innovative per lo smaltimento sicuro di amianto sono ammissibili ai finanziamenti previsti nell'ambito della futura iniziativa Orizzonte 2020 o del programma LIFE+. Tuttavia, poiché i rischi per la salute connessi all'esposizione all'amianto sono noti e detta esposizione dovrebbe diminuire grazie alla vigente normativa, in questa fase la Commissione non considera la possibilità di continuare a sostenere la ricerca su tali rischi per l'ambiente e per la salute.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010931/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Asbestos: disposal and new inerting techniques

For decades now, given the harmful effects of asbestos fibres on the human body that develop decades after original exposure, finding a single solution to the disposal of asbestos has been one of the central issues debated by scientists and politicians. Recent studies have estimated that between 2015 and 2020 there will be a peak in asbestos-related illnesses (asbestosis and mesothelioma) and that over 300 000 people could be affected. The correct disposal of materials containing asbestos fibres is therefore a priority and must be carried out in accordance with the criteria set by the relevant national and European laws.

The Department of Chemistry of the University of Bologna has tested a system that transforms cement-asbestos products using waste milk whey. The technology involves two main stages: firstly, a tonne of eternit (cement and asbestos) and 10 tonnes of whey are placed in a fibreglass reactor at room temperature; their reaction releases CO_2 and produces water, calcium ions and asbestos fibres, which sink to the bottom; the second stage involves the fibres being treated for four hours at a temperature of 150-180 degrees and results in a solution of metallic ions that can be retrieved electrochemically, as well as phosphates, silicates and dead bacteria that can be used as fertiliser. Currently, in several countries in northern Europe, asbestos is disposed of using thermal treatments at high temperatures, which result in polluting gases being released into the atmosphere. Alternatively physical processes are used that involve the use of acid reagents and produce waste materials that are difficult to dispose of.

Given that:

— asbestos poses a danger to human health and inhaling its fibres can cause illnesses even decades after professional, environmental or domestic exposure;

— scientific research is seeking an effective method of rendering asbestos safe;

— in Italy, for example, in 2009 alone, 378 914 tonnes of waste containing asbestos were produced;

could the Commission state whether:

— it intends to actively contribute to reducing the environmental presence of asbestos contamination;

— it is aware of the new experimental techniques for rendering asbestos safe;

— it intends to boost scientific research, as part of the Europe 2020 framework, in order to find methods that involve the least possible impact on the environment and on human health and can constitute a definitive solution for the disposal of this material.

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

Currently the Commission does not envisage any plans or programmes aimed specifically at the disposal of asbestos waste.

Research and demonstration on innovative technologies for safe disposal of asbestos are eligible for funding in the upcoming Horizon 2020 or the LIFE+ programme. However as the health impacts of exposure to asbestos are known and exposures are likely to decrease thanks to legislation in place the Commission is not currently considering supporting further research on the related environmental and health risks.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010933/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: La battaglia commerciale tra UE e Cina sui pannelli fotovoltaici: quali controlli?

I rapporti commerciali tra Unione europea e Cina in materia di pannelli fotovoltaici sono sul filo del rasoio. La battaglia per la risoluzione delle dispute commerciali si apre su due fronti: in Europa, con le inchieste antidumping sulle sovvenzioni cinesi alle cellule fotovoltaiche, e davanti all'OMC, dove la Cina si oppone con una denuncia per incongruenza di alcuni programmi tariffari di «conto energia» rispetto alle disposizioni internazionali.

È noto che, sia in Europa che negli Stati Uniti, molte imprese locali hanno dovuto chiudere sotto il peso della concorrenza asiatica. Secondo il rapporto della GTM Research, sono 180 le industrie mondiali del fotovoltaico oggi dichiarate «zombie», in netta perdita e che presumibilmente tra il 2012 ed il 2015 spariranno del tutto. Sempre secondo GTM, le prime aziende a chiudere saranno le 88 che si trovano nei paesi dove la produzione costa maggiormente: Europa, Usa e Canada, dove i costi superano gli 80 centesimi di dollaro per watt (in Cina 58 cent).

In Europa si cerca di far fronte a tale situazione sviluppando nuovi metodi di produzione di cellule fotovoltaiche. La tecnica oggetto di studio prevede di attivare il gas silano con dei fili caldi a resistenza, anziché con il plasma. In questo modo è possibile usare quasi tutto il gas silano, quindi si recupera l'85-90 per cento del gas che è di per sé molto costoso; così, inoltre, i rendimenti raggiungono il 23 % (11-16 % la media attuale) e si riducono i costi complessivi di produzione degli strati di oltre il 50 %.

Considerato che:

— i bassi prezzi delle merci cinesi nel medio termine possono essere svantaggiosi per le stesse industrie di Pechino;

— il mercato europeo è un fondamentale luogo di sbarco per i prodotti cinesi a basso costo,

sono a chiedere alla Commissione se:

— è stata presa in considerazione l'ipotesi di adottare misure volte a proteggere il mercato europeo dall'importazione di prodotti asiatici fotovoltaici (così come già avvenuto in America);

— come intenda dare seguito alla strategia comune su scala europea per sviluppare il settore delle energie rinnovabili, allo scopo di preservarne la competitività, come peraltro già espresso nella risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 23 maggio 2012.

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(18 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione ha avviato una procedura anti-dumping il 6 settembre 2012 e una procedura anti-sussidi l'8 novembre 2012. Le decisioni di avviare un'indagine anti-dumping e anti-sussidi in relazione alle importazioni di pannelli solari originari della Cina si basavano sulle denunce corredate di sufficienti elementi di prova diretti presentate dall'industria UE dei pannelli solari.

I risultati provvisori dovranno essere presentati entro il giugno 2013 per quanto concerne la procedura anti-dumping e entro l'agosto 2013 per la procedura anti-sussidi. Le misure definitive, se ve ne saranno, sono previste per l'inizio di dicembre 2013.

Il ricorso a questi strumenti è prassi normale nelle relazioni commerciali internazionali e tutti i membri dell'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio (OMC) hanno diritto di agire in tal modo nel rispetto di certe rigorose condizioni in linea con le regole dell'OMC. L'UE, gli Stati Uniti e la Cina, come anche diversi altri paesi, sono utilizzatori e l'avvio di casi di difesa commerciale dovrebbe avere lo scopo di ripristinare condizioni commerciali eque.

Per quanto concerne la competitività a livello europeo, quale invocata dal Parlamento nella sua risoluzione del 23 maggio 2012, la Commissione si è attivata a diversi livelli. La comunicazione della Commissione COM(2012)271 del 6 giugno 2012 delinea la politica in materia di cambiamento climatico per il periodo successivo al 2020. Per quanto concerne gli aspetti commerciali, la Commissione, in linea con le discussioni intervenute nel consiglio Affari esteri del maggio 2012 (diversi approcci alla liberalizzazione degli scambi verdi), sta valutando la situazione attuale e gli ostacoli commerciali nel settore delle energie rinnovabili per sviluppare ulteriormente un'azione bilaterale e di enforcement al fine di migliorare l'accesso al mercato. La scheda sul settore delle energie rinnovabili in cui figura tale valutazione è stata adottata dal comitato della politica commerciale il 17 dicembre 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010933/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: EU-China trade war over solar panels: where are the import controls?

Trade relations between the European Union and China in the solar panels sector are on a knife edge. The battle to resolve this trade dispute is being waged on two fronts: in Europe, in the form of anti-dumping investigations into the subsidies granted by the Chinese authorities to solar panel manufacturers, and in the WTO, where China has lodged a complaint alleging that some feed-in tariff schemes introduced in Europe are not consistent with international trade rules.

It is striking that in both Europe and the United States many small firms have been forced to close down, unable to cope with the competition from Asia. According to a report drawn up by GTM Research, 180 solar panel industries around the world now have 'zombie' status, meaning that they are in serious decline and will presumably disappear completely between now and 2015. Likewise according to GTM, the first firms to shut down will be the 88 located in those countries where manufacturing is most expensive, in Europe, the USA and Canada, where costs exceed 80 US cents per watt generated (in China: 58 US cents).

Europe is responding by developing new methods of manufacturing solar panels. The technology which is currently being studied involves activating the gas which is fundamental to the process, silane, using resistance wires heated to high temperatures, rather than with plasma. This makes it possible to recover 85-90% of the very expensive silane. In addition, yields reach 23% (11-16% on average at present), reducing overall manufacturing costs by more than 50%.

Given that in the medium term the low prices of Chinese goods may in fact damage Chinese industries themselves and that the European market is a key outlet for cheap Chinese products, has the Commission considered following the US lead and taking measures to protect the European market against imports of Asian solar panels?

How does it intend to implement at European level the joint strategy for the development of the renewable energies sector with a view to safeguarding its competitiveness, in keeping with the call made by Parliament in its resolution of 23 May 2012?

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

The Commission has initiated an anti-dumping proceeding on 6 September 2012 and an anti-subsidy proceeding on 8 November 2012. The decisions to open an anti-dumping and an anti-subsidy investigation concerning imports of solar panels originating in China were based on complaints with sufficient *prima facie* evidence which were lodged by the EU solar panel industry.

Provisional findings will have to be issued by June 2013 on the anti-dumping proceeding and by August 2013 on the anti-subsidy proceeding. The definitive measures, if any, are due in early December 2013.

The use of these instruments is normal practice in international trade relations and all World Trade Organisation (WTO) members have the right to do so under certain strict conditions in line with WTO rules. The EU, the United States and China, and several other countries, are users and the launching of trade defence cases should be aimed at restoring fair trade conditions.

As to the competitiveness at European level, as called upon by Parliament in its resolution of 23 May 2012, the Commission has been active at several levels. Commission Communication COM(2012) 271 of 6 June 2012 outlines the climate change policy for post-2020. As regards the trade aspects, the Commission is, in line with the discussions in the Foreign Affairs Council of May 2012 (different approaches to liberalisation of green trade), assessing the current state of play and the trade barriers in the renewable energy sector, in order to further develop bilateral and enforcement action to improve market access. The renewable energy sector fiche laying down this assessment was adopted by the Trade Policy Committee on 17 December 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010934/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Le lacune delle gare di project financing in Italia: quale l'impatto di una possibile regolamentazione

In Italia un recente studio dell'Ance (Associazione Nazionale Costruttori Edili) rivela una notevole mortalità dei progetti di partenariato pubblico-privato. Si tratta di gare per la costruzione e gestione d'infrastrutture pubbliche d'importo superiore a 5 milioni di euro, bandite in Italia tra il 2003 e il 2009 secondo le procedure del partenariato pubblico-privato (PPP). Lo studio rileva che di 685 gare pubbliche di partenariato pubblico privato il 66 per cento è stato aggiudicato, il 38 per cento ha raggiunto la fase di costruzione, il 25 per cento la fase successiva della gestione.

In particolare emergono due criticità. La prima riguarda il contenzioso. Ne è colpito il 24,2 per cento delle gare esaminate e la maggior parte dei casi è riconducibile a una carente definizione delle clausole contrattuali. Non si può pensare che ogni singola amministrazione italiana abbia le competenze per scrivere contratti adeguati, né che paghi consulenti per ottenere quelle competenze. Servono piuttosto dei contratti standardizzati, definiti per categoria di opera. Contratti che siano disponibili, e possibilmente anche vincolanti, per le amministrazioni locali, rivedibili sulla base dell'esperienza locale e centrale accumulata e scientificamente elaborata. Finora esiste un solo contratto standardizzato predisposto dall'unità tecnica della finanza di progetto per gli ospedali, e forse non è un caso che gli ospedali siano, tra le opere considerate nel campione, quelle con più bassa mortalità, nonostante la complessità dei progetti. In Inghilterra, per esempio, i contratti standardizzati esistono da anni e sono accessibili on-line. Ma i contratti non sono l'unica ragione di contenzioso. Sempre dallo studio in questione emerge che nel 16,7 per cento delle controversie le imprese hanno presentato ricorsi in merito alle procedure di aggiudicazione. Viene da domandarsi se le amministrazioni locali abbiano le competenze per gestire in modo efficiente queste procedure, che sono nuove e complesse, e se non possano invece servire tool kits e best practice di supporto. La seconda criticità riguarda il cambio di decisione del concedente; riguarda il 17,2 per cento delle gare.

Considerato che in Italia l'attività di monitoraggio degli appalti pubblici di lavori, servizi e forniture è stata finora finalizzata prevalentemente alla verifica della corretta applicazione della normativa, e le analisi quantitative che sono state divulgate seguono una logica meramente descrittiva, è evidente che ciò non permette di verificare se le amministrazioni riescano a tradurre le iniziative in progetti concreti e quali siano i costi e la performance dei progetti avviati.

Chiedo pertanto alla Commissione se è al corrente di tale situazione e perché, nelle valutazioni di impatto, non vengono presi in considerazione i fattori che spiegano la mortalità dei progetti, la diversità delle performance delle amministrazioni ed i costi che derivano da tali criticità e inefficienze.

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(8 febbraio 2013)

L'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento a un recente studio che evidenzia criticità nei partenariati pubblico-privati per la costruzione e la gestione di infrastrutture pubbliche in Italia. La Commissione non era a conoscenza dello studio e dei dati specifici e delle informazioni ivi contenuti.

Per quanto riguarda i problemi causati dall'inappropriata stesura dei contratti, è opportuno evidenziare che la normativa UE sugli appalti pubblici regolamenta le relative procedure di aggiudicazione solo per assicurare che queste siano trasparenti, non discriminatorie e concorrenziali. Le questioni relative alle modalità di redazione dei contratti e all'utilizzo di contratti standardizzati rimangono di competenza delle autorità nazionali.

Tuttavia, la Commissione è ben a conoscenza del fatto che i problemi relativi allo svolgimento delle procedure di aggiudicazione possono provocare inefficienze e ritardi nella realizzazione dei progetti. Questa è una delle ragioni che hanno spinto la Commissione ad adottare nel dicembre 2011 una proposta ([1]) di direttiva sugli appalti pubblici volta a modificare la normativa vigente rendendola in particolare più semplice e flessibile. La proposta comprende disposizioni sulla *governance* miranti a migliorare la sorveglianza da parte degli Stati membri dell'attuazione e dell'applicazione delle norme UE in materia di appalti pubblici.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010PC0781:IT:NOT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010934/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Deficiencies in project finance tenders in Italy: impact of possible regulations

In Italy, a study by the national construction association ANCE recently reveals a significant casualty rate in public-private partnership (PPP) projects. The study examined public infrastructure construction and management projects with a value in excess of EUR 5 million which were put out to tender in Italy between 2003 and 2009 using the PPP procedure. The study shows that out of 685 PPP procurement tenders, 66% had been awarded, 38% had reached the construction phase and 25% had reached management stage. Two criticalities in particular emerged. The first concerns disputes. These affected 24.2% of the tenders examined and in most cases could be ascribed to contracts not being sufficiently well drawn up. It should not be assumed that every single public authority in Italy has the skills needed to draw up suitable contracts, nor that they always pay consultants to obtain these skills. Instead they tend to use standard contracts for each of the tender categories. Contracts that are available to, and possibly also binding on, local authorities, and which can be revised using the wealth of scientifically obtained local and national experience. To date there is just one standard contract for hospitals, prepared by the hospital project financing unit, and yet not one of the hospital projects examined in the study has fallen by the wayside, despite their complexity. Standardised contracts have existed in the UK, for example, for years and can be accessed online. But contracts are not the only cause for dispute. It also emerges from this study that in 16.7% of disputes, firms have appealed against the award procedure. This raises the question of whether local authorities have the skills needed to manage these new and complex procedures efficiently, and whether supporting tool kits and best practice would not be useful instead. The second criticality is a change of mind by the contracting authority; this affects 17.2% of tenders.

In Italy monitoring of works, services and supplies procurement has until now primarily focused on ensuring that the rules have been correctly followed, and the quantitative analyses that have been published follow a purely descriptive logic, which clearly does not serve to confirm whether or not public authorities have succeeded in converting initiatives into tangible projects and what the costs and performance of the projects underway may be.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? Why the following are not considered in impact assessments: factors explaining the casualty rate for projects, the diversity in performance of public authorities and the costs arising from these criticalities and inefficiency.

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

The Honourable Member refers to a recent study illustrating the flaws of public-private partnerships for the construction and management of public infrastructures in Italy. The Commission was not aware of this study and of the specific data and information provided in it.

With regard to the problems stemming from the inadequate drafting of contracts, it should be recalled that EU public procurement law only regulates the procedures for the award of public contracts in order to ensure that these procedures are transparent, non-discriminatory and competitive. The question of how contracts are drafted and of whether and to what extent standardised contracts are used remains a responsibility of national authorities.

On the other hand, the Commission is well aware that problems related to the application of award procedures can bring about inefficiencies and delays in the implementation of projects. This is one of the reasons why the Commission adopted in December 2011 a proposal [1] for a directive on public procurement with the view to modernise existing legislation in particular by making it simpler and more flexible. This proposal also includes provisions on governance aimed at improving the monitoring by Member States of the implementation and application of EU public procurement rules on their territory.

[1] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0895:EN:NOT.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010935/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Lotta contro l'HIV: nuove sfide con le nanotecnologie

Nel mondo si stima che le persone infettate dall'HIV siano 34 milioni, di cui più di 3,4 milioni sono bambini; secondo l'OMS, nella regione europea nel 2010 circa 2,3 milioni di persone hanno contratto il virus HIV, di cui 1,5 milioni residenti nell'Europa orientale e nell'Asia centrale. I dati disponibili indicano che il numero di persone contagiate è globalmente in calo, ma Europa orientale e Asia centrale mostrano un aumento, rispetto al 2001, del 250 %.

Questi dati sono preoccupanti. La ricerca scientifica incentrata sulle nanotecnologie ha sviluppato un metodo per poter effettuare il test dell'HIV senza il supporto di strumentazioni sofisticate e potendo in questo modo abbattere i costi che si sostengono effettuando i normali test. La ricerca condotta in Inghilterra ha utilizzato il principio base delle nanotecnologie, grazie alla quali è possibile riconoscere qualsiasi reazione chimica in una soluzione ove sia conosciuto il biomarcatore specifico; per riconoscere il virus HIV è necessaria una soluzione contenente oro metallico ed è sufficiente iniettare un campione di sangue prelevato dal soggetto interessato: la reazione genera dei «ciuffi» di nanoparticelle che vanno a ricoprire le cellule eventualmente malate, conferendo alla soluzione il colore blu, anziché rosso. Questo procedimento è risultato efficace anche per diagnosticare il tumore alla prostata e si pensa che il sensore possa essere riconfigurato per riconoscere molti altri virus e malattie in cui è noto il biomarcatore specifico.

Considerato che:

— è di vitale importanza testare periodicamente i pazienti al fine di valutare il successo delle terapie retrovirali (HIV) e verificare la presenza di eventuali nuovi casi di infezione;

— gli attuali metodi di rilevamento sono troppo costosi per poter essere impiegati in Paesi dove le risorse destinate alla sanitaà sono scarse;

— il metodo proposto potrebbe, in futuro, consentire lo screening di molte altre malattie,

sono a chiedere alla Commissione se intenda promuovere l'utilizzo di tale tecnica negli Stati membri per programmi di screening e prevenzione di malattie per le quali un test immediato permetterebbe di diagnosticare patologie critiche in tempi rapidi e senza costi gravosi per i piani sanitari.

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

La comunicazione della Commissione «La lotta contro l'HIV/AIDS nell'Unione europea e nei paesi vicini, 2009-2013» ([1]) e il piano d'azione che l'accompagna ([2]) trattano dell'importanza dei test precoci dell'HIV e di un trattamento tempestivo per ridurre la trasmissione dell'HIV. In passato la Commissione ha promosso a più riprese tale problematica nei fori pubblici e ha aiutato gli Stati membri e la società civile con progetti finanziati dal programma Salute (ad esempio, SIALON II, un progetto che esamina l'effetto dei test rapidi dell'HIV nella collettività).

Inoltre, il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie ha emanato orientamenti in materia di test che riguardano anche l'uso dei test rapidi dell'HIV.

La Commissione non può però promuovere l'uso di un particolare test rapido in questo ambito.

([1]) Comunicazione COM(2009)569.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/sti_prevention/docs/eu_communication_2009_action_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010935/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Combating HIV: new nanotechnology challenges

It is estimated that 34 million people worldwide are HIV positive, of whom over 3.4 million are children. According to WHO estimates, around 2.3 million people contracted the HIV virus in Europe in 2010, 1.5 million of whom were from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Available statistics show the number of people infected worldwide to be falling, but to have risen by 250% in Eastern Europe and Asia compared with 2001.

These figures give cause for concern. Scientific research centring on nanotechnologies has enabled the development of a method for conducting HIV tests without sophisticated instruments, hence reducing the costs that have to be met when conducting traditional testing. The basic principle behind this research, which is being conducted in England, is the use of nanotechnology, which enables the specific biomarker to be recognised following a chemical reaction in a solution. A solution containing metallic gold is needed to detect the HIV virus, which can be done simply by mixing it with blood from the person concerned. The reaction generates clumps of nanoparticles which gather around the affected cells, turning the solution from red to blue. This procedure has also proved effective for diagnosing prostate tumours and it is believed that the sensor can be reconfigured to detect many other viruses and diseases with specific biomarkers.

Given that:

— it is vitally important to regularly test patients in order to evaluate the success of retroviral (HIV) therapies and to check for the presence of other new infections;

— current detection methods are too costly to be used in countries where health funding is scarce;

— the method proposed could, in future, enable screening for many other diseases;

Can the Commission state whether it will promote the use of this technique in Member States in programmes for the screening and prevention of diseases for which immediate testing would enable critical illnesses to be diagnosed swiftly and at no major cost to health programmes?

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

The Commission Communication on 'Combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries, 2009-2013' ([1]) and its accompanying Action Plan ([2]) address the importance of early HIV testing and timely treatment to reduce HIV transmission. The Commission has promoted this issue publicly at many occasions in the past and has supported Member States and civil society through projects funded by the Health Programme (e.g. SIALON II, a project that explores the effect of the rapid HIV tests in the community-based setting).

Furthermore, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has issued testing guidelines including the use of HIV rapid tests.

The Commission cannot however promote the use of a particular rapid test in this field.

([1]) Communication COM(2009)569.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/sti_prevention/docs/eu_communication_2009_action_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010936/12
alla Commissione
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Dispositivo atto a migliorare diagnosi e monitoraggio dei pazienti malati di cancro

La rivista Pnas ha recentemente parlato di un nuovo dispositivo, ispirato al funzionamento dei tentacoli delle meduse, che potrebbe migliorare diagnosi e monitoraggio dei pazienti malati di cancro. Tale dispositivo è stato realizzato dai ricercatori americani del *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (MIT) e del *Brigham and Women's Hospital*, secondo i quali la tecnologia potrebbe essere presto disponibile per uso clinico.

Le cellule tumorali in circolazione nel sangue di un paziente, spiegano gli esperti, contengono molte informazioni su come un tumore risponde al trattamento e quali farmaci potrebbero essere più efficaci per la sua cura. Queste cellule devono però prima essere catturate e isolate dalle altre cellule presenti in un campione di sangue. Molti laboratori stanno lavorando a dispositivi in grado di fare questa operazione ma i tentativi fatti finora hanno due limitazioni: ci vuole troppo tempo per elaborare una quantità sufficiente di sangue e non si riescono a estrarre le cellule per l'analisi dopo la loro cattura.

I ricercatori hanno superato questo problema realizzando un chip ispirato ai tentacoli appiccicosi della medusa che questi animali marini usano per catturare le particelle di cibo disperse nell'acqua. Il chip utilizza una rete tridimensionale costituita da lunghe sequenze ripetute di Dna che, come i tentacoli della medusa, possono intercettare e catturare alcune molecole. In questo caso le sequenze afferrano specifiche proteine presenti sulla superficie delle cellule tumorali mentre fluiscono nel sangue.

Il dispositivo è stato testato su cellule della leucemia ma si sta lavorando in modo che i suoi «tentacoli» possano intercettare le cellule che si staccano dai tumori solidi e viaggiano nel sangue, prima che possano seminare un nuovo tumore in un altro organo o tessuto.

Secondo i ricercatori, il dispositivo potrebbe anche consentire terapie personalizzate: sulle cellule isolate dai campioni di sangue, si potrebbero testare diversi farmaci e determinare quali sono i più efficaci. È la Commissione a conoscenza di tale studio? In caso di risposta affermativa, intende stanziare dei fondi per supportare l'efficacia di tale tipo di dispositivo?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei numerosi tentativi recenti volti a «catturare» e analizzare delle cellule cancerogene rare per mettere a punto cure personalizzate. Tale ricerca è inoltre finanziata dall'Unione europea in collaborazione con il progetto «MIRACLE» ([1]) con un contributo di 7 milioni di EUR. Anche se la pubblicazione menzionata dall'onorevole parlamentare rappresenta un grande passo in avanti, saranno necessari ulteriori investimenti per la ricerca e lo sviluppo prima che un dispositivo diagnostico così promettente sia disponibile per un utilizzo clinico.

I fondi di ricerca dell'Unione europea sono attribuiti sulla base di inviti a presentare proposte concorrenziali pubblicati assieme ai relativi programmi di lavoro. Dato che il settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013) sta per concludersi, a presente non vi sono proposte avanzate in quest'ambito.

Tuttavia, la proposta della Commissione per Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([2]), individua in «Salute, evoluzione demografica e benessere» una delle sei sfide che la società si troverà ad affrontare e che con tutta probabilità aprirà nuove prospettive alla ricerca sul cancro e sulle tecnologie innovative e esistenti, comprese quelle di diagnosi. Siccome le prime proposte saranno presentate probabilmente solo prima dell'inizio del 2014, i tempi sono prematuri per verificare quali tipi di ricerca potrebbero essere sostenuti.

([1]) www.miracle-fp7.eu/.
([2]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010936/12
to the Commission
Iva Zanicchi (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Device aimed at improving the diagnosis and monitoring of cancer patients

The PNAS journal recently discussed a new device, inspired by the way in which jellyfish tentacles function, that could lead to the improved diagnosis and monitoring of patients suffering from cancer. The device was created by American researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Brigham and Women's Hospital, who stated that the technology could soon be available for clinical use.

The experts explained that tumour cells in a patient's bloodstream contain a lot of information on how a tumour is responding to treatment and which drugs would be most effective at treating it. However, these cells must first be collected and isolated from the other cells present in a blood sample. Many laboratories are working on devices able to do this, but the attempts made thus far have two limitations: it takes too long to process a sufficient quantity of blood and it has not been possible to extract the cells for analysis after they have been captured.

The researchers have overcome this problem by creating a chip inspired by sticky jellyfish tentacles, which these marine creatures use to collect particles of food from the water. The chip uses a three-dimensional network made up of long repeating sequences of DNA that, like the tentacles of a jellyfish, are able to extract and collect several types of molecule. In this case, the sequences seize specific proteins present on the surface of tumour cells as they flow through the blood.

The device has been tested on leukaemia cells but work is under way to enable these 'tentacles' to pick out cells that have come away from solid tumours and are travelling in the blood, before they can begin to form a new tumour in another organ or tissue.

According to the researchers, the device could also allow for personalised treatments: various drugs can be tested on cells extracted from a blood sample in order to determine which are most effective. Is the Commission aware of this study? If so, does it intend to allocate funds to support the development of such a device?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the work of several recent attempts to 'capture' and analyse rare cancer cells and to develop personalised treatments. Such research is also funded by the European Union in the collaborative project 'MIRACLE' ([1]) with a contribution of EUR 7 million. Although the publication mentioned by the Honourable Member appears to be a major step forward, further investment into research and development will be needed before such a promising diagnostic device would be readily available for clinical use.

European Union research funding is granted based on competitive calls for proposals published with relevant Work Programmes. As the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) is coming to an end, there are currently no further calls foreseen in this area.

However, the Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([2]) identifies 'Health, demographic change and well-being' as one of the six societal challenges to be tackled which is likely to provide opportunities for research on the treatment of cancer and innovative and existing technologies including diagnostics. As the first calls for proposals are not expected to be issued before early 2014, it is too premature to ascertain which specific research issues could be addressed.

([1]) www.miracle-fp7.eu/
([2]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010937/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Sentenza della Corte suprema polacca che rende illegale la macellazione religiosa degli animali

Questa settimana la Corte costituzionale della Polonia ha stabilito che la macellazione religiosa degli animali è illegale, sulla base del fatto che è in contrasto con la legge polacca consentire il taglio della gola degli animali, con successivo dissanguamento a morte senza che l'animale sia stato stordito. Tuttavia, la legge UE che dovrebbe entrare in vigore a breve renderà illegale questa nuova legge polacca. La Svezia è finora l'unico altro Stato UE ad aver reso illegale questa pratica a motivo dei diritti degli animali. In considerazione di quanto precede, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere a quanto segue:

1. È a conoscenza di questa sentenza in Polonia? Quale analisi fa della questione?

2. Se ci deve essere una legge a livello europeo che ammette la macellazione religiosa degli animali, quali garanzie saranno incluse per garantire che i diritti degli animali siano protetti, per quanto possibile, dato che gli animali sono macellati senza prima essere stati storditi?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(1º febbraio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della sentenza della Corte costituzionale polacca in merito alla macellazione rituale. Il comunicato stampa ([1]) segnala che i poteri conferiti al ministro nella legge polacca sulla protezione degli animali del 21 agosto 1997 erano stati ritenuti non sufficientemente ampi per concedere l'autorizzazione alla macellazione senza stordimento. Pertanto, la disposizione in questione è diventata inapplicabile il 31 dicembre 2012.

Nell'Unione è in applicazione il regolamento (CE) n. 1099/2009 ([2]). All'articolo 3, paragrafo 1, esso recita che durante l'abbattimento e le operazioni correlate si devono risparmiare agli animali dolori, ansia o sofferenze evitabili. L'articolo 4, paragrafo 1, recita che gli animali possono essere abbattuti esclusivamente previo stordimento, conformemente ai metodi esposti nell'allegato I di detto regolamento.

In deroga al disposto di cui sopra, l'artico 4, paragrafo 4, consente la macellazione di animali senza stordimento previo nel caso di «animali sottoposti a particolari metodi di macellazione prescritti da riti religiosi a condizione che la macellazione abbia luogo in un macello». Tale deroga è giustificata dal considerando 18 ([3]).

L'articolo 26, paragrafo 2, lettera c), stabilisce che gli Stati membri possono adottare disposizioni nazionali intese a garantire una maggiore protezione degli animali durante l'abbattimento, diverse da quelle contenute nel regolamento, per gli animali sottoposti a particolari metodi di macellazione prescritti da riti religiosi, ai quali non si applicano i requisiti in tema di stordimento. Gli Stati membri devono vigilare sulle conseguenze che tali regole possono avere sul benessere degli animali e sulla libertà di religione, come prescritto all'articolo 10 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali. Disposizioni più rigorose in tema di protezione degli animali devono essere notificate alla Commissione, non devono pregiudicare il funzionamento del mercato interno e devono tener conto della libertà di manifestare la propria religione o credenza. ([4])

([1]) U 4/12 disponibile all'indirizzo: http://www.trybunal.gov.pl/OTK/ezd/sprawa_lista_plikow.asp?syg=U%204/12.
([2]) GU L 303 del 18.11.2009, pag. 1.
([3]) «La direttiva 93/119/CE prevedeva una deroga alle pratiche di stordimento nel caso di macellazioni rituali effettuate nei macelli. Poiché le norme comunitarie in materia di macellazioni rituali sono state recepite in modo diverso a seconda del contesto nazionale e considerato che le normative nazionali tengono conto di dimensioni che vanno al di là degli obiettivi del presente regolamento, è importante mantenere la deroga allo stordimento degli animali prima della macellazione, concedendo tuttavia un certo livello di sussidiarietà a ciascuno Stato membro. Il presente regolamento rispetta, di conseguenza, la libertà di religione e il diritto di manifestare la propria religione o la propria convinzione mediante il culto, l'insegnamento, le pratiche e l'osservanza dei riti, come stabilito dall'articolo 10 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea».
([4]) Conformemente agli articoli 10, paragrafo 1, e 52, paragrafo 1, della Carta dei diritti fondamentali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010937/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Polish supreme court ruling making the religious slaughter of animals illegal

This week Poland's Constitutional Tribunal ruled that the religious slaughter of animals was illegal, on the grounds that it was against Polish law to allow animals to have their throats cut and bleed to death without having first been stunned. However, the EU-wide law which is due to come into effect shortly is expected to make this new Polish law illegal. Sweden is so far the only other EU state to have made the practice illegal on animal rights grounds. In view of the above, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Is it aware of this ruling in Poland? What analysis can it give of the matter?

2. If there is to be an EU-wide law supporting the religious slaughter of animals, what safeguards will be included to ensure that animal rights are protected as much as possible, given that animals will be slaughtered without having first been stunned?

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

The Commission is aware of the Polish Constitutional Court ruling on ritual slaughter. The press release ([1]) states that the powers conferred on the minister in the Polish Law on protection of animals of 21 August 1997 were judged not broad enough to grant authorisations for slaughter without stunning. Hence the provision in question became inapplicable on 31 December 2012.

In the Union, Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 ([2]) is applicable. Its Article 3(1) provides that animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations. Article 4(1) states that animals shall only be killed after stunning in accordance with the methods stipulated in Annex I to that regulation.

By derogation from the above rule, Article 4(4) foresees killing of animals without prior stunning 'in the case of animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites […] provided that the slaughter takes places in a slaughterhouse'. This derogation is justified by Recital 18 ([3]).

Article 26(2)(c) provides that Member States may adopt national rules aimed at ensuring more extensive protection of animals at the time of killing than those contained in the regulation for animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites, where requirements for stunning do not apply. Member States must assess the consequences of such rules on animal welfare and on the freedom of religion as prescribed in Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Stricter rules concerning the protection of animals must be notified to the Commission; they may not affect the functioning of the internal market and must comply with the freedom to manifest religion or belief. ([4])

([1]) U 4/12 available at http://www.trybunal.gov.pl/OTK/ezd/sprawa_lista_plikow.asp?syg=U%204/12.
([2]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1.
([3]) 'Derogation from stunning in case of religious slaughter taking place in slaughterhouses was granted by Directive 93/119/EC. Since Community provisions applicable to religious slaughter have been transposed differently depending on national contexts and considering that national rules take into account dimensions that go beyond the purpose of this regulation, it is important that derogation from stunning animals prior to slaughter should be maintained, leaving, however, a certain level of subsidiarity to each Member State. As a consequence, this regulation respects the freedom of religion and the right to manifest religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance, as enshrined in Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.'.
([4]) in accordance with Articles 10(1) and 52(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010938/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 november 2012)

Betreft: Generaal pardon

De EU heeft minimumnormen, maatregelen en procedures voor asielzoekers ontwikkeld. Uitgangspunt is dat lidstaten asielzoekers een gelijke behandeling geven en dat illegale immigratie en misbruik voorkomen moet worden. Grondslag hiervoor is het Internationaal Verdrag betreffende de Status van Vluchtelingen en de artikelen 78 en 79 van het VWEU.

Artikel 20 van het Handvest van grondrechten van de Unie stelt rechtsgelijkheid centraal, overeenkomstig een algemeen rechtsbeginsel dat in alle Europese grondwetten is opgenomen en dat door het Hof is aangemerkt als een fundamenteel beginsel van het Gemeenschapsrecht.

In Nederland is de discussie weer opgelaaid over het bieden van een generaal pardon voor uitgeprocedeerde asielzoekers die illegaal langer dan vijf jaar in Nederland verblijven. Het betreft hier personen die geen gehoor geven aan een rechterlijke uitspraak die tot stand is gekomen met inachtneming van bovengenoemde grondslagen.

Het bieden van een generaal pardon aan personen die conform procedures zijn behandeld maar die geen gehoor hebben gegeven aan een rechterlijke uitspraak, creëert ongelijkheid tussen deze personen, enerzijds, en asielzoekers die wel gevolg hebben gegeven aan het afwijzen van hun verzoek en personen die in een andere lidstaat zijn afgewezen, anderzijds.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de plannen voor het bieden van een generaal pardon aan afgewezen asielzoekers in Nederland?

2. Zal Nederland daarmee naar het oordeel van de Commissie soepeler zijn in het verlenen van een verblijfsvergunning dan andere EU-lidstaten? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. Doorkruist het bieden van een generaal pardon door sommige lidstaten het uitgangspunt van de EU dat asielzoekers binnen de EU allen een gelijke behandeling moeten krijgen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Indien vraag 2 en/of 3 bevestigend wordt beantwoord, hoe valt het bieden van een generaal pardon door sommige lidstaten te rijmen met het beginsel van rechtsgelijkheid?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(22 januari 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de Nederlandse plannen waarnaar door het geachte Parlementslid wordt verwezen.

De voorwaarden en criteria voor de regularisatie van illegale immigranten zijn een nationale bevoegdheid. Bijzonderheden daarover zijn te vinden in een studie die door de Commissie werd gefinancierd ([1]). In het Europees immigratie- en asielpact ([2]) zijn de lidstaten overeengekomen dat ze zich zullen beperken tot individuele regularisatie om humanitaire of economische redenen en dat ze niet zullen overgaan tot algemene regularisaties.

Voor asielzoekers die wachten op een beoordeling van hun asielaanvraag gelden andere EU-regels dan voor asielzoekers van wie de asielaanvraag is afgewezen. Deze laatsten vallen onder de terugkeerrichtlijn ([3]), aangezien ze niet het recht hebben om in de EU te blijven. Volgens de richtlijn mogen de lidstaten geen illegale migranten op hun grondgebied toelaten zonder een terugkeerbesluit uit te vaardigen of een verblijfsvergunning af te geven.

([1]) Studie over de werkwijzen op het gebied van regularisatie van illegaal verblijvende onderdanen van derde landen in de lidstaten van de EU, beschikbaar op http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/immigration/immigration_studies_en.htm

([2]) Goedgekeurd door de Europese Raad op 15 en 16 oktober 2008.

([3]) 2008/115/EG.

De lidstaten worden vaak geconfronteerd met grote aantallen onderdanen van derde landen die ondanks een terugkeerbesluit niet kunnen worden teruggestuurd. De Commissie heeft de situatie en de behandeling van deze mensen onderzocht. Uit de resultaten van deze studie, die in januari 2013 wordt voorgesteld, blijkt dat sommige lidstaten voorzien in middelen en voorwaarden zodat personen voor wie een terugkeerbesluit niet kan worden uitgevoerd, kunnen overgaan tot een regularisatieprocedure. Zij moeten dan wel aan enkele voorwaarden voldoen. Ze moeten onder meer al een bepaalde tijd in het land verblijven, ze moeten hun medewerking verlenen en ze mogen de openbare orde niet verstoord hebben. Volgens de Commissie zijn dergelijke specifieke nationale programma's geen algemene regularisaties, maar veeleer individuele regularisaties zoals uitdrukkelijk toegestaan door het Europees pact en artikel 6, lid 4, van de terugkeerrichtlijn.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010938/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: General amnesty

The EU has developed minimum standards, measures and procedures for asylum-seekers. The point of departure is that Member States must give equal treatment to asylum-seekers and that illegal immigration and abuse must be prevented. The legal basis is the International Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and Articles 78 and 79 of the TFEU.

Article 20 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European puts equality before the law at the core, in accordance with a general legal principle contained in all European constitutions and regarded by the Court of Justice as a fundamental principle of Community law.

In the Netherlands, the debate has resurfaced about offering a general amnesty to asylum-seekers whose applications have been rejected and who have been living illegally in the Netherlands for more than five years. These are people who have not complied with a legal judgment that was delivered in accordance with the above legal bases.

The offer of a general amnesty to persons who have been treated in accordance with the procedures but have not complied with the legal judgment delivered creates inequality between these individuals and asylum-seekers who have acknowledged the rejection of their application and those rejected in other Member States.

1. Is the Commission aware of the plans to offer a general amnesty to rejected asylum-seekers in the Netherlands?

2. Does the Commission consider that in doing so the Netherlands are being more flexible in granting residence permits than other EU Member States? If not, why not?

3. Does the offer of a general amnesty by some Member States undermine the EU principle that all asylum-seekers in the EU be given equal treatment? If not, why not?

4. If the answer to question 2 and/or 3 is yes, how can the offer of a general amnesty by some Member States be reconciled with the principle of equality before the law?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Dutch plans referred to by the Honourable Member.

Conditions and criteria for regularisation of irregular immigrants fall under national competence, details of which may be found in a Commission-funded study ([1]). In the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum ([2]), Member States agreed to restrict themselves to case-by-case regularisations for humanitarian or economic reasons rather than generalised regularisations.

The applicable EU rules regarding asylum-seekers who are awaiting an assessment of their asylum claim are different from that of those whose request for asylum has been rejected. The latter normally fall within the scope of the Return Directive ([3]) as they do not enjoy a right to stay in the EU. The directive does not allow Member States to tolerate the presence of irregular migrants on their territory without either issuing a return decision or granting a residence permit.

([1]) Study on practices in the area of regularisation of illegally staying third-country nationals in the Member States of the EU, available from http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/categories/studies/index_en.htm#filter_regularisation

([2]) Adopted by the European Council on 15-16 October 2008.

([3]) 2008/115/EC.

Member States are frequently confronted with significant numbers of third-country nationals who cannot be returned, albeit a return decision has been taken. The Commission has carried out a study on the situation and treatment of this category of persons. The results, to be presented in January 2013, show that a number of Member States foresee channels and conditions through which persons with a return decision that cannot be enforced may enter a regularisation procedure, provided they fulfil certain conditions, such as a certain length of stay, cooperation and absence of public order concerns. The Commission does not consider such types of tailor-made national programs as generalised regularisation, but rather as case-by-case regularisation, expressly authorised under the European Pact and Article 6(4) of the Return Directive.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010939/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 november 2012)

Betreft: Moody's beoordeling Griekse schuld

Kredietbeoordelaar Moody's heeft donderdag 29 november 2012 laten weten dat de Griekse schuld, ook na de afspraken van deze week, onhoudbaar is. In de woorden van Moody's Investors Service: „Weliswaar heeft het akkoord met de belangrijkste crediteuren van afgelopen week voor enige verlichting op korte termijn gezorgd, maar de Griekse staatsschuld blijft onhoudbaar hoog en uiteindelijk zal vermoedelijk een deel van deze schuld moeten worden kwijtgescholden."

Op woensdag 28 november 2012 maakte commissaris Barnier (Interne Markt) bekend dat het Europees Parlement, de Commissie en de Raad tot overeenstemming zijn gekomen over strengere regels voor kredietbeoordelaars. Die betreffen timing maar ook inhoud van hun beoordelingen en aansprakelijkheid bij foutieve beoordelingen.

In dit licht stel ik de volgende vragen.

1. Deelt de Commissie de analyse van Moody's betreffende de houdbaarheid van de schulden van Griekenland?

2. Zo ja, welke actie is de Commissie voornemens om de schuld wel houdbaar te maken?

3. Zo nee, beschouwt de Commissie de beoordeling dan als inhoudelijk onjuist?

4. Als de Commissie de beoordeling onjuist vindt, welke stappen is zij voornemens te zetten, mede gezien de positie die zij heeft ingenomen in het debat rond het aansprakelijk stellen van bureaus zoals Moody's voor de effecten van onjuiste analyses?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(14 februari 2013)

Op 13 december 2012 heeft de Eurogroep verklaard dat de overeengekomen initiatieven en de volledige uitvoering van het aanpassingsprogramma de Griekse overheidsschuld op een houdbaar pad moeten brengen naar 124 % van het bbp in 2020.

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar het laatste Compliance Report, waarin de resultaten van de eerste evaluatie van het tweede aanpassingsprogramma worden gepresenteerd ([1]), en met name naar hoofdstuk 4, dat meer in het bijzonder betrekking heeft op de analyse van de houdbaarheid van de Griekse overheidsschuld.

Bij Verordening (EU) nr. 1060/2009 inzake ratingbureaus, zoals gewijzigd bij Verordening (EU) nr. 513/2011, is aan de Europese Autoriteit voor effecten en markten (European Securities and Markets Authority — ESMA), als enige toezichthouder op ratingbureaus in de EU, de bevoegdheid verleend handhavingsmaatregelen ten aanzien van ratingbureaus te nemen als zij van oordeel is dat een ratingbureau inbreuk heeft gepleegd op de bepalingen van genoemde verordening.

Voorts hebben de Raad van de Europese Unie en het Europees Parlement in november 2012 een politiek akkoord bereikt over een wijziging in de verordening inzake ratingbureaus in haar huidige vorm. Zodra de overeengekomen tekst kracht van wet krijgt, zullen beleggers of uitgevende instellingen schadevergoeding van een ratingbureau kunnen eisen wanneer zij schade hebben geleden omdat het betrokken ratingbureau opzettelijk of wegens grove nalatigheid de verordening inzake ratingbureaus heeft geschonden.

([1]) The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece — First Review December 2012 (European Economy, Occasional Papers 123, december 2012, Brussel, beschikbaar op papier en internet, 279 blz., tabellen, grafieken en bijlagen): http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010939/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Moody's assessment of the Greek debt

The credit rating agency Moody's announced on Thursday, 29 November 2012 that the Greek debt is unsustainable even after this week's agreements. Moody's Investors Service said that, although the previous week's agreement with the main creditors provided some short-term relief, the Greek sovereign debt remained unsustainably high and it was probable that part of this debt would eventually have to be written off.

On Wednesday, 28 November 2012, Michel Barnier, the Commissioner responsible for the internal market, announced that the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council had reached agreement on more stringent rules for credit rating agencies. These rules relate to both the timing and the content of their assessments, and to liability for incorrect assessments.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree with the analysis by Moody's of the sustainability of Greece's debt?

2. If so, what action does the Commission propose to take to make the debt sustainable?

3. If not, does the Commission regard this assessment as substantially incorrect?

4. If the Commission considers the assessment incorrect, what measures does it propose to take, in view *inter alia* of the position it has adopted in the debate on making agencies such as Moody's liable for the effects of incorrect analyses?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

On 13 December 2012, the Eurogroup stated that the agreed initiatives and the full implementation of the adjustment programme should bring Greece's public debt to a sustainable path to 124% of GDP in 2020.

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult Chapter 4 of the latest Compliance Report, which presents the results of the first review of the Second Adjustment Programme ([1]), dealing in particular with the analysis of sustainability of the Greek Government debt.

Regulation (EU) 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies (CRA Regulation), as amended by Regulation 513/2011, confers on the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), as the sole supervisor of EU CRAs, the power to take enforcement actions against credit rating agencies (CRAs), should it consider that a CRA has infringed the obligations imposed on it by the CRA Regulation.

Furthermore, in November 2012, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament reached a political agreement on an amendment of the current CRA Regulation. Once the agreed text becomes law, any investor or issuer may be able to claim damages from a CRA when he/she has suffered a damage as a result of a breach of the CRA Regulation that the CRA committed with intent or gross negligence,

([1]) The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece — First Review December 2012 (European Economy. Occasional Papers. 123. December 2012. Brussels. Paper and Internet. 279pp. Tab. Graph. Ann.)
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010940/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Reformas dos sistemas nacionais de saúde

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-009541/2012, o senhor comissário Maroš Šefčovič declarou, em nome da Comissão, que são «necessárias reformas profundas dos sistemas nacionais de saúde no sentido de identificar e resolver as ineficiências a fim de tornar os sistemas de saúde mais eficazes, sustentáveis e capazes de continuar a providenciar cuidados de saúde de alta qualidade e universais às futuras gerações».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que reformas e medidas concretas advoga para que os sistemas de saúde possam efetivamente identificar e resolver as suas ineficiências e ser mais eficazes, sustentáveis e capazes de continuar a providenciar cuidados de saúde de alta qualidade e universais às futuras gerações?

2. Que boas práticas recomenda neste domínio?

Resposta dada por Joe Borg em nome da Comissão
(24 de janeiro de 2013)

A Comissão e o Comité de Política Económica elaboraram um relatório que aborda as questões levantadas pelo Senhor Deputado e refere exemplos de políticas nos Estados-Membros.

O Conselho adotou, em 6 de junho de 2011, as seguintes conclusões : «Rumo a sistemas de saúde modernos, reativos e sustentáveis». Estas conclusões convidam os Estados-Membros e a Comissão a refletirem na identificação de formas de investimento eficazes na saúde, de modo a alcançar sistemas de saúde modernos, com capacidade de resposta e sustentáveis.

Este processo de reflexão está, atualmente, a decorrer no âmbito do Grupo de Alto Nível do Conselho sobre Saúde Pública e de cinco subgrupos de Estados-Membros interessados. Espera-se que o trabalho destes subgrupos esteja concluído até final de 2013.

O Conselho também convidou a Comissão a apoiar o processo de reflexão, inclusive através da facilitação do acesso a aconselhamento de peritos informal, independente e multissetorial que deve ser prestado mediante pedido dos Estados-Membros. Neste contexto, a Comissão adotou uma decisão relativa à criação de um painel de peritos independente e multissetorial para prestar aconselhamento sobre formas eficazes de investir na saúde. O processo de seleção para nomear membros do painel está a decorrer e deve ficar concluído no primeiro trimestre de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010940/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Reform of national health systems

In reply to my Written Question E-009541/2012, Mr Maroš Šefčovič stated on behalf of the Commission that there is a need for 'in-depth reforms in national health systems to identify and address inefficiencies so as to make health systems more efficient, sustainable and able to continue providing universal high-quality healthcare for generations to come'.

1. What reforms and practical measures does the Commission recommend so that health systems can indeed identify and address their inefficiencies and be more efficient, sustainable and able to continue providing universal high-quality healthcare for generations to come?

2. What best practices does it recommend in this area?

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

The Commission and the Economic Policy Committee have produced a report which addresses the issues raised by the Honourable Member and refers to policy examples in the Member States.

The Council adopted on 6 June 2011 conclusions 'Towards modern, responsive and sustainable health systems'. These conclusions invite Member States and the Commission to engage in a reflection process to identify effective ways of investing in health, so as to pursue modern, responsive and sustainable health systems.

This reflection process is currently ongoing within the Council working party on public health at senior level through five subgroups of interested Member States. The work of these subgroups is expected to be completed by the end of 2013.

The Council also invited the Commission to support the reflection process including by facilitating the access to informal and independent multi-sectoral expert advice to be provided on request to Member States. In this context, the Commission has adopted a decision to set up a multi-sectoral and independent expert panel to provide advice on effective ways of investing in health. The selection process to appoint the members of the panel is ongoing and should be completed in the first quarter of 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010941/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: África subsariana — projetos de água e saneamento em risco — esclarecimento

Em resposta à minha pergunta E-009448/2012, o senhor comissário Andris Piebalgs declarou, em nome da Comissão, que «embora o Tribunal reporte que menos de metade dos projetos examinados terá resultado numa resposta às necessidades dos beneficiários, a Comissão considera que as necessidades primordiais foram no entanto satisfeitas, mesmo sendo a maioria dos projetos muito ambiciosa.»

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual a diferença entre «necessidades dos beneficiários» e «necessidades primordiais»?

2. Sendo a maioria dos projetos muito ambiciosa, não considera que aquela distinção pouco concorre para aferir convenientemente se são ou não efetivamente bem-sucedidos?

3. Em que moldes realiza as análises socioeconómicas que indicou, de modo a garantir que as necessidades dos mais pobres sejam devidamente tidas em conta no momento de identificar e executar os projetos e garantir a sua melhor sustentabilidade?

4. Existe efetivamente o risco de rutura nos projetos de desenvolvimento identificados pelo Tribunal?

5. Quais foram as medidas que tomou para melhorar a qualidade dos seus projetos?

6. De que modo estarão estas aptas a resolver os potenciais problemas de sustentabilidade?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(1 de fevereiro de 2013)

Explicando através de um exemplo a diferença entre as «necessidades dos beneficiários» e as «necessidades primordiais»: na Tanzânia, no âmbito do Programa de abastecimento de água — Centros regionais fase I, a construção da estação de tratamento de águas residuais prevista para Mwanza teve de ser adiada para a fase II. O valor total alocado a esta ação foi de fato insuficiente após o concurso de obras para a construção das infraestruturas tanto para o abastecimento como do saneamento de água.

Do ponto de vista do Tribunal, não foi possível satisfazer as necessidades dos beneficiários, tal como foram definidas nos documentos do projeto para a fase I, visto que as duas infraestruturas não podiam ser construídas em simultâneo. No entanto, do ponto de vista da Comissão, uma vez terminada a fase II, Mwanza beneficiava de ambos os componentes e era possível satisfazer todas as necessidades.

Os estudos de viabilidade e conceção dos projetos para a água e o saneamento incluem questionários para recolha de dados demográficos mas também, de forma desagregada, de dados acerca do género e da situação socioeconómica [1]. Estes inquéritos foram conduzidos utilizando métodos normalizados, sendo posteriormente utilizados para a formulação da proposta e o planeamento das infraestruturas.

Os projetos avaliados pelo Tribunal foram aprovados entre 2001 e 2007, e a maior parte deles estão neste momento concluídos. Nas ocasiões em que foram identificadas fragilidades, realizaram-se intervenções para as resolver devidamente, tal como aconteceu no caso da Tanzânia.

[1] Tais como, o estatuto socioeconómico, os comportamentos e necessidades atuais relativos ao uso de água e ao saneamento, ou a vontade e a capacidade para pagar estes serviços.

Desde então, a Comissão tem tomado importantes medidas para melhorar a qualidade destes projetos. Melhores controlos internos, notas de orientação, iniciativas para a sensibilização interna e ações de formação são algumas das atividades desenvolvidas pela Comissão para ajudar a resolver os problemas de sustentabilidade. Uma medida que ajudou a melhorar a qualidade do projeto, implementada durante a realização dos projetos avaliados, foi a introdução de um Grupo de apoio para a qualidade, que analisou a proposta e a formulação dos projetos ([2]).

([2]) Como por exemplo no caso da Bolívia, em que o Grupo de apoio para a qualidade, questionou a relevância de alguns dos indicadores propostos para um programa de apoio orçamental setorial. As mudanças propostas permitiram uma intervenção mais específica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010941/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Sub-Saharan Africa — water and sanitation projects at risk — clarification

In reply to my Written Question E-009448/2012, Andris Piebalgs stated on behalf of the Commission that, even though the Court of Auditors had reported that less than half the projects studied responded to the needs of the beneficiaries, the Commission nevertheless considers that the most basic needs have been met, and notes that the majority of the projects are highly ambitious.

1. What is the difference between 'the needs of the beneficiaries' and 'the most basic needs'?

2. Given that the majority of the projects are highly ambitious, does the Commission not believe that this distinction does little to establish whether or not they have been successful?

3. How does it carry out the socioeconomic analyses referred to, in order to ensure that the needs of the poorest people are properly taken into account when projects are identified and implemented and to guarantee that they are genuinely sustainable?

4. Is there indeed a risk that the development projects identified by the Court of Auditors could be discontinued?

5. What steps has the Commission taken to improve the quality of its projects?

6. How will these steps help to resolve potential sustainability problems?

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

To clarify with an example the difference between the needs of beneficiaries and the most basic needs: in Tanzania, under the Water Supply Programme — Regional Centres Phase I, the construction of the wastewater treatment plant planned in Mwanza had to be postponed to Phase II. Indeed, the total amount allocated to the action was insufficient after procurement of the works to build both water supply and wastewater components.

From the Court's perspective, the needs of the beneficiaries, as defined in Phase I project's documents, were not met because the two components could not be built jointly. But from the Commission's perspective, after Phase II, Mwanza benefitted from both installations and all needs were eventually met.

The feasibility and design studies of water and sanitation projects include surveys to collect demographic but also dissagregated, gender-based socioeconomic data ([1]). These surveys are conducted using normalised methodologies and feed into the formulation of the proposal and subsequent design of the infrastructures.

The projects assessed by the Court were approved between 2001 and 2007 and most of them are now completed. When weaknesses were identified, they were duly adressed by subsequent actions as this was for instance the case in Tanzania.

Since then, the Commission has taken important steps to improve the quality of its projects. Improved internal controls, guidance notes, internal awareness initiatives and trainings are part of the actions that the Commission takes to help resolve sustainability problems. A measure which helped to improve project quality, introduced during the time of the evaluated projects, was the introduction of a Quality Support Group, which reviewed projects proposal and formulation ([2]).

([1]) Such as social status, current water and sanitation behaviours and needs, willingness and capacity to pay.
([2]) For example, in Bolivia, the Quality Support Group helped in putting in question the relevance of some indicators proposed for a sector budget support program. These proposed changes allowed a more focused intervention.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010942/12
adresată Comisiei
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D) şi Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(30 noiembrie 2012)

Subiect: Carne de porc contaminată cu Yersinia enterocolitica

Conform unei agenţii de ştiri americane, carnea de porc comercializată în Statele Unite este contaminată în proporţie de 69% cu bacteria periculoasă Yersinia enterocolitica. Această descoperire a fost făcuta în urma unei examinări recente a eşantioanelor de carne prelevate de-a lungul Statelor Unite ale Americii de către experţi ai Consumer Reports.

În luna septembrie 2012, UE a importat din SUA 5 026 de tone de carne de porc din Statele Unite.

În acest context,

1. Ce măsuri va lua Comisia pentru a se asigura că nu se importă carne contaminată cu Yersinia în UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(21 ianuarie 2013)

Carnea importată în Uniunea Europeană trebuie să respecte aceleaşi garanţii de siguranţă alimentară aplicabile şi cărnii produse în UE. Produsele importate care îndeplinesc aceste cerinţe trebuie să fie certificate de către autoritatea veterinară în ţara de origine. Dreptul ţărilor terţe de a exporta în UE depinde de rezultatele pozitive ale auditurilor periodice efectuate de către serviciul de audit al Comisiei (Oficiul Alimentar şi Veterinar) însărcinat cu sistemele de garantare a siguranţei alimentare în vigoare. Loturile de carne intră în UE prin punctele de control la frontieră, unde funcţionarii verifică dacă acestea respectă standardele UE.

Carnea de porc produsă în UE nu este supusă unor teste specifice de depistare a Yersinia. Actualele măsuri de igienă au ca scop prevenirea contaminării cărnii în timpul sacrificării şi al prelucrării ulterioare. Aceste norme nu vizează în mod special Yersinia, ci toate eventualele bacterii care produc îmbolnăviri şi din cauza cărora carnea ar putea deveni improprie pentru consum. Ca urmare a acestei abordări, doar aproximativ unul din 100 000 de consumatori europeni a fost afectat anual de Yersinia în ultimii cinci ani, cifrele prezentând o tendinţă descrescătoare ([1]).

Serviciile Comisiei nu cunosc detaliile tehnice ale studiului prezentat de „Consumer Reports”, dar se ştie că numai unele serotipuri de bacterii Yersinia enterocolitica sunt agenţi patogeni.

([1]) Raportul de sinteză al Uniunii Europene privind tendinţele şi sursele de zoonoze, de agenţi zoonotici şi de focare de toxiinfecţie alimentară în 2010 (*The European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2010*) (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2597.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010942/12
to the Commission
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D) and Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Pork contaminated with Yersinia enterocolitica

According to an American news agency, an investigation by 'Consumer Reports' experts who examined pork samples from across the United States has revealed that 69% of pork being marketed in that country is contaminated with dangerous Yersinia enterocolitica bacteria.

In September 2012, the EU imported 5 026 tonnes of pork from the United States.

In view of this,

1. What measures will the Commission take to ensure that no meat contaminated with Yersinia enterocolitica is imported into the EU?

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

Meat imported into the European Union has to comply with the same food safety guarantees as meat produced in the EU. Imported products that fulfil these requirements have to be certified by the veterinary authority in the country of origin. Third country entitlement to export to the EU remains subject to the successful outcome of the regular audits carried out by the Commission's audit service (Food and Veterinary Office) of the food safety guarantee systems in place. Meat consignments enter the EU via border inspection posts where officials verify whether EU standards are met.

For pig meat produced in the EU specific testing on Yersinia is not required. The current hygienic measures are aimed at prevention of contamination of the meat during slaughter and further processing. These rules are not focused on Yersinia only, but target all possible disease causing bacteria that might make meat unsafe to eat. This approach results in approximately one out of 100 000 European consumers being affected annually with Yersinia over the last five years, and this figure shows a downward trend ([1]).

The Commission services are not aware of the technical details of the study presented by 'Consumer Reports'. It is a known fact however that only a subset of Yersinia enterocolitica bacteria would seem to be pathogenic.

([1]) The European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2010 (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2597.htm).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-010943/12
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(30 listopada 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wzrost cen prądu w wyniku uwzględnienia wszystkich kosztów emisji CO_2 w cenie energii elektrycznej od dnia 1 stycznia 2013 r.

Wzrost cen prądu w wyniku uwzględnienia wszystkich kosztów emisji CO_2 w cenie energii elektrycznej od dnia 1 stycznia 2013 r. stanowi ważną kwestię w odniesieniu do konkurencyjności i zrównoważonego charakteru przemysłu, zwłaszcza tych gałęzi przemysłu w UE, które zużywają dużo energii. W oparciu o jednolitą podstawę Komisja przewidziała bezpłatne przydziały bezpośrednich emisji CO_2 dla gałęzi przemysłu zagrożonych ucieczką emisji, przede wszystkim w celu uniknięcia zakłóceń na rynku wewnętrznym przy jednoczesnym ograniczeniu do minimum możliwości przeniesienia produkcji przez te przedsiębiorstwa z UE do krajów trzecich. Jednocześnie Komisja przyznała, że 14 gałęzi przemysłu jest poważnie zagrożonych ze względu na koszty emisji pośrednich. Jednak w tym przypadku Komisja nie zdecydowała się na wprowadzenie podobnego systemu bezpłatnych przydziałów. Przyjęte niedawno wytyczne dotyczące stosowania dyrektywy 2009/29/UE umożliwiają państwom członkowskim przyznanie tym gałęziom przemysłu pomocy państwa wedle własnego uznania (w zgodzie z zasadą pomocniczości). Uzasadnieniem inicjatywy Komisji – powtórzmy – była chęć zapobieżenia zakłóceniom konkurencji i zadbanie o należyte funkcjonowanie rynku wewnętrznego. Niemniej jednak w praktyce środek ten z pewnością poważnie zaszkodzi rzeczywistej konkurencji i jeszcze bardziej pogłębi różnice między północną a południową częścią Europy. Choć różnice w Europie istniały już w przeszłości, można znaleźć argumenty na poparcie stwierdzenia, że sytuacja finansowa państw członkowskich z południowej części Europy podczas konsultacji dotyczących przyjęcia dyrektywy 2009/29/UE była zupełnie inna niż ich sytuacja w dobie obecnego kryzysu gospodarczego, który dotknął te kraje najboleśniej. Państwa członkowskie posiadające prężną gospodarkę ogłosiły już zamiar skorzystania z możliwości podjęcia działań wedle własnego uznania i zastosowania wytycznych Komisji poprzez udzielenie zainteresowanym gałęziom przemysłu maksymalnej dozwolonej pomocy. Jednak gałęzie przemysłu potrzebujące rekompensaty z tytułu kosztów emisji pośrednich stanowią ogromną i ważną część gospodarki we wspomnianych państwach członkowskich. W konsekwencji polityka taka bez wątpienia doprowadzi do wzrostu bezrobocia i wyższego deficytu. Należy bezwzględnie zadbać o równe warunki konkurencji dla wszystkich gałęzi przemysłu w całej Europie, które narażone są na ryzyko ucieczki emisji, a także promować spójność.

W celu rozwiązania kwestii, o których mowa powyżej i które niewątpliwie będą miały znaczny wpływ na zamierzoną spójność europejskiego rynku wewnętrznego, czy Komisja rozważa natychmiastowe przedstawienie wniosku w sprawie modyfikacji systemu rekompensat dla emisji pośrednich, aby wprowadzić jednolitą platformę polityczną na szczeblu UE, podobną do zbioru metod przyjętych w kontekście emisji bezpośrednich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(7 stycznia 2013 r.)

Komisja przyjęła wytyczne w sprawie pomocy państwa określające warunki, na których państwa członkowskie mogą kompensować część podwyższonych kosztów energii elektrycznej ponoszonych przez najbardziej efektywne przedsiębiorstwa w każdym sektorze. Państwa członkowskie mogą zdecydować, czy chcą przyznać jakąkolwiek pomoc takim przedsiębiorstwom, czy też nie, oraz będą miały możliwość przeznaczenia na ten cel części środków uzyskanych ze sprzedaży uprawnień na aukcji.

W wytycznych uwzględniono w sposób zrównoważony kilka kluczowych celów. Wytyczne te mają przyczynić się do złagodzenia skutków pośrednich kosztów emisji CO_2 w najbardziej wrażliwych sektorach. Jednocześnie mają one także służyć ograniczeniu do minimum zakłóceń konkurencji na rynku wewnętrznym poprzez zapobieganie tzw. „wyścigowi na dotacje" w ramach UE w okresie niepewności ekonomicznej i dyscypliny budżetowej.

Mimo że sytuacja gospodarcza niektórych państw członkowskich zmieniła się od czasu uzgodnienia przez współustawodawców w 2009 r. zmiany dyrektywy o systemie handlu emisjami (ETS), to Komisja koncentruje się obecnie na wdrożeniu tej dyrektywy, aby zapewnić wprowadzenie narzędzi politycznych uzgodnionych odnośnie do problemu ucieczki emisji gazów cieplarnianych.

Jak podkreślono w planie działań do roku 2050 na rzecz gospodarki niskoemisyjnej, Komisja będzie kontynuować monitorowanie wpływu EU ETS na konkurencyjność w sektorach energochłonnych. Ponadto Komisja będzie regularnie monitorować subwencje przyznawane przez państwa członkowskie i może dokonywać przeglądu wytycznych w sprawie pomocy państwa związanej z ETS w ciągu pierwszych kilku lat od rozpoczęcia ich stosowania.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010943/12
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Increase in power prices as a result of the full inclusion of the cost of CO_2 emissions in electricity tariffs as of 1 January 2013

The increase in power prices as a result of the full inclusion of the costs of CO_2 emissions in electricity tariffs as of 1 January 1 2013 constitutes a major issue as regards the competitiveness and sustainability of industry, especially energy-intensive EU industry. The Commission has provided for the allocation on a uniform basis of free allowances for direct CO_2 emissions to industries at risk of carbon leakage, essentially with the aim of avoiding distortions in the internal market while minimising the possibility that those companies will relocate from the EU to third countries. At the same time, the Commission has acknowledged that 14 industrial sectors are at high risk owing to the cost of indirect emissions; in this case, however, the Commission has not opted for a similar system of free allocation. The recently adopted guidelines on the application of Directive 2009/29/EU give Member States the option of granting state aid to these industries at their own discretion (in accordance with the subsidiarity principle). The stated reasoning behind the Commission's initiative was — once again — to prevent any distortions of competition and ensure the proper functioning of the internal market. Nonetheless, in practice this measure is bound seriously to harm genuine competition and further to widen the gap between northern and southern Europe. Although there were already disparities in Europe in the past, it can be argued that the financial situation of the southern European Member States at the time of the consultation on the adoption of Directive 2009/29/EU was considerably different to their situation in the present economic crisis, which has struck these countries the hardest. Member States with a strong economy have already announced their intention to exercise the discretion they have been given, and to apply the Commission's guidelines by granting the maximum level of aid allowed to the industries concerned. However, the industrial sectors in need of compensation for the costs of indirect emissions make up a vast and crucial segment of the economy in the aforementioned Member States; as a result, the above policy will undoubtedly lead to more unemployment and larger deficits. It is absolutely imperative to ensure a level playing field for all industries across Europe which are exposed to the risk of carbon leakage, and to promote cohesion.

In order to address the issue outlined above, which will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the cohesion envisaged for the European internal market, is the Commission considering an immediate proposal to modify the compensation scheme for indirect emissions, so as to introduce a uniform policy platform at EU level, similar to the methodology adopted for direct emissions?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2013)

The Commission adopted state aid Guidelines which set the conditions under which Member States may compensate part of the increased electricity costs faced by the most efficient companies in each sector. Member States are free to decide whether or not to grant any state aid to these companies, and will have the possibility to use part of the revenues generated from the auctioning of allowances for such purposes.

The Guidelines carefully balance several key objectives. They aim to mitigate the impact of indirect CO_2 costs for the most vulnerable industries, while they are also designed to minimise competition distortions in the internal market by avoiding subsidy races within the EU at a time of economic uncertainty and budgetary discipline.

Although the economic situation for some Member States has changed since the amendment of the Emission Trade Scheme (ETS) Directive was agreed by the co-legislators in 2009, the Commission currently concentrates on the implementation of the directive, to ensure that the agreed policy tools to address carbon leakage can be put in place.

As it was underlined in the 2050 Low carbon Roadmap, the Commission will continue to monitor the impact of the EU ETS on the competitiveness of the energy-intensive industries. Moreover, the Commission will regularly monitor the subsidies granted by Member States and may review the ETS state aid guidelines after the first years of application.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010944/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Prácticas contrarias a los derechos humanos en la recogida del algodón en Uzbekistán

Cada año, cuando llega la temporada de la siembra y de la cosecha del algodón, el gobierno de Uzbekistán moviliza aproximadamente a un millón de personas. Niños, profesores, funcionarios públicos y empleados privados son forzados a desarrollar la plantación y la recolección manual para garantizar la cosecha de este cultivo tan preciado para el gobierno del país.

Esta movilización forzada de la población, tanto adulta como menor de edad, permite al país mantener unos elevados niveles de producción que alcanzan precios muy competitivos en el mercado internacional. Esta movilización ilegal de la mano de obra del país para alcanzar las cuotas productivas fijadas por el gobierno uzbeko representa el factor clave en su competitividad internacional. El Foro Internacional de los Derechos Laborales (ILRF) sostiene que dicho algodón es adquirido por varias multinacionales y que se emplea, en concreto, para la fabricación de los tejidos de la empresa sueca H&M.

Las condiciones, próximas a la esclavitud, en las que la población uzbeka se ve obligada a recoger dicha materia prima son contrarias a múltiples normativas laborales internacionales. Las prácticas empleadas en Uzbekistán violan los convenios números 29, 138 y 182 de la OIT relativos a los trabajos forzados, la edad mínima de admisión al empleo y las peores formas de trabajo infantil, respectivamente.

En octubre del año pasado la Comisión Europea publicó una comunicación para la promoción de la responsabilidad social corporativa en las empresas europeas. Los hechos expuestos suponen una violación de las normativas laborales mencionadas y vulneran, asimismo, las relativas a la responsabilidad social corporativa, como la Guía para compañías multinacionales de la OECD o la Declaración de principios tripartita de la OIT sobre compañías internacionales y política social.

¿Considera la Comisión que la empresa H&M cumple la propuesta formulada en dicha comunicación sobre la responsabilidad social corporativa?

¿Piensa la Comisión actuar al respecto y ponerse en contacto con dicha empresa sueca para asegurarse de que asume algún tipo de responsabilidad social corporativa? Si no es así, ¿cómo pretende la Comisión que las empresas europeas introduzcan principios de responsabilidad social corporativa si no lo hacen las más competitivas, obteniendo así costes más bajos que las demás?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de enero de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta E-10194/2012 ([1]).

No obstante, vista la información recogida en la presente pregunta, la Comisión se ha puesto en contacto con la empresa H&M, la cual se ha remitido a la información disponible en la p. 42 de su informe de sostenibilidad de 2011.

El problema del trabajo infantil forzoso se plantea continuamente en el marco del diálogo político con Uzbekistán; en fechas más recientes, dicho problema se ha abordado con motivo de la última reunión del Comité de Cooperación entre la Unión Europea y Uzbekistán, en julio de 2012, así como en la reunión anual del Diálogo sobre Derechos Humanos entre la UE y Uzbekistán, en noviembre de 2012.

La UE también ha abogado por la cooperación entre las autoridades uzbekas y la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT), promoviendo en particular la organización junto con la OIT de un seminario sobre los convenios de dicha organización en Tashkent, en mayo de 2012. Actualmente se están manteniendo conversaciones entre la OIT y las autoridades uzbekas con vistas a permitir que la OIT observe la aplicación de sus convenios en Uzbekistán. La Comisión apoya activamente este proceso.

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

La cooperación de la UE para el desarrollo en Uzbekistán también puede tener efectos indirectos positivos. Con un nuevo programa, por valor de 10 millones de euros, destinado a impulsar la generación de ingresos en el sector agroalimentario y fomentar la diversificación de la producción agrícola se contribuirá a que disminuya la dependencia del monocultivo del algodón, así como a que se reduzca el trabajo forzoso en los campos de algodón.

Según diversas fuentes, incluido Unicef, se ha reducido el fenómeno del trabajo infantil durante la última cosecha, lo que supone un importante avance.

Gracias a la reciente creación de su Delegación en Uzbekistán, la UE continuará siguiendo muy de cerca este asunto del sector del algodón.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010944/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Human rights abuses in Uzbekistan's cotton harvest

Every year, when it is time to sow and harvest cotton, the Government of Uzbekistan mobilises around a million citizens. Children, teachers, civil servants and private sector employees are forced to work in the planting and hand-picking of this crop, which is highly prized by the government.

The forced mobilisation of adults and children enables the country to maintain high production levels and very competitive prices on the international market for its cotton. This illegal mobilisation of a national labour force, which is required to meet production quotas set by the Uzbek Government, is a key component of its international competitiveness. The International Labour Rights Forum (ILRF) maintains that this cotton is bought by a number of multinational enterprises and that it is, specifically, used to make fabrics for the Swedish firm H&M.

The conditions of near-slavery under which the Uzbek population is forced to harvest this raw material infringes numerous international labour laws. Practices used in Uzbekistan violate ILO Conventions 29, 138 and 182 on forced labour, the minimum age for admission to employment and the worst forms of child labour, respectively.

In October 2011, the Commission published a communication on corporate social responsibility in European enterprises. Apart from violating the abovementioned international labour standards, the situation described also fails to comply with the law on corporate social responsibility, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.

Does the Commission consider that H&M complies with the premise formulated in the communication on corporate social responsibility?

Does the Commission intend to act on this situation and contact the Swedish company in question to ascertain whether it is assuming any form of corporate social responsibility? If not, how does the Commission expect other European enterprises to adopt ideas reflecting corporate social responsibility if the most competitive companies manage to obtain lower costs by failing to do so?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission

(24 January 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-10194/2012 ([1]).

It has however made contact with H&M in the light of the information contained in the present question. H&M referred to information available on p.42 of its 2011 sustainability report.

This issue of forced child labour is continuously raised in the political dialogue with Uzbekistan, most recently on the occasion of the last EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Committee in July 2012 and during the annual EU-Uzbekistan Human Rights Dialogue in November 2012.

The EU has also pushed for a cooperation between the Uzbek authorities and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), notably by prompting the organisation of a seminar on ILO Conventions in Tashkent with the ILO in May 2012. Discussions between the ILO and the Uzbek authorities are ongoing with a view to allow the ILO to observe implementation of ILO Conventions in Uzbekistan. The Commission is actively supporting this process.

EU development cooperation in Uzbekistan may also have indirect positive effects. A new EUR 10 million programme to develop income generation in the agro-food sector and promote the diversification of agricultural production should diminish reliance on cotton monoculture and so also reduce forced labour in cotton fields.

The indications gathered from various sources, including Unicef, suggest that during the last harvest the phenomenon of child labour has been curbed, which is a significant step forward.

With its newly established EU Delegation in Uzbekistan, the EU will obviously keep following the issue of the cotton industry very closely.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010945/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Caída del PIB de la eurozona

Según los datos presentados por Eurostat el 15 de noviembre, la situación económica de la zona del euro entra en recesión al descender el Producto Interior Bruto (PIB) en un 0,1 % comparado con los datos del trimestre anterior. Este dato resulta muy preocupante, pero si lo comparamos con el correspondiente al mismo trimestre del año pasado, obtenemos el alarmante resultado de que el PIB de la eurozona ha descendido un 0,6 %.

Esta tendencia negativa confirma el rotundo fracaso de las políticas de austeridad que se llevan a cabo en los países del sur de la eurozona, cuya producción se encuentra en «caída libre». Las medidas de ajuste impuestas por la troika a los países intervenidos, o las recomendaciones de la Comisión que tan amablemente han sido aceptadas por otros Estados como España, no han hecho más que acelerar el descenso de la capacidad productiva de los «PIIGS». Dicha caída no solo provoca un fracaso en la recuperación económica de los países de la zona del euro, sino que supondrá también un fracaso en la recuperación de los déficits públicos. La caída de los ingresos fiscales es el principal problema de las arcas públicas y dicha caída agravará la crisis de ingresos fiscales, provocando la quiebra de empresas, el despido de trabajadores, etc., que constituyen la fuente de la mayoría de los ingresos públicos.

Este panorama económico de los países de la periferia económica europea está arrastrando a la baja la economía de toda la zona del euro. No solo en lo que se refiere al indicador del crecimiento medio de su PIB, sino también en lo que respecta al crecimiento de los países más fuertes, como Francia o incluso Alemania. Los países del sur de Europa, antaño grandes potencias consumidoras y fieles clientes de los sectores industriales de los países más boyantes de la zona del euro, se encuentran hoy en un proceso de empobrecimiento tal que no pueden mantener sus niveles de consumo y ocasionan, por tanto, un descenso de la demanda global de la zona del euro. El estancamiento de Francia y Alemania, la sorprendente caída del PIB holandés, etc. son señales de una profundización en los efectos perversos que la crisis financiera está introduciendo en la economía real por medio de las políticas de austeridad.

Ante la nueva información presentada por Eurostat, ¿afrontará la Comisión, en sus próximas recomendaciones, la cuestión de la crisis de los ingresos fiscales una vez observados los destructivos efectos de las políticas de austeridad? ¿Considera la Comisión la necesidad de recomendar políticas tributarias progresivas que permitan generar consumo sin socavar todavía más la capacidad de consumo? ¿Asume la Comisión alguna responsabilidad por los efectos negativos que las políticas planteadas en sus recomendaciones están teniendo en los países que las han aplicado?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de enero de 2013)

La actual falta de crecimiento en la zona del euro es, en gran medida, consecuencia de la agravación de la crisis de la deuda soberana en el primer semestre de 2012 y un síntoma del aumento de la preocupación de los mercados sobre la viabilidad a largo plazo de la zona del euro. Sin embargo, ahora hay indicios de que está volviendo la confianza. Irlanda ha retornado a los mercados de la deuda. Hay varios primeros indicios de que el capital se está volviendo a invertir en España, mientras que Italia colocó hace poco deuda a diez años con el interés más bajo desde 2010. Esta evolución refleja la aplicación de reformas estructurales de gran alcance y una profunda modificación de la arquitectura política de la UEM. El retorno de la confianza permitirá una recuperación del crecimiento en el primer semestre de 2013.

El saneamiento presupuestario puede tener un efecto moderador sobre el crecimiento a corto plazo, pero este efecto debe valorarse en relación con los riesgos de una reacción contraria de los mercados, que sería mucho más perjudicial, de juzgar aquellos que las cuentas públicas de la zona del euro son insostenibles. La deuda pública de la zona del euro ha aumentado muy rápidamente desde el comienzo de la crisis económica y financiera mundial y alcanza el 90 % del PIB, un nivel en torno al cual suelen volverse significativos los posibles puntos vulnerables macroeconómicos.

Los esfuerzos de saneamiento de los Estados miembros se especifican en términos estructurales, esto es, ajustados a efectos de la coyuntura económica. En consecuencia, si las condiciones macroeconómicas así lo exigen, un Estado miembro puede recibir un plazo suplementario para corregir su déficit excesivo, en el caso de haberse deteriorado las condiciones de crecimiento. Esto ha ocurrido ya tres veces este año, a saber, en España, Portugal y Grecia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010945/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Fall in GDP in the euro area

According to data presented by Eurostat on 15 November 2012, the economic situation in the euro area has gone into recession, with a 0.1% contraction in GDP compared with the previous quarter. This information is extremely worrying, but if we compare it with the data for the same quarter last year, the even more alarming result is that GDP in the euro area has dropped by 0.6%.

This negative trend confirms the resounding failure of the austerity policies being applied in the southern euro area countries, whose production has gone into free fall. The adjustment measures imposed by the Troika in the countries where it has intervened, or the Commission's recommendations, which have been so obligingly accepted by other countries such as Spain, have merely helped to accelerate the decline in productivity of the PIIGS (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain). This decrease not only stands in the way of economic recovery in the eurozone countries, but is also likely to prevent public deficits from being restored. The main problem faced by public funds is the drop in fiscal revenue, which will exacerbate the fiscal revenue crisis, leading to business bankruptcies and loss of jobs, which are the source of most public income.

This economic outlook in the countries on the periphery of the European economic area is pulling the economy of the whole eurozone downwards, not just in terms of its average growth indicator for GDP but also where the growth of the strongest countries, such as France and Germany, is concerned. The countries of southern Europe, which used to have major consumptive capacity and were loyal clients of the industrial sectors of the eurozone's most buoyant countries, are now undergoing such impoverishment that they are unable to maintain their levels of consumption, which is causing an overall decrease in demand in the euro area. The stagnation of France and Germany and the surprising fall in the Netherlands' GDP are just some of the signs that the damage being wrought on the real economy by the financial crisis through austerity policies is becoming more extensive.

In the light of this latest information from Eurostat, will the Commission confront the issue of the fiscal revenue crisis in its forthcoming recommendations, having noted the destructive effects of austerity policies? Does the Commission see a need to recommend progressive tax policies able to generate consumption without further undermining consumptive capacity? Does the Commission accept any responsibility for the negative impact that policies based on its recommendations are having in countries in which they have been applied?

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

The current lack of growth in the euro area is largely consequence of the aggravation of the sovereign-debt crisis in the first half of 2012 and a symptom of rising market concerns about the long-term viability of the euro area. Yet, there are now signs that confidence is returning. Ireland has returned to the debt markets. There is some early evidence of capital moving into Spain again and Italy recently sold 10-year debt at the lowest yield since 2010. This progress reflects the implementation of far-reaching structural reforms and deep changes in EMU's policy architecture. A return of confidence will allow a return to growth in the first half of 2013.

Fiscal consolidation can have a dampening effect on growth in the short term. But this effect should be assessed against the risks of a much more damaging backlash if markets were to judge euro area public finances unsustainable. Euro area government debt has increased extremely rapidly since the onset of the global economic and financial crisis and now stands at 90% of GDP, a level around which potential macroeconomic vulnerabilities typically become significant.

Member States consolidation effort is specified in structural terms, i.e. adjusted for the effect of the business cycle. Accordingly, if macroeconomic circumstances call for it, a Member State may receive extra time to correct its excessive deficit when growth conditions deteriorate. This has occurred already three times this year: in Spain, Portugal and Greece.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010946/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Inseguridad en la autorización de un medicamento, el caso de la Reboxetina

En el 2010 un grupo de investigadores alemanes descubrieron que la Reboxetina, el principio activo de un fármaco para el tratamiento de la depresión clínica, carecía por completo de efecto alguno sobre la salud, descubrieron además, que las empresas farmacéuticas que lo fabrican habían ocultado sistemáticamente las investigaciones que habían arrojado resultados contrarios a su efectividad.

Según la investigación, publicado en el British Medical Journal, existían numerosos datos sobre la escasa o nula efectividad de dicho fármaco en estudios que no habían sido publicados. La publicación expone los hechos de 6 estudios realizados sobre el medicamento que mostraban su escasa efectividad que nunca fueron publicados en revistas científicas, así como la directa eliminación de tres cuartas partes de los datos en los ensayos clínicos contra otros antidepresivos por parte de la empresa farmacéutica.

En la actualidad, pese al conocimiento público de los hechos, en España se siguen comercializando medicamentos con el principio activo de la Reboxetina, en concreto los medicamentos NOREBOX e IRENOR, que son comercializadas por la empresa Pfizer. Este medicamento nunca fue aprobado en Estados Unidos precisamente por falta de eficacia probada.

Tanto la Agencia Europea de Medicamentos como las distintas agencias nacionales deben ser las instituciones encargadas de velar por la seguridad de los medicamentos comercializados en Europa. Pero, ante los hechos presentados, surgen numerosas dudas sobre la transparencia y rigurosidad de sus actividades ante la influencia de las empresas farmacéuticas. Este escándalo salpica a ciertas publicaciones científicas que han demostrado en este caso desarrollar una actividad sesgada por los intereses económicos de las empresas del sector. Esta rotunda puesta en cuestión del sistema de autorización de los medicamentos en Europa debe generar una reacción de las instituciones europeas que garantice un verdadero control público sobre la autorización de los medicamentos.

¿Qué medidas piensa emplear la Comisión para garantizar el fin de la comercialización de la Reboxetina? ¿Cuáles son las medidas que la Comisión ha llevado a cabo para esclarecer la culpabilidad y sancionar a las empresas farmacéuticas y las publicaciones científicas que ocultaron datos sobre dicho medicamento? Ante el sesgo que las citadas empresas pueden inducir en las publicaciones científicas, ¿está desarrollando la Comisión algún plan de control para medicamentos actualmente aprobados cuya efectividad pueda haber sido objeto de falsedad por parte de las empresas farmacéuticas?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de enero de 2013)

Según la legislación farmacéutica ([1]) ([2]), solo se autoriza la comercialización de un medicamento una vez concluida positivamente una evaluación de la relación beneficio/riesgo. Tras la autorización inicial, el producto se somete a una vigilancia posterior a la comercialización. Entre otras obligaciones, el titular de la autorización de comercialización ha de comunicar a las autoridades competentes cualquier nueva información que pueda afectar a la evaluación de los beneficios y los riesgos del medicamento.

Recientemente se revisó la relación riesgo/beneficio de la reboxetina, tras la publicación en 2010 de un análisis de los datos relativos a la misma efectuado por un instituto científico alemán, que suscitó la cuestión de que los riesgos de la reboxetina eran superiores a los beneficios ([3]). La revisión de la Agencia Europea de Medicamentos confirmó en 2011 que la reboxetina presenta beneficios con respecto al placebo en el tratamiento de la enfermedad depresiva y la depresión grave ([4]).

Las autorizaciones de comercialización de los medicamentos que contienen reboxetina han sido concedidas por los Estados miembros, los cuales son responsables, por tanto, de garantizar que el titular de la autorización de comercialización cumple íntegramente sus obligaciones, incluido el poner a disposición de las autoridades competentes todos los estudios y datos pertinentes.

En caso de que se plantee una duda grave sobre la eficacia o seguridad, un Estado miembro o la Comisión pueden incoar un procedimiento de recurso a escala de la UE.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 726/2004, por el que se establecen procedimientos comunitarios para la autorización y el control de los medicamentos de uso humano y veterinario y por el que se crea la Agencia Europea de Medicamentos (DO L 136 de 30.4.2004, p. 1), modificado.
([2]) Directiva 2001/83/CE, por la que se establece un código comunitario sobre medicamentos para uso humano (DO L 311 de 28.11.2001, p. 67).
([3]) https://www.iqwig.de/download/A05-20C_Executive_Summary_Bupropion_mirtazapine_and_reboxetine_in_depression.pdf
([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2011/07/WC500109581.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010946/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Lack of safety in drug authorisation procedures: the case of Reboxetine

In 2010 a group of German researchers discovered that Reboxetine, the active principal of a drug used to treat clinical depression, had no effect at all on health. They also found that the pharmaceutical companies which manufacture it had systematically concealed research results demonstrating its ineffectiveness.

According to the study published in the British Medical Journal, extensive data showing this medicine to be of little or no use was found to exist in unpublished studies. The publication reveals the results of six studies of the drug, which demonstrated its ineffectiveness but were never published in scientific journals. It also shows that three quarters of the data from clinical tests comparing it with other antidepressant drugs were directly eliminated by the pharmaceutical company.

Despite public knowledge of these facts, medicinal products containing Reboxetine as their active principal — specifically Norebox and Irenor, manufactured by Pfizer — continue to be sold in Spain. This drug has never been approved for sale in the United States, precisely because of its lack of proven efficacy.

The European Medicines Agency and the various national agencies should act as the bodies responsible for monitoring the safety of medicines sold in Europe. However, the above situation raises numerous doubts as to the transparency and rigorousness of their activities in the face of influence from the pharmaceutical companies. This scandal extends to several scientific publications, which have been shown to have allowed themselves to be influenced by the economic interests of the pharmaceutical sector. This definite question mark over the drug authorisation system in Europe should give rise to a reaction from the European institutions leading to proper public control of the authorisation of medicinal products.

What steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Reboxetine is taken off the market? What action has the Commission taken to establish culpability and penalise the pharmaceutical companies and scientific publications which concealed data on this medicinal product? In view of the influence which these companies are able to exert on scientific publications, is the Commission developing any plan to monitor medicinal products which are currently approved but whose effectiveness may have been misrepresented by the pharmaceutical companies?

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

In accordance with the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]) ([2]) a marketing authorisation for a medicinal product is granted only after a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. After initial authorisation, the product is subject to post-marketing surveillance. Among other obligations, the marketing authorisation holder has to inform the competent authorities of any new information which might influence the evaluation of the benefits and risks of the medicinal product.

The benefit risk ratio of reboxetine was recently reviewed, after an analysis of reboxetine data conducted by a scientific institute in Germany was published in 2010, which raised concerns that the risks of reboxetine outweighed the benefits ([3]). The review by the European Medicines Agency confirmed in 2011, that reboxetine has benefit over placebo in the treatment of depressive illness and major depression ([4]).

The marketing authorisations for medicines containing reboxetine have been granted by Member States, who therefore have the responsibility to ensure the marketing authorisation holder fully complies with all obligations, including to make all relevant studies and data available to the competent authorities.

Should any serious efficacy or safety concerns be identified, a Member State or the Commission can initiate an EU-wide referral procedure.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended.
([2]) Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.
([3]) https://www.iqwig.de/download/A05-20C_Executive_Summary_Bupropion_mirtazapine_and_reboxetine_in_depression.pdf
([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2011/07/WC500109581.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010947/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Secuestro de personas migrantes en México

La Universidad Autónoma Nuevo León (México) ha presentado el pasado 6 de noviembre la publicación «Cuaderno sobre el secuestro de migrantes». Este documento es uno de los trabajos más exhaustivos realizados en México sobre el tema y en él se recogen testimonios directos obtenidos en diferentes casas del migrante de supervivientes a un secuestro.

Según un informe de la Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, cada seis meses son víctimas del delito de secuestro alrededor de 10 000 personas migrantes a Estados Unidos en tránsito por México. Esta escandalosa cifra continúa en aumento a medida que se incrementa el nivel de violencia en el país. El secuestro de personas migrantes se ha convertido en una práctica generalizada a lo largo y ancho del país al resultar entre las actividades más rentables para el crimen organizado en el país. El conflicto entre el Gobierno y los diferentes grupos del crimen organizado está cobrando sus víctimas entre las personas más vulnerables, y éstas son los migrantes que atraviesan el país sin ningún tipo de defensa por parte de las administraciones nacionales.

Numerosas asociaciones de defensa del migrante en México han denunciado en los diferentes juzgados de nivel local, estatal y federal en numerosas ocasiones delitos relacionados con el secuestro y extorsión de estas personas. En marzo de 2010, varias asociaciones acudieron a la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) dado que, ante la interpelación de los relatores de dicha comisión, el Gobierno mexicano negaba la información presentada en reiteradas ocasiones por la sociedad civil. Puesto que, pese a las acciones emprendidas por la sociedad civil mexicana, se ha incrementado el número de crímenes de estas características, ello exige una firme actuación por parte del Gobierno mexicano.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante del crecimiento del número de secuestros de personas migrantes en México? ¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el Gobierno mexicano está dando una adecuada y proporcionada respuesta al considerable número de casos de secuestro de migrantes en tránsito por el país? ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante interceder y presionar al Gobierno mexicano para que proteja suficientemente a las personas migrantes que cruzan su territorio del secuestro y la extorsión a la que están siendo sometidos por el crimen organizado?

En el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México, ¿qué medidas posibles pueden ponerse en marcha para evitar este drama de los secuestros de migrantes?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2013)

La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta tiene conocimiento de la situación crítica de los migrantes que transitan por México, en lo relativo a los problemas de seguridad y, más concretamente, de delincuencia organizada, y recibe periódicamente información al respecto.

La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta está alentando los intentos del Gobierno mexicano por mejorar la situación. En 2010, México estableció un nuevo marco legislativo en materia de migración, que, entre otras cosas, prevé la concesión de asistencia médica y social a los migrantes. La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta confía en que el nuevo Gobierno mexicano seguirá trabajando a nivel local, regional e internacional para solucionar el problema. En este sentido, el presidente Peña Nieto envió una señal positiva al entregar, pocos días después de tomar posesión del cargo, el Premio Nacional de Derechos Humanos 2012 al padre Solalinde, el más ferviente defensor de los derechos de los migrantes en México.

La UE se vale de diferentes conductos para manifestar su preocupación, entre ellos los Diálogos sobre Derechos Humanos, Justicia y Seguridad, que con carácter bilateral tienen lugar cada año y en los que invariablemente se tratan los problemas relacionados con la migración. Asimismo, alienta a las instituciones de la UE a dar prioridad a medidas o proyectos concretos que puedan contribuir a la labor de prevención y protección de los migrantes, entre ellos los menores y las mujeres, que constituyen las principales víctimas de los delitos a que se refiere Su Señoría. Así, la Comisión ha decidido recientemente respaldar un proyecto regional llevado a cabo por la Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal, a fin de proteger y promover los derechos de los migrantes en tránsito en México, Guatemala, Honduras y El Salvador. Por otra parte, las misiones diplomáticas de los Estados miembros en México visitan con regularidad los albergues para migrantes repartidos por el país, con objeto de dar publicidad y expresar su apoyo a la labor que desempeñan.

La Alta Representante y vicepresidenta se propone mantenerse muy atenta a la evolución en este ámbito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010947/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Abduction of migrants in Mexico

On 6 November 2012, the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon (Mexico) presented the 'Case file on the abduction of migrants'. This document is one of the most exhaustive studies of this topic to have been carried out in Mexico and brings together direct testimonies from survivors of abduction interviewed at different migrant refuge centres.

According to a report by the Mexican National Committee for Human Rights, some 10 000 people are abducted every six months while migrating to the United States via Mexico. This shocking figure continues to increase, hand in hand with the rising level of violence in the country. The abduction of migrants has become a widespread practice the length and breadth of Mexico, as it is one of the most lucrative activities for organised crime in that country. The impact of the conflict between the Government and the various organised criminal groups is being felt by the most vulnerable, who are the migrants crossing the country without any form of protection from the national authorities.

Numerous cases of crimes linked to the abduction and extortion of migrants have been filed with local, state or federal courts by different migrants' defence associations in Mexico. In March 2010, several associations addressed the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) following the Mexican Government's denial, when challenged by the Commission's rapporteurs, of the information repeatedly presented by civil society. Given that, despite initiatives undertaken by Mexican civil society, this type of crime is on the rise, a firm response is needed from the Mexican Government.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the increase in the number of migrants being abducted in Mexico? Does the VP/HR consider that the Mexican Government is providing an adequate and appropriate response to the large number of cases of abduction of migrants in Mexico? Does the VP/HR intend to intercede and exert pressure on the Mexican Government to ensure that it provides migrants crossing its territory with proper protection against the abduction and extortion by organised criminal gangs to which they are exposed?

What possible measures can be set in motion, within the framework of the EU-Mexico Association Agreement, to put an end to this dramatic situation?

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

The HR/VP is aware and regularly informed about the critical situation of transiting migrants in Mexico, in the context of the security issues and, specifically, organised crime.

The HR/VP is encouraging the Mexican Government in its efforts to improve the situation. In 2010 Mexico established a new legislative framework in the area of migration, which, amongst other measures, foresees social and medical aid to the migrants. The HR/VP is confident that the new Mexican Government will continue efforts, locally, regionally and at international level, to tackle this problem. In this respect, President Peña Nieto sent out a positive sign by delivering — a few days after taking office — the 2012 National Human Rights Prize to Father Solalinde, the most prominent defender of migrants' rights in Mexico.

The EU is using different channels to voice its concerns, such as the bilateral yearly Dialogues on Human Rights, Justice and Security, where migration issues are invariably raised. It also encourages EU institutions to give priority to concrete actions/projects that can help prevent and protect the migrants, including minors and women, who are particularly affected by the crimes the Honourable Member refers to. As a result, the Commission has recently decided to support a regional project carried out by the Human Rights Commission of the Federal District of Mexico, in order to protect and promote the rights of transiting migrants in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Moreover, the Member States diplomatic missions in Mexico are regularly visiting migrants' shelters across the country, in order to publicize and express support to their work.

The HR/VP intends to continue to monitor this issue very closely.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-010948/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(30 november 2012)

Betreft: Sluiting Ford Genk — Cars 2020-task force en concrete impulsen

Uit een studie van de Universiteit Hasselt over de economische impact van de sluiting van Ford Genk ([1]) blijkt dat het aantal banen dat verloren dreigt te gaan tengevolge van de sluiting van de Ford-fabriek in Genk op 11 759 ligt, waarvan in Limburg 4 337 bij Ford, 2 816 bij de toeleveranciers, 1 042 door de dalende consumptie en in Vlaanderen 3 111 bij de toeleveranciers.

In het actieplan Cars 2020 kondigt de Commissie aan dat ESF-middelen kunnen worden ingezet ter ondersteuning van de leveranciers die extra tijd nodig kunnen hebben om nieuwe klanten te vinden na een sluiting/inkrimping van een automobielfabriek.

Verder kondigt de Commissie aan de interdepartementale task force opnieuw te zullen opstarten. Deze task force kan het gebruik van EU-fondsen stroomlijnen, meer bepaald door technische bijstand te verlenen en de wachttijd te verminderen.

Gezien de uitzonderlijke sociaal-economische impact van deze sluiting, is een snelle implementatie van deze instrumenten uit het actieplan hoogst noodzakelijk.

1. Wanneer zal de interdepartementale task force opnieuw worden opgestart?

2. Wie zal van deze task force deel uitmaken?

3. Welke concrete impulsen, financiële bijstand en overbruggingsmaatregelen kan de Commissie voorzien ten aanzien van de toeleverende bedrijven, en binnen welk tijdskader?

4. Welke concrete maatregelen en ingrepen mogen op korte termijn worden verwacht van deze task force, met name inzake technische bijstand en met name voor de toeleveranciers van de sluitende Ford-fabriek in Genk?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(8 februari 2013)

1. In het actieplan CARS-2020 ([2]) kondigde de Commissie aan dat zij de taskforce zal opstarten om de belangrijkste gevallen van bedrijfssluitingen of aanzienlijke inkrimping in de automobielsector te onderzoeken en op te volgen. Er is echter een duidelijke vraag van het bedrijfsleven en/of van de nationale overheden nodig om de taskforce op te starten. Tot dusver is er geen dergelijke vraag ontvangen.

2. De taskforce voor herstructurering is een interne groep die vertegenwoordigers van verschillende directoraten-generaal van de Europese Commissie bijeenbrengt.

3. De Commissie wil het geachte Parlementslid wijzen op haar antwoord op vraag P-009753/12 ([3]). Zoals voorzien in de Verordening betreffende het Europees Fonds voor aanpassing aan de globalisering (EFG) ([4]), komen de werknemers die worden ontslagen bij de leveranciers en afnemers van Ford in aanmerking voor steun van dit Fonds indien er een aanvraag voor de werknemers van Ford gedaan wordt. Als België een aanvraag indient voor financiering door het EFG, is de tijdspanne van een dergelijke steun afhankelijk van vele factoren die op dit moment onbekend zijn (voornamelijk van de timing van de daadwerkelijke ontslagen en de datum van de aanvraag).

4. De taskforce zou de follow-up van de belangrijkste gevallen van sluitingen of aanzienlijke inkrimpingen van automobielfabrieken kunnen coördineren. Binnen deze taskforce zouden de diensten van de Commissie samen de mogelijke kwesties kunnen analyseren die ontstaan, evenals overwegen hoe de desbetreffende EU-fondsen het best gemobiliseerd en gestroomlijnd kunnen worden om de werknemers die de komende jaren worden ontslagen het best te ondersteunen (door het verlenen van technische bijstand, het verminderen van de wachttijd, het adviseren over het meest efficiënte gebruik van de hulpbronnen, en door toezicht en rapportage).

([1]) http://www.uhasselt.be/Documents/KIZOK/Impactstudie.pdf
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Verordening (EG) Nr. 1927/2006 van 20.12.2006 tot oprichting van het EFG.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010948/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Closure of Ford works in Genk, Cars 2020 task force and specific initiatives

A study by the University of Hasselt (Belgium) on the economic impact of the closure of Ford's Genk works ([1]) states that 11 759 jobs risk being lost as a result of the closure of the Ford works in Genk. This figure comprises (in the province of Limburg) 4 337 jobs with Ford, 2 816 jobs with suppliers and 1 042 jobs as a result of falling consumption, and (in Flanders) 3 111 jobs with suppliers.

In its Cars 2020 action plan, the Commission announced that resources from the ESF could be used in support of the suppliers who might need additional time to find new clients following a closure/downsizing of an automotive plant.

It also announced that it would be re-launching its inter-service task force. This task force could streamline the use of the relevant EU Funds, in particular by providing technical assistance and reducing waiting time.

In view of the exceptionally severe socioeconomic impact of this closure, it is essential that these instruments from the action plan should be speedily implemented.

1. When will the inter-service task force be re-launched?

2. Who will be the members of this task force?

3. What specific initiatives, financial assistance and transitional measures can the Commission provide for the supplier firms, and within what time frame?

4. What concrete measures and interventions may be expected in the short term from this task force, particularly in terms of technical assistance, and particularly for the suppliers of the closing Ford works in Genk?

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

1. In CARS 2020 Action Plan ([2]), the Commission announced that it will launch the task-force to study and follow up the main cases of automotive plant closures or significant downsizing. In order, however, to launch the task force a clear demand from industry and/or national authorities is needed. So far no such demand has been received.

2. The Task Force on Restructuring is an internal group bringing together representatives of several Directorates-General of the European Commission.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question P-009753/12 ([3]). As provided for by the regulation governing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) ([4]), workers made redundant by suppliers to, and downstream producers of, Ford would be eligible for assistance from this Fund if an application for the workers of Ford itself was made. If Belgium submits an application for EGF funding, the time frame of such assistance would depend on many factors unknown at this stage (in particular the timing of the actual redundancies and the date of application).

4. The Task Force could coordinate the follow-up of the main cases of automotive plant closures or significant downsizing. Within this task force, the Commission's services could analyse together the possible issues arising as well as consider how to best mobilise and streamline the use of the relevant EU Funds in order to support the workers who will be made redundant in the next few years (by providing technical assistance, reducing waiting time, advising on the most effective use of resources, monitoring and reporting).

([1]) http://www.uhasselt.be/Documents/KIZOK/Impactstudie.pdf
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 of 20.12.2006 on establishing the EGF.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010949/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Sudão do Sul — expulsão de funcionário das Nações Unidas

Tomei conhecimento da declaração da Alta Representante na qual manifestava preocupação pela expulsão, pelo governo do Sudão do Sul, de um funcionário da Missão das Nações Unidas naquele país (Unmiss). Este funcionário dedicava-se à questão dos direitos humanos.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Que comentário lhe merece a expulsão do funcionário?

— A União Europeia tomou ou admite tomar medidas junto do governo do Sudão do Sul de modo a manifestar-lhe a sua desaprovação pelo sucedido? Já o fez? Por que formas?

— Como avalia a prestação do Sudão do Sul no tocante às questões da democracia e dos direitos humanos?

— Mais genericamente, que avaliação faz dos primeiros anos da independência deste Estado? Nomeadamente, que apreciação faz do seu relacionamento com o vizinho Sudão?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(8 de fevereiro de 2013)

A AR/VP está preocupada com a expulsão do funcionário da Missão das Nações Unidas dedicado aos direitos humanos no Sudão do Sul. A UE apoia firmemente a Unmiss e, em particular, o seu trabalho crucial no domínio dos direitos humanos. A delegação da UE referiu este incidente junto da Vice-Presidente e de vários ministros. Por fim, em 28 de novembro de 2012, o porta-voz da Alta Representante da UE, produziu uma declaração acerca deste assunto, manifestando a preocupação da Alta Representante sobre a decisão do Sudão do Sul e indicando que esta expulsão representa uma violação das obrigações contraídas pelo Sudão do Sul no âmbito da Carta das Nações Unidas.

A AR/VP está também alarmada com os recentes relatórios da ocorrência de incidentes contra os direitos humanos e o assédio e intimidação de civis por parte das forças de segurança. Está profundamente perturbada com o assassínio do comentador político e ativista para os direitos humanos, Isaiah Abraham, em Juba em 5 de dezembro. Congratula-se com a decisão do Presidente de ordenar uma investigação, mas mostra-se preocupada com os relatos de ameaças feitas a outros jornalistas e ativistas que assumiram uma postura crítica após a morte de Abraham.

A AR/VP condena igualmente o assassínio de manifestantes desarmados por parte das forças de segurança, em 8 e 9 de dezembro, em Wau, e no estado oeste de Bahr el-ghazal. Defende também a resolução aprovada pela Assembleia para dar início a um inquérito.

É imperativo que os autores sejam julgados e que sejam tomadas medidas para garantir a liberdade de expressão e a proteção dos defensores dos direitos humanos, bem como impedir o uso desproporcionado da força.

Em relação às relações Norte-Sul, a AR/VP congratulou-se com a assinatura dos Acordos de Addis, em 27 de setembro de 2012; no entanto, está preocupada com os atrasos na sua implementação. A UE apela as partes a proceder imediatamente à implementação do acordo, bem como a resolver os assuntos pendentes mais urgentes, em particular o estatuto final do Abyei, a disputa das fronteiras e o conflito no Kordofan do Sul e no Nilo Azul, tal como declarado no Roteiro e Comunicado do Conselho de Paz e Segurança da UA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010949/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — South Sudan — expulsion of a UN official

I have learned of the statement in which the High Representative expressed disquiet at the decision by the South Sudan Government to expel an official working for the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The official in question was a human rights officer.

What other comments does the Vice-President/High Representative have to make about the official's expulsion?

Has the EU raised this incident with the South Sudan Government or is it willing to do so? Has it already conveyed its disapproval? In what way?

How does the High Representative view South Sudan's performance as far as democracy and human rights are concerned?

More generally, what is her assessment of South Sudan's first year of independence and in particular its relations with neighbouring Sudan?

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

The HR/VP is concerned about the expulsion of the Human Rights Officer working for the UN Mission in South Sudan. The EU strongly supports UNMISS and, in particular, its crucial work in the field of human rights. The EU has raised this incident with the Vice-President and a number of Ministers. Finally, on 28 November 2012, the spokesperson of the EU High Representative released a statement on this issue, showing the concern of the High Representative on South Sudan's decision and indicating that the expulsion represented a breach of South Sudan's obligations under the UN Charter.

The HR/VP is also alarmed about recent human rights-related incidents and reports of harassment and intimidation of civilians by the security forces. She is deeply disturbed about the killing of a political commentator and human rights activist, Isaiah Abraham, in Juba on 5 December. She welcomes the President's decision to order an investigation but is concerned about reports of threats to other journalists and activists who took a critical stance after Abraham's death.

The HR/VP also condemns the killing of unarmed protestors by security forces on 8 and 9 December in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal state. She welcomes the resolution passed by the Assembly calling for an investigation.

It is imperative that the perpetrators are brought to justice and that measures are taken to ensure freedom of speech and the protection of human rights defenders, as well as to refrain from the disproportionate use of force.

On North/South relations, the HR/VP welcomed the signing of the Addis Agreements reached on 27 September 2012 but is concerned about delays in implementation. The EU urges both Parties to proceed immediately with their implementation as well as resolving the remaining outstanding issues, in particular the Final status of Abyei, the claimed and disputed borders, and the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile as set out in the AU PSC Roadmap and Communique of 24 October.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010950/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Europeana — conteúdos disponibilizados nas línguas oficiais da UE

Tomei conhecimento de que a «newsletter» do portal Europeana apenas está disponível em inglês.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Quando prevê a disponibilização da «newsletter» nas demais línguas oficiais da União?

— Em que línguas estão disponíveis os demais conteúdos do Europeana?

— Qual o número e a percentagem de conteúdos em cada língua oficial?

— Que meios está disposta a empregar para assegurar que o maior número de conteúdos esteja disponível no maior número de línguas possível, respeitando assim o princípio da igualdade entre os nacionais dos Estados-Membros e o compromisso da União com o multilinguismo?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(14 de janeiro de 2013)

Sendo a Europeana o ponto único de acesso ao património cultural em linha da Europa, os seus objetivos são tornar acessível o acervo das bibliotecas, arquivos, museus, galerias e coleções audiovisuais europeus e fomentar a sua reutilização por terceiros em aplicações ou produtos e serviços de valor acrescentado.

A Europeana disponibiliza, hoje, cerca de 22 milhões de obras em texto, imagem, vídeo, som e 3D, provenientes de mais de 2200 instituições culturais de toda a Europa, que as fornecem nas línguas em que as têm disponíveis. Atualmente, existem obras em todas as línguas oficiais da UE, em norueguês, islandês, sérvio, turco e ainda outras línguas ([1]). O número de obras por língua e a respetiva percentagem do total variam, dado que o número de obras disponíveis na Europeana vai aumentando. A Europeana reflete, pois, a diversidade linguística da Europa enquanto parte integrante da identidade cultural europeia, respeitando, assim, o compromisso da União em matéria de multilinguismo.

A Europeana oferece a sua interface em 29 línguas, incluindo todas as línguas oficiais da UE, e aceita pesquisas multilingues. No que respeita ao boletim informativo (*newsletter*), as restrições orçamentais e outros condicionalismos levaram a Europeana a centrar os seus recursos nas suas tarefas essenciais (ver acima) e a adotar uma estratégia pragmática, oferecendo-o, de momento, apenas em inglês. No entanto, a Europeana incentiva voluntários das organizações participantes a efetuarem traduções e espera poder, no futuro, oferecer o boletim também noutras línguas.

([1]) Pode conhecer-se o número atualizado de obras por língua clicando na ligação «By language», que surge após uma pesquisa com os carateres *:* na caixa de pesquisa, em (http://www.europeana.eu/portal/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010950/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Europeana — the availability of content in the EU's official languages

The Europeana portal's newsletter is available only in English.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— When will this newsletter be made available in the remaining official languages of the Union?

— In what languages is the remaining Europeana content available?

— What is the amount and percentage of content in each official language?

— What resources is it prepared to use in order to guarantee that as much content as possible is available in as many languages as possible, in line with the principle of equality between Member State nationals and the Union's commitment to multilingualism?

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

As the single access point to Europe's cultural heritage online, Europeana's objectives are to make accessible the holdings of Europe's libraries, archives, museums, galleries and audiovisual collections and to foster their re-use by third parties in applications or added-value products and services.

Today, Europeana makes available some 22 million image, text, video, sound and 3D items contributed by more than 2,200 cultural institutions from all across Europe, which provide the objects in those languages they themselves hold them in. Currently, this covers material in all official EU languages plus Norwegian, Icelandic, Serbian, Turkish and some others ([1]). The number of items by language and their percentage of total vary as Europeana's content base grows. Europeana thus reflects Europe's linguistic diversity as part and parcel of European cultural identity and thus complying with the Union's commitment to multilingualism.

Europeana offers its interface in 29 languages, including all official EU languages, and supports multilingual searches. As for the newsletter, budgetary and practical constraints have led Europeana to focus its resources on its core tasks (see above) and adopt a pragmatic approach, offering it, for the moment, in English only. Europeana is, however, encouraging volunteers for translation among the participating organisations, and is hoping to be able to offer the newsletter also in other languages in the future.

([1]) The up-to-date number of items by language can be consulted by clicking on the 'by language' tab which appears after conducting a search with the characters *:* in the search box at http://www.europeana.eu/portal/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010951/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — República Democrática do Congo — apelo à paz por parte de líderes africanos

Um grupo de líderes da África Central e Oriental apelou recentemente às forças rebeldes M23 para terminarem imediatamente com a ofensiva militar na República Democrática do Congo e retirarem para 20 quilómetros a norte de Goma. Este apelo seguiu-se a uma reunião da conferência internacional da região dos Grandes Lagos na qual também se apelou ao governo congolês para se envolver na resolução das questões que o opõem ao M23.

Assim, pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

— Que apreciação faz deste apelo? Que comentário lhe merece?

— A União Europeia fez ou admite fazer apelo semelhante às partes para que procurem resolver o conflito por meios pacíficos?

— Foi contactada para apoiar um esforço de mediação do mesmo? Estaria disponível para o promover?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(19 de fevereiro de 2013)

A União Europeia congratula-se com o facto de a região estar a tentar procurar uma solução para a crise no Leste da RDC na sequência das ações de sedição do grupo M23 no âmbito das Forças Armadas Congolesas (FARDC). A UE apoia a via diplomática para a resolução do conflito, lançada pela Conferência Internacional da Região dos Grandes Lagos (CIRGL) e os esforços que continua a desenvolver neste sentido, bem como as outras iniciativas destinadas a promover uma paz sustentável (União Africana/UA, Comunidade de Desenvolvimento da África Austral/SADC, Nações Unidas/ONU).

A União Europeia lançou por diversas vezes um apelo a todas as partes interessadas (designadamente, M23, países vizinhos, governo da RDC) no sentido de exercerem toda a sua influência com vista a pôr termo à escalada militar. Em especial, a ocupação de Goma pelo movimento M23 em novembro foi fortemente condenada pela Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros (CNE).

A UE não foi convidada a desempenhar um papel direto em termos de mediação na crise no Leste da RDC, que está a ser atualmente desempenhado pela ICGLR. A União Europeia tem desenvolvido, contudo, uma grande atividade diplomática no que diz respeito à crise no Leste da RDC. Participa na qualidade de observador nas negociações convocadas pela ICGLR em Kampala e continua em contacto permanente com os governos da região e ainda com a ONU, a UA e outros membros da comunidade internacional, com o objetivo de encontrar uma solução duradoura para a crise, procurando sanar as causas na origem do conflito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010951/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Democratic Republic of Congo — appeal for peace by African leaders

A group of Central and East African leaders recently appealed to the M23 rebels to end the military offensive in the Democratic Republic of Congo immediately and withdraw to 20 km north of Goma. This appeal followed a meeting of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region, which also appealed to the Congolese government to make efforts to resolve the issues that are the source of the dispute between it and the M23 rebel group.

— What is the Vice-President/High Representative's assessment of this appeal? What comments would she make?

— Has the European Union made, or is it considering making, a similar appeal to the parties to seek to resolve the conflict by peaceful means?

— Has she been contacted with a view to providing support for mediation in this conflict? Would she be prepared to promote such mediation?

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

The EU welcomes the involvement of the region in the search for a solution to the crisis in eastern DRC following the M23 sedition from the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC). The EU supports the diplomatic track initiated by the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and its ongoing efforts as well as other initiatives aimed at promoting a sustainable peace (African Union/AU, Southern African Development Community/SADC, United Nations/UN).

On several occasions, the EU has appealed to all stakeholders (M23, neighboring countries, DRC governement, *inter alia*) to exert all their influence in order to stop the military escalation. In particular, Goma's occupation by the M23 movement in November was strongly condemned by the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC).

The EU has not been asked to play a direct mediation role in the crisis in eastern DRC. This role is currently played by the ICGLR. However, the EU diplomacy regarding the Eastern DRC crisis has been proactive. The EU is an observer of the talks convened by the ICGLR in Kampala and the EU remains in constant contact with the governments of the region as well as with the UN, AU and other members of the international community, with the aim of finding a lasting solution to the crisis by tackling the root causes of conflict.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010952/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: EIB allocating funds to Turkey

What is the Commission's reasoning as to why the European Investment Bank is allocating funding to Turkey (not a member of the European Union), in direct competition with jobs within the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2013)

EIB has been operating in Turkey since the mid-1960s. EIB operations are either covered by the EU Budget guarantee under the EIB external mandate, on the basis of a decision the European Parliament and the Council, or carried out at the own risk of the EIB under the Pre-Accession Facility. Since 2007, EIB had signed more than EUR 13 billion of operations in Turkey, out of which around half were under the mandate.

Decision 1080/2011/EU on the current EIB external mandate was adopted in November 2011 by the European Parliament and the Council. Decision 1080/2011/EU foresees a ceiling of around EUR 9 billion for the Pre-Accession region. Moreover, it is also envisaged that a substantial part of the EUR 2 billion climate change envelope would be allocated to the Pre-Accession region.

Turkey is one of the eligible countries for EIB operations in the Pre-Accession region. EIB activity in that region takes place in the framework established in the Accession and European Partnerships which sets the priorities for the candidates with the view to making progress in moving closer to the Union and which provide a framework for Union assistance.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010955/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: State aid since 2009

Could the Commission provide details of occasions when Member States have applied state aid rules since 2009?

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

Member States are subject to state aid rules since the entry into force of the Rome Treaty. State aid rules are in the TFEU under Articles 107, 108 and 109. At Commission level, State aid control is handled by three different Directorates-General: Competition, Agriculture and Rural Development, and Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

The Commission is in charge of ensuring that aid measures notified by Member States do not distort the EU internal market.

Since the entry into force of the Commission Notice on a Best Practices Code on the conduct of state aid control proceedings ([1]), these three Directorates-General also have assessed, at the request of Member States, draft aid measures that might turn into formal notifications ('pre-notifications').

The following table shows the number of notifications and pre-notifications from 1 January 2009 until 15 December 2012 for each Directorate-General ([2]):

Directorate General:	Pre-notifications:	Notifications:
COMP	791	1274
AGRI	55	355
MARE	17	82

([1]) OJ C 136, 16.06.2009, p. 130.
([2]) Note that aid measures can be subject to both a pre-notification and a notification. For example 43% of aids pre-notified to DG COMP have then been notified.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010956/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Car manufacturing capacity in the EU

What are the Commission's reasons for not steering a coordinated effort to cut car manufacturing capacity in the EU?

This would mirror what Brussels achieved in the early 1980s, when Viscount Davignon helped Europe's steelmakers to cut 20% of their capacity.

Question for written answer E-010957/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: BMW lobbying

Has the German car manufacturer BMW lobbied the Commission against cutting vehicle manufacturing capacity?

If so, could the Commission provide details?

Question for written answer E-010958/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Audi lobbying

Has the German car manufacturer Audi lobbied the Commission against cutting vehicle manufacturing capacity?

If so, could the Commission provide details?

Question for written answer E-010959/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Volkswagen lobbying

Has the German car manufacturer Volkswagen lobbied the Commission against cutting vehicle manufacturing capacity?

If so, could the Commission provide details?

Question for written answer E-010960/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Mercedes lobbying

Has the German car manufacturer Mercedes lobbied the Commission against cutting vehicle manufacturing capacity?

If so, could the Commission provide details?

Joint answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2013)

The Honourable Member can be assured that the difficult economic situation of the automotive industry in Europe is of a sincere concern to the Commission. The automotive industry is of strategic importance for the EU's prosperity and job creation and has a multiplier effect for the European economy via linkages with other industrial sectors. Already in the past, the Commission has been actively engaged in actions aimed at both supporting the competitiveness and sustainable growth of this industry ([1]). Today, with the unfavourable economic situation affecting the EU automotive industry, the Commission wants to provide additional support to the sector with the CARS 2020 Action Plan ([2]) that was adopted on 8 November.

Concerning the manufacturing capacity, it indeed has to be recognised that the industry suffers from structural overcapacity — although the situation varies between the Member States and manufacturers. It is, however the role of the industry to address this problem. The Commission cannot operate a plan similar to Davignon Plan 35 years ago since there is neither legal basis nor economic conditions to do so. On the other hand, the Commission can accompany workers affected by restructuring and ensure that current restructuring process enables us to safeguard healthy and competitive industrial base in Europe. Investment in innovation will be crucial in that respect as spelled out in CARS 2020 Action Plan mentioned above. The issue of tackling overcapacity in automotive industry in Europe has been and will be discussed with Member States and relevant stakeholders, including industry and the staff representatives.

([1]) COM(2009) 0104 final, COM(2010) 186 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010961/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Ford UK plant closures — European Globalisation Adjustment Fund

The production of Ford Transit vans in Southampton will cease in July 2013 with the loss of more than 500 jobs. A further 750 jobs will be lost as a result of the closure of stamping and tooling operations in Dagenham, East London.

Has the Commission received any application from the UK Government for compensation from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund? If so, could the Commission provide details?

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

The Commission has not received any application for funding from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) related to redundancies made by Ford in the United Kingdom. It invites the Honourable Member to get in touch with the EGF Contact Person for this Member State ([1]) in order to find out whether an application is being considered.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010962/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Ford plant closures in the UK

The production of Ford Transit vans in Southampton will cease in July 2013, with the loss of more than 500 jobs. A further 750 jobs will be lost as a result of the closure of stamping and tooling operations in Dagenham, East London.

Does the Commission support, tacitly or otherwise, the closure of two Ford plants in the UK?

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

The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific companies' decisions leading to closure of plants in Europe. However, it urges companies and stakeholders to anticipate restructuring as far as possible and to manage it in a socially responsible way.

Following the Green Paper 'Restructuring and anticipation of change' ([1]), the Commission is looking at ways to support the retraining of workers that have been or are at risk of being made redundant and to encourage the use of best practices in that field.

The Commission is also engaged in the implementation of the CARS 2020 Action Plan ([2]) which proposes short, medium and long term measures to help this sector build a sustainable future for its activities and jobs. Among others, the action plan stresses that various instruments are available to help retrain workers, including the European Social Fund (ESF).

The Managing Authority has informed us that no calls for financial assistance from the ESF Operational Programme in England have been received so far. However, ESF money remains available through the Skills Funding Agency's (SFA) 'Support for Redundancy' allocation and they are monitoring the situation closely.

Nevertheless, action is being taken. In Southampton, a Task Force is in place led by the Local Authority with input from the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, BIS Local, Jobcentre Plus and the SFA, and Eastleigh College is working with FORD to set up a support programme for at risk workers at the Plant.

([1]) Green Paper 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?' COM(2012) 7 final of 17 January 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 636 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010963/12
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(30. November 2012)

Betrifft: PCSC-Abkommen

Am 26. November 2012 hat die EU-Kommission einen Bericht vorgelegt, in dem sie u. a. die Prüm-like-Abkommen der Mitgliedstaaten untersucht hat. Dabei ist die Kommission zu dem Ergebnis gelangt, dass die Datenschutzbestimmungen in den Abkommen der Mitgliedstaaten mit den USA nicht dem Rahmenbeschluss 2008/977/JI des Rates entsprechen.

1. Auch Österreich hat ein entsprechendes Abkommen mit den USA geschlossen. Erfüllt dieses Abkommen nach Ansicht der Kommission die Datenschutzbestimmungen des Rahmenbeschlusses 2008/977/JI?

2. Enthält das Abkommen zwischen Österreich und den USA nach Ansicht der Kommission ausreichend Nutzungsbeschränkungen in Bezug auf die weitere Verwendung der Daten?

3. Wie lautet die vollständige Rechtsauffassung der Kommission in Bezug auf das Abkommen zwischen Österreich und den USA?

4. Welche Abkommen in welchen Bereichen entsprechen nicht dem Rahmenbeschluss 2008/977/JI des Rates?

5. Kann die Kommission einen Zeitplan vorlegen und mitteilen, bis wann sie die Verhandlungen mit den USA über ein entsprechendes Rahmenabkommen in Bezug auf die Übermittlung von personenbezogenen Daten zum Abschluss bringen will?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(11. Februar 2013)

In dem Bericht über Gegenseitigkeit bei der Befreiung von der Visumpflicht wurde generell die Frage angesprochen, ob die Abkommen über die Visumbefreiung auch auf dem Gebiet des Datenschutzes dem EU-Besitzstand entsprechen. Nach dem sogenannten „zweigleisigen Ansatz" können die Mitgliedstaaten einzeln Abkommen zur Befreiung von der Visumpflicht schließen, sofern diese Abkommen mit dem EU-Besitzstand vereinbar sind.

Die Europäische Kommission kam nicht zu dem Schluss, dass die bilateralen Abkommen unlösbare Probleme im Bereich des Datenschutzes aufwerfen und daher zwangsläufig neu ausgehandelt werden müssen.

In dem von der Europäischen Kommission vorgelegten Bericht wird auch darauf verwiesen, dass in diesem Zusammenhang dem Datenschutzabkommen, das zurzeit zwischen der EU und den USA im Bereich der Strafverfolgung ausgehandelt wird, entscheidende Bedeutung zukommt. Mit diesem Abkommen können insbesondere die geltenden bilateralen Abkommen durch die nötigen Datenschutzgarantien ergänzt werden, wie in der Grundrechts-Charta vorgesehen; danach sind alle EU-Organe und die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, bei der Durchführung des EU-Rechts den Anforderungen des Datenschutzes zu genügen.

Die Europäische Kommission betont nochmals, dass sie sich bei den diesbezüglichen Verhandlungen mit den USA für die Sicherstellung hoher Standards für den Schutz personenbezogener Daten einsetzen wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010963/12
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: PCSC Agreement

On 26 November 2012, the Commission presented a report investigating, amongst other things, the Prüm-like agreements of the Member States. The Commission came to the conclusion that the data protection provisions in the agreements between the Member States and the United States do not comply with Council Framework Decision 2008/977/JI.

1. Austria has also concluded a similar agreement with the United States. In the view of the Commission, does this agreement satisfy the data protection provisions of Framework Decision 2008/977/JI?

2. In the view of the Commission, does the agreement between Austria and the USA contain adequate restrictions on the further use of the data?

3. What is the full legal position of the Commission in relation to the agreement between Austria and the United States?

4. Which agreements and which areas within these agreements are incompatible with Council Framework Decision 2008/977/JI?

5. Can the Commission present a schedule indicating when it intends to conclude negotiations with the United States concerning a related Framework Agreement on the transfer of personal data?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 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*, also in the field of data protection. According to the so-called 'two-track approach', the Member States can conclude individually the Visa Waiver agreements to the extent that these agreements were compatible with the EU acquis.

The European Commission did not conclude that the bilateral agreements raise unsolvable data protection concerns and therefore nor did it conclude that they must necessarily be renegotiated.

The report presented by the European Commission also mentions the crucial role that the data protection agreement, which is currently negotiated between the EU and the US in the law enforcement sector, will play in this context. In particular, this agreement can complement the existing bilateral agreements with necessary data protection safeguards, in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which makes data protection an obligation to be observed by all EU institutions and Member States in implementing EC law.

The European Commission reiterates its commitment towards pursuing the negotiations with the US in this context in order to ensure a high standard of data protection for individuals.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010964/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(30 novembre 2012)

Oggetto: Transito merci sulle infrastrutture transalpine: posizione di svantaggio dell'Italia

Dal 1° novembre 2012, sarà vietato il transito degli autocarri con massa superiore alle 3,5t omologati Euro 2 (nel 2011 l'1,7 % dei veicoli transitati rientrava in tale categoria) nel traforo del Monte Bianco; inoltre, sia per il traforo del Monte Bianco sia per il traforo del Frejus i pedaggi saranno aumentati del 5,01 %, con un ulteriore aggravio di spesa per i mezzi Euro 3, come consentito dalla direttiva 2011/79/UE. Inizialmente le autorità francesi richiedevano anche la sospensione del transito dei veicoli Euro 3 sul versante francese adducendo motivi di inquinamento ambientale, ma in seguito alla presentazione di un secondo studio sull'inquinamento dell'aria, che portava risultati molto differenti e meno negativi rispetto quelli presentati dalla prefettura dell'Alta Savoia, unitamente all'incongruenza logica di esentare da tale divieto il traffico merci con destinazione nella sola Valle dell'Arve, la richiesta è stata ritirata.

Considerando:

— che l'Italia è separata dal resto d'Europa dall'arco alpino e che questo pone il mercato dei trasporti italiano in una posizione di netto svantaggio rispetto agli altri paesi membri,

— che il trasporto su gomma nelle infrastrutture transalpine esistenti è l'unica via d'accesso delle merci italiane agli altri mercati europei,

— che infrastrutture potenzialmente alternative al trasporto su strada quali la TAV Torino-Lione o il potenziamento dell'asse ferroviario del Brennero saranno ultimate solo fra il 2025 e il 2030,

— che spesso i paesi di confine, concorrenti dell'Italia, applicano misure unilaterali di contrasto al transito merci dall'Italia sull'arco alpino (come nel caso sopra esposto, un divieto di transito di determinati veicoli sul lato francese è di fatto un divieto di transito nelle infrastrutture transalpine).

Può la Commissione indicare come intende agire per tutelare l'Italia, il cui mercato rischia di essere relegato sempre più ai margini rispetto a quelli degli altri Stati membri, schiacciato da normative e balzelli in teoria comuni a tutti, ma che all'atto pratico ricadono solo sul nostro paese? Dato che si rende sempre più necessario e giusto nel rispetto dell'ambiente un rinnovo dei veicoli commerciali circolanti, intende la Commissione mettere in campo risorse destinate alle imprese per sostenerle nell'acquisto di nuovi mezzi meno inquinanti?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta P-10618/12 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010964/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Goods transport on transalpine infrastructure: Italy's disadvantage

From 1 November 2012, Euro 2 category lorries weighing over 3.5 tonnes (in 2011, 1.1% of transit vehicles fell into this category) will be prohibited from travelling through the Mont Blanc tunnel. Furthermore, the toll fares for both the Mont Blanc tunnel and the Frejus tunnel will be increased by 5.01%, with an average price increase of EUR 3, as permitted by Commission Directive 2011/79/EU. Initially, the French authorities requested that the transit of Euro 3 category vehicles also be suspended on the French side, citing environmental pollution as the reason, but following the release of a second study on pollution in the area, which revealed very different and much less negative results than the one presented by the prefecture of Upper Savoy, as well as the obvious inconsistency of exempting goods traffic destined for the Arve Valley from such a ban, the request was withdrawn.

Given that:

— Italy is separated from the rest of Europe by the Alps and that this puts the Italian transport market at a general disadvantage compared to other Member States,

— road transport via the transalpine infrastructure is the only way that Italian goods are able to reach other European markets,

— alternative infrastructure to road transport such as the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway or potentially the Brenner Pass railway will only be finished in 2025 and 2030,

— bordering countries, Italy's competitors, often apply unilateral measures against goods travelling from Italy through the Alps (such as in the case mentioned above: a ban on certain vehicles travelling on the French side is essentially a ban on transport using the transalpine infrastructure).

Could the Commission state how it intends to act to safeguard Italy, whose market is at risk of become increasingly sidelined by those of other Member States, constrained by rules and taxes that are, in theory, applicable to everyone, but in practice only impact our country? Given that it has become increasingly necessary and justifiable for environmental reasons that current commercial vehicles be updated, does the Commission intend to make resources available to businesses to support them in purchasing new vehicles that are less polluting?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-10618/12 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010965/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Educação na Guiné-Bissau

A educação é um direito humano básico, mas a igualdade de acesso a esse direito nos países em desenvolvimento, nomeadamente a Guiné-Bissau, ainda está longe de ser uma realidade.

A educação primária e secundária de raparigas adolescentes tem um efeito positivo e multiplicador com impacto na vida da própria rapariga, na família dela e na comunidade e, de forma mais alargada, em termos económicos e sociais, que por sua vez têm continuidade nas gerações seguintes.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Se patrocina e está envolvida em programas de educação especialmente dirigidos a raparigas na Guiné-Bissau;

— Em caso afirmativo, se esses programas são ao nível da educação primária, secundária ou ambas;

— Como e por que meios avalia o impacto desses programas.

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(1 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em conformidade com os princípios da eficácia da ajuda ([1]) e de repartição do trabalho entre os doadores, a UE não apoio diretamente o setor da educação na Guiné-Bissau através da cooperação bilateral.

Geralmente, a Comissão não patrocina programas educativos especificamente vocacionados para raparigas, mas sim programas com um impacto sobre o acesso das raparigas a um ensino de qualidade.

Através da rubrica orçamental Agentes não estatais de 2010, a UE financiou os projetos de escolas SOS, cujo objetivo consiste em providenciar um ensino básico e secundário de qualidade aos órfãos ou/e às crianças pobres. Esta experiência positiva será estendida graças ao convite à apresentação de propostas no âmbito da rubrica Agentes não estatais de 2012 que apoiem projetos em matéria de educação e cultura. Neste contexto, dois subsídios para o financiamento de projetos de educação primária serão atribuídos a duas ONG, num montante total de 1,3 milhões de euros.

A nível global, a Comissão contribui para o estabelecimento de uma Parceria Global para a Educação (GPE) ([2]) e participa ativamente no seu Conselho de Administração. A Delegação da UE em Bissau também colabora com os outros participantes no Grupo de Ensino Local.

Em 2011, a GPE afetou um montante de 12 milhões de dólares à Guiné-Bissau com vista a melhorar o contexto de ensino e de aprendizagem no ensino básico. No entanto, devido à situação política atual, o apoio externo a Guiné-Bissau tem vindo a estagnar-se.

As avaliações e estudos de impacto sobre a utilização dos fundos da UE são efetuados, por princípio, por peritos independentes ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Anteriormente denominada Iniciativa Acelerada «Educação para Todos», lançada em 2002, a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) consiste num pacto entre os doadores, os países parceiros e a sociedade civil, cujas atividades se desenrolam a nível mundial e nacional. Constitui um exemplo de plataforma para a eficácia da ajuda no setor da educação e um quadro para o alinhamento dos apoios com os planos nacionais para o setor da educação e para ajudar a mobilizar fundos para estes planos (ver www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) Ver, por exemplo, o último relatório sobre os países do Sul da Ásia: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010965/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Education in Guinea-Bissau

Education is a basic human right, but in developing countries, such as Guinea-Bissau, equal access to this right is still far from being a reality.

Primary and secondary education for girls has a positive and multiplying effect on the life of girls, their families and their communities, as well as in broader social and economic terms, which is also carried over into future generations.

Can the Commission therefore say:

— Whether it sponsors or is involved in educational programmes specifically directed at girls in Guinea-Bissau?

— If so, whether these programmes are at primary or secondary level, or both?

— How and by what means it assesses the impact of these programmes?

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

In line with the aid effectiveness principles ([1]) and the division of labour amongst donors, the EU is not directly supporting the education sector in Guinea-Bissau through its bilateral cooperation.

The Commission generally sponsors educational programmes which are not specifically directed at girls only but which have an impact on their access to quality education.

Through the budget line Non-State Actors 2010 (NSA), the EU has funded SOS schools projects which aim at giving a high level of primary and secondary education to orphans or/and poor children. This positive experience will be extended thanks to the NSA 2012 call for proposals which supports projects in culture and education. In this context, two grants for primary education projects will be signed with two NGOs for a total amount of EUR 1.3 million.

At a global level, the Commission contributes to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) ([2]) and participates actively in the Board of Directors. The EU Delegation in Bissau also works together with the other participants in the Local Education Group.

In 2011, the GPE allocated an amount of USD 12 million to Guinea-Bissau to improve the learning and teaching environment in primary education. But due to the political situation, external support to Guinea-Bissau has stalled.

The evaluation and impact assessment of the use of EU funds are carried out, as a matter of principle, by independent experts ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm .

([2]) Formerly the Education Fast Track Initiative launched in 2002, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a compact between donors, partner countries and civil society which operates both at global and country level. It is an example of a platform for aid effectiveness in education, a framework to align support to national education sector plans and to help mobilise funding for these plans (see www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) See for example the last report made for South Asian countries: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010966/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Educação em Timor-Leste

A educação é um direito humano básico, mas a igualdade de acesso a esse direito nos países em desenvolvimento, nomeadamente Timor-Leste, ainda está longe de ser uma realidade.

A educação primária e secundária de raparigas adolescentes tem um efeito positivo e multiplicador com impacto na vida da própria rapariga, na família dela e na comunidade e, de forma mais alargada, em termos económicos e sociais, que por sua vez têm continuidade nas gerações seguintes.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Se patrocina e está envolvida em programas de educação especialmente dirigidos a raparigas em Timor-Leste;

— Em caso afirmativo, se esses programas são ao nível da educação primária, secundária ou ambas;

— Como e por que meios avalia o impacto desses programas.

Resposta dada por A. Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(1 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em conformidade com a Agenda relativa à Eficácia da Ajuda ([1]) e a repartição do trabalho entre os doadores, a UE não apoia diretamente o setor da educação em Timor-Leste através da cooperação bilateral. O setor da educação em Timor-Leste recebe apoio de vários parceiros de desenvolvimento: Portugal dá apoio para formação de professores; a Austrália presta assistência através de um projeto de apoio ao setor da educação gerido pelo Banco Mundial; o Fundo das Nações Unidas para a Infância (Unicef) apoia o desenvolvimento de uma política de educação multilingue e financia ações para melhorar os sistemas de abastecimento de água e de saneamento básico das escolas primárias; Cuba está a aplicar o método cubano de alfabetização «Sim, eu posso», que visa reduzir a iliteracia; a Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, Ciência e Cultura (Unesco) apoia os esforços envidados pelo Governo para atingir os objetivos «Educação para todos»; o Brasil está a realizar projetos que visam melhorar os setores do ensino primário e da formação profissional.

Geralmente, a Comissão não patrocina programas educativos especificamente vocacionados para raparigas, mas sim programas com um impacto sobre o acesso das raparigas a um ensino de qualidade.

Por exemplo, a nível global, a Comissão contribui para a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) ([2]). Desde 2003 que Timor-Leste beneficia de fundos da GPE e, recentemente, recebeu financiamento para a execução do plano para o setor da educação através do reforço das capacidades do Ministério da Educação.

As avaliações e estudos de impacto sobre a utilização dos fundos da UE são efetuados, por princípio, por peritos independentes ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Anteriormente denominada Iniciativa Acelerada «Educação para Todos», lançada em 2002, a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) consiste num pacto entre os doadores, os países parceiros e a sociedade civil, cujas atividades se desenrolam a nível mundial e nacional. Constitui um exemplo de plataforma para a eficácia da ajuda no setor da educação e um quadro para o alinhamento dos apoios com os planos nacionais para o setor da educação e para ajudar a mobilizar fundos para estes planos (ver www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) Ver, por exemplo, o último relatório sobre os países do Sul da Ásia: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010966/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Education in Timor-Leste

Education is a basic human right, but in developing countries, such as Timor-Leste, equal access to this right is still far from being a reality.

Primary and secondary education for girls has a positive and multiplying effect on the life of girls, their families and their communities, as well as in broader social and economic terms, which is also carried over into future generations.

Can the Commission therefore say:

— Whether it sponsors or is involved in educational programmes specifically directed at girls in Timor-Leste?

— If so, whether these programmes are at primary or secondary level, or both?

— How and by what means it assesses the impact of these programmes?

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

In line with the Aid Effectiveness Agenda ([1]) and the division of labour amongst donors, the EU is not directly supporting the education sector in Timor-Leste through its bilateral cooperation. Several development partners are supporting the education sector in Timor-Leste: Portugal is contributing to teacher training; Australia is supporting education through a World Bank-administered Education Sector Support Project; the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) is supporting the development of a Multi-lingual Education Policy and is financing activities aimed at improving water and sanitation facilities in primary schools; Cuba is implementing the Cuban literacy methodology known as 'Yes, I Can' to reduce illiteracy; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) is supporting government endeavours to meet the global 'Education for All' goals; and Brazil is implementing projects to improve primary education and professional training.

The Commission generally sponsors educational programmes which are not specifically directed at girls only but which have an impact on their access to quality education.

For example, at a global level, the Commission contributes to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) ([2]). Since 2003, Timor-Leste has benefited from GPE funds and more recently in the implementation of the national education sector plan through strengthening capacity of the Ministry of Education.

The evaluation and impact assessment of the use of EU funds are carried out, as a matter of principle, by independent experts ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Formerly the Education Fast Track Initiative launched in 2002, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a compact between donors, partner countries and civil society which operates both at global and country level. It is an example of a platform for aid effectiveness in education, a framework to align support with national education sector plans and to help mobilise funding for these plans (see www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) See for example the last report made for South Asian Countries: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010967/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Educação em Cabo Verde

A educação é um direito humano básico, mas a igualdade de acesso a esse direito nos países em desenvolvimento, nomeadamente Cabo Verde, ainda está longe de ser uma realidade.

A educação primária e secundária de raparigas adolescentes tem um efeito positivo e multiplicador com impacto na vida da própria rapariga, na família dela e na comunidade e, de forma mais alargada, em termos económicos e sociais, que por sua vez têm continuidade nas gerações seguintes.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Se patrocina e está envolvida em programas de educação especialmente dirigidos a raparigas em Cabo Verde;

— Em caso afirmativo, se esses programas são ao nível da educação primária, secundária ou ambas;

— Como e por que meios avalia o impacto desses programas.

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(4 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em conformidade com os princípios da Agenda relativa à Eficácia da Ajuda ([1]) e da divisão do trabalho, a UE não apoia diretamente o setor da educação em Cabo Verde através da cooperação bilateral. O setor da educação em Cabo Verde recebe apoio direto de outros parceiros de desenvolvimento, incluindo o Brasil e Portugal, que constituem doadores importantes nos setores da formação especializada e do ensino superior. O Banco Mundial e o Banco Africano de Desenvolvimento estão a executar projetos para melhorar o ensino primário.

Geralmente, a Comissão patrocina programas educativos que não estão especificamente vocacionados para raparigas, mas que têm um impacto no acesso das mesmas a um ensino de qualidade.

A UE presta apoio orçamental geral a Cabo Verde para apoiar o crescimento e a redução da pobreza do país. O apoio orçamental geral da UE é transferido para o orçamento nacional sem consignação.

A Delegação da UE em Cabo Verde tem acompanhado a evolução e os resultados dos setores do ensino primário e secundário mediante indicadores de progresso específicos. A percentagem de professores do ensino primário com formação pedagógica de base aumentou de 82 % em 2008 para 90 % em 2010. A taxa de abandono no ensino secundário baixou de 8,2 % para 7,8 % durante o mesmo período. Em 2010, a taxa de inscrição de raparigas era de 92 % no ensino primário e 70 % no ensino secundário.

A Delegação da UE em Cabo Verde tem avaliado a política educativa do país mediante reuniões bianuais com o Ministério da Educação.

A apreciação e a avaliação de impacto sobre a utilização dos fundos da UE são efetuadas, por princípio, por peritos independentes ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm
([2]) Ver, por exemplo, o último relatório elaborado para os países da Ásia do Sul: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010967/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Education in Cape Verde

Education is a basic human right, but in developing countries, such as Cape Verde, equal access to this right is still far from being a reality.

Primary and secondary education for girls has a positive and multiplying effect on the life of girls, their families and their communities, as well as in broader social and economic terms, which is also carried over into future generations.

Can the Commission therefore say:

— Whether it sponsors or is involved in educational programmes specifically directed at girls in Cape Verde?

— If so, whether these programmes are at primary or secondary level, or both?

— How and by what means it assesses the impact of these programmes?

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

In line with the principles of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda ([1]), and the division of labour, the EU is not directly supporting the education sector in Cape Verde through its bilateral cooperation. Other development partners are providing direct support to the education sector in Cape Verde, including: Brazil and Portugal, which are important donors in skills training and higher education. The World Bank and the African Development Bank are implementing projects to improve primary education.

The Commission generally sponsors educational programmes which are not specifically directed at girls only but which have an impact on their access to quality education.

The EU provides general budget support to Cape Verde in support of the national growth and poverty reduction. The EU General budget Support is tranferred to the National Budget without earmarking.

The EU Delegation to Cape Verde has been monitoring developments and results in both the primary and secondary sectors with specific progress indicators. The percentage of primary schools teachers with basic educational training has increased from 82% in 2008 to 90% in 2010. The drop out ratio in secondary education has been reduced from 8.2% to 7.8% during the same period. In 2010, the net enrolment of girls was 92% in primary education and 70% in secondary education.

The EU Delegation to Cape Verde has been assessing the country's education policy through bi-annual policy meetings with the Ministry of Education.

The evaluation and impact assessment of the use of EU funds are carried out, as matter of principle, by independent experts ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm .
([2]) See for example the last report made for South Asian Countries: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010968/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Educação em São Tomé e Príncipe

A educação é um direito humano básico, mas a igualdade de acesso a esse direito nos países em desenvolvimento, nomeadamente São Tomé e Príncipe, ainda está longe de ser uma realidade.

A educação primária e secundária de raparigas adolescentes tem um efeito positivo e multiplicador com impacto na vida da própria rapariga, na família dela e na comunidade e, de forma mais alargada, em termos económicos e sociais, que por sua vez têm continuidade nas gerações seguintes.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Se patrocina e está envolvida em programas de educação especialmente dirigidos a raparigas de São Tomé e Príncipe;

— Em caso afirmativo, se esses programas são ao nível da educação primária, secundária ou ambas;

— Como e por que meios avalia o impacto desses programas.

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(5 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em conformidade com os princípios da Agenda relativa à Eficácia da Ajuda ([1]) e a repartição do trabalho, a UE não apoia diretamente o setor da educação em São Tomé e Príncipe através da cooperação bilateral. O setor da educação em São Tomé e Príncipe recebe apoio direto de diversos parceiros de desenvolvimento: Portugal executa projetos no âmbito do ensino secundário e superior; a Unicef financia atividades cujo objetivo é a melhoria das condições pedagógicas no ensino primário e da formação das jovens; Taiwan, o Brasil e o Banco Mundial executam projetos que se destinam a melhorar o ensino primário e a formação profissional.

Geralmente, a Comissão patrocina programas educativos que não estão especificamente vocacionados para as raparigas mas que têm um impacto no acesso das mesmas a um ensino de qualidade.

A nível mundial, a Comissão contribui para a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) ([2]) e participa ativamente no respetivo conselho de administração. São Tomé e Príncipe tem beneficiado de fundos da PGE para melhorar a prestação de serviços de base no setor do ensino, sendo dada uma atenção especial ao acesso mais equitativo a empregos, ao reforço da qualidade e da governação local em matéria de serviços.

A apreciação e a avaliação de impacto sobre a utilização dos fundos da UE são efetuadas, por princípio, por peritos independentes ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Anteriormente denominada Iniciativa Acelerada «Educação para Todos», lançada em 2002, a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) consiste num pacto entre os doadores, os países parceiros e a sociedade civil, cujas atividades se desenrolam a nível mundial e nacional. Constitui um exemplo de plataforma para a eficácia da ajuda no setor da educação e um quadro para o alinhamento dos apoios com os planos nacionais para o setor da educação e para ajudar a mobilizar fundos para estes planos (ver www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010968/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Education in São Tomé and Príncipe

Education is a basic human right, but in developing countries, such as São Tomé and Príncipe, equal access to this right is still far from being a reality.

Primary and secondary education for girls has a positive and multiplying effect on the life of girls, their families and their communities, as well as in broader social and economic terms, which is also carried over into future generations.

Can the Commission therefore say:

— Whether it sponsors or is involved in educational programmes specifically directed at girls in São Tomé and Príncipe?

— If so, whether these programmes are at primary or secondary level, or both?

— How and by what means it assesses the impact of these programmes?

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

In line with the principles of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda ([1]) and the division of labour, the EU is not directly supporting the education sector in São Tomé and Príncipe through its bilateral cooperation. Several development partners are supporting the education sector in São Tomé and Príncipe: Portugal is implementing projects in the field of secondary and higher education; Unicef is financing activities aimed at improving the pedagogical conditions in primary education and to improve the training of young girls; Taiwan, Brazil and the World Bank are implementing projects to improve primary education and professional training.

The Commission generally sponsors educational programmes which are not specifically directed at girls only but which have an impact on their access to quality education.

At global level, the Commission contributes to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) ([2]) and participates actively in the board of Directors. São Tomé and Príncipe has benefited from GPE funds to improve the delivery of basic education services with a focus on greater equitable access, better quality and improved local governance of services.

The valuation and impact assessment of the use of EU funds are carried out, as a matter of principle, by independent experts ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Formely the Education Fast Track Initiative launched in 2002, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a compact between donors, partner countries and civil society which operates both at global and country level. It is an example of a platform for aid effectiveness in education, a framework to align support to national education sector plans and to help mobilise funding for these plans (see www.globalpartnership.org)

([3]) See for example the last report made for South Asian Countries : http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-010969/12
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 de novembro de 2012)

Assunto: Educação em Moçambique

A educação é um direito humano básico, mas a igualdade de acesso a esse direito nos países em desenvolvimento, nomeadamente Moçambique, ainda está longe de ser uma realidade.

A educação primária e secundária de raparigas adolescentes tem um efeito positivo e multiplicador com impacto na vida da própria rapariga, na família dela e na comunidade e, de forma mais alargada, em termos económicos e sociais, que por sua vez têm continuidade nas gerações seguintes.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Se patrocina e está envolvida em programas de educação especialmente dirigidos a raparigas em Moçambique;

— Em caso afirmativo, se esses programas são ao nível da educação primária, secundária ou ambas;

— Como e por que meios avalia o impacto desses programas e se tem resultados do impacto dos programas por província.

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(1 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em conformidade com os princípios da Agenda relativa à Eficácia da Ajuda ([1]) e a repartição do trabalho, a UE não apoia diretamente o setor da educação em Moçambique através da cooperação bilateral. Vários Estados-Membros concedem apoio direto ao setor da educação em Moçambique como foi o caso, em 2012, da Alemanha, da Finlândia, do Reino Unido, de Portugal, da Irlanda e da Itália.

A UE concede apoio orçamental geral a Moçambique destinado a apoiar a estratégia nacional de crescimento e de redução da pobreza do Governo de Moçambique. O apoio orçamental geral da UE é transferido para o orçamento nacional sem afetação específica. A Delegação da UE em Moçambique assegura o acompanhamento do acesso ao ensino primário e da qualidade do ensino de acordo com os indicadores selecionados para o desembolso: «Taxa líquida de escolarização das raparigas aos seis anos» e «Número de alunos por professor do ensino primário». Houve uma melhoria regular da taxa geral de escolarização e na taxa de escolarização das raparigas no ensino primário, embora os objetivos anuais estejam longe de ser alcançados.

Além disso, a UE financia projetos para o setor da educação implementados por organizações da sociedade civil, mas que não estão especificamente vocacionados para raparigas, embora tenham um impacto positivo no seu acesso a um ensino de qualidade. Estes projetos são sujeitos a um sistema de acompanhamento orientado para os resultados realizado periodicamente por peritos externos independentes.

A nível global, a Comissão contribui para a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) ([2]) e participa ativamente nas reuniões do conselho de administração. Foi atribuída a Moçambique uma subvenção 90 milhões de dólares para o período de 2011-2014 destinada a melhorar o acesso, a qualidade e a equidade no setor da educação.

As avaliações e estudos de impacto sobre a utilização dos fundos da UE são efetuados, por princípio, por peritos independentes ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Anteriormente denominada Iniciativa Acelerada «Educação para Todos», lançada em 2002, a Parceria Global para a Educação (PGE) consiste num pacto entre os doadores, os países parceiros e a sociedade civil, cujas atividades se desenrolam a nível mundial e nacional. Constitui um exemplo de plataforma para a eficácia da ajuda no setor da educação e um quadro para o alinhamento dos apoios com os planos nacionais para o setor da educação e para ajudar a mobilizar fundos para estes planos (ver www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) Ver, por exemplo, o último relatório sobre os países do Sul da Ásia: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010969/12
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Education in Mozambique

Education is a basic human right, but in developing countries, such as Mozambique, equal access to this right is still far from being a reality.

Primary and secondary education for girls has a positive and multiplying effect on the life of girls, their families and their communities, as well as in broader social and economic terms, which is also carried over to future generations.

Can the Commission therefore say:

— Whether it sponsors or is involved in educational programmes specifically directed at girls in Mozambique?

— If so, whether these programmes are at primary or secondary level, or both?

— How and by what means it assesses the impact of these programmes and whether it has statistics for their results in each province?

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

In line with the principles of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda ([1]), including the division of labour, the EU is not directly supporting the education sector in Mozambique through its bilateral cooperation. Direct support to the education sector in Mozambique is ensured by several Member States, namely in 2012 Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Ireland and Italy.

The EU provides general budget support to Mozambique in support of the Mozambique Government's national growth and poverty reduction strategy. The EU General budget Support is transferred to the National Budget without earmarking. However, access to primary education and the quality of education are monitored by the EU Delegation to Mozambique as per the chosen indicators for disbursement: 'Net school enrolment rate at six years for girls' and 'Number of pupils per primary school teacher'. There has been regular improvement in the general enrolment rate and the enrolment rate for girls at primary level, even though meeting yearly targets remains a challenge.

Furthermore, the EU finances projects in the education sector implemented by civil society organisations, not specifically directed at girls only but which have an impact on their access to quality education. These projects are subject to regular external independent 'Results Oriented Monitoring'.

At global level, the Commission contributes to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) ([2]) and participates actively in the board of directors meetings. Mozambique has been allocated a USD 90 million grant for the period 2011-2014 to improve access to, and the quality and equity of, education.

The evaluation and impact assessment of the use of EU funds are carried out, as a matter of principle, by independent experts ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/eu-approach_en.htm

([2]) Formerly the Education Fast Track Initiative launched in 2002, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a compact between donors, partner countries and civil society which operates both at global and country level. It is an example of a platform for aid effectiveness in education, a framework to align support to national education sector plans and to help mobilise funding for these plans (see www.globalpartnership.org).

([3]) See for example the last report made for South Asian countries: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2010/1282_docs_en.htm.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-010970/12
adresată Comisiei
Renate Weber (ALDE)
(30 noiembrie 2012)

Subiect: Noua lege electorală din Italia

Întrucât:

— la 6 noiembrie 2012, Curtea Europeană a Drepturilor Omului, în cauza Ekoglasnost/Bulgaria, a hotărât că statul membru al UE nu a respectat „perioada de un an prevăzută în Convenția de la Veneția pentru a aduce modificări substanțiale legislației electorale" și că perioada de un an se aplică și condițiilor de participare la alegeri impuse grupurilor politice;

— actuala legislatură a Republicii Italiene, cea de a 16-a, va expira la 29 aprilie 2013, iar la 5 decembrie 2012 Senatul Republicii Italiene va vota o nouă lege electorală, care va fi supusă ulterior votului Camerei Deputaților;

— practica modificării legilor electorale în apropierea alegerilor, și anume cu mai puțin de un an înaintea unei alegeri, constituie o încălcare structurală începând din 2005 (alegerile regionale din 2005, alegerile generale din 2006, alegerile europene din 2009 și alegerile regionale din 2010), care se va repeta în cazul alegerilor regionale din 2013 și, foarte probabil, și în cazul alegerilor generale din 2013;

— în Italia, potrivit hotărârilor Consiliului Europei, durata excesivă a procedurilor administrative, penale și civile „pune serios în pericol respectarea statului de drept, ducând la negarea drepturilor consacrate în Convenția europeană a drepturilor omului",

ce măsuri urgente intenționează să ia Comisia pentru:

— a stabili dacă această cauză permite inițierea procedurilor destinate să constate posibile încălcări ale articolului 7 din Tratatul privind Uniunea Europeană;

— a solicita Comisiei de la Veneția a Consiliului Europei să emită un aviz privind actualul proces de reformă electorală din Italia?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(22 ianuarie 2013)

Așa cum s-a precizat deja în răspunsurile anterioare la întrebări cu solicitare de răspuns scris (de exemplu, E-005172/2012, întrebare adresată de doamna Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, și E-008425/2012, întrebare adresată de domnul João Ferreira ([1]), Comisia nu are competența generală de a interveni în ceea ce privește alegerile electorale. Legislația UE le dă cetățenilor UE dreptul de a participa la alegerile municipale și la cele pentru Parlamentul European în statul membru gazdă în care aceștia își au reședința, fără să dețină naționalitatea acelui stat ([2]). Principiile generale, comune tuturor statelor membre, referitoare la alegerile pentru Parlamentul European sunt prevăzute în Actul din 1976 privind alegerea membrilor Parlamentului European ([3]), în care se prevede, de exemplu, organizarea alegerilor prin vot universal direct, liber și secret.

Celelalte aspecte legate de organizarea alegerilor în statele membre țin de responsabilitatea statelor membre, inclusiv dispozițiile referitoare la alegerile parlamentare naționale sau regionale, la care se referă distinsul membru al PE.

În fine, în conformitate cu informațiile de care dispune Comisia, proiectul italian de reformă electorală ce viza viitoarele alegeri generale din 2013 a fost abandonat.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/ro/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=66E4568804D506BDCCB864EDD4635DDB.node1
([2]) Directiva 94/80/CE, respectiv 93/109/CE.
([3]) JO L 278, 8.10.1976, p. 5, modificat ultima dată prin Decizia 2002/772/CE, Euratom din 25.6.2002 și 23.9.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010970/12
to the Commission
Renate Weber (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: New Electoral Law in Italy

— that on November 6th, 2012, the European Court of Human Rights, in the case Ekoglasnost v Bulgaria, has ruled that the EU Member has not respected 'the period of one year upheld by the Venice Commission for the introduction of substantial amendments to electoral legislation' and that the period of one year exists also for the conditions of participation at elections imposed to political groups;

— that the current 16th Parliament of the Italian Republic will expire on April 29th, 2013, and that on December 5th, 2012, the Senate of the Italian Republic will vote a new electoral law, which will subsequently be submitted to the vote of the Chamber of Deputies;

— that the practice of changing electoral laws in the run-up of elections, i.e. less than one year before an election, has been a structural violation since 2005 (2005 regional elections, 2006 general election, 2009 European elections, 2010 regional elections) that will be reiterated in the 2013 regional elections and, most probably, for the 2013 general election as well;

— that in Italy, according to the rulings of the Council of Europe, the excessive length of administrative, criminal and civil procedures 'constitute a serious danger for the respect of the rule of law, leading to the denial of the rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights'.

What urgent measures does the Commission intend to take in order to:

— establish if the case enables the activation of procedures intended to ascertain possible violations of Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union;

— solicit the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe to express an opinion on the current process of electoral reform in Italy.

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

As already stated in previous replies to written questions (e.g. E-005172/2012 by Ms Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, E-008425/2012 by Mr João Ferreira ([1])) the Commission has no general power to intervene in the field of elections. EC law grants the right for the EU citizens to participate in municipal and European Parliament elections in the host Member State in which they reside without holding the nationality ([2]). General principles concerning the European Parliament elections, common to all Member States, are laid down in the 1976 Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament ([3]) which provides, e.g. for elections to be held by direct universal suffrage, freely and in secret.

Other aspects related to the organisation of the elections in the Member States fall within the responsibility of the Member States including, notably, the arrangements concerning regional or national parliamentary elections, to which the Honourable Member refers.

Finally, according to the information available to the Commission, the project of the Italian electoral reform in view of the next general elections of 2013 was abandoned.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Directive 94/80/EC and 93/109/EC respectively
([3]) OJ L 278, 8.10.1976, p. 5. last amended by Decision 2002/772/EC, Euratom of 25.06 and 23.09 2002

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-010971/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(30 november 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Zeven Kopten ter dood veroordeeld in Egypte

Op 28 november 2012 is door een Egyptische rechtbank in Cairo een doodsvonnis uitgesproken over zeven Egyptische Kopten. De Kopten zijn — bij verstek — veroordeeld vanwege hun vermeende rol in de productie van de film „The innocence of muslims".

1. Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger bekend met dit bericht?

2. Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger het met mij eens dat, hoewel de betreffende film als kwetsend kan worden opgevat, deze terdoodveroordeling absurd en buitensporig is? Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger het met mij eens dat de aanklacht „belediging van de Islam en de profeet Mohammed" niet mag leiden tot een dergelijke disproportionele veroordeling?

3. Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger bereid om haar strenge afkeuring en veroordeling van dit absurde vonnis aan de ambassadeur van Egypte bij de EU en bij de Egyptische autoriteiten duidelijk te maken?

4. Is de hoge vertegenwoordiger bereid sancties te overwegen, zoals het opschorten van ontwikkelingshulp aan de Egyptische overheid (dus niet de directe hulp aan „grassroots"-organisaties), totdat het Egyptische bewind het rechtssysteem en de juridische procedures van het land grondig hervormt en dit soort onterechte en vergaande veroordelingen niet langer tolereert?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(4 februari 2013)

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van deze vonnissen. De EU is principieel fel tegen de doodstraf en de afschaffing ervan is een van de hoofddoelstellingen van haar mensenrechtenbeleid. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter heeft ook aangegeven het wereldwijd afschaffen van de doodstraf een „persoonlijke prioriteit" te vinden. De afschaffing van de doodstraf komt ter sprake in alle bilaterale contacten met de Egyptische regering, in het bijzonder in de politieke dialogen tussen de EU en Egypte.

De EU is van oordeel dat samenwerking en politieke dialoog de meest geschikte manieren zijn om democratische hervormingen in Egypte aan te moedigen. Momenteel is het opschorten van hulp niet gerechtvaardigd. In principe kunnen alle EU-samenwerkingprogramma's worden opgeschort als het begunstigde land zijn verplichtingen niet nakomt inzake eerbiediging van de mensenrechten, de democratische beginselen en de rechtsstaat, en bij ernstige corruptie. De EU volgt en analyseert de situatie ter plekke nauwlettend en onderhoudt nauwe contacten met de Egyptische regering, de oppositie, het maatschappelijk middenveld en andere belanghebbenden om indien nodig en in het licht van de veranderende politieke context de juiste maatregelen te kunnen treffen.

Met de EU-programma's wordt steun verleend aan de Egyptische bevolking — en in het bijzonder de meest kwetsbare inwoners. In 2012 heeft de EU onder meer steun verleend op belangrijke vlakken als het scheppen van werkgelegenheid, de inzetbaarheid van jongeren en beroepsopleidingen. De hulp zal in veel gevallen via de lokale overheden of via niet-gouvernementele organisaties worden gekanaliseerd.

Het recht op een eerlijk proces is een fundamenteel mensenrecht en de EU verwacht van de Egyptische overheid dat zij haar internationale verbintenissen op dit vlak nakomt.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010971/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Seven Copts sentenced to death in Egypt

On 28 November 2012, a court in Cairo sentenced seven Egyptian Copts to death. The Copts were convicted — in absentia — of having allegedly played a part in the production of the film 'The innocence of Muslims'.

1. Is the High Representative aware of this report?

2. Does the High Representative agree that, although the film in question can be regarded as offensive, these death sentences are absurd and excessive? Does the High Representative agree that it is unacceptable for the charge of 'insulting Islam and the prophet Mohammed' to lead to such disproportionate sentences?

3. Will the High Representative convey to Egypt's Ambassador to the EU and the Egyptian authorities her utter rejection and condemnation of this absurd sentence?

4. Will the High Representative consider sanctions, such as suspending development aid to the Egyptian authorities (i.e. not direct aid to grassroots organisations), until the Egyptian regime thoroughly reforms the country's legal system and judicial procedures and ceases to tolerate such unjustified and drastic sentences?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the sentences. The EU holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty; its abolition is a key objective for the EU's human rights policy. The HR/VP has also indicated that abolishing capital punishment worldwide is a 'personal priority'. The abolition of the death penalty is raised in all relevant bilateral contacts with the Egyptian Government, notably in the context of the EU-Egypt political dialogues.

The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage democratic reforms in Egypt. The suspension of assistance would not be justified currently. In principle, all EU cooperation programmes can be suspended if the beneficiary country breaches an obligation relating to the respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law and in serious cases of corruption. The EU is continuously monitoring and analysing the situation on the ground in close contact and dialogue with the Egyptian Government, opposition, civil society representatives and other key stakeholders in order to take the necessary and appropriate measures according to the evolution of the political context.

The EU programmes support the Egyptian people and the most vulnerable among them. In 2012, for instance, the EU provided support in key areas such as job creation, youth employability and vocational training. Support will be channelled in many cases through the local administration or non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The right to fair trial is a basic human right and the EU expects the Egyptian authorities to comply with their international commitments in this regard.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010972/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30. November 2012)

Betrifft: Anpassung von Zugachsen an internationale Normen

Anfang Juni 2012 kam es bei Brixen in Italien zur Entgleisung eines Güterzuges der Rail Cargo Austria (RCA), der Güterzugsparte der Österreichischen Bundesbahn (ÖBB), bei der zwei Menschen verletzt wurden. Im Prüfbericht wurde eine verschobene Radscheibe als Unfallursache festgestellt, woraufhin die staatliche italienische Eisenbahnsicherheitsbehörde ANSF ab Oktober 2012 ein Fahrverbot für rund 2000 baugleiche Güterwagen der RCA verhängte. Das Fahrverbot gilt, bis der Betreiber der Züge nachweisen kann, dass die Zugachsen den internationalen Normen (UIC) entsprechen.

Unterstützt die Europäische Union ihre Mitgliedstaaten bei der Anpassung von Zugachsen an die internationalen Normen (UIC)?

Wenn ja, welche konkrete finanzielle Unterstützung erhielt die Österreichische Bundesbahn (ÖBB) bisher für die Anpassung der Zugachsen an internationale Normen, und mit welchen Auflagen war diese Unterstützung verbunden?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(30. Januar 2013)

Österreich erhält von der Europäischen Union keine finanzielle Unterstützung für die Anpassung von Zugachsen an die internationalen UIC-Normen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010972/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Altering train axles to meet international standards

A freight train belonging to Austrian Railways' freight division Rail Cargo Austria (RCA) was derailed at the beginning of June 2012 in Brixen, Italy, and two people were injured. The inspection report stated that the accident was caused by a displaced wheel disc, whereupon Italy's national rail safety authority ANSF imposed a ban in with effect from October 2012 on all movement of approximately 2 000 goods wagons belonging to RCA which are structurally identical. This ban will remain in place until the train operator can prove that the train axles meet international UIC standards.

Does the European Union assist its Member States financially with altering their train axles to meet international UIC standards?

If so, what specific financial assistance have Austrian Railways received so far with altering their train axles to meet international standards and what conditions were attached to this aid?

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

There is no financial support from the European Union to Austria to alter rolling stock axles to meet international UIC standards.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010973/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(30 de noviembre de 2012)

Asunto: Operadoras de internet en España

Según un estudio de la «Asociación de internautas» ([1]), ningún operador de internet en España ofrece el servicio que promete al cliente y la mayoría suspende en algún parámetro de calidad (velocidad de descarga y de subida, fallos de acceso…) ([2]).

Las mediciones se hicieron entre febrero y junio de 2012 y, como año tras año, parece ser que solamente se llega como máximo al 76 % de lo prometido.

A la vista de lo anterior, ¿conoce la Comisión este estudio?

En el caso que estos datos sean ciertos, ¿qué medidas tiene previsto tomar la Comisión para que las operadoras de internet en España den «la velocidad» que prometen a los ciudadanos y que, de momento, éstos pagan sin recibirla?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2013)

La Comisión conoce el estudio mencionado por Su Señoría y sus resultados. Aun cuando estos puedan resultar informativos, me gustaría subrayar que este tipo de estudio se realiza mediante herramientas basadas en sitios web cuya fiabilidad es a menudo limitada, dada la imposibilidad de controlar diversos factores externos.

Invito a Su Señoría a consultar los resultados del estudio llevado a cabo periódicamente por los principales operadores de banda ancha españoles con arreglo a la «Orden ITC/912/2006», de 29 de marzo de 2006, también denominada «Orden de Calidad». Los resultados más recientes de estas medidas de las velocidades de descarga en banda ancha se refieren al tercer trimestre de 2012, y en la mayor parte de los casos los promedios son superiores al 90 %.

Hace dos años, con el propósito de obtener una perspectiva paneuropea acerca del posible desfase entre las velocidades de banda ancha anunciadas y reales, la Comisión puso en marcha un estudio muy ambicioso destinado a medir el rendimiento efectivo de los servicios fijos de banda ancha. En contraposición a la metodología utilizada por el estudio que menciona Su Señoría, los resultados del nuestro se obtienen a partir de unidades físicas instaladas en los locales de un panel de hasta 10 000 voluntarios de los distintos países de la UE. Estas unidades ejecutan ensayos de modo permanente, las veinticuatro horas del día y los siete días de la semana, a fin de obtener unos resultados fiables y comparables. Se espera un primer informe para febrero de 2013.

El marco regulador de las comunicaciones electrónicas revisado ha reforzado la necesidad de transparencia en lo relativo a la calidad del servicio al facultar a las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación para establecer unos requisitos de calidad mínimos en materia de rendimiento de las redes de comunicaciones electrónicas. La Comisión seguirá vigilando la aplicación efectiva del marco regulador y, en 2013, se centrará en el fomento de la inversión en banda ancha a través de la reglamentación. Los resultados del estudio sobre las velocidades de la banda ancha serán tenidos en cuenta en este proceso.

([1]) http://www.internautas.org/html/7263.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/tecnologia/20121119/54355394387/ninguna-operadora-de-internet-en-espana-da-la-velocidad-que-promete.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010973/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Internet providers in Spain

According to a survey by the Spanish *Asociación de internautas* ([1]), not one Internet provider in Spain provides the service it promises its clients and most of them fail at least one quality standard (download and upload speeds, connection failures…) ([2]).

The assessment was carried out between February and June 2012 and, as in previous years, it seems that customers get, at the most, only 76% of what they are promised.

Is the Commission aware of this survey?

If this information is true, what steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Internet providers in Spain deliver the speeds promised to the public and which, at the moment, their customers are paying for without receiving.

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

The Commission is aware of this study and its results. While these results may be informative, I would like to stress that this type of studies are made using tools based on websites that are often of limited reliability because it is not possible to control a number of external factors.

I invite you to check the results of the regular study conducted by the major Spanish broadband providers in response to the 'Orden ITC/912/2006', of March 29 2006, also known as the 'Orden de Calidad'. The latest results of these measurements on broadband download speeds refer to the third quarter of 2012 and in most cases average results are above 90%.

To establish a pan-European perspective of the possible gap between advertised and actual broadband speeds, the Commission launched two years ago a very ambitious study to measure the effective performance of fixed broadband services. Contrary to the methodology used by the study referred to in your question, our study obtains results from hardware units installed in the premises of a panel of up to 10 000 volunteers around EU countries. These units run tests on an ongoing basis, 24/24, 7/7, in order to obtain reliable and comparable results. The first report is expected in February 2013.

The revised regulatory framework for electronic communications has reinforced the need for transparency in quality of service by introducing the competence of NRAs to set minimum quality requirements for the performance of electronic communications networks. The Commission will continue monitoring the effective implementation of the regulatory framework and will in 2013 focus on a regulatory environment that fosters broadband investment . The results of the study on broadband speeds will feed into this process.

([1]) http://www.internautas.org/html/7263.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/tecnologia/20121119/54355394387/ninguna-operadora-de-Internet-en-espana-da-la-velocidad-que-promete.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010974/12
à la Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(30 novembre 2012)

Objet: Utilisation de la cigarette électronique

Ces dernières années, on assiste à une augmentation de la consommation de la cigarette électronique en Europe. 7 % des citoyens de l'Union européenne ont indiqué l'avoir essayée et la valeur totale du marché dans l'Union européenne se situerait entre 400 et 500 millions d'euros en 2011, d'après une étude de la direction générale de la santé et des consommateurs de la Commission européenne. Ce nouveau produit, rechargeable par une cartouche contenant de la nicotine ainsi que des arômes additifs, remplace la combustion des goudrons par un mécanisme qui produit de la vapeur d'eau. Selon les fabricants, son utilisation serait moins nocive pour la santé que la cigarette classique. À ce jour, les effets sur la santé de la cigarette électronique n'ont pas été complètement élucidés. L'OMS ne considère pas que le dispositif puisse être une méthode de sevrage et continue de considérer la nicotine comme une substance «très dangereuse». Selon une étude réalisée en 2010 par l'Institut national de recherche et de sécurité, le liquide de recharge présente également des traces de propylène glycol qui, consommé à dose élevée, pourrait s'avérer toxique En France, l'Agence française de sécurité sanitaire des produits de santé (Afssaps) ne recommande pas l'utilisation de ce type de produit comme moyen de sevrage, des doutes persistant quant à son inoffensivité pour la santé. L'agence s'est également alarmée du fait que son usage expose les utilisateurs non dépendants aux cigarettes et à la nicotine à un risque de dépendance primaire. En 2010, La Commission avait indiqué, en réponse à une question parlementaire, qu'elle étudierait le cas des cigarettes électroniques et évaluerait «les répercussions [d'une] révision de la directive relative aux produits du tabac».

Au regard de l'incertitude concernant les répercussions de l'usage de la cigarette électronique sur la santé des consommateurs et, notamment, de la dépendance qu'elle pourrait engendrer, la Commission entend-elle mener une étude sur les risques potentiels qu'elle pourrait présenter, notamment chez les jeunes? La Commission envisage-t-elle de réviser la réglementation européenne sur le tabagisme en conséquence?

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

Le 19 décembre 2012, la Commission a adopté une proposition de révision de la directive sur les produits du tabac ([1]) qui couvre les produits contenant de la nicotine, tels que les cigarettes électroniques.

L'article 18 de cette proposition prévoit que les produits contenant de la nicotine dans des quantités dépassant un certain niveau ne peuvent être mis sur le marché que s'ils ont été autorisés en tant que médicaments. En ce qui concerne les produits contenant de la nicotine à des concentrations inférieures au seuil fixé, chaque unité de conditionnement ainsi que tout emballage extérieur doivent porter un avertissement sanitaire indiquant que le produit contient de la nicotine et peut nuire à la santé du consommateur. La Commission pourra adopter des actes délégués pour adapter les seuils et les avertissements sanitaires, afin de réagir sans délai à l'évolution du marché et aux avancées scientifiques concernant les cigarettes électroniques et les autres produits contenant de la nicotine.

La proposition est actuellement en cours d'examen au Parlement et au Conseil.

([1]) Proposition de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative au rapprochement des dispositions législatives, réglementaires et administratives des États membres en matière de fabrication, de présentation et de vente du tabac et de ses produits, COM(2012)788 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010974/12
to the Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Use of electronic cigarettes

Over the last few years, more and more people in Europe have started using electronic cigarettes. According to a study by the Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumers, 7% of EU citizens claim to have tried them and the total value of the EU market was between EUR 400 and 500 million in 2011. These new e-cigarettes, which can be recharged using cartridges containing nicotine and flavourings, use a mechanism that produces water vapour, rather than burning tobacco which produces tar. Manufacturers claim that they are less harmful than standard cigarettes. However, it is still not completely clear how smoking electronic cigarettes affects people's health. The World Health Organisation does not think that they should be used to wean people off standard cigarettes and still classifies nicotine as a 'very dangerous' substance. According to a 2010 study by the French National Research and Safety Institute, the liquid used to recharge the cigarettes also contains traces of propylene glycol, which can be toxic if consumed in large amounts. The French Agency for the Safety of Health Products (AFSSAPS) does not recommend that people use e-cigarettes to give up smoking, because it is still not clear how they affect human health. The agency's fear is that people who are not addicted to cigarettes and nicotine would develop an acute addiction by using these products. In 2010, the Commission, in its answer to a parliamentary question, said that it would look into the issue of electronic cigarettes and assess 'the impact of a (…) revision of the Tobacco Products Directive'.

Given that it is not clear how electronic cigarettes affect consumer health and whether they can lead to addiction, does the Commission intend to carry out a study into the potential risks of e-cigarette use, particularly among young people? Does it plan to revise EU legislation on smoking to take account of its findings?

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

On 19 December 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive, which covers nicotine containing products such as electronic cigarettes.

Article 18 of the proposal provides that nicotine-containing products above a certain nicotine level may only be placed on the market if they are authorised as medicinal product. With regard to nicotine-containing products below the threshold, each unit packet and any outside packaging must carry a health warning mentioning that the product contains nicotine and can damage the health of the consumer. The Commission would adapt the thresholds and the health warning by delegated acts to react swiftly to market and scientific developments with regard to e-cigarettes and other nicotine-containing products.

The proposal is now being discussed in Parliament and Council.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products, COM(2012) 788 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010975/12
à la Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(30 novembre 2012)

Objet: Procédure de test des systèmes de climatisation des véhicules à moteurs

En juillet 2012, la Commission européenne a publié une proposition de révision de sa législation sur les émissions de CO^2 des véhicules utilitaires légers neufs ([1]) avec pour objectif de réduire de 20 % les émissions de gaz à effet de serre d'ici à 2020. Cela va évidemment dans le bon sens.

En avril 2011, en réponse à une question parlementaire relative à la consommation supplémentaire de carburant et les émissions de CO^2 découlant de l'usage de la climatisation dans les véhicules, la Commission avait alors indiqué qu'une procédure d'essai visant à mesurer l'efficacité énergétique des systèmes de climatisation automobile ferait l'objet d'une réglementation d'ici à 2013. Or, la proposition présentée dans le cadre de la procédure 2012/0191(COD) mentionne simplement que les éco-innovations sont prises en compte à la suite de la mise en place d'une procédure de test.

1. La Commission peut-elle indiquer l'état d'avancement de la mise en place de la procédure de test et le calendrier de mise en œuvre réglementaire?

2. La Commission prévoit-elle d'inclure l'efficacité énergétique des systèmes de climatisation automobile dans l'évaluation intégrée des émissions de CO^2 des véhicules, une fois la procédure d'essai adoptée?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(4 février 2013)

La législation sur l'efficacité énergétique des systèmes de climatisation mobiles constitue une mesure additionnelle au sens de l'article 1er, dernier alinéa, du règlement (CE) nº 443/2009. Elle est un des éléments de l'approche intégrée de l'Union européenne visant à réduire les émissions de CO^2 des véhicules à moteur, telle que définie dans la communication de la Commission COM/2007/19 de février 2007. Les mesures additionnelles relevant de l'approche intégrée permettront de garantir une réduction supplémentaire des émissions de CO^2 de 10 g afin d'atteindre l'objectif global de 120 g de CO^2/km visé à l'article 1er du règlement (CE) nº 443/2009. Par conséquent, conformément à l'article 12, paragraphe 2, point c), du règlement (CE) nº 443/2009, ces mesures — et les réductions d'émissions qu'elles engendrent — ne peuvent être prises en compte dans la détermination des réductions des émissions de CO^2 réalisées, puisque cela reviendrait à comptabiliser ces réductions deux fois.

Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre des principes de l'approche intégrée exigée par le règlement (CE) nº 443/2009, la Commission a mis au point une procédure d'essai afin de mesurer l'efficacité énergétique des systèmes de climatisation mobiles lors de la réception des véhicules. Cette procédure se trouve en dernière phase d'évaluation dans le cadre d'un programme d'essai pilote. Une fois achevée, la Commission envisage de l'inclure dans l'évaluation intégrée des émissions de CO^2 des véhicules en modifiant sans délai le règlement (CE) nº 692/2008. Les mesures réglementaires en question seront probablement prises au cours du second semestre de 2013 ou au début de 2014.

([1]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil modifiant le règlement (UE) nº 510/2011 en vue de définir les modalités permettant d'atteindre l'objectif de 2020 en matière de réduction des émissions de CO^2 des véhicules utilitaires légers neufs (COM(2012)0394 du 11.7.2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010975/12
to the Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Procedure for testing motor vehicle air conditioning systems

In July 2012, the Commission published a draft revision of its legislation on CO_2 emissions from new light commercial vehicles ([1]) with the goal of a 20% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Obviously, that is a step in the right direction.

In April 2011, in response to a question in Parliament about additional fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions resulting from the use of air conditioning in vehicles, the Commission stated that a test procedure to measure the energy efficiency of air conditioning systems in motor vehicles would be the subject of a regulation by 2013. However, the proposal tabled as part of procedure 2012/0191(COD) merely mentions that eco-innovations are taken into account following the implementation of a test procedure.

1. Can the Commission say what progress has been made in implementing the test procedure and the timetable for implementing the regulation?

2. Once the test procedure has been adopted, does the Commission plan to include the energy efficiency of motor vehicle air conditioning systems in the integrated evaluation of vehicles' CO_2 emissions?

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

The legislation addressing the energy efficiency of mobile air-conditioning systems (MAC) is an additional measure within the meaning of the last paragraph of Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 443/2009. The MAC legislation is part of the EU's integrated approach to reduce CO_2 emissions from motor vehicles, as defined in Commission Communication COM/2007/19 of February 2007. The additional measures falling under the integrated approach will ensure a further 10g CO_2 emissions reduction to achieve the overall objective of 120g CO_2/km as specified in Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 443/2009. Consequently, pursuant to Article 12(2) (c) of Regulation (EC) No 443/2009, these measures -and the emission reductions they provide- cannot be taken into account towards the objective of CO_2 emissions reductions achieved, as this would lead to a double counting.

In implementing the principles of the integrated approach as required by Regulation (EC) No 443/2009, the Commission developed a test procedure for measuring MAC energy efficiency at type approval. This procedure is in the last stage of assessment in a pilot test programme. Once the test procedure is finalised the Commission intends to include it in the integrated evaluation of vehicles' CO_2 emissions by amending Regulation (EC) No 692/2008 without delay. The respective regulatory steps are likely to be taken in the second semester of 2013 or in early 2014.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 510/2011 to define the modalities for reaching the 2020 target to reduce CO_2 emissions from new light commercial vehicles (COM(2012)0394 of 11 July 2012).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010976/12
à la Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(30 novembre 2012)

Objet: Encourager l'utilisation de la traverse en bois pour les lignes de chemin de fer

L'utilisation de la traverse en béton remplace progressivement celle de la traverse en bois dans la construction des lignes ferroviaires. En France par exemple, sur les 2,5 millions de traverses posées chaque année, seulement 300 000 sont en bois.

La filière bois contribue au développement économique des régions forestières d'Europe ainsi qu'à la création d'emplois locaux et de débouchées dans ces régions. La perte de parts sur le marché du chemin de fer au profit du secteur du béton porte ainsi préjudice à la croissance dans les zones rurales et forestières d'Europe.

De plus, l'utilisation d'un matériau renouvelable a un impact relativement neutre sur l'environnement: le bois participe à l'absorption du CO^2 contenu dans l'air, et l'épuisement des ressources abiotiques est limité si elles sont gérées de manière durable.

Si le béton devait se substituer à terme au bois dans la construction des lignes de chemins de fer, le préjudice porté à l'industrie forestière en Europe et ses emplois serait lourd de conséquences.

La Commission européenne entend-elle prendre des mesures pour encourager l'utilisation de traverses en bois dans la construction des lignes ferroviaires?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(30 janvier 2013)

La Commission est consciente du problème soulevé par l'auteur de la question. Toutefois, ni l'Organisation européenne des scieries ni les pays qui en font partie n'ont abordé le sujet avec elle lors de leurs discussions périodiques sur les difficultés du secteur.

La Commission n'encourage l'utilisation d'aucun matériau spécifique pour les traverses de chemin de fer: les politiques de l'Union européenne en la matière doivent être axées sur les résultats et, *a priori*, être neutres sur ce point. Certaines de ces politiques peuvent néanmoins fournir aux parties directement concernées un cadre propice à l'étude de la question.

En premier lieu, la directive relative aux marchés publics ([1]) traite déjà de la durabilité dans ses dispositions sur les spécifications techniques et les critères de sélection. Dans sa proposition de révision, la Commission a étendu le champ d'application de cette directive ([2]).

En second lieu, la Commission a publié récemment une communication sur une «Stratégie pour une compétitivité durable du secteur de la construction et de ses entreprises» ([3]), qui prévoit la mise au point de règles harmonisées concernant la déclaration des caractéristiques de performance des produits de construction en rapport avec une utilisation durable des ressources. Une communication sur les constructions durables est également en préparation.

([1]) Directive 2004/18/CE du 31 mars 2004, JO L 134 du 30.4.2004, p. 114.
([2]) COM(2011)896 du 20.12.2011.
([3]) COM(2012)433 du 31.7.12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010976/12
to the Commission
Marielle de Sarnez (ALDE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Encouraging the use of wooden sleepers in railway lines

Concrete sleepers are gradually replacing wooden ones in railway line construction. In France, for example, only 300 000 of the 2.5 million sleepers laid each year are made of wood.

The timber industry contributes to the economic development of Europe's forest regions, as well as to the creation of local jobs and prospects in those regions. The loss of railway market share to the concrete sector is therefore harmful to growth in Europe's rural and forest areas.

Furthermore, using a renewable material has a relatively neutral impact on the environment: wood plays a part in absorbing CO_2 in the air, and the depletion of abiotic resources can be controlled if they are managed sustainably.

Were concrete eventually to replace wood in railway line construction, there would be very serious consequences for Europe's forestry industry and related jobs.

Does the Commission intend to take steps to encourage the use of wooden sleepers in railway line construction?

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

The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member. However, it has not been raised in the Commission's periodic contacts with the European Organisation of Sawmillers (EOS) or its national members, to discuss the sector's difficulties.

The Commission does not promote the use of a specific material over others as far as railway sleepers are concerned, since relevant EU policies should be result-oriented and a priori material-neutral. Nonetheless, some EU policies may provide useful frameworks in which this issue could be addressed by those directly concerned.

Firstly, the existing Public Procurement Directive ([1]) already addresses sustainability considerations in its provisions for technical specifications and selection criteria. The scope for this has been expended in the Commission's proposal ([2]) to revise the directive.

Secondly, the Commission has recently launched a communication on a 'Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises' ([3]), which foresees the development of harmonised rules on the declaration of the performance characteristics of construction products in relation to a sustainable use of resources. Furthermore, a communication on sustainable buildings is being prepared.

([1]) Directive 2004/18/EC, 31.3.2004, OJ L 134, 30.4.2004, p. 114.
([2]) COM(2011) 896, 20.12.2011.
([3]) COM(2012) 433, 31.7.2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-010977/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(30 Νοεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόταση από ΔΝΤ και ΕΚΤ σχετικά με την μείωση του ελληνικού χρέους

Την Δευτέρα 26.11.2012 και ενόψει της συνεδρίασης της ευρωομάδας, το έγκυρο περιοδικό Der Spiegel διέρρευσε συζήτηση σύμφωνα με την οποία ΔΝΤ και ΕΚΤ έθεσαν στην ΕΕ το ζήτημα μείωσης του ελληνικού χρέους σε βαθμό που να μην ξεπερνά το 70% του ελληνικού ΑΕΠ το 2020.

Επιβεβαιώνει η Επιτροπή ότι στη διάρκεια των διαπραγματεύσεων τέθηκε η συγκεκριμένη πρόταση από τους εταίρους της;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Μαρτίου 2013)

Το Eurogroup συζήτησε, στις 11 και στις 26 Νοεμβρίου 2012, σειρά μέτρων που πρέπει να ληφθούν για την επαναφορά του χρέους της Ελλάδας σε βιώσιμη πορεία κατά τη διάρκεια της τρέχουσας και της επόμενης δεκαετίας. Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη για καμία τέτοια πρόταση όπως αυτή στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010977/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: Proposal by IMF and ECB for Greek debt reduction

On Monday, 26 November 2012, the prominent German news magazine 'Der Spiegel', in connection with the Eurogroup meeting, revealed that in the course of discussions the IMF and ECB had tabled a recommendation to the EU for the reduction of Greek debt to a level not exceeding 70% of its GDP by 2020.

Can the Commission confirm that such a proposal was tabled by its partners in the course of the discussions?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2013)

The Eurogroup discussed on 11 and 26 November 2012 a range of measures needed to be taken to bring Greece's debt back onto a sustainable path through this and the next decade. The Commission is not aware of any such a proposal referred to by the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-010978/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(30 November 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Common Foreign and Security Policy and the lack of a common EU position on elevating the status of Palestine at the United Nations

Recently Vice-President/High Representative Ashton released a statement to the effect that: 'The EU has repeatedly expressed its support and wish for Palestine to become a full member of the United Nations as part of a solution to the conflict'.

May I take this opportunity to remind the Vice-President/High Representative that the Lisbon Treaty clearly states that the common foreign and security policy 'shall be defined and implemented by the European Council and the Council acting unanimously'.

May I also remind her that there is no common EU position on elevating the status of Palestine at the United Nations and that 12 Member States, including my own, abstained from voting on Resolution A/67/L.28 and that one Member State, the Czech Republic, voted against it.

Given this background, the Vice-President/High Representative is asked to answer the following:

1. Does she think that it was appropriate to issue such a statement on behalf of the EU? Given the lack of a common position, will she consider retracting the statement?

2. Will she refrain from issuing further statements on the Middle East, except where a common position has been unanimously reached among all Member States?

3. Now that, following its status upgrade, Palestine has to respect the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, will she discuss with Member States the possibility of issuing a statement which condemns as a war crime the firing of rockets from Gaza at Israeli civilian targets?

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

The statement in question was a declaration on behalf of the European Union and, as such, did represent a common position and was agreed by all member states prior to being issued.

The HR/VP will continue with her current practice as regards issuing statements on matters of foreign policy. She has frequently condemned the firing of rockets from Gaza, and did so once more on 16 November. The Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 10 December also stated that, 'The European Union reiterates its fundamental commitment to the security of Israel, including with regard to vital threats in the region. The European Union will never stop opposing those who embrace and promote violence as a way to achieve political goals.'

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010979/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Η απειλή του ιού του AIDS/HIV

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση των Ηνωμένων Εθνών κατά του ιού του AIDS/HIV για το 2012, πάνω από 34 εκ. ανθρώπων είχαν προσβληθεί από τον ιό του AIDS το 2011, παγκοσμίως. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι καθημερινά μολύνονταν 7 χιλ. άτομα, 800 εκ των οποίων ήταν παιδιά κάτω των 15 ετών. Μόνο στις χώρες της ΕΕ και του ΕΟΧ, οι νέες μολύνσεις ήταν πάνω από 28 χιλ. ενώ σχεδόν το ένα τρίτο των φορέων στην Ευρώπη δεν γνωρίζουν ότι πάσχουν από την ασθένεια.

Σε συνέχεια των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει αναλυτικά στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό των ανθρώπων που έχουν μολυνθεί με το ιό του AIDS στα κράτη μέλη το 2012, τον αριθμό εκείνων που έχουν πρόσβαση σε περίθαλψη και τον τρόπο μετάδοσής του; Θεωρεί ότι η τρέχουσα οικονομική κρίση μπορεί να οδηγήσει σε επιδείνωση της κατάστασης;

2. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει το γεγονός ότι όλο και περισσότερα εθνικά συστήματα υγείας έχουν σοβαρό πρόβλημα χρηματοδότησης των ακριβών θεραπευτικών αγωγών για την ασθένεια;

3. Προτίθεται να υποστηρίξει την έρευνα σχετικά με τις σεξουαλικώς μεταδιδόμενες ασθένειες;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Πρόληψης και Ελέγχου Νόσων (ECDC) σε συνεργασία με τις υπηρεσίες του ΠΟΥ στην Ευρώπη συγκεντρώνει επιδημιολογικά στοιχεία, τα οποία συμπεριλαμβάνουν και τον τρόπο μετάδοσης του ιού HIV στην Ευρώπη και, συνήθως, δημοσιεύει τα στοιχεία του προηγούμενου έτους την Παγκόσμια Ημέρα κατά του AIDS. Συνεπώς, τα στοιχεία για το 2011 δημοσιεύθηκαν τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 ([1]) και τα στοιχεία για το 2012 θα είναι διαθέσιμα τον Δεκέμβριο του 2013.

Η Επιτροπή συγκεντρώνει πληροφορίες από τα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις της οικονομικής κρίσης στις δράσεις κατά του HIV/AIDS στην Ευρώπη. Μέχρι στιγμής, αρκετά κράτη μέλη έχουν αναφέρει μείωση των κονδυλίων για την πρόληψη του HIV και για την στήριξη της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, καθώς και προβλήματα στην παροχή θεραπευτικών αγωγών κατά του HIV/AIDS σε όλα τα άτομα που χρήζουν βοήθειας και ιδιαίτερα σε παράνομους μετανάστες. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι οι δαπάνες για τη θεραπευτική αγωγή κατά του HIV/AIDS αποτελούν ένα σημαντικό ποσοστό των συνολικών φαρμακευτικών δαπανών. Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τις πρωτοβουλίες που στοχεύουν στην αύξηση της σχέσης κόστους-αποτελεσματικότητας όσον αφορά τις δημόσιες δαπάνες για τα φάρμακα, καθώς και εκείνες που εστιάζουν στον περιορισμό της σπατάλης. Ωστόσο, τέτοιου είδους μέτρα δεν πρέπει να απειλούν το θεμελιώδες δικαίωμα στην ιατρική περίθαλψη σύμφωνα με τις προϋποθέσεις που ορίζονται στις εθνικές νομοθεσίες και πρακτικές.

Από τη στιγμή που υπάρχει ένας σαφής σύνδεσμος μεταξύ της περιορισμένης δράσης πρόληψης και της επιδείνωσης της κατάστασης του ιού HIV γενικότερα, έτσι όπως καταδεικνύεται πρόσφατα στην Ελλάδα ([2]), η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών, με σκοπό την ενίσχυση της πρόληψης του ιού HIV και την παροχή πόρων στις ομάδες του πληθυσμού που διατρέχουν τον μεγαλύτερο κίνδυνο ([3]).

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει την έρευνα σχετικά με τις σεξουαλικώς μεταδιδόμενες ασθένειες και τα ερευνητικά προγράμματα της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/20121130-risk-assessment-hiv-in-greece.pdf
([3]) COM/569/2009; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0569:EN:NOT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010979/12
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: The threat of AIDS/HIV

According to the UNAIDS World AIDS Day Report 2012, over 34 million people worldwide were infected with the AIDS virus in 2011. This means that every day seven thousand people were infected, including 800 children under 15 years of age. In the EU and EEA countries alone, more than 28 000 persons were newly infected, while almost one third of carriers in Europe are unaware that they suffer from the disease.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any detailed statistics on the number of people infected with the AIDS virus in the Member States in 2012, the number of those who have access to care and the mode of transmission? Does it believe that the current economic crisis may lead to a deterioration of situation?

2. How does it view the fact that more and more national health systems have a serious problem financing expensive treatments for the disease?

3. Does it intend to support research into sexually transmitted diseases?

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

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) together with WHO Europe collect epidemiologcal data including on mode of transmission of HIV in Europe and usually publish the figures from the previous year on the occasion of World AIDS Day. Thus, data for 2011 were published in December 2012 ([1]), and data for 2012 will be available in December 2013.

The Commission collects information from Member States on the effects of the economic crisis on the HIV/AIDS response in Europe. So far, a number of Member States reported a reduction of HIV prevention budgets, a reduction on budgets to support civil society and problems in providing HIV/AIDS treatments to all people in need and in particular to irregular migrants. The Commission is aware that expenses for HIV treatment account for a considerable share of total drug expenses. The Commission supports initiatives to increase cost-efficiency in public spending on medicines and to eliminate waste. However, such measures must not threaten the fundamental right to medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices.

Since there is clear link between low levels of prevention action and worsening of HIV situation in general, as recently shown in Greece ([2]), the Commission supports efforts of Member States in strenghtening HIV prevention and in directing resources to those populations most at risk ([3]).

The Commission supports research into sexually transmitted diseases under and the EU research programmes.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Annual-HIV-Surveillance-Report.pdf
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/publications/20121130-risk-assessment-hiv-in-greece.pdf
([3]) COM/569/2009; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0569:EN:NOT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010980/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Burma

The Rohingya Muslims in Burma are referred to by the United Nations as one of the most persecuted groups in the world. The Burmese Government has made active attempts to try and remove the Rohingyas from its population. The Rohingyas are denied citizenship despite having lived in Burma for generations, and there are now over 100 000 displaced persons.

The Commission President, Jose Manuel Barroso, visited Burma/Myanmar at the beginning of November 2012 and confirmed further key development aid to the country.

In light of the visit, could the Commission confirm:

1. Whether Mr Barroso or any EU officials raised the Rohingya conflict with Burmese officials during the visit? If so, what was the outcome of this dialogue?

2. Whether the EU aid is in any way conditional on the Burmese Government taking steps to resolve the conflict?

3. What steps the EU and the aid provided will support to ensure that the Rohingya community's human rights are respected in Burma?

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

During his visit to Burma/Myanmar, President Barroso raised the plight of the Rohingya in all his meetings, in particular with President U Thein Sein, opposition leader Daw Aung Suu Kyi and the Lower House Speaker Thura Shwe Mann. President Barroso urged the authorities to stop the inter-communal violence, to provide access for humanitarian assistance and to address the issue of citizenship for the stateless Rohingya. President U Thein Sein asked for EU support to address humanitarian needs, guaranteeing access to the beneficiaries. He also appeared committed to address the underlying causes of the conflict.

It is particularly encouraging that, following President Barroso's visit, President U Thein, in a letter to the UN Secretary-General, acknowledged publicly for the first time the issue of citizenship for the Rohingya and committed his Government to address it.

The EU was the main sponsor of last year's UN General Assembly Resolution on the situation of human rights in Burma/Myanmar, which specifically referred to the predicament of the Rohingya. The EU is pleased with the fact that this resolution was adopted by consensus for the first time.

The EU's humanitarian assistance and development aid benefit all communities in Rakhine State based on their needs. EU development programmes in Burma/Myanmar include actions for the promotion of human rights, especially the rights of ethnic minorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010981/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Methamphetamine

The production, distribution and sale of methamphetamine are restricted or illegal in jurisdictions across the European Union. However, the differing approaches across the EU can be problematic, with possession of small amounts being a misdemeanour in the Czech Republic, while attracting far more severe penalties in other Member States.

1. What steps is the Commission taking to tackle methamphetamine production, distribution and dependency?

2. As part of the EU drugs strategy, what steps are being taken to improve EU-wide coordination of:

— drugs policy;

— drugs treatment for addicts;

— criminal justice systems and counter-narcotics intelligence?

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

The Member States are competent for deciding what specific action should be taken to address the production and trafficking of specific drugs, and the health problems that they cause, according to the socioeconomic and cultural context of each country. The Commission does not have a mandate to take initiatives in this area.

Coordination between the Member States' drugs policies and among the institutions involved in drugs policy-making, at national, EU and international level, is one of the pillars of the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020 ([1]), which was endorsed by the JHA Council on 7 December 2012.

Concrete measures to boost coordination between Member States' actions on illicit drugs will be outlined in a new Action Plan, implementing the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020. This Action Plan is planned to be adopted under the Irish Presidency in the first half of 2013.

According to an external evaluation of the implementation of the last EU Drugs Strategy, 2005-2012, and of its action plans, which was carried out by RAND Europe ([2]), the strategy has improved coordination between Member States' efforts in the drugs field and has boosted convergence of national policies on illicit drugs.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/eu_drugs_strategy_2013-20_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/rand_final_report_eu_drug_strategy_2005-2012_en.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-010982/12
til Kommissionen
Kriton Arsenis (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) og Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(3. december 2012)

Om: EU-retningslinjer om solarier

— Under henvisning til, at Det Internationale Kræftforskningscenter (IARC) har konstateret, at folk, der begynder at tage solarium, før de fylder 35, har 75 % højere risiko for melanom, og at der er en stærk sammenhæng mellem brug af solarier og udvikling af hudkræft,

— i betragtning af, at Kommissionen har taget skridt til at løse dette problem ved at bakke op om en revision af Cenelec-standarderne for solarier, som blandt andet forbyder brugen af solarier for mennesker under atten år,

— i betragtning af, at disse standarder ikke desto mindre anvendes forskelligt i EU-medlemsstaterne, og

— under henvisning til, at Kommissionen mellem 2009 og 2011 har støttet to fælles aktioner, hvilket også har forstærket nødvendigheden af at forbyde brugen af solbruningsudstyr med ultraviolette stråler for folk under atten år,
bedes Kommissionen besvare følgende:

Vil Kommissionen overveje at foreslå et EU-omfattende forbud mod brugen af solcentre for folk under atten år for at sikre bedre beskyttelse af dem, der er mest sårbare over for risici for hudkræft forårsaget af solarier?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(5. februar 2013)

Kommissionen henviser det ærede medlem til sine svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-4126/09 og E-4233/09 fra Jim Higgins, E-4250/09 fra Catherine Stihler, E-4657/09 fra Iva Zanicchi og E-5338/09 fra Proinsias de Rossa ([1]), som indeholder detaljerede oplysninger om den gældende lovramme for sikkerheden ved solarier.

Med hensyn til begrænsning af brugen af solarier for børn under 18 år vil Kommissionen — i lyset af den seneste, solide videnskabelige og medicinske dokumentation — gå videre med en vurdering af situationen på området og af, hvordan den gældende lovgivning håndhæves i medlemsstaterne. De relevante interesseparter (medlemsstaterne, forbrugerne, lægeeksperter, erhvervslivet) vil ligeledes blive hørt.

Kommissionen vil fremlægge den seneste udvikling på dette område for medlemsstaterne den 5. februar på det næste møde i forbrugersikkerhedsnetværket.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010982/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) και Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατευθυντήριες γραμμές της ΕΕ για συσκευές τεχνητού μαυρίσματος

— Το Διεθνές Κέντρο Έρευνας για τον Καρκίνο (IARC) παρατήρησε ότι άτομα τα οποία αρχίζουν το τεχνητό μαύρισμα σε ηλικία μικρότερη των 35 ετών έχουν 75% υψηλότερη πιθανότητα να υποστούν μελάνωμα, και ότι υφίσταται σημαντική σχέση μεταξύ της χρήσης συσκευών τεχνητού μαυρίσματος και της ανάπτυξης καρκίνου του δέρματος.

— Η Επιτροπή έχει αναλάβει ενέργειες για να αντιμετωπίσει το εν λόγω θέμα υποστηρίζοντας την αναθεώρηση των προτύπων CENELEC για τις συσκευές τεχνητού μαυρίσματος, ενέργειες οι οποίες, μεταξύ άλλων, απαγορεύουν την χρήση συσκευών τεχνητού μαυρίσματος από άτομα ηλικίας μικρότερης των 18 ετών.

— Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι παρόλα ταύτα υφίστανται διαφορές στην εφαρμογή αυτών των προτύπων στα κράτη μέλη.

— Η Επιτροπή υποστήριξε μεταξύ 2009 και 2011 δύο κοινές δράσεις οι οποίες υπογράμμισαν την ανάγκη για απαγόρευση της χρήσης συσκευών τεχνητού μαυρίσματος με υπεριώδεις ακτίνες για άτομα ηλικίας μικρότερης των 18 ετών.

Εν όψει των ανωτέρω, προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προτείνει μια απαγόρευση σε επίπεδο Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης της χρήσης κέντρων τεχνητού μαυρίσματος από άτομα ηλικίας μικρότερης των 18 ετών, με σκοπό να εξασφαλίσει καλύτερη προστασία για αυτά τα άτομα τα οποία διατρέχουν μεγαλύτερο κίνδυνο να αναπτύξουν καρκίνο του δέρματος λόγω των συσκευών τεχνητού μαυρίσματος;

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να παραπέμψει τον αξιότιμο κ. βουλευτή στις απαντήσεις της στις γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-4126/09 και E-4233/09 του κ. Jim. Higgins, E-4250/09 της κ. Catherine Stihler, E-4657/09 της κ. Iva Zanicchi και E-5338/09 του κ. Proinsias de Rossa ([1]) που παρέχουν λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το ισχύον νομικό πλαίσιο για την ασφάλεια των συσκευών τεχνητού μαυρίσματος.

Όσον αφορά τον περιορισμό της χρήσης συσκευών τεχνητού μαυρίσματος για παιδιά ηλικίας μικρότερης των 18 ετών, και υπό το φως των πρόσφατων ισχυρών επιστημονικών και ιατρικών στοιχείων, η Επιτροπή θα αξιολογήσει περαιτέρω την ισχύουσα κατάσταση και την επιβολή της σημερινής ισχύουσας νομοθεσίας στα κράτη μέλη. Στη διαβούλευση θα πάρουν επίσης μέρος οι σχετικοί ενδιαφερόμενοι φορείς (κράτη μέλη, καταναλωτές, ιατρικοί εμπειρογνώμονες, οικονομικοί φορείς).

Η Επιτροπή θα παρουσιάσει τις πρόσφατες εξελίξεις στον τομέα αυτό στα κράτη μέλη στις 5 Φεβρουαρίου κατά την προσεχή συνεδρίαση του δικτύου ασφάλειας καταναλωτή.

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

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-010982/12
za Komisijo
Kriton Arsenis (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) in Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(3. december 2012)

Zadeva: Smernice EU za solarne postelje

— Mednarodna agencija za raziskovanje raka (IARC) je ugotovila, da je pri osebah, ki so začele porjavitvene tehnike uporabljati pred 35. letom, tveganje za melanom večje za 75 % in da obstaja močna povezava med uporabo solarnih postelj in nastankom kožnega raka.

— Komisija je sklenila proti temu ukrepati, in sicer je podprla pregled standardov Evropskega odbora za elektrotehnično standardizacijo (CENELEC) za solarne postelje, po katerih je med drugim uporaba teh postelj prepovedana za mlajše od 18 let.

— V državah članicah se ti standardi ne uporabljajo enako.

— Komisija je med letoma 2009 in 2011 podprla dva skupna ukrepa, s katerima je med drugim pritrdila zahtevi, da bi uporabo porjavitvenih naprav z ultravijoličnim sevanjem prepovedali za mlajše od 18 let.

Ali Komisija glede na povedano razmišlja, da bi predlagala vseevropsko prepoved uporabe porjavitvenih salonov za mlajše od 18 let, s čimer bi zagotovili boljšo zaščito tistih, ki jih kožni rak zaradi uporabe solarnih postelj najbolj ogroža?

Odgovor g. Tajanija v imenu Komisije
(5. februar 2013)

Komisija želi spoštovane poslance napotiti na svoje odgovore na pisna vprašanja E-4126/09 in E-4233/09 (vlagatelj Jim Higgins), E-4250/09 (vlagateljica Catherine Stihler), E-4657/09 (vlagateljica Iva Zanicchi) in E-5338/09 (vlagatelj Proinsias de Rossa) ([1]), v katerih so na voljo podrobne informacije o veljavnem pravnem okviru v zvezi z varnostjo solarnih postelj.

Ob upoštevanju najnovejših trdnih znanstvenih in zdravstvenih dokazov bo Komisija glede omejitve uporabe solarnih postelj za osebe, mlajše od 18 let, nadalje ocenila obstoječe stanje in izvajanje trenutno veljavne zakonodaje v državah članicah. Poleg tega se bo posvetovala z zadevnimi zainteresiranimi stranmi (države članice, potrošniki, zdravstveni strokovnjaki in gospodarski subjekti).

Komisija bo najnovejši razvoj na tem področju državam članicam predstavila 5. februarja na naslednjem sestanku mreže za varnost potrošnikov.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010982/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) and Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: EU guidelines for sunbeds

— The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has observed that people who begin tanning before they turn 35 have a 75% higher risk of developing melanoma, and that there is a strong correlation between the use of sunbeds and the development of skin cancer.

— The Commission has taken steps to tackle this issue by supporting the revision of the standards for sunbeds established by the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC), which, *inter alia*, forbid the use of sunbeds by people under the age of 18.

— There is nevertheless a divergence in the application of these standards in the Member States.

— Between 2009 and 2011 the Commission supported two joint actions which also reinforced the need to ban the use of ultraviolet radiation tanning devices for people under the age of 18.

In light of the above, would the Commission consider proposing an EU-wide ban on the use of tanning salons for people under the age of 18 in order to ensure better protection of those most at risk of developing skin cancer through the use of sunbeds?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-4126/09 and E-4233/09 by Mr Jim Higgins, E-4250/09 by Ms Catherine Stihler, E-4657/09 by Sig.ra Iva Zanicchi and E-5338/09 by Mr Proinsias de Rossa ([1]) which provide detailed information on the applicable legal framework relating to the safety of sunbeds.

With regard to the restriction of sunbeds use for children under 18 years old, and in light of the recent strong scientific and medical evidence, the Commission will further evaluate the status-quo and the enforcement of current applicable legislation in the Member States. Relevant stakeholders (Member States, consumers, medical experts, economic operators) will also be consulted.

The Commission will present the recent developments in this area to the Member States on 5 February during the next Consumer Safety Network meeting.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010983/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: EU funding and procurement law in relation to Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories

Ahead of the recent debate on the EU-Israel ACAA Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance (ACAA) in plenary, I was contacted by a number of constituents who raised concerns about European Union funding of Israeli companies based in, or working through affiliates in, the occupied territories.

In order to satisfy my constituents' concerns, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What assessment has it made of the level of funding in the last five years allocated through EU programmes to businesses and other entities which may have affiliate activities based in the Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories?

2. Is it legal under EU procurement guidelines for a Member State to specify in the tender document that any products supplied as part of the contract must exclude produce from illegal Israeli settlements?

3. Is it legal under EU procurement guidelines for a Member State to specify in the tender document that companies operating in Israeli settlements can be excluded from contracts?

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

The Commission would point out that this question is exactly the same as a previous Written Question E-7066/2012 and would therefore refer the Honourable Member to the corresponding answer already given ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010984/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories

Can the Commission confirm whether or not the EU currently provides any funding either directly or indirectly which may be utilised by Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories, an Israeli pharmaceutical company operating some production activities in the West Bank region?

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

EU funding is provided to Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories through the 7th Framework Programme for research and technological development. This company currently receives a total of EUR 1.4 million for participation in four projects, as stated in the reply to Parliamentary Question E-007505/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010985/12
adresată Comisiei
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(3 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Compensarea prestatorilor serviciilor universale

Deși serviciile universale asigură accesul la rețelele de telecomunicații și la internet pentru toți cetățenii, obligațiile de serviciu universal (OSU) nu sunt compensate în toate statele membre. OSU sunt impuse operatorilor din toate statele membre. Directiva UE aplicabilă prevede compensare corespunzătoare a operatorilor care prestează acest serviciu în conformitate cu articolul 12 din directiva respectivă. Cu toate acestea, durata procedurilor prin care se adoptă o decizie privind compensarea corespunzătoare (în cazul în care aceasta se acordă) diferă mult de la un stat membru la altul, ducând la o situație de discriminare între operatorii din diferitele state membre.

1. Este Comisia la curent cu acest aspect problematic?

2. Ce măsuri intenționează Comisia să ia pentru a se asigura că deciziile privind compensarea OSU sunt adoptate într-un termen rezonabil în toate statele membre?

Răspuns dat de D-na Kroes în numele Comisiei
(24 ianuarie 2013)

Dispozițiile privind serviciul universal vizează să contribuie la combaterea riscului de excluziune socială, evitând în același timp o sarcină disproporționată asupra acestui sector. În conformitate cu articolul 12 din Directiva privind serviciul universal (USD), furnizorul (furnizorii) de serviciu universal desemnat (desemnați) trebuie să fie compensat (compensați) pentru costurile nete suportate în cazul în care costul furnizării obligației de serviciu universal (OSU) reprezintă o sarcină nejustificată. O astfel de compensare poate fi finanțată din fonduri publice și/sau dintr-un fond la care contribuie actorii de pe piața din sectorul comunicațiilor electronice. Câteva state membre și-au luat libertatea de a decide să nu desemneze niciun furnizor de OSU, sau au redus obligațiile privind elementele serviciului care sunt deja oferite pe piață (de exemplu, telefoanele publice și listele de abonați telefonici). În unele cazuri, autoritatea națională de reglementare a ajuns la concluzia că furnizarea obligației de serviciu universal nu reprezintă o sarcină nejustificată pentru furnizorul desemnat de OSU.

Comisia a identificat în comunicarea sa privind serviciul universal din noiembrie 2011 riscul apariției unor abordări divergente cu privire la punerea în aplicare a USD. Aceasta a considerat că este nevoie de orientări suplimentare pentru a se asigura că punerea în aplicare este în conformitate cu principiile aplicate în mod consecvent, luând în considerare diferitele etape de dezvoltare a piețelor din statele membre.

Comisia lucrează în prezent la o recomandare privind serviciul universal care se prevede că va fi adoptată la începutul anului 2013. O secțiune specifică va aborda mecanismele de finanțare și de calculare a costurilor serviciului universal pentru a asigura o abordare eficientă și armonizată în statele membre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010985/12
to the Commission
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Compensation for universal service providers

While universal services ensure access to telecommunication networks and the Internet for everyone, universal service obligations (USO) are not compensated in all Member States. USO are imposed on incumbents in all Member States. The relevant EU directive makes provision for due compensation for incumbents that provide this service in accordance with Article 12 of that directive. Nevertheless, the time needed for the procedure to reach a decision on due compensation (if any) differs widely among the Member States, leading to discrimination between incumbents in different Member States.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problematic issue?

2. What does the Commission intend to do to ensure that decisions on USO compensation are taken within a reasonable period of time throughout the Member States?

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

The Universal Service provisions aim to help tackle the risk of social exclusion while at the same time avoiding a disproportionate burden on the sector. According to Article 12 of the Universal Service Directive (USD) the designated universal service provider(s) must be compensated for the net cost incurred where the cost of providing the universal service obligation (USO) represents an unfair burden. Such compensation can be financed from public funds and/or from a fund to which market players in the e-communications sector contribute. Several Member States have exercised their discretion not to designate any USO provider, or have relaxed obligations concerning service elements that are already catered for by the market (e.g. public payphones and directories). In some instances the national regulatory authority came to the conclusion that providing the universal service obligation does not represent an unfair burden for the designated USO provider.

The Commission identified in its communication on universal service of November 2011 a risk of divergent approaches to implementing the USD. It considered that further guidance was needed to ensure that implementation is in accordance with consistently applied principles while taking into account the different stages of development of the markets in the Member States.

The Commission is currently working on a recommendation on universal service which is foreseen to be adopted in early 2013. A specific section will address the financing and costing mechanisms of universal service to ensure an efficient and harmonised approach in the Member States.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-010986/12
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(3 décembre 2012)

Objet: Renforcer la protection de nos enfants contre les abus sexuels sur Internet

Le 5 décembre prochain doit être officiellement lancée l'alliance mondiale pour combattre les abus sexuels commis contre des enfants via Internet, en présence de la commissaire européenne aux affaires intérieures, Cecilia Malmström, et du ministre de la justice des États-Unis, Eric Holder.

Les abus sexuels et les violences faites aux enfants sont des crimes particulièrement sordides, aggravés par le développement de l'Internet. On estime ainsi que près de 15 % des internautes âgés de 10 à 17 ans reçoivent des propositions de nature sexuelle en ligne. Face à un crime qui ne connaît pas de frontières, la coopération internationale doit s'organiser.

Il faut donc se féliciter de la mise sur pied de cette alliance, ainsi que de la coopération avec nos partenaires américains au sein du groupe de travail UE-États-Unis sur la cybercriminalité. Le renforcement du cadre juridique par une directive de 2011 et la création d'une unité spéciale de lutte contre la cybercriminalité, qui sera opérationnelle au sein d'Europol dès 2013, constituent également des progrès notables.

Mais nous devons encore intensifier notre politique de lutte contre la pédophilie sur Internet. L'Europe a beaucoup à apprendre de la justice américaine dans ce domaine. Sous la direction d'Eric Holder, le département américain de la Justice a mené des actions exemplaires, ayant conduit au démantèlement de plusieurs réseaux pédophiles et à l'arrestation de plus de 20 000 individus depuis 2009.

Pour suivre cette voie, il faudra que le nouveau centre européen de lutte contre la cybercriminalité soit doté des moyens adéquats. Les premières estimations relatives à son budget 2013 ne se montent qu'à environ 3,6 millions d'euros, pour un vaste éventail de missions. Dans le même temps, son pendant américain au niveau fédéral, qui se concentre sur la seule lutte contre la pédophilie en ligne, disposait lui en 2011 d'une dotation presque dix fois supérieure!

Dans ces conditions, comment la Commission compte-t-elle s'assurer que cette nouvelle unité aura les moyens de protéger efficacement nos enfants contre un tel fléau?

Réponse donnée par Mme Malmström au nom de la Commission
(26 février 2013)

Le centre européen de lutte contre la cybercriminalité (EC3) a été inauguré officiellement le 11 janvier 2013 au sein d'Europol, une organisation qui participe depuis plus de dix ans à la lutte contre les abus sexuels commis contre des enfants via internet. En ces temps d'austérité, la Commission a proposé des réductions affectant tous les chapitres du budget 2013 qui ont été entérinées par les autorités budgétaires de l'UE. Le personnel de la Commission collabore étroitement avec Europol pour évaluer le nombre de postes et les ressources financières dont EC3 aurait besoin, au cours des premières années et au-delà, pour s'acquitter des missions définies dans la communication de la Commission et approuvées par le Conseil.

Compte tenu de l'expertise et des capacités dont dispose Europol, la mise en place d'EC3 en son sein constituait une étape logique. À la suite d'un classement interne des priorités, les ressources seront réaffectées au sein de l'organisation ainsi qu'un nombre de postes proche des prévisions de la Commission concernant les besoins en personnel d'EC3 pour 2013. Ce processus montera progressivement en puissance et mobilisera des ressources supplémentaires au fil du temps, y compris éventuellement du personnel détaché par les États membres, de sorte que l'EC3 puisse devenir pleinement opérationnel en 2015. La Commission entend par ailleurs présenter en ce début d'année des propositions de réforme d'Europol lui confiant de nouvelles tâches, notamment au niveau de l'EC3, et qui nécessiteront dès lors une révision complète du financement de l'agence. La Commission est convaincue que l'EC3 saura répondre aux attentes de l'UE et des États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010986/12
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Stepping up efforts to protect children against online sexual abuse

On 5 December 2012, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, and US Attorney-General, Eric Holder, launched the Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online.

Child sexual abuse and violence against children are particularly heinous crimes, and the problem has been compounded by the development of the Internet. Indeed, it is estimated that nearly 15% of Internet users aged between 10 and 17 have received messages of a sexual nature online. Given that this type of crime transcends national borders, international cooperation is essential.

The launch of this global alliance and cooperation with the United States through the EU-US Working Group on Cyber-Security and Cyber-Crime are therefore very welcome steps forward. Considerable progress has also been made by strengthening the legal framework, through a directive passed in 2011, and by the setting up a dedicated European Cybercrime Centre at Europol, which will be operational by 2013.

However, we need to do even more to combat online child sexual abuse. Europe has a lot to learn from the US justice system in this regard. Under Eric Holder, the US Department of Justice has done some outstanding work, which has led to the smashing of a number of paedophile rings and the arrest of more than 20 000 people since 2009.

If we are to follow that lead, the new European Cybercrime Centre must be given adequate funding. The first estimates for the centre's 2013 budget amount to just EUR 3.6 million, despite the huge range of tasks it will have to perform. Meanwhile, in 2011 the centre's US federal counterpart — which focuses solely on combating online child sexual abuse — had a budget almost 10 times as big.

In these circumstances, how is the Commission planning to make sure that the new European Cybercrime Centre will have the resources it needs to protect our children effectively against this scourge?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2013)

The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) was officially launched on 11 January 2013 within Europol, but Europol has been working in the fight against child sexual abuse online for over a decade. In the current time of austerity the Commission proposed cuts across the board in 2013 budget that were endorsed by the EU budgetary authorities. Commission staff have been working closely with Europol to quantify the number of posts and financial resources that would be necessary in the first years and beyond for the EC3 to deliver the tasks outlined in the Commission's Communication and endorsed by the Council.

The establishment of EC3 was a logical step given Europol's existing expertise and capacity. Following an internal prioritization exercise, it will reallocate resources within the organisation as well as a number of staff which approaches the Commission's projected EC3 staff needs for 2013. A gradual process which will require additional resources over time, including possible secondments from Member States, is needed for the EC3 to become fully operational by 2015. Moreover the Commission will submit proposals early this year on the reform of Europol which will involve additional tasks for Europol, including the EC3, and will therefore require a thorough review of the Agency's funding. The Commission is confident that the EC3 can and will meet the expectations of the EU and the Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-010987/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(3 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Piano di riordino degli aeroporti: declassamento dell'aeroporto di Ancona-Falconara da civile a scalo cargo

Entro la fine dell'anno 2012 il governo italiano, e nello specifico il Ministero dello Sviluppo economico, delle infrastrutture e dei trasporti, ha previsto l'attuazione di un Piano di riordino degli aeroporti che prevede la razionalizzazione delle spese nel settore aeroportuale e la riduzione degli scali nazionali: da 60 aeroporti attivi si prevede una riduzione a 33 scali.

In particolare tale piano prevede lungo la costa adriatica il declassamento dell'aeroporto marchigiano di Ancona-Falconara a scalo cargo, a differenza di quello di Rimini (Regione Emilia-Romagna) che manterrà la vocazione di traffico turistico e charter.

Considerando che la Regione Marche continua ad investire risorse nella promozione turistica del proprio territorio, purtroppo già penalizzato dalla inadeguatezza delle attuali comunicazioni ferroviarie e stradali, con l'applicazione di tale piano aeroportuale non solo ci sarebbero gravi conseguenze sul piano di sviluppo della Regione Marche, ma verrebbero vanificati altresì gli sforzi compiuti dalle autorità locali e dagli operatori economici e turistici.

Ciò premesso si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se il Piano di riordino degli aeroporti non danneggi gli sforzi fatti da alcune Regioni per migliorare lo sviluppo, la promozione e la competitività del territorio;

2. se è legittima l'intenzione del Piano di mantenere lungo la costa adriatica, tra Venezia e Bari, solo l'aeroporto di Rimini a vocazione turistica e charter, penalizzando ulteriormente le infrastrutture, il settore dei servizi e il turismo della Regione Marche;

3. di fornire un quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2013)

La Commissione ritiene che l'accesso ai collegamenti aerei sia importante per lo sviluppo economico regionale. Gli aeroporti svolgono un ruolo fondamentale nel sistema del trasporto aereo, stabilendo un collegamento tra le compagnie aeree e i rispettivi passeggeri e clienti per il trasporto merci. Sono inoltre divenuti sempre più importanti per l'economia europea, poiché forniscono un'ampia gamma di collegamenti all'interno dell'UE e assicurano che l'Europa sia collegata con il resto del mondo. Sono anche fondamentali per la riuscita del cielo unico europeo. Consapevole di ciò, il 1° dicembre 2011, la Commissione europea ha adottato un pacchetto globale di misure finalizzate a ovviare alla carenza di capacità degli aeroporti europei e a migliorare la qualità dei servizi offerti ai passeggeri ([1]).

Tuttavia, le decisioni riguardanti la pianificazione delle infrastrutture di trasporto restano di competenza degli Stati membri e spetta alle autorità italiane decidere quale sia l'offerta ottimale di infrastrutture aeroportuali sul proprio territorio.

Per queste ragioni la Commissione non può fornire un quadro generale della situazione o esprimere un giudizio sulle modalità con cui si possono soddisfare al meglio le esigenze legate al trasporto aereo nella regione Marche.

([1]) Il pacchetto contiene tre proposte legislative sulle bande orarie, i servizi di assistenza a terra e le emissioni acustiche, nonché una comunicazione riguardante «La politica aeroportuale nell'Unione europea: assicurare capacità e qualità atte a promuovere la crescita, la connettività e la mobilità sostenibile», COM(2011)823. Per una migliore comprensione dell'attività normativa della Commissione in materia di aeroporti, La invito a consultare detta comunicazione disponibile al seguente link: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/airports/doc/2011-airport-package-communication_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010987/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Airport reorganisation plan: downgrading of Ancona-Falconara airport from a civil airport to a cargo terminal

By the end of 2012, the Italian Government, more specifically the Ministry of Economic Development, Infrastructure and Transport, has planned to implement an airport reorganisation plan in order to rationalise expenditure in the airport sector and reduce the number of national airports from 60 to 33.

In particular, under this plan, the airport of Ancona-Falconara in the Marche Region on the Adriatic coast will be downgraded to a cargo terminal, unlike Rimini Airport (Emilia-Romagna), which will maintain its status as an airport for tourists and charter flights.

The Marche Region continues to invest resources in promoting tourism on its territory, which, unfortunately, is already penalised by the inadequacy of existing rail and road links. If this airport plan is implemented, not only would there be serious consequences for the development of the Marche Region, but the efforts made by the local authorities and economic and tourism operators would also have been in vain.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Does it not agree that the airport reorganisation plan will harm the efforts made by some regions to improve the development, promotion and competitiveness of their territory?

2. Does it consider it legitimate for the plan to keep only the airport of Rimini along the Adriatic coast between Venice and Bari for tourist and charter flights, further penalising the infrastructure, services sector and tourism in the Marche Region?

3. Can it give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission judges that access to air links are important to regional economic development. Airports play a crucial role in the aviation chain, linking airlines with their passengers and freight customers. They have also become increasingly important to the European economy, providing a wide range of connections within the EU and ensuring that Europe stays connected with the rest of the world. They are also central to the successful delivery of the Single European Sky. Recognising this, on 1st December 2011 the European Commission adopted a comprehensive package of measures to address capacity shortage at Europe's airports and improve the quality of services offered to passengers ([1]).

However, decisions on the planning of transport infrastructure remain a competence for Member States and it is for the Italian authorites to decide on the optimal provision of airport infrastructure on its territory.

For these reasons the Commission can not provide an overview of the situation or to make a judgment as to how the needs for air travel from the Marche Region are best served.

([1]) The package contains three legislative proposals on slots, groundhandling and noise as well as a communication on 'Airport policy in the European Union — addressing capacity and quality to promote growth, connectivity and sustainable mobility' COM(2011) 823. To gain a better understanding of the regulatory work of the Commission in relation to airports we invite you to consult the aforementioned communication on the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/airports/doc/2011-airport-package-communication_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-010988/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Personas con discapacidad

El Comité Español de Representantes de Personas con Discapacidad (CERMI), que agrupa a más de 7 000 entidades, asegura que las administraciones autonómicas deben al sector al menos 250 millones de euros, y, los ayuntamientos, otros 50 por dos años de impagos.

Los 300 millones de deuda derivan de la prestación de servicios, subvenciones y de las ayudas en concepto de salarios destinadas a los Centros Especiales de Empleo (la Administración central abona la mitad del salario mínimo de cada trabajador). Esta situación se agrava como consecuencia de la falta de liquidez de las comunidades autónomas, muchas de las cuales esperan préstamos de la Administración central a través del Fondo de Liquidez Autonómico (FLA), en cuyo marco las comunidades autónomas se ven obligadas a destinar dichos préstamos, en primer lugar, a saldar su deuda financiera; a continuación, a pagar intereses; y, por último, a pagar a los proveedores.

Los impagos son especialmente relevantes en las comunidades que han pedido el rescate, a las que se han sumado Asturias, Illes Balears, Canarias y Cantabria, pero también en Castilla y León y Madrid. Pérez Bueno solo salva al País Vasco, Cataluña, La Rioja y Aragón.

El 20 % de los centros de atención a personas con discapacidad está en peligro de cierre inminente según el CERMI. Se calcula que en España hay 3,8 millones de personas con discapacidad y que solo 1 179 900 personas con edades comprendidas entre los 16 y los 64 años disponen de un certificado que acredita su situación. De ellas, menos de un tercio están laboralmente activas, según el INE.

Las personas con discapacidad deben enfrentarse, además, al ajuste de la Ley de Dependencia y a la desaparición de la obra social de las cajas de ahorro.

¿Conoce la Comisión esta situación? ¿Qué recomendaciones ha incluido e incluirá la Comisión en el Semestre Europeo para que España cumpla con el derecho a la salud de las personas con discapacidad y dependencia? ¿Ha realizado la Comisión algún estudio en relación con los efectos de las políticas de ajuste y austeridad sobre las personas más vulnerables, incluyendo las personas con dependencia? ¿Qué mecanismos de flexibilización del déficit aplicará la Comisión para permitir a las comunidades autónomas y ayuntamientos afrontar el pago a los proveedores? ¿Por qué no concede la Comisión la prioridad al pago por servicios sociales básicos frente al pago de servicios financieros (intereses y deuda)?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

En el «semestre europeo», la Comisión supervisa la ejecución por los Estados miembros de las reformas estructurales dirigidas a alcanzar los objetivos de crecimiento de Europa 2020.

La crisis ha tenido una gran repercusión en las condiciones sociales y de empleo, en particular en grupos vulnerables como las personas con discapacidad.

Como respuesta, la Recomendación del Consejo sobre el Programa Nacional de Reforma de 2012 y por la que se emite un dictamen del Consejo sobre el Programa de Estabilidad de España (6 de julio de 2012; en especial, su recomendación 7) insta a España a mejorar la situación de los grupos vulnerables mediante la mejora de su empleabilidad y la prestación de servicios eficaces de apoyo a los niños y las familias.

Las normas del Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento hacen hincapié en la evolución estructural y permiten un ritmo de saneamiento diferenciado según los Estados miembros. De conformidad con estas normas, el Consejo, previa recomendación de la Comisión, recomienda una combinación de medidas que faciliten el crecimiento, que preserven los principales motores del crecimiento y garanticen la eficacia del gasto. Las recomendaciones se dirigen a las autoridades nacionales. La disposiciones relativas a las entidades locales, regionales o autónomas se acuerdan en el diálogo político nacional.

El Fondo Social Europeo apoya la integración sostenible de los grupos desfavorecidos al amparo del tema prioritario 71. En España, las medidas entran en el ámbito de aplicación de la prioridad clave 2, con programas a los que se acogen más de 172 000 personas con discapacidad.

La cobertura sanitaria casi universal sigue siendo aplicable en España después de la reforma y el régimen de seguro por defecto cubre a los residentes con una renta familiar anual de menos de 100 000 euros. Las personas con discapacidad de conformidad con el artículo 12 de la Ley 13/1982 siguen estando exentas en gran medida de la participación en los gastos, además de aplicárseles posiblemente otras exenciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010988/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: People with disabilities

The Spanish Committee of Representatives of People with Disabilities (CERMI), which brings together more than 7 000 organisations and bodies, has claimed that autonomous administrations and town councils owe the sector over EUR 250 million and EUR 50 million respectively, after failing to meet payments for two years.

The EUR 300 million of debt arises from service provision, grants and funding in the form of salaries given to Special Employment Centres (the central administration pays half of the minimum salary for each employee). This situation is exacerbated by a lack of funds in the autonomous communities, many of which are waiting for loans from the central administration's Autonomous Liquidity Fund (FLA). After receiving such a loan, the autonomous community must first settle its debt before paying any interest, and only then may it pay its service providers.

Missing payments are particularly common in the autonomous communities which have requested bailouts, including in Asturias, the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands and Cantabria, but also in Castile and León and Madrid. The only communities Pérez Bueno, the director of CERMI, has not mentioned are the Basque Country, Catalonia, La Rioja and Aragon.

CERMI has warned that 20% of care centres for people with disabilities are at risk of imminent closure. It is estimated that there are 3.8 million people with disabilities in Spain, but that only 1 179 900 16 to 64-year-olds have a certificate to attest this. Less than a third of people with disabilities are employed, according to the National Institute of Statistics (INE).

In addition, people with disabilities are faced with changes to the dependency law and the discontinuation of social work that was organised by savings banks.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? What recommendations has the Commission made or will it make during the European Semester so that Spain ensures the right to health for people with disabilities or who are dependent? Has the Commission studied the effects that the budget tightening and austerity policies have had on the most vulnerable people in society, including those who are dependent on others? What mechanisms for relaxing the deficit rules will the Commission put into place to enable the autonomous communities and town councils to meet their payments to service providers? Why does the Commission not give priority to paying for basic social services over meeting payments for financial services (interest and debt)?

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

In the European Semester, the Commission monitors the implementation of structural reforms by Member States to achieve the Europe 2020 growth goals.

The crisis has had a strong effect on employment and social conditions, particularly on vulnerable groups like people with disabilities.

In response, the Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2012, delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Spain (6 July 2012, notably its Recommendation 7) invited Spain to improve the situation of vulnerable groups by increasing their employability and offering effective child and family support services.

The rules of the Stability and Growth Pact put an emphasis on structural developments and allow for a differentiated pace of consolidation between Member States. Following these rules, the Council, on a recommendation from the Commission, recommends a growth-friendly mix of measures that protect key growth drivers and ensure efficient spending. The recommendations are addressed to the national authorities. Arrangements concerning regional, local or autonomous entities are reached in the national policy dialogue.

The ESF supports sustainable integration of the disadvantaged groups on the basis of priority theme 71. In Spain, relevant actions fall under key priority 2 with programmes benefiting more than 172.000 persons with disabilities.

Near-universal health coverage continues to apply in Spain after the reform, with the default insurance scheme covering residents with annual household income below EUR 100.000. Persons with disabilities under Article 12 of Law 13/1982 remain largely exempt from cost-sharing, possibly with further exemptions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-010989/12
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(3. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Variantenunabhängige Untersuchungen zum Ausbau der Donau — Überprüfung

Die Präsentation der Ergebnisse der variantenunabhängige Untersuchungen zum Ausbau der Donau bezüglich der Umweltverträglichkeit und der Wirtschaftlichkeit beim 3. Donauforum am 22.11.2012 lassen den Schluss zu, dass die Variante C 280 schön gerechnet und die Variante A nicht optimiert wurde.

1. Die Kommission hat als Antwort auf die Anfragen E-005690/2011 und E-008176/2011 versichert, sie werde die variantenunabhängige Untersuchungen zum Ausbau der Donau beobachten („versichert dem Herrn Abgeordneten, dass sie den Fall aufmerksam verfolgt.").

Welche Erkenntnisse hat die Kommission aus diesen Beobachtungen bezüglich der Unabhängigkeit und Aussagekraft der Untersuchungen gewonnen?

2. In der Antwort auf die Anfrage E-005690/2011 versicherte die Kommission, dass die Mitglieder der Monitoring-Gruppe alle Untersuchungen vorgelegt bekämen und jederzeit Gelegenheit zu Nachfragen und Anregungen hätten. („Alle Untersuchungen werden nicht nur vorgelegt, sondern mit der Monitoring-Gruppe erörtert, so dass die Mitglieder jederzeit Gelegenheit zu Nachfragen und Anregungen hatten.")

Hat die Kommission die Beschwerden der Umweltverbände zur Kenntnis genommen, dass

— den Mitgliedern wichtige Unterlagen auch auf Nachfrage nicht zugänglich gemacht wurden,

— eine Beteiligung damit oft nicht möglich war,

— von der Monitoring-Gruppe berufene Experten ihre Vorschläge noch nicht vorbringen konnten und diese Vorschläge damit nicht in die Untersuchungen einfließen?

Welche Schritte unternimmt die Kommission, um diese Mängel zu beheben?

Kann die Kommission die Unabhängigkeit der Gutachter gewährleisten?

3. Kann die Studie bezüglich ihrer Aussagekraft und Unabhängigkeit von externen Gutachtern überprüft werden?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(11. Februar 2013)

Die Kommission hat bislang weder den Abschlussbericht über die Untersuchung noch den Abschlussbericht der Monitoring-Gruppe erhalten und kann nicht endgültig Stellung beziehen, solange ihr diese beiden Berichte nicht vorliegen.

In Beantwortung der vom Herrn Abgeordneten gestellten Fragen kann die Kommission aber folgende Bemerkungen machen:

1) Die Kommission hat die Beschwerde der Umweltvertreter in der Monitoring-Gruppe an den Bürgerbeauftragen geprüft und kommt zu dem Schluss, dass die Unparteilichkeit der von RMD durchgeführten Untersuchung gewährleistet ist, und zwar erstens durch die gründliche Kontrolle seitens der Monitoring-Gruppe, die — auf Vorschlag der Kommission — mit der Kontrolle der Durchführung der Untersuchung beauftragt war, zweitens durch die Kontrolle der nationalen und regionalen Behörden, die regelmäßig Berichte erhalten, und drittens durch die besonderen Verpflichtungen, die das Unternehmen in seiner Erklärung übernommen hat.

Nach Auffassung der Kommission gibt es daher keinerlei Hinweise dafür, dass der Inhalt der Untersuchung und deren Schlussfolgerungen bereits vorab festgelegt worden sind, da RMD keinen Einfluss auf die endgültige Entscheidung hat und eine sorgfältige Prüfung ihrer Aktivitäten durch mehrere Kontrollebenen sichergestellt ist. Das hat auch der Vorsitzende der Monitoring-Gruppe, Professor Hans-Joachim Koch, bekräftigt, dessen Autorität die Umweltverbände akzeptiert und unterstützt haben.

2-3) Aus dem Entwurf des Abschlussberichts der Monitoring-Gruppe geht hervor, dass die Gruppe nicht nur umfassend über die im Rahmen der Untersuchung durchgeführten Tätigkeiten informiert wurde, sondern auch Gelegenheit hatte, Umweltexperten um eine zweite Meinung zu bitten. Die Monitoring-Gruppe wartet derzeit auf eine zusätzliche Abschätzung der Umweltfolgen, die sich aus den beiden analysierten Varianten des Projekts ergeben würden. Diese Folgenabschätzung soll bis Ende Februar 2013 — also vor Fertigstellung des Abschlussberichts — vorliegen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010989/12
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Variant-independent research into improvement of the Danube — review

The presentation given at the 3rd Danube Forum on 22 November 2012 of the results of the variant-independent research into improvement of the Danube with regard to environmental impact and economic viability suggests that variant C 280 had been assessed too favourably whereas the full potential of variant A had not been examined.

1. In reply to questions E-005690/2011 and E-008176/2011, the Commission stated that it would examine the variant-independent research into the improvement of the Danube ('reassures the Honourable Member that it is closely following the case').

What are the Commission's findings following this examination in terms of the impartiality and representative nature of the research?

2. In its reply to Question E-005690/2011, the Commission stated that the members of the Monitoring Group would have access to all investigations and be able to ask questions and submit comments at any time. ('All investigations were not only presented but discussed with the Monitoring Group, ensuring that members always had the opportunity to raise questions and make suggestions.')

Has the Commission taken account of the complaints raised by the environmental associations, which have stated that:

— important documents were not made available to members, including when requested specifically,

— participation was often not possible for that reason,

— experts called upon by the Monitoring Group have not had the opportunity to put forward their proposals, which have not therefore been incorporated into the investigations?

What action is the Commission taking to address these shortcomings?

Can the Commission guarantee the independence of the experts consulted?

3. Could the representative nature and independence of the study be reviewed by external experts?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The Commission has not yet received the final report of the study nor the final report of the Monitoring Group and cannot take a final position until these two reports will be delivered.

The Commission can however make these remarks in reply to the specific points raised by the Honourable Member.

1. The Commission has assessed the complaint that environmental representatives in the Monitoring Group filed with the Ombudsman and finds that the impartiality of the study conducted by RMD has been guaranteed, firstly, by the in-depth control exercised by the Monitoring Group in charge of controlling the development of the Study, as proposed by the Commission, secondly by the control exercised by national and regional authorities that receive periodical reports and thirdly by the specific commitment reported in the declaration issued by this undertaking.

The Commission considers that there is no evidence that the content of the study and its conclusions are already predefined as RMD has no power on the final decision and its activities are scrutinised by a multiple layer of controls. This has also been reiterated by the Chairman of the Monitoring Group, Professor Hans-Joachim Koch, whose authority was accepted and endorsed by the environmental associations.

2-3. The draft final report of the Monitoring Group asserts that the Group not only has been extensively informed about the activities of the study but has also been able to invite environmental experts for second opinions. The Monitoring Group is waiting for an additional assessment of the environmental impact implication in both of the analysed Variants of the project. This assessment is scheduled for the end of February 2013, before finalising the report.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010990/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μικροχρηματοδοτήσεις για τους ανέργους στην ΕΕ

Στις αρχές Μαρτίου 2009, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε έναν μηχανισμό μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων (κυρίως μικρά δάνεια) για να ενθαρρύνει τους ανέργους να ξεκινήσουν δική τους επιχείρηση. Τα μικρά αυτά δάνεια απευθύνονταν πρωτίστως σε άτομα που έχασαν τη δουλειά τους, ώστε να μπορέσουν να ξεκινήσουν δική τους επιχείρηση, και για να βοηθήσει τις υπάρχουσες επιχειρήσεις να επεκταθούν και αφορούσε επιχειρήσεις που απασχολούν λιγότερα από 10 άτομα, οι οποίες αντιπροσωπεύουν πάνω από το 90% των επιχειρήσεων στην ΕΕ. Οι επιχειρήσεις αυτές είχαν δικαίωμα χρηματοδότησης έως και 25 000 ευρώ η καθεμιά.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδόν τρία χρόνια μετά, ποια είναι η αξιολόγησή της για την επιτυχία του προγράμματος;

2. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το ποσό και τις θέσεις εργασίας που εξασφαλίστηκαν στην ΕΕ; Διαθέτει στοιχεία για την Ελλάδα;

3. Προβλέπεται να επεκταθεί και να ενισχυθεί περαιτέρω το συγκεκριμένο μέτρο δεδομένου ότι η οικονομική κρίση επιβαρύνει κυρίως τις μικρές επιχειρήσεις και οδηγεί στις απώλεια χιλιάδων θέσεων εργασίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Μολονότι το 2012 ήταν μόλις το δεύτερο πλήρες έτος λειτουργίας του μηχανισμού μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων Progress, το προκαταρκτικό συμπέρασμα είναι ότι η πρωτοβουλία αυτή είναι επιτυχημένη. Έως τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2012, 21 πάροχοι μικροπιστώσεων σε 15 κράτη μέλη είχαν υπογράψει συμφωνίες με το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Επενδύσεων, το οποίο υλοποιεί τον μηχανισμό μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων Progress εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής και της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων.

2. Έως το τέλος του Σεπτεμβρίου 2012, δεσμεύτηκε ποσό ύψους 81 εκατ. ευρώ μέχρι το 2014. Αναμένεται να προκύψουν μικροδάνεια όγκου άνω των 212 εκατ. ευρώ κατά τα επόμενα δύο έως τρία έτη. Στο πλαίσιο του μηχανισμού μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων Progress, είχαν ήδη καταβληθεί σε μικροεπιχειρηματίες 6 318 μικροδάνεια ύψους 48,84 εκατ. ευρώ. Περισσότερο από το 30% όσων δημιούργησαν μια νέα επιχείρηση με μικροδάνειο ήταν προηγουμένως άνεργοι, άεργοι ή σπούδαζαν. Λόγω της αβεβαιότητας στην αγορά, η εφαρμογή καθυστέρησε στην Ελλάδα και, συνεπώς, δεν είναι ακόμα διαθέσιμα ουσιαστικά στοιχεία για τον ελληνικό διαμεσολαβητή.

3. Προκειμένου να επεκταθεί η υποστήριξη μέσω μικροχρηματοδότησης μετά το 2014, η Επιτροπή έχει προτείνει ένα πρόγραμμα για την κοινωνική αλλαγή και την καινοτομία (ΠΚΑΚ) ([1]). 92,44 εκατ. ευρώ του προτεινόμενου προϋπολογισμού προορίζονται για υποστήριξη μέσω μικροχρηματοδότησης, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της χρηματοδότησης για τη δημιουργία υποδομών στα ιδρύματα μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων και ποσού ύψους 92,28 εκατ. ευρώ για υποστήριξη κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων. Το ΠΚΑΚ βρίσκεται επί του παρόντος στο στάδιο των διαπραγματεύσεων μεταξύ του Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου.

([1]) COM(2011)609 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010990/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Microfinance for the unemployed in the EU

In early March 2009, the Commission proposed a microfinance facility (mainly microcredit) to encourage the unemployed to start their own businesses. This microcredit was intended primarily for people who had lost their jobs, so as to enable them to start their own businesses and to help existing businesses to expand. It concerned businesses employing fewer than 10 people which account for over 90% of businesses in the EU. These businesses were entitled to funding of up to EUR 25 000 each.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Almost three years later, how does it assess the success of the programme?

2. Can it state what amount has been allocated and how many jobs have been secured in the EU? Does it have any data for Greece?

3. Is it planned to extend and further develop this particular measure, since it is small businesses that are bearing the brunt of the financial crisis which is causing the loss of thousands of jobs?

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

1. Although 2012 was only the second full year of operation of Progress Microfinance, the preliminary conclusion is that the initiative is a success. By September 2012, 21 microcredit providers in 15 Member States had signed agreements with the European Investment Fund that implements Progress Microfinance on behalf of the Commission and the European Investment Bank.

2. By the end of September 2012, an amount of over EUR 81 million has been committed until 2014. It is expected to generate a microloan volume of more than EUR 212 million over the coming two to three years. Under Progress Microfinance, 6 318 microloans worth EUR 48.84 million had already been disbursed to micro-entrepreneurs. More than 30% of those who created a new business with a micro-loan were previously unemployed, inactive or studying. Due to market uncertainties, implementation was delayed in Greece and thus no substantial data for the Greek intermediary is available yet.

3. In order to extend microfinance support beyond 2014, the Commission has proposed a Programme for Social Change and Innovation (PSCI) ([1]). EUR 92.44 million of the proposed budget are earmarked for microfinance support, including funding for capacity-building of microfinance institutions, and another EUR 92.28 million for social enterprise support. The PSCI is currently under negotiations between Parliament and Council.

([1]) COM(2011) 609 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010991/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Υποσιτισμός μαθητών στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που παρέδωσε το ελληνικό Υπουργείο Παιδείας, την Τρίτη 27.11.2012, εκτιμάται ότι περίπου 2 000 μαθητές στην χώρα υποσιτίζονται εξαιτίας των επιπτώσεων της οικονομικής κρίσης στην οικογένεια τους.

Καθώς τα δύο προγράμματα που διαθέτει η ΕΕ για την ενίσχυση της διατροφής στα σχολεία «φρούτα στα σχολεία» και «γάλα στα σχολεία» χρηματοδοτούνται με σχετικά μικρά κονδύλια είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή αν εξετάζει την δημιουργία ενός νέου προγράμματος διατροφής για μαθητές στα σχολεία εξαιτίας των πρωτοφανών συνεπειών της οικονομικής κρίσης; Εκτιμά ότι, εναλλακτικά, θα μπορούσαν να ενισχυθούν οι πόροι στα ήδη δύο υπάρχοντα προγράμματα, ιδίως προς τις χώρες που αντιμετωπίζουν δημοσιονομικούς περιορισμούς; Είναι δυνατή η αξιοποίηση πόρων από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για στοχευμένες δράσεις στήριξης της διατροφής μαθητών που υποσιτίζονται; Έχει η Ελλάδα αναλάβει σχετική πρωτοβουλία; Υπάρχουν σχετικά παραδείγματα από άλλα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Ελλάδα μπορεί να συμμετάσχει στην εφαρμογή του προγράμματος διανομής γάλακτος στα σχολεία και του σχεδίου προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία. Μέχρι σήμερα, έχει θέσει σε εφαρμογή μόνο το σχέδιο προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία κατά το σχολικό έτος 2010/2011, με ποσοστό απορρόφησης 57% του κονδυλίου ύψους 1 861 300 που έχει διατεθεί για τον σκοπό αυτόν από την ΕΕ.

Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος διανομής γάλακτος στα σχολεία, η ενίσχυση για το γάλα καθορίζεται σε 18,15 ευρώ ανά 100 kg για 0,25 λίτρα ισοδυνάμου γάλακτος, κατ' ανώτατο όριο, ανά μαθητή ημερησίως. Υπάρχει επίσης δυνατότητα συμπληρωματικών εθνικών ενισχύσεων, αλλά η χορήγησή τους είναι προαιρετική. Για την εφαρμογή του σχεδίου προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία προβλέπεται ετήσιος προϋπολογισμός 90 εκατ. ευρώ και υποχρεωτική εθνική συγχρηματοδότηση (41% για την Ελλάδα).

Στο πλαίσιο των προτάσεων για τη μεταρρύθμιση της ΚΓΠ του 2020, η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη προτείνει να αυξηθεί ο προϋπολογισμός του σχεδίου προώθησης της κατανάλωσης φρούτων στα σχολεία σε 150 εκατ. ευρώ, να αυξηθούν τα ποσοστά συγχρηματοδότησης από την ΕΕ σε 75% ή 90% για ορισμένες περιοχές, και να καταστούν τα συνοδευτικά μέτρα επιλέξιμα για συγχρηματοδότηση από την ΕΕ. Όσον αφορά το πρόγραμμα διανομής γάλακτος στα σχολεία, προτείνεται η χάραξη από τα συμμετέχοντα κράτη μέλη στρατηγικής για την καλύτερη στόχευση της εφαρμογής του προγράμματος.

Πέραν τούτου, η Επιτροπή ξεκίνησε την εκπόνηση μελέτης εκτίμησης αντικτύπου με στόχο την ανάλυση των υφιστάμενων προγραμμάτων για τα σχολεία και θα εξετάσει τον τρόπο με τον οποίο θα πρέπει να εξελιχθούν τα εν λόγω προγράμματα στο μέλλον.

Παρότι δεν προορίζεται ειδικά για τα παιδιά, το ευρωπαϊκό πρόγραμμα επισιτιστικής βοήθειας για τους απόρους θα μπορούσε να συμβάλει στην αντιμετώπιση των υποσιτισμού των παιδιών στην Ελλάδα, αν υπάρξει κατάλληλη πρόβλεψη από τις εθνικές αρχές. Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε πρόσφατα το σχέδιο διανομής τροφίμων για το 2013 ([1]), με χρηματοδότηση ύψους άνω των 22 εκατ. ευρώ για την Ελλάδα.

Η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε επίσης τον περασμένο Οκτώβριο πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με τη σύσταση Ταμείου Ευρωπαϊκής Βοήθειας προς τους Απόρους για την περίοδο 2014-2020. Στο πλαίσιο του εν λόγω ταμείου, τα κράτη μέλη θα μπορούν να συνεχίσουν να στηρίζουν τη διανομή τροφίμων, αλλά επίσης, αν το επιθυμούν, και άλλων βασικών αγαθών σε παιδιά που υποφέρουν από υλική στέρηση.

([1]) Εκτελεστικός κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1020/2012, της 6ης Νοεμβρίου 2012, ΕΕ L 307.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010991/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Malnutrition among pupils in Greece

According to data published by the Greek Ministry of Education on Tuesday, 27.11.2012, an estimated 2 000 pupils in the country are suffering from malnutrition due to the impact of financial crisis on their families.

As the two EU programmes to improve nutrition in schools, the 'School Fruit Scheme' and the 'School Milk Scheme', are relatively underfunded, will the Commission say whether it is considering establishing a new nutrition programme for pupils in schools because of the unprecedented impact of the financial crisis ? Alternatively, does it consider that funding could be increased for the two existing programmes, particularly in countries facing fiscal constraints? Is it possible to use resources from the European Social Fund for targeted actions to improve the diets of pupils suffering from malnutrition? Has Greece taken an initiative in this connection? Are there examples of other Member States doing so?

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

Greece can take part in the School Milk (SMS) and School Fruit Scheme (SFS). So far it only implemented the SFS in the school year 2010/2011 with a 57% uptake of its EUR 1.861.300 EU allocation.

Under SMS the aid for milk is fixed at EUR 18.15 per 100 kg for the maximum of 0.25 litre of milk equivalent per pupil per school day. National top-ups are possible but voluntary. The SFS operates within the annual budget of EUR 90 million and obligatory national co-financing (41% for Greece).

In the CAP 2020 reform proposals, the Commission has already proposed to raise the SFS budget to EUR 150 million, to increase the rates of EU co-financing to 75% or 90% for certain regions, and to make accompanying measures eligible for EU co-financing. For SMS it is proposed that participating Member States should draw up a strategy to help focus the implementation of the scheme.

Beyond that, the Commission has launched an impact assessment to analyse the existing School Schemes and examine how they should develop in the future.

Although not specifically targeting children, the European Food Aid programme for the Most Deprived persons could contribute tackling child malnutrition in Greece, if so provided by the national authorities. The Commission has recently adopted the food distribution plan for 2013 ([1]), with an allocation of over EUR 22 million for Greece.

The Commission has also adopted last October a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on a Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived for the period 2014-2020. Under this Fund, the Member States would be able to continue supporting food assistance but also, if they so wish other basic goods to materially deprived children.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation 1020/2012, of 6 November 2012, OJ L 307.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010992/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αξιοποίηση πόρων για την έρευνα αιχμής στην ΕΕ

Στις 19 Ιουλίου 2011 η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε ανακοίνωση για την υποβολή ερευνητικών προτάσεων που εστιάζουν στην καινοτομία και την εμπορική αξιοποίηση των καλών ιδεών. Το συνολικό κονδύλι ανήλθε σε 7 δισ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος 2007-2013 για τη χρηματοδότηση της έρευνας, συνολικού ύψους 53 δισ. ευρώ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για την αποτελεσματικότητα της συγκεκριμένης ανακοίνωσης; Πόσοι πόροι από τα συνολικά 7 δις ευρώ αξιοποιήθηκαν εν τέλει;

2. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το ύψος του ποσού επιχορήγησης ελληνικών πρωτοβουλιών και καινοτόμων ιδεών;

3. Καθώς στόχος της ήταν η αύξηση των δαπανών για την έρευνα στην ΕΕ στο 3% του ΑΕΠ, εκτιμά ότι οι προτάσεις για τον νέο προϋπολογισμό (2014-2020) ανταποκρίνονται σε αυτόν τον στόχο;

Απάντηση της κ. Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

1. Στις 19 Ιουλίου 2011 η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε δελτίο Τύπου σχετικά με την παρουσίαση του προγράμματος εργασίας για το 2012 στο πλαίσιο του έβδομου προγράμματος-πλαισίου της ΕΕ για την έρευνα και την τεχνολογική ανάπτυξη (ΠΠ7, 2007-2013), στο οποίο όντως δόθηκε μεγάλη έμφαση στην καινοτομία και την αντιμετώπιση σημαντικών κοινωνικών προκλήσεων για τη γεφύρωση του χάσματος μεταξύ έρευνας και αγοράς.

Με μεγάλο αριθμό συμφωνιών επιχορήγησης ακόμη υπό επεξεργασία, είναι πολύ νωρίς για την Επιτροπή να υποβάλει έκθεση για την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος εργασίας ή παρατηρήσεις για την αποτελεσματικότητά του.

Η εκ των υστέρων έκθεση αξιολόγησης του ΠΠ7, η οποία έχει προγραμματιστεί να ολοκληρωθεί το 2015, θα παράσχει πλήρη εικόνα της υλοποίησης του προγράμματος και των επιτευγμάτων σε σχέση με τους στόχους που τέθηκαν αρχικά.

2. Για τους προαναφερόμενους λόγους, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να αναφέρει το ποσό της συνεισφοράς της ΕΕ που χορηγήθηκε σε Έλληνες δικαιούχους επιχορήγησης στο πλαίσιο του ΠΠ7 από τον προϋπολογισμό του προγράμματος εργασίας για το 2012.

Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αναφέρει ότι κατά την περίοδο από τον Ιανουάριο του 2007 έως τον Νοέμβριο του 2012, συνολικό ποσό ύψους 719,5 εκατ. ευρώ από τη συνεισφορά της ΕΕ διατέθηκε για ελληνικές οργανώσεις που συμμετείχαν σε ερευνητικές δραστηριότητες χρηματοδοτούμενες στο πλαίσιο του ΠΠ7.

3. Ο στόχος του 3% εφαρμόζεται σε ολόκληρη την ΕΕ. Οι προσπάθειες, συνεπώς, εστιάζονται πρωτίστως στο επίπεδο της χρηματοδότησης της έρευνας και της καινοτομίας στα κράτη μέλη.

Ωστόσο, το πρόγραμμα-πλαίσιο «Ορίζοντας 2020» θα διαδραματίσει επίσης σημαντικό ρόλο, ιδίως μέσω της μόχλευσης ή του συγκεντρωτικού αποτελέσματος στις ιδιωτικές επενδύσεις στον τομέα της έρευνας και της ανάπτυξης (βλ. ιδίως, την εκτίμηση επιπτώσεων της πρότασης «Ορίζοντας 2020» ([1]) και την πρόσφατη έρευνα ([2]) σε κορυφαίες επιχειρήσεις της ΕΕ).

([1]) SEC(2011)1427 τελικό. http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/proposals/horizon_2020_impact_assessment_report.pdf.
([2]) 2012 «Έρευνα της ΕΕ για τις τάσεις των επιχειρηματικών επενδύσεων στην Ε&Α», διατίθεται στη διεύθυνση: http://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/research/docs/survey/2012/Survey2012.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010992/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Use of funds for cutting-edge research in the EU

On 19 July 2011, the Commission published a communication on submitting research proposals that focus on innovation and the commercial exploitation of promising ideas. The total allocation amounted to EUR 7 billion under the 2007-2013 research funding programme, which has a total budget of EUR 53 billion.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Can it provide information on the effectiveness of this communication? How much of the total of EUR 7 billion has finally been used?

2. Can it say how much was allocated in grants to Greek initiatives and innovative ideas?

3. As the aim was to raise research spending in the EU to 3% of GDP, does it consider that the new budget proposals (2014-2020) will meet this target?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

1. On 19 July 2011, the Commission issued a press release presenting the Work Programme for 2012 under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) in which indeed a strong focus was put on innovation and tackling key societal challenges to bridge the gap between research and the market.

With a large number of grant agreements still under preparation, it is too early for the Commission to report on the Work Programme's implementation or comment on its effectiveness.

The *ex-post* FP7 evaluation report scheduled to be concluded in 2015 will provide a compehensive account of the programme's implementation and achievements against the objectives initially set.

2. For the reason cited above, the Commission is not in position to report on the amount of EU contribution awarded to Greek FP7 grant holders out of the budget of the 2012 Work Programme.

However, the Commision can report that during the period from January 2007 to November 2012, a total of EUR 719,5 million of EU contribution has been earmarked for Greek organisations participating in research activities funded under FP7.

3. The 3% target applies to the EU as a whole. The main focus is therefore at the level of R&I funding in the Member States.

However, Horizon 2020 will also play a key role, in particular through a leveraging or crowding-in effect on private Research and Development investments (see in particular, the impact assessment of the Horizon 2020 proposal ([1]) and the recent survey ([2]) of top EU firms).

([1]) SEC(2011)1427 final: http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/proposals/horizon_2020_impact_assessment_report.pdf
([2]) 2012 'EU Survey on R & D Investment Business Trends' available at: http://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/research/docs/survey/2012/Survey2012.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010993/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διευκρινίσεις για την επαναγορά χρέους από την Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τις αποφάσεις της ευρωομάδας την Δευτέρα 26.11.2012, προβλέπεται η προσπάθεια μείωσης του ελληνικού χρέους μέσω της επαναγοράς ορισμένου μέρους του.

Καθώς στο επίσημο κείμενο δεν περιγράφονται λεπτομέρειες, είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει η Επιτροπή στοιχεία για το πώς θα πραγματοποιηθεί η συγκεκριμένη διαδικασία; Σημειώνεται ότι η επιτυχία του μέτρου συνδέθηκε από το ΔΝΤ με την περαιτέρω στάση του και επομένως η διαδικασία που θα ακολουθηθεί αποκτά μεγαλύτερη σημασία.

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή καλεί το αξιότιμο μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου να συμβουλευτεί το κεφάλαιο 4 της πρόσφατης έκθεσης συμμόρφωσης, στην οποία παρουσιάζονται τα αποτελέσματα της πρώτης αξιολόγησης του δεύτερου προγράμματος προσαρμογής ([1]), στην οποία εξετάζεται ειδικότερα η ανάλυση της βιωσιμότητας του ελληνικού δημοσίου χρέους, και επεξηγούνται οι επιπτώσεις των πράξεων επαναγοράς του χρέους για τη χρηματοδότηση του προγράμματος και τη βιωσιμότητα του χρέους. Περισσότερες πληροφορίες είναι διαθέσιμες στο δικτυακό τόπο του Οργανισμού Διαχείρισης Δημοσίου Χρέους ([2]).

([1]) Το Δεύτερο Πρόγραμμα Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα — Πρώτη Αξιολόγηση Δεκέμβριος 2012 (Ευρωπαϊκή Οικονομία. Occasional Papers. 123. Δεκέμβριος 2012. Βρυξέλλες. Έντυπο και διαδίκτυο. 279 σ. Πίνακες. Διαγράμματα. Συνημμένα Παραρτήματα.) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm

([2]) http://www.pdma.gr/index.php/en/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010993/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Clarifications concerning the Greek debt buyback

Meeting on Monday 26.11.2012, the Eurogroup decided, *inter alia*, to attempt to reduce Greece's debt through partial buyback.

Since the official text does not go into detail, can the Commission provide information on how this procedure will go ahead? It should be borne in mind that the IMF has stated that its future position would depend on the success of the debt buyback, which gives it added significance.

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

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult Chapter 4 of the recent Compliance Report, which presents the results of the first review of the Second Adjustment Programme ([1]), dealing in particular with the analysis of sustainability of the Greek Government debt, and illustrating the impact of the debt-buy-back operation on financing of the programme and debt sustainability. More details can be found on the website of the Greek Debt Management Agency ([2]).

([1]) The Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece — First Review December 2012 (European Economy. Occasional Papers. 123. December 2012. Brussels. Paper and Internet. 279pp. Tab. Graph. Ann.)
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/op123_en.htm

([2]) http://www.pdma.gr/index.php/en/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010994/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκό δίπλωμα ευρεσιτεχνίας για την ενίσχυση της έρευνας και της καινοτομίας

Τον Απρίλιο του 2011, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε την καθιέρωση ενιαίου ευρωπαϊκού διπλώματος ώστε η διαδικασία απόκτησης διπλώματος ευρεσιτεχνίας να σταματήσει να είναι πολύπλοκη και δαπανηρή καθώς, εκτός από τις διοικητικές διατυπώσεις, η διαδικασία αυτή συνεπάγεται και σημαντικά έξοδα για μεταφράσεις. Έτσι, για να προστατεύσει την εφεύρεσή της σε όλη την Ένωση, μια επιχείρηση πρέπει να ξοδέψει έως και 32 000 ευρώ, έναντι 1 850 ευρώ που απαιτούνται κατά μέσο όρο στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαπιστώνει πρόοδο στην υιοθέτηση του ευρωπαϊκού διπλώματος ευρεσιτεχνίας και στην μείωση του διοικητικού κόστους και του κόστους μετάφρασης για την απόκτηση του;

2. Συλλέγει στοιχεία για το πόσο δαπανηρή είναι στα κράτη μέλη και στις επιχειρήσεις που δραστηριοποιούνται σε αυτά η συγκεκριμένη διαδικασία; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας σε σύγκριση σε σχέση με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Μετά τον πολιτικό συμβιβασμό που επετεύχθη μεταξύ του Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, εγκρίθηκαν τελικά στις 17 Δεκεμβρίου 2012 οι κανονιστικές ρυθμίσεις για τη θέσπιση ενισχυμένης συνεργασίας στον τομέα της δημιουργίας ενιαίου καθεστώτος προστασίας των ευρεσιτεχνιών, καθώς και ο κανονισμός του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση ενισχυμένης συνεργασίας στον τομέα της δημιουργίας ενιαίου καθεστώτος προστασίας των ευρεσιτεχνιών σε σχέση με τις εφαρμοστέες μεταφραστικές ρυθμίσεις. Θα τεθούν σε ισχύ την εικοστή ημέρα μετά την ημέρα της δημοσίευσής τους. Ωστόσο, θα εφαρμοστούν από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2014 ή από την ημερομηνία έναρξης ισχύος της συμφωνίας για την ίδρυση του Ενιαίου Δικαστηρίου Διπλωμάτων Ευρεσιτεχνίας, αναλόγως του ποια από τις ημερομηνίες αυτές είναι η τελευταία. Βάσει των εν λόγω κανονισμών (και υπό την προϋπόθεση ότι και τα 25 κράτη μέλη έχουν κυρώσει τη συμφωνία για την ίδρυση ενιαίου δικαστηρίου διπλωμάτων ευρεσιτεχνίας), αναμένεται ότι οι εφευρέτες θα έχουν τη δυνατότητα να εξασφαλίσουν ενιαία προστασία των διπλωμάτων ευρεσιτεχνίας στα 25 κράτη μέλη για ποσό μικρότερο των 5 000 ευρώ (κατά τη μεταβατική περίοδο για ποσό περίπου 6 500 ευρώ). Τούτο συνιστά σημαντική μείωση του κόστους από την οποία θα επωφεληθούν ιδίως οι ΜΜΕ (σημερινό κόστος περίπου 32 000 ευρώ).

2. Για τα «παραδοσιακά» ευρωπαϊκά διπλώματα ευρεσιτεχνίας η κατάσταση δεν έχει μεταβληθεί. Το κόστος απόκτησης «παραδοσιακών» ευρωπαϊκών διπλωμάτων ευρεσιτεχνίας τα οποία χρειάζεται να επικυρωθούν στα κράτη μέλη περιλαμβάνει ειδικότερα το κόστος των μεταφράσεων, τις αμοιβές των συμβούλων σε θέματα διπλωμάτων ευρεσιτεχνίας και τα έξοδα δημοσίευσης. Πληροφορίες για την κατάσταση στα κράτη μέλη, μεταξύ άλλων και στην Ελλάδα, διατίθενται στο έγγραφο National law relating to the EPC (Εθνικές νομοθεσίες σχετικά με τη Σύμβαση για το Ευρωπαϊκό Δίπλωμα Ευρεσιτεχνίας (ΣΕΔΕ)) που εξέδωσε το ΕΓΔΕ ([1]).

([1]) 15η έκδοση, http://www.epo.org/law-practice/legal-texts/national-law.html.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010994/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Adoption of a European patent to strengthen research and innovation

In April 2011, the Commission proposed the introduction of a single European patent in order to make the procedure for obtaining a patent less complicated and expensive because at present it involves significant translation costs in addition to administrative formalities. In order therefore to protect an invention throughout the Union, an enterprise in the European Union has to spend up to EUR 32 000, compared to an average of EUR 1 850 in the United States.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it noted any progress in the introduction of the European patent and in reducing administrative and translation costs for obtaining a patent?

2. Is it gathering data about how expensive this procedure is in the Member States and for enterprises in these countries? What is the situation in Greece compared to the other Member States?

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

1. After a political compromise has been found between the Parliament and the Council, the regulations implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection as well as the Council Regulation implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection with regard to the applicable translation arrangements have been finally adopted on 17 December 2012. They will enter into force on the twentieth day following that of their publication. They will however only apply from 1 January 2014 or the date of entry into force of the agreement on the Unified Patent Court, whichever is the later. On the basis of these regulations (and provided all 25 Member States have ratified the agreement on the Unified Patent Court), it is expected that inventors will have the possibility to obtain unitary patent protection for 25 Member States for less than EUR 5 000 (in the transitional period for about EUR 6 500). This constitutes a considerable reduction of cost which will in particular benefit SMEs (cost today about EUR 32 000).

2. For 'classical' European patents, the situation has not changed. The cost to obtain 'classical' European patents which need to be validated in the individual Member States comprise in particular cost for translations, fees charged by patent agents and charges for publication. Information on the situation in the individual Member States, including Greece, can be found in the publication 'National law relating to the EPC' published by the EPO ([1]).

([1]) 15th edition, http://www.epo.org/law-practice/legal-texts/national-law.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010995/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προστασία των θυμάτων σωματεμπορίας και σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης

Στις 29.3.2010, η Επιτροπή ζήτησε από τα κράτη μέλη αυστηρότερο νομοθετικό πλαίσιο κατά της σωματεμπορίας και της σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης παιδιών, υποστηρίζοντας ότι η Ευρώπη χάνει τη μάχη κατά των εγκλημάτων αυτών. Σύμφωνα με τα τότε στοιχεία της Επιτροπής, το 2006, 1 500 υποθέσεις σωματεμπορίας έφθασαν στα δικαστήρια σε όλη την ΕΕ, ενώ δόθηκε βοήθεια μόνο σε 3 000 θύματα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ανταποκρίθηκαν τα κράτη μέλη στην ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής του 2010; Παρατηρείται βελτίωση του νομοθετικού πλαισίου;

2. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το αν φθάνουν περισσότερες υποθέσεις για τα θέματα αυτά στα εθνικά δικαστήρια στην ΕΕ και, ιδίως αν παρέχεται βοήθεια αμεσότερα και αποτελεσματικότερα σε περισσότερες περιπτώσεις σε σχέση με το παρελθόν;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Από το 2010, εκδόθηκαν από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο δύο οδηγίες για την καταπολέμηση της σεξουαλικής κακοποίησης και της σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης παιδιών ([1]) και την πρόληψη και την καταπολέμηση της εμπορίας ανθρώπων ([2]). Η πρώτη οδηγία ζητά από τα κράτη μέλη να προσεγγίσουν τις νομοθεσίες τους σε ένα πλήρες φάσμα αξιόποινων πράξεων και να θεσπίσουν κοινά πρότυπα σχετικά με τις κυρώσεις, τις έρευνες και τις διώξεις αξιόποινων πράξεων, καθώς και την υποστήριξη και προστασία των θυμάτων. Η δεύτερη, μετά την πλήρη μεταφορά της στα κράτη μέλη, που προβλέπεται για την 6η Απριλίου 2013, αναμένεται να έχει σημαντική επίδραση στην υποστήριξη και προστασία των θυμάτων σωματεμπορίας πριν, κατά τη διάρκεια και, για κατάλληλο χρονικό διάστημα, μετά τις ποινικές διαδικασίες. Η προσέγγιση της εν λόγω οδηγίας έχει ως επίκεντρο τα θύματα, καθώς και την ισότητα των φύλων, για να καλύψει τη δράση σε διάφορους τομείς, όπως στη θέσπιση διατάξεων ποινικού δικαίου, τη δίωξη των δραστών, την υποστήριξη των θυμάτων και των δικαιωμάτων των θυμάτων στο πλαίσιο ποινικών διαδικασιών και την πρόληψη. Η Επιτροπή θα υποβάλει έκθεση το 2015 σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της.

Ο εντοπισμός, η προστασία και η συνδρομή των θυμάτων εμπορίας αποτελεί επίσης μια βασική προτεραιότητα που εντοπίστηκε στη στρατηγική της ΕΕ για την εξάλειψη της εμπορίας ανθρώπων ([3]), που εκδόθηκε από την Επιτροπή τον Ιούνιο του 2012.

([1]) Οδηγία 2011/92/ΕΕ σχετικά με την καταπολέμηση της σεξουαλικής κακοποίησης και της σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης παιδιών και της παιδικής πορνογραφίας και την αποκατάσταση της απόφασης-πλαίσιο 2004/68/ΔΕΥ.

([2]) Οδηγία 2011/36/ΕΕ για την πρόληψη και την καταπολέμηση της εμπορίας ανθρώπων και για την προστασία των θυμάτων της, καθώς και για την αντικατάσταση της απόφασης-πλαίσιο 2002/629/ΔΕΥ του Συμβουλίου.

([3]) Η στρατηγική της ΕΕ για την εξάλειψη της εμπορίας ανθρώπων 2012-2016 COM(2012)286 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010995/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Protection of victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation

On 29.3.2010, the Commission asked Member States for a stricter legislative framework to address the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, arguing that Europe was losing its fight against these crimes. According to Commission data at the time, in 2006 1 500 cases of human trafficking reached courts in the whole of the EU, while only 3 000 victims received assistance.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Did Member States respond to the Commission's 2010 Communication? Has there been any improvement in the legislative framework?

2. Does it have any information on whether more cases involving these issues are reaching national courts in the EU? In particular, is assistance being provided more directly and efficiently in more cases compared with the past?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

Since 2010, directives on combatting the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children ([1]) and on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings ([2]) have been adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. The first requires Member States to approximate their legislation on a comprehensive list of offences and adopt common standards on penalties, investigations and prosecutions of the offenses, support and protection of victims. The second is expected to have a considerable impact on protecting and supporting victims of trafficking in human beings before, during and, for an appropriate time, after criminal proceedings once it is fully transposed by the Member States, which should happen by 6 April 2013. It takes a victim centered approach, including a gender perspective, to cover action in different areas such as criminal law provisions, prosecution of offenders, victim support and victims' rights in criminal proceedings and prevention. The Commission will submit a report in 2015 on its implementation.

Identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking is also a key priorities identified in the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings ([3]), adopted by the Commission is June 2012.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA.

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

([3]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012)286 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010996/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιστροφές κονδυλίων από το Πρόγραμμα Δια Βίου Μάθησης στα ταμεία της ΕΕ λόγω μη αξιοποίησής τους

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή για το ύψος των κοινοτικών κονδυλίων που επιστράφηκαν το 2011 στην ΕΕ από έργα που η Ελλάδα δεν αξιοποίησε στο πλαίσιο του Προγράμματος Παιδεία και Δια Βίου Μάθηση; Αξιοποιούνται αυτά τα κονδύλια κατά το τρέχον έτος; Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή στοιχεία για το 2012;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Η ερώτηση του κ. βουλευτή αναφέρεται στις αποκεντρωμένες δράσεις του Προγράμματος Διά Βίου Μάθησης που εφαρμόζονται από ένα δίκτυο εθνικών υπηρεσιών, οι οποίες λειτουργούν σε όλες τις χώρες που συμμετέχουν στο πρόγραμμα. Η διαχείριση των κονδυλίων για τις αποκεντρωμένες δράσεις πραγματοποιείται μέσω των ετήσιων συμφωνιών που έχουν συνάψει η Επιτροπή και η αντίστοιχη εθνική υπηρεσία και δαπανώνται σύμφωνα με το καθορισμένο χρονοδιάγραμμα.

Όσον αφορά την ελληνική εθνική υπηρεσία, τα τελικά στοιχεία είναι διαθέσιμα μόνο για το 2007, καθώς οι επακόλουθες συμφωνίες βρίσκονται ακόμα υπό συζήτηση. Όσον αφορά την συμφωνία του 2007, 3 330 εκατομμύρια ευρώ (δηλαδή, το 18,7% της συνολικής συνεισφοράς της ΕΕ από τα 17 784 εκατομμύρια ευρώ τα οποία έλαβε η εθνική υπηρεσία το 2007) δεν δαπανήθηκαν και συνεπώς, ανακτήθηκαν από την Επιτροπή τον Ιανουάριο του 2012. Το εν λόγω ποσό θα χρησιμοποιηθεί για το Πρόγραμμα Διά Βίου Μάθησης το 2013.

Είναι λογικό ένα μικρό ποσοστό των κονδυλίων να μην έχει δαπανηθεί, π.χ. είτε επειδή μερικοί από τους δικαιούχους δεν έχουν δαπανήσει το συνολικό ποσό ή επειδή ακυρώθηκαν μερικές από τις συμβάσεις με τους δικαιούχους.

Στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, η υποαπορρόφηση το 2007 είχε ως πρωταρχικές αιτίες τις διαμαρτυρίες των φοιτητών και την κατάληψη των Πανεπιστημίων, με αποτέλεσμα να ακυρωθούν πολλές υποτροφίες Erasmus. Η ελληνική εθνική υπηρεσία έλαβε κάποια μέτρα με σκοπό να αυξήσει την κινητικότητα των φοιτητών τα επόμενα χρόνια, σημειώνοντας ιδιαίτερη επιτυχία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010996/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Restitution of appropriations from the Lifelong Learning Programme to EU funds owing to non-use

Will the Commission state the amount of Community funds returned to the EU in 2011 from projects that Greece failed to carry out under the Lifelong Learning Programme? Are these funds being used this year? Does the Commission have any figures for 2012?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The question of the Honourable Member refers to the decentralised actions of the Lifelong Learning Programme which are implemented by a network of National Agencies operating in all countries participating in the programme. Funds for the decentralised actions are managed through annual agreements concluded between the Commission and the respective National Agency and are spent according to an agreed timetable.

As concerns the Hellenic National Agency, final data are available only for 2007, as the subsequent agreements are still open. For the 2007 agreement, EUR 3,330 million (that is 18.7% of the total EU contribution of EUR 17,784 million received by the National Agency in 2007) were not spent and thus recovered by the Commission in January 2012. This recovery will be used for the Lifelong Learning Programme in 2013.

It is normal that a small percentage of funds remains unspent, e.g. because not all beneficiaries spend their grant in full or some contracts with beneficiaries are cancelled.

In the case of Greece, the under-spending in 2007 was primarily caused by student protests and the occupation of Universities which resulted in the cancellation of many Erasmus grants. The Hellenic National Agency took steps to increase student mobility in the following years, with considerable success.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-010997/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στήριξη ερευνητών μέσω του προγράμματος Marie Curie

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή είχε θέσει ως στόχο την στήριξη περίπου 10 000 ερευνητών από το πρόγραμμα Marie Curie για το τρέχον πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο. Παράλληλα χρηματοδότησε ένα πιλοτικό έργο για την τόνωση της επιχειρηματικότητας και της συνεργασίας μεταξύ πανεπιστημίων, ερευνητικών ιδρυμάτων και ιδιωτικών επιχειρήσεων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Επιτυγχάνεται ο στόχος στήριξης 10 000 ερευνητών; Ποιος είναι ο νέος στόχος που θέτει η Επιτροπή για την περίοδο 2014-2020;

2. Συλλέγει στοιχεία για τον αριθμό των προγραμμάτων που ενισχύονται από κάθε κράτος μέλος; Ποια είναι η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας; Είναι ικανοποιητικός ο αριθμός αυτός σε σχέση με τον αριθμό επιχορήγησης που παρατηρείται στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση της κ. Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

1. Είναι σημαντικό να διευκρινιστεί ότι ο στόχος που αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής αφορά περίπου 10 000 υποψήφιους διδάκτορες τους οποίους θα υποστηρίξει το πρόγραμμα «Δράσεις Marie Skłodowska-Curie» την περίοδο μεταξύ 2007 και 2013. Μέχρι σήμερα έχουν προσληφθεί περίπου 5 000 νέοι ερευνητές από τα 200 δίκτυα αρχικής κατάρτισης που έχουν υποβάλει ενδιάμεση έκθεση (μετά δύο έτη) ή τελική έκθεση (μετά τέσσερα έτη). Η Επιτροπή είναι πεπεισμένη ότι ο προαναφερόμενος στόχος θα επιτευχθεί, επειδή οι προσλήψεις είναι σε εξέλιξη σε 406 υπάρχοντα δίκτυα αρχικής κατάρτισης. Επιπλέον, θα υπάρξουν νέα δίκτυα αρχικής κατάρτισης, αρχής γενομένης από το 2013.

Αν ο προϋπολογισμός για το πρόγραμμα «Δράσεις Marie Skłodowska-Curie» παραμείνει έτσι όπως αναφέρεται στην πρόταση της Επιτροπής ([1]), θα μπορούσαν να υποστηριχτούν περίπου 25 000 υποψήφιοι διδάκτορες. Τυχόν αλλαγές στον προϋπολογισμό του προγράμματος θα επηρεάσουν τον αριθμό αυτό.

2. Από το 2007 και μετά, ελληνικές οργανώσεις έχουν πάρει μέρος 320 φορές στο πρόγραμμα «Δράσεις Marie Skłodowska-Curie», εξασφαλίζοντας χρηματοδότηση ύψους 60,2 εκατ. ευρώ. Ο αριθμός των συμμετοχών είναι ο 9ος υψηλότερος μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ.

([1]) Πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση του προγράμματος πλαισίου για την έρευνα και την καινοτομία «Ορίζοντας 2020» (2014-2020), COM(2011) 809 τελικό της 30.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010997/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Supporting researchers through the Marie Curie programme

The Commission had set a target of about 10 000 researchers to be supported by the Marie Curie programme for the current multiannual financial framework. At the same time, it funded a pilot project to stimulate entrepreneurship and cooperation between universities, research institutes and private enterprises.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Will it achieve the target of supporting 10 000 researchers? What is the new target set by the Commission for the period 2014-2020?

2. Is it gathering data on the number of programmes supported by each Member State? What is the situation in Greece? Is the number in Greece satisfactory compared to the number receiving grants in the other Member States?

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

1. It is important to clarify that the target mentioned by the Honourable Member is for about 10 000 doctoral candidates to be supported by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions between 2007 and 2013. So far nearly 5 000 early-stage researchers have been recruited by the 200 Initial Training Networks that have submitted a mid-term report (after two years) or final report (after four years). The Commission is confident that the aforementioned target will be met, because recruitment is ongoing in 406 current Initial Training Networks. In addition, there will be new Initial Training Networks starting in 2013.

Assuming that the budget for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions remains as stated in the Commission Proposal ([1]), around 25 000 doctoral candidates would be likely to be supported. Any change made to the budget of the programme would affect this figure.

2. Since 2007, Greek organisations have participated on 320 occasions in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, obtaining financing of 60.2 million EUR. This number of participations is the 9th highest among the EU Member States.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council Establishing Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), COM(2011) 809 final of 30.11.2011.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-010998/12
adresată Comisiei
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE)
(3 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Aspecte privitoare la siguranța pacienților, legate de prepararea medicamentelor

Există rapoarte recente cu privire la 32 de decese în urma unei epidemii de 461 de cazuri de meningită din Statele Unite, provocate de injecții cu acetat de metil-prednisolon contaminat. Steroidul a fost preparat de o farmacie în care Agenția pentru Alimente și Medicamente a SUA a identificat condiții neigienice.

Practica de preparare a medicamentelor în farmacii introduce potențialul unor erori, din cauza unor tehnici de manipulare necorespunzătoare sau inadecvate. Manipularea medicamentelor crește riscul de contaminare microbiană sau chimică.

A evaluat Comisia riscurile de contaminare și infecție care rezultă din prepararea medicamentelor în Uniunea Europeană?

De ce date dispune Comisia cu privire la infecțiile din UE provocate de practica preparării?

Va include Comisia orientări pentru a garanta cele mai înalte standarde de siguranță a produselor și a pacienților și a practicii medicale în orientările rezultate din punerea în aplicare a Recomandării Consiliului (2009/C 151/01) privind siguranța pacienților, inclusiv prevenirea și controlul infecțiilor asociate asistenței medicale?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(22 ianuarie 2013)

Legislația farmaceutică a Uniunii Europene ([1]) impune norme foarte stricte pentru fabricarea de medicamente la scară industrială. Aceste norme includ deținerea unei autorizații de fabricație. O astfel de autorizație este acordată după o inspecție a sediilor, pentru a verifica bunele practici de fabricație. Obiectivul este tocmai acela de a preveni orice contaminare a medicamentelor. Comisia a publicat deja numeroase ghiduri privind bunele practici de fabricație care vizează medicamentele.

În plus, toate medicamentele se introduc pe piață după o evaluare minuțioasă a calității, siguranței și eficacității lor. O autorizație de introducere pe piață pentru un medicament este acordată doar după constatarea unui raport pozitiv între beneficiile și riscurile utilizării acestuia.

Prin contrast, medicamentele preparate într-o farmacie conform instrucțiunilor dintr-o rețetă medicală prescrisă unui anumit pacient (formulări magistrale) și medicamentele preparate într-o farmacie în conformitate cu instrucțiunile dintr-o farmacopee și destinate eliberării directe către pacienții deserviți de farmacia în cauză (formulări oficinale) nu fac obiectul legislației Uniunii. Normele în vigoare pentru farmaciile individuale care prepară aceste medicamente sunt stabilite și controlate de către autoritățile competente din statele membre.

Din aceste motive, Comisia nu dispune de informații privind riscurile de contaminare și infecție rezultate din preparare, adică crearea unui anumit medicament pentru necesitățile unice ale unui pacient. Comisia nu a evaluat aceste riscuri și nu are în vedere elaborarea de ghiduri suplimentare.

([1]) Directiva 2001/83/CE de instituire a unui cod comunitar cu privire la medicamentele de uz uman, JO L 311, 28.11.2001, astfel cum a fost modificată.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010998/12
to the Commission
Cristian Silviu Buşoi (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Patient safety aspects relating to the compounding of medicines

There are recent reports of 32 deaths from an outbreak of 461 cases of meningitis in the United States, caused by injections of contaminated methylprednisolone acetate. The steroid was prepared in a compounding pharmacy where the US Food and Drug Administration has identified unhygienic conditions.

The practice of compounding medicines in pharmacies introduces the potential for error due to improper or inadequate handling procedures. The handling of drugs increases the risk of microbial or chemical contamination.

Has the Commission assessed the risks of contamination and infection resulting from the compounding of medicines in the European Union?

What data does the Commission have on infection in the EU arising from the practice of compounding?

Will the Commission include guidelines on ensuring the highest standards of product and patient safety and medical practice in guidelines arising from the implementation of the Council Recommendation (2009/C 151/01) on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections?

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

The European Union pharmaceutical legislation ([1]) imposes very strict rules for the manufacture of medicinal products at industrial scale. These rules include the holding of a manufacturing authorisation. Such authorisation is granted after an inspection of the premises to control the good manufacturing practices. The goal is precisely to prevent any contamination of the medicinal products. The Commission has already published numerous guidelines on good manufacturing practices for medicinal products.

In addition, all medicinal products are placed on the market after an in-depth assessment of their quality, safety and efficacy. A marketing authorisation for a medicinal product is granted only after a positive benefit-risk balance for related to its use has been concluded.

By contrast, medicinal products prepared in a pharmacy in accordance with a medical prescription for an individual patient (magistral formula) and medicinal products prepared in a pharmacy in accordance with the prescription of a pharmacopoeia and intended to be supplied directly to the patients served by the pharmacy in question (officinal formula) are excluded from the scope of the Union legislation. The rules in force for individual pharmacies preparing these medicines are laid down and controlled by the competent authorities of the Member States.

For these reasons, the Commission does not possess data on risks of contamination and infection resulting from the compounding, meaning the creation of a particular medicinal product for the unique needs of a patient. It has not assessed these risks and does not envisage preparing additional guidelines.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-010999/12
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Spread of Chalara fraxinea, ash dieback disease

The fungal disease Chalara fraxinea, or ash dieback, is now widespread across continental Europe, Britain and Ireland. It can spread quickly and poses a great risk to the survival of this tree species.

90% of Denmark's ash population has already been wiped out, and the disease is also having a severe impact in the UK, where there are 80 million ash trees.

Ash is a key material in many indigenous furniture and woodwork industries, as well as being the principal material for 'hurleys' used in the traditional game of hurling in Ireland and across the world.

In this regard, could the Commission outline what measures it has in place to stop this disease spreading further and to save this important species of tree?

What assistance can be given to national and local authorities to control this disease and ensure that ash forests continue to exist for future generations?

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

The United Kingdom and Ireland notified the Commission of findings in their territory for the first time in 2012. As a consequence, both Member States introduced national measures, including a ban on the import of ash trees, (and in Ireland and Northern Ireland a ban on the import of ash wood), to prevent the further introduction of Chalara fraxinea into their territories. The Commission is considering, with Member States, whether sufficient scientific and technical information is available to conclude that eradication or at least containment is realistic in Ireland and the United Kingdom. If this is the case, the Commission may propose to adopt appropriate measures. Prior to 2012, no other Member State had previously requested national protective measures against the spread of Chalara fraxinea in their territory.

Under the EU plant health regime, established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([1]), there is a basis for co-financing eradication campaigns by the competent authorities under very strict conditions (in particular, immediate notification to the Commission of the first outbreak in an area and swift and adequate eradication measures), but without any compensation of losses of producers, nursery, or forest owners affected by plant harmful organisms.

Moreover, Member States may grant state aid for the eradication and treating of tree diseases and for the loss of stock and for restocking costs if the stock was destroyed on the order of the authorities. ([2]) Furthermore, de-minimis aid of up to EUR 200 000 per enterprise over any period of three fiscal years may be granted under Regulation 1998/2006 ([3]). Such aid may also be granted in relation to the processing of ash trees.

([1]) Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000 on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community, OJ L 169, 10.7.2000.
([2]) Point 175 (c) of the Agricultural State Aid Guidelines, OJ C 319, 27.12.2006.
([3]) OJ L 379, 28.12.2006.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011000/12
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(3. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: „Financial Action Task Force“

Aus einer unlängst veröffentlichten Studie geht ein starker Verdacht hervor, dass die Empfehlungen Nr. 8 der Financial Action Task Force (FATF) betreffend die Verhütung der Nutzung gemeinnütziger Organisationen zur Finanzierung terroristischer Ziele von weniger demokratischen Regierungen dazu benutzt wird, die rechtmäßigen Tätigkeiten von Organisationen der Bürgergesellschaft und von Nichtregierungsorganisationen unrechtmäßig zu beschneiden.

Mehr als 180 Länder haben sich auf Ministerebene den FATF-Empfehlungen verschrieben, und es wurden strikte Evaluierungsmechanismen geschaffen, um deren Einhaltung sicher zu stellen. Auf der Plenarsitzung der FATF im Oktober 2012 brachte eine Gruppe von FATF-Mitgliedern ihre Besorgnis darüber zum Ausdruck, dass die Empfehlung Nr. 8 als Vorwand genutzt werde, um die Tätigkeiten rechtmäßiger NRO, gemeinnütziger Organisationen oder Organisationen der Bürgergesellschaft zu unterbinden.

Kann die Kommission, die Gründungsmitglied der FATF ist, erläutern, welche Maßnahmen sie derzeit durchführt oder zu ergreifen gedenkt, um sicher zu stellen, dass die auf der Empfehlung Nr. 8 basierenden Politiken und Verfahren mit den zentralen Werten und Grundprinzipien der EU in Einklang stehen und dass diese Empfehlung sich nicht weiterhin kontraproduktiv und einschränkend auf die rechtmäßigen Tätigkeiten der Bürgergesellschaft auswirkt?

Kann sie insbesondere mitteilen, welche Garantien geplant sind, um sicher zu stellen, dass Staaten, die diese Empfehlung umsetzen, dabei auch die Grundrechte und demokratischen Grundprinzipien respektieren? Welche Maßnahmen werden die Kommission und/oder die FATF ergreifen, um zu gewährleisten, dass die Empfehlung Nr. 8 und andere Terrorismusbekämpfungsmaßnahmen nicht die Erbringung humanitärer Hilfeleistungen beeinträchtigen, wie dies beispielsweise nach der Flutkatastrophe in Pakistan und der Hungersnot in Somalia geschehen ist?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(14. Februar 2013)

Der Kommission liegen keinerlei Informationen darüber vor, dass die FATF-Empfehlung Nr. 8 dazu genutzt wird, die Tätigkeiten rechtmäßiger gemeinnütziger Organisationen zu unterbinden, und teilt die Ansicht, dass die Reaktion auf die von diesem Sektor ausgehenden Risiken verhältnismäßig sein sollte. Zwar besteht durchaus die Gefahr, dass der Sektor von Terrorismus-Geldgebern missbraucht wird, doch lassen sich Höhe und Art des Risikos — wie u. a. in dem 2009 von der Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force der Vereinten Nationen vorgelegten Bericht „Tackling the Financing of Terrorism“ ([1]) festgestellt wird — nach wie vor nicht genau bestimmen.

Um eine verhältnismäßige und wirksame Umsetzung dieser Empfehlung zu gewährleisten, wird die Kommission deren Evaluierung in der vierten Evaluierungsrunde (die im Laufe dieses Jahres beginnen soll) überwachen. Sollte es in der Zwischenzeit gesicherte Nachweise dafür geben, dass humanitäre Hilfe eingeschränkt wird, würde dies die Kommission in die Lage versetzen, das Thema bei der FATF zur Sprache zu bringen.

([1]) http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/ctitf/pdfs/ctitf_financing_eng_final.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011000/12
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Financial Action Task Force

Recently published research provides strong evidence that Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8 (R8) on preventing non-profit organisations being used for terrorist financing purposes is being used as a pretext for repressive and less democratic governments unduly to restrict the legitimate activities of civil society and non-governmental organisations.

More than 180 countries are committed at ministerial level to implementing the FATF's Recommendations, and rigorous evaluation mechanisms have been devised to ensure that they comply. At the FATF's plenary meeting in October 2012, a group of FATF members expressed their concern that R8 'is being used as justification to suppress the activities of legitimate NPOs and charitable and civil society organisations'.

As a founding member of the FATF, will the Commission explain what steps it is now taking, or intends to take, to ensure that policies and practices based on R8 are consistent with core EU values and principles and that this recommendation does not continue to have the counter-productive effect of restricting the legitimate activities of civil society?

Specifically, what guarantees are envisaged to ensure that states implementing R8 respect fundamental rights and democratic standards? Furthermore, what measures are the Commission and/or the FATF taking to ensure that R8 and other counter-terrorism measures do not prevent the delivery of humanitarian aid, as happened after the floods in Pakistan and the famine in Somalia, for example?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2013)

The Commission is not aware of FATF Recommendation 8 being used to suppress the activities of legitimate Non Profit Organisations (NPOs), and shares the view that the response to the threat posed by this sector should be proportionate. The sector is potentially vulnerable to abuse by those that finance terrorism, but studies such as the 2009 UN Counter -Terrorism Implementation Task Force report 'Tackling the Financing of Terrorism' concludes that the precise level and nature of the risk remains unclear ([1]).

The Commission will monitor the evaluation of this recommendation during the fourth round of evaluations (due to commence later this year) to ensure that it is being used proportionately and effectively. If, in the meantime, firm evidence is available to suggest that humanitarian aid is being restricted, the Commission would be in a position to raise the issue at the FATF.

([1]) http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/ctitf/pdfs/ctitf_financing_eng_final.pdf

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011001/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(3 december 2012)

Angående: Rapporterna ”Special 301” i förhållande till EU:s utvecklingspolitik

Varje år sedan 1989 tar kontoret för USA:s företrädare i handelsfrågor (Office of the United States Trade Representative) fram en rapport kallad ”Special 301 Report” med en utvärdering av tredjeländers regelverk för skydd av immateriella rättigheter. De länder som pekas ut i rapporterna som ”prioriterade främmande länder” kan bli föremål för handelspolitiska motåtgärder av den amerikanska regeringen, tills denna är nöjd med skyddet för de immateriella rättigheterna.

Länder i Syd, bland annat sådana som tar emot utvecklingsbistånd från kommissionen till förmån för institutionell stabilitet och utbildningssystemen, förekommer ibland i dessa rapporter.

Har kommissionen utvärderat vilka negativa effekter som hot om straffåtgärder, eller användning av rapporterna som ”mjukt lagstiftningsverktyg” för att tvinga igenom en reform av immaterialrätten i mottagarländerna, får för den institutionella stabiliteten och tillgången till utbildning i de aktuella länderna? Vad gör kommissionen för att se till att en överdrivet nitisk genomdrivning av immateriella rättigheter i biståndsmottagarländerna inte leder till godtyckliga inskränkningar av yttrandefriheten?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(4 februari 2013)

Kommissionen övervakar inte systematiskt och har inte utvärderat de bilaterala diplomatiska förbindelserna i fråga om immateriella rättigheter mellan USA och andra tredjeländer, inbegripet de som tar emot utvecklingsbistånd från EU.

Dessutom har inga tredjeländer som tar emot utvecklingsbistånd från EU rapporterat till kommissionen om fall där USA:s främjande av skyddet av immateriella rättigheter skulle ha inverkat på institutionell stabilitet eller tillgång till utbildning, eller lett till godtyckliga inskränkningar av yttrandefriheten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011001/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Special 301 Reports in relation to European Union development policy

Every year since 1989, the Office of the United States Trade Representative has drafted a 'Special 301 Report' evaluating the intellectual property rights frameworks of third countries. Countries identified in the Special 301 Reports as 'priority foreign countries' may be subject to trade retaliation from the US Government until such time as it is satisfied that intellectual property rights protection is adequate.

Countries in the global south, including those which are beneficiaries of Commission development aid for institutional stability and educational systems, are sometimes listed in the Special 301 Reports.

Has the Commission evaluated what adverse effects the threat of sanctions, or the use of the 301 Reports as a soft law tool to force a reform of IPR enforcement in the beneficiary countries, has on institutional stability and access to education in those countries? What is the Commission doing to ensure that over-implementation of IPR enforcement in countries in receipt of development aid does not lead to arbitrary restrictions of freedom of speech or expression?

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

The Commission does not systematically monitor and has not made an evaluation of the bilateral diplomatic relations in the area of intellectual property between the United States of America and other third countries, including those benefiting from EU development aid.

Additionally, no cases have been reported to the Commission by third countries benefiting from EU development aid of any possible impact that the enforcement of intellectual property rights promoted by the United States of America would have on institutional stability, access to education or arbitrary restrictions to freedom of speech or expression.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011003/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE) e Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(3 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Tutela della concorrenza nei mercati dei servizi retail e Duty Free aeroportuali

Le strutture aeroportuali assumono sempre più caratteristiche di monopolio naturale, per cui i gestori aeroportuali, spesso imprese controllate da enti pubblici, devono garantire la contendibilità dei mercati «a valle», mediante procedure competitive aperte per la concessione degli spazi occorrenti per lo svolgimento di attività retail nei terminali aeroportuali. Alcuni fra i maggiori gestori aeroportuali europei hanno invece proceduto ad affidamenti diretti di spazi per servizi retail a favore di imprese da loro controllate, individualmente o in joint venture con operatori privati. Secondo l'orientamento della giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia, le imprese che godono di affidamenti diretti da parte di enti pubblici che le controllano devono svolgere la loro attività, in modo esclusivo o almeno prevalente, a servizio degli enti pubblici controllanti. In contrasto con tale indicazione, le imprese di servizi retail e Duty Free, controllate dai maggiori gestori aeroportuali, partecipano regolarmente alle gare indette da altri gestori per l'affidamento di spazi commerciali nei terminali aeroportuali, nei paesi d'origine e all'estero, allargando sensibilmente la propria quota di mercato a livello europeo. Tali imprese godono di evidenti vantaggi competitivi derivanti dalla disponibilità, non contendibile da parte di terzi, dei mercati di origine e dei profitti colà realizzati in regimi preferenziali ed esclusivi. In tal modo si determina una distorsione della concorrenza nei mercati in oggetto, dal momento che non è garantita la parità delle condizioni di partenza, per cui il mercato dei servizi retail aeroportuali rischia di diventare un oligopolio ristretto, caratterizzato dalla presenza delle sole società controllate dai grandi gestori aeroportuali con la conseguente espulsione delle imprese indipendenti, che non possono godere delle stesse opportunità finanziarie privilegiate. La distorsione concorrenziale è facilmente constatabile comparando i margini omogenei realizzati da taluni operatori nei servizi aeroportuali di più paesi, con i margini difformi che altri operatori realizzano, rispettivamente nei mercati protetti e negli altri mercati. Il rischio è quello di pregiudicare l'efficienza dinamica dei mercati dei servizi retail e Duty Free aeroportuali con effetti negativi sul benessere dei consumatori.

si chiede di conoscere quali iniziative intende intraprendere la Commissione, al fine di garantire, anche nel mercato dei servizi retail aeroportuali, il principio per cui le società controllate da enti pubblici e titolari di affidamenti diretti nei mercati di origine devono svolgere la loro attività, in modo esclusivo o di gran lunga prevalente, a servizio degli enti che le controllano, evitando ingressi distorsivi della concorrenza in mercati diversi.

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(5 marzo 2013)

Dalle informazioni attualmente a disposizione della Commissione, non è chiaro se i gestori aeroportuali e le imprese di servizi retail sotto il loro controllo abbiano violato le norme UE in materia di concorrenza e di appalti pubblici.

Le gare d'appalto per le concessioni retail presso gli aeroporti sono generalmente volte ad attirare offerte elevate. La semplice constatazione che le imprese di servizi retail usano gli utili generati dalla loro posizione di monopolio nell'aeroporto in cui sono presenti al fine di presentare un'offerta più elevata per l'acquisto di concessioni per servizi retail in altri aeroporti non è sufficiente per stabilire un abuso di posizione dominante ai sensi dell'articolo 102 del TFUE. Pertanto, a tale riguardo la Commissione non prevede di prendere iniziative in base alle norme UE della concorrenza.

Per quanto riguarda l'aggiudicazione di contratti di concessione di servizi, la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ha stabilito che le amministrazioni aggiudicatrici sono tenute a rispettare i principi fondamentali del trattato, il che comporta in particolare un obbligo di trasparenza ([1]). Può avvenire diversamente solo nel caso in cui il contratto sia stato stipulato da un ente pubblico e da un soggetto giuridicamente distinto sul quale l'ente eserciti un controllo analogo a quello esercitato sui propri servizi e, nel contempo, quest'ultimo realizzi la parte più importante della propria attività con l'ente o con gli enti pubblici detentori ([2]). Sulla base delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione non è in grado di capire se il diritto UE sugli appalti pubblici sia stato violato.

([1]) Cfr. Causa C-324/98, Telaustria Verlags GmbH e Telefonadress GmbH, punti 60 e 61.
([2]) Cfr. Causa C-458/03, Parking Brixen, punti da 58 a 62.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011003/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE) and Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Safeguarding competition in airport rental and duty-free services

Airport facilities are increasingly taking on the aspect of a natural monopoly, as a result of which airport managers, often businesses controlled by public bodies, have to ensure the competitiveness of 'downstream' markets by means of open competitive procedures for the concession of space required for retail activity in airport terminals. Some major European airport managers, on the other hand, have directly granted space for retail services to businesses which they control, individually or as joint ventures with private operators. According to the case-law of the Court of Justice, undertakings benefiting from direct assignment by public bodies which control them should be run entirely or at least principally as a service to the controlling public bodies. Counter to this ruling, retail and duty-free services undertakings controlled by the major airport operators regularly compete in the tendering procedures organised by other operators for the assignment of commercial space in airport terminals in their countries of origin and other countries, considerably enlarging their market share at European level. Such undertakings benefit from clear competitive advantages from having home markets in which others cannot compete and from the profits acquired there under preferential and exclusivity arrangements. In this way distortion of competition is created in these markets, given that an equal playing field is not guaranteed, so that the market for airport retail services is in danger of becoming a restricted oligopoly typically consisting only of undertakings controlled by the major airport operators with the resulting expulsion of independent businesses, which cannot benefit from the same preferential financial conditions. The distortion of competition is easy to see, comparing the regular margins achieved by certain operators in the airport services of several countries with the irregular margins which other operators have, in protected markets and other markets respectively. The risk is that the dynamic efficiency of markets for airport retail and duty-free services markets will be harmed with negative effects for consumer welfare.

We would like to hear what initiatives the Commission intends to take in order to defend the principle whereby, in the market for airport retail services as elsewhere, undertakings controlled by public bodies and holders of directly assigned concessions in home markets should be run exclusively or very largely as a service to the bodies controlling them, without competition distorting forays into different markets.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

From the information currently at the Commission's disposal, it is not evident that airport operators and the retail service undertakings under their control have infringed EU competition or public procurement rules.

Tenders for retail concessions at airports generally aim to attract high bids. The mere observation that retail service undertakings use the profits generated by their monopoly position in their 'home' airport to submit a higher bid to acquire concessions for other airports' retail services is insufficient to establish an abuse of dominant position under Article 102 TFEU. The Commission therefore does not foresee taking action under EU competition rules in this regard.

Regarding the award of services concession contracts, the Court of Justice of the EU has held that contracting authorities are bound to comply with the fundamental rules of the Treaty, which implies in particular an obligation of transparency. ([1]) An exception to this would be if the contract was concluded between a public authority and an entity legally distinct from that authority, over which the authority exercises control similar to that which it exercises over its own departments and, at the same time, that entity carries out the essential part of its activities with the controlling public authority or authorities. ([2]) On the basis of the information made available by the Honourable Member, it is not possible for the Commission to know if EU public procurement law has been violated.

([1]) See Case C-324/98, Telaustria Verlags GmbH and Telefonadress GmbH, points 60-61.
([2]) See Case C-458/03, Parking Brixen, points 58 to 62.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-011004/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Ist auch Frankreich „zu groß, als dass man es scheitern lassen dürfte"?

Wie beurteilt die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund der Lage in Europa die Reformen und die voraussichtlichen mittelfristigen Entwicklungen in Frankreich nach der Rückstufung des Landes durch die Rating-Agentur Standard & Poor's, zumal die Rückstufung Frankreichs als Grund für die Rückstufung des Europäischen Stabilitätsmechanismus genannt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(16. Januar 2013)

Im November wurden französische Staatsanleihen durch Moody's von AAA auf AA1 herabgestuft. Dem vorausgegangen war eine vergleichbare Herabstufung durch Standard and Poor's vom Januar, die neun Mitgliedstaaten — darunter auch Frankreich — betraf. Angesichts der hohen Beteiligung Frankreichs an ESM und EFSF wurden deren Ratings kurz darauf ebenfalls herabgesetzt.

Das Urteil der Rating-Agenturen ist nur eine Bewertung von vielen und wird von uns nicht kommentiert. Tatsächlich ist die Rendite französischer Staatsanleihen im letzten Jahr gesunken, worin das große Vertrauen der Anleger zum Ausdruck kommt.

Davon abgesehen muss Frankreich nach unserer Einschätzung weitreichende Strukturreformen durchführen, um wieder auf einen nachhaltigen Wachstumspfad zu gelangen, und seine Konsolidierungsanstrengungen fortführen, damit das Defizitverfahren eingestellt werden kann. Besonderes Augenmerk muss auch der steigenden Arbeitslosigkeit gelten. Schließlich sind durch die nachlassende Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der Exporte gravierende außenwirtschaftliche Ungleichgewichte entstanden. Die französischen Behörden sind sich dieser Anforderungen durchaus bewusst, auch im Lichte der länderspezifischen Empfehlungen, die der Rat im Juli an Frankreich gerichtet hat.

Bedeutende Schritte wurden bereits unternommen, darunter Konsolidierungsmaßnahmen zur Senkung des Defizits auf 3 % des BIP, Maßnahmen zur Steigerung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit, insbesondere durch steuerliche Entlastung der Unternehmen, und die Aufnahme von Verhandlungen zur Reform des Arbeitsrechts. In vielen Fällen stehen diese Reformen noch ganz am Anfang und werden möglicherweise noch weitere Anstrengungen erfordern. Die Kommission behält die Fortschritte in diesen Bereichen genauestens im Auge.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011004/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Is France also 'too big to fail'?

After the downgrading of France by Standard & Poor's, how does the Commission view the reforms and medium-term developments in France in the light of the European situation, especially given that France is the reason mentioned for downgrading the European Stability Mechanism?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2013)

In November, Moody's downgraded the French sovereign bonds from Aaa to Aa1. This followed a similar decision taken by Standard and Poor's for nine Member States, including France, in January. The ratings of the ESM and the EFSF were downgraded shortly afterwards, in particular due to the high contribution of France to these instruments.

The opinion of rating agencies is one assessment among others and we do not comment on their decisions. In fact, the yield on French bonds has decreased over the last year, reflecting the high confidence of investors.

Beyond that, our assessment is that France needs to undertake wide-ranging structural reforms to ensure a sustainable return to growth and to continue fiscal consolidation efforts to bring the excessive deficit procedure to an end. The increasing unemployment also calls for specific attention. Finally, the deterioration of export competitiveness has resulted in serious external imbalances. The authorities are aware of these needs, also in the light of the Council's country specific recommendations addressed to France in July.

Important steps have been taken which include consolidation measures aimed at bringing the deficit to 3% of GDP, measures on competitiveness to lower in particular the fiscal burden on companies and the ongoing negotiation to reform the labour code. In many cases, these reforms are still at a very early stage and additional efforts might still be needed. The Commission monitors progress in these areas closely.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-011005/12
a Bizottság számára
Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D)
(2012. december 3.)

Tárgy: Visszamenőleges hatályú jogalkotás az Európai Unió tagállamaiban

Magyarország kormánya 2010-es hivatalba lépését követően több alkalommal visszamenőleges hatályú törvénykezést alkalmazott. 2010-ben a közszférában kifizetett, kétmillió forintot meghaladó végkielégítésekre vetett ki a kormány 98%-os, öt évre visszamenőleges hatállyal megállapított adót, annak ellenére, hogy ezt az Alkotmánybíróság alkotmányellenesnek nyilvánította. 2011-ben a korkedvezményes nyugdíjak megszüntetésével és azt csökkenthető, megszüntethető juttatássá való átalakításával a kormány visszamenőlegesen írta felül több százezer, elsősorban volt rendvédelmi dolgozó nyugdíjjogosultságát, akiket aktív életszakaszukban bérkiegészítések helyett a korkedvezményes nyugdíjazással kompenzáltak rendkívüli munkakörülményeikért. A rokkantnyugdíjak felülvizsgálata, amelyről szintén 2011-ben döntött a magyar kormány, hasonló módon bírálja felül számos magyarországi rokkant nyugdíjjuttatásait, visszamenőlegesen megfosztva őket szerzett jogaiktól. A visszamenőleges hatályú törvényeket tiltotta Magyarország 2012 előtt hatályban lévő Alkotmánya, a 2012. január 1-jén hatályba lépett Alaptörvényben azonban ez a tiltás már nem szerepel.

Az Európai Unió jogának egyik alapelve a jogbiztonság garantálásának követelménye, amelynek egyik eleme a visszamenőleges hatályú jogalkotás tilalma. Ez megjelenik az Európai Bíróság igazságszolgáltatási gyakorlatában is. A visszamenőleges hatály explicit tilalma továbbá megjelenik az Emberi Jogok Európai Egyezményében (7. cikk) és a Polgári és Politikai Jogok Nemzetközi Egyezségokmányában (15. cikk) is. Minthogy az EJEE a Szerződés 6. cikke szerint aláírója az egyezménynek, és az abban lefektetett alapelvek az uniós jogrend részét képezik, a visszamenőleges hatály tilalma egyben tekinthető az EUSZ 2. cikkében lefektetett jogállamiság követelményének. A visszamenőleges hatályú törvénykezés egyben alkalmas arra, hogy megsértse a polgárok hatékony jogorvoslathoz és a tisztességes eljáráshoz való jogát, amelyet az EU Alapjogi Chartájának 47. cikke rögzít.

1. Egyetért-e azzal a Bizottság, hogy a visszamenőleges hatályú törvénykezés elfogadhatatlan egy uniós tagállamban, hiszen az az Európai Unió jogrendjének egyik fontos alapelve?

2. Figyelembe véve Viviane Reding alapjogi biztos 2012. szeptember 12-én tett javaslatát a tagállami igazságügyi rendszerek működésének vizsgálatáról, tervezi-e a Bizottság, hogy fellép a visszamenőleges hatályú törvények mint az EU alapértékeit megsértő jogalkotás ellen?

3. Megengedhető-e a Bizottság szerint, hogy a tagállamok, akár saját hatáskörbe tartozó jogalkotás, akár az európai jog átültetése során az európai uniós jog alapelveit megsértsék?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. január 24.)

A magyar hatóságok Tisztelt Képviselő által említett intézkedései és azoknak az Európai Unió Alapjogi Chartája 47. cikkével való összeegyeztethetősége tekintetében a Bizottság emlékeztet arra, hogy a Charta 51. cikke szerint a tagállamok annyiban címzettjei a Charta rendelkezéseinek, amennyiben az Unió jogát hajtják végre. A Tisztelt Képviselő által nyújtott információk alapján nem tűnik úgy, hogy az említett ügyben az érintett tagállam az Unió jogát végrehajtva járt volna el. Az ügyben tehát kizárólag a tagállamok felelősségi körébe tartozik annak biztosítása, hogy az alapvető jogok tekintetében fennálló – nemzetközi megállapodásokból és nemzeti jogszabályaikból eredő – kötelezettségeiket tiszteletben tartsák.

A nemzeti igazságügyi rendszerek értékelése tekintetében a Bizottság egyértelműsíteni kívánja, hogy az Európai Parlament által bejelentett kezdeményezés nem fog olyan jogi kérdésekkel foglalkozni, mint amilyen a visszamenőleges hatályú nemzeti jogszabályok.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011005/12
to the Commission
Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Ex post facto legislation in the Member States

Since its election to power in 2010 the Hungarian government has approved *ex post facto* legislation on a number of occasions. In 2010 the government imposed a 98% tax, with retroactive effect over the previous five years, on severance payments of more than two million forints paid out in the public sector, in spite of the fact that this was declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court. In 2011 it changed, with retroactive effect, the pension entitlement of hundreds of thousands of mainly police officers, who had been compensated during their working lives for their work in exceptional circumstances with early retirement rather than pay supplements, by bringing to an end early retirement and transforming it into the form of benefits, which — unlike pensions — may be cut or even withdrawn completely. The review of disability allowance, on which the Hungarian government also passed a decision in 2011, similarly revised a large number of pension entitlements to the disabled in Hungary and divested them of their acquired rights with retroactive effect. *Ex post facto* laws were banned in Hungary by the Constitution, which came into force before 2012; however, this prohibition no longer appears in the 'Basic Law', which came into force on 1 January 2012.

One of the fundamental principles of European Union law is the requirement for a guarantee of legal certainty, which includes the prohibition of *ex post facto* legislation. This can also be seen in the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union. There is also an explicit ban on *ex post facto* law in Article 7 of the European Convention on Human Rights and in Article 15 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Since, under Article 6 of the convention, the European Convention on Human Rights is a signatory to the Treaty and the fundamental principles which it contains form part of EC law, the ban on *ex post facto* law can also be regarded as a requirement of the rule of law laid down in Article 2 TEU. *Ex post facto* legislation may also violate citizens' right to effective legal redress and a fair trial, which is laid down in Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

1. Does the Commission agree that *ex post facto* legislation is unacceptable in a Member State, since the fact of its being unacceptable is a keystone of EU legislation?

2. Taking into account the proposal made on 12 September 2012 by Commissioner for Fundamental Rights Viviane Reding concerning a review of how the Member States' judicial systems operate, is the Commission planning to take action against *ex post facto* laws, which constitute legislation which violates the fundamental values of the EU?

3. In the Commission's view, is it acceptable for Member States to violate the fundamental principles of EC law either when formulating their own legislation or when transposing EC law?

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

Regarding the measures by Hungarian authorities referred to by the Honourable Member and their compatibility with Article 47 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Commission recalls that according to its Article 51, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member, it does not appear that in the matter referred to the Member State concerned did act in the course of implementation of EC law. In that matter it is thus for Member States alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected.

As regards the evaluation of national justice systems, the Commission would like to clarify that the initiative announced in the European Parliament will not address legal issues such as national laws having retroactive effects.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011006/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Cambio climático y escasa efectividad del SECE

El Banco Mundial ha alertado recientemente en su último informe, titulado «Turn Down the Heat: Why a 4° C Warmer World must be Avoided» y publicado el pasado 18 de noviembre, sobre el peligro de una elevación de la temperatura media global en 4° C, resultante del actual estado de emisiones registrado en el mundo.

Dicha institución es una de las mayores responsables *del calentamiento global, al haber financiado desde hace años un modelo de desarrollo que ha destruido buena parte del capital natural del planeta para generar «desarrollo» en países de la periferia económica. Ahora ha pasado a ser una institución que habla abiertamente de las pérdidas que supondrá dicho calentamiento e intenta estimular el Sistema Mundial de Comercio de Emisiones para frenarlo. Dicho Sistema de Comercio de Emisiones ha resultado ser una farsa que solo sirve para facilitar inversiones internacionales en nuevas tecnologías y recursos naturales mientras que las grandes empresas contaminadoras no necesitan descender sus niveles de emisiones.*

En el informe de la Comisión del pasado 14 de noviembre sobre el estado del mercado europeo del carbono en 2012 *se reconoce la escasa efectividad de dicho mecanismo para la reducción de las emisiones (aproximadamente un 10 % menores), que se atribuye a los efectos de la crisis económica. El límite fijado para las emisiones europeas ha sido establecido para el periodo 2008-2011 en 7 765 millones de toneladas de CO_2 equivalentes, superando en casi 1 000 millones de toneladas las necesidades efectivas de la industria europea y generando un superávit que permitirá a la industria europea contaminar aún más en lugar de reducir sus emisiones. Este disparatado resultado de un mecanismo que pretende reducir las emisiones hace del Sistema Europeo de Comercio de Emisiones (SECE) un mecanismo que resulta desfasado antes de haber empezado a funcionar plenamente. No obstante, como ha subrayado el Banco Mundial, el cambio climático supondrá el mayor problema de la humanidad en los años venideros, con pérdidas en la agricultura, la subida del nivel del mar y las consiguientes pérdidas de costas, la acidificación de los océanos, etc.*

1. Al considerar el SECE como un sistema prácticamente fallido, ¿está la Comisión considerando nuevas opciones para la reducción de emisiones que obliguen directamente a la reducción de las mismas entre las grandes empresas europeas?

2. *¿Tiene la Comisión la intención de proponer el fin de los créditos internacionales y centrar su acción en las emisiones europeas?*

3. ¿Está la Comisión considerando nuevas opciones para la reducción de emisiones que suponga*n una planificación de la reducción y racionalización del consumo, así como un mayor fomento de las energías renovables y la producción descentralizada?*

Respuesta de la Sra. Hedegaard en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de enero de 2013)

La Comisión no está de acuerdo con su afirmación de que el sistema de comercio de emisiones es un sistema prácticamente fallido. A este respecto, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría, por ejemplo, a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-008053/2012 ([1]). Con todo, la Comisión está de acuerdo en que la oferta de créditos internacionales, entre otros factores, ha contribuido en gran medida al surgimiento en el sistema de graves desequilibrios entre la oferta y la demanda que podrían tener repercusiones negativas a largo plazo. Por este motivo, en el informe a que se refiere Su Señoría ([2]), la Comisión ha propuesto medidas a corto plazo (llamadas «medidas de concentración al final del periodo» o back-loading, en inglés ([3])) y opciones con más medidas estructurales para reforzar el régimen de comercio de derechos de emisión (RCDE) en la tercera fase.

La legislación actual no autoriza el uso de créditos internacionales por las empresas participantes en ese régimen después de 2020. Limitar el uso de esos créditos después de 2020 es pues una medida estructural posible para reforzar el RCDE de la UE. La Comisión ha iniciado una consulta pública en línea acerca de las diversas opciones posibles de medidas estructurales ([4]) y estaría interesada en conocer el punto de vista de Su Señoría al respecto.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-008053 %2b0 %2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=EN.
([2]) COM(2012) 652 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/news/articles/news_2012111203_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0017/index_en.htm

En lo referente a las demás políticas, la Comisión ha puesto en marcha una gran variedad de iniciativas en ámbitos como el uso eficaz de los recursos ([5]) y la eficiencia energética ([6]) y, en relación con un mayor fomento de las energías renovables, la Comunicación sobre este tipo de energías ([7]), publicada en junio de 2012, indica las posibles opciones políticas después de 2020 para garantizar la continuidad y la estabilidad, a fin de que la producción europea de energías renovables pueda seguir creciendo hasta 2030 y después de esa fecha.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/resource-efficient-europe/.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/index_en.htm
([7]) COM(2012) 271 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011006/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Climate change and the limited effectiveness of the ETS

In the World Bank's latest report entitled 'Turn Down the Heat: Why a 4°C Warmer World must be Avoided', published on 18 November, it drew attention to the danger of a 4°C increase in the average global temperature as a result of the current state of emissions recorded in the world.

The World Bank bears major responsibility for global warming because for years it has funded a development model that has destroyed a large part of the planet's natural capital in order to generate 'development' in countries on the economic periphery. Now it has become an institution that speaks openly of the losses that this warming will cause and it is attempting to promote the Global Emissions Trading Scheme to curb this. The Emissions Trading Scheme has turned out to be a farce that serves solely to facilitate international investments in new technologies and natural resources while large undertakings producing pollution are not required to lower their emission levels.

The Commission report of 14 November on the state of the European carbon market in 2012 acknowledges the limited effectiveness of this mechanism in reducing emissions (approximately 10% lower), which is attributed to the effects of the economic crisis. The limit set for European emissions in the period 2008-2011 was 7.765 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent, therefore exceeding the effective needs of European industry by almost 1 000 million tonnes and generating a surplus that will allow European industry to pollute even more rather than reducing its emissions. This absurd result of a mechanism that is intended to cut emissions means that the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is outdated before it has even come fully on stream. However, as highlighted by the World Bank, climate change will be the biggest problem facing humanity in the coming years, with losses in agriculture, rising sea levels and the resulting loss of coastal areas and ocean acidification, and so on.

1. Since the ETS is considered to be a practical failure, is the Commission considering new options to reduce emissions that directly require large European undertakings to cut their emissions?

2. Does the Commission intend to propose an end to international credits and focus its action on European emissions?

3. Is the Commission considering new options to reduce emissions that involve planning reductions and rationalising consumption and also further boosting renewable energies and decentralised production?

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

The Commission does not agree that emissions trading is a practical failure. For example, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008053/2012 ([1]). However, the Commission agrees that the supply of international credits, among other factors, has contributed significantly to the emergence of serious imbalances between supply and demand in the system with potentially negative long-term repercussions. It has therefore proposed both short term measures (so-called 'back-loading' ([2])) and options for further structural measures to strengthen the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) during phase 3, in the Commission report referred to by the Honourable Member ([3]).

Current legislation does not allow for the use of international credits by ETS companies after 2020. Limiting the use of international credits after 2020 is therefore an option for a structural measure to strengthen the EU ETS. An online consultation on the options for structural measures has been launched ([4]) and the Commission would be interested in the Honourable Member's further views.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2012-008053%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/news/articles/news_2012111203_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 652 final.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0017/index_en.htm

In relation to other policies, the Commission is pursuing a wide range of initiatives in the fields of resource ([5]) and energy ([6]) efficiency, and as regards further boosting renewables, the Renewable Energy Communication ([7]) of June 2012 outlines possible policy options for beyond 2020 to ensure continuity and stability, enabling Europe's renewable energy production to continue to grow to 2030 and beyond.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/resource-efficient-europe/.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/index_en.htm
([7]) COM(2012) 271 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011007/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Nuevo asesinato de un ciudadano palestino por Israel pese al alto el fuego

El pasado 23 de noviembre el ejército de Israel volvió a asesinar a un palestino. Pese al alto el fuego firmado entre Israel y Hamás con la colaboración de Egipto, el Gobierno de Israel parece hacer oídos sordos al mundo y continúa con su política de genocidio.

La persona asesinada esta vez *ha resultado ser Anwar Qdeih, un joven palestino de 23 años cuyo único delito fue acercarse a la valla de «la cárcel más grande del mundo» para colocar una bandera de la organización de Hamás. Desde el otro lado de la valla, bien protegidos, los criminales tirotearon indiscriminadamente a una concentración de civiles desarmados que protestaban contra la inhumana situación en la que Israel mantiene a la población palestina. Como resultado se produjeron 7 heridos y la irrecuperable pérdida de Anwar.*

Dos *días antes, Israel había firmado, gracias a la fundamental mediación de Egipto, un alto el fuego que ponía fin a los ocho días de campaña militar que Israel llevó a cabo contra la población de Gaza y que terminó con un balance de 163 palestinos y 3 israelíes muertos. Esta sanguinaria campaña es calificada por Israel como un ejercicio de defensa propia, pero a la luz de los datos la comunidad internacional solo puede calificarse como genocidio. Un genocidio que resulta absolutamente gratuito, en términos penales, para Israel debido al abandono en el que la comunidad internacional ha dejado a Gaza. Este abandono no es coherente con las opiniones de la sociedad europea, que en su más amplia mayoría ha mostrado su solidaridad con la población de Gaza en numerosas manifestaciones en un gran número de ciudades.*

Anwar es una víctima más, tanto del ejército de Israel como del abandono al que los gobiernos mundiales someten a Gaza. Esta situación no puede mantenerse más con la complicidad de la Unión Europea, cuando la sociedad de prácticamente todos los *Estados miembros reclama su solidaridad con Gaza en las calles. Por todo esto se formulan las siguientes preguntas:*

1. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante condenar públicamente el asesinato y exigir formalmente a Israel el respeto al alto el fuego firmado, así como el enjuiciamiento y esclarecimiento de los responsables en el asesinato de Anwar Qdeih?

2. *¿Está considerando* la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la *posibilidad de congelar inmediatamente el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel como medida de presión para el cumplimiento del Derecho internacional humanitario por parte de Israel?*

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de febrero de 2013)

Tanto la AR/VP (Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta) como la UE en su conjunto han expresado su profundo pesar por la pérdida de vidas civiles de ambos bandos debido a la reciente escalada de violencia en Gaza e Israel, opinión que también se ha recogido en las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores (CAE) de 19 de noviembre de 2012, y han instado a Israel a que actúe de forma proporcionada cuando proteja a sus civiles frente a ataques con misiles procedentes de la Franja de Gaza. En lo que respecta al alto el fuego, las conclusiones del CAE de 10 de diciembre de 2012 elogiaron los esfuerzos de Egipto y otros mediadores y señalaron que «es fundamental que se apliquen todas las partes del acuerdo de alto el fuego».

La posición de la AR/VP con respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel se expuso en la respuesta a la anterior pregunta escrita E-010294/2011 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011007/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Another Palestinian killed by Israel despite the ceasefire

On 23 November, the Israeli army once again killed a Palestinian. Despite the ceasefire signed between Israel and Hamas with Egypt's collaboration, the Israeli Government seems to have turned a deaf ear to the rest of the world and is continuing with its policy of genocide.

The person killed this time was a young Palestinian aged 23, Anwar Qdeih, whose sole crime was to approach the fence of the 'biggest prison in the world' to put a Hamas flag on it. From their well-protected position on other side of the fence, the criminals fired indiscriminately at a group of unarmed civilians who were protesting against the inhuman situation in which Israel holds the Palestinian people. The upshot was that 7 people were wounded and Anwar lost his life.

Two days before, thanks to vital mediation by Egypt, Israel had signed a ceasefire bringing to an end the eight-day military campaign that Israel had waged against the population of Gaza and that ended with a death toll of 163 Palestinians and 3 Israelis. This bloody campaign is classified by Israel as a self-defence exercise but given the death toll, the international community can only classify it as genocide. In criminal terms, Israel will get off scot free for this genocide because the international community has abandoned Gaza. This attitude is at odds with the views of the vast majority of Europeans who have expressed their solidarity with the people of Gaza at many demonstrations in many different cities.

Anwar is yet another victim — both of the Israeli army and world governments' abandonment of Gaza. This situation can no longer go on with the complicity of the European Union, when people in practically every Member State are proclaiming their solidarity with Gaza in the streets. I therefore wish to ask the following questions:

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to condemn the killing publically and formally request Israel to comply with the ceasefire signed and to establish and bring to trial those responsible for killing Anwar Qdeih?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative considering the possibility of immediately freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement as a means of pressurising Israel to comply with international humanitarian law?

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

Both the HR/VP and the EU as a whole have expressed their deep regret at the loss of civilian life on both sides of the recent escalation of violence in Gaza and Israel, including in the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) conclusions of 19 November 2012, and urged Israel to act proportionately when protecting its civilians from rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip. As regards the ceasefire, the 10 December 2012 FAC conclusions commended the efforts of Egypt and other mediators and stated that 'it is vital that all parts of the ceasefire agreement are implemented'.

The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to previous Written Question E-010294/2011 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011008/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Impunidad de los crímenes de guerra en Libia

El pasado 17 de octubre, la conocida ONG Human Rights Watch (HRW) publicaba un nuevo artículo en el que exponía las nuevas pruebas que había recogido sobre los asesinatos en masa ocurridos en la ciudad de Sirte (Libia) a manos de las milicias rebeldes de Misrata tras el asesinato de Muammar Gadafi, hace más de un año.

Muammar *el Gadafi fue ejecutado sin mediación judicial alguna por las milicias rebeldes aliadas de la OTAN. Dichos grupos paramilitares pasearon su cuerpo y lo exhibieron como el símbolo de la victoria en un acto de barbarie, crueldad y violación de los derechos humanos sin precedentes. Ante estas cruentas imágenes, la comunidad internacional celebró el asesinato por suponer este el final simbólico de la guerra, mientras que tan solo condenó tímidamente la violación de los derechos más básicos de un detenido. Esta celebración conjunta de la comunidad internacional y la timidez de la condena de dichos actos supuso la verdadera condena a muerte de al menos 66 detenidos en Sirte, que integraban el convoy en el que viajaba el líder libio. Las milicias rebeldes, al observar la absoluta impunidad de la ejecución de Gadafi, comenzaron a exterminar a aquellos soldados fieles al Gobierno libio detenidos en el ataque, incluido el hijo de Gadafi, que fue asesinado posteriormente en Misrata.*

Este caso, uno de los mejores documentados gracias a la investigación de HRW, no está siendo esclarecido por las actuales autoridades libias. No existe proceso alguno de esclarecimiento de responsabilidad criminal en *casos de asesinatos presentados, ni en otros muchos casos sin tanta documentación disponible. La Corte Penal Internacional recibió el mandato de manos de la ONU para investigar y perseguir los crímenes de guerra cometidos desde el pasado 17 de febrero de 2011; el pasado 7 de noviembre dicha corte animó al nuevo Gobierno libio a que no queden impunes los crímenes cometidos durante la guerra.*

1. ¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el actual Gobierno de Libia está realizando procesos judiciales imparciales sobre todos los crímenes cometidos?

2. *¿Cuáles son las medidas de presión que la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante plantea ejercer respecto del Gobierno libio para asegurar el enjuiciamiento de todos los responsables de crímenes de guerra?*

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de febrero de 2013)

La UE está preocupada por las informaciones sobre las violaciones de los derechos humanos en Libia. La UE ha planteado esta cuestión en su diálogo con las autoridades libias y seguirá insistiendo en la aplicación del Estado de Derecho sin discriminaciones. En efecto, la CPI tiene un mandato para investigar crímenes de guerra y confiamos en que estudie las pruebas presentadas por Human Rights Watch (Observatorio de Derechos Humanos).

En la Libia de después de la revolución, muchos organismos públicos tienen grandes dificultades para prestar servicios del nivel exigido; así ocurre también con el poder judicial. Por ello, el Gobierno libio ha indicado que una de sus grandes prioridades es una estrategia nacional para reactivar el sistema judicial. La UE apoyará a las autoridades libias en esta tarea, que también incluirá formación para reforzar la independencia y la capacidad del poder judicial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011008/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Impunity for war crimes in Libya

On 17 October, the well-known NGO, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a new article in which it set out further evidence that it had gathered on the mass killings in the town of Sirte (Libya) carried out by the Misrata rebel militias following the death of Muammar Gaddafi over a year ago.

Muammar el Gaddafi was executed without any judicial mediation by the rebel militias allied to NATO. These paramilitary groups paraded his body and exhibited it as a symbol of victory in an act of barbarism, cruelty and unprecedented violation of human rights. On seeing these cruel images, the international community celebrated the killing, assuming it to be the symbolic end of the war, and only mildly condemned the violation of a prisoner's most basic rights. This celebration by the international community, combined with its timid condemnation of these acts, was tantamount to a death sentence for at least 66 prisoners in Sirte, who were travelling in the convoy with the Libyan leader. The rebel militias, realising the complete impunity of Gaddafi's execution, began to exterminate the soldiers loyal to the Libyan government who were taken prisoner in the attack, including Gaddafi's son, who was killed later in Misrata.

This case — one of the most fully documented thanks to HRW's investigations — is not being clarified by the current Libyan authorities. There are no proceedings to establish criminal responsibility in the murder cases referred to, nor in many other cases with less documentation available. The International Criminal Court has received a mandate from the UN to investigate and pursue the war crimes committed since 17 February 2011; on 7 November the ICC urged the new Libyan Government not to let the crimes committed during the war go unpunished.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that the current Government of Libya is holding impartial judicial proceedings in respect of all the crimes committed?

2. What pressure does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to put on the Libyan Government to ensure that all those responsible for war crimes are put on trial?

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

The EU is concerned at reports about human rights violations in Libya. The EU has raised this issue in its dialogue with the Libyan authorities and will continue to insist on the indiscriminate application of the rule of law. The ICC has indeed a mandate to investigate war crimes and we are confident they will look into the evidence presented by Human Rights Watch.

In the post revolution Libya many public bodies are struggling to provide services at the required level; this is also the case for the judiciary. The Libyan government has therefore indicated that a national strategy to reactivate the court system is among their top priorities. The EU will support the Libyan authorities in this endeavour, which will also include training to bolster the independence and capacity of the judiciary.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011009/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Situación de los derechos humanos en Bani Walid (Libia)

Según diferentes ONG observadoras de la situación de los derechos humanos en Libia, se está llevando a cabo desde hace semanas un supuesto genocidio de la tribu Warfala. Diferentes informadores que han alcanzado a ponerse en contacto con dichas ONG afirman que la ciudad de Bani Walid está cercada por las milicias rebeldes que masacran impunemente a su población, incluso utilizando armas prohibidas por la Convención de Ginebra, como napalm y gas sarín.

La situación en Libia ha empeorado radicalmente desde la intervención de la OTAN, incrementándose el clima de violencia generalizada *y el número de ataques terroristas, como aquel en el que murió asesinado el Embajador de los Estados Unidos el pasado 12 de septiembre en Bengasi. Las facciones de las milicias rebeldes, bien equipadas y armadas, están degradando la situación de los derechos humanos hasta límites insospechados. Según diversas fuentes se han producido cientos de asesinatos y diferentes violaciones de derechos, actos que no están siendo perseguidos efectivamente por las autoridades del nuevo Estado libio.*

En este contexto de violencia generalizado, varias ONG han sido informadas por periodistas locales de que, al parecer, existe un fuerte bloqueo militar por parte de los rebeldes que impide la entrada a periodistas o refugiados que tratan de volver a sus casas. Según informadores locales, durante la noche del 25 de octubre y la mañana del 26 se realizó un intenso ataque sobre la ciudad incluyendo el apoyo de bombardeos aéreos sobre la ciudad.

1. *¿Tiene conocimiento la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de los hechos reseñados? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál es la información exacta de la que dispone? ¿Cuantos muertos se podrían haber producido en la ciudad?*

2. *¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que las instituciones del nuevo Gobierno de Libia podrán desarrollar investigaciones imparciales sobre los supuestos hechos, teniendo en cuenta que parece haber tropas del Estado implicadas?*

3. *En caso de confirmarse el uso de armas prohibidas por la Convención de Ginebra, ¿está la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante informada? ¿Piensa ejercer todas las presiones posibles para evitar su uso?*

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

La UE siguió muy de cerca los acontecimientos que tuvieron lugar a finales de octubre de 2012 en la ciudad libia de Beni Walid. La Delegación de la UE en Libia y la Misión de Apoyo de las Naciones Unidas en Libia (Unsmil) mantuvieron distintos contactos para analizar la situación durante los enfrentamientos armados. Algunos informes puntuales procedentes de fuentes no confirmadas apuntaron al uso de armas de fuego prohibidas por el Derecho internacional como, por ejemplo, el gas. Sin embargo, las diferentes misiones llevadas a cabo en Beni Walid por parte de organizaciones humanitarias, durante y después de los enfrentamientos, no pudieron encontrar pruebas que apoyaran dichas acusaciones.

La UE plantea cuestiones relacionadas con los derechos humanos a las autoridades libias periódicamente y continuará haciéndolo en el futuro. En respuesta, las autoridades han reconocido problemas y han manifestado su disposición para abordarlas. Al mismo tiempo, la UE es sensible a la compleja situación que vive Libia en la actualidad. Durante los últimos cuatro meses Libia ha atravesado un período de incertidumbre política con un Gobierno provisional que ha tenido que hacer frente a numerosos retos, incluida una importante crisis de seguridad no solo en Bengasi, sino también en otras partes del país.

La UE seguirá instando a las autoridades para que garanticen el respeto de las normas en materia de derechos humanos y seguirá ayudándolas a cumplir con sus responsabilidades de conformidad con el Derecho internacional. En este sentido, debe señalarse que la UE ya está proporcionando un paquete de ayuda de 20 millones de euros a fin de mejorar la protección de los grupos vulnerables, incluidos los migrantes. Se están tramitando nuevas medidas y proyectos a este respecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011009/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights situation in Bani Walid (Libya)

According to NGOs acting as human rights observers in Libya, acts of genocide have been committed against the Warfala tribe for the past few weeks. Different sources that have managed to make contact with these NGOs report that the town of Bani Walid is surrounded by rebel militias who are massacring its population with impunity, in some cases even using weapons banned by the Geneva Convention, like napalm and sarin gas.

The situation in Libya has deteriorated sharply since the NATO intervention — the widespread climate of violence and the number of terrorist attacks, like the one in which the US Ambassador was killed on in Benghazi on 12 September, have increased. The well-equipped and well-armed rebel militia factions have caused the human rights situation to deteriorate beyond recognition. According to various sources, hundreds of people have been murdered and there have been countless human rights violations. These acts are not being properly prosecuted by the new Libyan authorities.

Against this backdrop of widespread violence, various NGOs have been told by local journalists that there is apparently a strong military blockade by the rebels that prevents the entry of journalists or refugees who are trying to return to their homes. According to local sources, during the night of 25 October and the morning of 26 October a heavy attack was carried out on the town, including aerial bombardment.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these facts? If so, exactly what information does she have? What is the possible death toll in the town?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that the institutions of the new Libyan Government will be able to conduct impartial investigations into the alleged events, bearing in mind that Government troops appear to be involved?

3. If it is confirmed that weapons banned by the Geneva Convention are being used, is the Vice-President/High Representative informed of this? Does she intend to exert all possible pressure to prevent their use?

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

The EU followed very closely the events that took place in late October 2012 in the Libyan city of Beni Walid. Different contacts were held between the EU Delegation in Libya and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to analyse the situation during the armed clashes. Some punctual reports from unconfirmed sources pointed at the use of weapons banned by international law like, for instance, gas. However, the different missions conducted in Beni Walid by humanitarian organisations, during and after the clashes, could not find evidences which could back those allegations.

The EU raises human rights issues with the Libyan authorities on a regular basis and will continue to do so in the future. In reply the authorities have acknowledged problems and have expressed their readiness to address these issues. At the same time the EU is sensitive to the complex situation in Libya at present. Over the past four months Libya has undergone a period of political uncertainty with a caretaker government having to deal with numerous challenges — including a major security crisis not just in Benghazi but in a number of other parts of the country.

The EU will continue to press the authorities to ensure respect for human rights standards, and will continue to help them meet their responsibilities under international law. In this regard, it should be noted that the EU is already providing a EUR 20 million support package aimed at improving the protection of vulnerable groups including migrants. Further measures and projects in this regards are in the pipeline.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011010/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Crímenes de guerra contra la población de la Franja de Gaza

La operación militar denominada «Pilar defensivo» por el ejército de Israel ha causado una cifra aterradora de víctimas en la Franja de Gaza desde el pasado miércoles 14 de noviembre. Son más de 150 los muertos de los que la prensa internacional ha podido rendir cuentas en una operación que, sin ningún género de duda, constituye, de nuevo, un verdadero genocidio de la población palestina.

Según las autoridades sanitarias de la Franja de Gaza, el 40 % de las víctimas mortales son niños, mujeres y ancianos, porcentaje que desciende en el caso de los heridos, que superan los 700. En la noche del lunes 19 de noviembre fueron asesinados cuatro miembros de una misma familia, entre ellos dos niños de dos y cuatro años. Estos escalofriantes datos han provocado la denuncia de Unicef y de varias ONG que operan en el terreno. Estos asesinatos son los que la comunidad internacional puede llegar a conocer puesto que el flujo de información como consecuencia del bloqueo israelí es muy limitado. El ejército de Israel ha bombardeado los edificios donde tienen su sede los medios de comunicación escrita, las infraestructuras y las estaciones de televisión de la Franja de Gaza. Los periodistas palestinos, tras la muerte de varios de ellos, se refugian en los hoteles internacionales para evitar su bombardeo sistemático y lograr transmitir información sobre esta verdadera matanza del pueblo palestino. Un genocidio de estas características viola la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos y buena parte del Derecho internacional humanitario. El ejército de Israel ha violado sistemáticamente la práctica totalidad de los artículos contenidos en los Convenios de Ginebra de 1949 al no proteger a la población civil no hostil, ejecutar sin juicio previo, no garantizar zonas de seguridad para la población civil, etc.

Esta violación masiva del Derecho internacional nos devuelve al mundo de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, cuando una gran potencia militar como Alemania pudo ordenar el genocidio de un pueblo. La diferencia es que hoy buena parte de la comunidad internacional está siendo cómplice de tal genocidio al permitir la absoluta impunidad de Israel pese a estar perfectamente al tanto de los hechos.

1. *¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante desarrollar las acciones necesarias para que los crímenes de guerra y las violaciones del Derecho internacional humanitario por parte del ejército de Israel sean debidamente perseguidas y juzgadas?*

2. *¿Tiene previsto* la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante congelar *con carácter inmediato el Acuerdo de asociación UE-Israel como medida de presión para lograr el cumplimiento del Derecho internacional humanitario por parte de Israel?*

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

La AR/VP (Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta) rechaza totalmente la comparación de las recientes acciones israelíes con las de la Alemania nazi que sugiere Su Señoría. En las conclusiones del Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores, de 19 de noviembre de 2012, sobre la reciente escalada de violencia en Gaza e Israel, la UE insistió en la necesidad de que todas las partes implicadas en el conflicto respeten plenamente el Derecho internacional humanitario.

La posición de la AR/VP con respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel se expuso en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-10294/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011010/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — War crimes against the population of the Gaza Strip

The military operation named 'Pillar of Defence' by the Israeli army has resulted in a terrifying number of victims in the Gaza Strip since its launch on Wednesday 14 November 2012. The international press has been able to account for over 150 deaths in an operation which, without a shadow of a doubt, constitutes actual genocide against the Palestinian population.

According to the Gaza Strip health authorities, 40% of the fatalities were children, women or elderly people, while this percentage was lower among the over 700 people injured. On the night of Monday 19 November, four members of the same family were murdered, including two children aged two and four. These chilling details have prompted Unicef and many NGOs operating in the field to condemn the situation. These murders are only those that the international community has been able to find out about, since information from within is very scarce due to the Israeli blockade. The Israeli army bombarded the buildings housing written press outlets and the Gaza Strip television infrastructure and studios. After several of their colleagues had been killed, Palestinian journalists sought refuge in international hotels, in order to stay clear of systematic bombardments and to circulate information about this veritable slaughter of the Palestinian people. Genocide of this scale violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international humanitarian law on a significant number of counts. The Israeli army has systematically violated virtually all of the articles of the 1949 Geneva Conventions by failing to protect non-hostile civilians, carrying out executions without previous judgment, not guaranteeing safety zones for civilians, etc.

This massive violation of international law takes us back to the Second World War, when a great military power, Germany, was able to order the genocide of a people. The difference is that today a large proportion of the international community is complicit to this genocide by permitting Israel's absolute impunity, despite being perfectly aware of the facts.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take the necessary action to prosecute and judge the Israeli army's war crimes and violations of internationalhumanitarian law?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to freeze the EU-Israel AssociationAgreement with immediate effect, as a way of putting pressure on Israel to comply withinternational humanitarian law?

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

The HR/VP totally rejects the comparison of recent Israeli actions with those of Nazi Germany implied by the Honourable Member. In its Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 19 November 2012 on the recent escalation of violence in Gaza and Israel the EU stressed the need for all sides in the conflict to fully respect international humanitarian law.

The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to Written Question E-10294/2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011011/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Intensificación de la violencia ejercida por el ejército de Israel en Siria y Gaza

El Gobierno de Israel no cesa en su empeño de constituir la mayor amenaza para la paz mundial. Israel lleva practicando su política de desestabilización del Oriente Próximo prácticamente desde su creación para imponer unilateralmente las fronteras de un Estado que no ha sido reconocido por la comunidad internacional. Hoy mismo, su ejército ha vuelto a resultar noticia por incrementar la tensión en una zona ya de por sí bastante castigada por conflictos internos.

Israel volvió a realizar una nueva operación militar sobre posiciones palestinas al norte de la Franja de Gaza, tras un intenso fin de semana de intercambio de disparos entre milicias palestinas y el ejército israelí. El Gobierno de Israel sostuvo el pasado domingo 4 de noviembre que se está preparado «para una escalada de la violencia», lo que supuso la operación militar «Pilar Defensivo» que ha impactado a la población palestina de Gaza, que lleva sufriendo el exterminio en aislamiento desde 2007. La comunidad internacional ha presionado hasta que se firmó el alto el fuego y se puso fin a dicha operación militar el pasado 21 de noviembre.

No resultando suficiente la intervención del Gobierno de Israel en Palestina, el día 11 su ejército realizó varios disparos de advertencia en territorio sirio. Israel no ataca territorio sirio desde 1973 en la guerra del *Yom Kipur*. Los disparos efectuados suponen una respuesta a un proyectil que impactó en un puesto de vigilancia en los Altos del Golán, territorio considerado «nacional» unilateralmente por Israel al no haber sido reconocida dicha anexión por la comunidad internacional. Vista la guerra civil que se está desarrollando en Siria, no se puede alcanzar una salida pacífica militarizando aún más la región, constituyendo los disparos de advertencia la antesala a una posible intervención por parte del Estado anexionista de Israel.

1. Considerando que los Altos del Golán no pueden ser considerados territorio israelí ¿cómo valora la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante los disparos efectuados sobre Siria?

2. A pesar del alto el fuego, ¿cuál es la posición de la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante sobre la nueva escalada de la violencia que Israel ha llevado a cabo sobre Gaza y la potencial extensión del conflicto sobre Siria? ¿Considera que Israel es una amenaza para la paz en la región? Añadiendo estos nuevos incumplimientos de la legalidad internacional, ¿considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la inmediata congelación del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel como medida de presión para el cumplimiento del Derecho internacional por parte de Israel?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de marzo de 2013)

A la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta le sigue preocupando la seguridad y la estabilidad de la región y, en particular, las posibles repercusiones de la crisis de Siria en los países vecinos. También continúa reclamando a todas las partes que den muestras de moderación y eviten la escalada de los conflictos. La UE no reconoce la soberanía del Estado de Israel sobre los territorios ocupados, incluidos los Altos del Golán. No obstante, reconoce el derecho a proteger a sus ciudadanos en su territorio, en las condiciones previstas en el Derecho internacional. En los territorios ocupados, Israel tiene el deber, en virtud de los Reglamentos de la Haya, de adoptar todas las medidas a su alcance para garantizar la seguridad pública. La posición de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel figura en la respuesta a la anterior pregunta escrita E-010294/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011011/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Intensification of the violence shown by the Israeli Army in Syria and Gaza

The Government of Israel is unceasing in its efforts to constitute the greatest threat to world peace. Israel has pursued its policy to destabilise the Middle East virtually since its creation in order to unilaterally impose the borders of a State that has not been recognised by the international community. Its army has again made the news today by stepping up tension in an area that is already badly affected by internal conflict.

Israel carried out a further military operation against Palestinian positions to the north of the Gaza Strip after a tense weekend of exchange of fire between Palestinian militias and the Israeli Army. The Government of Israel stated on Sunday, 4 November that it was preparing 'for an escalation in violence', which resulted in the military operation 'Pillar of Defence', which targeted the Palestinian population of Gaza, which has been undergoing extermination in isolation since 2007. The international community applied pressure until the ceasefire was signed and the military operation was brought to an end on 21 November.

As if it were not enough for the Government of Israel to intervene in Palestine, on 11 November its army fired several warning shots into Syrian territory. Israel has not attacked Syrian territory since 1973 in the Yom Kippur war. The shots were fired in response to a mortar shell that hit a surveillance post in the Golan Heights, territory which is unilaterally considered by Israel to be 'national' — this annexation has not been recognised by the international community. On account of the civil war under way in Syria, a peaceful solution cannot be reached by further militarising the region — the warning shots could be a first step towards a possible intervention by the annexing State of Israel.

1. Since the Golan Heights cannot be considered Israeli territory, how does the Vice-President/High Representative assess the shots fired into Syria?

2. Despite the ceasefire, what is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative on Israel's further escalation of violence against Gaza and the potential extension of the conflict into Syria? Does the Vice-President/high Representative consider that Israel is a threat to peace in the region? Given these further additional breaches of international law, does the Vice-President/High Representative consider the immediate freezing of the EU-Israel Association Agreement to be a means of pressurising Israel into complying with international law?

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

The HR/VP remains concerned about security and stability in the region, particularly about the possible spill-over effects of the Syrian crisis in neighbouring countries, and continues to call on all sides to show restraint and prevent escalation. The EU does not recognise the State of Israel's sovereignty over occupied territories, including the Golan Heights. It has, however, the right to protect its citizens in its territory and under the conditions foreseen in international law. For people in occupied territory, Israel has a duty under the Hague Regulations to take all measures within its power to ensure public safety. The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to previous Written Question E-010294/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011012/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Portugal will dieselben Zugeständnisse wie Griechenland

Nach Griechenland will nun auch Portugal Zugeständnisse in Bezug auf Zinssätze und Laufzeiten der Darlehen der EFSF erwirken.

Gibt es hierzu konkrete Berechnungen über die Finanzierung? Bitte um eine detaillierte Erläuterung.

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(22. Januar 2013)

Infolge des Beschlusses der Eurogruppe vom 13. Dezember 2012 wird Griechenland für Darlehen, die im Rahmen der Darlehensfazilität für Griechenland (DFG), einer bilateralen Vereinbarung zwischen Griechenland und anderen Mitgliedstaaten der Eurogruppe, vergeben werden, niedrigere Zinsen zahlen, da die Marge auf diese Darlehen, die zusätzlich zum Euribor-Zins berechnet wird, von 150 Basispunkten auf 50 Basispunkte gesenkt wurde. Für Portugal gibt es keine vergleichbare Fazilität.

Die EFSF-Zinsen werden für Griechenland unverändert bleiben. Sowohl Griechenland als auch Portugal entrichten (wie Irland) an den EFSF Zinsen, die dem Jahresdurchschnittszinssatz entsprechen, zu dem der EFSF Darlehen am Markt aufnimmt. Für Portugal liegt dieser Satz derzeit knapp über 3 %. Darüber hinaus stellt der EFSF Gebühren in Rechnung, um seine Betriebskosten zu decken und die Bürgen zu entschädigen. Die Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets haben sich darauf geeinigt, für Griechenland die Garantieverpflichtungsgebühr zu streichen, die sich auf jährlich 10 Basispunkte auf den ausgezahlten Betrag beläuft. Eine ähnliche Streichung für Portugal würde sich nur sehr geringfügig auf die Finanzen des Landes auswirken, da diese Gebühr über viele Jahre hinweg bis zur Fälligkeit der Darlehen aufläuft. Portugal erhält ebenfalls Mittel aus dem EFSM und zahlt derzeit 2,9 % Zinsen auf EFSM-Darlehen. Griechenland erhält keine derartigen Mittel aus dem EFSM.

Die Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets haben zudem beschlossen, die Zinszahlungen auf EFSF-Darlehen um 10 Jahre zu verschieben und die Fälligkeiten der EFSF-Darlehen an Griechenland zu verlängern. Durch die Verschiebung der Zinszahlungen zahlt Griechenland in nächsten 10 Jahren weniger Zinsen, in den darauf folgenden 10 Jahren aber mehr. Im Wesentlichen handelt es sich dabei um eine einstweilige Verlagerung der Finanzierungskosten und Griechenland hat auf diesen Zinsverzug Zinsen zu zahlen. Die Ausdehnung der Fälligkeiten bedeutet, dass die EFSF-Darlehen länger laufen. Diese Maßnahme hat keine Auswirkungen auf die Finanzierungskosten Griechenlands.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011012/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Portugal wants to have the same concessions as Greece

After Greece, Portugal now also wants concessions on EFSF lending rates and maturities.

Are there specific figures showing how much this financing will cost? A detailed explanation would be appreciated.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(22 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, because the margin on these loans, on top of the Euribor interest rate, has been reduced from 150 bps to 50 bps. There is no silimar facility for Portugal.

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%. In addition, the EFSF charges fees, to cover its operational costs and to compensate guarantors. Euro area Member States have agreed to cancel for Greece the guarantee commiment fee which amounts to 10 bps annually on the disbursed amount. A similar cancelation for Portugal would have a very minor impact on the country's finances as it accumulates over many years until the maturity of the loans. Portugal also receives funding from the EFSM and currently pays 2.9% on EFSM loans. Greece does not receive such funding from EFSM.

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 a heavier one in the next decade; it is mainly an intertemporary shift in financing cost and Greece will have to pay interest charges on its deferred interests payments. The extension of maturities means that the EFSF loans will be outstanding for a longer period and this measure has no impact on Greece's financing costs.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011014/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(3 december 2012)

Betreft: Commissie: „Slecht gesteld in Turkije" (vervolgvraag)

Op 30 november 2012 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-009082/2012. Daarin schrijft hij onder andere: „Er moet opnieuw de nodige vaart worden gezet achter de toetredingsonderhandelingen […]." En vervolgens: „Wat betreft het Cypriotische voorzitterschap, herhaalt de Commissie haar ernstige bezorgdheid over de uitlatingen en dreigementen van Turkije en roept zij Turkije op om de rol van het voorzitterschap van de Raad ten volle te respecteren […]."

1. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het tegenstrijdig is om weliswaar „bezorgd te zijn over uitlatingen en dreigementen van Turkije ten aanzien van het Cypriotische voorzitterschap", maar tegelijkertijd te stellen dat „de nodige vaart achter de toetredingsonderhandelingen moet worden gezet"? Zo neen, hoe legt de Commissie dit dan uit?

2. Blijkt uit de woorden van de heer Füle dat de uitlatingen en dreigementen van Turkije in feite géén gevolgen hebben voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen? Zo neen, welke consequenties verbindt de Commissie dan wél aan de onacceptabele Turkse houding ten aanzien van het Cypriotische voorzitterschap?

3. Verwacht de Commissie dat Turkije ooit gemotiveerd zal zijn om zijn onacceptabele houding te veranderen, terwijl de toetredingsonderhandelingen gewoon ongewijzigd doorgaan? Zo ja, waarop baseert de Commissie deze verwachting?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „De Commissie gelooft dat het voortgangsverslag nuttig is als leidraad voor verdere noodzakelijke hervormingen in Turkije, overeenkomstig de EU-normen en het *acquis* — bijvoorbeeld op vlakken als de vrijheid van meningsuiting en inspanningen inzake het beteugelen van de criminaliteit en het bestrijden van terrorisme."

4. Verwacht de Commissie dat Turkije de genoemde „noodzakelijke hervormingen" ooit zal doorvoeren? Zo ja, op welke termijn verwacht de Commissie dit? Waarop baseert de Commissie deze verwachting?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije in feite steeds verder afglijdt? Deelt de Commissie de conclusie dat Turkije geen Europees land *is* en dat ook nooit zal *worden*? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het beter is de knoop definitief door te hakken en alle toetredingsonderhandelingen met én alle EU-geldstromen naar Turkije onmiddellijk te beëindigen? Zo neen, hoe lang wil de Commissie nog doorgaan met onderhandelen met én het financieel ondersteunen van een land dat *nooit* tot de EU zal kunnen toetreden?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar de inleiding van het voortgangsverslag 2012 over Turkije ([1]), dat op 10 oktober 2012 aan het Europees Parlement werd voorgelegd.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011014/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Commission: 'Unsatisfactory state of affairs in Turkey' (follow-up question)

On 30 November 2012, Mr Füle answered Written Question E-009082/2012 on behalf of the Commission. In his answer, he wrote, *inter alia*: 'Accession negotiations need to regain their momentum […]' and then: 'Regarding the Cypriot Council Presidency the Commission has reiterated its serious concerns with regard to Turkish statements and threats and called for full respect of the role of the Presidency of the Council […]'

1. Does the Commission agree that it is contradictory on the one hand to express 'concerns with regard to Turkish statements and threats' concerning the Cypriot Presidency, while on the other hand asserting that 'accession negotiations need to regain their momentum'? If not, how does the Commission explain this?

2. Do Mr Füle's statements indicate that Turkey's statements and threats will not in practice have any impact on the accession negotiations? If not, what consequences will Turkey's unacceptable attitude towards the Cypriot Presidency have, as far as the Commission is concerned?

3. Does the Commission anticipate that Turkey will ever be motivated to alter its unacceptable attitude while the accession negotiations simply continue without any change of course? If so, on what does the Commission base this expectation?

Mr Füle also wrote: 'The Commission believes that the progress report is a useful tool to guide further necessary reforms in Turkey, in line with the EU standards and the acquis — for instance in areas such as freedom of expression and efforts to control crime and to combat terrorism.'

4. Does the Commission expect that Turkey will ever implement the 'necessary reforms' to which it refers? If so, how soon does the Commission expect it to do so? On what does the Commission base this expectation?

5. Does the Commission agree that Turkey is in practice continuously regressing? Does the Commission agree that Turkey *is* not a European country and that it will never *become* one? Does the Commission agree that it would be better to act decisively and immediately halt all accession negotiations with, and all EU funding of, Turkey? If not, for how long does the Commission intend to continue to negotiate with, and to provide financial support for, a country which will *never* be able to accede to the EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 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

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011015/12
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(3. joulukuuta 2012)

Aihe: Täyttävätkö Suomen toimet saimaannorpan suojelussa luontodirektiivin velvoitteet?

Syksyllä 2012 arvioitiin saimaannorpan talvikannan (2011-2012) kooksi 310 yksilöä. Tämä on suurin nykyaikaisen kannanarviolaskennan aikana tehty arvio. On kuitenkin huomioitava, että kannan kasvu on keskittynyt edelleen ydinalueille (Pihlajavesi, Haukivesi), kun taas reuna-alueilla kanta riippuu muutamasta yksilöstä. Kannan kasvua arvioitaessa tulisi ottaa myös huomioon, että pienessä kannassa vuosittaiset heilahdukset näkyvät suhteellisesti suurempina.

Vuonna 2011 kalastusrajoitukset lisääntyivät, kun noin 2 000km^2 keskeisistä norppien lisääntymisalueista saatiin keväisten kalastusrajoitusten piiriin. Verkoilla kalastus on näillä alueilla kielletty huhtikuun puolivälistä kesäkuun loppuun. Kalastusrajoitukset ovat osoittautuneet toimiviksi: alkukesän kuuttikuolemat ovat vähentyneet. Kuitenkin jo keväällä 2011 alueen rajaus todettiin riittämättömäksi: kuusi kuuttia syntyi alueen ulkopuolella ja muutama lähellä rajaa. Lisäksi esimerkiksi vuonna 2012 kalanpyydyksiin kuolleita kuutteja löytyi kuusi kappaletta ja lisäksi yksi, jonka kuolinsyy viittaa pyydyskuolemaan. Rajoitusten ulkopuolella norppia on kuollut aiempaa enemmän. Tilastojen mukaan kuuttien kalanpyydyskuolemat jatkuvat aina syys-lokakuulle asti, vaikkakin suurin piikki on huhti-kesäkuussa.

Nyt norpan suojelua pohtiva seurantaryhmä on päättänyt, ettei Saimaalle tulla esittämään nykyistä tiukempia kalastusrajoituksia. Tämä siitä huolimatta, että tilastot tukisivat kalastusrajoitusten pidentämistä ainakin elokuun loppuun.

Voidaanko komission mielestä katsoa, että Suomen nykyiset toimenpiteet saimaannorpan suojelemiseksi ovat riittäviä luontodirektiivin velvoitteiden ja suojelupäämäärän toteuttamiseksi, unionin tuomioistuimen oikeuskäytäntö huomioon ottaen (erit. tapaus komissio v. Irlanti (C-117/00))?

Pyydän komissiota selvittämään, rikkooko Suomi luontodirektiivin vaatimuksia ja toimiiko se vastoin EY-tuomioistuimen oikeuskäytäntöä saimaannorpan suojelussa.

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta esittämä vastaus
(29. tammikuuta 2013)

Komissio pyytää arvoisaa parlamentin jäsentä tutustumaan komission vastaukseen saimaannorpan suojelua käsitelleeseen kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-3101/09 ([1]). Vastauksessa komissio selittää luontodirektiivissä (1992/43/ETY ([2])) säädetyt velvoitteet.

Tämän lajin suojelusta Suomessa on parhaillaan käynnissä rikkomusmenettely. Viimeisimmän Suomen viranomaisilta saadun vastauksen mukaan kalanpyydyskuolemat aiheuttavat edelleen huolta.

Tilannetta arvioidaan uudelleen vuonna 2013 ottaen huomioon Suomen viranomaisilta odotettavissa olevat uudet tiedot. Tällöin on tarkasteltava, riittävätkö kalastusrajoitukset estämään, ettei kuutteja, jotka ovat edelleen liian pieniä vapautuakseen verkoista, kuolisi huomattavia määriä.

Kaikkien Natura 2000 -alueiden olisi kuuluttava asianmukaisten suojelutoimien piiriin, jotta vältetään elinympäristöjen heikentyminen ja niitä lajeja koskevat häiriöt, joita varten alueet on osoitettu, kuten luontodirektiivin 6 artiklan 2 kohdassa edellytetään. Sama vaatimus on vahvistettu asiassa C-117/00 ([3]). Komissio on tyytyväinen sen toimintasuunnitelman tavoitteeseen, jolla Natura 2000 -alueita päivitetään saimaannorpan osalta vuosina 2013-2015. Kyseisiä alueita on kuitenkin vielä tarpeen tarkentaa.

([1]) Ks. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fi/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) EYVL L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) Euroopan yhteisöjen tuomioistuimen asiassa C-117/00 13.6.2002 antama tuomio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011015/12
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Finnish measures to protect the Saimaa ringed seal: do they fulfil the obligations under the Habitats Directive?

In autumn 2012 the winter population (2011-2012) of Saimaa ringed seals was estimated at 310, the highest figure since population estimates began in their present form. However, population growth is still concentrated in the central areas (Pihlajavesi and Haukivesi), whereas the population on the fringes depends on a few individuals. When estimating population growth it should also be borne in mind that when the population is small, the impact of annual fluctuations is, in relative terms, magnified.

In 2011 fishing restrictions were extended when about 2 000 km^2 of the central seal breeding areas were brought within the scope of the spring fishing ban. No fishing with nets may be carried out in the restricted areas from mid-April to the end of June. The fishing restrictions have proved effective: pup deaths in early summer have fallen. However, in spring 2011 the boundaries were already found to be too narrow: six pups were born outside the restricted area, and several others were born close to the edge. Furthermore, in 2012, for example, six pups died because they had been caught unintentionally by fishing gear, and another was thought to have died for the same reason. Outside the restricted areas seal deaths have risen. According to the statistics, bycatch mortality among pups invariably continues until late September or early October, although the rate peaks in April to June.

The seal conservation monitoring group has now decided that fishing restrictions in Lake Saimaa will not be tightened up, even though the figures suggest that they should be extended until at least the end of August.

In the Commission's opinion, can the existing Finnish measures to protect the Saimaa ringed seal be considered sufficient to fulfil the obligations under the Habitats Directive and meet the conservation target, taking into account the case law of the Court of Justice (especially in the Commission v Ireland case (C-117/00))?

Can the Commission ascertain whether, as far as ringed seal conservation is concerned, Finland is infringing the requirements of the Habitats Directive and acting contrary to Court of Justice case law?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-3101/09 ([1]) on the protection of the Saimaa ringed seal, in which it explains the obligations laid down by the Habitats Directive (1992/43/EEC ([2])).

An infringement procedure is currently ongoing in relation to the protection of this species in Finland. The last reply from the Finnish authorities indicates continuing concern about the issue of by-catch mortality.

The situation will be reassessed in 2013, taking into consideration expected new information from the Finnish authorities. This will need to consider whether fishing restrictions are adequate to prevent significant mortality of pups, which are still too small to free themselves from nets.

All Natura 2000 areas should be covered by appropriate protection measures to avoid deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of species for which the areas have been designated, as required by Art.6(2) of the Habitats Directive and confirmed in Case C-117/00 ([3]). The Commission welcomes the objective of the action plan of updating the Natura 2000 sites with regard to the Saimaa Seal in 2013-2015. However clarifications on the areas involved are needed.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) OJ L 206 , 22.07.1992.
([3]) Judgment of the European Court of Justice of 13 June 2002 in Case C-117/00.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-011016/12
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(3 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Czarna lista UE „znanych ze stosowania przemocy osadników" z Izraela

W dniu 16 listopada 2012 r. Komitet Polityczny i Bezpieczeństwa (KPiB) przyjął komunikat Grupy Roboczej ds. Maszreku i Maghrebu (MAMA) z dnia 17 października 2012 r. zatytułowany „Follow-up to 14 May FAC conclusions on MEPP: Settler violence" [Działania podjęte w następstwie konkluzji Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych dotyczących bliskowschodniego procesu pokojowego: przemoc stosowana przez osadników]. Treść tego komunikatu jest wysoce niepokojąca, gdyż sugeruje on, że państwa członkowskie „mogłyby rozważyć możliwość odmowy wjazdu do UE znanym ze stosowania przemocy osadnikom". Jestem także głęboko zaniepokojony następującym zaleceniem MAMA: „Delegatury UE w Tel Awiwie, a także w Jerozolimie i Ramallah, nasilą monitorowanie reagowania izraelskich władz na akty przemocy ze strony radykalnych osadników […] delegatury UE mogłyby w najpoważniejszych przypadkach obserwować procesy sądowe." To skandal, że takie działania (zwykle zarezerwowane dla krajów w sposób rażący łamiących prawa człowieka, jak Białoruś) są zalecane wobec kraju demokratycznego, jakim jest Izrael, gorliwie przestrzegający praworządności. Władze Izraela podjęły już stanowcze i zdecydowane działania, aby zapobiec wszelkim formom przemocy. Jestem głęboko przekonany, że jest to wewnętrzna sprawa Izraela oraz że jego władze odpowiednio się nią zajmują.

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zgadza się z opinią, że jest to wewnętrzna sprawa Izraela?

2. Ministerstwo spraw zagranicznych Izraela słusznie zadało następujące pytania: jeśli tzw. „znani ze stosowania przemocy osadnicy" nie będą wpuszczani do UE, ponieważ Izrael nie postawił ich przed sądem, to w jaki sposób dana osoba będzie uznawana za „stosującego przemoc osadnika" jeśli nie została skazana? Z drugiej strony, jeśli osadnik został skazany, oznacza to, że Izrael wymierzył mu sprawiedliwość, a więc zakaz wjazdu do UE nie miałby sensu. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel widzi niespójność takiego podejścia?

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

Działania osadników izraelskich na terytoriach okupowanych z definicji nie stanowią sprawy wewnętrznej Izraela. Komunikat, który Szanowny Pan Poseł przytoczył w swoim pisemnym zapytaniu, jest jednak wewnętrznym dokumentem do dyskusji, a nie publicznym dokumentem UE. W związku z tym niewłaściwe byłoby komentowanie jego treści.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011016/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EU blacklist of 'known violent settlers' from Israel

A note of the Maghreb-Mashreq committee (MaMa) of 17 October 2012 entitled 'Follow-up to 14 May FAC conclusions on MEPP: Settler violence' was approved by the Political and Security Committee (PSC) on 16 November 2012. The content of this note is very disturbing, as it suggests that Member States 'could explore the possibilities of denying access of known violent settlers to the EU'. I am also deeply disturbed by MaMa's recommendation for the following line of action: 'The EU missions in Tel Aviv as well as in Jerusalem and Ramallah will step up monitoring on the Israeli authorities' action against violence by extremist settlers […] the EU missions could attend trials in the most serious cases.' It is scandalous that such an action (usually reserved for countries with gross human rights violations such as Belarus) is recommended towards a democracy like Israel, which ardently upholds the rule of law. The Israeli authorities have already taken firm and decisive action to counter all forms of violence. I am fervently convinced that this is Israel's internal issue and that the authorities are dealing with it accordingly.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree with the statement that this is an internal matter for Israel?

2. The Israeli Foreign Ministry has aptly raised the following questions: if the so-called 'known violent settlers' are not admitted to the EU because Israel has failed to put them on trial, how would a person be defined as a 'violent settler' if he hasn't been convicted? On the other hand, if he has been convicted, then Israel has brought him to justice and an EU travel ban would be inappropriate. Does the Vice-President/High Representative see an inconsistency in this approach?

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

By definition, actions by Israeli settlers in occupied territory are not an internal matter for Israel. However, the note referred to in your written question is an internal discussion paper and not a public EU document. Therefore it would be inappropriate to comment on its contents.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011017/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Armonización de la fiscalidad cultural

El pasado 1 de septiembre, el cambio del tipo impositivo en España supuso una subida del 8 % al 21 % aplicado a bienes y servicios culturales. Se observa que la disminución de público está teniendo una repercusión inmediata en un sector ya muy castigado por los recortes, con una destrucción significativa de empresas culturales y la consiguiente pérdida de puestos de trabajo.

Las industrias culturales tienen un especial significado en Europa en la medida en que contribuyen a la promoción de la diversidad cultural así como de la cohesión local y regional.

Considerando que la cultura es un bien público y teniendo en cuenta que, en la Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 10 de abril de 2008, sobre las industrias culturales en Europa (P6_TA(2008)0123), se pide a la Comisión un marco reglamentario y fiscal que favorezca a las industrias culturales aplicando deducciones fiscales y tipos reducidos de IVA, y considerando que la UE, en sus negociaciones con la OMC, tiene en cuenta la naturaleza específica de estos bienes según el término «excepción cultural».

Siendo conscientes de formar parte de una comunidad cultural europea, preguntamos: ¿ha valorado la Comisión la posibilidad de redactar una Directiva armonizadora de la fiscalidad cultural?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2013)

El actual régimen del IVA aplicable al suministro de bienes y servicios culturales refleja la decisión del poder legislativo de la UE al definir el ámbito de aplicación de los tipos reducidos autorizados por la Directiva del IVA ([1]), así como la libertad de acción de los Estados miembros en virtud de dicha Directiva.

El artículo 96 de la Directiva del IVA dispone que los Estados miembros apliquen un tipo normal del IVA que no podrá ser inferior al 15 %. Sin embargo, su artículo 98 establece que los Estados miembros pueden aplicar uno o dos tipos reducidos del IVA no inferior al 5 % a las entregas de bienes y las prestaciones de servicios a que se refiere el anexo III de la Directiva del IVA, que contempla una serie de suministros culturales. Estas normas se aplican a todos los Estados miembros, salvo en los casos específicos en que se hayan concedido excepciones.

La última etapa del proceso destinado a armonizar el régimen del IVA fue la adopción de una Comunicación sobre el futuro del IVA ([2]), que anuncia, en particular, una revisión de los tipos reducidos de dicho impuesto ([3]).

En lo que respecta a los cambios recientes del IVA en España, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-008242/2012 ([4]).

([1]) Directiva 2006/112/CE del Consejo, de 28 de noviembre de 2006, relativa al sistema común del impuesto sobre el valor añadido (Directiva del IVA) — (DO L 347 de 11.12.2006, p. 1).
([2]) COM(2011) 851 final — Comunicación sobre el futuro del IVA — Hacia un sistema de IVA más simple, robusto, eficaz y adaptado al mercado único.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/consultations/tax/2012_vat_rates_en.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011017/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Harmonisation of cultural taxation

On 1 September, the change in the tax rate in Spain resulted in an increase in the rate applied to cultural goods and services from 8% to 21%. Falling visitor numbers are having an immediate impact on a sector already hard hit by cuts, with the collapse of many cultural undertakings and the resulting job losses.

Cultural industries are particularly significant in Europe as they contribute to promoting cultural diversity and local and regional cohesion.

Culture is a public asset and the European Parliament resolution of 10 April 2008 on cultural industries in Europe (P6_TA(2008)0123) calls on the Commission to establish a regulatory and fiscal framework that favours cultural industries by applying tax credits and reduced rates of VAT. It also recalls that in its negotiations with the WTO the EU should take into account the specific nature of these goods and the principle of 'cultural exception' applied to them.

As we form part of a European cultural community, we wish to ask the Commission whether it has considered the possibility of preparing a directive to harmonise cultural taxation?

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

The current VAT treatment of the supplies of cultural goods and services reflects the choice of the EU legislator in defining the scope of the reduced rates allowed by the VAT Directive ([1]) and the freedom of action enjoyed by Member States under that directive.

Article 96 of the VAT Directive requires Member States to apply a standard VAT rate which may not be less than 15%. However, its Article 98 provides that Member States may apply one or two reduced VAT rates of no less than 5% to supplies of goods and services referred to in Annex III to the VAT Directive, which contains a number of cultural supplies. These rules apply to all Member States except where specific derogations have been granted.

The latest step in the process aiming at harmonising VAT arrangements was the adoption of a communication on the future of VAT ([2]), which announced notably a review of the VAT rates structure ([3]).

Concerning the recent changes to VAT in Spain, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-008242/2012 ([4]).

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax (the VAT Directive) — (OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p.1).
([2]) COM(2011) 851 final — Communication on the future of VAT — Towards a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system tailored to the single market.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/consultations/tax/2012_vat_rates_en.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011018/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Confiscación de recursos fiscales palestinos y construcción de viviendas en Cisjordania

De nuevo, el Gobierno de Israel vuelve a reanudar las hostilidades contra Palestina. Pese al alto el fuego que alcanzaron ambos países el pasado 21 de noviembre, parece ser que Israel insiste en llevar a cabo todo tipo de agresiones contra Palestina, especialmente tras la aprobación de su estatus como miembro observador en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas.

Israel ha bloqueado la asignación mensual de recursos fiscales recaudados a ciudadanos palestinos, aproximadamente unos 92 millones de euros. Israel recauda a través de su Hacienda Tributaria los impuestos aduaneros pertenecientes a Palestina, así como los impuestos de los ciudadanos palestinos que trabajan en Israel. El Gobierno israelí ha decidido bloquear la devolución de estos fondos para cubrir la deuda que Palestina tiene con Israel en concepto de la electricidad que le suministran. La cantidad supone prácticamente la mitad de los recursos económicos de la Autoridad Nacional Palestina y su confiscación supone una agresión que, si bien no incumple el alto el fuego, traerá consigo graves problemas para el mantenimiento del Estado palestino.

Aparte de esta agresión fiscal, el Gobierno israelí aprobó el viernes 30 de noviembre la construcción de un nuevo asentamiento de 3 000 viviendas para nuevas colonias judías en los territorios ocupados de Cisjordania y Jerusalén Este, violando de nuevo la integridad territorial de Palestina. La decisión unilateral de esta construcción de viviendas en los territorios ocupados solo puede agravar el conflicto y hacer más difícil una salida negociada del mismo. Israel continúa siendo la principal amenaza para la paz y la seguridad en la zona, y lo confirma, día tras día, con la absoluta indiferencia al Derecho internacional y a las decisiones de las Naciones Unidas. En ese contexto, según las declaraciones realizadas por la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante el pasado día 29 de noviembre ante el voto sobre Palestina como miembro observador en la ONU, la UE sostiene que la solución negociada se debe alcanzar «sobre las bases de una solución de dos Estados, con el Estado de Israel y un Estado soberano, democrático, viable y contiguo de Palestina».

1. ¿Piensa la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante exigir a Israel el fin de la construcción en los territorios ocupados?

2. ¿Qué medidas concretas piensa desarrollar para garantizar la viabilidad fiscal y la soberanía del Estado palestino?

3. ¿Considera la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel hasta que Israel respete las fronteras, la viabilidad y la soberanía del Estado palestino?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión

(5 de febrero de 2013)

La UE nunca ha sido más clara que cuando manifestó, en el Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de 10 de diciembre de 2012, su firme oposición a la expansión de las colonias israelíes. La UE se opone especialmente a la aplicación de planes que vayan en grave detrimento de las perspectivas de una resolución negociada del conflicto por poner en peligro la posibilidad de un Estado palestino contiguo y viable y de Jerusalén como la futura capital de dos Estados. A la luz de su principal objetivo de lograr la solución de dos Estados, la UE seguirá estando muy atenta a la situación y a sus repercusiones generales y actuará en consecuencia.

En lo que se refiere a la viabilidad presupuestaria de la Autoridad Palestina, el Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de 10 de diciembre también hizo un llamamiento a Israel para que evitara cualquier disposición que perjudicara la situación financiera de la Autoridad Palestina. La UE seguirá manteniendo en 2013 su programa de asistencia al pueblo palestino con la misma dotación que en 2012 (300 millones de euros). Al amparo de dicho programa, concentrará a comienzos de año su ayuda financiera directa al presupuesto de la Autoridad Palestina para ayudarla a superar sus dificultades actuales y seguirá prestando un apoyo a largo plazo para crear las instituciones estatales palestinas. El Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de 14 de mayo de 2012 también planteó en sus conclusiones una serie de asuntos que, a juicio de la UE, deben abordarse desde el punto de vista de la garantía de la viabilidad de dicho Estado, incluida la importancia económica actual de la Zona C de Cisjordania.

La posición de la AR/VP respecto a la posibilidad de congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel se indica en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-10294/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011018/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Confiscation of Palestinian tax resources and construction of housing in the West Bank

Once again, the Israeli Government has resumed hostilities against Palestine. Despite the ceasefire imposed on both countries on 21 November it seems that Israel is bent on carrying out all forms of aggression against Palestine, especially since the approval of its observer status in the UN General Assembly.

Israel has blocked the monthly allocation of tax resources collected from Palestinians, some EUR 92 million. Via its Tax Agency, Israel collects the customs duties belonging to Palestine and the taxes paid by Palestinian citizens working in Israel. The Israeli Government decided to block repayment of the funds in order to cover Palestine's debt to Israel for the electricity supplied to it. The amount represents almost half of the Palestinian National Authority's economic resources and its confiscation is an act of aggression which, although it does not breach the ceasefire, will cause serious problems for the continued existence of the Palestinian State.

Apart from this act of fiscal aggression, on Friday 30 November the Israeli Government approved the construction of a new settlement of 3 000 housing units for new Jewish colonies in the Occupied Territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, once again violating Palestine's territorial integrity. The unilateral decision to build these housing units in the Occupied Territories can only aggravate the conflict and make a negotiated settlement more difficult. Israel continues to be the main threat to peace and security in the region, which is borne out day after day, by its total indifference to international law and UN decisions. Against this backdrop, according to statements made by the Vice-President/High Representative on 29 November regarding the vote on Palestine as a UN observer member, the EU maintains that the negotiated settlement should be reached on the basis of a 'two-state solution with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine'.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to demand Israel to stop building in the Occupied Territories?

2. What practical measures will be taken to ensure the fiscal viability and sovereignty of the Palestinian State?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative considering the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement until such time as Israel respects the borders, viability and sovereignty of the Palestinian State?

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

The EU has never been clearer than it was in the Foreign Affairs Council on 10 December 2012 in voicing its strong opposition to Israeli settlement expansion. The EU particularly opposes the implementation of plans which seriously undermine the prospects of a negotiated resolution of the conflict by jeopardising the possibility of a contiguous and viable Palestinian state and of Jerusalem as the future capital of two states. In the light of its core objective of achieving the two-state solution, the EU will closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and act accordingly.

As regards the fiscal viability of the Palestinian Authority, the FAC of 10 December also included a call on Israel 'to avoid any step undermining the financial situation of the Palestinian Authority'. The EU will continue to maintain its assistance programme to the Palestinian people in 2013 at the same level as in 2012 (EUR 300m). Under this it will both 'frontload' its direct financial support to the Palestinian Authority budget to help it through its current difficulties as well as continue to provide long-term support for building Palestinian state institutions. The Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 14 May 2012 also set out a range of issues which the EU believes should be addressed in terms of ensuring the viabiliity of such a state, including the current economic importance of Area C of the West Bank.

The HR/VP's position with regard to the possibility of freezing the EU-Israel Association Agreement was set out in the reply to Written Question E-10294/2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011019/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Bombardeo del Ejército colombiano en pleno proceso de negociaciones

El pasado sábado 1 de diciembre el Ejército colombiano bombardeó posiciones de las FARC con el supuesto resultado de 20 muertos entre sus filas. Esto supone una nueva agresión en el contexto del proceso de negociación iniciado el pasado lunes 19 de noviembre con el alto el fuego unilateral anunciado por las FARC del 20 de noviembre al 20 de enero del año próximo.

Con un bombardeo como este, el Gobierno colombiano confirma su actitud beligerante y su nula intención de buscar una salida negociada al conflicto, ya que parece aprovechar el alto el fuego para intensificar las ofensivas militares en contra de las FARC. La actitud del Presidente Santos supone una grave agresión que demuestra que este Gobierno es una de las causas de la violencia en Colombia, y no una parte de la solución al conflicto. Esta actitud violenta implica el nulo respeto a la tregua y la clara amenaza para los integrantes de las FARC de que pueden ser perseguidos y asesinados pese a participar en un proceso de paz, como en el caso del exterminio de los componentes de la Unión Patriótica en la segunda mitad de los años ochenta. Este hecho profundiza en las raíces del conflicto y cierra opciones políticas para una salida negociada y pacífica de un conflicto que ya supera los 60 años de duración.

Las FARC han dado un paso adelante para que el proceso de negociación iniciado pueda conducir al desarrollo de un verdadero cambio en Colombia. Considerando que se trata de uno de los países con mayor número de violaciones de los derechos humanos, la posición bloqueadora de Santos deja clara cuál de las partes tiene la voluntad de llegar a una salida negociada del conflicto.

La propia Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante declaró que «la Unión Europea siempre ha estado convencida de que solo una solución negociada puede proporcionar la base para una paz duradera en Colombia». Pero pese a la histórica oportunidad que se presenta, el Presidente del Gobierno colombiano continúa manifestando su total falta de reciprocidad, respondiendo a la tregua con bombardeos.

1. ¿Qué medidas piensa emplear la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante para garantizar que el Gobierno de Colombia abandone el bombardeo y continúe en el proceso de negociación?

2. ¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que el Gobierno colombiano debe responder proporcionalmente con algún gesto pacífico frente al anuncio de la tregua de las FARC?

3. ¿Piensa la UE presionar a través de la congelación del Acuerdo Comercial Multiparte hasta que Colombia negocie una salida de su conflicto?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de febrero de 2013)

Remitimos a Su Señoría a la respuesta a la pregunta escrita anterior E-010866/2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011019/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Bombardment by the Colombian Army in the midst of the negotiation process

On Saturday, 1 December, the Colombian Army bombed FARC positions, allegedly resulting in 20 deaths from among its ranks. This is a further act of aggression against the backdrop of the negotiation process launched on Monday, 19 November, with the unilateral ceasefire announced by the FARC to last from 20 November to 20 January next year.

A bombardment like this confirms the Colombian Government's belligerent attitude and its refusal to seek a negotiated settlement to the conflict since it seems to be taking advantage of the ceasefire to step up military offensives against the FARC. President Santos' attitude implies an act of serious aggression and shows that this Government is one the causes of the violence in Colombia and not part of the solution to the conflict. This violent attitude implies non-compliance with the truce and a clear threat to FARC members that they can be pursued and killed despite taking part in a peace process — as in the case of the extermination of the members of the Patriotic Union in the second half of the 1980s. This fact deepens the roots of the conflict and closes off political options for a negotiated and peaceful outcome to a conflict that has already lasted for more than 60 years.

The FARC have taken a step forward to enable the negotiation process to bring about a genuine change in Colombia. Since this is one of the countries with the highest number of human rights violations, President Santos' obstructive position makes it quite clear which side is willing to achieve a negotiated outcome to the conflict.

The Vice-President/High Representative herself stated that 'it has always been the conviction of the European Union that only a negotiated solution can provide the basis for lasting peace in Colombia'. But despite the historic opportunity that has arisen, the President of the Colombian Government continues to demonstrate his total lack of reciprocity by responding to the truce with bombing.

1. What measures does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take to guarantee that the Government of Colombia stops the bombardment and continues the negotiation process?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that the Colombian Government should respond in like manner with some peaceful gesture to mark the announcement of the FARC truce?

3. Does the EU intend to bring pressure to bear by freezing the Multiparty Trade Agreement until such time as Colombia negotiates an outcome to its conflict?

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

The Honourable Member is kindly referred to the reply to the previous Written Question E-010866/2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011020/12
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: ECJ ruling on gender discrimination in the sale of insurance

Following the ECJ ruling on the 'Gender Directive' (2004/113/EC) of March 2011, as of 21 December it will no longer be possible for insurance companies to offer different premiums to women because of their gender.

Some industry studies have estimated that this ruling could mean that young women could face an increase of up to 25% in their motor insurance premiums and that pension annuities could fall by at least 2%.

If car insurance becomes more costly for young women, many will not be able to afford to have a car. My constituency has a large rural population, often with limited access to public transport; having a car is not a luxury, but often a necessity in order to travel to work. Unemployment amongst young people has also risen.

1. What action is the Commission taking to monitor the impact of the decision to stop Member States being able to 'permit proportionate differences in individuals' premiums and benefits where the use of sex is a determining factor in the assessment of risk based on relevant and accurate actuarial and statistical data' under Article 5(2) of Directive 2004/113/EC?

2. What action is the Commission taking to pursue alternative policies to enable young people, particularly young women in rural areas, to have access to affordable car insurance?

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

It is the exclusive competence of the Court of Justice of the European Union to authoritatively interpret EC law in order to ensure its uniform interpretation and application in all the Member States. The Commission is, after the Court ruling in the Test-Achats case ([1]), under the obligation to ensure that EC law, as interpreted by the Court, is properly implemented. The Commission will report on the impact of the ruling in 2014, in the context of a more general report on the implementation of Directive 2004/113/EC.

It is likely that the Court's judgment will have some effects on individual premiums. Depending on the product concerned, premiums might increase or decrease for men or women. The actual impact of the changes is hard to predict, because several other factors come into play when insurers calculate their prices, including the percentage of men and women in the insurer's portfolio, the transition cost and risk margin to adapt to a new system and the level of competition in a specific market. In practice, although entry tariffs for motor insurance might increase for young women and decrease for young men, young women's premiums should decrease more quickly on average than young men's premiums, based on their individual driving behaviour.

The Commission will remain vigilant in following the evolution of the insurance market in order to detect any unjustified rise in prices attributed to the Test-Achats ruling, including in light of the tools that are available under competition law in the event of alleged anti-competitive conduct.

([1]) Judgment of 1 March 2011 in Case C-236/09, OJ C 130 of 30.4.2011, p. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011021/12
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Competition issues in the market for prescribed medication

Over recent years there has been a significant reduction in the number of full-line pharmaceutical wholesalers in the UK; there is now no single wholesaler able to supply the full range of medicines, whereas there used to be twelve. This has led to the loss of any effective competition between wholesalers, which has had a detrimental effect on dispensing contractors and the patients they serve.

1. Has the Commission looked into the effects of pharmaceutical companies deciding to supply only a limited number of drug wholesalers?

2. Is there evidence to suggest anti-competitive behaviour in this market?

3. Has the Commission considered whether legislation such as Directive 2011/62/EU has resulted in a contraction of wholesalers?

4. Can the Commission confirm that changes in the wholesale supply of medicines have not created distortions in the market for prescribed medication?

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

The Commission continuously monitors market developments in the pharmaceutical sector under its competition law remit.

In recent years, several manufacturers in the UK have implemented substantial changes to the way they distribute their medicines, some of which involve using a limited number of wholesalers and the introduction of 'direct to pharmacy' schemes.

An investigation under Article 101 TFEU would require indications that pharmaceutical market players have engaged in agreements or concerted practices which have as their object or effect the restriction of competition in the distribution markets, having an impact on the EU trade. Similarly under Article 102 TFEU, it would require indications that pharmaceutical manufacturers with a dominant position in a relevant market are imposing supply policies or conditions that may be considered abusive.

At this point no sufficient evidence to justify opening of a formal investigation into such practices in the UK has been brought to the Commission.

Finally, the provisions affecting wholesalers introduced by Directive 2001/62/EC, notably the reporting of incidents of falsified medicines by wholesalers and the recording of their authorisation in the EU database, has not resulted in the contraction of the number of wholesalers. Other provisions affecting wholesalers will enter into force only after 2017.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011022/12
to the Commission
Derek Roland Clark (EFD)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: UK floods

Following the extensive damage caused by floods in the UK over the last few weeks, will the Commission say whether the UK will be receiving financial support from EU funds?

It will be extremely expensive to clear up and restore systems of all kinds after these floods, and it should be borne in mind that the UK is one of the major contributors to the EU budget.

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

The main financial instrument for addressing the consequences of natural disasters inside the EU is the EU Solidarity Fund. This instrument can normally be mobilised if the damage caused by a disaster exceeds a certain threshold, which for the UK in 2012 was set at EUR 3.536 billion. For smaller disasters, the Fund can only be activated under very exceptional circumstances.

In order for the Commission to approve aid to a Member State from the EU Solidarity Fund the Member State must make an application within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage caused by the disaster. In this case, the UK has not applied for financial assistance from the Fund. Without this application the Commission is unable to assess whether the UK would qualify for aid.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011023/12
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Natural catastrophe insurance markets

Further to its answer of 24 July 2012 to my Written Question E-005359/2012, and to the report published by the Joint Research Centre on 28 September 2012 entitled 'Natural Catastrophes: Risk relevance and Insurance Coverage in the EU', which concluded that 'there are cases where NatCat [natural catastrophe] insurance markets do not seem to fully cope with existing risks', what action is the Commission now considering to ensure that NatCat insurance markets are able to fully cope with existing risks such as floods and storm damage?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2013)

As a follow up to the final report on 'Natural Catastrophes: Risk Relevance and Insurance Coverage in the European Union' published by the Joint Research Centre in the third quarter of 2012, the Commission is preparing a Green Paper on the prevention and insurance of natural and man-made disasters. The adoption of that Green Paper is foreseen for the first quarter of 2013 as part of the forthcoming EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change.

The overall objective of the EU Adaptation Strategy is to contribute effectively to a more climate resilient Europe. This means enhancing the preparedness and capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change at local, regional, national and EU levels, developing a coherent approach and improving coordination. Insurance, both as a sector and as an instrument for adaptation, should provide the adequate incentives for investments and business decisions so as to secure the long-term resilience and competitiveness of the EU's economy.

The Commission will decide on possible follow-up actions after having studied the responses to the public consultation on the Green Paper.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-011024/12
Komisi
Andrea Češková (ECR)
(3. prosince 2012)

Předmět: Chladící kapalina HFO-1234yf

Společným rozhodnutím Evropského parlamentu a Rady byla dne 17. května 2006 přijata směrnice o emisích z klimatizačních systémů motorových vozidel a o změně směrnice Rady 70/156/EHS. Za účelem omezení emisí některých fluorovaných skleníkových plynů z klimatizačních systémů stanovuje tato směrnice požadavky týkající se klimatizačních systémů montovaných do vozidel a bezpečného fungování těchto systémů. Další legislativní opatření, která regulují klimatizační systémy, je nařízení Komise č. 706/2007 a směrnice Komise 2007/37/ES.

Tento legislativní rámec stanovuje taková kritéria pro klimatizační systémy a jimi vypouštěné emise, kterým vyhovuje pouze nově vyvinutá chladící kapalina HFO-1234yf. Na základě výsledku standardního testování jednoho německého výrobce automobilů bylo zjištěno, že je tato chladící kapalina vysoce hořlavá, a tudíž pro reálný provoz nebezpečná. Vzhledem k tomuto neuspokojivému výsledku je chladící kapalina HFO-1234yf v současné době podrobena nezávislému testování.

V této souvislosti si dovoluji položit Komisi následující otázky a požádat o jejich individuální zodpovězení:

1. Co s tím v této situaci Komise hodlá činit od 1. ledna 2013?

2. Jakým způsobem budou výsledky testů Komisí zohledněny?

Odpověď pana Tajaniho jménem Komise
(28. ledna 2013)

Směrnice 2006/40/ES týkající se mobilních klimatizačních systémů (MKS) stanoví, že od 1. ledna 2011 musí být MKS nově schválených typů vozidel plněny chladivem s nízkým potenciálem globálního oteplování. Směrnice ke splnění této povinnosti nepředepisuje žádné konkrétní chladivo nebo systém. Na základě několika testování a hodnocení různých výrobků jakožto možných náhražek stávajícího chladiva/plynu HFC-134a nesplňujícího požadavky směrnice a po provedení rozsáhlého posouzení rizik během procesu normalizace se dospělo k závěru a dohodě, že bezpečnou alternativou pro použití v mobilních klimatizačních systémech je chladící kapalina HFO-1234yf.

Vzhledem k výjimečným okolnostem a výlučně s ohledem na problémy s dodávkou této chladící kapaliny Komise nicméně souhlasila s tím, že nezahájí řízení pro nesplnění povinností v případech, kdy bude výroba vozidel do 31. prosince 2012 dále používat plyn HFC-134a.

Míní-li se „standardním testováním jednoho německého výrobce automobilů“ zkoušky provedené společností Daimler a ohlášené v tiskové zprávě ze dne 25. září 2012, pak Komise potvrzuje, že o nich byla zpravena.

Směrnice 2006/40/ES je plně v platnosti ode dne 1. ledna 2013 a Komise stávající situaci i veškeré případy porušení uvedené směrnice pozorně monitoruje.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011024/12
to the Commission
Andrea Češková (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: HFO-1234yf coolant

By joint decision of the European Parliament and the Council, on 17 May 2006 the directive relating to emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles and amending Council Directive 70/156/EEC was adopted. This directive lays down requirements concerning air conditioning systems installed in vehicles and the safe operation of these systems, with a view to limiting emissions of certain fluorinated greenhouse gases from air conditioning systems. Commission Regulation No 706/2007 and Commission Directive 2007/37/EC are other pieces of legislation that regulate air conditioning systems.

This legislative framework sets such rigid criteria for air conditioning systems and the emissions that they release that the only coolant able to meet them is the newly developed HFO-1234yf. However, standard testing carried out by a German automobile manufacturer demonstrated that this coolant is highly flammable, and therefore unsuitable for ordinary use. In view of these disturbing findings, the HFO-1234yf coolant is currently undergoing independent testing.

In this connection, I should like to ask the Commission to provide an answer to each of the following questions:

1. What steps does the Commission intend to take in this matter from 1 January 2013?

2. How will it include the results of the tests in its calculations?

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

Directive 2006/40/EC on mobile air-conditioning (MAC) stipulates that, as of 1 January 2011, MACs of newly approved types of vehicles have to be filled with a refrigerant with a low global warming potential (GWP). The directive does not prescribe any particular refrigerant or system to fulfil this obligation. Following several tests and evaluations of various products as potential replacements of the current refrigerant/gas HFC-134a, which does not fulfil the requirements of the directive, and after performing extensive risk assessment during the standardisation process, it was concluded and agreed that HFO-1234yf was safe to use in mobile air-conditioning systems.

However, in light of the exceptional circumstances and exclusively with respect to supply problems of HFO-1234yf, the Commission accepted to refrain from launching infringement procedures in cases where vehicle production would continue to be done with the gas HFC-134a until 31 December 2012.

If the tests referred to as 'standard testing carried out by a German automobile manufacturer' mean the tests carried out by Daimler and announced in a press release of 25 September 2012, the Commission confirms that it has been informed thereof.

Directive 2006/40/EC fully applies as of 1 January 2013 and the Commission closely monitors the situation and any potential violation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011025/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Online-Bildungsprojekte in der EU

Einige US-amerikanische Projekte, darunter insbesondere „Coursera", „Udacity" und „EdX", bieten kostenlose Universitätskurse oder Kurse auf Universitätsniveau über das Internet an. Einige solche Bildungsprojekte sind explizit darauf ausgerichtet, Menschen ohne Universitätsabschluss den Zugang zu hochwertigen Kursen zu ermöglichen. Die zugehörigen Lernmaterialien werden dabei meist von amerikanischen Universitäten zur Verfügung gestellt. Die überwiegende Anzahl derartiger Projekte findet sich im englischsprachigen Raum und wird von US-Organisationen betrieben.

Das Internet bietet die Möglichkeit (Hochschul-)Kurse bei geringen Kosten einem großen Publikum zugänglich zu machen, zum Beispiel durch automatisierte Benotungsverfahren.

1. Fällt es nach Ansicht der Kommission in den Aufgabenbereich der EU, Projekte zu fördern, mit denen selbst erstellte oder von Universitäten angebotene Kurse online kostenfrei oder kostenpflichtig verfügbar gemacht werden?

2. Welche Strategie verfolgt die Kommission zu Online-Bildungsangeboten im Allgemeinen und Online-Hochschulbildung im Speziellen? Wenn sie bisher über keine explizite Strategie verfügt: Wann wird die Kommission eine solche vorschlagen?

3. Wurde die Kommission bereits um Förderung von Online-Bildungsprojekten gebeten? Wenn ja: zu welchen und wie hat die Kommission reagiert?

4. Werden bereits Online-Bildungsprojekte durch die Kommission — beispielsweise über das Forschungsrahmenprogramm oder über Kulturprojekte — gefördert?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(31. Januar 2013)

Die Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie (IKT) verändert sämtliche Aspekte unser aller Leben. Die Bürgerinnen und Bürger kommen immer leichter an Wissen, und dies auch immer öfter kostenlos. Die Zahl der E-Learning-Kurse und anderer online verfügbarer Ressourcen (entweder als freie Lern- und Lehrmaterialien oder als kostenpflichtige Bildungsangebote) steigt exponential an.

Ein derartiger Paradigmenwechsel kann für Lernende interessant sein, für die der Besuch einer Hochschule sonst zu abwegig wäre, und mehr maßgeschneiderte Lösungen mit flexiblem und kreativem Lernverhalten ermöglichen — z. B. wenn die Nutzerinnen und Nutzer Lerninhalte selbst erstellen.

Die EU-Strategie zur Modernisierung der Hochschulen ([1]) fordert die Mitgliedstaaten und die Hochschulen auf, das „Potenzial der IKT besser [zu] nutzen, um wirksamere und individuellere Lernerfahrungen, Lehr- und Forschungsmethoden (z. B. E-Learning und Blended Learning) zu ermöglichen und virtuelle Lernplattformen stärker einzusetzen".

Im Frühjahr 2013 wird die Kommission eine Initiative zur Öffnung der Bildung vorstellen, die zum Ziel hat, mithilfe neuer Technologien die Bildung und die Kompetenzentwicklung zu verbessern, und das im November 2012 angenommene Paket zu neuen Denkansätzen für die Bildung ergänzt.

Die EU-Finanzmittel helfen bereits zahlreichen Hochschulen dabei, das Potenzial für neue Lehr- und Lernpraktiken auszuschöpfen, indem bei neuen Inhalten und der Umsetzung grenzübergreifend zusammengearbeitet wird. Näheres zu solchen über Erasmus unterstützten Projekten kann unter: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/multilateral-projects_de.htm abgerufen werden.

Im Rahmen des vorgeschlagenen Programms „Erasmus für alle" für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 möchte die Kommission die Möglichkeiten für eine derartige Zusammenarbeit weiter ausbauen und verstärken.

([1]) KOM(2011)567 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011025/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Online education projects in the EU

Several projects in the United States, in particular 'Coursera', 'Udacity' and 'EdX', are providing university courses or university-level courses online free of charge. Some of these education projects are specifically designed to enable people who do not have university degrees to access advanced courses. The syllabuses and course materials used are provided in most cases by American universities. The vast majority of such projects are taking place in the English-speaking world and run by American organisations.

The Internet enables (higher education) courses to be made available to a wide audience at low cost, with features such as automatic grading, for example.

1. Does the Commission consider that supporting projects to make tailor-made or university courses available online free of charge or in return for payment falls within the competence of the EU?

2. What is the Commission's strategy with regard to online training in general and online university training in particular? If the Commission does not yet have a specific strategy in this area, when will it propose one?

3. Has the Commission already received requests to support online education projects? If so, which were the projects and how did the Commission react?

4. Are online education projects already being supported by the Commission — for example, under the framework Programme for Research or as part of cultural projects?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is changing all aspects of our lives. Knowledge is increasingly available to all citizens, and is increasingly free. There has been an exponential growth in educational courses and other resources available via the Internet, either free as Open Educational Resources or paid-for educational content.

Such a paradigm shift has the potential to attract learners for whom university would otherwise be a remote possibility and to allow for more tailor-made solutions with flexible and creative ways of learning, including where the user is also a creator of learning content.

The EU Modernisation of Higher Education Strategy ([1]) calls upon Member States and Higher Education Institutions to 'better exploit the potential of ICTs to enable more effective and personalised learning experiences, teaching and research methods (e.g. eLearning and blended learning) and increase the use of virtual learning platforms'.

In spring 2013, the Commission will present an initiative on 'Opening up Education' to enhance education and skills development through new technologies, as a follow-up to the Rethinking Education package adopted in November 2012.

EU funding is already helping many universities to explore the potential of new teaching and learning practices by cooperating on new content and delivery across borders. Details of such projects supported via the Erasmus initiative can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/multilateral-projects_en.htm.

Within the framework of the proposed 'Erasmus for All' programme 2014-2020, the Commission wishes to further expand and deepen opportunities for such cooperation.

([1]) COM(2011) 567 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011028/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Grace and favour accommodation for Commission officials

A constituent has written to me asking about the cost of providing grace and favour accommodation for Commission officials.

Could the Commission confirm how many such houses, apartments or chalets exist and for what purposes, and state how many people are employed in their service and maintenance? Could it also supply the latest estimate of the total value of the accommodation around the world owned or leased by the Commission?

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

The Commission does not provide any official residences or subsidised housing for its staff employed in the EU. The general rule regarding staff accommodation is that each staff member assigned in the EU finds and pays his/her own accommodation in his/her member state of assignment.

The only exception to this rule is the housing provided to newcomers in the Joint Research Center in Ispra, Italy, where during the first 6 months of their assignment they can be accommodated in an apartment rented to them by the Commission, i.e. staff pays rent. All expenses linked to those apartments, including service and maintenance, are covered by individual staff members and not by the Commission. The prices of those apartments are in line with the prices on the local real estate market.

As regards staff assigned to EU delegations in non-EU countries, the institutions follow the practice of the Member States for their diplomatic staff in embassies. For these staff members, housing and housing expenses are governed by Article 5 of Annex X of the Staff Regulations. The costs of accommodation leased by the Commission is detailed on page 82 of the Working Document Part VI, administrative expenditure under heading 5 of the Draft General Budget of the European Commission for the financial year 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011029/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Violence against immigrants in Greece

A constituent has written to me asking about anti-immigrant violence carried out by Golden Dawn and allied fascists in Greece. He claims that some of the violence has been supported by members of a police force who have abandoned their neutrality.

What steps will the Commission take to ensure that the Greek authorities are reminded of their obligations to uphold human rights, of the importance of unbiased, professional policing at a time of national crisis and of the right of immigrants from both inside and outside the EU to fair treatment?

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

The European Commission strongly condemns all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, including anti-immigrant violence, no matter whom they come from. These phenomena are incompatible with the values on which the European Union if founded. Public authorities must strongly condemn and actively fight against racist and xenophobic crime, including by ensuring that any alleged offences motivated by racism or xenophobia are promptly investigated and, when necessary, the perpetrators of such acts are prosecuted and punished.

Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA ([1]) obliges all EU Member States to penalise the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred based on race, colour, religion, descent or ethnic or national origin, and to ensure that a racist or xenophobic motivation of any other offece is considered as an aggravating circumstances or may be taken into account in the determination of the penalties. The framework Decision provides also for the liability of legal persons.

The Member States were obliged to transpose the framework Decision into their national legislation by 28 November 2010. Greece has not so far notified its national implementing measures. The Commission is not authorised to launch infringement proceedings on the basis of Framework Decisions until 1 December 2014 but it monitors closely the transposition and the application of the framework Decision and will prepare a report assessing the Member States' compliance with this EC law in 2013.

([1]) 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.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011030/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Incursions into the lands of the Yanomami forest tribespeople of South America

I have received a letter from a constituent who is concerned about recent incursions into the historic lands of the indigenous Yanomami forest tribespeople of South America.

The state of Brazil has not granted them ownership of their tribal lands, and in recent months miners prospecting for gold have returned to the areas in which they live.

Could the Commission raise the issue with the Brazilian Government and seek assurances that the historic lands of the Yanomami tribespeople will be protected from encroachment?

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

The European Union is aware of the situation faced by the Yanomami forest tribespeople as well as other indigenous tribes in Brazil.

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

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

The European Union has been actively supporting over the years indigenous rights in Brazil, through the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) budget line, the European Initiative for Human Rights and Democracy (EIDHR) and the tropical forest budget line.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011031/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Proposed French import tax on Malaysian palm oil

I have been contacted by a constituent who is following the EU-Malaysia FTA negotiations.

He is concerned about the French Senate's proposal to place a discriminatory new tax on palm oil imports from Malaysia. He understands that the proposed new tax could be challenged under WTO rules governing the substitutability of domestic products, because no equivalent tax has been levied on comparable French products, and also under the WTO's Sanitary and Phytosanitary rules.

My constituent tells me that Malaysian business and Government leaders have taken great exception to this proposal from the French Senators. It is likely that the French proposal, if passed into law, will provide a major obstacle to a successful free trade agreement between Malaysia and the European Union.

Has the Commission made any representations to the French Government to explain that levying discriminatory new taxes on Malaysian products could frustrate hopes of a successful continuation of FTA negotiations?

Answer given by M. De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 January 2013)

The Commission has been following very closely the French debate and parliamentary process on the proposal to increase the special consumption tax on palm oil. The proposed tax was eventually rejected by French parliamentarians on 3 December 2012 in the final reading of the relevant bill.

The Commission has also conveyed its concerns to the French authorities and pointed to the wider impact that such domestic taxation measures on palm oil may have on the EU's Free Trade Agreement agenda with palm oil exporting countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia.

The Commission will continue to monitor the issue closely.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011032/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Kurdish prisoners in Turkey

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about Kurdish prisoners in Turkey.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. What discussions it has had with the Turkish authorities about the hundreds of Kurdish political prisoners who have been on hunger strike in Turkish prisons since 12 September 2012?

2. Whether it believes that the incarceration of Abdullah Öcalan is an appropriate way to reach a political settlement of the Kurdish question in Turkey, and whether it has made any representations to the Turkish authorities on behalf of the EU on this matter?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Members to its answer to previous written questions P-010241/2012 and P-010242/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011033/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Rispetto della normativa europea nei lavori di costruzione del «terzo ponte» a Cremona

Nella sua risposta E-006740/2012, del 16 agosto 2012, all'interrogazione relativa al contestato progetto di costruzione di un «terzo ponte» a Cremona, la Commissione ha precisato di non avere ancora ricevuto dalle autorità italiane informazioni dettagliate sulla valutazione, in conformità all'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva Habitat, dell'impatto ambientale di tale progetto su diversi siti Natura 2000 e ha rammentato che spetta in primo luogo ai giudici e alle autorità amministrative nazionali far si che le autorità degli Stati membri rispettino la normativa dell'Unione europea.

Lo scorso 25 settembre 2012 la terza sezione del Tribunale Amministrativo Regionale del Lazio ha respinto, giudicandoli «tardivi» ([1]), i ricorsi presentati dal «Comitato Amici della grande Nonna Quercia» che denunciavano il mancato rispetto della normativa europea da parte di questo progetto.

Per un mero vizio di forma, quindi, l'autorità giudiziaria nazionale responsabile di valutare e assicurare l'osservanza della direttiva 92/43/CEE nel caso di specie, non è entrata nel merito della questione.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di quanto esposto? Di fronte a quanto verificatosi, in mancanza di un pronunciamento dell'autorità giudiziaria competente sul fondo del problema, come intende procedere per garantire l'effettivo rispetto della normativa europea relativamente agli ormai imminenti lavori di costruzione del «terzo ponte», che avranno un devastante impatto sui siti SIC e ZPS (Spiaggioni, Spinadesco e Rio Boriacco) inseriti nella Rete Natura 2000?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione raccoglie e valuta attualmente le informazioni relative al «terzo ponte» e su tali basi deciderà di eventuali future iniziative.

Dalle informazioni messe a disposizione dalle autorità nazionali risulta che il progetto cui si riferisce l'onorevole deputato non è cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.

([1]) http://www.giustizia-amministrativa.it/DocumentiGA/Roma/Sezione%203/2011/201102061/Provvedimenti/201208062_01.XML.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011033/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 December 2012)

Subject: Compliance with European Union law of construction work for the 'third bridge' in Cremona

In response to the question concerning the disputed 'third bridge' construction project in Cremona, the Commission's answer of 16 August 2012 (E-006740/2012) stated that it had not yet received from the Italian authorities detailed information on the assessment, in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, of the environmental impact of this project on various Natura 2000 sites, and recalled that national courts and administrative bodies were primarily responsible for ensuring that the authorities of the Member States comply with European Union legislation.

On 25 September 2012, the Third Chamber of the Lazio Regional Administrative Court rejected the appeals denouncing the non-compliance with European Union legislation of this project, lodged by the 'Amici della grande Nonna Quercia' association, on the grounds that they were lodged too late ([1]).

Therefore, due to a simple formal defect, the national judicial body responsible for assessing and ensuring compliance with Directive 92/43/EEC in this case did not analyse the substance of the issue.

Is the Commission aware of this state of affairs? Faced with these events, in the absence of a ruling by the competent judicial body on the merits of the case, how does the Commission intend to proceed in order to ensure actual compliance with European Union law of the now imminent construction work for the 'third bridge', which will have a devastating impact on three Natura 2000 SCI/SPA sites (Spiaggioni, Spinadesco and Rio Boriacco)?

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

The Commission is currently collecting and assessing the information related to the 'third bridge' situation and will decide on possible next steps as appropriate on the basis of its assessment.

According to the information made available by the National Authorities, the project referred to by the Honourable Member is not co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

([1]) http://www.giustizia-amministrativa.it/DocumentiGA/Roma/Sezione%203/2011/201102061/Provvedimenti/201208062_01.XML [Judgment in Italian].

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011034/12
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Presunte violazioni dell'accordo di libero scambio di prodotti agricoli e derivati tra UE e Marocco

Secondo quanto denunciato da Coldiretti, una delle associazioni di categoria italiane rappresentante il comparto agricolo, il Regno del Marocco starebbe esportando in Italia ingenti quantitativi di pomodori trattati con difese antiparassitarie che contengono principi attivi non più utilizzabili nell'Unione europea, in quanto non ne rispetterebbero gli standard fitosanitari. Il prezzo sottocosto di 36 euro al quintale, cui verrebbero venduti i pomodori importati, inoltre, contravviene le clausole dell'accordo stipulato tra Unione europea e Marocco, che fissava la cifra minima a 46,10 euro.

Se quanto affermato da Coldiretti trovasse conferma nella realtà, ne deriverebbe un grave pregiudizio per i produttori e per i consumatori.

L'accordo era stato oggetto di forti perplessità da parte di associazioni di categoria di tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE dell'area mediterranea a causa della mancanza di una preventiva valutazione d'impatto ed in quanto non fondato su regole condivise in grado di tutelare gli interessi del sistema agricolo europeo.

Considerato che il massimale per l'esportazione di novembre, previsto per 35mila tonnellate, è stato ampiamente superato ed il prezzo minimo stabilito non è stato rispettato, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se siano in corso verifiche in merito a quanto denunciato da Coldiretti;

— in che modo intende controllare il rispetto delle clausole dell'accordo, con riferimento ai prezzi di entrata e all'eventuale rispetto delle norme fitosanitarie?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

I dati notificati dalle autorità doganali nazionali e pubblicati quotidianamente sul sito web della direzione generale della Fiscalità e dell'unione doganale dimostrano che la quota d'importazione di pomodori assegnata al Marocco è sempre stata rispettata.

Secondo il sistema di vigilanza della Commissione, che si basa sulle informazioni fornite dagli Stati membri, nel novembre 2012 sono state importate in UE 44 778 tonnellate di pomodori, ripartite come segue: 27 530 tonnellate per il contingente mensile contro le 34 900 tonnellate stabilite dall'accordo, 7 673 tonnellate per il contingente supplementare contro 8 400 tonnellate e 9 575 tonnellate fuori contingente secondo le condizioni della nazione più favorita.

Il valore forfettario all'importazione può oscillare attorno al prezzo di entrata e i dazi sono pagati di conseguenza. La corretta applicazione di questi sistemi rientra nelle responsabilità delle autorità doganali nazionali.

Per rafforzare i controlli sulle importazioni, è stato istituito un sistema di tracciabilità mediante il regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 701/2012 ([1]) della Commissione.

Inoltre, il 17 dicembre 2012, la Commissione ha inviato una lettera ai direttori delle autorità doganali nazionali per richiedere alcuni elementi essenziali, quali il metodo di valutazione utilizzato, il valore in dogana delle merci importate, i dazi riscossi ad valorem e i dazi specifici pagati per ogni dichiarazione di immissione in libera pratica dalla campagna d'importazione 2011 in poi. Non appena saranno disponibili i dati completi, gli Stati membri e il Parlamento europeo saranno informati dell'esito.

Tutte le partite sono verificate prevalentemente al 100 % per la conformità alle norme sanitarie e fitosanitarie. Tuttavia, per i prodotti ortofrutticoli, la percentuale può essere ridotta sulla base di criteri, quali il rischio fitosanitario e i dati storici, valutati e rivisti annualmente. Dall'ultima ispezione dell'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario (febbraio 2011) sono emersi esiti soddisfacenti riguardo ai controlli effettuati e alle norme adottate dal Marocco.

([1]) GU L 203 del 31.7.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011034/12
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Alleged infringements of the free trade agreement between the EU and Morocco on agricultural and similar products

According to reports by Coldiretti National Farmers Confederation, an Italian trade association representing the agricultural sector, the Kingdom of Morocco is exporting to Italy large quantities of tomatoes treated with pesticides that contain active ingredients that can no longer be used in the European Union, since they do not comply with plant protection rules. The below-cost price of EUR 36 per 100 kg at which the imported tomatoes are apparently being sold also contravenes the terms of the agreement between the EU and Morocco, which set the minimum amount at EUR 46.10.

If Coldiretti's allegations were to be confirmed, this would be seriously detrimental to both producers and consumers.

The agreement had been the subject of serious concern on the part of trade associations in all EU Member States from the Mediterranean area, due to the lack of a prior impact assessment and because it was not based on shared rules to protect the interests of the European agricultural system.

Given that the November export ceiling, which was supposed to be 35 thousand tonnes, has been amply exceeded and the minimum price established has not been respected, can the Commission say:

— whether it is currently looking into Coldiretti's allegations;

— how it intends to monitor compliance with the terms of the agreement, with reference to entry prices and, where necessary, compliance with plant protection rules?

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

Data notified by national customs authorities and published daily on the webpage of Directorate General of Taxation and Customs Union show that tomato import quota allocated to Morocco has always been respected.

For the Commission monitoring System 'Surveillance' based on information provided by Member States, in November 2012, 44 778 tonnes of tomatoes entered the EU broken down as follows: 27.530 t (monthly quota vs. 34.900 t fixed in the agreement, 7.673 t in the additional quota vs. 8.400 t and 9.575 t out of quota at Most Favoured Nation conditions).

The Standard Import Value can fluctuate around the entry price, and duties are paid accordingly. The correct application of the systems falls under the responsibility of the national customs authorities.

To reinforce the import controls, a traceability system was put in place through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 701/2012 ([1]).

Moreover, the Commission has sent a letter on 17 December 2012 to the directors of national customs requesting some essential elements such as the valuation method used, the customs value of the imported goods, the collected *ad valorem* and specific duties paid for each declaration of release into free circulation from the 2011 import campaign onwards. As soon as complete data will be available, Member States and the European Parliament will be informed on the outcome.

All consignments (SPS issues) are principally verified at 100% for compliance. However, for fruit and vegetables, percentage can be reduced, based on criteria, phytosanitary risk and historic data, assessed and reviewed annually. The last inspection of the Food and Veterinary Office (February 2011) drew satisfactory conclusions regarding the controls and regulations put in place in Morocco.

([1]) OJ L203 of 31.7.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011035/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EU spending on and upgrade of the Karem Abu Salem / Kerem Shalom border crossing on the Gaza Strip-Israel-Egypt border

The EU is spending EUR 13 million on upgrading the Karem Abu Salem / Kerem Shalom border crossing point on the Gaza Strip-Israel-Egypt border. It is also spending nearly EUR 1 million on the EU Border Assistance Mission in Gaza. While it is important to keep the border crossings open to allow humanitarian aid to enter Gaza, what is the EU doing to address the greater threat posed by the network of hundreds of tunnels used to smuggle weapons into Gaza?

The rockets and mortars smuggled through this network of tunnels are being used to attack innocent Israeli civilians. The tunnels are also used for drug smuggling and human trafficking. How can the EU justify spending millions on upgrading legal border crossings if it is not addressing the greater problem of the tunnels used for smuggling?

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

The EU's concern regarding weapon smuggling into the Gaza Strip has been most recently set out in the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 10 December 2012, in which it called for the issue of illegal weapons' transfer into the Gaza Strip to be effectively addressed as a matter of urgency. In the same conclusions the EU once again reiterated its fundamental commitment to the security of Israel.

Fully recognising Israel's legitimate security needs, the European Union also reiterated its call for the immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from the Gaza Strip. Such a comprehensive approach, involving all crossings and not only for humanitarian purposes, would also serve to undermine the economic rationale behind the tunnel networks and hence weaken these structures.

The European Union has also expressed its readiness to make use of its instruments in support of the efforts of the parties to the ceasefire, including the possible reactivation, in the appropriate way, of the European Union Border Assistance Mission in Rafah (EUBAM Rafah).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011036/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Meetings between DG Agriculture officials and staff and the ESRA, CEFS, CIBE and CIUS representatives

1. Would the Commission please indicate how many meetings DG Agriculture officials and staff have held with representatives of the following organisations since 1 January 2011:

— the European Sugar Refiners' Association (ESRA)

— the Comité Européen des Fabricants de Sucre (CEFS)

— the International Confederation of European Beet Growers (CIBE)

— the Committee of European Users of Sugar (CIUS)?

If the Commission cannot provide details for all officials, would it please focus on meetings with officials and staff in unit DDG2.C.5: Arable crops, sugar, fibre plants, animal feed and their hierarchical superiors up to and including the Director-General.

2. Is the Commission aware of any conflict of interest among DG Agriculture officials relating to decisions on sugar? Have any DG Agriculture officials abstained from decision-taking where such a conflict exists? If so, what was the conflict? If the Commission cannot provide details for all officials, would it please focus on officials and staff in unit DDG2.C.5 (Arable crops, sugar, fibre plants, animal feed) and their hierarchical superiors up to and including the Director-General.

Answer given by M. Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2013)

In the framework of their obligations arising from the management of the agricultural markets, Commission services meet stakeholders of the main agricultural markets, including the representatives of the organisations in the sugar sector, in Advisory Committees which are held on a quite regular basis and in specific meetings organised upon request from the stakeholders. These can be viewed at http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/consultations/advisory-groups/sugar/index_en.htm.

The Commission can assure the Honourable Member that all contacts are conducted in a way to protect Union interest, listening to all the interests at stake but never to promote a specific interest of one party.

On the second aspect of the question, the Commission is not aware of any conflict of interest among DG Agriculture & Rural Development officials responsible for issues related to the sugar sector and the sugar stakeholders. No DG AGRI official has informed his/her appointing authority in application of Article 11 a of the Staff regulations and no DG AGRI official had to abstain from preparing decisions, because of a possible conflict of interest.

Articles 11 to 26 of the Staff Regulations contain specific and legally binding obligations for staff members to prevent situations of conflict of interest from arising. Any breach of these obligations makes a staff member liable to disciplinary action. DG AGRI has made every effort to raise the awareness amongst its staff of these ethical obligations: in 2012, a training session on ethics was held for DG AGRI managers, followed by a DG-wide Ethics Day for all staff. In addition, DG AGRI offers its staff ample and easily accessible guidance on ethics issues relevant for their work on its intranet.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011037/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Scuola costruita con i soldi ricavati dallo stoccaggio dei rifiuti

In un piccolo paese del centro Italia è stata costruita una scuola elementare totalmente finanziata con i ricavi dello stoccaggio dei rifiuti dei paesi vicini. Un edificio interamente costituito con materiali ecocompatibili, che dispone di luci con il fotovoltaico e classi hi-tech e sui tetti 700 mq di giardini pensili e pannelli fotovoltaici.

Si tratta di un circolo virtuoso in cui il Comune accoglie dal circondario tutti i rifiuti misti e quelli industriali non pericolosi.

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

1. in che modo intende agire affinché l'ecoinnovazione entri a far parte della realtà quotidiana in tutta Europa;

2. quali risultati ha finora ottenuto il Piano d'azione per le tecnologie ambientali (ETAP) nel rimuovere gli ostacoli che impediscono lo sviluppo delle tecnologie ambientali?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

In seguito all'attuazione del piano d'azione per le tecnologie ambientali (ETAP), il 15 dicembre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato un piano d'azione per l'ecoinnovazione (EcoAP) per favorirne la diffusione puntando su sette azioni mirate. Sulla seguente pagina web troverà ulteriori approfondimenti in merito, tra cui informazioni sui partenariati europei per l'innovazione (acqua, materie prime, agricoltura, città e comunità intelligenti, ecc.) e su una serie di iniziative lanciate nel quadro dell'EcoAP:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoap/index_it.htm.

Da una valutazione sull'ETAP è emerso che le premesse per la crescita delle tecnologie ambientali nell'UE sono migliorate grazie ad iniziative focalizzate sul sostegno agli sviluppatori delle stesse tecnologie e sul miglioramento delle condizioni di mercato ([1]).

L'ETAP ha incentivato gli investimenti in progetti di prima applicazione commerciale relativi a ecoinnovazioni. Ad oggi in questo ambito sono stati sostenuti oltre 200 progetti e nel 30 % dei casi i vantaggi economici sono già tangibili ([2]). L'ETAP ha inoltre promosso il sistema di verifica delle tecnologie ambientali ([3]), che al momento è in una fase pilota avviata per promuovere la penetrazione nel mercato di nuove tecnologie e volta a verificarne le prestazioni dichiarate.

([1]) Relazione «The implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan» (L'attuazione del piano d'azione per le tecnologie ambientali), 23 agosto 2009, 159 pagine.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etv/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011037/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: School built with money earned from waste storage

An entire elementary school has been built in a small village in central Italy using money earned from storing the waste of neighbouring villages. The school has been constructed entirely of eco-friendly materials, and has photovoltaic lighting systems, high-tech classrooms and 700 m^2 of hanging gardens and solar panels on its roof.

This is a virtuous circle, in which the town council stores all mixed waste and non-hazardous industrial waste from the surrounding area.

In the light of this, can the Commission say:

1. what steps it intends to take to make eco-innovation an everyday reality throughout Europe;

2. what success the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP) has had so far in removing the obstacles to the development of environmental technologies?

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

Following the implementation of ETAP, the Commission adopted on 15 December 2011 an Eco-Innovation Action Plan (EcoAP) to foster the market uptake of eco-innovation through seven dedicated actions. Further information on these, including the European Innovation Partnerships (water, raw materials, agriculture, smart cities and communities, etc.), and on a range of EcoAP initiatives is available on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoap/index_en.htm

With respect to ETAP, an evaluation has concluded that the conditions for the development of environmental technologies have improved in the EU, due to initiatives focusing on developers of technologies and improving the market conditions ([1]).

ETAP has leveraged investment for market replication projects of eco-innovations. More than 200 such projects have been supported to date with 30% of beneficiaries already reporting commercial benefits ([2]). It has also led to the Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) initiative ([3]), which is currently in a pilot phase designed to promote market penetration of new technologies by verifying their performance claims.

([1]) Ecorys, 'The implementation of the Environmental technologies action plan', 23 August 2009, 159 p.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etv/index.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011038/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Vittime degli incidenti di caccia

Ancora un gravissimo incidente di caccia che ha ferito gravemente un bambino di dodici anni. La tragedia è avvenuta nelle campagne di Nuoro, dove un bambino è stato colpito alla testa da un proiettile, proveniente dall'arma dello zio durante una battuta di caccia, che ha centrato la parte sinistra del cranio del bambino.

Tali fatti di sangue si susseguono sempre più frequentemente e sistematicamente all'inizio della stagione venatoria. Finora sono stati registrati 17 morti e 59 feriti, di cui 4 morti e 16 feriti tra la gente comune, e 13 morti e 43 feriti tra i cacciatori. Sei i bambini vittime di armi da caccia, di cui due i morti e quattro i feriti.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sono state predisposte misure a livello europeo al fine di prevenire i sempre più frequenti incidenti che colpiscono soprattutto i bambini;

2. con quali iniziative intende sensibilizzare i cacciatori sul tema della sicurezza?

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

La regolamentazione della caccia, che comprende questioni inerenti alle norme di sicurezza, è di competenza nazionale. Spetta alle autorità competenti di ogni paese decidere in merito alle misure appropriate per garantire la sicurezza dei cittadini, bambini compresi, e sensibilizzare i cacciatori sulla tematica della sicurezza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011038/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Hunting accidents

A 12-year-old boy has been very badly injured in yet another serious hunting accident, this time during a hunt in the Nuoro region of Sardinia, Italy. The child was injured when a bullet from his uncle's gun struck him in the left side of the head.

Incidents of this kind are particularly common at the beginning of the hunting season. So far this season, 17 people have died and a further 59 have been injured. Of those who died, 4 were bystanders and 13 were hunters, while of those injured, 16 were bystanders and 43 were hunters. Six of the victims were children, two of whom subsequently died from their wounds.

1. Has the Commission taken measures at European level to tackle the ever increasing number of hunting accidents involving children?

2. How does it intend to raise awareness of safety issues among members of the huntingcommunity?

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

The regulation of hunting, including matters relating to safety standards, is a matter of national competence. It is for the competent authorities in each country to decide on appropriate measures to ensure the safety of people, including children and to raise awareness of safety issues among members of the hunting community.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011039/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Trekking urbano e mobilità sostenibile

Un nuovo progetto italiano istituisce un nuovo network per muoversi rigorosamente a piedi privilegiando la salute. Tale progetto coinvolge il governo italiano, il ministero della Salute e il Coni ed è rivolto ai cittadini affinché privilegino il trekking urbano sfruttando percorsi pedonali certificati e accessibili a tutti.

Dal momento che i rischi della sedentarietà sono chiari (5 milioni di morti all'anno, tanti quanti ne provoca il fumo), l'idea di un percorso dedicato alla visita di centri storici o di aree specifiche della città, a tragitti che coinvolgono il territorio circostante e alle proposte naturalistiche e ambientali, appare una proposta da incentivare al più presto per promuovere stili di vita sani.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenze di questo progetto e quali misure intende adottare al fine di ampliare ancora ulteriormente tale rete, garantendo una maggiore diffusione soprattutto nei piccoli centri urbani europei;

2. se sono previste iniziative volte a pianificare tutte le misure per migliorare la qualità dell'ambiente e soddisfare le esigenze dei cittadini e delle imprese attraverso la mobilità sostenibile?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

1) La Commissione non era al corrente di questo nuovo progetto italiano. Essa promuove le attività di escursionismo in Europa tramite l'iniziativa CIVITAS ([1]) ed il programma Energia intelligente — Europa/STEER ([2]).

2) I piani di mobilità urbana sostenibili sono stati trattati in particolare nel quadro del piano d'azione sulla mobilità urbana ([3]). Sono state avviate varie iniziative per stabilire e diffondere le buone pratiche per la definizione di questi piani ([4]). Sebbene molte città abbiano istituito piani di questo tipo, non si tratta ancora di una pratica diffusa. Nell'ambito del seguito dato al Libro bianco sui trasporti del 2011 ([5]), la Commissione sta elaborando un quadro europeo per lo sviluppo e l'attuazione dei piani di mobilità urbana sostenibili.

([1]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/index.php?id=69.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/.
([3]) Comunicazione della Commissione al Parlamento europeo, al Consiglio, al Comitato economico e sociale europeo e al Comitato delle regioni, COM(2009)490.
([4]) www.mobilityplans.eu.
([5]) Libro bianco «Tabella di marcia verso uno spazio unico europeo dei trasporti», COM(2011)144 definitivo. Inoltre: documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione — SEC(2011)391 definitivo — e relazione sulla valutazione dell'impatto del Libro bianco — SEC(2011)358 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011039/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Urban hiking and sustainable mobility

A new Italian project to promote healthy living has launched a new power walking network. The project, backed by the Italian Government, the Ministry of Health and the Italian Olympic Committee, is designed to encourage the public to opt for urban hiking on validated pedestrian trails which are accessible to everyone.

The risks of a sedentary lifestyle are clear (5 million deaths per year, as many as from smoking), so the idea of these trails, which range from visits to the historic centre or specific areas of a town to trips involving the surrounding countryside with tips on nature study and the environment, should surely be encouraged as a matter of urgency, in order to promote a healthy lifestyle.

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

1. if it is aware of this project, and what measures it intends to take to extend the network further, rolling it out particularly to smaller European urban centres;

2. if there are any initiatives designed to plan all the measures to improve the quality of the environment and to meet public and commercial needs by offering sustainable mobility?

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

1. The Commission was not aware of this new Italian project. The Commission promotes walking activities in Europe through the CIVITAS initiative ([1]) and the Intelligent Energy Europe/STEER programme ([2]).

2. The concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans received particular attention in the action plan on Urban Mobility ([3]). Several initiatives have been launched to establish and disseminate good practice for the establishment of such plans ([4]). Although many cities have established these plans, it is not yet a widespread practice. As part of the follow up to its 2011 Transport White Paper ([5]), the Commission prepares the establishment of a European framework for the development and implementation of these sustainable urban mobility plans.

([1]) http://www.civitas-initiative.org/index.php?id=69.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/.
([3]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions COM(2009) 490.
([4]) www.mobilityplans.eu.
([5]) White Paper 'Towards a European transport area' (COM(2011) 144 final), also: Staff Working Document — SEC(2011) 391 final — and Impact Assessment report for the White Paper — SEC(2011) 358 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011040/12
a la Comisión
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(4 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Evolución del Acuerdo Agrícola con Marruecos

El 1 de octubre entró en vigor el nuevo Acuerdo Agrícola entre la UE y Marruecos. Dicho Acuerdo fue respaldado por el Pleno del Parlamento Europeo el pasado mes de febrero pese a la oposición de un elevado número de eurodiputados que consideraron que haría peligrar miles de empleos agrícolas en muchos Estados de la Unión Europea y agravaría la situación de unos productores que ya tenían que hacer frente a los fraudes en los contingentes de importación del convenio anteriormente en vigor, según quejas planteadas por el sector ante la Oficina de Lucha contra el Fraude de la Comisión Europea (OLAF).

Productores de España, Italia y Francia han denunciado que Marruecos estaría ahora incumpliendo los términos del nuevo Acuerdo Agrícola en cuanto a los cupos y precios de entrada del tomate que exporta a la UE, lo que estaría produciendo un hundimiento en las cotizaciones de algunos productos agrícolas en los mercados europeos, especialmente el tomate.

1. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de que se está reproduciendo la misma situación vivida en años anteriores a pesar de los cambios ya introducidos en la normativa europea para mejorar el seguimiento de los precios de entrada?

2. ¿Podría proporcionar la Comisión la información de la que dispone al respecto? ¿Qué medidas está adoptando o piensa adoptar para que se respeten los términos del actual acuerdo?

3. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión que los productos agrícolas provenientes de Marruecos cuentan con las mismas condiciones fitosanitarias que los producidos en Europa y que el nivel de exigencia a los productores marroquíes es exactamente igual al exigido a los productores europeos?

4. ¿Qué medidas está adoptando la Comisión para que se mejore el control sobre las importaciones en la EU, siguiendo las recomendaciones de la OLAF?

5. ¿En qué momento se encuentra la Comisión en cuanto al proceso de modificación del sistema de precios de entrada solicitado por la Comisión de Peticiones del Parlamento Europeo, a iniciativa del Partido Popular Español, con motivo de la negociación del nuevo acuerdo con ese país?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de enero de 2013)

Los datos comunicados por las autoridades aduaneras nacionales y publicados diariamente en la página web de la Dirección General de Fiscalidad y Unión Aduanera muestran que el contingente de importación de tomates asignado a Marruecos siempre se ha respetado.

El valor de importación a tanto alzado puede fluctuar por encima o por debajo del precio de entrada y en función de eso se pagan los aranceles. La correcta aplicación del sistema compete a las autoridades aduaneras nacionales.

Con objeto de reforzar el control de las importaciones, se ha implantado un sistema de trazabilidad mediante el Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 701/2012 de la Comisión ([1]).

Por otra parte, la Comisión envió una carta el 17 de diciembre de 2012 a los directores de las aduanas nacionales en la que les solicitaba algunos datos esenciales como el método de valoración utilizado, el valor en aduana de las mercancías importadas y los derechos *ad valorem* y específicos percibidos en cada declaración de despacho a libre práctica desde la campaña de importaciones de 2011. Cuando disponga de todos esos datos, los comunicará a los Estados miembros y al Parlamento Europeo.

([1]) DO L 203 de 31.7.2012.

En principio, se comprueba el 100 % de los envíos para cerciorarse del cumplimiento de las normas sanitarias y fitosanitarias. No obstante, en el caso de las frutas y hortalizas, ese porcentaje puede reducirse atendiendo al riesgo fitosanitario, a los datos históricos y a criterios que se evalúan y revisan cada año. En la última inspección de la Oficina Alimentaria y Veterinaria (febrero de 2011) se extrajeron conclusiones satisfactorias sobre los controles y normativas existentes en Marruecos.

En la propuesta de PAC para 2020 ([2]), se ha propuesto ajustar las reglas del sistema de precios de entrada al Código Aduanero en aras de la simplificación administrativa.

([2]) COM(2011) 626 final/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011040/12
to the Commission
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Developments relating to the EU-Morocco Agricultural Agreement

On 1 October 2012, the new EU-Morocco Agricultural Agreement entered into force. The agreement was endorsed by Parliament at its plenary session of February 2012 despite opposition from a significant number of MEPs. They feared that the agreement would put thousands of agricultural jobs at risk in many Member States and make the situation worse for producers, who were already facing difficulties as a result of import quota fraud committed in breach of the previous agreement (according to complaints lodged with the Commission's European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) by the sector).

Producers in Spain, Italy and France claim that Morocco is now breaching the terms of the new agreement as regards the quotas and entry prices for its tomato exports to the EU. European producers argue that this is causing a collapse in the European market prices of some agricultural products, particularly tomatoes.

1. Is the Commission aware that the problems encountered in previous years are reoccurring, despite the changes that have been made to European legislation to ensure more effective monitoring of entry prices?

2. What information does the Commission have on this issue? What measures is it taking or does it plan to take to ensure that the terms of the current agreement are upheld?

3. Can it confirm whether agricultural products from Morocco are subject to the same plant health conditions as products from Europe and whether Moroccan producers have to meet exactly the same requirements as their European counterparts?

4. What measures is the Commission taking to ensure that imports into the EU are monitored more effectively, in line with OLAF's recommendations?

5. What stage has been reached with regard to the modification of the entry price systemrequested by Parliament's Committee on Petitions, at the initiative of Spain's PopularParty, as part of the negotiations concerning the new agreement with Morocco?

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

Data notified by national customs authorities and published daily on the webpage of Directorate.

General of Taxation and Customs Union, show that tomato import quota allocated to Morocco has always been respected.

The Standard Import Value can fluctuate around the entry price, and duties are paid accordingly. The correct application of the systems falls under the responsibility of the national customs authorities.

To reinforce the import controls, a traceability system was put in place through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 701/2012 ([1]).

Moreover, the Commission has sent a letter on 17 December 2012 to the directors of national customs requesting some essential elements such as the valuation method used, the customs value of the imported goods, the collected *ad valorem* and specific duties paid for each declaration of release into free circulation from the 2011 import campaign onwards. As soon as complete data will be available, Member States and the European Parliament will be informed on the outcome.

([1]) OJ L203 of 31.7.2012.

All consignments (SPS issues) are principally verified at 100% for compliance. However, for fruit and vegetables, percentage can be reduced, based on criteria, phytosanitary risk and historic data, assessed and reviewed annually. The last inspection of the Food and Veterinary Office (February 2011) drew satisfactory conclusions regarding the controls and regulations put in place in Morocco.

In the CAP 2020 proposal ([2]), the alignment of the modalities of the entry price system with the Custom Code has been proposed for administrative simplification.

([2]) COM(2011) 626 final/2.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011041/12
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(4 december 2012)

Betreft: Invoering door de Franse regering van taks op bier

Het Franse parlement keurde een wetsontwerp „Sécurité sociale: loi de financement 2013" (Sociale zekerheid: financieringswet 2013) goed op 3 december 2012. Uit de bepalingen valt vooral artikel 24 op, waarmee het Franse parlement vanaf januari 2013 de accijnzen op bier verhoogt.

Artikel 24 valt op omwille van twee redenen:

1. De tarieven worden disproportioneel verhoogd in vergelijking met huidige situatie: van 1,38 euro naar 3,60 euro per graad per hectoliter voor bieren onder of gelijk aan 2,8 % alcohol, en van 2,75 euro naar 7,20 euro per graad per hectoliter voor bieren boven 2,8 % alcohol.

2. Deze bepaling geldt enkel voor bieren, niet voor andere alcoholische dranken, zoals wijn.

Gegeven het feit dat wijn voornamelijk een Frans nationaal product is, terwijl bier voornamelijk een buitenlands product is van Frankrijk, en dat bier en wijn producten van dezelfde aard zijn, vraag ik de Commissie om een en ander te toetsen aan artikel 110 van het VWEU, dat stelt dat het de lidstaten verboden is om hogere binnenlandse belastingen van welke aard dan ook te heffen op producten van de overige lidstaten dan op nationale producten.

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(4 januari 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op de eerdere schriftelijke vraag E-010118/2012 van mevrouw Thyssen en de heer Belet.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011041/12
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Introduction by the French Government of taxation on beer

On 3 December 2012 the French Parliament adopted a bill entitled 'Sécurité sociale: loi de financement 2013' (Social security: 2013 financing law). Article 24 of this bill, whereby the French Parliament increases the duty on beer with effect from January 2013, is particularly significant.

There are two reasons why Article 24 deserves attention:

1. It provides for a disproportionate increase in the rate of duty, from EUR 1.38 to EUR 3.60 per degree per hectolitre for beers with an alcohol content of or below 2.8%, and from EUR 2.75 to EUR 7.20 per degree per hectolitre for beers with an alcohol content above 2.8%.

2. This rule applies only to beers, not to other alcoholic drinks such as wine.

In view of the fact that wine is mainly a French domestic product, while beer is mainly a foreign product imported into France, and that beer and wine are products of the same type, could the Commission please examine the above facts in the light of Article 110 TFEU, which lays down that no Member State shall impose on the products of other Member States any internal taxation of any kind in excess of that imposed on similar domestic products?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer given to previous Written Question E-010183/2012 from Ms Thyssen and Mr Belet.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011042/12
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(4 december 2012)

Betreft: De implementatie van de functionele luchtruimblokken (FAB's) in het kader van de European Single Sky

Verordening (EG) nr. 1070/2009, die erop is gericht de prestaties en de duurzaamheid van het Europese luchtvaartsysteem te verbeteren, bepaalt dat uiterlijk op 4 december 2012 alle nodige maatregelen genomen moeten worden door de lidstaten om te garanderen dat de functionele luchtruimblokken, de zogenaamde FAB's, worden geïmplementeerd. Vandaag moet ik echter vaststellen dat de vereisten voor de realisatie van deze FAB's niet naar behoren geïmplementeerd zijn in de verschillende lidstaten. De FAB-coördinator, Georg Jarzembowski, heeft in zijn laatste voortgangsrapport in de Commissie vervoer aangegeven dat het niveau van implementatie van lidstaat tot lidstaat sterk verschilt, maar dat geen enkele FAB aan alle vereisten voldoet om vandaag operationeel te zijn. En dat terwijl de voordelen van het Europees eengemaakt luchtruim op het vlak van milieu, kostenbesparing en efficiëntie zo overtuigend zijn.

Dit is een ernstige inbreuk op de toepassing van Europese wetgeving door de lidstaten. Daarom stel ik de volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Plant de Commissie acties tegen de lidstaten wegens het nalaten van een tijdige en correcte implementatie van de functionele luchtruimblokken?

2. Zal de Commissie inbreukprocedures starten tegen de lidstaten? Indien ja, wanneer zal zij deze procedures van start laten gaan?

3. Wat zal de Commissie doen om ervoor te zorgen dat ook de andere onderdelen van de Single European Sky correct en tijdig geïmplementeerd worden?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(16 januari 2013)

1. De Commissie bereidt momenteel inbreukprocedures voor tegen een aantal lidstaten. De komende weken gaan er „EU Pilot"-procedures van start die zijn gericht op wettelijke vereisten waaraan niet is voldaan. Hierop kan een verdere analyse van de operationele vereisten volgen. De eerste „EU Pilot"-procedure inzake functionele luchtruimblokken (FAB's) zal begin 2013 openbaar worden gemaakt.

2. Als er bij gebrek aan FAB's aanvullende capaciteitsbeperkingen worden opgelegd om het Europese luchtruim veiliger te maken, leidt dat tot vertragingen. Momenteel worden de capaciteitsdoelstellingen in een aantal FAB's niet gehaald. Naar verwachting zal het luchtverkeer in 2015 (of eventueel al in 2014) toenemen, waardoor de situatie met betrekking tot congestie verder zal verslechteren; de veiligheid zal daarbij echter niet in het gedrang komen. Deze verslechtering kan worden vermeden als de FAB's tegen die tijd zijn verbeterd.

3. De Commissie zal deze andere onderdelen in het oog houden. Als er problemen worden vastgesteld, zal zij de lidstaten hierop wijzen, zodat zij op tijd maatregelen kunnen nemen en zich kunnen houden aan de termijnen die in de regelgeving zijn vastgelegd.

4. De Commissie verzoekt de heer El Khadraoui om precies aan te geven welke termijn in 2030 hij bedoelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011042/12
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Establishment of Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) in connection with the Single European Sky

Regulation (EC) No 1070/2009, whose aim is to improve the performance and sustainability of European aviation, lays down that by 4 December 2012 Member States must take all the necessary measures to ensure that Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) are implemented. Now, however, I observe that the requirements for the establishment of FABs have not been properly complied with in the various Member States. The FAB coordinator, Georg Jarzembowski, indicated in his most recent progress report in the Committee on Transport that the level of implementation varied considerably between Member States, but that none of the FABs met the conditions to be operational now. This is despite the fact that the benefits of a Single European Sky with regard to the environment, savings on costs, and efficiency are so convincing.

This is a serious breach of European law by Member States.

1. Is the Commission planning measures against Member States for failure to implement Functional Airspace Blocks promptly and correctly?

2. Will the Commission bring infringement proceedings against the Member States? If so, when will it launch these proceedings?

3. What will the Commission do to ensure that the other elements of the Single European Sky are likewise implemented correctly and promptly?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2013)

1. The Commission is preparing infringement procedures against Member States starting in the next weeks with EU Pilots, focusing on the legal requirements not met. A further analysis on the operational requirements may follow. The first EU Pilot on Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) will be published in early 2013.

2. In the absence of FABs, additional capacity restrictions, which protect Europe's skies, would still generate delays. Several FABs perform under their capacity targets already today. When traffic picks up, which is currently expected in 2015 but could also occur from 2014, this congestion will further deteriorate even though safety will not be jeopardised, unless FABs can be improved by then.

3. The Commission will monitor these other elements and, flag up any relevant issues with Member States to foster corrective action by them ahead of regulatory deadlines.

4. The Commission respectfully asks Mr El Khadraoui which deadline in 2030 he is referring to.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011043/12
a la Comisión
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Andres Perello Rodriguez (S&D) y Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(4 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Pérdida de trazabilidad de 250 fuentes radiactivas en la central nuclear de Ascó (Tarragona)

En el último informe del Sistema Integrado de Supervisión de Centrales Nucleares (SISC) figura que los responsables del Consejo de Seguridad Nacional español (CSN) no pudieron constatar documentalmente dónde se almacenaban unas 233 fuentes radiactivas procedentes de la central nuclear de Ascó que se contabilizan en el programa general de residuos radiactivos. En total —y tal y como reconoce el mismo titular de la central— se podría haber perdido toda la trazabilidad de más de 250 cápsulas de residuos sin que existan tampoco datos precisos sobre su grado de peligrosidad, aunque se sabe que, al menos ocho de ellas, estaban catalogadas como de alta actividad por el inventario de la misma central.

¿Ha recibido información la Comisión, por parte de la autoridad reguladora competente, sobre el caso del extravío de estas fuentes radiactivas de la central de Ascó?

Teniendo en cuenta:

— que la Directiva 2009/71/Euratom tenía como plazo de transposición el 22 de julio del 2011,

— que, en el marco de la Directiva 2011/70/Euratom, España tiene que presentar a la Comisión en 2015 su programa nacional, que debería incluir, entre otras medidas, un inventario de todos los residuos radiactivos y el combustible nuclear gastado,

— que España, como Estado miembro, tiene la obligación de establecer un marco legislativo nacional para la gestión segura del combustible nuclear gastado y de los residuos radiactivos,

¿Considera la Comisión que España está realizando una correcta gestión de la seguridad nuclear de los residuos en instalaciones como la de Ascó?

¿No cree la Comisión que, con la finalidad de evitar casos como el de Ascó y en el marco de una futura revisión de la legislación al respecto, se deberían proponer más y mejores medidas para asegurar la trazabilidad de los residuos de las centrales nucleares?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de enero de 2013)

1. No, la Comisión no ha recibido información de la autoridad reguladora competente sobre ese tema.

2. y 3. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-010470/12 del Sr. Oreste Rossi.

La Comisión resalta que, según la Directiva 2011/70/Euratom del Consejo ([1]), los Estados miembros (y, por lo tanto, también España) deben notificar por primera vez a la Comisión el contenido de su programa nacional (que, entre otros elementos, debe incluir un inventario de todos los residuos radiactivos y el combustible nuclear gastado), lo antes posible y, en cualquier caso, antes del 23 de agosto de 2015 ([2]).

En vista de ello, la Comisión no puede apreciar por ahora si España está realizando una correcta gestión de los residuos radiactivos ni considera necesario proponer en estos momentos medidas más estrictas de trazabilidad de esos residuos.

([1]) Directiva 2011/70/Euratom del Consejo, por la que se establece un marco comunitario para la gestión responsable y segura del combustible nuclear gastado y de los residuos radiactivos (DO L 199, p. 48).
([2]) Artículo 15, apartado 4, de la Directiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011043/12
to the Commission
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Andres Perello Rodriguez (S&D) and Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Loss of traceability in respect of 250 sources of radioactivity at the Ascó nuclear power plant in Tarragona

In the latest report published as part of the integrated system for the supervision of nuclear power plants (SISC), officials working for Spain's nuclear safety council (CSN) were unable to establish from the documentation available the storage location of some 233 sources of radioactivity from the Ascó nuclear power plant listed in the general programme on radioactive waste. According to the plant's proprietor, traceability on more than 250 waste containers may have been lost. Furthermore, there are no accurate data relating to how hazardous these might be, although it is known that at least eight of them had been categorised as highly radioactive in an inventory carried out at the Ascó plant.

Has the Commission received information from the relevant regulator about this case involving the loss of radioactive material from the Ascó plant?

Given that:

— the deadline for transposing Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom was 22 July 2011;

— under Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom, Spain must, in 2015, submit to the Commission its national programme, which should include an inventory of all radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel;

— Spain, as an EU Member State, must establish a national legislative framework to ensure the safe management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste;

Does the Commission take the view that Spain is correctly managing the situation with regard to the safety of nuclear waste at plants like the one at Ascó?

Does the Commission agree that in order to avoid cases like the one at Ascó and as part of a future review of the relevant legislation, more and tougher steps should be taken to ensure traceability of waste from nuclear power plants?

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

1. No, the Commission has not received information from the relevant regulator on this matter.

2-3. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Members to its reply to Written Question E-010470/12 by Mr Oreste Rossi.

The Commission notes that, according to Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom ([1]), Member States (thus also Spain) shall for the first time notify to the Commission the content of their national programme (including an inventory of all radioactive waste and spent fuel) by 23 August 2015 ([2]).

In light of the above, the Commission cannot currently assess whether radioactive waste is managed in Spain adequately, neither does it consider necessary to propose at this stage more stringent rules on the traceability of radioactive waste.

([1]) Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste; OJ L 199, p. 48.
([2]) Article 15(4) of the directive.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011044/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(4. december 2012)

Om: Godkendte falske hofter

Kommissionen har svaret (jf. P-009797/2012), at sagen omkring de godkendte falske hofter fra et tjekkisk bemyndiget organ er løst ved, at der er sendt advarsler ud til medlemslandene. Desuden redegør Kommissionen for initiativer i udkastet til revision af direktivet om medicinsk udstyr. Jeg kender udmærket til Kommissionens forslag til forbedringer på længere sigt. Men jeg finder dog svaret meget utilfredsstillende vedrørende tiltagene her og nu.

Kommissionen bedes uddybe nærmere:

Hvor mange forskellige slags klasse III-udstyr er der blevet certificeret i Tjekkiet siden oprettelsen af det bemyndigede organ?

Hvor mange af de godkendte produkter har Kommissionen gennemgået, efter at skandalen kom frem?

Hvor mange af de godkendte produkter burde reelt ikke være godkendt, fordi sikkerheden ikke er i orden?

Kan Kommissionen garantere, at alle patienter, der har fået opereret tjekkisk certificeret udstyr ind i kroppen, også kan være trygge ved, at alt er i orden?

Ved at udsende advarsler til medlemsstaterne forventer Kommissionen så, at det er de enkelte medlemslande, der hver især skal krydstjekke de produkter, som er certificeret af det pågældende tjekkiske bemyndigede organ?

Som det fremgår af mine spørgsmål, så finder jeg på ingen måde Kommissionens behandling af denne sag tilfredsstillende. Selv om vi er i gang med at revidere reglerne, så varer det en årrække, før de træder i kraft. Jeg mener, at de europæiske patienter har krav på sikkerhed allerede nu, og ikke først når det nye direktiv træder i kraft. Jeg mener ligeledes, det er bedre med en europæisk løsning på problemerne end at overlade det til de øvrige 26 medlemsstater at tjekke samtlige produkter, der er certificeret af det tjekkiske bemyndigede organ.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(22. januar 2013)

Kommissionen har ingen oplysninger om specifikke certifikater, som er udstedt af bemyndigede organer. I henhold til lovgivningen om medicinsk udstyr foretages tilsynet med de bemyndigede organer af den kompetente udpegende myndighed i den medlemsstat, hvor det bemyndigede organ befinder sig. I denne forbindelse skal de bemyndigede organer oplyse den pågældende kompetente myndighed om de certifikater, der udstedes.

Kommissionen er ikke ansvarlig for at undersøge CE-mærkede produkter. Markedsovervågningen foretages af de kompetente myndigheder i medlemsstaterne, som skal registrere og evaluere oplysninger om uheld med medicinsk udstyr. Når medlemsstaterne har foretaget en vurdering, er de forpligtet til at informere Kommissionen og de øvrige medlemsstater om, hvilke foranstaltninger der er truffet. Vigtige sikkerhedsspørgsmål drøftes i arbejdsgrupper ledet af Kommissionen.

For så vidt angår sikkerheden vedrørende udstyr, der er certificeret af de bemyndigede organer i Tjekkiet, og foranstaltninger, som er under gennemførelse i henhold til de gældende lovgivningsmæssige rammer for medicinsk udstyr forud for vedtagelsen af den reviderede lovgivning, er Kommissionen og medlemsstaterne i gang med at gennemføre en plan over øjeblikkelige tiltag i henhold til den nuværende lovgivning. Yderligere oplysninger om dette emne kan findes i Kommissionens svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-009797/2012 og E-010402/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011044/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Approved fake hips

In its answer (cf. Question P-009797/2012) the Commission states that the issue of fake hips approved by a Czech notified body is being resolved by issuing alerts to the Member States. The Commission also gives an account of initiatives put forward in the proposal revising the directive on medical devices. I am well aware of the Commission's proposals for improvements in the long term. However, I consider the answer most unsatisfactory as regards action to be taken now.

Would the Commission elaborate as regards the following:

How many different types of class III medical device have been certified in the Czech Republic since the notified body was set up?

How many approved products has the Commission examined since the scandal came to light?

How many of the approved products ought not to have been approved because of safety shortcomings?

Can the Commission guarantee that all patients who have received medical devices certified in the Czech Republic can be confident that everything is in order?

In issuing alerts to the Member States, does the Commission expect each individual Member State separately to cross-check products certified by the relevant Czech notified body?

As my questions show, I regard as entirely unsatisfactory the way in which the Commission has addressed this issue. Though we are in the process of revising the rules, it will be years before they come into force. I believe that European patients have a right to safety now, rather than not until after the new directive comes into force. I also believe that a European solution to the problems is better than leaving it to the other 26 Member States to check all products certified by the Czech notified body.

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

The Commission does not have information concerning specific certificates delivered by notified bodies. In accordance with the medical devices legislation, the supervision of notified bodies is carried out by the designating competent authority of the Member State where the notified body is located. In this framework, notified bodies must inform the respective competent authority of the certificates they issue.

The Commission is not in charge of examining CE-marked products. Market surveillance falls within the responsibilities of the competent authorities of the Member States who must record and evaluate information about incidents involving medical devices. After carrying out an assessment Member States have a duty to inform the Commission and other Member States of the measures which they have taken. More important safety issues are discussed in Working Groups chaired by the Commission.

With regard to the safety concerning devices certified by the notified bodies established in Czech Republic and actions currently being taken under the existing medical devices regulatory framework in advance of the adoption of the revised legislation, the Commission and Member States are implementing a plan of immediate actions under the current legislation. For further information on this matter the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to Parliamentary Question E-009797/2012 and Parliamentary Question E-010402/2012 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011045/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Υψηλά επίπεδα ρύπανσης υδάτινων πόρων

Σύμφωνα με την τελευταία αναφορά της Ευρωπαϊκής Υπηρεσίας Περιβάλλοντος που εξέτασε την κατάσταση 104 000 ποταμών, 19 000 λιμνών και 4 000 εποχικών ρευμάτων, αλλά και παράκτιων περιοχών, το 50% των υδάτινων όγκων της Ευρώπης παρουσιάζουν υψηλά επίπεδα ρύπανσης.

Αν και διαπιστώνεται κάποια πρόοδος, που σχετίζεται με τη μείωση της χημικής ρύπανσης και την καλύτερη επεξεργασία των αστικών λυμάτων, αυτή η διαδικασία είναι εξαιρετικά αργή με αποτέλεσμα να κινδυνεύει κατά περίπτωση η δημόσια υγεία αλλά και η καλή λειτουργία των οικοσυστημάτων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα μέτρα που προτίθεται να λάβει η ΕΕ για τη βελτίωση της οικολογικής κατάστασης των ευρωπαϊκών υδάτινων πόρων;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε στις 14.11.2012 το «Προσχέδιο για τη διαφύλαξη των υδατικών πόρων της Ευρώπης» ([1]), συμπεριλαμβανομένης της 3ης έκθεσης εφαρμογής της οδηγίας-πλαισίου για τα ύδατα ([2]). Στην ανακοίνωση για το προσχέδιο ([3]) τονίζεται η σημασία της καλύτερης εφαρμογής της εν λόγω οδηγίας και προτείνεται μια σειρά μέτρων που αποσκοπούν στην επίτευξη καλής κατάστασης των υδατικών πόρων της ΕΕ. Τα μέτρα αυτά περιλαμβάνουν περαιτέρω καθοδήγηση σχετικά με τις οικολογικές ροές, τους λογαριασμούς υδάτων, τις εκτιμήσεις κόστους και οφέλους, τον καθορισμό στόχων, τα μέτρα φυσικής συγκράτησης των υδάτων, όπως οι πράσινες υποδομές, και την προώθηση της αποδοτικής χρήσης του νερού.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012)670 τελικό της 14.11.2012.
([3]) COM(2012)673 τελικό της 14.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011045/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: High levels of water pollution

According to the latest report of the European Environment Agency which examined the state of 104 000 rivers, 19 000 lakes and 4 000 seasonal streams and also coastal areas, 50% of water bodies in Europe have high levels of pollution.

While some progress has been made, associated with a reduction in chemical pollution and improved urban wastewater treatment, this process is extremely slow, in some cases endangering public health and the sound functioning of ecosystems.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What measures does the EU intend to take to improve the ecological state of Europe's water resources?

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

The Commission adopted on 14.11.2012 its 'Blueprint for safeguarding Europe's water resources' ([1]), including the 3rd Implementation report of the Water Framework Directive ([2]). The Blueprint Communication ([3]) reinforces the importance of better implementation of this directive, and proposes a number of measures aiming to achieve good status of EUs water resources. These measures include further guidance on ecological flows, water accounts, costs and benefits, target setting, natural water retention measures such as green infrastructure and the promotion of water efficiency.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([2]) COM(2012)670 final of 14.11.2012.
([3]) COM(2012)673 final of 14.11.2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011046/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Η διασφάλιση επαρκούς ποσότητας ποιοτικού νερού

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Περιβάλλοντος, προκειμένου να διασφαλισθεί επαρκής ποσότητα καλής ποιότητας νερού για όλους του Ευρωπαίους, ανακοίνωσε μέτρα τα οποία παραπέμπουν στη νέα αυστηρότερη στρατηγική που υιοθετήθηκε για τη διαχείριση των υδάτων, διαπιστώνοντας ότι η σχετική οδηγία για την προστασία των υδάτων δεν τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή από πολλές χώρες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Η νέα αυτή αυστηρότερη στρατηγική θα εφαρμοσθεί σε όλα τα μέλη της ΕΕ με τον ίδιο τρόπο; Τι ακριβώς θα ισχύσει για τις χώρες με ελλειμματικό υδάτινο ισοζύγιο;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε το Νοέμβριο του 2012 το «προσχέδιο για τη διαφύλαξη των υδατικών πόρων της Ευρώπης» ([1]), στο οποίο τονίζεται ότι οι τρέχουσες προσπάθειες διαχείρισης των υδάτων σε μεγάλα τμήματα της ΕΕ συχνά δεν επαρκούν για την εκπλήρωση του στόχου να επιτευχθεί καλή κατάσταση έως το 2015, όπως επιβάλλεται από την οδηγία πλαίσιο της ΕΕ για τα ύδατα ([2]). Για να διατηρηθούν και να βελτιωθούν οι υδατικοί πόροι της ΕΕ, απαιτούνται συνεπώς μείζονα πρόσθετα μέτρα.

Στο προσχέδιο περιγράφονται οι πιθανές δράσεις που απαιτείται να αναληφθούν για θέματα ζωτικής σημασίας. Σε αυτές συγκαταλέγονται η βελτίωση της χρήσης της γης, η αντιμετώπιση της ρύπανσης των υδάτων, η αύξηση της αποδοτικής χρήσης και της αντοχής του νερού καθώς και η βελτίωση της διακυβέρνησης. Το προσχέδιο αναγνωρίζει ότι το εκάστοτε υδάτινο περιβάλλον διαφέρει σε μεγάλο βαθμό ανά την ΕΕ και δεν προτείνει μία και μοναδική λύση, κατάλληλη για όλες τις περιπτώσεις, συμβαδίζοντας με την αρχή της επικουρικότητας. Οι δράσεις που προβλέπονται στο προσχέδιο θα αναπτυχθούν περαιτέρω με τα κράτη μέλη και θα υλοποιηθούν καταλλήλως σε χώρες με ελλειμματικό υδατικό ισοζύγιο, καθώς και σε χώρες που μαστίζονται από άλλες προκλήσεις.

([1]) COM/2012/0673 τελικό.
([2]) Οδηγία 2000/60/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011046/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Ensuring a sufficient quantity of good quality water

In order to ensure a sufficient quantity of good quality water for all Europeans, the European Environment Agency has announced measures which relate to the new, more stringent water management strategy, noting that the relevant water protection Directive has not been implemented by many countries.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Will this new more stringent strategy be implemented in all EU Member States in the same way? What provisions exactly will apply to countries with a water balance deficit?

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

The Commission adopted in November 2012 the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources ([1]), which highlights that the current water management efforts in large parts of the EU are often not sufficient to reach the objective to achieve good status by 2015 as required by the EU Water Framework Directive ([2]). Major additional action is therefore needed to preserve and improve EU waters.

The Blueprint outlines potential actions required for key themes including improving land use, addressing water pollution, increasing water efficiency and resilience and improving governance. The Blueprint recognises that the aquatic environments differ greatly across the EU and does not propose any one size fits all solution, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The Blueprint actions will be further developed with Member States and implemented as appropriate in countries with a water balance deficit as well as in countries suffering other challenges.

([1]) COM(2012) 0673 final.
([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011047/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Aumento dei casi di HIV in Grecia

Ai primi di dicembre 2012, il *New York Times* ha riferito che i funzionari della sanità greca avevano avvertito di un allarmante aumento delle infezioni da HIV nella capitale Atene. L'aumento è pronunciato tra i consumatori di droghe per via endovenosa. Ciò è dovuto ai forti tagli nel settore dell'assistenza sanitaria e dei programmi di riabilitazione dalle tossicodipendenze.

Un professore di epidemiologia e medicina preventiva della Scuola medica dell'Università di Atene ha descritto l'aumento dei casi, come una epidemia di grandi dimensioni e in rapido sviluppo. Secondo altri funzionari, dal 2008 al 2012 ci sono stati ogni anno da 10 a 14 nuovi casi di sieropositività HIV tra i tossicodipendenti di Atene, ma il numero è balzato a 206 casi nel 2011 e a 487 casi fino a ottobre 2012.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'aumento del numero di nuovi casi di HIV in Grecia?

2. La Commissione dispone attualmente di una politica di contrasto alle epidemie che si verificano negli Stati membri?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza del numero crescente di casi di HIV in Grecia. Questo è il motivo per cui, nell'aprile 2012, la Commissione ha chiesto al Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC) di preparare una valutazione del rischio relativa a questa situazione. La valutazione del rischio corredata di raccomandazioni sul modo di affrontare questa situazione eccezionale è stata pubblicata di recente sul sito web del ECDC ([1]).

La comunicazione della Commissione «La lotta contro HIV/AIDS nell'Unione europea e nei paesi vicini» e il relativo piano d'azione ([2]) delinea il quadro politico per la risposta dell'UE all'emergenza del HIV/AIDS. Questa politica è imperniata su una prevenzione efficace, su attività da condurre nelle regioni prioritarie tra i gruppi prioritari, compresi gli utilizzatori di droghe per via endovena. Le attività sono condotte in cooperazione con gli Stati membri, la società civile, le organizzazioni delle Nazioni Unite e le agenzie dell'UE.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Risk-Assessment-HIV-in-Greece.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/aids/docs/com2009_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011047/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Rise in cases of HIV in Greece

In early December 2012, *The New York Times* reported that Greek health officials had warned of an alarming increase in HIV infections in the capital Athens. The increase is pronounced among intravenous drug users. This is due to deep cuts in healthcare and drug treatment programmes.

A professor of epidemiology and preventative medicine at Athens University Medical School has described the increase in cases as a large and rapidly developing epidemic. According to other officials, from 2008 to 2010 there were 10 to 14 new HIV infections per year among Athens drug users, but that number shot up to 206 cases in 2011 and to 487 cases by October 2012.

1. Is the Commission aware of the rise in the number of HIV cases in Greece?

2. Does the Commission currently have a policy to deal with epidemics occurring in Member States?

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

The Commission is aware of the rising number of HIV cases in Greece. This is the reason why, in April 2012, the Commission asked the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) to prepare a risk assessment of the situation. The risk assessment with recommendations to handle this exceptional situation was recently published on the ECDC website ([1]).

The Commission communication 'on combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbouring countries' and its accompanying action plan ([2]) set out the policy framework for the EU response to HIV/AIDS. This policy focuses on effective prevention, activities in priority regions and in priority groups, including injecting drug users. Activities are implemented in cooperation with Member States, civil society, UN organisations and EU agencies.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121130-Risk-Assessment-HIV-in-Greece.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/aids/docs/com2009_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011048/12
to the Commission
Seán Kelly (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Competition aspects of the price differential between the Irish and UK beef markets

Will the Commission comment on the significant price differential between the Irish and UK beef markets for Irish beef and its relevance in relation to Article 101 TFEU?

Although this continues a trend which was noted as far back as 2009, the differential is the highest it has been for 12 years and means that beef farmers now reportedly receive up to EUR 252 per head more for beef in UK markets than in Ireland.

In particular, since early summer, in spite of the bad weather and consequent increased feeding costs, beef prices have been reported to have steadily fallen in Ireland, while prices in the UK, which is the largest export market for Irish beef, have risen.

It is of the upmost importance that there should be no abuse of market power which would distort and artificially depress farm gate prices.

Can the Commission state whether it is currently investigating the nature of this price gap and whether it will take any practical steps to ensure a fair EU market, as required by EU competition law?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2013)

The Commission is aware of the existence of price divergences for similar products in different Member States. Price differences in food between and within countries are caused by a number of factors such as consumer preferences, income, labour and product market regulation, transport costs, market conditions, etc. Several studies exist quantifying the relative importance of such factors, the most recent by the European Central Bank[1]. Some actors also mention the existence of Territorial Supply Constraints (TSCs) as a factor influencing price differences. The Commission has just launched a Green Paper on Unfair Trading Practices which will gather, inter alia, views on the existence and importance of TSCs.

A number of European NCAs have also looked at the causes for observed price differences. For example, in 2009 the Irish NCA examined, in its 'Retail-related Import and Distribution study' ([2]) the factors that had contributed to retail price differences between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The study revealed that differences in the cost of doing business, the scale of the firms involved, different tax regimes, consumers' incomes and tastes, as well as levels of competition and regulation, all affected the pricing practiced by suppliers and retailers.

There may be many explanations related to market structure, regulation or other factors for the price differential between the Irish and UK beef markets and such price differential does not warrant an antitrust investigation per se. However, if the Commission is provided evidence that such differences are due to specific anti-competitive behaviour by market operators, it will not hesitate to start an investigation on potential competition law infringements.

([1]) "Structural features of distributive trades and their impact on prices in the Euro area", European Central Bank. Occasional Paper Series. No 128 / September 2011. http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/scpops/ecbocp128.pdf

([2]) 'Retail-related Import and Distribution study'. The Competition Authority. Ireland. May 2009. http://www.tca.ie/images/uploaded/documents/Retail-related%20Import%20and%20Distribution%20Study%20FINAL.pdf .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011049/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) and maladministration

A recent report by the European Ombudsman found that in 2011 the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) was the least compliant EU institution. EPSO scored 69%, far less than the overall rate of 82%.

1. Can the Commission explain why EPSO is not complying with the Ombudsman's suggestions?

2. Given that EPSO's vision statement states that it aims to be 'recognised internationally as a centre of excellence in personnel selection' and to be 'trusted and valued by the institutions we serve', how can EPSO expect to be either trusted or recognised for excellence when it fails to implement recommendations from the only body able to investigate maladministration on behalf of EU citizens?

3. Given the EUR 60 billion administration budget of the EU institutions, can EPSO assure me that, while refusing to comply with the Ombudsman's suggestions, it has performed its recruitment procedures fairly and honestly and that any maladministration has not in any way increased the burden on the taxpayer?

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

EPSO organises selection procedures in the framework of European law, in particular the rules governing staff selection and recruitment procedures of the EU institutions laid down in the Staff Regulations. EPSO recognises the importance of the Ombudsman's role and welcomes his suggestions, whether critical remarks, or further remarks where no maladministration was found. EPSO cases leading to a critical remark are few and EPSO noted that the Ombudsman's 'Annual Report 2011' emphasised *'EPSO's openness to finding rapid and fair solutions to problems'* ([1]). His 'Report on responses to proposals for friendly solutions and draft recommendations', dated November 2012, also mentioned an EPSO 'star case', i.e., a case where the institution took exemplary action and should serve as a model for other institutions of how best to react to the Ombudsman's suggestions. The organisation of selection procedures is a very specific field and when a suggestion is received from the Ombudsman, EPSO has to consider not only the interests of one specific candidate but the interests of all candidates as well as those of the European institutions. EPSO has to verify the feasibility of any suggestion from an organisational and a technical point of view. Whenever feasible, therefore, EPSO complies with the Ombudsman's recommendations. EPSO continues to attach the greatest importance to transparency and equitable treatment of candidates throughout the selection process and strives to comply both with the applicable legal rules and the relevant case law of the EU Courts and, in this way, maintain the trust of the EU institutions and its citizens, whilst providing high-quality and cost-efficient selection procedures.

([1]) European Ombudsman Annual Report 2011, page 52.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011050/12
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Application of the European Market Infrastructure Regulation to foreign exchange swaps and forwards

The US Treasury Department has exempted foreign exchange swaps and forwards from Dodd-Frank Act regulations which were originally designed to reduce risk and increase transparency in the derivatives market.

Can the Commission state whether the European Market Infrastructure Regulation (EMIR) is still considered to apply to foreign exchange derivatives?

Does the Commission agree with the US Treasury that, unlike other derivatives, foreign exchange swaps and forwards already trade in a highly transparent, liquid and efficient market?

Or could any such an exemption granted in the EU potentially undermine regulatory overhaul and increase systemic risk, at a time when regulators around the globe led by the USA are trying to reduce it? Could it therefore also threaten to subvert the regulation of derivatives if interest rate or credit swaps are structured as foreign exchange swaps to benefit from such an exemption?

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

Regulation 648/2012 on OTC derivatives, Central Counterparties and Trade Repositories (EMIR) ([1]) applies to all financial instruments as defined in Section C of Annex I to Directive 2004/39/EC (as implemented by Article 38 and 39 of Regulation (EC) No 1287/2006 (MIFID)). This includes certain foreign exchange derivatives.

The Commission recognises that foreign exchange derivatives that are standardised are generally traded in liquid markets and that a considerable proportion of the market have arrangements in place to mitigate the settlement risk inherent in many types of foreign exchange derivatives. However, counterparty credit risk exists alongside settlement risk in foreign exchange derivative transactions and this needs to be addressed by EU rules. Further, mitigation of settlement risk is not mandatory.

The EMIR framework means that clearing obligations are unlikely to be imposed for deliverable foreign exchange derivative transactions in the EU without an industry initiative. However, there is no express power for the Commission to exempt foreign exchange transactions generally from requirements under EMIR, including bilateral margin requirements. The Commission recognises that if such an exemption were provided for, it could lead to regulatory arbitrage, including the possibility of transactions being re-categorised in order to benefit from such an exemption.

([1]) Published in the Official Journal of the EU on 27 July 2012, L 201/1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011052/12
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(4 décembre 2012)

Objet: Pour une mise en œuvre rapide du plan solaire méditerranéen

Le plan solaire méditerranéen est un tremplin pour développer les énergies renouvelables et renforcer l'efficacité énergétique de toute une région. Par son impact régional, l'Union européenne se pose véritablement comme le chef de file de la lutte contre le changement climatique à l'échelle mondiale. L'achèvement de la boucle énergétique méditerranéenne doit donc être considéré comme une priorité.

L'Union a démontré son engagement fort en ce sens: le commissaire Oettinger a rappelé récemment son attachement à ce projet, et d'importants financements ont déjà été dégagés par l'Union. Le mois dernier, l'Union a donné le véritable coup d'envoi pour le complexe solaire de Ouarzazate, qui fera du Maroc le pionnier de la région dans la mise en œuvre du plan solaire.

Ce plan solaire doit être mis en œuvre rapidement, et de façon suffisante, si nous voulons atteindre l'objectif ambitieux que nous nous sommes fixés. Nous traversons une période de transformation rapide du paysage énergétique, qui rend critiques toute lenteur et tout délai supplémentaire.

Or, si l'Union le soutient avec enthousiasme, plusieurs États membres semblent hésiter à lui apporter leur soutien plein et entier, comme on a pu le voir sur certains projets. Nos entreprises ont besoin d'un soutien politique fort: ne laissons pas le champ libre aux hésitations, à la demi-mesure, ne laissons pas des entreprises étrangères à cette région dominer cet immense projet! C'est l'Europe, c'est la région Méditerranée, qui en seront les plus grandes bénéficiaires: elles doivent s'y engager pleinement!

Toute hésitation nous porterait un préjudice considérable. Les difficultés économiques que nous traversons ne peuvent justifier une réduction de nos ambitions. À long terme, ce sont notre crédibilité et notre sécurité énergétique qui sont en jeu. C'est pourquoi je pose la question suivante: la Commission pense-t-elle être en mesure de rallier autour de ce projet l'ensemble des acteurs concernés, dans une ambition politique forte, pour sa mise en œuvre rapide?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(6 février 2013)

La Commission estime également que le plan solaire méditerranéen (PSM) est un élément essentiel de la politique qu'elle mène afin d'assurer la sécurité énergétique de l'Union européenne et de lutter contre le changement climatique et s'engage pleinement à ce que sa mise en œuvre soit une réussite. Par ailleurs, en plus des initiatives concrètes en cours mentionnées dans la question, la Commission soutient les actions du secrétariat de l'Union pour la Méditerranée en ce qui concerne la préparation du schéma directeur du PSM qui sera présenté lors de la prochaine réunion des ministres de l'énergie de l'Union pour la Méditerranée, qui se tiendra d'ici la fin de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011052/12
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: The Mediterranean Solar Plan needs to be implemented soon

The Mediterranean Solar Plan is a springboard for developing renewable energy and improving energy efficiency across the entire region. Given the influence that the EU exerts on its neighbours, it is undoubtedly at the forefront of the global fight against climate change. Completing the Mediterranean energy ring should be a priority, therefore.

The EU has demonstrated the importance it attaches to these plans: Commissioner Oettinger recently reiterated his commitment to the project, and the EU has already made substantial funding available. In agreeing to provide support for the Ouarzazate solar complex last month, the EU effectively gave the go ahead for a project which will make Morocco the regional pioneer in terms of solar energy production.

If we are to meet the ambitious objective that we have set ourselves, the Mediterranean Solar Plan must be implemented swiftly and effectively. Our energy mix is changing rapidly, which means that foot-dragging or further delays must be avoided at all costs.

And yet, although the EU wholeheartedly backs the plan, several Member States seem reluctant to give it their full support, an attitude already seen in connection with other projects. Our businesses need strong political support: this is not a time for hesitation or half measures, otherwise companies from other parts of the world will come to dominate this huge project! As the regions that stand to benefit the most, Europe and the Mediterranean must demonstrate their full commitment to the Mediterranean Solar Plan.

If the Council were to betray any doubts whatsoever, the result would be disastrous. Just because we are currently facing tough economic times, it does not mean that we can afford to scale back our ambitions. In the long run, our credibility and energy security are at stake. Will the Commission take steps to ensure that all the stakeholders lend their full support to the Mediterranean Solar Plan so that it can be implemented quickly, in keeping with our political ambitions?

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

The Commission shares the view that the Mediterranean Solar Plan (MSP) is an essential component of its policy to achieve energy security for the European Union and address climate change, and is fully committed to its successful implementation. In addition and on top of the concrete ongoing initiatives mentioned in the question, the Commission supports the action of the Union for the Mediterranean secretariat as regards the preparation of the MSP Master Plan to be submitted to the next UfM Energy Ministerial meeting by the end of 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011053/12
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(4 december 2012)

Betreft: Censuur op Turkse tv: Simpsons verboden

De Turkse mediawaakhond RTUK heeft de Turkse televisiezender CNBC-E een boete van 22 700 euro opgelegd voor het uitzenden van een aflevering van The Simpsons. In de aflevering geeft God een kop koffie aan Satan, worden stripfiguren aangespoord iemand te vermoorden „in de naam van God" en zijn brandende bijbels te zien. Volgens de waakhond is het godslastering en zet het aan tot geweld en het drinken van alcohol.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Turkse TV krijgt boete voor The Simpsons" ([1])?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat CNBC-E een boete heeft gekregen voor het uitzenden van een aflevering van The Simpsons? Verwerpt de Commissie deze impliciete censuur?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat hieruit blijkt hoe slecht het in Turkije gesteld is met de vrijheid van meningsuiting, expressie en pers?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat hieruit blijkt dat kritiek op de islam resp. het op de hak nemen van eender welke religie/ideologie in Turkije verboden is? Verwerpt de Commissie dit? Zo neen, waarom niet?

5. Is de Commissie voornemens gevolg te geven aan het feit dat Turkije steeds verder achteruit holt? Zo ja, wat? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(4 februari 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de kwestie waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst.

De vrijheid van meningsuiting en de vrijheid van gedachte, geweten en godsdienst, die ook de vrijheid om niet te geloven omvat, zijn grondrechten waar de Commissie op let bij haar beoordeling van de vorderingen die Turkije maakt bij het voldoen aan de politieke criteria. De Commissie heeft er bij diverse gelegenheden op gewezen dat Turkije de tekortkomingen in dit verband dringend moet aanpakken.

De Commissie heeft in haar voortgangsverslag over Turkije van 2012 ([2]) haar bezorgdheid geuit over de beslissingen van de hoogste instantie voor radio en televisie (RTUK) om de televisiestations te waarschuwen en boetes op te leggen, in het bijzonder voor het afbeelden van bijgeloof, voor het belasteren van de normen en de nationale waarden en de bescherming van de familie en voor de afbeelding van onzedelijkheden en de verheerlijking van terrorisme.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/buitenland/21126665/__Boete_wegens_The_Simpsons__.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011053/12
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Censorship on Turkish TV: ban on The Simpsons

The Turkish media watchdog RTUK has fined the Turkish television channel CNBC-E EUR 22 700 for broadcasting an episode of The Simpsons. In the episode in question, God gives Satan a cup of coffee, cartoon characters are encouraged to murder someone 'in God's name' and Bibles are seen burning. According to the watchdog, this is blasphemy and constitutes incitement to violence and to drink alcohol.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Turkse TV krijgt boete voor The Simpsons' [Turkish TV fined over The Simpsons] ([1])?

2. What view does the Commission take of the fact that CNBC-E has been fined for broadcasting an episode of The Simpsons? Does the Commission condemn this implicit censorship?

3. Does the Commission agree that this shows how unsatisfactory the situation is with regard to freedom of expression and freedom of the press in Turkey?

4. Does the Commission agree that this shows that criticising Islam or ridiculing any religion or ideology whatsoever is banned in Turkey? Does the Commission condemn this? If not, why not?

5. Will the Commission take action in response to the fact that Turkey is regressing more and more? If so, what? If not, why not?

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

The Commission is aware of the issue referred to by the Honourable Member.

Freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, which also includes the freedom not to believe, are fundamental rights monitored by the Commission in its appreciation 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.

The Commission, in its 2012 Progress Report on Turkey ([2]), expressed its concerns with regard to decisions of the Supreme Board of Radio and Television (RTÜK) to issue warnings to television stations and to impose fines on them, in particular for representing superstitious beliefs, denigrating morals and national values and the protection of the family, representing obscenity and praising terrorism.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/buitenland/21126665/__Boete_wegens_The_Simpsons__.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011054/12
komissiolle (Varapuheenjohtajalle/korkealle edustajalle)
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(4. joulukuuta 2012)

Aihe: VP/HR – EU:n ja Israelin väliset kauppasuhteet

Israel ilmoitti tällä viikolla laajentavansa asutusta Länsirannan ja Gazan miehitetyillä alueilla sijaitsevissa siirtokunnissaan vastineena palestiinalaishallinnon uudelle tarkkailuasemalle YK:ssa. Israel ilmoitti rakentavansa 3 000 asuntoa alueelle. Tämä siitä huolimatta, että Israel lupasi vuonna 2003 jäädyttää meneillään olevat asuntohankkeet.

Monet maat ovat ilmaisseet huolensa Israelin päätöksestä. Israelin siirtokunnat rikkovat kansainvälistä oikeutta (YK:n päätöslauselma 446, 1979), ja tämä on ollut toistuva huolenaihe myös EU:n Israelia koskevissa tiedonannoissa.

Aikooko ulkosuhdehallinto jäädyttää EU:n ja Israelin välisten kauppaneuvottelujen viemisen pidemmälle?

Mihin muihin toimenpiteisiin ulkosuhdehallinto aikoo ryhtyä, mikäli Israel ei peru päätöstään uuden asutuksen perustamisesta siirtokuntiin?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(4. helmikuuta 2013)

EU:n ja Israelin välillä ei tällä hetkellä käydä kauppaneuvotteluja. EU on joka tapauksessa tehnyt selväksi 10. joulukuuta 2012 kokoontuneessa ulkoasiainneuvostossa vastustavansa voimakkaasti Israelin siirtokuntien laajentamista. Erityisesti EU vastustaa sellaisten suunnitelmien toimeenpanoa, jotka vaarantavat tavoitteen alueellisesti yhtenäisestä ja elinkelpoisesta Palestiinan valtiosta ja Jerusalemista kahden valtion pääkaupunkina, sillä tällaiset toimet vaikeuttavat vakavasti konfliktin ratkaisemista neuvottelemalla. EU:n päätavoite konfliktissa on kahden valtion ratkaisu. EU seuraa tilannetta ja Israelin toiminnan laajempia vaikutuksia tästä näkökulmasta ja toimii niiden mukaisesti.

EU vahvisti kantaansa Israelin aluevaatimuksiin myös siten, että ulkoasiainneuvosto ilmaisi 10. joulukuuta 2012 antamissaan päätelmissä EU:n sitoumuksen huolehtia, että Israelin valtion ja Euroopan unionin välisissä sopimuksissa yksiselitteisesti ja nimenomaisesti todetaan, että niitä ei sovelleta Israelin vuonna 1967 miehittämiin alueisiin. Lisäksi parhaillaan pannaan täytäntöön 14. toukokuuta 2012 annettuja ulkoasiainneuvoston päätelmiä, jotka koskevat siirtokuntien tuotteita.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011054/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Trade between the EU and Israel

This week, Israel has announced that it intends to expand its settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza in response to the Palestinian Authority's new observer status at the UN. Israel has announced that it will build 3 000 homes in the area. This is despite the fact that in 2003 Israel pledged that it would freeze its current settlement projects.

Many countries have expressed their concern about Israel's decision. The Israeli settlements breach international law (UN Resolution 446 (1979)), and this has also repeatedly prompted the EU to express concern in its statements on Israel.

Will the EEAS put the trade negotiations between the EU and Israel on ice?

What other measures will the EEAS take if Israel does not revoke its decision to build new homes in the settlements?

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

There are currently no ongoing trade negotiations between the EU and Israel. The EU has nevertheless been very clear in the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on 10 December 2012 in voicing its strong opposition to Israeli settlement expansion. The EU particularly opposes the implementation of plans which seriously undermine the prospects of a negotiated resolution of the conflict by jeopardising the possibility of a contiguous and viable Palestinian state and of Jerusalem as the future capital of two states. In the light of its core objective of achieving the two-state solution, the EU will closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and act accordingly.

Moreover, in order to strengthen the EU position regarding territorial claims by Israel, those same conclusions expressed the commitment of the EU to ensure that all agreements between the State of Israel and the European Union 'unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967'. Action is being taken as well to adequately implement the 14 May 2012 FAC conclusions as regards settlement products.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011055/12
to the Commission
Derek Roland Clark (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: François Théret

According to *Bloom*'s website, François Théret became a member of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) in October 2010. It also notes that in January 2011 he joined Scapêche, which is Intermarché's fishing fleet based in Lorient. The act which established this Committee requires STECF members to act 'independently of Member States or stakeholders … on the basis of independence, impartiality and transparency'.

Will the Commission please comment on this gross breach of STECF rules? This is a clear case of corruption which needs to be put right.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Commission Decision (2005/629/EC) establishing a Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries for details on the rules of procedure. This decision contains rules about independence of any external influence.

Members of the STECF shall act independently of Member States or stakeholders, making an annual declaration of commitment to act in the public interest and, at each meeting they participate in, a declaration of interests indicating either the absence or existence of any interest which might be considered prejudicial to their independence. They can hold public or private positions. According to the information given by STECF in the case of Mr Theret the rules were implemented.

In the framework of the Reform of the common fisheries policy the Commission is in the process of discussing with the co-legislators on how to best reform the advisory bodies of the Commission including the rules of independence. In the meantime we have to implement the aforementioned decision.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011056/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — L'Iran rifornisce di armi la Siria attraverso lo spazio aereo iracheno

Il 2 dicembre 2012, il quotidiano britannico *The Sunday Times* riferiva che lo spazio aereo sull'Iraq era utilizzato dal governo iraniano per rifornire la Siria di razzi, missili anticarro e granate a propulsione a razzo. Secondo il *New York Times*, il Presidente degli Stati Uniti, Obama ha chiesto al governo iracheno di ispezionare i voli tra l'Iran e la Siria, finora invano.

Il giornale riferisce anche che il Segretario di Stato Hillary Clinton ha già assicurato l'impegno del Ministro degli Esteri iracheno, Hosyar Zebari, a garantire che il suo paese ispezionerà i voli dall'Iran alla Siria.Tuttavia, dalla fine di ottobre 2012 sono stati ispezionati solo due voli.

Il governo degli Stati Uniti sostiene di avere le prove della collusione tra funzionari iracheni e iraniani in materia di ispezioni. Secondo il Capo dell'aviazione civile in Iraq, Nasir Bender, la ragione per cui solo due voli iraniani sono stati ispezionati è l'alto costo del carburante: «Sarebbe un grosso spreco di denaro. Ad ogni aereo che facciamo atterrare dobbiamo fornire il carburante necessario».

Secondo i funzionari degli Stati Uniti, il Primo ministro iracheno Nouri al-Maliki teme che la caduta del Presidente siriano Bashar al-Assad provochi una rivolta delle forze sunnite e curde nella regione, che potrebbe destabilizzare il governo dell'Iraq dominato dagli sciiti.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto alle notizie che l'Iraq aiuta l'Iran ad esportare armi e materiale militare in Siria?

2. Quali passi è disposta ad effettuare la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante onde affrontare questi problemi con il Primo Ministro al-Maliki?

3. Qual è la valutazione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in merito alla portata del sostegno iracheno alla Siria?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2013)

L'AR/VP segue con estrema attenzione la questione e si è detta preoccupata per il fatto che l'Iran, violando la risoluzione 1747 del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU, utilizzi il territorio e lo spazio aereo iracheni al fine di fornire sostegno militare (formazione, attrezzature e armi) al regime siriano.

Di fronte a tale situazione, il 20 dicembre 2012 l'UE ha intrapreso, mediante il capo della sua delegazione in Iraq, un'iniziativa diplomatica nei confronti del Primo ministro Al Maliki volta a esortare il paese ad adoperarsi maggiormente per impedire che il sostegno fornito dall'Iran passi attraverso il suo territorio, ad esempio aumentando considerevolmente i controlli dei voli iraniani diretti in Siria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011056/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iran arming Syria through Iraqi airspace

On 2 December 2012, the UK newspaper *The Sunday Times* reported that airspace over Iraq was being used by the Iranian Government to transport rockets, anti-tank missiles and rocket-propelled grenades to Syria. According to *The New York Times*, US President Obama has asked the Iraqi Government to inspect flights between Iran and Syria, so far to no avail.

The newspaper also reports that US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has already secured a commitment from Iraq's Foreign Minister, Hosyar Zebari, to ensure that his country will inspect such flights from Iran to Syria. However, since late October 2012 only two flights have been inspected.

The US Government claims to have evidence of collusion between Iraqi and Iranian officials regarding inspections. According to the head of civil aviation in Iraq, Nasir Bender, the reason that only two Iranian flights have been inspected is the high cost of fuel: 'It would be a big waste of money. Each plane we take down we must refill with fuel'.

According to US officials, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is afraid that the fall of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad would cause an uprising of Sunni and Kurdish forces in the region, which could destabilise Iraq's Shia-dominated government.

1. What is the position of the High Representative/Vice-President regarding reports that Iraq is assisting Iran in exporting arms and military material to Syria?

2. What steps is the HR/VP prepared to take in order to address these concerns with Prime Minister al-Maliki?

3. What is the HR/VP's assessment of the extent of Iraqi support to Syria?

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

The HR/VP has been following very closely this question and has expressed concern that Iran is using Iraqi territory and airspace to provide military support (training, equipment and weapons) to the Syrian regime, in contravention of the UN Security Council Resolution 1747.

In response to the situation, an EU Demarche was carried out to Prime Minister Al Maliki by the Head of the EU Delegation in Iraq on 20 December 2012. The EU in the demarche called on Iraq to make further efforts to prevent Iran support passing through Iraq, including by significantly increasing the frequency of the checks of Iranian flights to Syria.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011057/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Un deputato del partito ungherese Jobbik chiede un'indagine sugli ebrei

Il 27 novembre 2012, il *Guardian* riferiva che un deputato ungherese del partito Jobbik aveva chiesto di verificare se il pensiero degli ebrei ponga un presunto «rischio per la sicurezza nazionale». Marton Gyongyosi del Jobbik aveva detto che il numero degli ebrei dovrebbe essere contato e registrato su una lista, specialmente quelli in parlamento e al governo. Sosteneva che era l'ora di farlo, dato il conflitto in Medio Oriente.

Il partito Jobbik è stato responsabile di molti commenti antisemiti, antirom e omofobici in passato.

1. Quali nuovi passi ha in programma di effettuare la Commissione nel 2013 per contrastare l'antisemitismo?

2. Secondo la Commissione, quali sono le aree principali che vanno affrontate per combattere l'antisemitismo?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2013)

Le esternazioni di odio e i reati di stampo antisemita sono problemi da risolvere per sradicare definitivamente l'antisemitismo.

La Commissione combatte questi comportamenti grazie alla decisione quadro 2008/913/GAI ([1]). Tale decisione obbliga gli Stati membri a sanzionare l'istigazione intenzionale alla violenza e all'odio in riferimento alla razza, al colore della pelle, alla religione, alla discendenza o all'origine nazionale o etnica. Inoltre, gli Stati membri devono garantire che le motivazioni razziste o xenofobe, tra cui quelle antisemite, siano prese in considerazione all'atto della determinazione della pena per qualsiasi altro reato.

La Commissione verifica il recepimento e l'applicazione di questa decisione quadro e presenterà la sua relazione nel 2013. La decisione quadro non autorizza la Commissione ad avviare procedure di infrazione fino al 1° dicembre 2014.

In aggiunta alla normativa UE, la Commissione continuerà a combattere l'antisemitismo attraverso la commemorazione del Giorno della memoria ([2]), sostenendo le attività di commemorazione e le attività volte a sradicare l'antisemitismo ([3]), e favorendo l'operato dell'Agenzia dell'Unione europea per i diritti fondamentali ([4]).

Il 18 gennaio 2013, i Ministri della giustizia dell'UE hanno discusso la necessità di «prendere delle misure per contrastare i reati e l'intolleranza, compresi il razzismo e l'antisemitismo» durante una riunione informale del Consiglio «Giustizia e affari interni». La presidenza irlandese ha concluso invitando la Commissione ad avviare un ampio dibattito pubblico, con i governi e le istituzioni pubbliche negli Stati membri, che tenga conto della relazione annuale della Commissione sull'applicazione della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea.

([1]) Decisione quadro 2008/913/GAI del Consiglio, del 28 novembre 2008, sulla lotta contro talune forme ed espressioni di razzismo e xenofobia mediante il diritto penale, GU L 328 del 6.12.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news-events/events/20122012holocaust_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/overview/action-4-active-european-remembrance/index_en.htm; http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([4]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/fra-antisemitism-survey.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011057/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Member of Hungary's Jobbik party asks for survey of Jews

On 27 November 2012, the *Guardian* reported that an MP from Hungary's Jobbik party had called for a survey of Jewish people thought to pose an alleged 'national security risk'. Jobbik's Marton Gyongyosi had said that the number of Jews should be 'tallied up', especially those in parliament and government. He had claimed that this exercise was 'timely', given the conflict in the Middle East.

The Jobbik party has been responsible for making a number of anti-Semitic, anti-Roma and homophobic remarks in the past.

1. What new steps is the Commission planning to take in 2013 in order to tackle anti-Semitism?

2. In the Commission's view, what are the main areas that need to be addressed in order to combat anti-Semitism?

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

Antisemitic hate speech and hate crime based on an antisemitic motivation are areas that must be addressed to effectively fight against antisemitism.

The Commission combats these conducts through Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA. ([1]) This law obliges the Member States to penalise the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred on the basis of race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. Furthermore, Member States must ensure that a racist or xenophobic , including an anti-Semitic motivation, of any other offence is taken into account in the determination of the penalties.

The Commission monitors the transposition and implementation of this framework Decision and will present its assessment in 2013. The Commission is not authorised to launch infringement proceedings on the basis of Framework Decisions until 1 December 2014.

In addition to EU legislation, the Commission will continue combating antisemitism by commemorating the Holocaust Remembrance Day ([2]), by providing financial support to stakeholders' remembrance activities and activities aimed at tackling antisemitism, ([3]) and by supporting the work of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. ([4])

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]) 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.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news-events/events/20122012holocaust_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/overview/action-4-active-european-remembrance/index_en.htm; http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([4]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/fra-antisemitism-survey.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011058/12
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(4 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Dopuszczalność upraw GMO w Polsce

W dniu 9 listopada 2012 r. Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej głosami rządzącej koalicji przyjął nową ustawę o nasiennictwie, w praktyce dopuszczającą możliwość stosowania upraw GMO. Jako reprezentant Mazowsza, regionu rolniczego, znanego z produkcji zdrowej żywności, jestem tym faktem wysoce zaniepokojony. Jako szczególnie niebezpieczny oceniam brak konieczności informowania na etykietach opakowań nasion o tym, że dana odmiana rośliny jest modyfikowana genetycznie. Odrzucona została poprawka opozycji w tej materii.

Wiadomo powszechnie, że raz dopuszczona odmiana GMO wyrządza nieodwracalne skutki, ze względu na skażenia transgeniczne pomiędzy roślinami GMO, a ekologicznymi, które siłą rzeczy się wymieszają. W efekcie rolnicy stosujący produkcję ekologiczną stracą certyfikaty jakości swoich upraw.

W związku z powyższym, zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Czy brak stosownych oznaczeń dotyczących pochodzenia produktów, w tym przypadku nasion GMO, jest zgodny z prawem wspólnotowym i europejskimi normami ochrony konsumentów?

2. Czy prawdą jest, jak sugeruje część ekspertów, polityków i dziennikarzy, że przyjęcie ustawy w takim kształcie związane było z kwestią unijnej pomocy dla polskiego rolnictwa?

3. Czy priorytetem Komisji w zakresie europejskiego rolnictwa są uprawy GMO, czy też jednak przedkłada działania na rzecz promocji, wsparcia i ochrony rolnictwa ekologicznego, oraz jakie to są działania?

Czy możliwy jest nacisk ze strony instytucji europejskich na polski rząd celem zobligowania go do skutecznej ochrony rolnictwa w obliczu zagrożenia uprawami roślin genetycznie modyfikowanych, szczególnie w odniesieniu do rolnictwa ekologicznego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(5 lutego 2013 r.)

1. Artykuł 4 ust. 6 rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1830/2003 ([1]) wymaga, by na etykietach produktów składających się z organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie (GMO) lub je zawierających, np. nasion, była zamieszczana wyraźna informacja o obecności GMO. Słowa „Ten produkt zawiera organizmy zmodyfikowane genetycznie" powinny znajdować się na etykiecie lub być widoczne na opakowaniu produktu.

2. Komisja nie dysponuje informacjami odnośnie do stwierdzeń, które przytacza Pan Poseł. Komisja co do zasady nie komentuje artykułów prasowych ani publicznych wypowiedzi polityków w państwach członkowskich.

3. Zdaniem Komisji żadna forma rolnictwa nie powinna być w Unii wykluczona. Propozycje dotyczące WPR ([2])po 2013 r. są wyraźnie nastawione na ekologizację rolnictwa. Zaproponowano, by rolnictwo ekologiczne domyślnie kwalifikowało się do płatności związanych z ekologizacją w ramach I filaru WPR. Planuje się również wzmocnienie wsparcia dla rolnictwa ekologicznego udzielanego w ramach krajowych i regionalnych programów rozwoju obszarów wiejskich współfinansowanych przez UE (II filar WPR).

([1]) Dz.U. L 268 z 18.10.2003, s. 1.
([2]) Wspólna polityka rolna.

4. Unijne przepisy dotyczące organizmów genetycznie zmodyfikowanych przewidują, że państwa członkowskie mogą wprowadzać krajowe środki w zakresie współistnienia upraw, aby uniknąć niezamierzonej obecności GMO w produktach na obszarach, na których uprawia się GMO, zapobiec potencjalnym stratom gospodarczym oraz skutkom mieszania się upraw zmodyfikowanych genetycznie z niezmodyfikowanymi, w tym z uprawami ekologicznymi. Komisja pomaga państwom członkowskim we wprowadzaniu tych środków, prowadząc Europejskie Biuro ds. Współistnienia Upraw ([3]) odpowiadające za wypracowanie najlepszych praktyk dotyczących współistnienia upraw. Komisja opublikowała także zalecenie ([4]) w sprawie wytycznych w zakresie opracowywania krajowych środków dotyczących współistnienia upraw. Wniosek dotyczący rozporządzenia ([5]) przyjęty przez Komisję w lipcu 2010 r. pozwoli państwom członkowskim, które tego sobie życzą, na ograniczenie lub zakazanie upraw GMO na ich terytoriach ze względów innych niż ryzyko dla zdrowia i środowiska, w tym współistnienie upraw.

([3]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:200:0001:0005:PL:PDF.

([5]) Wniosek dotyczący rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady zmieniającego dyrektywę 2001/18/WE w zakresie umożliwienia państwom członkowskim ograniczenia lub zakazania uprawy organizmów zmodyfikowanych genetycznie na swoim terytorium (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0375:FIN:PL:PDF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011058/12
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Authorising GMO crops in Poland

On 9 November 2012, the Polish Sejm adopted a new Seeds Act thanks to the votes of the ruling coalition. This act, in practice, authorises the cultivation of GMOs. As a representative of Mazowsze, an agricultural region known for its healthy food, I am deeply concerned by this state of affairs. I consider the fact that there is no requirement to include information on the seed package label as to whether the contents are genetically modified to be particularly dangerous. An amendment aimed at imposing such an obligation was rejected.

It is widely known that once cultivation of a GMO crop has been permitted, the effects are irreversible, given that transgenic contamination between GMOs and organic plants is certain to occur. Farmers cultivating organic produce will, as a result, lose the quality certifications for their crops.

In this connection:

1. Is the absence of appropriate indications regarding the origin of products — in this case GMO seeds — in accordance with EC law and European consumer protection standards?

2. Is it true — as some experts, politicians and journalists suggest — that the adoption of the Seeds Act in its present form was linked to the issue of EU assistance for Polish agriculture?

3. Are GMO crops a Commission priority in the area of European agriculture? Is it also proposing that actions be taken to promote, support and protect organic agriculture? If so, what are these actions?

Could the European institutions put pressure on the Polish Government with a view to requiring it to provide the agricultural sector — and the organic sector in particular — with effective protection against the threats posed by genetically modified plants?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission

(5 February 2013)

1. Article 4.6 of Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003 ([1]) requires that products consisting of or containing GMOs — i.e. seeds — are labelled to provide clear information on the presence of GMOs. The words 'This product contains GMOs' shall appear on a label or on the product's display.

2. The Commission is not aware of the assertions made by the Honourable Member. It is Commission policy not to comment on press articles, or on public statements by politicians in the Member States.

3. The Commission considers that no form of farming should be excluded in the EU. The proposals for the CAP ([2]) post-2013 have a strong focus on the greening of agriculture. It is proposed that organic farming should qualify by default for eligibility to 'greening' payments under Pillar I of the CAP, and that organic farming support in national and regional Rural Development programmes co-financed by the EU (Pillar II of the CAP) should be reinforced.

4. The EU legislation on GMOs provides that Member States can implement national coexistence measures to avoid unintended presence of GMOs in other products in areas where GMOS are cultivated, to prevent the potential economic loss and impacts of admixture of GM and non-GM crops, including organic crops. The Commission has been assisting Member States in implementing these measures, first by hosting the European Coexistence Bureau (ECoB) ([3]) in charge of developing best practices for co-existence, and by publishing a recommendation ([4]) on guidelines for the development of national co-existence measures. The proposal for a regulation ([5]) adopted by the Commission in July 2010 will allow Member States, if they wish, to restrict or ban cultivation of GMOs in their territory for reasons other than risk on health and the environment, including coexistence.

([1]) OJ L 268, 18.10.2003.
([2]) Common Agricultural Policy.
([3]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/docs/new_recommendation_en.pdf
([5]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory (http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/docs/proposal_en.pdf).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011060/12
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(4 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Odzież z materiałów szkodliwych dla zdrowia

Z zaprezentowanego przed kilkoma dniami raportu organizacji Greenpeace dotyczącego produktów odzieżowych wynika, że producenci ubrań stosują materiały zawierające niebezpieczne dla zdrowia substancje, w tym rakotwórcze barwniki. Dotyczy to większości międzynarodowych koncernów, przy czym część z nich zobowiązała się do wyeliminowania szkodliwych komponentów. Niestety niektóre europejskie firmy, jak hiszpańska Zara, nie reagują na związane z tą sytuacją apele, prawdopodobnie więc nie planują działań zmierzających do pożądanego rozwiązania tego poważnego problemu.

Kierując się interesem europejskich konsumentów w związku z powyżej przedstawioną argumentacją pragnę zwrócić się z prośbą o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy stosowanie rakotwórczych substancji w przemyśle odzieżowym jest zgodne z europejskimi normami w zakresie ochrony zdrowia i wobec tego odbywa się za wiedzą i pod kontrolą Komisji?

2. Jakie działania względem producentów zostaną podjęte w przypadku potwierdzenia przez Komisję stosowania niedopuszczalnych związków chemicznych?

3. Czy w związku z ujawnieniem występowania na europejskim rynku szkodliwych dla zdrowia produktów odzieżowych Komisja podejmie działania zmierzające do ich wyeliminowania oraz poinformowania konsumentów o możliwych zagrożeniach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(7 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisji znany jest raport, do którego odnosi się Szanowny Pan Poseł.

W UE prawodawstwo obejmuje różne podejścia do ograniczenia ilości substancji niebezpiecznych w wyrobach włókienniczych. Przykładowo, rozporządzenie REACH ([1]) zawiera ograniczenia dla różnych substancji, takich jak barwniki azowe w wyrobach włókienniczych i skórzanych, oraz dla substancji używanych do obróbki takich artykułów. Ramowa dyrektywa wodna (RDW) ([2]) wymienia nonylofenol jako priorytetową substancję niebezpieczną i zawiera wymóg, aby do 2021 r. stopniowo wycofano emisję tej substancji do środowiska wodnego. W dyrektywie IPPC ([3]) określono dopuszczalne wielkości emisji dla substancji priorytetowych, które są regularnie poddawane przeglądowi. Opublikowane w ramach tej dyrektywy „najlepsze dostępne techniki" z 2003 r. stosowane w produkcji wyrobów włókienniczych, zostaną poddane przeglądowi w 2014 r.

Egzekwowanie przepisów dotyczących substancji chemicznych należy do organów celnych i organów nadzoru rynku państw członkowskich. Na przykład organy te kontrolują obecność barwników azowych w odzieży i mogą podjąć odpowiednie środki, w tym wycofanie z rynku, jeżeli zostanie przekroczona wartość graniczna określona w rozporządzeniu REACH ([4]). Informację o podjęciu takich środków zgłaszają one Komisji za pomocą unijnego systemu szybkiego informowania (RAPEX) ([5]). Od 2007 r. zgłoszono ok. 110 takich środków.

Ze względu na znaczenie problemu chemikaliów w wyrobach włókienniczych Komisja rozpoczęła badanie instrumentów legislacyjnych i obecnie stosowanych podejść do kwestii takich chemikaliów, w celu rozważenia, czy należy je zmodyfikować.

([1]) Rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1907/2006 Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 18 grudnia 2006 r. w sprawie rejestracji, oceny, udzielania zezwoleń i stosowanych ograniczeń w zakresie chemikaliów (REACH); Dz.U. L 396 z 30.12.2006, s. 1.
([2]) Dyrektywa 2000/60/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 23 października 2000 r. ustanawiająca ramy wspólnotowego działania w dziedzinie polityki wodnej; Dz.U. L 327 z 22.12.2000, s. 1.
([3]) Dyrektywa Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2008/1/WE z dnia 15 stycznia 2008 r. dotycząca zintegrowanego zapobiegania zanieczyszczeniom i ich kontroli (Dz.U. L 24 z 29.1.2008, s. 8-29).
([4]) Rozporządzenie REACH, załącznik XVIII, pozycja nr 43.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011060/12
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Toxic substances in clothing

A report on clothing products published by Greenpeace a few days ago highlights the fact that clothing manufacturers are using materials containing toxic substances, including carcinogenic dyes. This problem affects most international multinational corporations, some of which have committed themselves to eliminating the use of harmful substances. Unfortunately some European firms, such as the Spanish company Zara, are failing to respond to the calls for action and are probably not planning to do anything about this serious problem.

As this is a matter of great interest to European consumers, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the use of carcinogenic substances in the clothing industry consistent with European health protection standards and is it therefore taking place with the knowledge and under the supervision of the Commission?

2. What action will be taken against manufacturers if the Commission establishes that they are using chemical compounds which are not permitted?

3. In light of this discovery, will the Commission take action to remove harmful clothing products from the European market and inform consumers of the possible dangers?

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

The Commission is aware of the report to which the Honourable Member refers.

In the EU, legislation includes several approaches to limiting the quantity of dangerous substances in textiles. For example, the REACH Regulation ([1]) restricts various substances, such as azo dyes, in textiles or leather articles, and substances for the processing of such articles. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([2]) lists nonylphenol as a priority hazardous substance, requiring emissions to the aquatic environment to be phased out by 2021. The IPPC Directive ([3]) sets emission limit values for priority substances which are regularly reviewed. Its 'Best Available Techniques' for the production of textiles, of 2003, will be reviewed in 2014.

Enforcement of the rules on chemicals falls to the Member States' customs and market surveillance authorities. For example, authorities control azo colourants in clothing and can take appropriate measures, including removal from the market, if the limit in the REACH Regulation ([4]) is exceeded. They notify the Commission of such measures through the EU rapid alert system RAPEX ([5]). Since 2007, some 110 such measures were notified.

In view of the importance of the issue of chemicals in textiles, the Commission has started to examine the legislative instruments and approaches currently used for addressing such chemicals, in order to consider whether they merit a revision.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals; OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.
([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy; OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1.
([3]) Directive 2008/1/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (OJ L 24, 29.1.2008, p. 8-29).
([4]) REACH Regulation, Annex XVII, entry n° 43.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011061/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Entlastung des Faktors „Arbeit“

Die Kluft zwischen „Arm“ und „Reich“ nimmt in Österreich immer mehr zu — so verfügt die Hälfte der Haushalte über ein durchschnittliches Nettovermögen von 15 000 EUR, 30 % von durchschnittlich 175 000 EUR, 15 % von etwa 497 000 EUR und 5 % von circa 2,5 Millionen EUR.

Der österreichische Sozialminister schlägt vor, den Faktor Arbeit zu entlasten und den Faktor Vermögen zu belasten.

Wäre die Kommission bereit, diese österreichische Anregung europaweit als angemessene Lösung ins Auge zu fassen?

Damit würde man einen aktiven Beitrag der vermögenden Oberschicht zur Linderung der Wirtschaftskrise einfordern. Diejenigen, die durch die Wirtschaftskrise unverschuldet in Not geraten sind, würden vorübergehend finanzielle Unterstützung erhalten können.

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(15. Februar 2013)

In ihrem Jahreswachstumsbericht 2013 ([1]) stellt die Europäische Kommission fest, dass die Mitgliedstaaten versuchen sollten, ihre Steuersysteme effizienter, wettbewerbsfreundlicher und gerechter zu gestalten. Eine solche Verlagerung muss in einem Gesamtpaket erfolgen, das den Gegebenheiten des jeweiligen Mitgliedstaats Rechnung trägt.

Die Wahl der Mittel für die Umverteilung obliegt den Mitgliedstaaten.

Im Europäischen Semester machte die Kommission auf einen Teilbereich der Vermögensbesteuerung aufmerksam, indem sie darauf hinwies, dass periodische Steuern auf Immobilen wie Grundstücke und Gebäude zu den am wenigsten wachstumsschädlichen Steuern gehören, da sie naturgemäß unbeweglich und damit schwer zu umgehen und zu hinterziehen sind ([2]). Außerdem hängt der Besitz von Immobilien normalerweise stark von Einkommen und Gesamtvermögen ab. Es handelt sich daher um ein steuerliches Instrument, das genutzt werden kann, um Effizienz zu erreichen und verteilungspolitische Ziele zu verwirklichen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_de.pdf
([2]) Siehe auch den Bericht „Taxation Trends in the EU“, S. 45-54:.
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_structures/2012/report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011061/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Reducing the tax burden on labour

In Austria the divide between rich and poor continues to widen: the top 50% of households have average net assets of EUR 15 000, whilst for the top 30% the figure is EUR 175 000, for the top 15% it is roughly EUR 497 000, and for the top 5% it is roughly EUR 2.5 million.

The Austrian Minister for Social Affairs is proposing to shift the tax burden from labour towards private wealth.

Would the Commission be willing to consider implementing this Austrian proposal on a Europe-wide basis?

This would force the better-off members of society to make an active contribution to alleviating the economic crisis. Temporary financial support could also be offered to those who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in dire financial straits.

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

In its Annual Growth Survey ([1]) 2013, The European Commission states that Member States should aim at making tax systems more efficient, competitive and fairer. Such a shift requires a package approach which is adapted to the circumstances of individual Member States.

The choice of the tools for redistribution is a prerogative of the Member States.

In the European Semester, the Commission has drawn attention to a subset of property taxation by stating that recurrent taxes on immovable property, e.g. land and buildings are amongst the least detrimental to growth because they are by nature immobile and difficult to avoid and evade ([2]). Furthermore, possession of immovable property tends to correlate strongly with income and total wealth. Hence, it's a tax instrument that can be used to achieve both efficiency and distributional policy aims.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2013_en.pdf
([2]) See also p. 45-54 of the Taxation Trends in the EU report:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_structures/2012/report.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011062/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Die Folgen der Sparpolitik für Frauen und Kinder in Irland

Irland musste massive Sparmaßnahmen ins Auge fassen, um das Haushaltsdefizit in den Griff bekommen zu können; dabei trafen die daraus resultierenden Folgen — z. B. die Arbeitslosigkeit — erst die Männer, aber nach und nach sind jetzt immer mehr auch ebenso die Frauen betroffen.

1. Ist der Kommission das Problem der Folgen der Sparpolitik bekannt, und weiß sie, dass auch Frauen und Kinder direkt betroffen sind? (Bitte um detaillierte Angaben)

2. Welche Einzelheiten liegen zu den folgenden Punkten vor:

— Prozentualer Anteil der Frauen (davon Akademikerinnen/Nicht-Akademikerinnen),

— bis 30-Jährige,

— 30 bis 50-Jährige,

— Frauen im Alter von über 50,

— prozentualer Anteil der arbeitslos gewordenen Frauen, die in ein anderes Land gezogen sind, um anderswo eine Arbeitsmöglichkeit zu finden?

3. Welche Empfehlungen/Unterstützungen erhalten die irischen Frauen und Kinder in dieser Situation?

4. In welcher Form wirkt sich die Situation der irischen Frauen und Kinder auf die wirtschaftliche Situation Europas im Einzelnen aus?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(7. Februar 2013)

Die Wirtschaftskrise und die finanzpolitischen Konsolidierungsmaßnahmen zur Senkung des durch sie verursachten gesamtstaatlichen Defizits wirken sich auf das verfügbare Einkommen der privaten Haushalte aus. Zwischen 2009 und 2010 ist das Medianeinkommen pro Haushalt mit unterhaltsberechtigten Kindern in Irland erheblich gefallen, und zwar von 21 859 EUR auf 18 977 EUR. Es lag jedoch deutlich über dem EU-27-Durchschnitt von 13 769 EUR im Jahr 2010. Da jedoch noch keine detaillierten Einkommensdaten für 2011 und 2012 verfügbar sind, ist es nicht möglich, die Auswirkungen der Konsolidierungsmaßnahmen auf die Finanzsituation von Frauen und Kindern für die letzten zwei Jahre zu bewerten.

Gemäß der Europäischen Arbeitskräfteerhebung lag die Arbeitslosenquote in Irland im dritten Quartal 2012 bei den Frauen bei ca. 11,5 %, gegenüber 17,8 % bei den Männern. Die Arbeitslosenquote bei den Frauen ist umso geringer je höher das Bildungsniveau (17,6 % bei den Geringqualifizierten; 14,2 % bei den durchschnittlich Qualifizierten und 7,7 % bei den Hochqualifizierten) und sinkt mit dem Alter (18,2 % bei Frauen unter 30, 9,7 % bei Frauen zwischen 30 und 49 und 8,0 % bei Frauen ab 50).

Die Zahl der ausgewanderten Irinnen stieg von 6 000 im Jahr 2008 auf 20 600 im Jahr 2012. Bei der männlichen Bevölkerung Irlands belaufen sich die Zahlen auf 7 100 und 26 000.

Die Arbeitsverwaltung der irischen Regierung und die Bürgerinformationsstelle (Citizens Information Board) sind die wichtigste Quelle für Informationen und Unterstützung im Zusammenhang mit Sozialschutz, Gesundheit, Rechtsschutz und anderen Ressourcen in ganz Irland.

Die Wirtschaftskrise und die finanzpolitischen Konsolidierungsmaßnahmen in Irland wirken sich in der Tat auf die allgemeine Wirtschaftslage in der EU aus, was sich insbesondere am Verlust der Kaufkraft und der Auswanderung irischer Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer zeigt. Die Kommission ist sich dessen bewusst und spricht sich daher für wachstumsfreundliche Konsolidierungsmaßnahmen aus, um die sozialen Folgen gering zu halten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011062/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: The repercussions of austerity measures on women and children in Ireland

Ireland has had to consider drastic austerity measures to get its budget deficit under control. The repercussions of this — e.g. unemployment — hit men first of all, but women are now gradually being affected more and more as well.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problem of repercussions from austerity measures, and does it know that women and children are also being directly affected? Please answer in detail.

2. Does it have precise figures for the following:

— the percentage of women affected (graduates/non-graduates),

— under 30 years old,

— 30-50 years old,

— over 50 years old,

— the percentage of women who, having lost their jobs, have moved to another country where they hope to be able to find work?

3. What advice or support do Irish women and children in this situation receive?

4. Can the Commission explain in detail how the situation of Irish women and children affects the economic situation in Europe?

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

The economic crisis and the fiscal consolidation to counter the subsequent government budget deficit are affecting households' disposable incomes. Between 2009 and 2010, the median income per household with dependent children in Ireland fell significantly from EUR 21 859 to EUR 18 977, but was much higher than the EU-27 average of EUR 13 769 in 2010. However, since detailed data on incomes for 2011 and 2012 are not available yet, it is not possible to assess the impact of fiscal consolidation on incomes of women and children for the last two years.

According to the EU-Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate in Ireland was around 11.5% for women, compared to 17.8% for men in the third quarter 2012. The unemployment rate among women decreases with the education level (17.6% among low skilled; 14.2% among medium skilled and 7.7% among high skilled) and decreases with age (18.2% for those below 30, 9.7% for those aged 30 to 49 and 8.0% for women aged 50 and over).

The number of Irish women emigrating has grown from 6 000 in 2008 to 20 600 in 2012. For Irish men the figures are respectively 7 100 and 26 000.

The main source of information and support regarding entitlements to social protection, health, legal protection and other resources throughout Ireland is provided by the employment service of the Irish government and the Citizens Information Board.

The economic crisis and the fiscal consolidation in Ireland do indeed affect the overall economic situation in the EU, in particular via the loss of purchasing power and the emigration of Irish workers. The Commission is aware of this and therefore advocates for growth-friendly consolidation measures in order to mitigate the social impact.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011063/12
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Animal welfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina has aspirations to join the EU, but will have to align its legislation with EU standards before it can be permitted to join.

I have recently been informed of the appalling treatment of stray animals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some recent examples include the inhumane way that dogs have been treated and disposed of at the Hresa and Banja Luka shelters. Such shelters are allegedly used to misappropriate public money, which may include financial aid provided by the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Whilst there is no EU legislation on the treatment of stray dogs, Article 13 TFEU does require Member States fully to respect the welfare requirements of animals.

1. Has Bosnia and Herzegovina begun to align its legislation with EU legislation on this matter in line with the Interim Agreement?

2. Will the Commission be carrying out an investigation into state shelters and animal abuse in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

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

The EU legislation on animal welfare covers currently a large field, from animal welfare in farms, zoos and laboratory-testing of animals to movement and transport of pets. The welfare of (stray) dogs and cats does not fall under the EU's competence but within the remit of Member States' administrations.

The Commission has actively supported the work performed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to develop guidelines for the control of stray dog populations, recognising the importance of controlling them without causing unnecessary animal suffering while minimising public health and safety risks. However, it is up to Bosnia and Herzegovina, as full member of the OIE, to consider how it might most appropriately use these international guidelines in its national context.

The alignment of national welfare legislation with EC law is a prerequisite for EU membership, with the objective of full application of EU legislation upon the country's accession to the EU. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, although there is legislation in place (Law on Animal Welfare), this is not fully implemented.

The Commission monitors regularly the enforcement of EU legislation on animal welfare through inspection services, spot audits and technical trainings. Technical assistance is available and offered to candidate countries both for the transposition and the implementation of EU legislation. However, for the time being no particular investigation into state shelters of Bosnia and Herzegovina is planned to take place.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011064/12
adresată Comisiei
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(4 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Recomandare privind consolidarea investițiilor în banda largă și a măsurilor de nediscriminare

Comisia a anunțat în iulie 2012 că intenționează să introducă o recomandare cu scopul de a consolida investițiile în banda largă. Obiectivul indicat include crearea unui mediu de investiții mai stabil (prin relaxarea controlului prețurilor angro), cu condiția de a se menține concurența prin norme mai stricte în materie de nediscriminare și un test eficace privind efectul de foarfecă tarifară.

În prezent, discriminarea prin alte mijloace decât prețurile este practicată de către operatorii cu putere semnificativă pe piață și este monitorizată în mai multe state membre. Acest lucru aduce atingere concurenței pe piețele de telecomunicații și are un impact asupra beneficiilor consumatorilor. În acest context, cum intenționează Comisia să asigure punerea în aplicare a principiului nediscriminării pe piața telecomunicațiilor? În plus, în ceea ce privește anunțul din iulie, Comisia este invitată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Pe ce bază presupune Comisia că stabilizarea prețurilor va duce la realizarea de investiții de către operatorii tradiționali într-o rețea europeană de generație următoare?

2. În conformitate cu Consiliul FTTH pentru Europa, în momentul de față operatorii tradiționali realizează investiții mai mici în fibra optică decât operatorii alternativi. Prin urmare, de ce pare Comisia să rezerve un rol privilegiat în materie de investiții operatorilor dominanți pe piață?

3. Examinează Comisia posibilitatea de a condiționa explicit relaxarea în materie de reglementare în ceea ce privește prețurile angro pentru rețelele de acces de generație următoare cu intrări echivalente și teste ex-ante privind efectul de foarfecă tarifară?

4. Examinează Comisia posibilitatea de a introduce o procedură în temeiul articolului 7 pentru a crește coerența și credibilitatea măsurilor de nediscriminare?

5. Intenționează Comisia să măsoare eficiența măsurilor de nediscriminare în funcție de obiective de performanță? Sunt prevăzute sancțiuni în cazul în care operatorii cu putere semnificativă pe piață nu respectă aceste obiective?

6. Intenționează Comisia să consulte publicul cu privire la proiectele de măsuri propuse, în special pentru a permite evaluarea impactului asupra prețurilor cu amănuntul? Dacă nu, din ce motiv?

Ca referință, conform Consiliului FTTH pentru Europa, operatorii tradiționali au realizat 33% din investițiile „fibră până acasă" în 2011 (minimul general), iar operatorii alternativi au realizat 55% ([1]).

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(31 ianuarie 2013)

Sectorul investește anual între 5 și 10 miliarde EUR în banda largă. China a conectat aproximativ 35 de milioane de gospodării în 2012, Australia a angajat circa 30 de miliarde EUR de la buget în următorii ani pentru rețelele de mare viteză, iar în SUA conectivitatea la rețele de mare viteză a crescut de la 20% la 80% în doar 3 ani.

O tarifare coerentă și stabilă a accesului în întreaga UE garantează că societățile naționale de telecomunicații beneficiază de previzibilitatea necesară pentru investițiile la scară largă de care au nevoie pentru dezvoltarea benzii largi până în 2020, așa cum se prevede în Agenda digitală pentru Europa.

Obiectivul Comisiei este de a încuraja un ecosistem de reglementare foarte util pentru operatorii alternativi și foarte puțin împovărător pentru operatorii tradiționali. Un singur operator nu poate realiza obiectivele Agendei digitale pentru Europa.

După cum subliniați și dumneavoastră, o eventuală relaxare a prețurilor la rețelele de nouă generație se poate face numai dacă operatorii alternativi pot reproduce din punct de vedere tehnic și economic ofertele cu amănuntul în aval ale operatorului cu putere semnificativă pe piață, astfel încât aceștia să poată concura în condiții de egalitate.

([1]) http://www.ftthcouncil.eu/documents/Reports/Market_Data_December_2011.pdf

Caracterul adecvat și eficacitatea obligațiilor de nediscriminare vor fi impuse în temeiul procedurii prevăzute la articolul 7. Echivalența obligației de input ar trebui să fie verificată de autoritatea națională de reglementare în raport cu indicatorii de performanță și garanțiile privind nivelul serviciilor. Nerespectarea obligațiilor de către un operator cu putere semnificativă pe piață ar trebui să fie sancționată financiar.

Din octombrie 2011, Comisia a organizat consultări publice și specifice cu părțile interesate și a efectuat două studii independente privind metodele de calcul al costurilor și obligațiile de nediscriminare pentru accesul la banda largă. Se așteaptă ca punerea în practică a recomandării să creeze condițiile adecvate pentru stimularea concurenței, a investițiilor și a inovării. Dacă rețelele de nouă generație sunt deschise concurenței și inovării, prețurile cu amănuntul vor reflecta costul just al serviciilor care răspund necesităților în continuă schimbare ale consumatorilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011064/12
to the Commission
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Recommendation on enhancing broadband investments and non-discrimination measures

The Commission announced in July 2012 that it intends to issue a recommendation with the aim of 'enhancing broadband investments'. The stated objective includes creating a more stable environment for investment (through relaxation of wholesale price controls) on condition that competition is maintained by tougher non-discrimination rules and an effective margin squeeze test.

Currently, non-price discrimination by significant market power (SMP) operators is evidently happening, and being traced, in several Member States. This is to the detriment of competition in telecommunications markets, and has an impact on consumer benefit. In light of this, how does the Commission intend to ensure that non-discrimination is enforced in the telecommunications market? Furthermore, with respect to the July announcement, the Commission is invited to answer the following:

1. On what basis does the Commission assume that the stabilisation of prices will translate into investments by the incumbent operators in a European next-generation network (NGN)?

2. According to the FTTH Council Europe, incumbent operators are currently investing in fibre to a lesser degree than alternative operators. Why, then, does the Commission appear to reserve a privileged role in investments for dominant operators?

3. Is the Commission considering explicitly linking the regulatory relaxation on next-generation access networks (NGAs) wholesale pricing with equivalence of inputs and *ex-ante* margin squeeze tests?

4. Is the Commission considering an Article 7 procedure in order to enhance the consistency and credibility of non-discrimination measures?

5. Is the Commission planning to measure the effectiveness of non-discrimination measures against performance targets, and are any sanctions foreseen in the case that SMP operators fail to comply?

6. Does the Commission intend to consult the public on the proposed draft measures, in particular in order to allow assessment of the impact on retail prices? If not, why not?

For reference, according to FTTH Council Europe, incumbent operators accounted for 33% of — the overall low — 'fibre to the home' investment in 2011, alternative operators for 55%. ([1])

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

Sector invests between EUR 5-10 bn in broadband annually. China connected some 35 million households in 2012, Australia committed nearly public EUR 30 bn over the coming years for their high speed networks, and in the US high speed networks connectivity increased from 20% to 80% in only 3 years.

Consistent and stable access pricing across EU ensures that telcos have the benefit of predictability needed for the large scale investments required to rollout broadband by 2020 as set out in the DAE.

The goal of the Commission is to foster a regulatory ecosystem that is most useful for alternative operators and least burdensome to incumbents. No single operator can deliver the DAE targets.

As the Honourable Member points out, any price relaxation on NGN can only be granted if alternative operators can technically and economically reproduce the retail offers of the SMP operator so that they can compete downstream on an equal footing.

The adequacy and effectiveness of the non-discrimination obligations will be enforced under the article 7 procedure. The Equivalence of Input obligation should be verified by the NRA against performance indicators and service level guarantees. Failure by an SMP to comply should be financially sanctioned.

([1]) http://www.ftthcouncil.eu/documents/Reports/Market_Data_December_2011.pdf

Since October 2011 the Commission has held public and specific stakeholder consultations and carried out two independent studies on costing methodologies and non-discrimination obligations for broadband access. The implementation of the recommendation is expected to create the right conditions for competition, investment and innovation to thrive. If NGN are open to competition and innovation, retail prices will reflect the fair cost of services that respond to consumers' evolving needs.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011065/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Illusione della primavera siriana

Il 28 novembre scorso, alle ore sette, a Damasco è esplosa un'autobomba parcheggiata nella piazza di Jaramanah, il quartiere in cui abitano i cristiani. Venti minuti più tardi è arrivato il secondo scoppio. Una seconda autobomba, molto più potente della prima, concepita per provocare il massimo numero possibile di vittime tra curiosi e soccorritori, è esplosa nello stesso posto. «Mi sono trovato di fronte — scrive un abitante del quartiere in una mail pubblicata da un quotidiano italiano — ad un orrore indescrivibile attuato con il classico metodo di Al Qaida. Mentre vi scrivo i morti sono già 40 e i feriti 75.» Dopo essere stato testimone di questo orrore il cittadino afferma: «il quartiere in cui vivo è abitato per il 62 % da cristiani. Tutti gli altri sono sfollati, fuggiti dalla periferia di Damasco. I Drusi e gli sfollati sono a favore della Siria, contro il fanatismo, l'ideologia salafista e i Fratelli musulmani. Basta tutto questo a giustificare un simile orrore? Perché il braccio militare dell'Esercito libero commette atti del genere? A questo punto — continua il cittadino siriano — credo che la primavera araba sia stata solo un miraggio, una scusa per permettere l'imposizione di uno Stato religioso negli Stati arabi. […] Credetemi, anch'io voglio che la Siria diventi più democratica e più libera, ma non voglio che diventi come l'Egitto, la Libia e la Tunisia». E conclude: «Credetemi, per noi cristiani la situazione è ormai fin troppo chiara. Siamo diventati le vittime di un conflitto settario, di una guerra di religione dove le minoranze sono obiettivi leciti perché considerate infedeli.»

Non pensa il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante che in realtà la primavera araba appena sbocciata rischi di essere offuscata da un autunno precoce che potrebbe sfociare presto in un gelido inverno della democrazia?

1. Come pensa di tutelare la sicurezza delle minoranze ed in particolare dei cristiani, che sono i maggiormente colpiti?

2. Non crede che una seria riflessione debba essere compiuta dall'UE sulle conseguenze prossime (migrazioni verso le coste italiane, centinaia di vittime, distruzioni materiali immense, ecc.) e lontane (nuovi regimi di dittatura, fondamentalismo religioso imposto allo Stato, violenze continue contro le minoranze, ecc.) causate dalle trasformazioni in corso in alcuni Stati arabi e influenzate dall'ideologia salafita che non ha nulla a che vedere con la democrazia e con le regole della convivenza civile?

3. Quando l'UE si renderà conto dei danni arrecati alla società civile dall'affermarsi di regimi basati sulla violenza e sull'intolleranza?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2013)

Dagli eventi della primavera araba l'UE ha sostenuto costantemente un modello di transizione politica democratica rispettoso dei principi universali dei diritti umani. Nel processo di transizione, prettamente nazionale, si esprimono e si confrontano diverse visioni di società. Vi partecipano diverse forze politiche, tra cui le forze islamiche che coprono un vasto arco ideologico. L'UE è pronta a cooperare con i gruppi impegnati a garantire la partecipazione pacifica alla vita democratica, mettendo però in chiaro i valori che sostiene e l'importanza che ascrive a una società pluralista e tollerante. L'UE si serve degli strumenti a sua disposizione per diffondere questi valori e accompagna i processi di transizione sostenendo la società civile e i difensori dei diritti umani e dispensando aiuti umanitari. Il nuovo Fondo europeo per la democrazia è destinato ad avere un ruolo centrale in questo processo.

L'UE ha espresso, in diverse conclusioni del Consiglio, seria preoccupazione per i diritti umani e per le condizioni umanitarie in Siria e ha ribadito la necessità di proteggere le popolazioni civili. Per quanto riguarda la difficile situazione delle minoranze cristiane, l'UE, nelle conclusioni del Consiglio «Affari Esteri» di febbraio 2011, ha riconfermato il suo deciso impegno a incoraggiare e proteggere la libertà di religione o di credo senza alcuna discriminazione. L'AR/VP ha emesso dichiarazioni di condanna per gli episodi di violenza e per le azioni intese a istigare al conflitto interetnico e interconfessionale. L'UE ha esortato le parti siriane alla tutela dei principi di libertà di religione e di credo chiedendo all'opposizione di individuare un corpus di principi che garantiscano lo sviluppo del paese verso il pieno rispetto dei diritti di cittadini, indipendentemente dall'appartenenza politica, etnica o religiosa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011065/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Hopes for a Syrian spring

At seven o'clock on 28 November, a car bomb exploded in Damascus in Jaramanah Square, a Christian district. A second explosion occurred twenty minutes later. Another car bomb, much more powerful than the first and designed to cause as many victims as possible among the onlookers and the emergency aid workers, exploded in the same place. 'Right in front of me', writes someone living in the district in an e-mail published in an Italian newspaper, 'was a scene of indescribable horror that bore all the hallmarks of an al-Qaeda attack. As I write, the death toll stands at 40 with 75 injured'. After having witnessed such horror, the person goes on to say: 'the district I live in is 62% Christian. All the others have gone: they have fled from the outskirts of Damascus. The Druze and those who have left are for Syria, and against fanaticism, the Salafist ideology and the Muslim Brotherhood. Does all of this justify such horror? Why is the armed wing of the Free Syrian Army committing such acts? In my view', continues the Syrian correspondent, 'the Arab Spring was a mirage, an excuse to set up religious states in Arab countries. […] Believe me, I too want Syria to be more democratic and free, but I do not want it to become like Egypt, Libya and Tunisia'. The correspondent ends by saying: 'Believe me, the situation is now all too clear for us Christians. We have become the victims of a sectarian conflict, a religious war in which minorities are legitimate targets because they are seen as the infidel'.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative not think that there is a risk that the Arab Spring, still in its infancy, will be overshadowed by a premature autumn that could soon turn into an ice-cold winter of democracy?

1. How do you intend to guarantee the safety of minorities and in particular Christians, who are the main victims?

2. Do you not think that the EU should give serious thought to the short-term (migration to the Italian coast, hundreds of victims, huge material damage, etc.) and long-term (new dictatorships, religious fundamentalism imposed by the State, continued violence against minorities, etc.) consequences of the changes under way in some Arab countries influenced by the Salafist ideology, which has nothing to do with democracy and with the rules of peaceful coexistence?

3. When will the EU realise the damage caused to civil society when regimes get into power that are based on violence and intolerance?

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

Following the Arab Spring events, the EU has constantly expressed its support for the model of democratic political transition that is in full conformity with the universal principles of human rights. Transition is a home-grown process in which different visions of society are expressed and confronted. Diverse political forces are part of this process, including that of political Islam which spans a wide ideological spectrum. The EU is ready to work with groups committed to the peaceful participation in democratic life, but it is clear on the values it supports and the need for a pluralistic and tolerant society. The EU uses available instruments to promote these values and to address consequences of ongoing transition including support to civil society and human rights defenders, alongside humanitarian aid. The newly created European Endowment for Democracy will also play a prominent role in this support process.

The EU has, in its Council Conclusions, expressed grave concern over the human rights and humanitarian situation in Syria, and the need to protect civilians. With regard to the plight of Christian minorities, the EU, in its Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of February 2011, reaffirmed its strong commitment to the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief without any discrimination. The HR/VP has in her statements condemned the incidents of violence as well as all acts aimed at inciting interethnic and inter-confessional conflict. The EU has requested all parties in Syria to uphold the principles of freedom of religion and belief, and urged the opposition to agree on a set of principles for working towards a Syria where all citizens enjoy equal rights regardless of their affiliations, ethnicities or beliefs.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011066/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Espansione dei narcotrafficanti messicani e colombiani in Europa

Durante l'ultimo vertice dell'Ufficio antidroga svoltosi a Bruxelles, il vice sottosegretario di Stato degli Stati Uniti Brian A. Nichols ha rivelato che i narcotrafficanti messicani si espandono in Europa attraverso i Balcani e che il raggio d'azione dei cartelli del narcotraffico ha raggiunto dimensioni globali.

Antonio Mazzitelli, rappresentante dell'Agenzia antidroga dell'ONU (UNODC) a Città del Messico, sostiene che l'obiettivo dei narcotrafficanti messicani è conquistare il mercato europeo passando dai Balcani, ovvero una rotta alternativa a quella di Spagna e Portogallo. Inoltre, aggiunge, in Europa si sta scatenando una forte concorrenza tra i cartelli messicani e colombiani nell'offerta di cocaina.

1. In quale modo intende la Commissione combattere l'espansione dei narcotrafficanti messicani e colombiani in Europa?

2. Non ritiene, di conseguenza, che i paesi dell'area dei Balcani debbano essere esentati dalla liberalizzazione dei visti e che, al contrario, debbano essere rafforzati i controlli alle loro frontiere, in particolare al confine con i paesi già membri dell'UE?

3. Non ritiene opportuno congelare i negoziati di adesione all'UE instaurati con questi paesi considerando anche quanto esposto nella comunicazione «Strategia di allargamento e sfide principali per il periodo 2012-2013» (COM(2012)0600) del 10 ottobre 2012 per quanto riguarda in particolare la Serbia («La criminalità organizzata, in particolare il riciclaggio del denaro e il traffico di droga, rimane un fenomeno molto preoccupante in Serbia») e la Bosnia-Erzegovina («Le attività della criminalità organizzata sono inoltre legate al transito della droga sulle rotte di traffico internazionali»)?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(12 febbraio 2013)

Le iniziative concrete delle autorità di contrasto e delle autorità giudiziarie degli Stati membri per combattere le attività dei narcotrafficanti messicani e colombiani possono essere sostenute a livello dell'UE dalle agenzie specializzate, quali Europol o Eurojust. La Commissione contribuisce alla lotta contro il narcotraffico nei paesi dell'America latina, nei paesi della cosiddetta «rotta della cocaina» (che va dall'America latina attraverso l'Africa occidentale verso l'Europa) e della cosiddetta «rotta dell'eroina» e nei paesi dei Balcani occidentali, aiutando, ad esempio, tali paesi ad elaborare politiche antidroga o a rafforzare le istituzioni nel settore del contrasto alla criminalità e della giustizia.

La Commissione, di concerto con gli Stati membri, il Consiglio e le agenzie europee competenti, ha attuato il patto europeo di lotta contro il traffico internazionale di droga e sta attuando il ciclo programmatico dell'UE per il 2011-2013 volto a contrastare la criminalità organizzata e le forme gravi di criminalità internazionale, quattro delle cui otto priorità riguardano la lotta contro il traffico di droga, anche nei paesi dei Balcani occidentali. Anche il «pacchetto anticorruzione» adottato nel giugno 2011 contribuisce a combattere la penetrazione della criminalità organizzata nell'economia legale, soprattutto attraverso i proventi del narcotraffico.

Tra breve inizieranno le discussioni sulla versione riveduta del piano d'azione UE-Balcani occidentali in materia di lotta contro la droga. La lotta contro il narcotraffico è inoltre un punto centrale dell'intero processo di preadesione. L'UE, tuttavia, non ha ancora avviato i negoziati di adesione con la Serbia e la Bosnia-Erzegovina. Per quanto riguarda il Montenegro, non sono ancora iniziati i negoziati di adesione sul capitolo 24 — Giustizia, libertà e sicurezza — che comprende la politica antidroga dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011066/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Expansion of activities by Mexican and Colombian drugs traffickers in Europe

At the last summit on combating drugs held in Brussels, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Brian A. Nichols, revealed that Mexican drugs traffickers were expanding their activities in Europe via the Balkans and that the operations of drugs cartels had now reached global dimensions.

Antonio Mazzitelli, representing the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Mexico City, said that the objective of the Mexican drug traffickers was to conquer the European market via the Balkans, an alternative route to the one through Spain and Portugal. Moreover, strong competition was emerging in Europe between the Mexican and Colombian cartels supplying cocaine.

1. How does the Commission intend to combat the expansion of the activities of Mexican and Colombian drugs traffickers in Europe?

2. In view of this, should the Balkan countries not be excluded from the liberalisation of visas and their border controls in fact reinforced, in particular controls on borders with countries that are already EU Member States?

3. Would it not be advisable to freeze the negotiations on EU accession that have been started with these countries, especially in view of what is stated in the communication on 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013' (COM(2012)0600) of 10 October 2012 with respect in particular to Serbia ('Organised crime remains a serious concern in Serbia, in particular regarding money laundering and drug smuggling') and Bosnia and Herzegovina ('Organised crime activities are further linked to the transit of drugs on international trafficking routes')?

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

The concrete efforts of Member States' law enforcement and judicial authorities to combat the activities of Mexican and Columbian drug traffickers in Europe can be supported at EU level by the specialised agencies such as Europol or Eurojust. The Commission supports anti-drug trafficking activities, e.g. through assisting countries in establishing anti-drug policies or by institution building in the law enforcement and justice sectors, in Latin America, in countries belonging to the so-called 'cocaine route' stretching from Latin America via West Africa to Europe and in countries along the so-called 'heroin route' as well as in the western Balkans countries.

The Commission, jointly with the Member States, the Council and the responsible European agencies have implemented the European Pact to combat international drug trafficking and are now implementing the 2011-2013 EU Policy Cycle to combat organised and serious international crime in which four of eight priorities concern the fight against drug trafficking, also within the western Balkans. The anti-corruption package adopted in June 2011 also helps tackle the penetration of the licit economy, notably by drug money.

Discussions on a renewed EU-Western Balkans Drugs Action Plan will start soon. Moreover, the fight against drugs trafficking is at the centre of attention during the entire pre-accession process. However, the EU has not yet opened accession negotiations with Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. As regards Montenegro, the accession negotiations in Chapter 24 — Justice, Freedom and Security, in which the EU drugs policy is included — have not begun.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011067/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Situazione di palese incompatibilità e di violazione del principio di imparzialità dell'azione amministrativa nella Regione Veneto

Il 19 settembre 2011 Veneto Strade S.p.A., società mista pubblico-privata detenuta all'80 % dalla Regione Veneto e dalle sette province che la compongono ([1]), ha presentato un progetto di realizzazione di un collegamento stradale detto «Passante Nord» nel Comune di Rovigo ([2]). Questo progetto costituisce una variante urbanistica al piano di assetto del territorio (PAT) del Comune di Rovigo spostando il tracciato originario del collegamento stradale più a nord.

La variante depositata al Comune di Rovigo con nota firmata dall'amministratore delegato di Veneto Strade S.p.A., l'ingegnere Silvano Vernizzi, è stata accolta in data 30 novembre 2011 dalla commissione VAS (valutazione ambientale strategica) della Regione Veneto, presieduta dallo stesso Ing. Vernizzi. In data 10 febbraio 2012 la Conferenza di servizi convocata presso la Regione Veneto ha approvato il PAT, recependo anche il parere della commissione VAS relativamente al nuovo tracciato del Passante Nord.

Risulta perciò che il medesimo soggetto è contemporaneamente titolare della carica di amministratore della società proponente la variante urbanistica e presidente della commissione VAS chiamata ad esprimersi sulla medesima variante ([3]). Pare evidente una situazione di violazione del principio di imparzialità dell'azione amministrativa dove una variante urbanistica viene proposta e valutata positivamente (ai fini della VAS) dalla stessa persona.

Va ricordato che il medesimo soggetto è anche commissario straordinario della superstrada pedemontana veneta, opera dal rilevantissimo impatto ambientale che interessa le province di Treviso e Vicenza ([4]), dirigente della segreteria per le infrastrutture della Regione Veneto, presidente delle commissioni regionali VIA (valutazione impatto ambientale) e VINCA (valutazione incidenza ambientale).

La Corte di Giustizia ha avuto occasione di richiamare gli Stati membri sulla necessità che «in seno all'autorità normalmente incaricata di procedere alla consultazione in materia ambientale sia organizzata una separazione funzionale» al fine «di fornire in modo oggettivo il proprio parere» in ottemperanza all'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva 2001/42/CE ([5]).

Non ritiene che i ruoli sopra evidenziati, assegnati al medesimo soggetto, rappresentino una situazione di palese incompatibilità e di violazione del principio di imparzialità dell'azione amministrativa con conseguente violazione delle direttive 2001/42/CE e 2011/92/UE?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(29 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione desidera sottolineare che le questioni relative al conflitto di interessi rientrano nella sussidiarietà e sono quindi di competenza degli Stati membri.

La Commissione contatterà le autorità italiane al fine di ottenere maggiori informazioni sulle modalità con cui si sono svolte le consultazioni delle autorità ambientali competenti, ai sensi dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva 2001/42/CE ([6]) per il piano di assetto del territorio del Comune di Rovigo e dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 1, della direttiva 2011/92/UE ([7]) per la superstrada pedemontana veneta.

([1]) http://www.venetostrade.it/public/.
([2]) Collegamento tra via Porta Adige presso il Censer e la S.S. 16 a sud del Ceresolo nel Comune di Rovigo
([3]) http://www.regione.veneto.it/NR/rdonlyres/561644A6-F01C-4558-9233-1975A80988E6/0/cv_VERNIZZISILVANO.pdf
([4]) Proprie interrogazioni P-009842/2011 del 20.10.2011 e E-007368/2012 del 23.7. 2012.
([5]) Sentenza della Sez. IV — 20 ottobre 2011 nella causa C-474/10.
([6]) GU L 197 del 21.7.2001.
([7]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011067/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Evident violation of the principle of impartiality in an administrative procedure followed by the Veneto region

On 19 September 2011, Veneto Strade SpA, a semi-public company in which the Veneto region and the seven provinces making up the region ([1]) own an 80% share, presented plans to create a road link known as the 'Northern Bypass' in the municipality of Rovigo ([2]). These plans represent a change to the regional planning programme for Rovigo, since they move the route of the road link further north than originally planned.

This change, submitted to the municipality of Rovigo with a note signed by the Chief Executive of Veneto Strade SpA, Silvano Vernizzi, was on 30 November 2011 accepted by the Veneto region's strategic environmental assessment (SEA) committee, chaired by the same Mr Vernizzi. On 10 February 2012 the services conference convened by the Veneto region approved the planning programme, taking into account the SEA committee's opinion on the new route for the Northern Bypass.

It is thus clear that the same individual simultaneously holds the posts of Chief Executive of the company proposing the planning change and Chairman of the SEA committee asked to give its opinion on this planning change ([3]). It appears self-evident that the principle of impartiality is violated by an administrative procedure in which a planning change is proposed and approved (in terms of the SEA) by the same person.

We must also remember that this same individual is also Special Commissioner for the Pedemontana Veneta expressway, a project which will have a huge environmental impact on the Treviso and Vicenza provinces ([4]), Regional Secretary for Infrastructure in the Veneto region, and Chairman of the regional environmental impact assessment (EIA) and environmental incidence assessment committees.

The Court of Justice has had occasion to remind Member States of the requirement that 'within the authority usually responsible for undertaking consultation on environmental matters […], a functional separation' must be organised, to allow it to 'give an objective opinion', in accordance with Article 6(3) of Directive 2001/42/EC ([5]).

Does the Commission not consider that the roles described above, being held by the same individual, represent an evident violation of the principle of impartiality in the administrative procedure, with a consequent violation of Directives 2001/42/EC and 2011/92/EU?

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

The Commission would like to underline that issues of conflict of interest are a matter of subsidiarity and are therefore the responsibility of the Member States.

The Commission will contact the Italian authorities to obtain more details on how the consultations of the competent environmental authorities have been carried out under Article 6(3) of Directive 2001/42/EC ([6]) for the Regional Planning Programme of Rovigo and Article 6(1) of Directive 2011/92/EU ([7]) for the Pedemontana Veneta expressway.

([1]) http://www.venetostrade.it/public/ [In Italian].
([2]) Link between Via Porta Adige, close to the Censer conference and exhibition centre, and the SS16 motorway to the south of Ceresolo, in the municipality of Rovigo.
([3]) http://www.regione.veneto.it/NR/rdonlyres/561644A6-F01C-4558-9233-1975A80988E6/0/cv_VERNIZZISILVANO.pdf [CV in Italian].
([4]) See questions by the same author, P-009842/2011 of 20.10.2011 and E-007368/2012 of 23.7.2012.
([5]) Judgment of the Court (Fourth Chamber) of 20 October 2011 in Case C-474/10.
([6]) OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([7]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011068/12
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Accordo di libero scambio UE-Giappone nel settore automobilistico

Il 29 novembre 2012, il Consiglio dei ministri dell'Unione europea ha dato il via libera alla Commissione per l'avvio di negoziati per un accordo di libero scambio con il Giappone nel settore automobilistico.

Secondo diversi studi di settore, tale accordo apporterebbe un grave danno all'industria automobilistica europea in termini di calo di produzione e, conseguentemente, di perdita occupazionale tra le 35 mila e 73 mila unità.

1. Vista le attuali difficoltà del settore automobilistico europeo e le conseguenze derivanti da tale accordo, non ritiene la Commissione opportuno segnalare al Consiglio la necessità di congelare tale iniziativa al fine di salvaguardare l'industria automobilistica europea?

2. Considerando altresì che il governo francese ha chiesto alla Commissione di avviare un'iniziativa di monitoraggio delle importazioni di automobili coreane nell'Unione europea, in applicazione della clausola di salvaguardia, contenuta nel trattato di libero scambio stipulato nel 2011 tra Unione europea e Corea del Sud, in virtù della quale l'Unione europea può ripristinare dazi doganali se l'aumento delle importazioni di un prodotto è tale da recare pregiudizio all'industria dell'Unione, non ritiene la Commissione illogico avviare negoziati di libero scambio con il Giappone riguardanti il medesimo settore automobilistico?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(15 gennaio 2013)

1. Dalla valutazione d'impatto svolta dalla Commissione europea sul futuro accordo con il Giappone emerge che l'eventuale perdita di posti di lavoro nel settore automobilistico potrebbe essere assorbita da altri settori e che, nel complesso, la bilancia occupazionale risulterebbe ampiamente positiva per l'Europa. Inoltre, dato che gli effetti di un accordo con il Giappone comincerebbero probabilmente a farsi sentire solo nel prossimo decennio, considerati i tempi necessari per la negoziazione e la ratifica dell'accordo e gli eventuali periodi di transizione per i settori sensibili, si prevede che per allora la competitività internazionale di tutti i produttori europei dovrebbe essere stata ripristinata e che il settore dovrebbe quindi essere in grado di beneficiare pienamente delle maggiori opportunità di accesso al mercato che tale accordo aprirebbe alle esportazioni europee in Giappone.

2. A norma dell'accordo di libero scambio tra l'UE e la Corea i dazi doganali possono essere reintrodotti qualora lo smantellamento tariffario dovesse provocare un aumento delle importazioni tale da recare pregiudizio all'industria automobilistica dell'UE. Tuttavia non è questo il caso. La richiesta del governo francese era limitata al monitoraggio delle importazioni di automobili coreane, ma non ha potuto essere accolta in quanto le condizioni giuridiche non erano soddisfatte.

La Commissione segue tuttavia attentamente queste importazioni ed è disposta a valutare la possibilità di ricorrere ai meccanismi previsti nell'accordo di libero scambio UE-Corea qualora il loro impiego fosse giustificato. Finora, tuttavia, questo non è stato necessario e non ha alcuna ripercussione diretta sui negoziati con il Giappone.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011068/12
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Free trade agreement between the EU and Japan in the automotive sector

On 29 November 2012, the Council of the European Union gave the Commission the green light to open negotiations with Japan on a free trade agreement in the automotive sector.

Various studies have shown that an agreement of this kind would have a detrimental effect on the European automotive sector — production would fall substantially, and between 35 000 and 73 000 people would lose their jobs.

1. The European car industry is already facing tough times, and a free trade agreement with Japan would only make things worse. Does the Commission therefore agree that, in the interests of protecting the EU motor vehicle industry, it should tell the Council that negotiations should be suspended?

2. The French Government has asked the Commission to begin monitoring South Koreancar imports into the EU, in accordance with the safeguard clause included in the 2011 freetrade agreement between the EU and South Korea. The clause allows the Union toreintroduce customs duties if an increase in the volume of imports of a given product ishaving a negative impact on the counterpart industry in the EU. Does the Commission notagree that it would be illogical to open free trade negotiations designed to lead to theconclusion of an equivalent agreement with Japan?

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

1. The impact assessment conducted by the European Commission on the future agreement with Japan shows that possible loss of employment in the car sector could be absorbed by other sectors and that the overall employment balance would be largely positive for Europe. In addition given that an agreement with Japan would not likely start producing effects before the next decade given the time necessary for its negotiation, ratification and possible transition periods for sensitive sectors, it is expected that the international competitiveness of all European producers will have been restored by then so as to allow this sector to fully benefit from the increased market access opportunities that this agreement will create for European exports to Japan.

2. According to the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA), customs duties may be reintroduced in case the tariff dismantling would result in an increase of imports causing damage to the EU car industry. This is however not the case. The request of the French Government was limited to a surveillance of imports of cars from Korea, but could not be accepted because the legal conditions were not met.

The Commission is nevertheless closely monitoring these imports and is prepared to consider using the mechanisms foreseen in the EU-Korea FTA in case this would be justified. This has however not been the case so far and has no direct impact on the negotiations with Japan.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011069/12
aan de Commissie
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(4 december 2012)

Betreft: Ecocombi

Uit een recente studie van de universiteit van Huddersfield blijkt dat de inzet van de ecocombi in het Verenigd Koninkrijk leidt tot een stevige besparing van de transportkosten en tot een flinke daling van de uitstoot van koolstofdioxide. Daarbij houdt het onderzoek rekening met het volume spoorgoederenvervoer dat naar de weg wordt verplaatst als gevolg van het opheffen van de beperkingen voor de ecocombi ([1]).

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de uitkomsten van het genoemde onderzoek van de universiteit van Huddersfield?

2. Onderschrijft de Commissie de uitkomsten van het onderzoek, dat het toestaan van de ecocombi op de Britse wegen leidt tot een stevige besparing van de transportkosten (tot 19 %) en een forse daling van de jaarlijkse CO_2-uitstoot (maximaal 58000 ton CO_2 per jaar)? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie van plan de resultaten van het onderzoek om te zetten in concrete wijzigingsvoorstellen voor de wetgeving omtrent de maximale gewichten en afmetingen van voertuigen voor het internationale goederenvervoer over de weg (Richtlijn 96/53/EG) zodat de ecocombi in Europa veel meer kansen krijgt? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(1 februari 2013)

De Commissie heeft kennis genomen van de door het geachte Parlementslid vermelde studie. De uitkomsten van de studie vormen een interessante aanvulling op een grootschalig onderzoek over de impact van grotere en zwaardere voertuigen op de modal split, de CO_2-uitstoot, de infrastructuur en de veiligheid op de weg. De resultaten van dergelijke onderzoeken zijn sterk uiteenlopend, afhankelijk van de hypotheses waarvan men is uitgegaan. Aangezien deze verslagen geen aanleiding hebben gegeven tot een consensus en de uitkomsten van de door het geachte Parlementslid vermelde studie uitsluitend betrekking hebben op het Verenigd Koninkrijk, is de Commissie van mening dat deze ontoereikend zijn als grondslag om de inzet van de ecocombi naar de hele EU uit te breiden of deze in de hele EU te verplichten door middel van een herziening van Richtlijn 96/53/EG van de Raad van 25 juli 1996 houdende vaststelling, voor bepaalde aan het verkeer binnen de Gemeenschap deelnemende wegvoertuigen, van de in het nationale en het internationale verkeer maximaal toegestane afmetingen, en van de in het internationale verkeer maximaal toegestane gewichten ([2]).

([1]) http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/15769/1/High_Capacity_Vehicle_Impact_Assessment_Final_version.pdf
([2]) PB L 235 van 17.9.1996, blz. 59.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011069/12
to the Commission
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: High capacity vehicles

A recent study by the University of Huddersfield indicates that the use of high-capacity vehicles (HCVs) in the United Kingdom would yield a substantial saving on transport costs and a very significant reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. The study takes into account the volume of freight traffic which would be displaced from rail to road if the limits which currently prevent the use of such vehicles were raised ([1]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the findings of the aforementioned study by the University of Huddersfield?

2. Does the Commission endorse the study's finding that allowing HCVs to operate on Britain's roads would substantially reduce both transport costs (by up to 19%) and annual CO_2 emissions (by up to 58 000 tonnes of CO_2 per annum)? If not, why not?

3. On the basis of these findings, will the Commission propose specific amendments to the legislation on the maximum weights and dimensions of vehicles in international road haulage (Directive 96/53/EC) so as to create far more opportunities for HCVs in Europe? If not, why not?

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

The Commission is aware of the study referred to by the Honourable Member. The findings of the study constitute an interesting addition to a wide-reaching body of investigation into the impact of larger and heavier vehicles on modal split, emissions, infrastructure and road safety. The results from such investigations vary greatly depending on the assumptions used. Given the lack of consensus resulting from these reports, and due to the fact that the findings of the study referred to by the Honourable Member are restricted to the UK, the Commission considers that these cannot be a sufficient basis for provisions to extend or impose the use of high capacity vehicles in the EU as a whole, through a revision of Council Directive 96/53/EC of 25 July 1996 laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authrized dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic ([2]).

([1]) http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/15769/1/High_Capacity_Vehicle_Impact_Assessment_Final_version.pdf
([2]) OJ L 235, 17.9.1996, p. 59.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011070/12
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(4. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Hungerstreik der unterdrückten Kurden in der Türkei — Stellungnahme und Reaktion der EU

Die Lage der Kurden im EU-Beitrittsbewerberstaat Türkei ist prekär. Dem größten Volk der Erde ohne eigenen Staat werden dort elementare Rechte wie die Verwendung der eigenen Muttersprache verweigert. Nach einer Verhaftungswelle im März 2009 und im Dezember 2009 sitzen tausende vom Volk gewählte Mandatsträger und andere Funktionäre der kurdischen Partei für Frieden und Demokratie (BDP) unter dem Vorwand des „Terrorismus" in Haft. Viele kurdische Jugendliche, Journalisten und Rechtsanwälte teilen dieses Schicksal. Vor einigen Wochen begannen Medienberichten zufolge kurdische Häftlinge in türkischen Gefängnissen einen Hungerstreik, dem sich mittlerweile fast 10 000 Personen angeschlossen haben. Nachdem Ministerpräsident Erdogan diesen verzweifelten Protest seinerseits als eine Art „Showeinlage" bezeichnete, spricht er neuerdings von Zwangsernährung und auch von der Wiedereinführung der Todesstrafe.

Daraus ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Erfordert diese dramatische Zuspitzung der Lage im EU-Kandidatenland Türkei nicht ein rasches Handeln auf EU-Ebene? Was gedenkt man seitens der EU zu unternehmen, und wie beurteilt die Kommission die zugespitzte Lage?

2. Der Konflikt betrifft die in Österreich starke Zuwanderergruppe der Kurden. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die prekäre Lage dieser Minderheit in der Türkei?

3. Wie steht die Kommission dazu, dass man den Kurden in der Türkei elementare Rechte wie die Verwendung der eigenen Muttersprache verweigert?

4. Die Türkei bekommt von der EU eine alljährliche Heranführungshilfe in Höhe von 900 Millionen EUR. Wäre es nicht an der Zeit, die Zahlungen aus der EU aufgrund dieser Vorkommnisse einzustellen?

5. Wie wird die Kommission auf die Pläne von Premier Erdogan reagieren, was die Wiedereinführung der Todesstrafe anbelangt? Wären solche Pläne nach Meinung der Kommission nicht mit der Mitgliedschaft der Türkei im Europarat unvereinbar?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(4. Februar 2013)

1.-3. Die Europäische Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antworten auf die parlamentarischen Anfragen P-010241/2012 und P-010242/2012 ([1]).

4. Mit den Mitteln, die im Rahmen der Heranführungshilfe für Projekte in der Türkei bereitgestellt werden, soll die Türkei bei Erfüllung der Kriterien unterstützt werden, die Voraussetzung für den Beitritt zur EU sind. Dazu gehören auch die politischen Kriterien, die insbesondere die Achtung von Minderheiten einschließen. Die Aussetzung dieser finanziellen Unterstützung wäre nicht mit dem Ziel der Heranführungshilfe vereinbar.

5. Die Europäische Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten in diesem Zusammenhang auch auf ihre Antworten auf die parlamentarischen Anfragen E-010369/2012 und E-010384/2012.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011070/12
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Hunger strike of persecuted Kurds in Turkey — position and reaction of the EU

The situation of the Kurds in the EU candidate country of Turkey is precarious. The world's biggest ethnic population without their own state are being denied their fundamental rights, such as the use of their language. Following a wave of arrests in March and December 2009, thousands of democratically elected representatives and other officials from the Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) are being detained in prison on the pretext of terrorism. Many Kurdish young people, journalists and lawyers are in the same situation. Several weeks ago the media reported that Kurdish detainees in Turkish prisons had gone on hunger strike; they have since been supported by almost 10 000 people. Having dismissed these desperate protests as 'just a show', Prime Minister Erdogan has recently been talking about force feeding and reinstating the death penalty.

This situation gives rise to the following questions:

1. Does the dramatic escalation of the situation in Turkey as an EU candidate country not call for rapid action at EU level? How does the EU intend to respond, and how does the Commission assess the escalation of the situation?

2. The conflict affects the sizeable Kurdish immigrant community in Austria. How does the Commission assess the precarious situation of this minority in Turkey?

3. What is the Commission's position on the fact that Kurds in Turkey are being denied fundamental rights such as the use of their language?

4. Turkey receives pre-accession assistance of EUR 900 million from the EU each year. Is it not time to suspend EU payments in the light of the current situation?

5. How will the Commission react to Prime Minister Erdogan's plans to reinstate the death penalty? Would the Commission not consider that these plans are irreconcilable with Turkey's membership of the Council of Europe?

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

1-3. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to EP questions P-010241/2012 and P-010242/2012 ([1]).

4. The funds allocated to projects in Turkey under the Instrument for pre-accession are destined to help Turkey achieve fulfilling the criteria for EU membership, including the political criteria, of which the respect of minorities is an important element. Suspending them for non-fulfilment of the criteria would run counter to the objective of pre-accession funding.

5. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to EP questions E-010369/2012 and E-010384/2012.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011071/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(4 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Bosnia-Erzegovina e Repubblica Srpska: diritti delle minoranze

Il 31 agosto 2012 è scaduto il termine per l'attuazione della sentenza della Corte europea per i diritti dell'uomo nella causa Sejdić e Finci c. Bosnia-Erzegovina, senza che il governo della Bosnia-Erzegovina ne abbia dato esecuzione. La decisione mette in luce le difficoltà in materia di diritti umani ancora presenti in Bosnia a 17 anni dalla fine del conflitto. Oltre al fatto che il governo non ottempera alla sentenza della Corte, si verificano tuttora gravi violazioni di altri diritti umani, tra cui violazioni dei diritti fondiari e di proprietà, violazioni della libertà religiosa e discriminazioni sulla base di aspetti quali la razza, l'origine nazionale e sociale e l'appartenenza a una minoranza nazionale.

In particolare, nel territorio della Repubblica Srpska la minoranza etnica croata, di religione cattolica, risente delle politiche e delle decisioni prese dalle autorità pubbliche, prevalentemente a favore della popolazione serba di religione cristiana ortodossa, predominante nella Repubblica.

Alla luce di tali sviluppi:

1. quali misure intende adottare la Commissione per aiutare il governo bosniaco a modificare la Costituzione in modo tale da dare esecuzione alla sentenza sul caso Sejdić e Finci c. Bosnia-Erzegovina?

2. È la Commissione al corrente del trattamento discriminatorio delle minoranze etniche e religiose in Bosnia?

3. In che misura ha affrontato la Commissione la questione delle minoranze religiose nell'ambito dei negoziati con la Bosnia-Erzegovina?

4. È la Commissione al corrente del fatto che dei 40 000 cattolici residenti prima del conflitto nell'area di Banja Luka, nella Repubblica Srpska, oggi ne rimangono solo 3 000?

5. È la Commissione al corrente del fatto che il diritto nazionale e le autorità locali stanno creando ostacoli alla popolazione che chiede di rientrare in possesso delle case abbandonate durante il conflitto?

6. Attribuisce la Commissione l'importanza adeguata alla problematica delle minoranze religiose? In caso affermativo, è disposta a renderla un punto permanente nell'ordine del giorno dei negoziati di adesione della Bosnia-Erzegovina?

7. Quali misure intende adottare l'UE al fine di evidenziare le preoccupazioni dell'Unione e incoraggiare le autorità locali di governo a impegnarsi nel campo dei diritti umani e delle libertà fondamentali, in particolare nelle aree abitate da minoranze etniche e religiose?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

L'esecuzione della sentenza Sejdić-Finci è centrale nelle relazioni tra la Bosnia-Erzegovina e la Commissione, che ha intavolato un intenso dialogo ad alto livello sul processo di adesione con le autorità e gli esponenti politici nazionali. Nel quadro del dialogo, avviato a giugno 2012 su iniziativa della Commissione per aiutare la Bosnia-Erzegovina ad avanzare nel processo di adesione all'Unione, è stata convenuta una tabella di marcia che dovrà condurre il paese a presentare la domanda di adesione. L'esecuzione della sentenza Sejdić-Finci è appunto uno dei requisiti fondamentali della tabella di marcia. Durante la seconda riunione del dialogo, a novembre 2012, la Commissione ha ribadito l'importanza dell'esecuzione della sentenza, dichiarandosi ancora una volta disponibile a contribuire a una soluzione.

La Commissione ribadisce sistematicamente l'importanza della libertà di religione nelle riunioni con le autorità del paese nell'ambito del processo di stabilizzazione e di associazione e in altre occasioni, ad esempio gli incontri con i leader politici e religiosi nazionali. Anche la relazione del 2012 sui progressi compiuti dalla Bosnia-Erzegovina insiste sull'importanza di questo diritto fondamentale.

La Commissione sostiene inoltre il rientro duraturo dei profughi. Nel quadro dello strumento di assistenza preadesione sono stati stanziati cospicui fondi per sostenere l'attuazione dell'allegato VII dell'accordo di Dayton e la realizzazione del processo avviato con la dichiarazione di Sarajevo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011071/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska: minority rights

On 31 August 2012 the deadline for compliance with the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Sejdić and Finci v Bosnia and Herzegovina passed, without the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina having complied. This ruling highlights the human rights difficulties that still exist in Bosnia 17 years after the end of the conflict. Alongside the government's failure to comply with the court ruling, serious violations of other human rights are taking place: violations of land and property rights and freedom of religion, and discrimination based on characteristics such as race, national and social origin and association with a national minority.

In particular in the territory of the Republika Srpska, the Croatian ethnic minority, which is Catholic, is affected by the policies pursued and the decisions taken by the public authorities, which are mostly in favour of the predominantly Serb, Christian Orthodox population.

In the light of these developments:

1. Which measures does the Commission intend to take to help the Bosnian Government amend the constitution, so as to comply with the ruling in the case of Sejdić and Finci v Bosnia and Herzegovina?

2. Is the Commission aware of the unlawful treatment of ethnic and religious minorities in Bosnia?

3. To what extent has the Commission been able to raise the subject of religious minorities in its negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina?

4. Is the Commission aware that, of the 40 000 Catholics living in the area of Banja Luka, Republika Srpska, before the conflict, only 3 000 remain today?

5. Is the Commission aware that national law and local authorities are making it difficult for people to reclaim the houses they abandoned during the conflict?

6. Is the Commission taking the problem of religious minorities seriously? If so, is it prepared to make it a permanent item on the agenda for accession negotiations with Bosnia-Herzegovina?

7. Which measures does the EU intend to take to raise the Union's concerns and to encourage local government authorities to make commitments in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular in areas with ethnic and religious minorities?

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

The Commission has placed the implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling at the heart of its dialogue with Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has closely engaged with the country's authorities and political leaders in a High Level Dialogue on the Accession Process. The Commission launched this initiative in June 2012 with the aim of helping Bosnia and Herzegovina move forward in the EU accession process. In this framework, a Roadmap for Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU membership application has been agreed. The implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling is a key requirement under this Roadmap. At the Second Meeting of the Dialogue in November 2012, the Commission stressed that the implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling remains crucial and reiterated its readiness to help to find a solution.

The Commission has been underlining, on a regular basis, the importance of freedom of religion during meetings with the country's authorities, in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process as well as on other occasions, including during meetings with political and religious leaders. The importance of this fundamental right is also stressed in the Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012 Progress Report.

The Commission also supports sustainable refugee return. Significant funds under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance have been earmarked to support the implementation of Annex VII of the Dayton Agreement as well as in the framework of the Sarajevo Declaration Process.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011072/12
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: EIB loan to Ford in Turkey

Ford has announced its intention to close its last UK assembly plant, in Swaythling, Southampton, with the loss of 1 400 jobs. Production of Ford's Transit Van will switch from Swaythling to Turkey, having been based in Southampton — the company's last UK vehicle assembly plant — for 40 years.

It has emerged that the European Investment Bank (EIB) has loaned Ford GBP 80 million to invest in its Turkish plant, as part of its moves to prepare the country's economy for possible European Union membership.

Has the Commission considered that certain EIB loans may have a negative impact on firms registered within the EU, especially where the EIB's very favourable loans could offer an unfair advantage to non-EU firms?

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

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to refer to the Commission joint answer to written questions P-10070/2012 by Mrs Van Brempt, P-10100/2012 by Mr Belet and E-10134/2012 by Mrs Stassen ([1]) as regards the EIB loan to Ford in Turkey.

The main objective of the EIB is to support growth and jobs in the EU through long-term, sustainable and economically sound investment in infrastructure, private sector companies and small businesses, including in the automotive sector where EIB has financed several projects over the last number of years notably to promote cleaner transport solutions.

At the same time, an objective of EIB activity outside the Union, in particular in Pre-Accession countries, is the promotion of local private sector development. This applies to both EIB own risk activities, under which the EIB loan to Ford in Turkey was carried out, and EIB activities under the external mandate, as provided for in Decision No 1080/2011/EU of the Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 granting an EU guarantee to the EIB against losses under loans and loan guarantees for projects outside the Union ([2]).

The legislative proposal for the EIB external mandate covering the period 2014-2020 will soon be submitted by the Commission to the Parliament and Council. In this context, the external lending framework and objectives of the EIB will be discussed by the co-legislators.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) OJ L 280, 27.10.2011.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-011073/12
chuig an gCoimisiún (Leasuachtarán / Ardionadaí)
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(4 Nollaig 2012)

Ábhar: VP/HR — Sáruithe ar chearta an duine chleachtóirí Falun Gong

Is gluaiseacht Áiseach a bhfuil a fréamhacha sa Bhúdachas é an Falun Dafa (nó Falun Gong, mar a thugtar freisin air) agus tá géarleanúint á déanamh sa tSín ar a chleachtóirí ó 1999 i leith. Tá an ghéarleanúint sin scaipthe go dtí na Rúis le tamall anuas. De réir tuairiscí, tá sárú á dhéanamh ar chearta an duine chleachtóirí Falun Gong i dtíortha ar fud an domhain, go háirithe sa Rúis agus sa tSín.

Tá imscrúduithe neamhspleácha maidir le líomhaintí i leith orgán a bheith á mbaint as cleachtóirí Falun Gong agus iad beo déanta ag an Uasal David Matas — iar-dhlíodóir ar son chearta an duine — agus ag an Uasal David Kilgour — iar-fheisire Ceanadach. Bailíodh fianaise sna himscrúduithe sin a léirigh go bhfuil méid mór orgán á mbaint as daoine ina mbeatha sa tSín agus sa Rúis.

An bhféadfadh an Leasuachtarán/Ardionadaí, dá bhrí sin, eolas a thabhairt maidir leis na bearta láithreacha atá glactha aige chun a chinntiú go mbíonn cearta an duine chleachtóirí Falun Gong á gcosaint agus á n-áirithiú sa Rúis agus sa tSín?

Ar mhaithe lena chinntiú nach mbíonn mí-úsáid ar bith á baint ag rialtas na Síne as an máinliacht thrasphlandaithe, an bhfuil tús curtha le himscrúdú neamhspleách ar bith i dtaobh orgáin a bheith á mbaint as cleachtóirí Falun Gong nó as cimí coinsiasa sa Rúis agus sa tSín? Anuas ar sin, an bhfuil brú ar bith á chur ag an AE ar an tSín dul chun cinn cinnte, dearfach a dhéanamh sa mhéid sin?

Ritheadh an 22ú Seimineár um Chearta an Duine idir an AE agus an tSín le déanaí. An bhféadfadh an Leasuachtarán/Ardionadaí eolas a thabhairt maidir leis an toradh a bhí ar an seimineár, go háirithe a mhéid a bhaineann le deireadh a chur le céasadh agus le sáruithe ar chearta an duine i gcás cleachtóirí Falun Gong?

An bhféadfadh an Leasuachtarán/Ardionadaí sonraí a thabhairt maidir leis an méid a rinneadh i ndiaidh an idirphlé is déanaí a bhí ann leis an tSín ar an 29 Bealtaine 2012 chun dul i ngleic leis an gcleachtas atá ann cleachtóirí Falun Gong a choinneáil i mbraighdeanas aonair?

Cad atá déanta ag an Leasuachtarán/Ardionadaí chun a chinntiú go mbeidh ceisteanna maidir le cearta an duine ar an gclár oibre le linn cainteanna leis an Rúis agus leis an tSín amach anseo?

Freagra ón Ardionadaí/Leasuachtarán Ashton thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(4 Feabhra 2013)

Mar a sonraíodh roimhe seo, tá imní ar an AE nach bhfuil na srianta forleathana atá á gcur ar bhaill den Ghluaiseacht Falun Gong ag teacht leis an tsaoirse coinsiasa a aithnítear faoi Airteagal 18 de Dhearbhú Uilechoiteann Chearta an Duine.

Agus í i dteagmháil leis na húdaráis Shíneacha, leanfaidh an AR/LU ar aghaidh ag tarraingt anuas na ceiste faoin mbealach a gcaitear le cleachtóirí Falun Gong agus na ceiste maidir le horgáin a bhaint as daoine ina mbeatha. Ceanglaítear aontú an deontóra a fháil i scríbhinn i rialachán a ghlac an tSín maidir le trasphlandú orgáin an duine, rialachán a tháinig i bhfeidhm an 1 Iúil 2006. Ní leor an rialachán sin, áfach, chun ceist chead an deontóra a shocrú, go háirithe i gcás na ndaoine a fhaigheann bás agus iad faoi choimeád, nó na ndaoine a chuirtear chun báis. Tá imní ar an AE freisin faoin rúndacht a bhaineann le staitisticí i ndáil le pionós an bháis agus trasphlandú orgán araon, rud a fhágann nach féidir léargas grinn a fháil faoi fhoinse na n-orgán trasphlandaithe, agus tá imní air freisin faoi na líomhaintí go ndéantar go leor orgán a bhaint ó phríosúnaigh ina mbeatha ag campaí Athoideachais trí Obair.

Pléadh dhá theama ag an 22ú seiminéar um chearta an duine idir an AE agus an tSín a bhí ar siúl ón 29 go dtí an 31 Deireadh Fómhair: cearta an duine, an comhshaol agus an ceart chun forbartha; agus cearta oibrithe imirceacha a chosaint. Dá bhrí sin, níor pléadh an bealach a gcaitear le cleachtóirí Falun Gong.

Mar sin féin, tá aghaidh tugtha ag an AE cheana féin ar an ábhar seo nuair a phlé an AE cearta an duine leis an tSín roimhe seo, agus leanfar leis sin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011073/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights violations against practitioners of Falun Gong

Falun Dafa (also called Falun Gong) is an Asian movement rooted in Buddhism. Its practitioners have been persecuted in China since 1999 and this persecution has recently spread to Russia. According to reports, Falun Gong practitioners are suffering human rights violations around the world, especially in China and Russia.

Mr David Latas, a former human rights lawyer, and Mr David Kilgour, a former Canadian member of parliament, have carried out independent investigations into allegations of organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners. Evidence gathered during those investigations reveals that the scale of organ harvesting in China and Russia is substantial.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide information regarding the immediate action it has taken to ensure that Falun Gong practitioners' human rights are being protected and safeguarded in Russia and China?

In order to ensure that the Chinese Government does not misuse transplant surgery, has any independent investigation been carried out into the issue of organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners or prisoners of conscience in Russia or China? Furthermore, is the EU exerting pressure on China to make definite, positive progress in this respect?

The 22nd EU-China Human Rights Seminar was held recently. Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide information on the results of that seminar, particularly in relation to the torture of Falun Gong practitioners and the violation of their human rights?

Could the Vice-President/High Representative provide details of action taken following its most recent dialogue with China on 29 May 2012 to address the issue of Falun Gong practitioners being kept in solitary confinement?

What has the Vice-President/High Representative done to ensure that human rights issues will be on the agenda during talks with Russia and China in future?

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

As stated previously, the EU is concerned that the extensive restrictions imposed upon members of the Falun Gong movement are incompatible with freedom of conscience as recognised under Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In its contacts with the Chinese authorities, the HR/VP will continue to raise the issue of the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners and that of organ harvesting. The regulation adopted by China on human organ transplants, which came into effect on 1st July 2006, requires the written agreement of the donor. However, the regulation does not adequately address the issue of donor consent, especially for those who have died in custody or have been executed. The EU is also concerned at the secrecy which surrounds both death penalty and organ transplant statistics, which makes it impossible to gain an accurate picture of the source of transplanted organs, and at allegations that many organs are harvested from prisoners in Re-Education through Labour camps.

The 22nd EU-China human rights seminar, which took place on 29-31 October 2012, discussed two themes: human rights, the environment and the right to development; and protecting the rights of migrant workers. Therefore the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners was not discussed.

Nevertheless, the EU has already addressed this point in the framework of past rounds of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue and will continue to do so.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011075/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(4 december 2012)

Betreft: Minimumlonen en sociale dialoog in het arbeidsomstandighedenpakket van de Commissie

Het door commissaris Andor voorgestelde arbeidsomstandighedenpakket onderstreept het belang van minimumlonen en sociale dialoog voor degelijke en kwalitatieve banen en het bestrijden van armoede bij werkenden.

In haar studie Labour Market Developments in Europe, 2012 rekent de Commissie daarentegen zowel de verlaging van door sociaal overleg verkregen statutaire en contractuele minimumlonen als beleidsmaatregelen die de rol van vakbonden bij het bepalen van lonen verzwakken tot een lijst van arbeidsvriendelijke maatregelen.

1. Welke plaats geeft de Commissie aan de kwaliteit van tewerkstelling in haar onderzoek naar correcte arbeidsomstandigheden?

2. Zal de verlaging van minimumlonen en het terugdringen van algemeen verbindende collectieve arbeidsovereenkomsten de armoede bij werkenden en de inkomensongelijkheid in de EU niet verder verhogen?

3. Is de Commissie bereid om waardige minimumlonen en het bevorderen van collectief onderhandelde lonen als fundamentele bouwstenen van het Europees sociaal model en garantie voor de koopkracht van de Europese burger te verdedigen?

4. Blijft de Commissie vasthouden aan de centrale positie van de sociale dialoog en de autonomie van de sociale partners bij het onderhandelen van collectieve arbeidsovereenkomsten, zoals met name bindend gestipuleerd door het Handvest van de grondrechten, artikelen 28 en 31, of ook nog de IAO-conventies 98 en 154?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(18 maart 2013)

Het verslag *Labour Market Developments in Europe, 2012* is een analysedocument dat is opgesteld door het directoraat-generaal Economische en Financiële Zaken en dat niet ter aanneming aan de Commissie wordt voorgelegd. Het maakt geen deel uit van het Europees semester en heeft dus geen betrekking op toekomstige landenspecifieke aanbevelingen of op de jaarlijkse groeianalyse (JGA) voor 2013 die onlangs is aangenomen. De mededeling *Naar een banenrijk herstel* is aangenomen door de Commissie en geeft haar visie weer over de werkgelegenheidssituatie en het werkgelegenheidsbeleid op middellange termijn ([1]).

De Commissie hecht veel belang aan de kwaliteit van de werkgelegenheid, waarbij wordt gezorgd voor een eerlijk en billijk loon, een evenwicht tussen flexibiliteit en zekerheid in contractuele arbeidsverhoudingen en het ontmoedigen en voorkomen van zwartwerk. Deze doelstellingen worden weerspiegeld in de prioriteiten die in verschillende edities van de JGA en het Gezamenlijk verslag over de werkgelegenheid worden gesteld, alsook in een aantal landenspecifieke aanbevelingen die zijn gedaan in het kader van het Europees semester.

De Commissie heeft in het kader van het Europees semester aanbevelingen gedaan om loonontwikkelingen te bevorderen die de opname van werklozen op de arbeidsmarkt ten goede komen en die er tegelijkertijd op wijzen dat het aanpakken van de werkloosheid afhankelijk is van loonontwikkelingen en een alomvattend beleid vereist. De Commissie heeft ook aandacht voor het risico op toenemende armoede en met name armoede onder werkenden.

De Commissie houdt vast aan de centrale positie van de sociale dialoog en aan de vrijheid om collectief te onderhandelen die worden vermeld in het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie, in het Verdrag en in de desbetreffende IAO-verdragen. Een vruchtbare sociale dialoog is van essentieel belang om zowel economische prestaties als sociale rechtvaardigheid te waarborgen en om passend en duurzame arbeidsmarkthervormingen op te stellen.

([1]) In de mededeling wordt vooral de nadruk gelegd op de behoefte aan het bevorderen van een tripartiete gedachtewisseling over loonontwikkeling met betrekking tot productiviteit, inflatie en interne vraag, werkloosheid en inkomen en een evenwicht tussen flexibiliteit en zekerheid.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011075/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Minimum wages and social dialogue in the Commission's working conditions package

The working conditions package proposed by Commissioner Andor stresses the importance of minimum wages and social dialogue for decent, high-quality jobs and in combating poverty among people in employment.

In its study Labour Market Developments in Europe, 2012, on the other hand, the Commission presents a list of measures favourable to employment which includes both (a) reducing statutory and contractual minimum wages established by means of social dialogue and (b) policy measures which weaken the role of trade unions in setting wages.

1. What role does the Commission assign to the quality of employment in its study of appropriate working conditions?

2. Is it not the case that cutting minimum wages and reducing the role of universally binding collective agreements on terms of employment will bring about a further rise in poverty among working people and further aggravate income inequality in the EU?

3. Will the Commission defend decent minimum wages and the promotion of collectively negotiated wages as fundamental building blocks of the European social model and guarantees of the purchasing power of European citizens?

4. Does the Commission still endorse the central position of social dialogue and the autonomy of the social partners in negotiating collective agreements on terms of employment, as, for example, stipulated bindingly by Articles 28 and 31 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights or also by ILO Conventions 98 and 154?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(18 March 2013)

The report on 'Labour Market Developments in Europe 2012' is an analytical paper produced by DG ECFIN that has not been subject to adoption by the College. It is not part of the EU Semester and therefore it has no bearing on future Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) or the recently adopted Annual Growth Survey 2013. The communication 'Towards a job-rich recovery' has been adopted by the College and reflects its views on the employment situation and the way forward in the medium-term for employment policies ([1]).

The Commission assigns high importance to the quality of employment, including ensuring equitable and adequate pay, balancing flexibility and security in contractual labour relations, discouraging and preventing undeclared labour. Priorities set in various issues of the AGS and the Joint Employment Report, as well as a number of country-specific recommendations issued within the framework of the EU Semester, reflect these objectives.

The Commission, in the context of the European Semester has issued recommendations aimed at promoting wage developments favouring the absorption of unemployed into the labour market while highlighting that responses to unemployment rely on wages developments and require comprehensive policies. The Commission is also attentive to the risks of increasing poverty, and in particular in-work poverty.

The Commission is bound to respect the autonomy of collective bargaining and the key role of social dialogue set out in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and in the Treaty, and in the relevant ILO conventions. A fruitful social dialogue is key for ensuring both economic performance and social justice, and designing appropriate and sustainable labour market reforms.

([1]) In particular, this communication highlights the need to promote tripartite exchange of views on wages developments in relation to productivity, inflation and internal demand, unemployment and income and balancing flexibility and security.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011076/12
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Notification provided for in Article 10(4) of the Protocol on Transitional Provisions annexed to the European Union Treaties

If the United Kingdom gives the notification provided for in Article 10(4) of the Protocol on Transitional Provisions annexed to the European Union Treaties, is the EU authorised under those Treaties to conclude international agreements with the UK in matters covered by EC laws that would cease to apply to the United Kingdom by virtue of that notification?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2013)

If the United Kingdom gives the notification provided for in Article 10(4) of Protocol Nr. 36, the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission, shall determine the necessary consequential and transitional arrangements. Nevertheless, in accordance with Article 10 (5) of the Protocol, the UK may, at any time afterwards, notify the Council of its wish to participate in acts which have ceased to apply to it. In that case, the relevant provisions of Protocols 19 and 21 shall apply. Therefore, the Commission sees no room for the conclusion of international agreements between the EU and the United Kingdom on such matters.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011077/12
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(4 december 2012)

Betreft: Franse heffing van gelijk werking op bier

Frankrijk heeft de accijns op bier met 160 procent verhoogd waardoor deze tien tot zestien maal meer zal bedragen dan de accijns op wijn. Deze disproportionele heffing leidt tot een discriminatoire behandeling van gelijksoortige alcoholproducten en hun producenten omdat het vooral nationale product wijn een zijdelingse bescherming en concurrentievoordeel krijgt t.a.v. het vooral geïmporteerde product bier.

Ik verneem dan ook graag van de Commissie welke maatregelen zij zal treffen om deze heffing van gelijke werking, die de interne markt en het vrije verkeer van goederen tussen de lidstaten schaadt, te doen opheffen.

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(16 januari 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op de eerdere schriftelijke vraag E-010183/2012 van mevrouw Thyssen en de heer Belet.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011077/12
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: French 'charges having equivalent effect' on beer

France has increased the duty on beer by 160%, making it 10 to 16 times higher than the duty on wine. This disproportionate charge leads to discriminatory treatment among similar alcohol products and their producers, as it gives wine — which is primarily a domestic product — indirect protection and a competitive advantage over beer, which is primarily imported.

Can the Commission please state what measures it will take to ensure that this 'charge having an equivalent effect', which damages the internal market and the free movement of goods between the Member States, is removed?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer given to previous Written Question E-010183/2012 from Ms Thyssen and Mr Belet.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011078/12
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Ayudas públicas al sector de la pesca de cefalópodos de Galicia excluido del Acuerdo UE-Mauritania

La Unión Europea ha suscrito un acuerdo pesquero con la República Islámica de Mauritania manifiestamente negativo para los intereses del sector, especialmente para la flota cefalopodera de Galicia y Portugal, que ha tenido que retirar sus barcos de las costas mauritanas. Esta situación ha sido denunciada en numerosas ocasiones en las preguntas parlamentarias E-004361/2012, E-007099/2012, E-007547/2012 y E-007546/2012, además de por la mayoría de los diputados al Parlamento Europeo presentes en varias reuniones de la Comisión de Pesca en las que se ha debatido este tema.

La exclusión en el Acuerdo de pesca UE-Mauritania de los 24 buques cefalopoderos gallegos tiene un gran impacto a nivel social, laboral y económico en diversas comarcas de Galicia debido a la importancia de la actividad pesquera en zonas en las que no hay otras alternativas de diversificación económica. Tras diversas movilizaciones en protesta por la situación y las consecuencias socioeconómicas de esta exclusión, los trabajadores afectados han decidido emprender un encierro en el Ayuntamiento de Marín (Pontevedra) en reacción a la situación, que se ha visto agravada en los últimos días por la falta de celeridad en la ejecución de las ayudas públicas previstas por el Estado español para paliar los efectos de la exclusión de esta flota del acuerdo pesquero.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de esta grave situación?

¿Considera la Comisión que se está haciendo lo suficiente para garantizar a los trabajadores afectados por la exclusión de la flota cefalopodera del acuerdo la adecuada compensación económica?

¿Puede informar la Comisión sobre la posibilidad de bloqueo del acuerdo en caso de que no se cumpla el nivel de utilización de las posibilidades de pesca por parte de la flota pesquera europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2013)

La Comisión Europea es consciente de las implicaciones sociales y económicas para la flota cefalopodera española derivadas de la ausencia de posibilidades de pesca de cefalópodos en aguas de Mauritania. Este es el resultado de la decisión de Mauritania de reservar todas las posibilidades de pesca de esta población para su propia flota. Como consecuencia de ello, la UE no dispone de ningún excedente. No obstante, la Comisión ha velado por que el Acuerdo incluyera una cláusula de revisión que prevé la posibilidad de capturar cefalópodos en el futuro si la situación de la población mejora y Mauritania decide asignar una parte de ella a las posibilidades de pesca de la UE. La Comisión Europea se ha comprometido con Mauritania a crear un comité científico conjunto para evaluar la situación de la población en los próximos días.

Para ayudar a la flota, España puede decidir conceder ayudas a la flota cefalopodera para la paralización definitiva ([1]) o temporal ([2]) en virtud del Fondo Europeo de Pesca. Esta ayuda está limitada normalmente al 6 % de la ayuda financiera de la UE, pero este nivel fue aumentado para España al 12 % mediante la Decisión de la Comisión, de 25 de abril de 2012 ([3]), tras la interrupción de la pesca al amparo del Acuerdo de asociación en el sector pesquero con Marruecos.

En caso de que no se utilicen suficientemente las posibilidades de pesca, el artículo 5 del Protocolo incluye una cláusula de salvaguardia que permite la denuncia del mismo, con un plazo de preaviso de cuatro meses. Así pues, la Comisión Europea podría recuperar *pro rata temporis* su contribución financiera.

([1]) De conformidad con el artículo 23 del FEP.
([2]) De conformidad con el artículo 24 del FEP.
([3]) Decisión C(2012) 2675 de la Comisión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011078/12
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: State aid for the cephalopod fisheries sector in Galicia which has been excluded from EU-Mauritania agreement

The European Union has signed a fisheries agreement with the Islamic Republic of Mauritania which is manifestly detrimental to the interests of the sector, especially for the cephalopod fleet of Galicia and Portugal, which has had to withdraw its vessels from the Mauritanian coast. This situation has been denounced on numerous occasions in parliamentary questions E-004361/2012, E-007099/2012, E-007547/2012 and E-007546/2012, and by most MEPs who attended several Fisheries Committee meetings at which this issue was discussed.

The exclusion of 24 Galician cephalopod vessels from the EU-Mauritania fisheries agreement is having a great impact from the social, employment and economic point of view in various parts of Galicia due to the importance of fishing in areas where there are no other alternatives for economic diversification. After several demonstrations to protest about the situation and the social and economic consequences of this exclusion, the workers affected have decided to carry out a sit-in at the Marín Town Hall (Pontevedra) in reaction to the situation, which has been recently exacerbated by the authorities' slowness in providing the state aid the Spanish Government has put in place to mitigate the effects of the fleet's exclusion from the fisheries agreement.

Is the Commission aware of this serious situation?

Does the Commission think that enough is being done to ensure that the workers affected by the exclusion of the cephalopod fleet from the agreement receive adequate financial compensation?

Can the Commission provide information on the possibility of blocking the agreement if utilisation of fishing opportunities by the EU fishing fleet does not reach the required level?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The European Commission is aware of the social and economic implications for the Spanish cephalopods fleet linked to the absence of opportunities to fish for cephalopods in Mauritania waters. This is a result of the decision by Mauritania to reserve all fishing opportunities for this stock for its own fleet. As a result there is no surplus available to the EU. Nevertheless, the Commission has ensured that the agreement includes a review clause to provide the possibility for cephalopods in the future if the state of the stock were to improve and Mauritania would decide to grant a part of it the fishing opportunities to the EU. The European Commission has engaged Mauritania with the aim of conveying a Joint Scientific Committee to assess the stock in the coming days.

To support the fleet, Spain may decide to grant aid to the cephalopods fleet for permanent ([1]) or temporary cessation ([2]) under the European Fisheries Fund. This aim is normally limited to 6% of the EU financial assistance, but this level has been increased for Spain to 12% by way of Commission decision of 25 April 2012 ([3]) following the interruption of fishing under the Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Morocco.

Should fishing opportunities not be used enough, Article 5 of the Protocol contains a safeguard clause allowing for termination of the Protocol, after a notice period of 4 months. Thus, the European Commission would be able to recover *pro rata temporis* its financial contribution.

([1]) Following Article 23 of the EFF.
([2]) Following Article 24 of the EFF.
([3]) Commission Decision C(2012) 2675.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011079/12
to the Commission
Sajjad Karim (ECR)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Matriculation tax in Spain

It has been brought to my attention that Spanish Law 38/1992 is being used to charge full rates of tax on charter boats from other EU Member States operating in Spanish waters, despite their only being based and used in Spain for a limited number of weeks each year.

The EU Court of Justice has ruled — in cases C-451/99 *Cura Anlagen* (2002) and C-242/05 *van de Coevering* (2006) — that Member States can only levy a full registration tax if a vessel is based permanently within that Member State, and that payment of tax to that Member State should be proportionate to the duration of the use of the vehicle in that state.

From the Commission's answer to Written Question P-007526/2012, I understand that it takes the view that Spain is not in proper compliance with these rulings of the EU Court of Justice.

I understand that the Commission has formally asked Spain to change the way it taxes rented or leased vehicles within the framework of two infringement proceedings (2010/2104 and 2010/2105) and is in the process of investigating its non-compliance with EU rules.

1. Does the Commission believe that this tax violates the principles governing the free movement of persons, the freedom to provide services and the freedom to provide services to maritime transport?

2. Could the Commission provide an update on the progress of its investigations and, if possible, a date when its findings will be announced?

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

In the framework of infringement procedures 2010/2104 (taxation in Spain of means of transport leased in Member States other than Spain) and 2010/2105 (taxation in Spain of company cars) the European Commission has sent a reasoned opinion (for each of the cases) to the Spanish authorities. Contacts with those authorities are ongoing and the Commission is currently analysing the information at its disposal and the possible options in order to ensure that the national legislation is in line with EC law, as interpreted by the Court of Justice of the EU.

With a view to ensuring that these discussions run smoothly, it is essential for the Commission to maintain a climate of mutual trust with the Member State by avoiding the disclosure of the contents of such contacts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011080/12
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Impact of mining for tin on Bangka island (Indonesia) and checks on EU raw material imports

Tin is a vital component in all phones and electronic gadgets sold in the EU, and the Indonesian island of Bangka, along with the neighbouring island Belitung, produces almost one third of the world's supply.

Friends of the Earth has suggested that two of the leading producers of smartphones, Samsung and Apple, appear to use tin from Bangka in their mobile phones. Tin mining is having a catastrophic impact on the people and the environment in the area. According to a recent shocking report there is evidence that:

— silt from tin-mining boats is choking coral, driving away fish and marine life, and ruining fishermen's livelihoods;

— forests and farmland have been destroyed, the fertility of the soil has declined, and there has been little or no restoration of mined land;

— injuries and fatal accidents have occurred when pits have collapsed.

In light of this, can the Commission confirm whether it is aware of this problem?

Stopping tin mining in one place is probably not the answer — it would simply shift the problem to another country.

Companies should be obliged to disclose the full environmental and social costs of their products. Can the Commission confirm whether there are any plans to introduce such an obligation?

Could the Commission state whether measures are in place for the EU to check on the sustainability of its raw material imports? If so, could the Commission detail its audit procedures?

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

The Commission is aware of such reports. While the Commission has already engaged in discussions with the Indonesian Government on environmental and sustainable development issues, this dialogue will be strengthened with the entry into force of the EU-Indonesia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in the near future as it contains specific provisions of cooperation on environmental and natural resources, forestry, agriculture and rural development.

As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility policy, the Commission actively encourages EU companies to adopt responsible business conduct practices ([1]). In this framework, the Commission is also working on a legislative proposal to improve company disclosure of social and environmental information ([2]). While the Commission does not have dedicated audit procedures in place concerning imports of raw materials, it promotes greater support for and use of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for multinational enterprises, and OECD due diligence guidance for responsible supply chains management, specifically focused on the mining sector ([3]). It also supports implementation of the United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on business and human rights, which encourage reporting and transparency of companies' activities including within their supply chains.

([1]) Commission Communication 'A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility', COM(2011)681 final.
([2]) Commission Communication 'Single Market Act', COM(2011)206 final.
([3]) Commission Communication 'Trade, Growth, and Development', COM(2012)22 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011081/12
an die Kommission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(4. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Informationen über den spanischen Bankensektor entsprechend den Auflagen des Memorandum of Understanding

Wird die Kommission die Daten zum spanischen Bankensektor zur Verfügung stellen, die im Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Anlage A, Unterabschnitte 1 bis 4 (siehe unten) verlangt werden? Anhang A: Geforderte Daten (siehe Seite 17 des MoU). Dieser lautet wie folgt:

„Die spanischen Behörden legen im wöchentlichen oder monatlichen Rhythmus folgende Daten bzw. eine Aktualisierung derselben vor:

1. Wöchentliche Berichte und Daten zu Bankeinlagen.

2. Wöchentliche Berichte und Daten zur Liquiditätslage und -prognose der Banken.

3. Vierteljährlich die dem Aufsichtsorgan übersandten Quartalsabschlüsse der 14 Bankkonzerne, einschließlich zusätzlicher Angaben über folgende Sachverhalte:

Informationen zur Finanzlage und zu aufsichtsrechtlichen Belangen (konsolidierte Daten) der 14 Bankkonzerne und des Gesamt-Bankensektors, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die GuV, die Bilanzen, die Aktiva-Qualität, das aufsichtsrechtliche Eigenkapital und Prognosen zur Entwicklung der Bilanzen;

notleidende Kredite, eingezogene Sicherheiten und diesbezügliche Risikovorsorge, einschließlich Angaben zum Engagement in den verschiedenen Anlageklassen (Land & Entwicklung, inklusive Gewerbeimmobilien), Wohnimmobilien, Kreditvergabe an den Mittelstand, an Großkonzerne und Verbraucher;

Aktiva-Qualität in den verschiedenen Anlageklassen (gute Qualität, unter Beobachtung, Sub-Standard, notleidend, restrukturiert, davon restrukturiert und notleidend), Risikovorsorge in den verschiedenen Anlageklassen, Neukreditvergabe in den verschiedenen Anlageklassen;

Staatsanleihenportfolio;

ausstehende Schuldtitel mit Aufgliederung nach Rangigkeit (vorrangige besicherte, vorrangige unbesicherte, nachrangige Schuldtitel (davon Vorzugstitel), staatlich garantierte Schuldtitel) und Angaben zu den bei Privatanlegern platzierten Beträgen sowie Tilgungspläne;

das aufsichtsrechtliche Eigenkapital und seine Zusammensetzung, einschließlich Angaben zum Kapitalbedarf (Kredit-, Markt- und, operationelle Risiken).

4. Bis Prognosen für die Quartalsbilanzen vorliegen, sollen die vom FROB gestützten Banken auf Basis einer vorab ausgearbeiteten Dokumentvorlage Angaben zum Refinanzierungsbedarf und zu ihren Sicherheitenreserven für einen Zeitraum von 1 Monat, von 3 Monaten und von 6 Monaten vorlegen. Von einigen Banken werden schließlich Finanzierungspläne angefordert. Die Berichterstattungspflichten werden um Kapitalpläne erweitert".

Die oben genannte Liste ist vorläufig. Weitere Anforderungen können zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt hinzugefügt werden. Zu diesem Zweck wird ein Verfahren für das zuständige Personal von Kommission, EZB, EBA und IWF etabliert, um bei Bedarf spontan weitere Forderungen nach Bankdaten einzureichen.

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission

(8. Februar 2013)

Gemäß Absatz 34 der Absichtserklärung (Memorandum of Understanding — MoU) vom 23. Juli 2012 über Auflagen für den Finanzsektor sowie Anhang 1 des MoU stellen die spanischen Behörden „unter strikten Geheimhaltungsauflagen die Daten zur Verfügung […], die zur Überwachung des Gesamt-Bankensektors sowie einzelner Banken, die aufgrund ihrer Systemrelevanz oder ihrer individuellen Situation von besonderem Interesse sind, erforderlich sind." Die Daten werden von der Banco de España unter äußerst strengen Geheimhaltungsvorschriften bereitgestellt, weil sie sehr detaillierte Informationen über einzelne Banken enthalten. Eine Verbreitung dieser Informationen könnte starke Marktreaktionen auslösen und den Geschäftsinteressen der betreffenden Finanzinstitute erheblich schaden. Daher kann die Kommission diese Daten weder dem Herrn Abgeordneten noch einem anderen Dritten zur Verfügung stellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011081/12
to the Commission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Information on the Spanish banking sector as required by the memorandum of understanding

Will the Commission provide me with the data on the Spanish banking sector required by the memorandum of understanding (MoU) in Annex A, subsections 1 to 4 (see below): Annex A: Data requirements (see page 17 of the MoU)? This reads as follows:

'Spanish authorities will regularly submit or update, at least on a weekly or monthly basis the following data,

1. Reports and data, on a weekly basis, on bank deposits.

2. Reports and data, on a weekly basis, on banks' liquidity position and forecast.

3. Quarterly bank prudential financial statements as sent to the supervisor, for the 14 banking groups, including additional details on:
financial and regulatory information (consolidated data) on the 14 banking groups and the banking sector in total, especially regarding (P&L), balance sheets, asset quality, regulatory capital, balance sheet forecasts;

non-performing loans, repossessed assets and related provisions; to include exposure across different asset classes (Land & Development, including commercial real estate), Residential Real Estate, SME lending, Corporate lending, Consumer lending;

asset quality across different asset classes (good quality, watch, substandard, NPL, restructured, of which restructured and NPL); provision stock across different asset classes, new lending across different asset classes;

sovereign debt holdings;

outstanding stock of debt issued, with a break down by seniority (senior secured, senior unsecured, subordinated of which preference shares, government guaranteed), with the amounts placed with retail customers, and amortisation schedule;

regulatory capital and its components: including capital requirements (credit risk, market risk, operational risk).

4. Until quarterly balance sheet forecasts are available, an agreed template for banks supported by FROB, regarding refinancing needs and collateral buffers, for a horizon of 1 month, 3 months and 6 months should be provided. Funding plans will eventually be required for an expanded sample of banks. Reporting will be expanded to also include capital plans.'

The above list is provisional. Further requests may be added at a later stage. For this purpose, a procedure will be set up for the relevant Commission, ECB, EBA and IMF staff to submit additional ad hoc banking data requests as required.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(8 February 2013)

According to paragraph 34 and the schedule in Annex 1 of the Memonrandum of Understanding on Financial-sector policy of 23 July 2012, Spanish authorities provide 'under strict conditions of confidentiality, the data needed for monitoring of the banking sector as a whole and of banks of specific interest due to their systemic nature or their condition.' The data are provided by the Banco de España under such very strict rules of confidentiality as they contain very granular information on individual banks. Their dissemination could be highly market-sensitive and very detrimental to the commercial interests of the respective financial institutions. Therefore, the Commission is not in the position to provide these data to the honorable member or any third party.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-011082/12
Komisii
Katarína Neveďalová (S&D)
(4. decembra 2012)

Vec: Rusko: neférové pravidlá týkajúce sa miestneho obsahu a investovania poškodzujúce priemysel s automobilovými súčiastkami v rámci EÚ

Podľa informácií, ktorými disponuje Komisia, v roku 2005 Rusko zaviedlo veľmi agresívnu lokalizačnú politiku v automobilovom priemysle. Tvorí ju najmä investičný režim známy ako „montážny režim", v ktorom Rusko zaviedlo výšku miestneho obsahu (až do 60 %) a spája ju s ďalšími výhodami (napr. automobilové súčiastky bez dovozného cla, zvýhodnený daňový režim, bez povinnosti platiť recyklačný poplatok).

Okrem toho aj napriek nadmerným kapacitám výroby automobilov v EÚ musia investori vybudovať závod s minimálnou kapacitou 350 000 automobilov ročne, čo len prispeje k presýteniu európskeho trhu.

Na základe vyššie uvedeného, môže Komisia odpovedať na nasledujúce otázky?

1. Aké sú ekonomické a sociálne dôsledky vyplývajúce z vyššie uvedených opatrení týkajúcich sa priemyslu s automobilovými súčiastkami v rámci EÚ, najmä pokiaľ ide o továrne na Slovensku?

2. Majúc na zreteli skutočnosť, že Rusko sa nedávno stalo členom Svetovej obchodnej organizácie (WTO), sú spomínané opatrenia v súlade s pravidlami tejto organizácie? Boli tieto opatrenia zahrnuté do dialógov, ktoré pripravili Rusko na vstup do WTO?

3. Aké iniciatívy má Komisia v úmysle podniknúť, aby vyriešila túto nepríjemnú situáciu a vyhla sa tak ďalšiemu zhoršeniu situácie v odvetví výroby automobilov a automobilových súčiastok v Európe.

4. Uvažuje Komisia o tom, že podporí súbor koordinovaných iniciatív zameraných na boj proti nespravodlivým obchodným bariéram, ktoré obmedzujú vývoz automobilov a vozidiel vyrobených v štátoch EÚ do tretích krajín?

Odpoveď pána De Guchta v mene Komisie
(4. februára 2013)

1. Ekonomické a sociálne dôsledky opatrení uvádzaných váženou pani poslankyňou zahŕňajú riziko premiestnenia aktivít a pracovných miest v sektore automobilovej výroby zo všetkých štátov EÚ do Ruska. Slovensko pravdepodobne bude zasiahnuté, keďže najvýznamnejší výrobcovia automobilov investovali v rámci montážneho režimu v Rusku.

2. Montážny režim *per se* nie je v súlade s pravidlami Svetovej obchodnej organizácie (WTO) pre investičné opatrenia vzťahujúce sa na obchod. Európska únia v tejto súvislosti viedla s Ruskom dlhé rokovania pred tým, ako krajina vstúpila do WTO. V konečnom dôsledku sa dohodlo, že súčasťou správy ich pracovnej skupiny pre WTO bude zavedenie šesťročného prechodného obdobia (do 1. júla 2018) na odstránenie ustanovení montážneho režimu, ktoré nie sú v súlade s pravidlami pre investičné opatrenia vzťahujúce sa na obchod, spolu so zavedením systému na zníženie rizika možného premiestnenia aktivít a pracovných miest v sektore výroby automobilových súčiastok počas tohto prechodného obdobia.

3. Komisia predovšetkým rozhodne vystupuje proti akýmkoľvek ďalším diskriminačným opatreniam v sektore automobilovej výroby (šrotovné pre automobily, dovozné clá na karosérie vozidiel). Rusko je dôležitý trh pre automobilový priemysel, avšak podniky v EÚ by nemali podstupovať zásadné riziko prostredníctvom investícií len na základe neprimeranej ochrany na ruskom trhu. Komisia je znepokojená takýmito tendenciami a súvisiacimi podnikateľskými rozhodnutiami o premiestnení aktivít a pracovných miest okrem iného na rozvíjajúce sa trhy, ako je napríklad Brazília.

4. Komisia je pripravená dôrazne presadzovať medzinárodne dohodnuté obchodné pravidlá a bilaterálne dohody s tretími krajinami s cieľom zabezpečiť, aby sa situácia ďalej nezhoršovala.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011082/12
to the Commission
Katarína Neveďalová (S&D)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Russia: unfair local content and investment rules damaging the EU automotive and car parts industry

According to the Commission's own evidence, since 2005 Russia has put in place a very aggressive localisation policy in the automotive sector. It mainly consists of an investment regime known as 'the assembly regime' where Russia imposes local content levels (up to 60%) linking it to other advantages (such as free import duties for components, a favourable tax regime, no obligation to pay the recycling fee).

Moreover, investors also have to build a minimum capacity of 350 000 cars a year which, in view of the existing overcapacity in the EU, contributes only to adding new overcapacities to the European market.

Based on the above, can the Commission respond to the following questions:

1. What is the economic and social impact of the measures mentioned above on the EU automotive and car parts industry, notably on factories in Slovakia?

2. Bearing in mind that Russia recently became a member of the WTO, are these measures in line with the WTO rules? Were these measures included in the talks that paved the way for Russia's accession to the WTO?

3. What initiatives does the Commission intend to undertake to solve this unfortunate situation and avoid further deterioration of the state of the automotive and car parts industry in Europe?

4. Is the Commission considering promoting a set of coordinated initiatives aimed at tackling unfair trade barriers limiting the export of EU-made cars and vehicles to third countries?

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

1. The economic and social impact of the measures referred to by the Honourable Member consists in the risk of delocalisation of activities and jobs in the automotive sector from all EU Member States to Russia. Slovakia is likely to be impacted as the main car producers in Slovakia have all invested under the assembly regime in Russia.

2. The assembly regime is *per se* not in line with the TRIMs (Trade Related Investment Measures) World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. The EU had long negotiations with Russia on this issue before its WTO accession. In the end it was agreed as part of their WTO working party report to allow for a six year transition period (until 1 July 2018) to phase out the TRIMs incompatible elements of the assembly regime together with a system to mitigate the risk of potential delocalisation in the car components sector during this transition period.

3. First of all the Commission is going against any further discriminatory measures in the automotive sector recently taken by Russia (recycling fee for vehicles, import duties for car bodies). Russia is an important market for the automotive industry but EU companies should not take important risks by investing only on the basis of undue protection of the Russian market. The Commission is highly concerned by such tendencies and subsequent business decisions on relocation by manufacturers, including in other emerging markets, like for example Brazil.

4. The Commission is ready to pursue the enforcement of the internationally-agreed trade rules and its bilateral agreements with third countries to make sure that the situation does not further deteriorate.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011083/12
do Komisji
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(4 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsekwencje dla Polski za niedotrzymanie terminu transpozycji dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/31/WE z dnia 23 kwietnia 2009 r.

W ślad za interwencją organizacji Climate Action Network Europe, która wpłynęła do mojego biura, chciałabym wyjaśnić niepokojącą sytuację zaistniałą w kraju mojego wyboru.

Polska nadal nie wdrożyła dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/31/WE z dnia 23 kwietnia 2009 r. w sprawie geologicznego składowania dwutlenku węgla oraz zmieniającej dyrektywę Rady 85/337/EWG, Euratom, dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2000/60/WE, 2001/80/WE, 2004/35/WE, 2006/12/WE i 2008/1/WE oraz rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1013/2006 do swojego systemu prawnego. Czy Komisja Europejska prowadzi już dochodzenie w tej kwestii i jakie są możliwe konsekwencje dla Polski za niedotrzymanie terminu transpozycji tego aktu prawnego, który upłynął 25 czerwca 2011 r.?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(7 lutego 2013 r.)

Komisja rzeczywiście wszczęła przeciwko Polsce postępowania w sprawie uchybienia zobowiązaniom na podstawie art. 258 Traktatu o Funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej (TFUE) w związku z niedopełnieniem obowiązku zgłoszenia środków transponujących dyrektywę Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2009/31/WE z dnia 23 kwietnia 2009 r. w sprawie geologicznego składowania dwutlenku węgla ([1]), kierując do Polski wezwanie do usunięcia uchybienia.

Kolejnym etapem postępowania w sprawie uchybienia zobowiązaniom jest uzasadniona opinia, wzywająca państwo członkowskie do zastosowania się do przepisów w określonym terminie. W przypadku uporczywego niestosowania się do uzasadnionej opinii, Komisja może skierować sprawę do Trybunału Sprawiedliwości i domagać się nałożenia ryczałtu i okresowej kary pieniężnej.

Ponadto, nie transponując dyrektywy 2009/31/WE, Polska może pozbawić się szansy na otrzymanie dofinansowania do komercyjnych projektów demonstracyjnych CCS z programu finansowania NER300 – mechanizmu obejmującego 300 mln uprawnień z rezerwy dla nowych instalacji w ramach systemu handlu uprawnieniami do emisji, ustanowionego artykułem 10a ust. 8 dyrektywy 2003/87/WE ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009L0031:en:NOT.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0063:0087:pl:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011083/12
to the Commission
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(4 December 2012)

Subject: Consequences for Poland of not keeping to the deadline for transposition of Directive 2009/31/EC

Following the receipt by my office of information from Climate Action Network Europe, I should like to express my concerns regarding the current situation in my home country.

Poland has still not transposed Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council 2009/31/EC of 23 April 2009 on the geological storage of carbon dioxide and amending Council Directive 85/337/EEC, Euratom, European Parliament and Council Directives 2000/60/EC, 2001/80/EC, 2004/35/EC, 2006/12/EC and 2008/1/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 into national law. Has the Commission launched an investigation into this matter, and what consequences could Poland face for its failure to keep to the deadline for transposing this legislation, which lapsed on 25 June 2011?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2013)

The Commission has indeed launched infringement proceedings under Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) against Poland for failure to notify transposing measures for Directive 2009/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the geological storage of carbon dioxide ([1]), by sending a letter of formal notice to Poland.

The next stage in the infringement procedure would be the Reasoned Opinion, requesting the Member State to comply within a given time limit. In case of continued non-compliance, the Commission may refer the case to the Court of Justice and request the imposition of a lump sum and periodic penalty payment.

In addition, by not transposing Directive 2009/31/EC, Poland could deprive itself of the opportunity to co-finance its CCS commercial demonstration projects from the NER300 funding programme — the mechanism covering 300 million allowances from the new entrants reserve of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, established by Article 10a(8) of Directive 2003/87/EC ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009L0031:en:NOT.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0063:0087:en:PDF.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011084/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(5 december 2012)

Angående: UEFI säkerhetsstart och EU:s konkurrenslagstiftning

Den 26 oktober 2012 beslutade sig alla hårdvarutillverkare som har produkter som är kompatibla med operativsystemet Windows 8 för att använda sig av ett system för säkerhetsstart (secure boot) som enbart tillverkas och används av företaget Microsoft. Krypteringsnycklar för UEFI säkerhetsstart kan endast erhållas från Microsoft, mot betalning. UEFI säkerhetsstart kan inte deaktiveras av den slutanvändare som har köpt hårdvara som är kompatibel med operativsystemet Windows 8. Detta tvingar i praktiken användarna att köpa en krypteringslösning från en annan försäljare än den som sålt hårdvaran, om de vill kunna köra alla typer av programvara på hårdvaran, inklusive annan programvara än Microsofts egen.

Detta verkar vara ett klart fall av låsning till en säljare, varigenom en slutanvändare som ingår ett avtal med en hårdvaruförsäljare också tvingas köpa eller använda en produkt från en annan leverantör, som slutanvändaren inte nödvändigtvis har valt att göra affärer med.

1. Har kommissionen undersökt, eller planerar den att undersöka, huruvida hårdvaruförsäljare som har genomfört dessa lösningar utan att ge slutanvändaren möjlighet att deaktivera UEFI säkerhetsstart bryter mot EU:s konsumentskyddslagstiftning eller konkurrenslagstiftning?

2. Vilka resurser har kommissionen för att rätta till denna kränkning av slutanvändarens rätt att fritt välja vilka mjukvaruförsäljare de vill köpa av?

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011160/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(6 december 2012)

Angående: UEFI säkerhetsstart och EU:s konkurrenslagstiftning

Den 26 oktober 2012 beslutade sig alla hårdvarutillverkare som har produkter som är kompatibla med operativsystemet Windows 8 för att använda sig av ett system för säkerhetsstart (secure boot) som enbart tillverkas och används av företaget Microsoft. Krypteringsnycklar för UEFI säkerhetsstart kan endast erhållas från Microsoft, mot betalning. UEFI säkerhetsstart kan inte deaktiveras av den slutanvändare som har köpt hårdvara som är kompatibel med operativsystemet Windows 8. Detta tvingar i praktiken användarna att köpa en krypteringslösning från en annan försäljare än den som sålt hårdvaran, om de vill kunna köra alla typer av programvara på hårdvaran, inklusive annan programvara än Microsofts egen.

Mjukvaruförsäljare som vill ta fram programvara för den nya hårdvaran kommer att bli beroende av tillgången på krypteringsnycklar från Microsoft, eller eventuellt från ett företag som har köpt en licens för Microsofts nycklar tillsammans med rätten att i sin tur ge licens för nycklarna (även utan att ta betalt). Detta gör att all programvara som utvecklas för ny Windows 8-kompatibel hårdvara blir extremt beroende av en enda försäljare (Microsoft).

1. Hårdvaruförsäljare som inte har gjort det möjligt att deaktivera säkerhetsstartfunktionen i sin hårdvara tvingar därmed andra programvaruutvecklare än Microsoft att, eventuellt mot sin vilja, sluta avtal med Microsoft angående krypteringsnycklar. Undersöker kommissionen huruvida dessa hårdvaruförsäljare bryter mot EU:s konkurrenslagstiftning?

2. Vilka resurser har kommissionen för att se till att utvecklarna i EU även i fortsättningen är fria att ta fram programvarulösningar för slutanvändare utan att, eventuellt mot sin vilja, tvingas ingå avtal med Microsoft?

Samlat svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(31 januari 2013)

Kommissionen är medveten om säkerhetskraven i operativsystemet Microsoft Windows 8. De innebär att datortillverkarna (så kallade OEM-företag) måste använda UEFI säkerhetsstart (Unified Extensible Firmware Interface).

Kommissionen förfogar över olika rättsliga instrument som ska skydda fri konkurrens på marknaden. Grundbestämmelserna finns i artiklarna 101 och 102 i fördraget om Europeiska unionens funktionssätt (EUF-fördraget).

Men huruvida EU:s konkurrensregler överträtts beror på en rad olika faktiska, rättsliga och ekonomiska omständigheter. Kommissionen har för närvarande ingen information som stöder att säkerhetskraven i Windows 8 i praktiken medför en överträdelse av konkurrensbestämmelserna i artikel 101 och 102 i EUF-fördraget. Enligt kommissionens uppgifter kan OEM-företagen ge slutanvändarna möjlighet att desaktivera UEFI säkerhetsstart.

Kommissionen kommer dock att fortsätta bevaka utvecklingen på marknaden för att bevara en fri och lojal konkurrens mellan alla marknadsaktörer.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011084/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: UEFI Secure Boot and European Union competition law

On 26 October 2012, all hardware manufacturers with products compatible with the Windows 8 operating system chose to adopt a system of secure booting which is created and implemented only by Microsoft Corporation. Keys for the encryption used by the so-called UEFI Secure Boot can only be obtained from Microsoft Corporation, and only at a price. UEFI Secure Boot cannot be disabled by the end-user who has acquired hardware compatible with the Windows 8 operating system, thereby effectively obliging him or her to buy an encryption solution from a vendor different from the hardware vendor in order to be able to run any software on that hardware, including software other than Microsoft Corporation software.

This appears to be an obvious case of vendor lock-in, whereby the end-user, by virtue of entering into an agreement with a party selling hardware, is also forced to make a purchase or rely on a product from a third party that he or she has not necessarily consented to enter into a business transaction with.

1. Has the Commission investigated, or is it planning to investigate in future, whether the hardware vendors who implemented these solutions without giving end-consumers the possibility of deactivating UEFI Secure Boot have breached EU consumer protection laws or EU competition law?

2. What resources are at the Commission's disposal to remedy this infringement of end-consumers' freedom to choose freely the software vendors with whom they wish to enter into business transactions?

Question for written answer E-011160/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: UEFI Secure Boot and European Union competition law

On 26 October 2012, all hardware manufacturers with products compatible with the Windows 8 operating system chose to adopt a system of secure booting which is created and implemented only by Microsoft Corporation. Keys for the encryption used by the so-called UEFI Secure Boot can only be obtained from Microsoft Corporation, and only at a price. UEFI Secure Boot cannot be disabled by the end-user who has acquired hardware compatible with the Windows 8 operating system, thereby effectively obliging him or her to buy an encryption solution from a vendor different from the hardware vendor in order to be able to run any software on that hardware, including software other than Microsoft Corporation software.

Software vendors wishing to make software for the new hardware will be reliant on the availability of encryption keys from Microsoft Corporation or, possibly, from an entity which has purchased a licence for the keys from Microsoft together with the right to sublicense the keys (including free of charge). This makes all software made for new Windows 8-compatible hardware extraordinarily reliant on a single vendor (Microsoft).

1. Is the Commission investigating whether this may be a breach of European competition laws by the hardware vendors who have not made it possible to deactivate the Secure Boot option in their hardware, thereby forcing other developers of software produced by firms other than Microsoft Corporation to enter into a possibly involuntary contract with Microsoft Corporation over encryption keys?

2. What resources are at the Commission's disposal to ensure that the freedom of developers to make software solutions for end-consumers, without being forced to enter into agreements with Microsoft, potentially involuntarily, is maintained in the European Union?

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

The Commission is aware of the Microsoft Windows 8 security requirements. According to these requirements, in order to conform to the Windows 8 certification program, computer manufacturers ('OEMs') have to use Unified Extensible Firmware Interface ('UEFI') secure boot.

The Commission has at its disposal various legal instruments to ensure that competition is preserved in the markets. The basic provisions are contained in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ('TFEU') in Article 101 and 102 TFEU.

Whether there is a violation of EU competition rules depends however on a range of factual, legal and economic considerations. The Commission is currently not in possession of evidence suggesting that the Windows 8 security requirements would result in practices in violation of EU competition rules as laid down in Articles 101 and 102 TFEU. In particular, on the basis of the information currently available to the Commission it appears that the OEMs can decide to give the end users the option to disable the UEFI secure boot.

The Commission will however continue to monitor the market developments so as to ensure that competition and a level playing field are preserved amongst all market players.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011085/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(5 grudnia 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Przejęcie mienia stowarzyszenia Vyasna

26 listopada białoruskie władze wtargnęły do siedziby stowarzyszenia Vyasna w Mińsku, którego szefem jest niesłusznie skazany w tym roku na 4,5 roku więzienia białoruski obrońca praw człowieka Aleś Bialacki, i przejęły majątek oraz siedzibę organizacji.

Wyrażając głębokie oburzenie działaniem władz w państwie będącym ostatnią dyktaturą Europy, chciałbym zapytać Komisję, jakie jest jej stanowisko w kwestii konfiskaty mienia stowarzyszenia Vyasna oraz czy planuje ona podjąć działania mające na celu doprowadzenie do zwrotu mienia stowarzyszeniu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Füleg w imieniu Komisji
(5 lutego 2013 r.)

Przejęcie siedziby stowarzyszenia Vyasna jest wydarzeniem niepokojącym, dodatkowo pogłębiającym problem niesłusznego skazania jej przewodniczącego Alesia Bialackiego w listopadzie 2011 r. Wynikało ono z przyczyn wyraźnie politycznych, a jego powodem było wsparcie, jakiego on i jego stowarzyszenie odważnie udzielają ofiarom represji na Białorusi. Na początku 2013 r. pozostali pracownicy stowarzyszenia przeniosą się do nowych pomieszczeń biurowych.

W grudniu 2012 r. komisarz ds. rozszerzenia i polityki sąsiedztwa spotkał się z przedstawicielami stowarzyszenia Vyasna i Białoruskiego Stowarzyszenia Dziennikarzy, aby otrzymać informacje z pierwszej ręki na temat tej sytuacji i wyrazić poparcie dla obrońców praw człowieka w obliczu nieustających represji.

UE wyraża zaniepokojenie z powodu ograniczeń i przeszkód, jakie napotykają obrońcy praw człowieka na Białorusi i wielokrotnie wzywała władze tego kraju, aby umożliwiły działaczom swobodne prowadzenie ich działalności, między innymi poprzez rejestrację ich organizacji.

UE ponownie wezwała do uwolnienia Alesia Bialackiego oraz do pełnego przywrócenia mu praw obywatelskich i politycznych, jak również do uwolnienia wszystkich innych więźniów politycznych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011085/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Seizure of property of the 'Viasna' organisation

On 26 November 2012, representatives of the Belarusian authorities forced their way into the Minsk headquarters of the 'Viasna' organisation and seized the property and the building. The organisation's director, the Belarusian human rights defender Ales Bialiatski, was wrongly sentenced earlier this year to four and a half years' imprisonment.

I am outraged by the actions of the authorities in what is Europe's last dictatorship. What is the Commission's view on the confiscation of the 'Viasna' organisation's property, and does it plan to take steps to ensure that the property is returned?

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

The seizure of Viasna's offices is a worrying development, compounding the wrongful sentencing of its Director Ales Bialiatski in November 2011 on clearly politically motivated grounds for his and Viasna's courageous support to victims of repression in Belarus. In early 2013 the remaining Viasna staff will move into new office premises.

In December 2012, the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy met with representatives from Viasna and the Belarusian Association of Journalists in order to receive a first-hand account of the situation and to express support to the human rights defenders in the face of continued repression.

The EU is concerned about the restrictions and obstacles imposed on human rights defenders in the exercise of their activities in Belarus and has repeatedly urged the authorities to allow them to freely fulfil their important functions, including by allowing the registration of their organisations.

The EU has also repeatedly called for the release of Ales Bialiatski and the full reinstatement of his civil and political rights, as well as for the release of all other political prisoners.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011086/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιπτώσεις στο Εθνικό Πάρκο Βόρειας Πίνδου από τα σχεδιαζόμενα υδροηλεκτρικά έργα στις Πηγές Αώου, στην Ελλάδα

Υδροηλεκτρικό φράγμα ύψους 60 μέτρων που θα εκτρέψει τον ποταμό Αώο πρόκειται να κατασκευαστεί μεταξύ Βοβούσας και Σμιξωμάτων, σε σημαντικές φυσικές περιοχές, για να διοχετεύσει τα νερά στη λίμνη Ιωαννίνων ([1]). Το σχέδιο των εταιρειών ΤΕΡΝΑ Ενεργειακή ΑΕ και ΔΕΗ. Ανανεώσιμες, που έχει ενταχθεί στη Β' φάση του σχεδίου Διαχείρισης Υδατικού Διαμερίσματος Ηπείρου, είχε υποβληθεί στο παρελθόν για έγκριση αλλά απορρίφθηκε το 2009 ([2]). Οι τοπικές αντιδράσεις είναι έντονες ([3]). Δεν υπάρχει Συμβούλιο Υδάτων σε επίπεδο υδρολογικής λεκάνης. Πέντε περιβαλλοντικές οργανώσεις επισημαίνουν ότι η κατασκευή αγωγού για μεταφορά του νερού και η διάνοιξη δρόμου προβλέπεται να γίνει στη Β' Ζώνη του Εθνικού Πάρκου που, σύμφωνα με το νομικό καθεστώς, ορίζεται ως ζώνη διατήρησης οικοτόπων και ειδών και απαγορεύονται τέτοιου είδους δραστηριότητες ([4]). Θα έχει μη-αντιστρεπτές επιπτώσεις στο Εθνικό Πάρκο Βόρειας Πίνδου (περιλαμβάνει 11 περιοχές του Δικτύου Natura 2000). Η δραστική μείωση της διαθέσιμης ποσότητας νερού θα επιφέρει σοβαρό πλήγμα στην οικονομία της ευρύτερης περιοχής Κόνιτσας (γεωργία και τουρισμό) και στην πολιτισμική της ταυτότητα. Στις Πηγές Αώου έχει κατασκευαστεί και λειτουργεί από το 1996 και άλλο φράγμα, γεγονός που έχει επιφέρει δραστικές αλλοιώσεις.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενημέρωση από τις αρχές του κράτους-μέλους για το σχέδιο εκτροπής του Αώου και τις πιθανές περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις;

2. Μπορούν οι ελληνικές αρχές να εγκρίνουν την κατασκευή Υδροηλεκτρικών Φραγμάτων ενώ δεν έχουν ολοκληρωθεί τα Σχέδια Διαχείρισης Υδάτινων Πόρων, όπως προβλέπει η Οδηγία 2000/60/ΕΚ;

3. Η εκτροπή ποταμού με αιτιολογία όπως αυτή για το προωθούμενο έργο από μια λεκάνη απορροής (Αώου: GR11, ΦΕΚ 1383/Β/2010) σε άλλη (Καλαμά: GR12, ΦΕΚ 1383/Β/2010) είναι σύμφωνη με το πνεύμα της Οδηγίας 2000/60;

4. Είναι ο σχεδιασμός του συγκεκριμένου έργου συμβατός με την Οδηγία των Οικοτόπων (92/43/ΕΟΚ); Αν όχι, τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ενημερωθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές για το ζήτημα αυτό.

Η Ελλάδα δεν έχει υποβάλει ακόμη στην Επιτροπή σχέδια διαχείρισης για τις λεκάνες απορροής των ποταμών (ΣΔΛΑΠ). Μέχρι την υποβολή τους, η Επιτροπή δεν θα είναι σε θέση να αναλύσει αν τα εν λόγω ΣΔΛΑΠ συμμορφώνονται με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας-πλαισίου για τα ύδατα (ΟΠΥ ([5])). Γενικά, αν και η ΟΠΥ δεν απαγορεύει τον σχεδιασμό νέων έργων ή τη μεταφορά ύδατος από μια λεκάνη απορροής ποταμού σε άλλη πριν από τη δημοσίευση των σχετικών ΣΔΛΑΠ, πρέπει να ληφθούν όλα τα μέτρα για τον μετριασμό των δυσμενών επιπτώσεων των έργων, χωρίς αυτά να διακυβεύουν την επίτευξη των στόχων σε άλλα υδατικά συστήματα.

([1]) Εφημερίδα Πρωϊνά Νέα: (http://www.proinanea.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38717:lr-----&catid=26&Itemid=4), Ανακοίνωση Οικολόγων Πράσινων: (http://www.mpoukasmiltos.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=134:--------lr-----&catid=36:2011-01-25-15-37-10&Itemid=66).
([2]) http://www.wwf.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=608:2009-11-05-08-32-56&catid=70:2008-09-16-12-10-46&Itemid=90.
([3]) Ο Δήμος Ζαγορίου και ο Δήμος Κόνιτσας με πρόσφατα ψηφίσματά τους διαφωνούν με σφοδρότητα με αυτά τα σχέδια, ενώ έχει ξεκινήσει και ηλεκτρονική συλλογή υπογραφών για τη σωτηρία του Αώου: http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/protect-the-waters-of-aoos.html
([4]) http://topontiki.gr/article/40356.
([5]) Οδηγία 2000/60/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000.

Στην οδηγία περί οικοτόπων ([6]) ορίζεται ότι πρέπει να αξιολογηθούν δεόντως οι ενδεχόμενες επιπτώσεις έργου στις περιοχές Natura 2000 της περιφέρειας, είτε αυτό βρίσκεται εντός είτε εκτός των εν λόγω περιοχών. Το έργο μπορεί να εγκριθεί αν εξακριβωθεί ότι δεν θα επηρεάσει την ακεραιότητα των σχετικών περιοχών. Η εξασφάλιση συμμόρφωσης προς τις ως άνω διατάξεις αποτελεί ευθύνη των αρμόδιων ελληνικών αρχών. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να παρέμβει όταν υπάρχουν αποδείξεις για παραβίαση της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ.

([6]) Οδηγία 92/43/ΕΟΚ, ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011086/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Impact on the National Park of Northern Pindos (Greece) of planned hydroelectric projects at the source of the river Aoos

A hydroelectric dam 60 meters high which will divert the river Aoos is due to be constructed between Vovousa and Smixomata, important conservation areas, in order to divert the water to Lake Ioannina ([1]). The project launched by Terna Energy Ltd and Greek Electricity Board Renewables, which has been included in the second phase of the Epirus District Water Management plan, had already been submitted for approval in the past, but was rejected in 2009 ([2]). The local community is strongly opposed to the plan ([3]). No Water Council at river basin level exists. Five environmental groups have pointed out that a pipeline to transport the water and a road are expected to be constructed in the second zone of the National Park which has a special legal status: it is designated as an area of conservation of habitats and species where the activities in question ([4]) are prohibited. They will have irreversible effects on the Northern Pindos National Park (which includes 11 Natura 2000 network regions). The drastic reduction in the available quantity of water will deal a serious blow to the economy of the entire region of Konitsa (agriculture and tourism) and its cultural identity. There already exists a dam at the source of the river Aoos which has been operating since 1996, bringing with it drastic changes.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it been informed by the authorities of the Member State in question about the scheme to divert the river Aoos and the potential environmental impact of such a scheme?

2. Can the Greek authorities approve the construction of hydroelectric dams, without the River Basin Management Plans having been completed, in breach of Directive 2000/60/EC?

3. Is the diversion of a river for the reasons advanced for the project in question from one river basin (Aoos: GR11, Gov. Journal 1383/B/2010) to another (Kalama: GR12, Gov. Journal 1383/V/2010) in keeping with the spirit of Directive 2000/60?

4. Is the planning of the project consistent with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)? If not, what steps will it take to remedy the situation?

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

The Commission has not been informed of this issue by the Greek authorities.

Greece has not yet reported its river basin management plans (RBMPs) to the Commission. Until it does, the Commission will not be able to analyse whether these RBMPs comply with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD ([5])). Generally, while the WFD does not prohibit the planning of new projects or the transfer of water from one river basin to another before the publication of the RBMPs concerned, all steps should be taken to mitigate the adverse impacts of projects and they must not compromise the achievement of objectives in other bodies of water.

([1]) Proina Nea newspaper (http://www.proinanea.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38717:lr-----&catid=26&Itemid=4), Announcement by the Ecologist Greens Party: http://www.mpoukasmiltos.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=134:--------lr-----&catid=36:2011-01-25-15-37-10&Itemid=66.

([2]) http://www.wwf.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=608:2009-11-05-08-32-56&catid=70:2008-09-16-12-10-46&Itemid=90.

([3]) The municipalities of Zagorio and Konitsa recently adopted resolutions categorically rejecting these plans and an Internet petition has been launched for the preservation of the river Aoos: http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/protect-the-waters-of-aoos.html

([4]) http://topontiki.gr/article/40356.

([5]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

The Habitats Directive ([6]) states that the potential impacts of a project on the Natura 2000 areas of the region must be properly assessed, whether it is located within or outside those areas. The project can be authorised if it is ascertained that it will not affect the integrity of the areas concerned. It is the responsibility of the Greek competent authorities to ensure compliance with these provisions. The Commission can intervene when there is evidence of a breach of EU legislation.

([6]) Directive 92/43/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011087/12
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(5. joulukuuta 2012)

Aihe: Ihosyövän varhainen toteaminen

Ihosyöpä on yksi nopeimmin yleistyvistä syövän muodoista Euroopassa. Tämä siitä huolimatta, että ihosyöpä on parannettavissa – jos se havaitaan ajoissa – ja taudin merkit ovat suhteellisen helposti tunnistettavissa.

Saksa on ensimmäisenä valtiona maailmassa ottanut käyttöön valtakunnallisen ohjelman, jolla pyritään seulomaan sekä melanoomaa olevat ihosyöpätapaukset että muut ihosyöpätapaukset. Tähän mennessä saadut tulokset osoittavat, miten taudin varhainen toteaminen voi pelastaa ihmishenkiä ja säästää terveydenhoidon kustannuksia, kun potilaat hoidetaan varhaisessa vaiheessa. Schleswig-Holsteinin osavaltiossa ihosyöpäkuolleisuus oli laskenut arviolta 50 prosentilla, kun oli kulunut viisi vuotta siitä, kun alkuvaiheen kokeiluhanke päättyi alueella.

Saksa on kuitenkin poikkeus tässä asiassa. Vaikka ihosyöpää esiintyy yhä enemmän, muissa jäsenvaltioissa taudin seulontaan tai varhaiseen toteamiseen keskitytään edelleen vain vähän. EU on viime vuosina antanut toimintaohjeita rintasyövän, kohdunkaulansyövän sekä paksu- ja peräsuolensuolen syövän seulomiseksi. Ihosyöpään ei kuitenkaan ole tähän mennessä omaksuttu vastaavanlaista kohdennettua lähestymistapaa.

Tätä taustaa vasten kysyn komissiolta:

1. Mihin toimiin EU on ryhtynyt edistääkseen ihosyövän ennaltaehkäisyä sitä kautta, että terveydenhoitoalan ammattilaiset toteaisivat taudin varhaisessa vaiheessa?

2. Voisiko komissio harkita laativansa ihosyövän varhaista toteamista ja hoitoa koskevat toimintaohjeet?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(30. tammikuuta 2013)

Neuvoston 2. joulukuuta 2003 antamassa suosituksessa esitetään ne perusperiaatteet, jotka koskevat parhaita käytänteitä syövän havaitsemiseksi varhaisessa vaiheessa. Hyväksyttyjen tieteellisten kriteerien perusteella EU on tähän mennessä edistänyt väestöpohjaisten seulontaohjelmien järjestämistä rintasyövän, kohdunkaulansyövän sekä paksu- ja peräsuolensyövän havaitsemiseksi. Seulontamenetelmiä kehitetään jatkuvasti, ja kaikkien väestöpohjaisia seulontaohjelmia koskevien uusien suositusten on oltava näyttöön perustuvia. Komissio odottaa, että osana Euroopan syövänvastaisen säännöstön (European Code Against Cancer) tarkistusta, josta huolehtii Kansainvälinen syöväntutkimuskeskus (International Agency for Research on Cancer), nykyisiä seulontasuosituksia tarkastellaan myös uudelleen yhteistyössä asiantuntijoiden kanssa. Komissio harkitsee tarpeellisia toimia tämän uudelleentarkastelun pohjalta.

Ihosyöpiä ja melanoomaa koskeva tutkimus on ollut yksi painopisteistä seitsemännessä tutkimuksen, teknologian kehittämisen ja demonstroinnin puiteohjelmassa (FP7, 2007-2013) ([1]). Tähän mennessä on osoitettu 67 miljoonaa euroa uusien ja aiempien diagnostisten välineiden (esim. "MINERVA" ([2]), "VIAMOS" ([3])), parannettujen tai uusien hoitomuotojen sekä ihosyöpien synty- ja etenemismekanismien ja hoidon vaikuttamattomuuden tutkimiseen. Esimerkiksi äskettäin toteutettu huippuosaamisen verkosto "GenoMEL" ([4]) on luonut kestävän yhteistyösuhteen melanooman tutkijoiden välille EU:ssa, määrittänyt useita geenejä, joihin liittyy suurempi melanoomariski, ja harjoittanut koulutusta verkossa toteutettavan ohjauksen muodossa.

Komissio pyytää arvoisaa parlamentin jäsentä tutustumaan myös vastaukseen, jonka se on antanut kirjalliseen kysymykseen E-004003/2012 ([5]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/105817_en.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/105387_en.html).
([4]) http://www.genomel.org/.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011087/12
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Early detection of skin cancer

Skin cancer is one of the fastest growing cancers in Europe, despite the fact that it can be cured if detected early enough and danger signs are relatively easy to recognise.

Germany is the first country in the world to launch a nationwide screening programme for both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer. Results to date show how early detection can save lives and healthcare expenditure by treating patients at an early stage. A decrease in skin cancer mortality of approximately 50% was observed in Schleswig-Holstein five years after the completion of an initial pilot programme in that region.

However, Germany is an exception in this regard. Despite the increasing incidence of skin cancer, the focus on screening or early detection of the disease remains limited in other Member States. In recent years the EU has adopted screening guidelines for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer. However, it has not so far developed a similar targeted approach to skin cancer.

In this context:

1. What is the EU doing to promote the secondary prevention of skin cancer through early detection by healthcare professionals?

2. Would the Commission consider helping to draw up guidelines on the early detection and treatment of skin cancer?

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

The Council Recommendation of 2 December 2003 sets out the fundamental principles of best practice in early detection of cancer. Based on the accepted scientific criteria, so far, the EU has promoted organised population-based screening programmes for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer. Screening methodologies are subject to ongoing development and any new recommendation for population-based screening programme must be based on evidence. The Commission expects that as part of the revision process of the European Code Against Cancer undertaken by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the current screening recommendations will be also reviewed in cooperation with relevant experts. On the basis of such review, the Commission will consider appropriate action.

Research on skin cancers and melanoma has been a priority across the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) ([1]). So far, EUR 67 million have been devoted to address novel and earlier diagnostic tools (e.g. 'MINERVA' ([2]), 'VIAMOS' ([3])), improved or novel therapies and mechanisms of skin cancers initiation, progression and resistance to therapy. For example, a recently finalised Network of Excellence, 'GenoMEL' ([4]), has created a durable collaboration between melanoma researchers in the EU, identified several genes associated with a greater melanoma risk and has engaged in education through web tutorials.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-004003/2012 ([5]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/105817_en.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/105387_en.html).
([4]) http://www.genomel.org/.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011088/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE) e Ivo Vajgl (ALDE)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Medio Oriente senza armi di distruzione di massa

Nei prossimi mesi si svolgerà in Finlandia un'importante Conferenza delle NU sulla creazione di una zona priva di armi di distruzione di massa (ADM). La Conferenza è promossa da molti Stati, tra cui gli Stati Uniti, la Russia e il Regno Unito.

La creazione di un Medio Oriente privo di armi di distruzione di massa potrebbe offrire interessanti vantaggi strategici per la regione e per tutto il mondo in generale. Risolverebbe la crisi nucleare iraniana, eliminando in tal modo lo stimolo ad un impulso di proliferazione che potrebbe indurre tre o quattro paesi del Medio Oriente ad entrare nel club nucleare. Rafforzerebbe il trattato di non proliferazione nucleare ed altri regimi di non proliferazione riducendo il numero degli Stati in possesso di ADM. Infine eliminerebbe le armi più pericolose dalla regione più instabile al mondo e ridurrebbe il rischio che queste armi possano essere utilizzate in guerra o per caso.

La partecipazione di tutte le parti interessate è fondamentale per la riuscita della Conferenza. Il facilitatore e gli sponsors non sono riusciti ad avere la partecipazione di tutti i paesi della regione, essendosi Israele rifiutato di partecipare.

Israele tuttavia ha molto da guadagnare da una zona in cui si sia verificato che non vi sono ADM. Una regione senza ADM è preferibile ad una in cui vi siano Stati dotati di armi nucleari, soprattutto se Israele mantiene il suo vantaggio determinante in termini di armamenti convenzionali.

Quali misure concrete il SEAE e l'Alto Rappresentante intendono adottare per garantire che l'UE svolga un ruolo attivo nel sostenere l'avvio di negoziati su un Medio Oriente senza ADM?

Quali iniziative concrete sono attualmente adottate dall'UE per esortare Israele, Iran, Egitto e gli altri paesi del Medio Oriente a partecipare alla Conferenza e ad esercitare pressioni sui principali protagonisti al fine di evitare ogni ulteriore ritardo nell'organizzazione di questa Conferenza?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(25 gennaio 2013)

Dalla dichiarazione di Barcellona del 1995 l'UE è impegnata nell'istituzione di una zona priva di armi di distruzione di massa in Medio Oriente, liberamente accettata dai paesi della regione, e appoggia i piani d'azione del trattato di non proliferazione delle armi nucleari (TNP) adottati nel 2010. L'Unione europea ritiene questo processo di fondamentale importanza per il ciclo di revisione del TNP.

L'UE ha contribuito con tre seminari sull'argomento, tenutisi a Parigi nel giugno 2008 e, attraverso il consorzio di gruppi di riflessione dell'UE per la non proliferazione, a Bruxelles nel luglio 2011 e novembre 2012. I due seminari più recenti hanno registrato un'ampia partecipazione di rappresentanti del mondo accademico, della società civile e di funzionari.

Dato che i nostri seminari hanno fornito una valida sede per un impegno costruttivo e un dialogo proficuo tra la maggior parte dei paesi interessati e tutti gli altri soggetti coinvolti, siamo sicuri che gli organizzatori della conferenza del 2012 sapranno mettere a frutto gli elementi positivi finora emersi. A questo proposito, i nostri seminari e il lavoro svolto dal consorzio di gruppi di riflessione dell'UE per la non proliferazione, che ha prodotto quasi 30 documenti preparatori riguardanti le varie questioni relative alla futura creazione di una zona priva di armi di distruzione di massa, possono costituire la base di partenza per il processo ufficiale che si svolgerà con il sostegno dell'ambasciatore Laajava.

L'UE continuerà a sostenere pienamente il facilitatore in tutte le iniziative future e incoraggerà tutti i paesi della regione a collaborare tra di loro.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011088/12
za Komisijo (VP/HR)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE) in Ivo Vajgl (ALDE)
(5. december 2012)

Zadeva: VP/HR – Bližnji vzhod brez orožja za množično uničevanje

V prihodnjih mesecih naj bi na Finskem potekala pomembna konferenca Združenih narodov o vzpostavitvi območja brez orožja za množično uničevanje na Bližnjem vzhodu. Konferenco podpirajo številne države, med drugimi ZDA, Rusija in Združeno kraljestvo.

Če bi Bližnji vzhod postal območje brez orožja za množično uničevanje, bi to lahko imelo neprecenljive strateške koristi za to regijo in svet na splošno. S tem bi se rešila iranska jedrska kriza, saj ne bi bilo več želje po naglem širjenju, ki bi lahko še tri ali štiri države na Bližnjem vzhodu spodbudila, da se pridruži skupini držav, ki razvijajo jedrsko orožje. Zaradi zmanjšanja števila držav, ki imajo orožje za množično uničevanje, bi se okrepila vloga pogodbe o neširjenju jedrskega orožja in preostali režimi neširjenja. In nenazadnje bi s tem iz te najbolj nestabilne regije na svetu odstranili najnevarnejše orožje in zmanjšali nevarnost, da bi se to orožje uporabilo v vojni ali po nesreči.

Za uspeh konference je nujna udeležba vseh interesnih skupin. Posredniku za konferenco in njenim podpornicam ni uspelo privabiti vseh držav iz te regije, saj je Izrael udeležbo zavrnil.

Ravno Izrael pa bi lahko imel velike koristi od preverljivega območja brez orožja za množično uničevanje. Regija brez orožja za množično uničevanje je bolj zaželena od regije z več državami z jedrskim orožjem, zlasti če bo Izrael ohranil odločno prednost, ki jo ima pri konvencionalnem orožju.

Katere praktične ukrepe sta ESZD in visoka predstavnica pripravljeni sprejeti, da bo EU dejavno in uradno podprla začetek pogajanj o Bližnjem vzhodu kot območju brez orožja za množično uničevanje?

S katerimi konkretnimi ukrepi si EU prizadeva, da bi se Izrael, Iran, Egipt in preostale države Bližnjega vzhoda udeležile konference, in kako bo pritisnila na ključne igralce, da ne bi še bolj odlašali z organizacijo konference?

Odgovor visoke predstavnice Unije in podpredsednice Komisije Catherine Ashton v imenu Komisije
(25. januar 2013)

EU je z Barcelonsko deklaracijo iz leta 1995 zavezana cilju vzpostavitve območja brez orožja za množično uničevanje na Bližnjem vzhodu, ki naj bi ga države v regiji prostovoljno uresničile, in je podprla akcijske načrte na podlagi Pogodbe o neširjenju jedrskega orožja, ki so bili sprejeti v letu 2010. EU meni, da je ta proces ključnega pomena za cikel pregledov Pogodbe o neširjenju jedrskega orožja.

Prispevek EU so bili trije seminarji na to temo, organizirani junija 2008 v Parizu ter – prek konzorcija možganskih trustov EU za neširjenje orožja – julija 2011 in novembra 2012 v Bruslju. Zadnjih dveh seminarjev se je udeležilo veliko predstavnikov univerz in civilne družbe ter uradnikov.

Glede na to, da so naši seminarji dober forum za konstruktivno sodelovanje in ploden dialog med veliko večino zadevnih držav in vsemi drugimi zadevnimi zainteresiranimi stranmi, smo prepričani, da bodo tisti, ki so odgovorni za konferenco iz leta 2012, gradili na obstoječih pozitivnih elementih. V zvezi s tem lahko naši seminarji in delo konzorcija možganskih trustov EU za neširjenje orožja, ki je pripravil skoraj 30 delovnih dokumentov in v njih zajel različne vrste vprašanj v zvezi s prihodnjim območjem brez orožja za množično uničevanje, služijo kot temelj uradnemu procesu, v katerem kot posrednik sodeluje ambasador Laajava.

EU bo posrednika še naprej v celoti podpirala pri vseh prihodnjih ukrepih, vse države v regiji pa bo spodbujala k medsebojnemu sodelovanju.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011088/12
komissiolle (Varapuheenjohtajalle/korkealle edustajalle)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE) ja Ivo Vajgl (ALDE)
(5. joulukuuta 2012)

Aihe: VP/HR – Kaikista joukkotuhoaseista vapaa Lähi-itä

Suomessa on määrä järjestää lähikuukausina merkittävä YK:n konferenssi, jolla pyritään tekemään Lähi-idästä täysin joukkotuhoaseeton vyöhyke. Monet valtiot, kuten Yhdysvallat, Venäjä ja Yhdistynyt kuningaskunta, ovat kampanjoineet konferenssin puolesta.

Joukkotuhoaseettoman vyöhykkeen perustaminen Lähi-itään voisi tuottaa vakuuttavia strategisia etuja tälle alueelle ja laajasti ottaen koko maailmalle. Se ratkaisisi Iranin ydinalan kriisin ja poistaisi motiivin aseiden leviämisen kiihtymiseen, joka saattaisi tarkoittaa, että kolmesta tai neljästä muusta Lähi-idän maasta tulisi ydinasevaltioita. Vyöhykkeen perustaminen vahvistaisi ydinsulkusopimusta ja muita aseiden leviämisen estämiseen tarkoitettuja järjestelyjä, kun joukkotuhoaseita hallussaan pitävien valtioiden määrä vähenisi. Viime kädessä sillä poistettaisiin kaikkein vaarallisimmat aseet maailman tulenarimmalta alueelta, mikä pienentäisi riskiä siitä, että kyseisiä aseita käytettäisiin sodassa tai vahingossa.

Konferenssin onnistumisen kannalta on ratkaisevaa, että kaikki sidosryhmät osallistuvat siihen. Konferenssin isäntämaa ja tukijat eivät ole saaneet alueen kaikkia maita osallistumaan konferenssiin, sillä Israel on kieltäytynyt osallistumasta.

Israelilla olisi kuitenkin paljon voitettavanaan, jos vyöhykkeestä tulisi todennetusti joukkotuhoaseeton. Joukkotuhoaseeton alue on suotavampi vaihtoehto kuin alue, jolla on useampia ydinasevaltioita, etenkin jos Israel säilyttää tavanomaiseen aseistukseen perustuvan ratkaisevan yliotteensa.

Mitä käytännön toimenpiteitä Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto ja korkea edustaja ovat valmiit toteuttamaan varmistaakseen, että EU:lla on aktiivinen ja virallinen rooli tuettaessa neuvottelujen käynnistämistä siitä, että Lähi-itään perustettaisiin joukkotuhoaseeton vyöhyke?

Mitä konkreettisia toimenpiteitä EU jo toteuttaa saadakseen Israelin, Iranin, Egyptin ja muut Lähi-idän maat osallistumaan konferenssiin ja painostaakseen keskeisiä toimijoita, jotta konferenssin järjestäminen ei viivästyisi entisestään?

Korkean edustajan, varapuheenjohtaja Catherine Ashtonin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(25. tammikuuta 2013)

EU on vuonna 1995 annetusta Barcelonan julistuksesta lähtien ollut sitoutunut tavoitteeseen Lähi-idän maiden vapaasti perustamasta joukkotuhoaseettomasta vyöhykkeestä. EU on tukenut vuonna 2010 hyväksyttyjä ydinsulkusopimuksen toimintasuunnitelmia ja pitää pyrkimystä joukkotuhoaseettomaan vyöhykkeeseen Lähi-idässä olennaisena ydinsulkusopimuksen tarkistuskierrokselle.

EU on edistänyt vyöhykettä järjestämällä aiheesta kolme seminaaria, joista ensimmäinen pidettiin Pariisissa kesäkuussa 2008 ja muut asesulkua käsittelevien ajatushautomoiden muodostaman EU:n asesulkukonsortion avulla Brysselissä heinäkuussa 2011 ja marraskuussa 2012. Jälkimmäisiin seminaareihin osallistui laaja kirjo akateemisen maailman ja kansalaisyhteiskunnan edustajia sekä virkamiehiä.

EU:n seminaarit ovat tarjonneet useimmille asianomaisille maille ja muille asiasta kiinnostuneille tai osallisille hyvän tilaisuuden antaa rakentava panoksensa ja käydä hedelmällistä keskustelua. Uskommekin, että vuoden 2012 konferenssin järjestäjät haluavat hyödyntää seminaareissa havaittuja myönteisiä lähtökohtia. EU:n järjestämät seminaarit ja asesulkua käsittelevien ajatushautomoiden muodostaman EU:n asesulkukonsortion työstä syntyneet lähes 30 tausta-asiakirjaa, joissa käsitellään kattavasti tulevaan vyöhykkeeseen liittyviä ongelmia, voivat siis toimia perustana alivaltiosihteeri Laajavan valmistelemalle viralliselle prosessille.

EU tukee edelleen kaikin tavoin konferenssin valmistelijaa tämän työssä ja kehottaa kaikkia Lähi-idän maita yhteistyöhön.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011088/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE) and Ivo Vajgl (ALDE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — A Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction

In the months ahead an important UN Conference on making the Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is due to be held in Finland. The conference has been promoted by many states, including the US, Russia and the UK.

The establishment of a Middle East WMD-free zone could offer compelling strategic benefits to the region and to the world at large. It would resolve the Iranian nuclear crisis, thereby removing the stimulus for a proliferation spurt that could see three or four more Middle Eastern countries joining the nuclear club. It would strengthen the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and other non-proliferation regimes by reducing the number of states in possession of WMD. Finally, it would eliminate the most dangerous weapons from the world's most volatile region and reduce the risk that these weapons might be used in war or by accident.

The participation of all stakeholders is critical to the Conference's success. The facilitator and the sponsors have not been able to achieve the participation of all the countries in the region, as Israel has declined to attend.

Israel, though, has much to gain from a verifiably WMD-free zone. A region without WMD is preferable to one that has multiple nuclear weapon states, especially if Israel maintains its decisive advantage in conventional weaponry.

What practical steps are the EEAS and the High Representative willing to take to ensure that the EU plays an active official role in supporting the start of negotiations on a Middle East WMD-free zone?

What concrete steps are being taken by the EU to urge Israel, Iran, Egypt and the other Middle Eastern countries to participate in the Conference and to put pressure on the key players in order to avoid any further delay in the organisation of this Conference?

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

The EU is committed since the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 to the aim of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Zone in the Middle East, freely arrived at by the countries of the region and has supported the NPT action plans adopted in 2010. The EU considers this process key to the NPT review cycle.

The EU contributed with three seminars on the subject, organised in Paris in June 2008, and — through the EU Non proliferation Consortium of Think Tanks — in Brussels in July 2011 and in November 2012. The two most recent seminars saw broad participation of both academic and civil society representatives and of officials.

Given that our seminars have provided a good forum for constructive engagement and fruitful dialogue among the vast majority of the concerned countries and all other interested and relevant stakeholders, we are confident that those who are responsible for the 2012 Conference would choose to build on the positive elements emerged. In this regard, our seminars, and the work conducted by the EU Non Proliferation Consortium of think tanks, that has produced almost 30 background papers covering all different set of issues pertaining to a future Zone, can serve as a building block in the official process under the facilitation of Ambassador Lajaava.

The EU will continue to fully support the Facilitator in any future steps and will encourage all countries of the region to engage with each other.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-011089/12
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(5 декември 2012 г.)

Относно: Стратегията на ЕС относно наркотиците

Наближава краят на периода на валидност на настоящата стратегия на ЕС по отношение на наркотиците (2005-2012 г.). Във фокуса на тази стратегия са две области на политическа дейност — намаляване на търсенето и намаляване на предлагането. Наред с това в основата на стратегията са и следните две междусекторни теми — международното сътрудничество, от една страна и научните изследвания, информацията и оценката — от друга.

Европейската комисия извърши оценка на Плана за действие на ЕС по отношение на наркотиците (2009-2012 г.) и обяви, че ще проведе независима външна оценка на Стратегията на ЕС относно наркотиците. Комисията беше си поставила за цел да предложи нова политическа рамка относно наркотиците въз основа на тази оценка, предвидена за края на 2011 г., но до момента няма публикувано предложение.

През май 2012 Съветът на Европейския съюз се споразумя в своя проект за заключения по отношение на новата стратегия на ЕС относно наркотиците (10231/12), че ЕС има нужда от Стратегия относно наркотиците за периода 2013-2020 г., която да служи като политическа рамка в областта на наркотиците и която следва да бъде приета до края на 2012 г.

С оглед на това, може ли Комисията да каже дали ще бъде направено предложение за нова стратегия на ЕС относно наркотиците? Ако да, кога?

Ако да, аз бих искала да зная какви мерки са предвидени за новата политическа рамка относно наркотиците.

И накрая, бих искала да зная, дали в новата стратегия ще бъдат включени нови актуални опасности за здравето на гражданите на ЕС, например динамичното развитие на пазарите на наркотици, включително използването на интернет като средство за разпространение на незаконни наркотици.

Отговор, даден от г-жа Рединг от името на Комисията
(6 февруари 2013 г.)

Стратегията на ЕС по отношение на наркотиците за периода 2013-2020 г. беше завършена от кипърското председателство и одобрена от Съвета по правосъдие и вътрешни работи на 7 декември 2012 г. Документът вече може да бъдат намерен на уебсайта на ГД „Правосъдие, свобода и сигурност“[1].

В стратегията са заложени основните приоритети в политиката по отношение на наркотиците за следващите години, които включват аспекти на здравето, динамиката на пазарите на забранени наркотични вещества и новите предизвикателства. В нея по-конкретно се подчертава, че трябва да се отдели специално внимание на новите комуникационни технологии, които играят съществена роля при улесняването на производството, пазарното предлагане, трафика и разпространението на наркотици, включително на контролираните нови психоактивни вещества. В стратегията се консолидира моделът на ЕС за политика за борба срещу наркотиците, която се основава на балансиран подход, насочен с еднаква решимост към намаляване на търсенето и на предлагането на наркотици.

Конкретни мерките за преодоляване на тези предизвикателства ще бъдат набелязани в план за действие за изпълнение на стратегията на ЕС по отношение на наркотиците, който се предвижда да бъде приет по време на ирландското председателство през първата половина на 2013 г.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/eu_drugs_strategy_2013-20_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011089/12
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: The EU Drugs Strategy

The current EU Drugs Strategy (2005-2012) is about to expire. This strategy concentrates on two policy fields of action, namely demand reduction and supply reduction. Its centrepiece consists of two parallel cross-cutting themes — on the one hand, international cooperation and, on the other, research, information and evaluation.

The Commission has undertaken an evaluation of the EU Drugs Action Plan (2009-2012) and announced an external independent evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy. Based on this evaluation, which was due by the end of 2011, the Commission aimed to propose a new drugs policy framework, but no proposal has so far been published.

In May 2012 the Council of the European Union agreed in its Draft Conclusions on the new EU Drugs Strategy (10231/12) that the EU needed an EU Drugs Strategy for 2013-2020 as the political framework in the field of drugs, which should be adopted by the end of 2012.

In view of this, could the Commission say whether a proposal for a new EU Drugs Strategy will be made? If so, when?

If so, will it say what measures are planned in the new drugs policy framework?

Finally, will the Commission say whether the new strategy will include new ongoing threats to the health of EU citizens, for instance the dynamics of the drug markets, including the use of the Internet as a facilitator for the distribution of illegal drugs?

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

The EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020 was finalised by the Cypriot Presidency, and endorsed by the JHA Council on 7 December 2012. The document is already available and can be found on the DG JUST website ([1]).

The strategy sets the main priorities in drugs policy for the next years, covering health aspects, the dynamics in the illicit drug markets and new challenges. In particular, it outlines that special attention must be given to new communication technologies as having a significant role as a facilitation for the production, marketing, trafficking and distribution of drugs, including controlled new psychoactive substances. It consolidates the EU model on drugs policy, based on the balanced approach — under which drug demand and drug supply need to be tackled with equal vigour.

Concrete measures to address these challenges will be outlined in an Action Plan, implementing the EU Drugs Strategy, which is planned to be adopted under the Irish Presidency in the first half of 2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/eu_drugs_strategy_2013-20_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011090/12
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: Contrôles techniques périodiques

Le 13 juillet 2012, la Commission a fait la proposition (COM(2012)0380) de réviser le règlement relatif au contrôle technique périodique des véhicules à moteur et de leurs remorques.

Le système actuel des contrôles techniques, notamment en France, est basé sur un premier contrôle quatre ans après l'achat, puis un contrôle tous les deux ans. Le projet de rapport relatif au «paquet contrôle technique» prévoit de conserver le premier contrôle obligatoire quatre ans après l'achat ainsi que celui de deux ans qui suit, mais d'imposer par la suite un contrôle technique annuel. La mise en place de ce contrôle technique périodique annuel semble être peu cohérente avec la sécurité accrue des nouveaux modèles automobiles, dont la fiabilité augmente constamment. De plus, les études relatives à l'accidentologie due aux défaillances techniques ne concordent pas entre elles, ce qui doit pousser la Commission à poursuivre les études avant de mettre en place toute mesure. Enfin, les contrôles techniques sont coûteux et la mise en place d'un contrôle plus fréquent, sans garantie de plus grande efficacité, risquerait de fragiliser le pouvoir d'achat des ménages européens, alors que l'automobile revêt une place de plus en plus importante dans la vie quotidienne.

1. Sur quelles études d'accidentologie se base la Commission pour justifier sa proposition de mise en place d'un contrôle technique périodique?

2. Concernant les véhicules de collection ou présentant un intérêt historique, qui parcourent un faible nombre de kilomètres durant l'année, la Commission prévoit-elle des mesures dérogatoires pour ce type de véhicules?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(4 février 2013)

La Commission souhaite informer l'Honorable Parlementaire que sa proposition se fonde sur plusieurs études et rapports selon lesquels 6 % des accidents de la route peuvent être liés à des défaillances techniques des véhicules impliqués.

Les deux principaux rapports établis par des organismes indépendants sont les suivants:

— le rapport «SWOV Fact sheet: Periodic Vehicle Inspection of cars» ([1]); et

— le rapport «Effect of vehicle roadworthiness on crash incidence and severity» ([2]).

D'autres publications, comme par exemple l'étude «Autofore Study» ([3]), s'appuyent sur une analyse approfondie des accidents et contiennent des chiffres similaires.

En ce qui concerne les véhicules présentant un intérêt historique, la proposition de la Commission prévoit l'exemption du contrôle technique périodique pour cette catégorie de véhicules.

([1]) SWOV Institute for Road Safety Research, 2009 — www.swov.nl/UK/Research/factsheets.htm
([2]) Monash University Accident Research Centre, 2000 — http://www.monash.edu.au/miri/research/reports/muarc164.html
([3]) CITA, 2008 ou Road Safety Report 2008 (DEKRA, 2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011090/12
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Periodic roadworthiness tests

On 13 July 2012, the Commission put forward a proposal for a regulation (COM(2012)0380) which seeks to amend the rules on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers.

The current roadworthiness test system, at least in France, involves an initial test four years after a new vehicle has been purchased and every two years thereafter. The proposal for a regulation, which is part of the 'roadworthiness package', retains both the first obligatory test at the four-year mark and the test two years after that, but also introduces an annual roadworthiness test for vehicles more than six years old, a move which seems out of step with the constantly improving levels of safety and reliability offered by new models. Moreover, studies of road accidents caused by technical failures often produce contradictory findings, which should prompt the Commission to carry out further studies before introducing any measures. Lastly, roadworthiness tests are expensive, and increasing their frequency without a guarantee that this would be any more effective in improving safety would risk undermining European households' purchasing power, given the ever greater role that motor vehicles play in daily life.

1. What studies on traffic accidents did the Commission use as the basis for its proposalto introduce periodic roadworthiness tests?

2. Will the new rules include derogations for cars in collections or historic cars, which have a low annual mileage?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that its proposal is based on several studies and reports that indicate that 6% of road accidents can be linked to technical defects of vehicles involved.

The two main reports coming from independent organisations are

— the 'SWOV Fact sheet: Periodic Vehicle Inspection of cars' ([1])

— the 'Effect of vehicle roadworthiness on crash incidence and severity' ([2])

Other publications based on in-depth analysis of accidents show similar figures as e.g."AUTOFORE Study" ([3]).

As regards vehicles of historic interest, the Commission proposal provides for an exemption from periodic testing for these vehicles.

([1]) SWOV Institute for Road Safety Research, 2009 — www.swov.nl/UK/Research/factsheets.htm
([2]) Monash University Accident Research Centre, 2000 — http://www.monash.edu.au/miri/research/reports/muarc164.html
([3]) CITA, 2008 or 'Road Safety Report 2008' (DEKRA, 2009).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011091/12
an die Kommission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE) und Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE)
(5. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Nukleare Sicherheit im Südkaukasus und das Kernkraftwerk Metsamor

Metsamor ist ein 32 Jahre altes Kernkraftwerk, das sich in einer aktiven Erdbebenzone ungefähr 30 km westlich von Eriwan befindet. Es ist das letzte Kernkraftwerk außerhalb Russlands mit einem Druckwasserreaktor nach sowjetischem Muster, dessen Bauweise noch aus den sechziger Jahren stammt.

Somit ist Armenien weitgehend von einem veralteten Kernkraftwerk abhängig, das sich in einem erdbebengefährdeten Gebiet befindet, in dem die arabische und die eurasische tektonische Platte aufeinandertreffen. 1988 gab es in einer Entfernung von weniger als 100 km vom Kraftwerk Metsamor ein Erdbeben der Stärke 6.9 auf der Richterskala. Das Kraftwerk Metsamor wurde daraufhin abgeschaltet; infolge der Energiekrise, die durch den von 1988 bis 1994 andauernden Konflikt mit Aserbaidschan wegen der armenischen Invasion von Berg-Karabach und den sieben umliegenden Regionen entstanden war, ist jedoch ein Reaktor erneut in Betrieb genommen worden.

Ein Entschließungsantrag der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates von 2002 betont, dass die Existenz von rechtsfreien Räumen auf den besetzten Gebieten Aserbaidschans eine echte nukleare Gefahr für den gesamten Kaukasus darstellt ([1]).

Das Vorhandensein unbewachter nuklearer Bereiche in den von Armenien besetzten Gebieten von Berg-Karabach und den sieben umliegenden Regionen gibt diesbezüglich weiterhin Anlass zur Sorge.

Am 18. April 2012 hat das Parlament im Rahmen der Verhandlungen zu dem Assoziierungsabkommen EU-Armenien eine Entschließung mit Empfehlungen an den Rat, die Kommission und den Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst angenommen, in der die Abschaltung des Kernkraftwerks Metsamor noch vor 2016 gefordert wird, da eine Nachrüstung auf die aktuellen, international anerkannten Standards nicht möglich sei ([2]).

Ist sich die Kommission des gegenwärtig in Armenien und der umliegenden Region bestehenden atomaren Risikos bewusst, durch das die gesamte Region, die für Europa von hoher strategischer Bedeutung ist, destabilisiert werden könnte?

Welche konkreten Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um den armenischen Behörden zu ermöglichen, die atomare Gefahr zu verringern und ein mögliches neues Fukushima an den Grenzen Europas zu verhindern?

Wird die Kommission die armenischen Behörden bei der Abschaltung des Kernkraftwerks Metsamor unterstützen?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(25. Januar 2013)

1. Die Abgeordneten werden auf die Antwort der Kommission auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-02880/12 von Herrn Nikolaos Salavrakos und E-09079/12 von Frau Minodora Cliveti verwiesen.

2. Armenien, das sich ebenfalls bereits erklärt hat, die für die Stresstests der Europäischen Union (EU) ([3]) verwendete Methodik zu verwenden, wird voraussichtlich 2013 einen nationalen Bericht vorlegen. Die Europäische Gruppe der Regulierungsbehörden für nukleare Sicherheit prüft die Modalitäten für die Begutachtung des armenischen Berichts anhand der gleichen Methodik, wie sie bei der gegenseitigen Begutachtung der Berichte der EU-Mitgliedstaaten angewandt wird.

Außerdem wird die Zusammenarbeit mit Armenien im Rahmen des EU-Instruments für Zusammenarbeit im Bereich der nuklearen Sicherheit weiterhin fortgesetzt. Ihr Ziel ist die weitere Verbesserung der nuklearen Sicherheit in Armenien.

([1]) http://assembly.coe.int/documents/workingdocs/doc02/edoc9444.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=DE&reference=P7-TA-2012-128.
([3]) Mitteilung der Kommission an den Rat und das Europäische Parlament über die umfassenden Risiko- und Sicherheitsbewertungen („Stresstests") von Kernkraftwerken in der Europäischen Union und damit verbundene Tätigkeiten, KOM(2012)571 endg.; im Internet abrufbar unter: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/safety/stress_tests_de.htm

Darüber hinaus beteiligt sich die Kommission mit Blick auf die Stärkung des globalen Rechtsrahmens für die nukleare Sicherheit an den Folgemaßnahmen, die auf den Ergebnissen der zweiten außerordentlichen Tagung der Vertragsparteien (zu denen Armenien zählt) des Übereinkommens über nukleare Sicherheit ([4]) basieren.

3. Dazu können wir keine Angaben machen, da kein derartiger Antrag der armenischenBehörden bei der Kommission eingegangen ist.

([4]) Die zweite außerordentliche Tagung der Vertragsparteien des Übereinkommens über nukleare Sicherheit fand im August 2012 in Wien statt.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011091/12
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE) en Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE)
(5 december 2012)

Betreft: Nucleaire veiligheid in de zuidelijke Kaukasus en de kerncentrale van Metsamor

Metsamor is een 32 jaar oude kerncentrale die in een actief aardbevingsgebied ligt, ongeveer 30 km ten westen van Jerevan. Het is de laatste kerncentrale buiten Rusland die nog steeds een drukwaterreactor van het Sovjet-model gebruikt, een ontwerp dat dateert uit de jaren '60.

Armenië is dus sterk afhankelijk van een verouderde kerncentrale in een seismisch gebied waar de Arabische en Euraziatische tektonische platen met elkaar in botsing komen. In 1988 vond er een aardbeving plaats met een kracht van 6.9 op de schaal van Richter op minder dan 100 km afstand van de centrale van Metsamor. De centrale werd vervolgens gesloten, maar één reactor werd opnieuw geactiveerd als gevolg van de energiecrisis die werd veroorzaakt door het conflict van 1988-1994 met Azerbeidzjan over de Armeense invasie van Nagorno-Karabach en de zeven omliggende regio's.

In de ontwerpresolutie van de Parlementaire Vergadering van de Raad van Europa van 2002 wordt benadrukt dat het bestaan van wetteloze zones in de bezette gebieden van Azerbeidzjan een daadwerkelijk nucleair gevaar vormt voor de gehele Kaukasus. ([1])

Het bestaan van ongecontroleerde nucleaire zones in de door Armenië bezette gebieden van Nagorno-Karabach en de zeven omliggende regio's blijft in deze context zorgwekkend.

Het Parlement heeft op 18 april 2012, in het kader van de onderhandelingen over de associatieovereenkomst EU-Armenië, een resolutie aangenomen met aanbevelingen gericht aan de Raad, de Commissie en de Europese dienst voor extern optreden, waarin wordt verzocht om de kerncentrale van Metsamor voor 2016 te sluiten aangezien deze niet voldoende gemoderniseerd kan worden om te beantwoorden aan de huidige overeengekomen en internationaal erkende normen. ([2])

Is de Commissie zich bewust van het nucleaire risico dat momenteel in Armenië en de omliggende regio bestaat en dat een hele regio die van groot strategisch belang is voor Europa zou kunnen destabiliseren?

Welke concrete maatregelen gaat de Commissie nemen om de Armeense autoriteiten in staat te stellen om het nucleaire gevaar te verminderen en een mogelijk nieuw Fukushima aan de grenzen van Europa te voorkomen?

Gaat de Commissie de Armeense autoriteiten helpen bij het sluiten van de kerncentrale van Metsamor?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie

(25 januari 2013)

1. De Commissie verwijst de geachte Parlementsleden naar het antwoord op de schriftelijke vragen E-02880/12 van de heer Nikolaos Salavrakos en E-09079/12 van mevrouw Minodora Cliveti.

2. Er wordt verwacht dat Armenië, dat zich bereid heeft verklaard te werken op basis van de methodologie die wordt gebruikt voor stresstests ([3]) in de Europese Unie, in 2013 een nationaal verslag zal indienen. De Groep Europese Regelgevers op het gebied van nucleaire veiligheid bekijkt de modaliteiten voor een collegiale toetsing van het Armeense verslag aan de hand van een vergelijkbare methodologie als voor de verslagen van de EU-lidstaten.
De samenwerking met Armenië in het kader van het EU-instrument voor samenwerking inzake nucleaire veiligheid loopt bovendien nog steeds, met als doel de nucleaire veiligheid in Armenië te verbeteren.

De Commissie neemt daarnaast deel aan de vervolgmaatregelen die zijn genomen naar aanleiding van de resultaten van de tweede buitengewone vergadering van de verdragsluitende partijen (waartoe Armenië behoort) bij het Verdrag inzake nucleaire veiligheid ([4]), met als doel het globaal juridisch kader voor nucleaire veiligheid te versterken.

3. De Commissie heeft geen verzoek in die zin ontvangen van de Armeense autoriteiten enkan deze vraag dus niet beantwoorden.

([1]) http://assembly.coe.int/documents/workingdocs/doc02/edoc9444.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0128+0+DOC+XML+V0//NL.
([3]) Mededeling van de Commissie aan de Raad en het Europees Parlement inzake de volledige risico- en veiligheidsevaluatie („stresstests") van kerncentrales in de Europese Unie, COM(2012) 571 final; beschikbaar op het volgende webadres: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/safety/stress_tests_en.htm
([4]) De tweede buitengewone vergadering van de verdragsluitende partijen bij het Verdrag inzake nucleaire veiligheid vond plaats in Wenen in augustus 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011091/12
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE) and Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Nuclear safety in the southern Caucasus and the Metsamor nuclear power plant

Metsamor is a 32-year-old nuclear plant, located in an active earthquake zone around 30 km west of Yerevan. It is the last nuclear plant outside Russia that still uses a Soviet-model pressurised water reactor, the design of which dates back to the 1960s.

Armenia is thus largely dependent on an aged nuclear plant in a seismic zone, where the Arabian and Eurasian tectonic plates collide. In 1988 an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9 on the Richter scale occurred fewer than 100 km from the Metsamor plant. The Metsamor plant was subsequently closed, but one reactor was reactivated following the energy crisis caused by the 1988-1994 conflict with Azerbaijan over the Armenian invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh and the seven surrounding regions.

A motion for a resolution by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe from 2002 underlines that 'the existence of unlawful zones in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan creates a real nuclear danger for the whole of the Caucasus' ([1]).

The existence of uncontrolled nuclear zones on the Armenian-occupied territories of Nagorno-Karabakh and the seven surrounding regions remains a cause for concern in this context.

On 18 April 2012 Parliament adopted, within the framework of the negotiations of the EU-Armenian Association Agreement, a resolution with recommendations addressed to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service requesting that the Metsamor nuclear power plant be closed before 2016, since it cannot be upgraded to meet current, agreed and internationally recognised standards. ([2])

Is the Commission aware of the nuclear risk that currently exists in Armenia and the surrounding region, which could destabilise a whole region of great strategic importance for Europe?

Which practical measures will the Commission take in order to enable the Armenian authorities to reduce the nuclear danger and prevent a possible new Fukushima at Europe's borders?

Will the Commission assist the Armenian authorities in closing down the Metsamor power plant?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission

(25 January 2013)

1. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Members to its replies to written questions E-02880/12 by Mr Nikolaos Salavrakos and E-09079/12 by Mrs Minodora Cliveti.

2. Armenia, who has also agreed to work on the basis of the methodology used for the European Union (EU) stress tests process ([3]), is expected to submit a national report in 2013. The European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group is examining the modalities to peer review the Armenian report using a similar methodology as the one applied to the reports of the EU Member States.
In addition, cooperation with Armenia under the EU Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation is still ongoing and aims at further improving nuclear safety in Armenia.

Furthermore, the Commission participates in the follow up actions based on the results of the 2nd extraordinary meeting of Contracting Parties (which include Armenia) to the Convention on Nuclear Safety ([4]), with a view to strengthening the global legal framework for nuclear safety.

3. We cannot say as we have not received such request from the Armenian authorities.

([1]) http://assembly.coe.int/documents/workingdocs/doc02/edoc9444.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2012-128.
([3]) Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the comprehensive risk and safety assessments ('stress tests') of nuclear power plants in the European Union and related activities, COM(2012) 571 final; available at: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/safety/stress_tests_en.htm
([4]) The 2nd extraordinary meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety took place in August 2012, in Vienna.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011092/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: L'abeille comme espèce protégée?

Face au phénomène inquiétant de surmortalité des abeilles domestiques et à ses conséquences dramatiques sur le service de la pollinisation, la Commission a-t-elle exploré la possibilité d'accorder à ces insectes une protection juridique particulière au niveau européen?

Certaines associations de protection des abeilles militent en faveur d'un classement comme «espèce protégée» mais d'autres considèrent que de telles dispositions auraient un impact très négatif sur le développement de l'apiculture dans l'Union européenne.

Comment résoudre ce dilemme et assurer la protection des abeilles domestiques tout en soutenant l'élevage de cette espèce et la vente de ses produits?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(31 janvier 2013)

La directive «Habitats» de l'Union ([1]) protège déjà de nombreux habitats essentiels pour les abeilles, tels que les prairies de fauche, et a conduit à la création d'un réseau européen des zones protégées appelé «Natura 2000». Cela signifie que, à l'instar d'autres pollinisateurs, l'abeille domestique Apis mellifera bénéficie de la préservation des habitats naturels dans le réseau Natura 2000. En outre, cette espèce bénéficie également, dans les zones rurales au sens large, de mesures environnementales prévues au titre d'autres politiques, dont la politique agricole.

Conformément au règlement (CE) nº 1234/2007 du Conseil ([2]) portant organisation commune des marchés agricoles (articles 105 à 110), l'Union européenne soutient la production et la commercialisation de miel. Dans le cadre de l'actuel programme apicole triennal (2011-2013), un cofinancement de 32 millions d'euros est prévu en faveur des mesures nationales visant à améliorer les performances du secteur apicole dans les États membres. Les mesures admissibles au bénéfice de l'aide englobent notamment l'assistance technique, la lutte contre la varroase et le repeuplement du cheptel apicole et permettent de lutter contre la mortalité des abeilles et d'augmenter le nombre de cheptels apicoles présents dans l'Union, tout en protégeant les sous-espèces locales.

Par ailleurs, une aide financière peut être octroyée au titre du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (Feader) conformément au règlement (CE) nº 1698/2005 du Conseil ([3]). Cependant, toute mesure financée par le Feader doit être exclue du programme apicole.

Des informations complètes concernant les mesures en faveur des abeilles domestiques et les aides destinées au secteur apicole et à la commercialisation de ses produits ont été fournies dans les réponses de la Commission aux questions écrites E-11165/2011, E-10324/2012 et E-02739/2012 posées respectivement par M. Mario Mauro, M. Nuno Melo et Mme Karin Kadenback.

([1]) JO L 206 du 22.7.1992.
([2]) JO L 299 du 16.11.2007.
([3]) JO L 277 du 21.10.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011092/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Making bees a protected species?

Given the alarmingly high death rate of domestic bees and the devastating consequences in terms of pollination, has the Commission considered the possibility of giving them special legal protection in Europe?

While a number of bee conservation associations are calling for bees to be made a protected species, others argue that it would seriously undermine the development of beekeeping in the European Union.

How can this dilemma be resolved in order to protect domestic bees effectively while supporting the beekeeping sector and the marketing of its products?

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

The EU Habitats Directive ([1]) is already protecting many key habitats for bees (e.g. hay meadows) and has led to the establishment of the EU network of protected areas called Natura 2000. This means that, like other pollinators, the domestic bee *Apis mellifera* benefits from the conservation of natural habitats in the Natura 2000 network. Moreover, it also benefits from environmental measures in the wider countryside provided under other policy sectors, such as agriculture.

Under Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([2])establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets (Articles 105-110), the EU supports the production and marketing of honey. Within the current tri-annual apicultural programme (2011-2013) co-financing of EUR 32 million is provided for national measures to improve the beekeeping sector in the Member States. The measures eligible for aid include in particular technical assistance, varroasis control and restocking of hives and provide means to fight bee mortality and to increase the number of beehives in the EU while protecting the local subspecies.

Furthermore, financial support may be possible under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 ([3]). However, any measures financed from the EAFRD shall be excluded from the apiculture programme.

Comprehensive information on actions in favour of domestic bees and support to the beekeeping sector and the marketing of its products has been provided in the Commission replies to written questions E-11165/2011 by Mario Mauro, E-10324/2012 by Nuno Melo , E-02739/2012 by Karin Kadenbach.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.
([3]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-011094/12
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Impacto de las divergencias de las condiciones financieras en la zona euro y del retraso en el establecimiento de la Unión Bancaria

El pasado 26 de junio, los líderes de la zona euro afirmaron que era «imperativo romper el círculo vicioso entre bancos y soberanos» y pidieron a la Comisión que presentara propuestas para establecer un mecanismo único de supervisión efectivo y a los colegisladores que las trataran como un asunto urgente antes de finales de año.

A mediados de septiembre, la Comisión Europea presentó dos propuestas legislativas para establecer un Mecanismo Único de Supervisión. La Comisión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios del Parlamento Europeo aprobó sus informes al respecto el pasado 28 de noviembre. Sin embargo, el Consejo Ecofin no ha conferido todavía un mandato de negociación a la Presidencia chipriota imposibilitando así prácticamente la conclusión del proceso legislativo antes de finales de año.

El círculo vicioso entre bancos y soberanos supone en realidad que en el seno de la zona euro las familias, las empresas y el tesoro de algunos Estados miembros pueden financiarse a unos tipos desproporcionadamente bajos comparados con los aplicados en otros Estados, mientras que las entidades financieras de los primeros reciben unos intereses desproporcionadamente altos en sus posiciones acreedoras respecto a los segundos. Esta situación anómala, con un terreno de juego desequilibrado, se materializa en transferencias de flujos económicos desde Estados miembros en dificultades hacia los que disfrutan de una posición más confortable, agravando los problemas, aumentando los riesgos y ampliando las tensiones en el seno de la Unión. Situación que se produce en un contexto de recapitalización de las instituciones financieras en el que el riesgo no lo soportan los acreedores privados externos que lo han asumido sino que se hace recaer, en última instancia, en los contribuyentes internos ajenos al mismo.

1. ¿Ha cuantificado la Comisión el impacto económico de las divergencias de financiación en los países de la zona euro?

2. ¿Ha estimado el perjuicio que supone el retraso en el cumplimiento de los compromisos de los líderes de la zona euro para los países en dificultades?

3. ¿Va a informar detalladamente a la opinión pública al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de enero de 2013)

Como resultado de la crisis financiera y de la consiguiente crisis de la deuda soberana, el coste de financiación en los distintos Estados miembros varía en mayor medida que antes. La divergencia se debe principalmente a las diferencias en su situación fiscal, económica y financiera. La Comisión supervisa de forma regular la situación de todos los Estados miembros y la incidencia económica de las condiciones de financiación en general es uno de los factores que afectan al rendimiento de la economía. El último informe trimestral sobre la zona del euro ([1]) incluye un artículo en el que se examinan los diferenciales de los bonos soberanos en la zona del euro.

Los ministros de Hacienda de la UE convinieron el 13 de diciembre de 2012 en el planteamiento general sobre el paquete legislativo que instituye un mecanismo único de supervisión (MUS) para la vigilancia de las entidades de crédito, el cual constituye un elemento clave del plan de la UE para establecer una unión bancaria. Este acuerdo permite a la Presidencia negociar el paquete con el Parlamento Europeo a fin de adoptar esta legislación en la primavera de 2013. Este plazo es muy breve, teniendo en cuenta la complejidad del tema.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/qr_euro_area/2012/qrea4_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011094/12
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Impact of different financing conditions in the euro area and of the delay in establishing the Banking Union

On 26 June 2012, the euro area leaders stated that there was a 'imperative' need to 'break the vicious circle between banks and sovereigns' and called on the Commission to bring forward proposals for establishing an effective single supervisory mechanism and on the co-legislators to address this matter urgently, before the end of the year.

In mid-September, the Commission presented two legislative proposals on the establishment of a single supervisory mechanism. The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs of the European Parliament adopted its reports on those proposals on 28 November 2012. However, the Ecofin Council has still not granted a negotiating mandate to the Cyprus Presidency, in effect making it impossible for the legislative process to be completed by the end of the year.

In reality, as a result of this vicious circle between banks and sovereigns within the euro area, families, enterprises and treasuries in some Member States can take out financing at disproportionately low interest rates compared with those applied in other Member States, while financial institutions in the former receive disproportionately high interest on their credit positions as compared to the latter. This anomalous situation, where there is no level playing field, leads to transfers of economic flows from Member States in difficulty towards Member States in an easier position, thereby exacerbating problems, increasing risks and ratcheting up tensions within the EU. This is happening against the background of a recapitalisation of financial institutions in which the risk is not being borne by the external private-sector creditors who have assumed it but, in the final analysis, by domestic taxpayers unconnected with that debt.

1. Has the Commission quantified the economic impact of different financing conditions in the euro area countries?

2. Has it calculated the damage, to countries in difficulty, of the euro area leaders' delay in meeting their commitments?

3. Will it provide the public with detailed information on this matter?

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

As a result of the financial and ensuing sovereign debt crisis the cost of financing in different Member States varies to a greater extent than it used to. The divergence is mainly attributable to the difference in the fiscal, economic and financial situation. The Commission monitors the situation in all Member States on regular basis and the economic impact of broad financing conditions is one of the factors that affect the economic performance. The most recent Quarterly Report on Euro Area ([1]) includes an article that looks at sovereign bond spreads in the euro area.

The EU finance ministers agreed on 13 December 2012 on the general approach on the legislative package that establishes single supervisory mechanism (SSM) for the oversight of credit institutions, which is a key element in the EU's plan to establish a banking union. This agreement enables the presidency to negotiate the package with the European Parliament, the aim being to adopt the legislation in spring 2013, which given the complexity of the issue is a very short delay.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/qr_euro_area/2012/qrea4_en.htm

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-011095/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(5. december 2012)

Om: Direktivet om patientrettigheder

Ifølge direktivet om patientrettigheder hedder det, at: »*Sikring af kontinuiteten i grænseoverskridende sundhedsydelser afhænger af rettidig overførsel af data vedrørende patienters helbred. Ifølge den ramme, der er fastsat ved direktiv 95/46/EF om beskyttelse af fysiske personer i forbindelse med behandling af personoplysninger og om fri udveksling af sådanne oplysninger, har patienter ret til adgang til personoplysninger vedrørende deres helbred. Dette omfatter også retten til journalindsigt, f.eks. diagnoser, undersøgelsesresultater, vurderinger foretaget af de behandlende læger og alle de behandlinger eller indgreb, der er foretaget.*«

1. Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at dette direktiv giver patienter i en hvilken som helst medlemsstat ret til at få udleveret sin journal, således at patienten kan tage denne med sig — evt. til et andet EU-land?

2. Vil Kommissionen endvidere oplyse, om der skulle være en særlig gennemførelsesbestemmelse i belgisk lovgivning, som gør, at en belgisk læge må nægte at udlevere en kopi af en patients journal?

3. Eksempel: En dansk statsborger modtager kirurgisk behandling i Belgien, men skal føre forsikringssag i Danmark. Patienten og patientens forsikringsselskab anmoder om at få udleveret kopi af patientens journal til brug i forsikringssagen i Danmark, men den belgiske læge nægter — med den begrundelse, at journalen er hans ejendom, og at det er ulovligt at udlevere denne ifølge belgisk lovgivning. Vil Kommissionen venligst be- eller afkræfte rigtigheden heraf?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(10. januar 2013)

Direktiv 2011/24/EU ([1]) om patientrettigheder i forbindelse med grænseoverskridende sundhedsydelser skal være gennemført af medlemsstaterne senest den 25. oktober 2013. I henhold til artikel 4, stk. 2, litra f), i samme direktiv skal medlemsstaterne sikre, at patienter, der modtager behandling på deres område, har ret til en skriftlig eller elektronisk patientjournal over den pågældende behandling og adgang til i det mindste en kopi af denne journal i overensstemmelse med de nationale foranstaltninger til gennemførelse af EU-bestemmelserne om beskyttelse af personoplysninger, særlig direktiv 95/46/EF og 2002/58/EF.

Kommissionen er ikke bekendt med nogen lov, der i dag ville gøre det muligt for en belgisk læge at nægte at udlevere en kopi af en patients journal. Skulle en sådan lov alligevel eksistere, ville Kommissionen være nødt til at se nærmere på den som led i arbejdet med at kontrollere gennemførelsen af direktiv 2011/24/EU i belgisk lovgivning for at efterprøve, om den er i overensstemmelse med den relevante EU-lovgivning og med principperne i traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde.

Kommissionen er ikke bekendt med nogen bestemmelse i belgisk lovgivning, der ville gøre det muligt for belgiske læger at nægte at udlevere en patientjournal med den begrundelse, at journalen er deres ejendom, og Kommissionen har heller ikke modtaget henvendelser vedrørende sådanne hændelser. Det kan imidlertid helt principielt slås fast, at national lovgivning, i henhold til hvilken en patient ikke kan få udleveret sin journal, ikke er i overensstemmelse med de forpligtelser, der følger af direktiv 2011/24/EU.

([1]) EUT L 88 af 4.4.2011, s. 45.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011095/12
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Directive on patients' rights

According to the directive on patients' rights, '*Ensuring continuity of cross-border healthcare depends on timely transfer of data concerning patient's health. The framework provided by Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, provides for patient's right to have access to his personal data concerning his health. This includes also right to access to the patient's medical records, such as diagnosis, examination results, assessments by treating physicians and any treatment or interventions provided.*'

1. Can the Commission confirm that this directive gives patients in any Member State the right to obtain their medical records, so that patients can take these away with them — even to another EU Member State?

2. Will the Commission also state if there is any special implementing provision in Belgian law that would allow a Belgian doctor to refuse to provide a copy of a patient's medical record?

3. By way of example, a Danish citizen receives surgical treatment in Belgium, but must make an insurance claim in Denmark. The patient and the patient's insurance company ask for a copy of the patient's medical record for use in the insurance claim in Denmark, but the Belgian doctor refuses to provide this on the grounds that the record is his/her property and that it is illegal to hand it over under Belgian law. Can the Commission confirm or deny that this is the case?

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

Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare is due to be transposed by Member States by 25 October 2013. Under Article 4(2) (f) of this directive, Member States are obliged to ensure that patients who receive treatment on their territory are entitled to a written or electronic medical record of such treatment, and access to at least a copy of this record, in conformity with and subject to national measures implementing Union provisions on protection of personal data, in particular Directives 95/46/EC and 2002/58/EC.

The Commission is unaware of any law that would allow a Belgian doctor to refuse to provide a copy of a patient's medical record at the present moment. Should such a law exist, the Commission would need to examine it as part of the process of checking the transposition of Directive 2011/24/EU into Belgian law, to see if it is in conformity with the relevant EU legislation and the principles of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The Commission is not aware of a provision in Belgian law that would allow Belgian doctors to refuse a medical record on the grounds that it is his/her property, nor has the Commission received any correspondence about such incidents. However, as a matter of principle, national legislation according to which the patient record cannot be made available to the patient is not in conformity with the obligations contained in Directive 2011/24/EU.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011096/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Differential consumer pricing in the eurozone

Is the Commission aware that certain businesses are setting different consumer prices for identical products in different eurozone Member States — set out as differential pricing on a single price label? What does the Commission think this means for both the single market and the prospects of the eurozone?

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

The Commission is aware that certain companies are selling similar products at different prices across EU Member States.

These practices are not a priori against EU competition rules and the single market, as there might be several reasons why suppliers are charging higher prices in one Member State than in another. Price formation depends on several factors, such as the input costs (e.g. labour), the size of the market, tax policies (e.g. VAT rates), different labelling requirements (e.g. in multilingual countries) and regulatory frameworks.

Nevertheless, the Commission is determined to address unjustified territorial supply constraints and help develop parallel trade, if provided with evidence.

Regarding the prices of food products and unfair trading practices in the food industry, the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain includes an Expert Platform on the European Food Prices Monitoring Tool. This aims to increase price transparency and predictability as well as to improve the accessibility of statistical data on prices in successive stages of a number of food supply chains. Using this tool could help investigate the reasons behind the disparities between prices in different EU Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011097/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: EU choices for funding in Zimbabwe

Will the Commission explain why it has chosen to support the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) in Zimbabwe rather than alternatives including the Southern African Commercial Farmers' Alliance (SACFA) and/or Justice for Agriculture (JAG)?

Question for written answer E-011098/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: EU funding in Zimbabwe

By how much and for what purpose is the EU funding the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) in Zimbabwe?

Joint answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The EU has allocated a grant (EUR 2 million; two years until August 2013) to the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) and the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU), which set up a Trust to manage the grant. The purpose of the action is to strengthen service delivery (i.e. advice on good agricultural practices & farm management, business plan development) and the capacity of the Unions to mobilise farmers at the grass roots level to influence policies, laws and programmes. The CFU is not benefiting from any other EU grant at present.

Referring to the other entities mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Southern African Commercial Farmers' Alliance (SACFA) operates mainly in Matabeleland and does not have the CFU's national outreach. Justice for Agriculture (JAG) focuses on human rights and judicial issues surrounding the Fast Track Land Reform. This vocation does not correspond to the focus of the ZFU/CFU programme, which strives to improve the overall agriculture sector working environment.

The EU has therefore decided to grant support to the ZFU/CFU and not SACFA or JAG, in coherence with the context of general agricultural recovery and considering the important role of Farmer Unions, which is also in line with the objectives of the instrument funding this action.

The EU has recognised Zimbabwe to be in a crisis situation ([1]), permitting the Delegation to directly award contracts to beneficiaries, which was applied in this case. The EU responds to requests for support based on the quality of the proposals and their relevance for the overall development of the country.

([1]) Article 168(2) of the EU General Budget Financial Regulations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011099/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Possibilità di utilizzare i fondi europei per l'istruzione tecnica superiore nell'ambito di azioni regionali

Il confronto internazionale continua a evidenziare un gap preoccupante tra la realtà italiana e il resto dei paesi avanzati per il numero dei giovani con titolo di studio di livello terziario. In Italia spicca in particolare l'assenza di un livello terziario professionalizzante, che nella media OCSE rappresenta un ulteriore 11 % di giovani laureati. Dal 2011 si è attivato anche in Italia un canale d'istruzione tecnica superiore, con le Fondazioni ITS, scuole speciali di tecnologia di durata biennale di livello post-secondario, parallelo ai percorsi universitari. È un importante avvio di un processo che guarda ai modelli europei e appare molto promettente per i livelli qualitativi espressi e il grado di collaborazione tra istituzioni educative, imprese, università e centri di ricerca. In Lombardia sono stati costituiti 7 ITS, per un totale di 10 percorsi attivi.

Il finanziamento pubblico per due bienni completi per ciascun percorso è pari a 5,2 milioni di euro di cui 1,2 di cofinanziamento della Regione Lombardia nell'ambito del Programma Operativo Regionale del Fondo Sociale Europeo (POR FSE). In questa fase si ritiene che il Fondo Sociale Europeo rappresenti uno strumento imprescindibile per il sostegno alla nascita di questo vitale canale formativo.

Vi è innanzitutto una piena coerenza di tali azioni con il campo di applicazione dell'intervento di cui l'articolo 3 del regolamento (CE) n. 1081/2006 del 5 luglio 2006. In merito al rispetto del principio di addizionalità sancito dall'articolo 15 del regolamento (CE) n. 1083/2006, va sottolineato come gli ITS non rappresentino politiche ordinarie dell'ordinamento italiano, ma si trovino ancora in una prima fase sperimentale, come sancito dall'articolo 9 del decreto 7 settembre 2011 del Ministro dell'istruzione, dell'università e della ricerca di concerto con il Ministro del lavoro e delle politiche sociali. Infine, anche il «decreto recante linee guida in materia di semplificazione e promozione dell'istruzione tecnico-professionale a norma dell'articolo 52 del decreto legge 9 febbraio 2012, n. 5, convertito nella legge 4 aprile 2012 n. 35, recante disposizioni urgenti in materia di semplificazione e di sviluppo» prevede esplicitamente che al potenziamento degli ITS possano concorrere anche le risorse messe a disposizione dall'Unione europea.

Tutto ciò premesso, in merito alla diretta utilizzazione da parte delle Regioni dei fondi ITS nel contesto dell'articolo 3 del regolamento (CE) n. 1081/2006, si chiede alla Commissione:

È possibile prevedere un apposito ambito di sviluppo dell'istruzione superiore di livello post-secondario con carattere tecnico e professionalizzante?

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

Le istituzioni di istruzione superiore sono chiamate a svolgere un ruolo chiave nell'incoraggiare la traduzione delle conoscenze in innovazione. In ciò rientra il collocamento dei laureati nelle imprese, l'incubazione di spin-off in parchi scientifici e tecnologici, la fornitura di consulenza e sostegno alle PMI e la promozione di reti e di cluster di imprese. Queste misure possono essere supportate dai Fondi strutturali dell'UE, in particolare dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e dal Fondo sociale europeo (FSE). Per quanto concerne quest'ultimo più in particolare, il regolamento (CE) n. 1081/2006 ([1]) prevede la possibilità di usare l'FSE per promuovere l'accesso all'occupazione e all'inclusione sostenibile sul mercato del lavoro e la progettazione e l'introduzione di riforme dei sistemi di istruzione e formazione (nelle regioni interessate dall'obiettivo «Convergenza»). L'accesso a questi fondi può variare a seconda degli Stati membri e delle regioni, delle priorità e delle regole che si applicano ai singoli programmi operativi interessati.

La questione continuerà a rivestire particolare importanza nel periodo di programmazione 2014-20. La proposta della Commissione in merito al regolamento del FSE ([2]) comprende, tra le priorità di investimento, la voce «migliorare la qualità, l'efficacia e l'apertura dell'istruzione superiore e di livello equivalente al fine di aumentare la partecipazione e i tassi di riuscita».

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1081/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 luglio 2006, relativo al Fondo sociale europeo e recante abrogazione del regolamento (CE) n. 1784/1999, GU L 210 del 31.7.2006.

([2]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativo al Fondo sociale europeo e che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 1081/2006 del Consiglio (COM/2011/0607 final).

La Commissione ha inoltre presentato una guida «Connecting Universities to Regional Growth» ([3]) per aiutare le autorità pubbliche a promuovere la partecipazione attiva delle istituzioni di istruzione superiore alle strategie regionali in tema di innovazione per una specializzazione intelligente, in cooperazione con i centri di ricerca, le imprese e la società civile.

([3]) http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/research-and-innovation/documents/connecting_universities2011_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011099/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Possibility of using European funds for technical higher education in regional projects

International comparisons continue to show a worrying gap between Italy and other advanced countries when it comes to the number of young people with tertiary-level qualifications. In particular, Italy is remarkable for its dearth of tertiary-level vocational training; the OECD average for such young graduates is 11% higher. In 2011 Italy set up a network of 'Higher Technical Institutes' (ITS), colleges offering two-year post-secondary technical courses running in parallel to the university system. It is a significant start to a process inspired by European models and looks very promising as regards both its quality and the level of cooperation between educational institutions, companies, universities and research centres. In Lombardy seven ITS have been set up offering a total of 10 practical courses.

There is public financing of EUR 5.2 million for two complete two-year cycles for each qualification, EUR 1.2 million of which is co-financing from the Lombardy Region under the ESF Regional Operational Programme. At this stage it is believed that the European Social Fund is essential for supporting the development of this vital form of training.

Such training falls completely within the scope of the assistance provided for in Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of 5 July 2006. On the question of compliance with the additionality principle in Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, we should stress that the ITS are not covered by the normal policies laid down in Italian law, but are still in an experimental phase, as provided for in Article 9 of the Decree of 7 September 2011 of the Minister for Education, Universities and Research in agreement with the Minister for Labour and Social Policy. Finally, the decree laying down guidelines on the simplification and promotion of technical and vocational education pursuant to Article 52 of Decree Law No 5 of 9 February 2012, converted into Law No 35 of 4 April 2012, providing for urgent measures on simplification and development, explicitly provides that resources made available by the European Union may also be used to support the expansion of the ITS.

In view of the above, can the Commission say, concerning the direct use of ITS funds by the Regions under Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006:

Is it possible to provide an appropriate framework for the development of post-secondary technical and vocational higher education?

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

Higher education institutions have a key role to play in promoting translation of knowledge into innovation. This includes placement of graduates in companies, incubating spin-offs in science and technology parks, providing advice and support to SMEs and promoting networks and business clusters. These measures can be supported through EU Structural Funds, in particular the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund (ESF). As regards the latter more specifically, Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 ([1]) provides for the possibility to use the ESF to enhance access to employment and sustainable inclusion in the labour market and to promote the design and introduction of reforms of the education and training systems (in the regions covered by the 'Convergence' objective). Access to such funds may vary across Member States and regions depending on the priorities and rules applicable to the individual Operational Programmes concerned.

This issue will continue to be of particular importance during the 2014-20 programming period. The Commission proposal for the ESF Regulation ([2]) includes 'improving the quality, efficiency and openness of tertiary and equivalent education with a view to increasing participation and attainment levels' as one of the investment priorities.

Lastly, the Commission presented a Guide on 'Connecting Universities to Regional Growth' ([3]) to help public authorities promote the active engagement of higher education institutions in regional innovation strategies for smart specialisation, in cooperation with research centres, businesses and civil society.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1784/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 (COM(2011) 0607 final).
([3]) http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/research-and-innovation/documents/connecting_universities2011_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011100/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Presunti crimini contro l'umanità in Nigeria

Un rapporto della Corte Penale Internazionale dell'Aja ha reso noto che il movimento Boko Haram, che agisce principalmente nel Nord della Nigeria, è sospettato di crimini contro l'umanità. Gli attentati posti in essere dal movimento, volti a colpire la minoranza cristiana in Nigeria, si verificano tuttora con notevole frequenza e si stima che le vittime di questa ondata di violenza religiosa siano, dal 2009 ad oggi, circa 3000, di cui almeno 1000 nel solo 2012.

Considerando che, a partire dal 2000, dodici dei trentasei Stati nigeriani hanno adottato il codice penale islamico, la sharia, violando in tal modo la costituzione nazionale, di chiara impostazione laica;

considerando che le leggi penali islamiche violano in maniera palese i diritti umani stabiliti nel capitolo IV della Costituzione federale nigeriana, oltre che varie norme internazionali, tra cui il Patto Internazionale per i diritti civili e politici;

considerando che l'Unione europea risulta essere uno dei maggiori donatori in Nigeria, finanziando altresì progetti finalizzati alla pace, alla sicurezza ed al rispetto dei diritti umani;

considerando la risoluzione (P7_TA(2012)0090) del Parlamento europeo del 7 marzo 2012 in cui si invitavano i governi statali e federale della Nigeria a proteggere le comunità più vulnerabili;

Considerando l'interrogazione n. E-001594/2012, nella cui risposta si assicurava la futura collaborazione tra l'Unione europea e lo Stato nigeriano al fine di ridurre la minaccia alla vita dei cittadini;

si chiede alla Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante:

— che azioni ha già intrapreso a seguito della citata risoluzione parlamentare?

— vi è stata e quali risultati ha prodotto la collaborazione UE-Nigeria, assicurata nella risposta data dalla Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante all'interrogazione n. E-001594/2012, relativamente alla riduzione della minaccia alla vita dei cittadini?

— di quali mezzi dispone e, conseguentemente, quali azioni intende porre in essere per scongiurare altri attentati in futuro, visto il fallimento delle raccomandazioni espresse e il mancato miglioramento della situazione nel paese, nonostante l'impegno del governo nazionale a difesa dei diritti umani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

I recenti attentati dei militanti islamici in Nigeria hanno preso di mira, oltre alle chiese, edifici governativi e dei servizi di sicurezza, mercati, scuole e civili innocenti, sia musulmani che cristiani. L'Unione europea condanna questi attentati che rappresentano veri e propri atti criminali. A tal proposito si veda altresì la dichiarazione dell'AR/VP Catherine Ashton del 19 giugno 2012.

L'UE collabora con la Nigeria, sia direttamente sia con l'ECOWAS a livello regionale, per sostenerla nel difficile tentativo di creare condizioni di sicurezza durature e di agire sui molteplici fattori socioeconomici e politici che conducono alla radicalizzazione. L'Unione ha già reindirizzato parti del programma di cooperazione con la Nigeria verso il nord del paese in modo da velocizzare le iniziative per la lotta alla povertà e alle privazioni nella regione. Nel corso di quest'anno sarà avviato un programma per la salute materna che si concentrerà sulla regione settentrionale del paese e si andrà ad aggiungere al programma sanitario attualmente in corso, che riguarda anch'esso parte della Nigeria settentrionale. Inoltre è in corso l'elaborazione di un progetto dal titolo «Women's engagement in peace and security» (La partecipazione delle donne al processo di pace e sicurezza).

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 dal progetto per il sostegno alla mediazione su iniziativa del Parlamento europeo (EEAS BL 2238). Si sta altresì preparando un altro progetto, incentrato sulla prevenzione dei conflitti e sull'occupazione giovanile in quest'area.

L'onorevole parlamentare ha sollevato la questione della fede e della legge islamica. Nel 2000, 12 dei 36 Stati nigeriani hanno reintrodotto la legge islamica per gli illeciti penali. La ricerca europea indica, tuttavia, che essa è stata scarsamente applicata nella zona del paese dove sono più attivi i militanti islamici (nord-est della Nigeria). Numerosi partner per lo sviluppo, compresa l'UE, appoggiano il rafforzamento del sistema giudiziario formale nigeriano.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011100/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Alleged crimes against humanity in Nigeria

According to a report of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, the Boko Haran movement, operating mainly in northern Nigeria, is suspected of crimes against humanity. The attacks carried out by the movement, aimed at the Christian minority in Nigeria, are still taking place with great frequency and the number of victims of this wave of religious violence since 2009 is estimated at about 3 000, of which at least 1 000 just this year.

Whereas:

since 2000 12 of the 36 Nigerian states have adopted the Islamic criminal code, sharia law, in violation of the clearly secular national constitution;

Islamic criminal law blatantly violates the human rights set out in Chapter IV of Nigeria's Federal Constitution, plus a number of international standards, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

the European Union is one of Nigeria's main aid donors, also funding projects to promote peace, security and respect for human rights;

the European Parliament Resolution (P7_TA(2012)0090) of 7 March 2012 calls on the federal and state governments in Nigeria to protect the most vulnerable communities;

the answer to Question E-001594/2012 said that the European Union and Nigeria would work together in future to reduce the threat to people's lives,

can the Vice-President/High Representative say:

— What action she has already taken in response to the above resolution of Parliament?

— Whether there has been cooperation between the EU and Nigeria to reduce the threat to people's lives, as promised in the answer given by the Vice-President/High Representative to question No E-001594/2012, and with what results?

— What means are available to her, and consequently what action she intends to take, to prevent further attacks in the future, given the failure to implement the recommendations made and the lack of improvement in the country's situation, despite the federal government's pledge to defend human rights?

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

The recent attacks by militant islamists in Nigeria have targeted government and security buildings, markets, schools and innocent civilians both Muslims and Christians, as well as churches. All such attacks are criminal activities and have been condemned as such by the EU. Please also refer to HRVP Ashton's statement of 19 June 2012.

The EU is working together with Nigeria, both directly and with Ecowas on a regional basis to help it tackle the challenges of creating durable security and dealing with multiple socioeconomic and political factors conducive to radicalisation. The EU has already reoriented parts of its cooperation programme in Nigeria to the North of the country to accelerate action against poverty and deprivation there. A maternal health programme focusing on Northern Nigeria which will be launched later this year in addition to our ongoing health programme which also targets part of Northern Nigeria. In addition we are working on a project on 'Women's engagement in peace and security'.

In addition, in July 2012, the EU provided capacity building for mediation in one of the most fragile areas making use of funds from the mediation support project initiative by the European Parliament. (EEAS BL 2238). We are also preparing another project focusing on conflict prevention and youth employment for this area.

The Honourable Member raises the issue of faith and Islamic law. 12 of Nigeria's 36 states have in 2000 reintroduced Islamic law for criminal offences. European research indicates, however, that it has barely been applied in the part of the country where Islamist militants are most active (North-East Nigeria). Quite a number of development partners, including the EU, support the strengthening of Nigeria's formal justice system.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011101/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Violazione della libertà di religione in Cina

Alcune agenzie specializzate hanno rilanciato la notizia dell'arresto, avvenuto il primo agosto 2012, di nove medici cristiani cinesi che prestavano cure mediche gratuite nella regione della Mongolia Interna, accusati di «utilizzo della religione per minacciare l'implementazione della legge» e di «evangelizzazione illegale». Ad oggi, dopo diversi ritardi nella notificazione degli arresti e palesi violazioni del diritto di libertà religiosa, queste persone risultano ancora detenute e due di esse sono state condannate a trascorrere due anni di detenzione in un campo di lavoro rieducativo.

Considerando che, come espresso dal rapporto 2012 di Amnesty International, il governo cinese sta adottando misure per limitare la libertà religiosa nel paese e per questo motivo molti culti sono stati messi al bando, tra cui il cristianesimo;

considerando che l'articolo 36 della Costituzione cinese tutela la libertà religiosa affermando che «i cittadini della Repubblica Popolare Cinese godono della libertà religiosa, che nessun organo dello Stato o organizzazione pubblica o individuo possono costringere i cittadini a credere o a non credere in qualunque religione, né possono discriminare i cittadini che credono o non credono in nessuna religione»;

considerando che la Cina è uno degli Stati firmatari della «Dichiarazione Universale dei Diritti dell'Uomo», in cui è compreso il diritto alla libertà religiosa;

considerando le reiterate violazioni della libertà religiosa perpetrate in Cina negli ultimi anni, tra le quali la nota vicenda riguardante il premio Nobel per la pace Liu Xiaobo, imprigionato nel 2008 per aver attivamente partecipato alla stesura e diffusione della «Charta 08», manifesto che sollecitava un maggior rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo;

si chiede alla Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante:

— è a conoscenza di tale situazione?

— quali azioni ha già intrapreso, o intende intraprendere, per favorire il rispetto dei diritti umani in Cina, in questa particolare situazione e in generale?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 marzo 2013)

L'AR/VP segue attentamente la situazione dei diritti umani in Cina e dal 1995 l'Unione europea intrattiene dialoghi periodici sui diritti umani nel corso dei quali vengono sollevate diverse questioni relative a violazioni perpetrate in Cina in questo settore, compresa la libertà di religione o di credo.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza delle attività delle autorità cinesi volte a ricondurre ogni pratica religiosa sotto il controllo dello Stato e del rischio di vessazioni, dell'arresto e della reclusione e, in alcuni casi, di persecuzione violenta, cui sono esposti coloro che praticano una religione che lo Stato vieta o non approva. A religioni vietate appartengono, tra gli altri, le chiese domestiche protestanti clandestine e i cattolici che riconoscono l'autorità della Santa Sede. I seguaci di Falun Gong, un movimento spirituale vietato dal 1999 in quanto «culto eretico», sono da allora oggetto di una sistematica campagna nazionale, spesso violenta.

Con le autorità cinesi l'Unione europea continuerà a sollevare la questione dei diritti umani e singoli casi in riunioni bilaterali e consessi internazionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011101/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Infringement of religious freedom in China

Some specialist news agencies have published further reports of the arrest, which took place on 1 August 2012, of nine Christian Chinese doctors who were providing free healthcare in the region of Inner Mongolia. They were charged with 'using religion to threaten law enforcement' and 'illegal evangelism'. To date, following various delays in notifying the arrests and flagrant violations of the right to religious freedom, these individuals are still in custody and two of them have been sentenced to two years in a rehabilitation labour camp.

Considering that, as stated in Amnesty International's 2012 report, the Chinese government is in the process of adopting measures to limit religious freedom in China and, many religions have been banned as a result, including Christianity;

Considering that Article 36 of the Chinese Constitution protects religious freedom, stating that 'Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief. No state organ, public organisation or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion.';

Considering that China is one of the signatories to the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights', which includes the right to freedom of religion;

Considering that the repeated violations of religious freedom committed in China in recent years, among which the high profile case of Liu Xiaobo, imprisoned in 2008 for his active participation in the drafting and dissemination of 'Charter 08', a manifesto calling for greater respect for human rights,

In light of the above, we ask the Vice-President/High Representative:

— whether they are aware of this situation?

— what steps have already been taken, or are planned, to promote the respect of human rights in China, in this specific instance and in general?

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

The HR/VP monitors closely the Human Rights situation in China and the EU has been holding regular Human Rights Dialogues since 1995 during which various human rights violations in China, including freedom of religion or belief, are being raised.

The HR/VP is aware of the Chinese authorities' efforts to bring all religious practice under state control and how people practising religions banned by the state, or without state sanction, risk harassment, detention, imprisonment, and in some cases, violent persecution. Banned religions included underground Protestant house churches and Catholics who accept the authority of the Holy See. Practitioners of Falun Gong, a spiritual group banned since 1999 as a 'heretical cult', have been subjected to a systematic, nationwide, often violent campaign since then.

The EU will continue to raise human rights issues and individual cases with the Chinese authorities in bilateral meetings and multilateral fora.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011102/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Tassi di interesse applicati dalla società Equitalia

Equitalia è la società a totale controllo pubblico (51 % Agenzia delle entrate e 49 % INPS), nata il 1° ottobre 2006 e incaricata dell'esercizio dell'attività di riscossione di tributi, contributi e sanzioni.

Equitalia si fa pagare un aggio per la sua attività di riscossione dei crediti. Entro 60 giorni dalla notifica della cartella l'aggio è a carico del debitore per il 4,65 %, mentre il restante 4,35 % è a carico dell'ente creditore. Oltre i 60 giorni l'aggio è totalmente a carico del debitore nella misura del 9 %.

In Italia si sono registrati migliaia di denunce mosse da privati e da associazioni nei confronti di Equitalia. In alcuni casi Equitalia è stata accusata di praticare tassi oltre le soglie di usura.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è conforme alle norme europee il fatto che una società a controllo pubblico possa applicare dei tassi superiori ai tassi di usura riconosciuti tali dalle leggi nazionali, e

— in quali altri Stati membri esistono degli enti a controllo pubblico preposti alla riscossione di tributi, contributi e sanzioni e quali aggi applicano per tale servizio?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2013)

1. Non esiste al momento nessuna normativa specifica dell'UE che disciplini l'ammontare degli aggi per la riscossione tributaria. Gli Stati membri possono pertanto fissare tali compensi nel modo e al livello che ritengono più opportuni, a condizione di rispettare le norme generali dell'Unione e, in particolare, di non trattare i casi che interessano più Stati in modo meno favorevole rispetto ai casi prettamente interni.

2. La Commissione non dispone di sufficienti elementi per fornire una risposta completa e fondata alla domanda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011102/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Interest rates charged by Equitalia

Equitalia is the entirely publicly owned entity (51% held by the revenue agency and 49% by the INPS national welfare agency) established on 1 October 2006 and tasked with collecting taxes, levies and fines.

Equitalia charges a fee for its activity of collecting claims. In the first sixty days after the notification has been served, the debtor is liable for 4.65 percentage points of the fee and the creditor body for the remaining 4.35 percentage points. Once the sixty days have elapsed, the debtor is entirely liable for the 9% fee charged.

In Italy thousands of complaints have been made against Equitalia, both by individuals and by organisations. In some cases, Equitalia has been accused of charging rates higher than the usury thresholds.

Can the Commission say:

— Whether the fact that a publicly controlled entity can charge rates higher than the usury thresholds established by national law is in accordance with European legislation?

— And in what other Member States there are publicly owned entities for the collection of taxes, levies and fines and what fees such entities charge?

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

1. There is currently no specific EU legislation regulating the size of fees for tax collection. Therefore, as long Member States comply with general EU rules, in particular do not treat cross-border situations less favourably than purely internal situations, they are entitled to set such fees in the manner and at the level they see fit.

2. The Commission has not enough elements at its disposal to provide a complete and reliable answer to the question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011103/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Turchia in Europa con la lira turca

Nei giorni scorsi il Premier turco Erdogan ha dichiarato che se la Turchia dovesse aderire all'Unione europea, non aderirebbe però all'euro. Al contrario, creerebbe un mercato con una nuova moneta: la lira turca.

La Commissione come intende reagire a questa affermazione?

La Commissione come ritiene si possa conciliare il proposito del Premier Erdogan con il processo di adesione della Turchia all'UE?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2013)

Secondo il punto 14 del quadro di negoziazione con la Turchia, il paese «parteciperà all'unione economica e monetaria già dall'adesione in qualità di Stato membro con deroga e adotterà l'euro come moneta nazionale dopo una decisione del Consiglio al riguardo che sarà presa sulla base di una valutazione dell'osservanza dei necessari requisiti. La parte restante dell'acquis in questo settore si applica completamente dall'adesione».

Il Consiglio non ha ancora invitato la Turchia a presentare la sua posizione negoziale nel settore della politica economica e monetaria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011103/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Integrating Turkey into Europe with the Turkish lira

In the past few days, the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan has stated that if Turkey were to join the European Union, it would not adopt the euro. On the contrary, it would establish a new currency zone, based on the Turkish lira.

How does the Commission plan to respond to this statement?

How, in the Commission's view, is it possible to reconcile the Turkish Premier's proposal with Turkey's EU accession process?

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

The Negotiating Framework with Turkey states in its point 14 that 'Turkey will participate in the economic and monetary union from accession as a Member State with a derogation and shall adopt the euro as its national currency following a Council decision to this effect on the basis of an evaluation of its fulfilment of the necessary conditions. The remaining acquis in this area fully applies from accession.'

To date, the Council has not invited Turkey to submit its negotiation position in the area of Economic and Monetary policy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011104/12
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(5 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Novo programa Erasmus

Tendo em conta o sucesso do programa «Erasmus» desde a sua criação em 1987, considerado um dos grandes êxitos da União Europeia, e considerando que a mobilidade, que contribui para o desenvolvimento de competências, está no centro da estratégia da Comissão para combater o desemprego dos jovens;

Tendo em conta que a Comissão, através de um comunicado, anunciou a criação de um novo programa «Erasmus» mais abrangente, cujo lançamento está previsto para 2014;

Tendo em conta as notícias na imprensa, dando conta de que este novo programa resultará de uma fusão de várias iniciativas num só projeto, com um financiamento de 18 mil milhões de euros, entre 2014 e 2020;

Perguntas à Comissão:

1. Que programas serão suprimidos e qual o objetivo desta fusão?

2. Qual é, neste momento, o estado do processo?

3. Qual será o nome deste novo programa e quem poderá beneficiar dele?

Resposta dada por Androulla Vassiliou em nome da Comissão
(22 de janeiro de 2013)

Em novembro de 2011, a Comissão propôs a fusão de sete programas existentes nos domínios da educação, da formação, da juventude e do desporto (Programa de Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida, Juventude em Ação, Erasmus Mundus, Alfa, Edulink, Tempus e o Programa de Cooperação entre a UE e os Países Industrializados) num único programa integrado. Esta proposta pretende, por um lado, melhorar a coerência e o enriquecimento mútuo entre os diferentes setores ligados à educação e à juventude, e por outro, reforçar o valor acrescentado da UE, simplificar a sua utilização pelos beneficiários e garantir uma maior eficácia de custos ao nível da execução. Graças a esta integração, os cinco programas existentes para a cooperação internacional no domínio do ensino superior serão reunidos num quadro único e racionalizado, o que facilitará consideravelmente o acesso por parte das instituições de ensino superior.

A proposta da Comissão encontra-se atualmente em análise no Parlamento e no Conselho. O Conselho adotou uma orientação geral parcial em 11 de maio de 2012 que considera todos os elementos da proposta, exceto o orçamento e o mecanismo de garantia em matéria de empréstimos proposto para os estudantes. A Comissão CULT do Parlamento adotou o seu relatório sobre o programa em 27 de novembro de 2012, tendo em vista a sua votação na sessão plenária de início de 2013.

Procurando beneficiar plenamente do prestígio do nome «Erasmus» e de todas as suas conotações positivas para a mobilidade e a cooperação no ensino superior, a Comissão propôs a designação «Erasmus para Todos» para o novo programa. Qualquer organismo público ou privado que desenvolva uma atividade nos domínios da educação, da formação, da juventude e do desporto de base pode candidatar-se a este programa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011104/12
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: New Erasmus programme

Since its creation in 1987, the Erasmus programme has proved highly popular. It is considered one of the EU's major success stories and reflects the fact that mobility, as a factor assisting skill development, is at the centre of the Commission's strategy for combating youth unemployment.

The Commission has issued a communication announcing the creation of a new, more extensive Erasmus programme, to be launched in 2014.

Press reports indicate that the new programme will involve the fusion of several existing ones into a single project with a budget of EUR 18 billion for the 2014.2020 period.

Can the Commission say:

1. Which programmes will be eliminated and what is the aim of this fusion?

2. What stage has been reached in the process?

3. What will be the name of the new programme and who will be eligible for it?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2013)

In November 2011 the Commission proposed to bring seven existing programmes in the field of education, training, youth and sport (the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Youth in Action programme, Erasmus Mundus, Alfa, Edulink, Tempus and the cooperation programme with industrialised countries) together into a single integrated programme. The proposal aims to enhance coherence and cross fertilisation between the different educational and youth sectors, while ensuring EU added value, simplification for beneficiaries and a cost effective programme delivery. Thanks to this integration, the five existing programmes for international cooperation in the area of higher education will be merged into a single streamlined framework, greatly facilitating access for higher education institutions.

The Commission proposal is currently being discussed with Parliament and Council. The Council adopted a Partial General Approach on 11 May 2012 covering all aspects of the proposal except the budget and the proposed student loan guarantee facility. The CULT Committee of the Parliament adopted its report on the programme on 27 November 2012 with a view to a vote in the plenary in early 2013.

In order to exploit the full potential of the well-established 'Erasmus' brand name and its positive connotations for mobility and cooperation in the field of higher education, the Commission proposes to call the new programme 'Erasmus for All'. Any public or private body active in the areas of education, training, youth and grassroots sport may apply to participate in the programme.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011106/12
an die Kommission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(5. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Entwicklung der Pensionskosten

1. Wie hoch ist die durchschnittliche Pension der unter das Statut fallenden Mitarbeiter der Kommission im Jahr 2012?

2. Wie hoch war die tatsächlich gezahlte niedrigste Pension pro Monat im Jahr 2012, wie hoch die höchste?

3. Wie viele Pensionsempfänger gibt es derzeitig in der Kommission und wie viele in den anderen Institutionen?

4. Wie viele Pensionäre wird es nach Einschätzung der Kommission zum Jahresende 2014 geben, wie viele 2020? Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission die Pensionskosten für 2014 und 2020?

5. Die Pensionsansprüche der Mitarbeiter, die unter das Beamtenstatut fallen, werden aus dem jährlichen Haushalt beglichen. Welche Regelungen wurden für den Fall, dass sich die Europäische Union auflösen sollte, getroffen, um die offenen Pensionsansprüche zu begleichen?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(5. März 2013)

Die durchschnittliche Pension beläuft sich auf rund 4 200 EUR. Die Pensionen reichen von 35 EUR für Bedienstete, die unmittelbar vor ihrem Eintritt in den Ruhestand nur sehr kurze Zeit bei den EU-Einrichtungen tätig waren, bis hin zu rund 9 000 EUR für eine sehr geringe Zahl von Generaldirektoren, die vor ihrem Eintritt in den Ruhestand den vollen Pensionsanspruch erworben haben. Nach jüngsten Daten erhielten 19 346 Anspruchsberechtigte eine Pension aus dem Altersversorgungssystem der Union, darunter 13 897 ehemalige Bedienstete der Kommission.

Nach Schätzungen der Europäischen Kommission — bei denen es sich wohlgemerkt um langfristige Schätzungen handelt, die nicht zur Vorausschätzung der kurzfristigen Pensionsausgaben herangezogen werden sollten — werden sich die Zahl der Pensionsempfänger und die Pensionsausgaben wie folgt entwickeln:

2014: 20 781 Pensionsempfänger bzw. 1,4 Mrd. EUR

2020: 25 432 Pensionsempfänger bzw. 1,7 Mrd. EUR.

Empfängerzahl und Ausgaben steigen an, weil das Pensionssystem noch nicht ausgereift ist. Das Altersversorgungssystem existiert zwar schon seit 1962, doch hat sich die Zahl der Bediensteten mit den verschiedenen Erweiterungen von 6 auf 27 Mitgliedstaaten, der Einrichtung neuer Institutionen und Agenturen und der Übertragung neuer Aufgaben auf die EU mit der Zeit erhöht. Die in früheren Jahren eingestellten Bediensteten erreichen nun das Pensionsalter, so dass die Zahl der Empfänger steigt. Dies ist der Hauptgrund für den Anstieg der Pensionsausgaben.

Den Projektionen zufolge werden die Pensionsausgaben allerdings langsamer steigen als die Zahl der Pensionsempfänger, was vor allem auf die Statutsreform von 2004 zurückzuführen ist. Beim Anstieg der Pensionsausgaben darf nicht vergessen werden, dass ein heute in den Ruhestand tretender Bediensteter für seine Pension während seines aktiven Dienstes Pensionsbeiträge eingezahlt hat. Gemäß Artikel 83 werden die Versorgungsleistungen durch die EU garantiert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011106/12
to the Commission
Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Developments with regard to pension costs

1. What is the average pension paid to European Commission staff covered by the Staff Regulations in 2012?

2. What was the amount of the lowest and of the highest monthly pension actually paid in 2012?

3. How many pension recipients are there in the Commission and in the other institutions at present?

4. According to the Commission's estimate, how many pensioners will there be at the end of 2014, and how many in 2020? What is the Commission's estimate of the overall pension costs in 2014 and in 2020?

5. The pension claims of staff covered by the Staff Regulations are paid from the yearly budget. What provision has been made for meeting outstanding pension claims in the event of a break-up of the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2013)

The average pension is around EUR 4 200 Euros. Pensions range from EUR 35 for staff who worked for very short time in the institutions right before their retirement to about EUR 9 000 for a very small number of retired Directors-General with complete pension rights. According to the most recent figures, the number of beneficiaries of the Union pension scheme was 19346, which included 13897 beneficiaries from the Commission.

According to the estimations of the European Commission, which are long-term estimations and should not be used to forecast short-term pension expenditure, the number of beneficiaries of the pension expenditure would be the following:

In 2014: 20781 and EUR 1.4 billion;

In 2020: 25432 and EUR 1.7 billion.

The increase in the number of beneficiaries and in expenditure is due to the fact that the pension scheme is not yet mature. Even though the scheme has been in existence since 1962, the number of staff has grown over time in the context of successive enlargements from 6 to 27 Member States, the establishment of new institutions and agencies and new tasks conferred upon the EU. Staff recruited in the past are reaching retirement age and this determines the increasing number of beneficiaries, which is the main factor for the increase in the pension expenditure.

However, pension expenditure is projected to grow more slowly than the number of pensioners, largely due to the effects of the 2004 reform of the Staff Regulations. As regards the increase in pension expenditure, it is important to bear in mind that a staff member retiring today has already paid pension contribution for their pension during their period of service, whilst the EU issued a guarantee laid down in Article 83 of the Staff Regulations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011107/12
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(5. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Naturschutz und die Wirtschaftlichkeit des LIFE+ Projekts „Aurina"

Mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 614/2007 wurde das Finanzierungsinstrument für die Umwelt („LIFE+") geschaffen. Durch LIFE+ geförderte Projekte müssen laut der Verordnung zur Entwicklung, Durchführung und Aktualisierung der Umweltpolitik und des Umweltrechts der Union beitragen. Aktuell ist die Kommission an der Finanzierung des LIFE+ Projekts LIFE09 NAT/DE/000010 (LIFE PROJECT „Aurina") zu 50 % beteiligt.

Ziel dieses Projekts ist die Wiederansiedlung des „Goldenen Scheckenfalters in naturnahen Weidelandschaften Schleswig-Holsteins". Zu diesem Zwecke wurden vor kurzem 18 Hektar in einem über 70 Jahre gewachsenen Waldgebiet im Projektgebiet 6, Lütjenholm, gerodet. Im Anschluss soll nun der Waldboden abgetragen werden, um den natürlichen Lebensraum des Goldenen Scheckenfalters, die Geest, wiederherzustellen.

Öffentlicher, politischer und gerichtlicher Widerspruch von Anwohnern, Politikern und Umweltschutzverbänden konnten die Abholzung nicht stoppen.

1. Wie viel Geld wurde vonseiten der Kommission für die gesamte Laufzeit des Projekts vom 1.9.2010 bis zum 31.12.2018 bewilligt?

2. Für die Neuansiedlung des Goldenen Scheckenfalters wurden 18 Hektar Wald gerodet, der über 70 Jahre gewachsen ist. Wie rechtfertig die Kommission ihre Unterstützung eines Projekts, das im Gegensatz zum Kriterium des Schutzes natürlicher Lebensräume steht?

3. Im Rahmen des LIFE09 NAT/DE/000010 Projekts sollen neben einer teueren Waldrodung auch bis zu 65 000 t Waldboden abgetragen werden. Wie passt ein derart kostenintensiver und umweltschädigender Vorgang aus Sicht der Kommission mit den Kriterien der Wirtschaftlichkeit und des Naturschutzes zusammen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(28. Januar 2013)

In der Finanzierungsvereinbarung für das Projekt LIFE09 NAT/D/010 („Aurinia") ist der Höchstbeitrag aus Mitteln des LIFE-Instruments für die gesamte Laufzeit des Projekts auf 1 649 129 EUR festgesetzt.

Das Projekt sollte im Zusammenhang mit der Umsetzung der Richtlinie 92/43/EWG des Rates zur Erhaltung der natürlichen Lebensräume sowie der wildlebenden Tiere und Pflanzen ([1]) gesehen werden, deren Ziel darin besteht, EU-weit einen günstigen Erhaltungszustand für alle Arten und natürlichen Lebensraumtypen von gemeinschaftlichem Interesse zu erreichen. Der Skabiosen-Scheckenfalter, um den es bei dem Projekt geht, wird in Anhang II der Richtlinie geführt und wurde zuletzt 1991 in Schleswig-Holstein gesichtet.

Die regelmäßige Überwachung der Umsetzung aller LIFE-Nature-Projekte hat der Kommission keinen Anhaltspunkt dafür geliefert, dass dieselben Erhaltungsziele in Schleswig-Holstein mit einem anderen Ansatz kostengünstiger hätten erreicht werden können. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass die Umwandlung von 18 Hektar künstlich angepflanzter Fichtenwälder, die an eine kleine zu erhaltende Heide angrenzen, in artenreiches Grünland die wirksamste Methode war, um den Lebensraum der Zielarten wiederherzustellen. Diese Vorgehensweise steht mit der bewährten Praxis bei anderen EU-Projekten zur Wiederherstellung von Lebensräumen im Einklang.

([1]) ABl. L 206 vom 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011107/12
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Nature conservation and sound financial management with regard to the LIFE+ project 'Aurina'

Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 established a financial instrument for the environment ('LIFE+'). The regulation stipulates that projects supported through LIFE+ must contribute to the implementation, updating and development of environmental policy and legislation. Currently the Commission co-finances LIFE+ project LIFE09 NAT/DE/000010 ('Aurina') at a rate of 50%.

The aim of the project is to reintroduce the marsh fritillary (Euphydryas aurinia) in semi-natural grassland in Schleswig-Holstein. To this end, 18 hectares of forest was recently cleared in an area that has been forested for more than 70 years (project area 6, Lütjenholm). Now the forest soil is to be removed so as to restore sandy heathland (Geest), the marsh fritillary's natural habitat.

Despite public, political and judicial resistance on the part of local residents, politicians and environmental protection groups, deforestation could not be prevented.

1. What is the total amount granted by the Commission for the entire duration of the project, i.e. from 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2018?

2. To reintroduce the marsh fritillary, 18 hectares of forest has been cleared that had been growing for more than 70 years. How does the Commission justify its support for a project that runs contrary to the criterion of natural habitat protection?

3. In addition to costly deforestation, the LIFE09 NAT/DE/000010 project also includes the removal of up to 65 000 tonnes of forest soil. How, in the Commission's view, does such a cost-intensive and environmentally damaging course of action conform to the criteria of sound financial management and nature conservation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2013)

The grant agreement for project LIFE09 NAT/D/010 ('Aurinia') stipulates that the maximum contribution from the LIFE instrument, for the entire duration of the project, is fixed at EUR1,649,129.

The project should be seen in the context of the implementation of Council Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora , the aim of which is to achieve an EU-wide favourable conservation status for all species and natural habitat types of Community interest. The species targeted by the project, the marsh fritillary butterfly, is listed in Annex II of that directive and was last observed in Schleswig-Holstein in 1991.

Within the scope of its regular monitoring of the implementation of all individual LIFE-Nature projects, the Commission has found no indications that the same conservation objectives could have been achieved in Schleswig-Holstein in a more cost-effective way with another approach. The Commission believes that converting into species-rich grasslands these 18 hectares of artificial spruce plantations, adjacent to a small remaining heathland, was the most effective way to restore the habitat of the target species. This is consistent with best practice widely applied in other habitat restoration projects in the EU.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011108/12
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Gleichberechtigung bei der Einbürgerung in EU-Mitgliedstaaten

Die Einbürgerung in Deutschland ist, wie in anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten, kostenpflichtig. Gegen eine Gebühr von 255 EUR erhält man die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit. Im Vergleich zu anderen EU-Staaten ist die Einbürgerung in Deutschland jedoch verhältnismäßig teuer. In Frankreich zum Beispiel beträgt die Einbürgerungsgebühr nur knapp 55 EUR. Auch in anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten sind die bei der Einbürgerung zu zahlenden Beträge deutlich geringer als in Deutschland. Da augenscheinlich eine deutliche Ungleichheit bezüglich der Einbürgerungskosten besteht, stellt sich somit die Frage nach der Gleichberechtigung der EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger.

Dies vorausgeschickt frage ich die EU-Kommission:

1. Ist der Kommission diese Situation bekannt?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission diesen Sachverhalt?

3. Ist diese Situation mit den europäischen Verträgen vereinbar?

4. Was gedenkt die Kommission gegen diese Ungleichbehandlung zu unternehmen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(6. Februar 2013)

Die Bedingungen für die Erlangung und den Verlust der Staatsangehörigkeit eines Mitgliedstaates werden durch dessen innerstaatliches Recht geregelt. Fragen, die sich aus der Festlegung der Bedingungen für den Erwerb der Staatsangehörigkeit durch einen Mitgliedstaat ergeben, fallen nicht in den Zuständigkeitsbereich der Europäischen Union. Die Kommission verfügt hinsichtlich der vom Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen nationalen Maßnahmen über keinerlei Zuständigkeiten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011108/12
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Equal treatment with respect to naturalisation in EU Member States

As in other EU Member States, naturalisation in Germany is payable: German citizenship can be obtained against a fee of EUR 255. Compared with other EU countries, however, naturalisation in Germany is relatively costly. The naturalisation fee in France, for example, is less than EUR 55. In other EU Member States, too, the fees charged for naturalisation are considerably lower than in Germany. Such evidence of manifest inequality with regard to naturalisation costs needs to be considered in the light of equal treatment of EU citizens.

In view of this I ask the European Commission:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. How does the Commission assess this state of affairs?

3. Is this situation compatible with the European Treaties?

4. What action will the Commission take to end such inequality of treatment?

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

The conditions for obtaining and forfeiting citizenship of a Member State are regulated under the national laws of the individual Member State. Issues ensuing from the definition by a Member State of the conditions for the acquisition of its nationality do not fall within the ambit of European Union law. The Commission has no competence regarding the national measures referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011109/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση της περιβαλλοντικής νομοθεσίας στον Άγιο Μάμα Χαλκιδικής
Στον υγρότοπο του Αγίου Μάμα Χαλκιδικής (δήμος Ν. Προποντίδας) που εντάσσεται στο δίκτυο NATURA 2000, λειτουργούν πάνω από 25 beach bar — 10 από αυτά εντός NATURA — με δραστηριότητες που υποβαθμίζουν, όμως, το οικοσύστημα, με καταστροφή της βλάστησης και των θέσεων φωλεοποίησης προστατευόμενων ειδών πτηνών (το καλοκαίρι 2012 καταστράφηκε ολοσχερώς η αποικία του Νεροχελίδονου — *Glareola pratincola* ενός από τα δύο είδη για τα οποία η περιοχή έχει ενταχθεί στο δίκτυο NATURA 2000), αλλοίωση του τοπίου, εγκατάσταση μόνιμων κατασκευών, δημιουργία, δίχως σχετική άδεια, χώρων στάθμευσης αυτοκινήτων, αλλά και νέων οδών προσέγγισης μέσα στις αμμοθίνες, καθώς κι ανεξέλεγκτη κίνηση μηχανοκίνητων οχημάτων πάνω στις αμμοθίνες ([1]). Τα παραπάνω έχουν καταγγελθεί πολλές φορές στις αρμόδιες αρχές από διάφορους φορείς και περιβαλλοντικές οργανώσεις, έχουν διαπιστωθεί οι παραβάσεις και έχουν βεβαιωθεί πρόστιμα. Όμως, οι αυθαιρεσίες συνεχίζονται εν γνώσει των υπηρεσιών ([2]) ([3]) ([4]).

Με βάση το Ν.2971/2001 ([5]) και την ΚΥΑ (Κοινή Υπουργική Απόφαση) 1038460/2009 ([6]) οι δήμοι έχουν δικαίωμα να παραχωρούν σε ιδιώτες τον αιγιαλό και την παραλία για απλή χρήση (ξαπλώστρες, ομπρέλες), μετά από δημοπρασία. Απαγορεύεται, όμως, οποιαδήποτε μόνιμη κατασκευή, δημιουργία δρόμων, διαμόρφωση της παραλίας, ενώ για προστατευόμενες περιοχές απαιτείται η σύμφωνη γνώμη του Υπουργείου Περιβάλλοντος, Ενέργειας και Κλιματικής Αλλαγής. Η παραχώρηση του αιγιαλού και της παραλίας τα προηγούμενα χρόνια γινόταν χωρίς σχετική απόφαση του ΥΠΕΚΑ, κατά παράβαση της σχετικής ΚΥΑ. Το καλοκαίρι 2012, και κατόπιν σχετικών αναφορών, ερωτήθηκε το ΥΠΕΚΑ το οποίο εισηγήθηκε θετικά ([7]), χωρίς όμως να μπορεί να εξασφαλίσει την προστασία της περιοχής NATURA. Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εκτιμά ότι η χρήση του αιγιαλού εντός της περιοχής NATURA με τον τρόπο που γίνεται συνάδει με την ευρωπαϊκή περιβαλλοντική νομοθεσία;

2. Σκοπεύει να ζητήσει εξηγήσεις από το ΥΠΕΚΑ για τη θετική εισήγησή του για χρήση του αιγιαλού εντός της περιοχής NATURA, ενώ γνώριζε επί σειρά ετών τις αυθαιρεσίες που οδηγούν σε καταστροφή του περιβάλλοντος και δεν έχει προηγουμένως διασφαλίσει ότι οι όποιες δραστηριότητες θα είναι συμβατές με την προστασία της περιοχής;

3. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει προκειμένου να προστατεύσει τον υγρότοπο του Αγίου Μάμα από περαιτέρω καταστροφές;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής

(30 Ιανουαρίου 2013)

Η λιμνοθάλασσα του Αγίου Μάμα έχει ενταχθεί από την Ελλάδα στο δίκτυο Natura 2000 με βάση τόσο την οδηγία 92/43/ΕΟΚ ([8]) για τους οικοτόπους (ενδιαιτήματα) όσο και την οδηγία 2009/147/ΕΚ ([9]) για τα πτηνά. Η περιοχή υπόκειται, κατά συνέπεια, στις διατάξεις προστασίας και διαχείρισης του άρθρου 6 της οδηγίας για τα ενδιαιτήματα, οι οποίες επιβάλλουν ιδίως τη λήψη μέτρων από τις ελληνικές αρχές για να αποφευχθεί η υποβάθμισή της και να εξασφαλιστεί ότι τυχόν νέα σχέδια ή έργα που ενδέχεται να έχουν σημαντικές επιπτώσεις αξιολογούνται ορθά και εγκρίνονται μόνον εάν δεν επηρεάζουν την ακεραιότητα της περιοχής. Βάσει των διαθέσιμων πληροφοριών, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να αποφανθεί κατά πόσον οι δραστηριότητες στον αιγιαλό και την παραλία που αναφέρονται από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου συμβιβάζονται με τις προαναφερόμενες διατάξεις. Θα ζητήσει επομένως σχετικές πληροφορίες από τις ελληνικές αρχές, μεταξύ άλλων και για συναφείς αποφάσεις και παραχωρήσεις που έχουν εγκριθεί.

([1]) Επιτέλους οι αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες «είδαν» τις αυθαιρεσίες στην παραλία του υγροτόπου στον Αγ. Μάμα στη Χαλκιδική!. http://ecology-salonika.org/2010/09/07/arbitrariness-on-the-beach-of-agios-mamas-wetland-in-halkidiki/.

([2]) Το υπ' αριθμ. 21646/11-7-11 έγγραφο του δήμου Ν. Προποντίδας.

([3]) Τα υπ' αριθμ. 024/641/16-5-2008 και 5372/489/29-8-11 έγγραφα του τμήματος Περιβάλλοντος και Υδροοικονομίας της Π.Ε. Χαλκιδικής.

([4]) Τα υπ' αριθμ. 1381/4-8-11, 2546/18-8-11 και 3030/4-10-11 έγγραφα της Κτηματικής Υπηρεσίας Χαλκιδικής.

([5]) Νόμος 2971/2001: http://nomothesia.ependyseis.gr/eu-law/getFile/N+2971+2001.pdf?bodyId=4174.

([6]) ΚΥΑ 1038460/2439/Β0010/15.04.2009: http://hellenicmunicipalpolice.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/aigialosparalia-kya1038460-2439-b0010-15-04-2009.pdf

([7]) Παρ' όλη μάλιστα την καταστροφή που συντελείται ουδέποτε το ελληνικό δημόσιο έκανε χρήση του δικαιώματος του για άρση της παραχώρησης της εκμετάλλευσης του αιγιαλού από το Δήμο Ν. Προποντίδας, ως όφειλε βλέποντας την επί σειρά ετών κατάφορη παραβίαση της νομοθεσίας, προκειμένου να προστατευτεί η περιοχή.

([8]) Οδηγία 92/43/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου της 21ης Μαΐου 1992 για τη διατήρηση των φυσικών οικοτόπων καθώς και της άγριας πανίδας και χλωρίδας, ΕΕ L 206 της 22.7.1992.

([9]) ΕΕ L 20 της 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011109/12
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2012

Subject: Violation of environmental legislation in Agios Mamas, Halkidiki

In the wetlands of Agios Mamas in Halkidiki (municipality of Nea Propontis) that form part of the Natura 2000 network, more than 25 beach bars are operating, 10 of them within the NATURA area. These bars cater for activities that are degrading the ecosystem, destroying the vegetation and the nesting sites of a protected species of bird (in summer 2012, the bird colony of Collared Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*) — one of the two species on account of which the site was included in the Natura 2000 network — was wiped out), spoiling the landscape and causing permanent structures and illegal car parks to be built, together with new approach roads through the dunes, leading to the uncontrolled movement of motor vehicles there ([1]). These abuses have several times been brought to the attention of the competent authorities by various agencies and environmental organisations, and violations have been established and assurances given that fines would be imposed. However, these abuses are continuing with the full knowledge of the authorities ([2]) ([3]) ([4]).

On the basis of Law 2971/2001 ([5]) and Joint Ministerial Decision 1038460/2009 ([6]), municipalities have the right to concede to individuals the right to exploit the foreshore and beach for temporary usage (sunbeds, parasols). However, any permanent construction, road building, and the reshaping of the beach are prohibited, while for protected areas the consent of the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate Change is required. The concession of the foreshore and beach in previous years was awarded in the absence of any decision by the Ministry of Environment, in breach of the relevant Joint Ministerial Decision. In summer 2012, after petitions had been lodged, the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate Change was asked for an opinion and issued a positive recommendation ([7]), but is unable to ensure the protection of the NATURA area.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it believe that the use of the foreshore within a NATURA area in this way is compatible with European environmental legislation?

2. Does it intend to ask the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate Change to account for the positive recommendation it issued regarding the use of the foreshore within a NATURA area, despite knowing for a number of years of the abuses that are destroying the environment and without having previously ensured that any activities will be compatible with the protection of area?

3. What steps will it take to protect the Agios Mamas wetlands from further destruction?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission

(30 January 2013)

The Lagoon of Agios Mamas has been designated by Greece for the Natura 2000 network pursuant both to the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ([8]) and the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC ([9]). The area is therefore subject to the protection and management provisions laid down in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, requiring in particular measures to be taken by the Greek authorities to avoid its deterioration and to ensure that any new plans or projects with likely significant effects are properly assessed and are only authorised if they do not affect the integrity of the area. On the basis of available information the Commission cannot say whether the activities mentioned by the Honourable Member on the foreshore and the beach are compatible with the aforementioned provisions; it will therefore seek relevant information from the Greek authorities, including on any related decisions and concessions granted.

([1]) At last the competent services have opened their eyes to the abuses being perpetrated on the beach of the Agios Mamas wetlands, Halkidiki! http://ecology-salonika.org/2010/09/07/arbitrariness-on-the-beach-of-agios-mamas-wetland-in-halkidiki/
([2]) Document 21646/11-7-11 of the municipality of Nea Propontis.
([3]) Documents 024/641/16-5-2008 and 5372/489/29-8-11 of the Environment and the Water Resources Section of the Prefecture of Halkidiki.
([4]) Documents1381/4-8-11, 2546/18-8-11 and 3030/4-10-11 of the Halkidiki Land Registry.
([5]) Law 2971/2001: http://nomothesia.ependyseis.gr/eu-law/getFile/N+2971+2001.pdf?bodyId=4174
([6]) Joint Ministerial Decision1038460/2439/B0010/15.04.2009: http://hellenicmunicipalpolice.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/aigialosparalia-kya1038460-2439-b0010-15-04-2009.pdf
([7]) Despite all this destruction, the Greek Government has never invoked its right to waive the municipality of Nea Propontis' right to grant a concession to exploit the foreshore, as it should have done, given the flagrant violation of the law over a number of years, so as to protect the area.
([8]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora Official Journal L 206, 22.7.1992.
([9]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011111/12
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Carlo Fidanza (PPE) e Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Etichettatura d'origine

Il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011, del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011 (articolo 26, paragrafo 2, lettera b) ha introdotto l'indicazione del paese d'origine o del luogo di provenienza obbligatorio per le carni dei codici della nomenclatura combinata (NC) elencati all'allegato XI dello stesso regolamento.

Entro il 13 dicembre 2013, e a seguito di valutazioni d'impatto, la Commissione dovrà adottare atti di esecuzione relativi all'applicazione del citato paragrafo 2, lettera b).

Lo stesso articolo 26 dispone che, entro il 13 dicembre 2014, la Commissione dovrà presentare al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio relazioni sull'indicazione obbligatoria del paese d'origine o del luogo di provenienza per altri alimenti, tra cui le carni non indicate nel citato allegato XI del regolamento, gli alimenti non trasformati e i prodotti a base di un unico ingrediente;

L'interesse dei consumatori europei verso una maggiore trasparenza dell'etichettatura è in continua crescita, e alcuni Stati membri (tra cui l'Italia) stanno adottando percorsi legislativi, più restrittivi della norma comunitaria, per garantire ai consumatori informazioni dettagliate circa la provenienza e l'origine dei cibi che consumano.

Si prega la Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Qual è lo stato di avanzamento dei lavori sulle analisi d'impatto propedeutiche all'adozione degli atti esecutivi necessari all'applicazione dell'indicazione del paese d'origine o del luogo di provenienza obbligatorio per le carni elencate nell'allegato XI del citato regolamento?

2. Al fine di rendere al più presto operativa l'indicazione obbligatoria del paese d'origine o del luogo di provenienza anche per gli altri alimenti previsti dal paragrafo 5, quando intende essa presentare al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio le relazioni di cui allo stesso articolo 26?

3. Ritiene essa che l'etichettatura obbligatoria del paese d'origine per tutti i prodotti agricoli possa ridurre le distorsioni della concorrenza sul mercato comunitario e i fenomeni di induzione in errore per i consumatori dovuti alla diffusione di riferimenti testuali e grafici, presenti nelle etichette dei prodotti, che richiamano erroneamente la provenienza e l'origine geografica relative a determinati territori?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

1. Per una valutazione d'impatto fondata su informazioni fattuali, la Commissione ha fatto svolgere uno studio esterno ([1]), il cui bando di gara è stato pubblicato nell'aprile 2012. Il contraente ha iniziato i lavori a settembre 2012 e ha organizzato un seminario rivolto ai soggetti interessati il 26 ottobre successivo. La relazione finale dello studio è prevista per giugno 2013.

2. Ai sensi dell'articolo 26, paragrafo 5, del regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori ([2]), la Commissione è tenuta a presentare al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio le relazioni sull'indicazione obbligatoria del paese d'origine o del luogo di provenienza entro il 13 dicembre 2014. A tal fine, si è previsto di commissionare nel 2013 studi esterni per le sei categorie di alimenti interessate, le cui relazioni dovrebbero essere completate a tempo debito nel 2014.

3. L'impiego di indicazioni ingannevoli sulla provenienza o l'origine geografica specifica di un prodotto è vietato e spetta agli Stati membri affrontare la questione, in quanto responsabili dell'applicazione del regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011, a norma dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 1, lettera a), e dell'articolo 26, paragrafo 3, dello stesso regolamento.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/agriculture/tenderdocs/2012/63845/index_en.htm
([2]) GU L 304 del 22.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011111/12
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Carlo Fidanza (PPE) and Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Country-of-origin labelling

Article 26(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of 25 October 2011 made indication of the country of origin or place of provenance mandatory for meat falling within the Combined Nomenclature ('CN') codes listed in Annex XI to the regulation.

By 13 December 2013, following impact assessments, the Commission has to adopt implementing acts concerning the application of the abovementioned Article 26(2)(b).

Article 26 also stipulates that, by 13 December 2014, the Commission has to submit reports to the European Parliament and the Council regarding the mandatory indication of the country of origin or place of provenance for other food, including meat not referred in the abovementioned Annex XI to the regulation, unprocessed foods and single ingredient products;

European consumers are increasingly keen to have greater labelling transparency and a number of Member States (including Italy) are adopting stricter legislation than the European rules so as to ensure their consumers have detailed information on the provenance and origin of the food that they eat.

Could the Commission please reply to the following questions:

1. What is the state of progress of work on the impact assessments required for the adoption of the legislation needed to implement the mandatory indication of the country of origin or the place of provenance for the meat listed in Annex XI to the abovementioned Regulation?

2. In order for the mandatory indication of the country of origin or the place of provenance to become operational as soon as possible also for the other food listed in paragraph 5, when does the Commission intend to submit the reports referred to in Article 26 to the European Parliament and the Council?

3. Does the Commission consider that the mandatory labelling indicating the country of origin for all agricultural products could reduce unfair competition on the EU market and the number of consumers who are misled by text and graphics on product labels that mendaciously claim a specific geographic provenance or origin?

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

1. In order to provide the impact assessment with factual information, an external study was contracted by the Commission ([1]). The call for tender was published on April 2012 and the contractor started its work on September 2012. A stakeholders workshop was organised by the contractor on 26 October 2012. The final report of the study is due in June 2013.

2. According to Article 26(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), the Commission is required to submit the reports to the European Parliament and the Council by 13 December 2014. To this effect, external studies are foreseen to be contracted in 2013 by the Commission for the 6 categories of foods concerned, and the reports are expected to be completed in 2014 in due time.

3. Mendacious claims of specific geographic provenance or origin are prohibited and should be addressed by Member States that are responsible for the enforcement of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011on the basis of Article 7(1)(a) and Article 26(3) thereof.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/agriculture/tenderdocs/2012/63845/index_en.htm
([2]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011112/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 december 2012)

Betreft: Nutella-taks

Verschillende EU-lidstaten plannen om de zogenaamde „Nutella-taks" in te voeren, een belasting op voedingswaren vervaardigd met palmolie.

Palmolie bevat immers veel verzadigde vetzuren, wat negatieve effecten kan hebben op het cholesterolgehalte, met mogelijk hart- en bloedvatenaandoeningen tot gevolg.

Palmolie wordt bovendien zelden op milieuvriendelijke wijze geproduceerd; de productie gaat vaak gepaard met grootschalige ontbossing.

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de mogelijke schadelijke gezondheidseffecten van voedingswaren die worden geproduceerd met palmolie?

Gaat de Commissie ermee akkoord dat een eventuele heffing op producten die op een niet-milieuvriendelijke wijze zijn geteeld (ook buiten de EU), beter Europees wordt gecoördineerd? Is de Commissie voornemens in dezen een initiatief te nemen?

Welke maatregelen kan de Commissie nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat palmolie op een duurzame wijze geproduceerd wordt?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(14 februari 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de gegevens over het effect van verzadigde vetzuren op de gezondheid. Palmolie en veel andere levensmiddelen van dierlijke op plantaardige herkomst bevatten verzadigde vetzuren. De Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid (EFSA) heeft een wetenschappelijk advies over verzadigde vetzuren uitgebracht ([1]) met informatie over het effect van de consumptie van verzadigde vetzuren op de menselijke gezondheid. Dit advies vormt voor de Commissie de meest gezaghebbende evaluatie van de relevante wetenschappelijke gegevens ter zake.

Milieuoverwegingen spelen een belangrijke rol bij fiscale beleidsinitiatieven van de Commissie. De Commissie vindt echter dat er in dit stadium geen behoefte is aan een wetgevingsinitiatief van de EU om levensmiddelen of landbouwproducten te belasten.

De Commissie beseft ook dat een duurzame productie van levensmiddelen belangrijk is voor het milieu. Volgens de Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe is de levensmiddelensector een van de belangrijkste sectoren waar gestreefd moet worden naar meer efficiëntie bij het gebruik van grondstoffen. Zoals aangekondigd in de Roadmap bereidt de Commissie een mededeling over duurzame levensmiddelen voor, die later dit jaar zal worden gepubliceerd.

([1]) European Food Safety Authority: Scientific opinion on Dietary Reference Values for fats, including saturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated fatty acids, monounsaturated fatty acids, trans fatty acids, and cholesterol. EFSA Journal 2010; 8(3):1461 [107 pp.].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011112/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Nutella tax

Various EU Member States are planning to introduce a 'Nutella tax', a tax on foods manufactured with palm oil.

This is because palm oil contains large quantities of saturated fatty acids, which can adversely affect cholesterol levels, which in turn may cause cardiovascular diseases.

Moreover, palm oil is rarely produced in an environmentally benign manner: its production is often accompanied by large-scale deforestation.

Is the Commission aware of the possible damaging effects on health of food produced using palm oil?

Does the Commission agree that a possible levy on products cultivated in an environmentally undesirable manner (including outside the EU) ought to be more effectively coordinated at European level? Will the Commission take an initiative to this end?

What measures can the Commission take to ensure that palm oil is produced sustainably?

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

The Commission is aware of the evidence on the effect of saturated fatty acids on health. Saturated fatty acids are contained in palm oil as well as in many other foods of animal or plant origin. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has adopted a scientific opinion on Dietary Reference Values for fats, including saturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated fatty acids, monounsaturated fatty acids, trans fatty acids, and cholesterol ([1]), which includes information on the effect of the consumption of saturated fatty acids on human health. For the Commission, this opinion constitutes the current authoritative evaluation of the relevant scientific data on this issue.

Environmental concerns play an important part in the taxation policy initiatives of the Commission. However at this stage the Commission does not see the need for an EU-wide legal initiative for a tax on food or agricultural produce.

The Commission is also well aware that the sustainable production of food is a key environmental concern. The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe identified food as one of the key sectors in which resource efficiency has to be tackled. As announced in the Roadmap, the Commission is now drafting a communication on Sustainable Food intended for publication later this year.

([1]) European Food Safety Authority: Scientific opinion on Dietary Reference Values for fats, including saturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated fatty acids, monounsaturated fatty acids, trans fatty acids, and cholesterol. EFSA Journal 2010; 8(3):1461 [107 pp.].

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011113/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 december 2012)

Betreft: Hout als bron van hernieuwbare energie

Uit cijfers van Eurostat ([1]) blijkt dat de lidstaten gemiddeld 49 % van hun hernieuwbare energie halen uit hout en houtafval, om hun doelstelling voor hernieuwbare energie te behalen. In de meerderheid van de lidstaten is hout de voornaamste bron voor hernieuwbare energie.

Van hout wordt algemeen aangenomen dat het „CO2-neutraal" is. Toch wijzen wetenschappers erop dat dit niet noodzakelijk zo is. Er bestaan momenteel immers geen duurzaamheidscriteria die garanderen dat hout op een duurzame wijze wordt gebruikt als bron voor energie.

Eén van de duurzaamheidscriteria die naar voren wordt geschoven is het gebruik in cascade: het gebruik van hout enkel aan het einde van de levenscyclus ervan, dus houtafval of „end of the lifecycle" hout dat verwerkt zit in afgedankte meubelen, panelen of papier.

Hoe kijkt de Commissie hier tegenaan?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat de aanwending van hout vandaag te veel aanleiding geeft tot het creëren van een zogenaamde „carbon debt"?

Heeft de Commissie het voornemen om duurzaamheidscriteria voor hout als bron voor hernieuwbare energie voor te stellen?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(23 januari 2013)

De Commissie is goed op de hoogte van het debat over de broeikasgasemissies van bio-energie. Zij legt momenteel de laatste hand aan een effectbeoordeling waarin wordt nagegaan of en welke duurzaamheidscriteria voor vaste en gasvormige biomassa moeten worden vastgesteld voor de hele EU. In deze beoordeling wordt ook gekeken naar de vraagstukken die door het geachte Parlementslid worden genoemd. De beoordeling wordt naar verwachting in de eerste helft van 2013 afgerond. Op dat moment zal de Commissie eventueel een voorstel indienen over deze kwestie.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/5-29112012-AP/EN/5-29112012-AP-EN. PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011113/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Wood as a source of renewable energy

Figures from Eurostat ([1]) indicate that, on average, the Member States obtain 49% of their renewable energy from wood and wood waste, with a view to attaining their renewable energy targets. In most Member States, wood is the principal source of renewable energy.

Wood is generally assumed to be 'carbon-neutral'. However, scientists point out that this is not necessarily correct. At present, there are no sustainability criteria to guarantee that wood is used in a sustainable manner as an energy source.

One proposed sustainability criterion is use in cascade: the use of wood only at the end of its life cycle, i.e. wood waste or 'end-of-life-cycle' wood contained in waste furniture, panels or paper.

What view does the Commission take of this?

Does the Commission agree that the use of wood is currently creating too much 'carbon debt'?

Will the Commission propose sustainability criteria for wood as a source of renewable energy?

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

The Commission is very aware of the debate related to the greenhouse gas characteristics of bioenergy and is currently finalising an Impact Assessment with a view to deciding on the need for and possible content of EU-wide sustainability criteria for solid and gaseous biomass. This work, which also assesses the issues referred to by the Honourable Member, is expected to be finalised in the first half of 2013, at which point the Commission, if appropriate, will table a proposal on the matter.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/5-29112012-AP/EN/5-29112012-AP-EN.PDF

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011114/12
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: Taux réduit de TVA — Services à la personne en France

Le 21 juin dernier, la Commission a lancé une procédure contre la France pour qu'elle applique le taux normal de TVA aux professions les plus demandées des services à la personne (SAP), alors qu'elles bénéficiaient jusqu'à présent du taux réduit.

1. La France est-elle le premier et le seul pays à appliquer ce taux réduit de TVA aux SAP?

2. La Commission a-t-elle déjà alerté d'autres États pour une application impropre du taux de TVA réduit sur des professions particulières?

Malgré tout, ces services répondent aux principaux critères d'octroi du taux réduit de TVA, régis par la législation européenne (directive 2006/12/CE). D'abord, ce sont des services qui ont pour objet «d'améliorer le bien-être des personnes» (délivrés à des personnes à mobilité réduite, gravement malades ou âgées), et donc indissociables de l'aide de santé à domicile (taux réduit de TVA). Ensuite, ces services sont délivrés dans un «circuit local, sans distorsion de concurrence, et aux consommateurs finaux (les bénéficiaires)».

3. Quels arguments a utilisés la Commission pour ne pas considérer ces critères, pourtant manifestes?

4. Pourquoi avoir inclus les activités de mandataires (il s'agit d'un mode de recrutement et non d'une profession)?

Si cette recommandation est appliquée, elle aura des conséquences terribles (précarisation de 80 000 emplois). Ce sont pourtant des emplois d'avenir (au vu de l'évolution démographique), absolument non-délocalisables, qui créent du lien social et maintiennent un tissu économique local. Ce sont des emplois que nous devrions encourager, plutôt que de les condamner. C'est aux responsables politiques que nous sommes de faire évoluer la loi pour qu'elle prenne en compte les réalités du terrain.

5. De manière générale la Commission prévoit-elle bientôt d'ouvrir une révision de la directive?

6. Quelles sont les marges de manœuvre de la Commission et du Conseil sur ce sujet?

7. Si révision il y a, quel est le rôle du Parlement européen dans ce processus précis de décision?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(18 janvier 2013)

1. Selon les informations dont dispose actuellement la Commission, la France est le seul État membre qui applique un taux réduit de TVA à des services à domicile qui ne constituent pas des «soins» et ne relèvent pas des catégories pour lesquelles la législation de l'Union permet un tel taux (directive 2006/112/CE, annexe III). La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à consulter les taux de TVA appliqués par les États membres à l'adresse suivante: (http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/index_fr.htm).

2. La Commission a déjà engagé à l'encontre d'autres États membres des procédures concernant les taux réduits de TVA incompatibles avec le droit de l'Union. Des informations sur les procédures d'infraction en matière fiscale sont disponibles à l'adresse suivante: (http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/infringements/index_fr.htm).

3-6. L'Honorable Parlementaire voudra bien se reporter aux réponses données aux questions écrites E-010420/2012 et E-009945/2012. Les marges de manœuvre du Conseil ne relèvent pas des compétences de la Commission. Toutefois, lors de l'accord politique unanime du Conseil qui a abouti à l'adoption de la directive 2009/47/CE, certains États membres ont déclaré que toute décision qui pourrait être adoptée à l'avenir sur les taux réduits de TVA devrait en restreindre le champ d'application général.

7. En vertu de l'article 113 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (TFUE), le Conseil statue à l'unanimité conformément à une procédure législative spéciale, après consultation du Parlement européen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011114/12
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Reduced rate of VAT — personal services in France

On 21 June 2012 the Commission launched a procedure against France to require it to apply the normal rate of VAT to the most frequently used personal service professions, which until now have benefitted from a lower rate.

1. Is France the first and only country to apply this reduced rate to personal services?

2. Has the Commission already notified other countries that they are incorrectly applying a reduced rate of VAT on specific professions?

The fact is that these services meet the main criteria for applying a reduced rate of VAT in accordance with EU legislation (Directive 2006/112/EC). Firstly, they are services which aim to 'improve the well-being of people' (i.e. services which are provided to people who have reduced mobility or are seriously ill or old), and are therefore inseparable from domestic care services (on which a reduced rate of VAT is applied). Furthermore, they are delivered locally, without distorting competition and to end consumers (beneficiaries).

3. What arguments did the Commission use to exclude such criteria, which so clearly apply?

4. What was the reason for including the activities of intermediaries (a method of recruitment, not a profession)?

If this recommendation is applied it will have drastic consequences, putting 80 000 jobs at risk. Yet these are jobs of the future (given the demographic changes taking place), which simply cannot be relocated and which create social cohesion and maintain the local economic fabric. These are the jobs we should be promoting, not condemning. It is our job as politicians to make changes to the law so that it takes into account the realities on the ground.

5. Is the Commission planning a revision of the directive in the near future?

6. What scope for manoeuvre is available to the Commission and the Council on this subject?

7. If there is to be a revision, what will Parliament's role be in the decision-making process?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(18 janvier 2013)

1. Selon les informations dont dispose actuellement la Commission, la France est le seul État membre qui applique un taux réduit de TVA à des services à domicile qui ne constituent pas des «soins» et ne relèvent pas des catégories pour lesquelles la législation de l'Union permet un tel taux (directive 2006/112/CE, annexe III). La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à consulter les taux de TVA appliqués par les États membres à l'adresse suivante: (http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/rates/index_fr.htm).

2. La Commission a déjà engagé à l'encontre d'autres États membres des procédures concernant les taux réduits de TVA incompatibles avec le droit de l'Union. Des informations sur les procédures d'infraction en matière fiscale sont disponibles à l'adresse suivante: (http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/infringements/index_fr.htm).

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7. En vertu de l'article 113 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (TFUE), le Conseil statue à l'unanimité conformément à une procédure législative spéciale, après consultation du Parlement européen.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011115/12
alla Commissione
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: La banca HYPO

La banca HYPO, presente in Italia dal 1998 in seguito alla fusione con la società di leasing HYPO Service — attiva fin dagli anni 90 —, ha sviluppato la propria attività grazie al finanziamento garantito dalla controllante austriaca HYPO Alpe — Adria — Bank International AG con sede a Klagenfurt. Nel giugno 2011 HYPO Italia (assieme a HYPO Austria) è stata ufficialmente posta in vendita, onde realizzare il piano di dismissione voluto dallo stato austriaco e preteso dalla Comunità europea.

Dopo un'estenuante e infruttuosa trattativa con le organizzazioni sindacali, il 1° febbraio 2012 HYPO Italia ha conferito in HYPO Alpe — Adria — Leasing S.r.l. (società controllata indirettamente dalla capogruppo austriaca) 800 milioni di euro di crediti «non-performing», con 80 dipendenti, senza accordare il mantenimento delle tutele previste per il settore dei bancari (HYPO Leasing non si è iscritta all'ABI e non è stato accettato un accordo di salvaguardia dei dipendenti conferiti).

Negli ultimi tempi, tutti i 40 lavoratori assunti a tempo determinato non sono stati confermati al termine del contratto ed è stata avviata la procedura di licenziamento di 118 dei 403 dipendenti. Le organizzazioni sindacali hanno chiesto di conoscere le future strategie al fine di concertare con l'azienda l'attivazione degli strumenti a disposizione (fondo esuberi, incentivi all'esodo volontario anticipato, utilizzo di part-time, contratti di solidarietà, riduzione orari di lavoro e/o di spettanze, ecc.) per il contenimento del costo del lavoro, ma non sono stati forniti né una reale motivazione della riorganizzazione, né i dati semestrali, né le future strategie per la prosecuzione del business in Italia, né la disponibilità ad attivare gli ammortizzatori di settore, con un secco rifiuto di accordare un piano incentivato volontario di dismissioni.

A tal proposito, si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali misure intende essa adottare per salvaguardare le migliaia di posti di lavoro oggi in pericolo e per far sì che sia riconosciuto il diritto contrattuale previsto dalle normative europee?

2. Come intende la Commissione accompagnare con proprie norme i piani di ristrutturazione delle aziende in crisi, con particolare attenzione a quelle bancarie?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

1. Diverse direttive UE sull'informazione e la consultazione dei lavoratori, e in particolare le direttive 2002/14/CE ([1]) e 98/59/CE ([2]), si potrebbero applicare in casi di ristrutturazione.

La Commissione non è in condizione di valutare i fatti o di stabilire se un'impresa privata abbia o meno ottemperato alla normativa in vigore. Spetta alle autorità nazionali assicurare che la legislazione nazionale che recepisce le direttive dell'UE sia applicata in modo corretto ed efficace dal datore di lavoro in questione, tenuto conto delle circostanze specifiche di ciascun caso.

2. La Commissione è disposta a considerare l'eventualità di usare tutti gli strumenti a sua disposizione, e in particolare il Fondo sociale europeo e il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

La Commissione sollecita le imprese e tutti gli stakeholder a gestire le ristrutturazioni in modo proattivo e socialmente responsabile. Dando seguito al suo Libro verde ([3]) la Commissione esamina il modo per meglio incoraggiare l'applicazione e l'osservanza delle migliori pratiche in questo ambito.

([1]) Direttiva 2002/14/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 marzo 2002, che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori — Dichiarazione congiunta del Parlamento europeo, del Consiglio e della Commissione sulla rappresentanza dei lavoratori, GU L 80 del 23.3.2002, pag. 29.

([2]) Direttiva 98/59/CE del Consiglio del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi, GU L 225 del 12.8.1998, pag. 16.

([3]) Libro verde «Ristrutturare e anticipare i mutamenti: quali insegnamenti trarre dall'esperienza recente?» (COM(2012)7 def. del 17 gennaio 2012).

Per quanto concerne le banche, la Commissione ha adottato nel 2012 una proposta di quadro unionale per il risanamento e la risoluzione delle crisi degli enti creditizi e delle imprese di investimento ([4]). Questa proposta implementa gli standard internazionali e i regimi di risoluzione delle crisi bancarie adottati dal Consiglio per la stabilità finanziaria e avallati dal G20. La proposta conferisce alle autorità il potere per assumere il controllo operativo delle banche e ristrutturarle nel caso venga attivato il processo di risoluzione, al fine di assicurare che i futuri fallimenti bancari possano essere gestiti senza turbativa della stabilità finanziaria e senza dover far ricorso alle finanze pubbliche. La proposta non deroga alle direttive UE sull'informazione e la consultazione dei lavoratori.

([4]) Proposta del 6 giugno 2012 di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che istituisce un quadro di risanamento e la risoluzione delle crisi degli enti creditizi e delle imprese di investimento e che modifica le direttive del Consiglio 77/91/CEE e 82/891/CE, le direttive 2001/24/CE, 2002/47/CE, 2004/25/CE, 2005/56/CE, 2007/36/CE e 2011/35/CE e il regolamento (UE) n. 1093/2010 — COM/2012/0280 def. — 2012/0150 (COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011115/12
to the Commission
Debora Serracchiani (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Hypo Bank

Hypo Bank, which has been in Italy since 1998 following a merger with the leasing company Hypo Service (operational since the 1990s), has developed its own business thanks to funding provided by its Austrian parent company *Hypo Alpe — Adria — Bank International AG*, with headquarters in Klagenfurt. In June 2011 Hypo Italy (together with Hypo Austria) was officially put up for sale in order to implement the hive-off plan called for by the Austrian Government and demanded by the European Union.

After exhausting and unsuccessful negotiations with the trade unions, on 1 February 2012 Hypo Italy transferred to *Hypo Alpe — Adria — Leasing s.rl.* (a company that is indirectly controlled by its Austrian parent company) EUR 800 million in non-performing loans, together with 80 employees, without ensuring that the employees would continue to benefit from the legal protection provided for in the banking sector (Hypo Leasing has not registered with the ABI [Italian Banking Association] and an agreement to safeguard the employees transferred was not accepted).

Recently, all 40 of the workers hired on fixed-term contracts have not had their contracts renewed and redundancy procedures have been launched for 118 of the 403 employees. The trade unions have asked for information about future strategies in order to come to an agreement with the company over the use of available instruments (redundancy fund, voluntary early retirement incentives, use of part-time, solidarity contracts, reduced working hours and/or entitlements, etc.) so as to reduce labour costs, but they have been given no real reason for the reorganisation; neither have they been provided with the half-year data, with future strategies for continuation of business in Italy, or any indication of the company's willingness to activate the necessary social safety valves, having met with a flat refusal to grant voluntary early retirement incentives.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. What measures will it take to safeguard the thousands of jobs that are currently at risk and to ensure that the contractual rights provided for under EU legislation are recognised?

2. How does the Commission intend to back up, by introducing its own rules, the restructuring plans of companies in crisis, with a particular focus on banks?

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

1. Several EU Directives on informing and consulting workers, and in particular Directives 2002/14/EC ([1]) and 98/59/EC ([2]), could be applicable in cases of restructuring.

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 transposing the EU Directives is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

2. The Commission is willing to consider using all tools at its disposal, and in particular the European Social Fund and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

The Commission urges companies and all stakeholders to anticipate restructuring and to manage it in a socially responsible way. Following its Green Paper ([3]), the Commission is considering how best to encourage and ensure wide observance of best practice in this field.

([1]) Directive 2002/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community — Joint declaration of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on employee representation, OJ L 80, 23.3.2002, p. 29.

([2]) Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998, p. 16.

([3]) Green Paper 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: what lessons from recent experience?' (COM(2012) 7 final of 17 January 2012).

With regards to banks, the Commission has adopted in 2012 a proposal on an EU Framework for the Recovery and Resolution of Credit Institutions and Investment Firms ([4]). This proposal implements the international standards on bank resolution regimes adopted by the Financial Stability Board and endorsed by the G20. The proposal grants power to authorities to take operational control of banks and to restructure them in case the resolution process is triggered, to ensure that future bank failures can be managed without disruption for financial stability and without use of public finances. The proposal does not derogate from the EU directives on information and consultation of workers.

([4]) Proposal of 6 June 2012 for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms and amending Council Directives 77/91/EEC and 82/891/EC, Directives 2001/24/EC, 2002/47/EC, 2004/25/EC, 2005/56/EC, 2007/36/EC and 2011/35/EC and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 /* COM/2012/0280 final — 2012/0150 (COD) */.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011116/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Registration of trailers

1. Can the Commission provide a list of the Member States where trailers have to be registered?

2. Can the Commission explain, with regard to the Roadworthiness Package, how trailers would be tested, when in Member States like Ireland there is no obligation to register trailers?

3. Can the Commission provide data on the number of accidents caused by trailers?

4. How many lives would be saved were trailers to be put through a National Car Test (NCT)-style inspection periodically?

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

The Commission cannot provide any list that compiles all trailers registration through the EU. Nevertheless the Commission has the contact points of the approval authorities in the Member States that might inform the Honourable Member about the registration obligation of trailers ([1]).

European legislation already requires since 1977 annual roadworthiness tests for heavy trailers with a laden mass above 3.500 kg ([2]) regardless whether they are registered or not. In Member States where trailers are not registered, those trailers that have successfully passed a roadworthiness test receive — according to the information available with the Commission — a proof in form of a sticker.

The European road accident database CARE, as well as other accident databases, contain information on accidents regardless whether they concern vehicles or vehicle combinations with a trailer. There is no research or other empiric evidence demonstrating that the number of technical defects found at trailers would be less then those of cars.

Furthermore, the Commission would like to draw the attention to the fact that rare use of light trailers leads to higher amount of defects, especially of mechanical components (brakes and coupling) and of tyres. Moreover, if drivers that do not regularly use trailers face exceptional situations when pulling a trailer, they might not identify some malfunctions and therefore act inadequately.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/approval-authorities-technical services/approval-authorities/index_en.htm
([2]) Directive 77/143/EEC, OJ L 47, 18.2.1977.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011117/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: Prévention liée au vieillissement chez la femme

La population de l'Union européenne ne peut que vieillir progressivement en raison des faibles taux de natalité et du prolongement de l'espérance de vie. Les politiques européennes ont de plus en plus intégré cette dimension, ainsi qu'en témoigne, en 2012, l'Année européenne du vieillissement actif et de la solidarité intergénérationnelle. L'objectif est de favoriser, pour tous, un vieillissement en bonne santé par l'accès à une assistance sanitaire de qualité et des mesures de prévention qui aident les personnes âgées à rester autonomes le plus longtemps possible.

1. La Commission rejoint-elle le Parlement sur l'importance de publier un nouveau rapport sur l'état de santé des femmes, en prêtant une attention particulière à la classe d'âge des plus de 65 ans et aux indices de vieillissement actif?

2. La Commission est-elle en faveur d'une reconnaissance de la dimension sexospécifique en matière de santé comme un aspect essentiel des politiques européennes et nationales sur la santé?

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

1. La Commission continuera à collecter des données sur l'état de santé des femmes et des hommes et à les partager sur sa page web consacrée à la santé publique. Elle n'estime pas nécessaire de publier un nouveau rapport sur l'état de santé des femmes, après celui de 2010: un tel rapport risquerait de faire double emploi avec le travail considérable réalisé par l'Institut européen pour la santé des femmes, par exemple.

2. La Commission encourage la reconnaissance de la dimension sexospécifique en matière de santé dans les politiques européennes et nationales et entend appliquer ce principe de manière horizontale à toutes les politiques de santé.

Plusieurs initiatives en cours peuvent contribuer à la prévention des problèmes de santé liés à l'âge chez la femme. Ainsi, la Commission mène un projet pilote en faveur d'une alimentation saine — projet financé par le Parlement européen; il consiste en l'élaboration d'une documentation adaptée qui sera diffusée à titre d'essai dans les classes de préparation à la naissance, les hôpitaux, les crèches, les établissements préscolaires et les écoles. En outre, le rapport intitulé «Alimentation, activité physique et prévention des maladies cardiovasculaires», publié en novembre 2011, définit une série d'objectifs relatifs au régime alimentaire, à l'activité physique et à l'indice de masse corporelle qui peuvent servir de base à la formulation de recommandations adaptées à l'âge et au sexe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011117/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Prevention of age-related health problems in women

The European Union's population is ageing gradually as a result of low birth rates and greater life expectancy. European policies have increasingly taken account of this trend, as can be seen in the fact that 2012 was declared the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. The aim is to promote healthy ageing for everyone through access to high-quality healthcare and by means of preventive measures to enable the elderly to remain independent for as long as possible.

1. Does the Commission agree with Parliament that it is important to publish a new reporton the state of women's health, focusing in particular on the over-65 age group and activeageing indicators?

2. Does the Commission support the recognition of the gender dimension to health as anessential part of EU and national health policies?

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

1. The Commission will continue to collect data on the health of women and men and provide information through the public health web page. The Commission does not consider it necessary to publish a new report on women's health, in addition to the report published in 2010. This would risk duplication, for example with the important work of the European Institute of Women's health.

2. The Commission supports the recognition of the gender dimension of health as part of EU and national health policies, and will apply this principle to all health policies in a horizontal way.

A number of ongoing initiatives can contribute to the prevention of age-related health problems in women. For example, the Commission is taking forward a pilot project on promotion of healthy diets, funded by the European Parliament, which is developing tailored education material to be tested in pre-natal classes, hospitals, nurseries, pre-school establishments and schools. In addition, the report 'Diet, Physical Activity and Cardiovascular Disease Prevention' of November 2011, put forward a set of goals regarding diet, physical activity and Body Mass Index that can be used for shaping recommendations adapted to gender and age.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011118/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: Révolution numérique: Gestion collective des droits

La révolution numérique a modifié le mode de fonctionnement des entreprises, et l'incidence de l'économie de l'internet est considérable depuis ces dernières années. Les avantages et les possibilités de croissance économique, la création d'emplois, les opportunités pour les consommateurs, la variété des produits, les prix abordables, et les opportunités pour les entreprises sont immenses.

En ce qui concerne les travaux préparatoires sur la proposition législative relative à la «gestion collective des droits»:

1. Quand la Commission compte-t-elle aboutir dans ces travaux afin d'améliorer la responsabilité, la transparence et la gouvernance des sociétés de gestion collective des droits, et établir des mécanismes efficaces de règlement des litiges, en vue de clarifier et simplifier les systèmes d'octroi de licences dans le secteur de la musique?

2. Quelles sont les pistes sur lesquelles travaille la Commission à ce sujet?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(1er février 2013)

La Commission a adopté, le 11 juillet 2012, une proposition de directive sur la gestion collective des droits d'auteur et des droits voisins et sur la concession de licences multiterritoriales des droits relatifs à des œuvres musicales, en vue de leur utilisation en ligne au sein du marché intérieur (ci-après, la «proposition de directive»). Celle-ci est en cours d'examen par le Conseil depuis septembre 2012 et par le Parlement depuis novembre 2012, avec un premier échange de vues au sein de la commission juridique.

Sur le fond, la proposition de directive comporte deux volets principaux. Le premier établit un cadre de gouvernance et de transparence applicable à toutes les sociétés de gestion collective, de sorte à améliorer leur fonctionnement et, en particulier, leur gestion financière. Le second volet vise à améliorer la concession de licences multiterritoriales de droits d'auteur aux fins de l'utilisation en ligne d'œuvres musicales et encourage l'agrégation volontaire des répertoires dans l'Union européenne. La proposition de directive régit également la question de la résolution des litiges et introduit, notamment, des mécanismes d'arbitrage pour la concession de licences multiterritoriales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011118/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Digital revolution: collective rights management

The digital revolution has transformed the way in which companies operate, while the Internet economy has also had a significant impact over the last few years. The advantages and opportunities in terms of economic growth, job creation, consumer choice, product variety, affordable prices and business openings are immense.

With regard to preparation for the proposal for a directive on collective rights management:

1. When does the Commission expect to have completed its work on achieving better accountability, transparency and governance on the part of collective rights management societies and establishing effective arbitration procedures with a view to clarifying and simplifying licensing in the music sector?

2. What lines of action are being followed by the Commission in this area?

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

On 11 July 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on collective management of copyright and related rights and multi-territorial licensing of rights in musical works for online uses in the internal market (hereinafter referred to as the 'proposed directive'). The proposed directive is now being discussed by the Council since September 2012 and examined by the Parliament since November 2012, with a first exchange of views in the Legal Affairs committee.

On substance, the proposed directive has two main strands. The first strand establishes a governance and transparency framework applicable to all collecting societies, in order to improve their functioning and in particular, their financial management. The second strand aims at improving the multi-territorial licensing of authors' rights in musical works for online uses and fosters a voluntary repertoire aggregation in Europe. The proposed directive also addresses the question of dispute resolution and in particular, introduces arbitration mechanisms for multi-territorial licensing.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011119/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: Les business angels

Concernant la thématique des «business angels» (pour mémoire, les «business angels» sont des personnes physiques qui investissent une part de leur patrimoine dans une entreprise innovante à potentiel et qui, en plus de leur appui financier, mettent gratuitement à disposition de l'entrepreneur, leurs compétences, expérience, réseaux relationnels et une partie de leur temps):

1. La Commission a-t-elle déjà commenté l'émergence des «business angels»?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle étudier le marché européen des «business angels»?

3. Estime-t-elle utile de développer les capacités des gestionnaires de réseaux de «business angels» dans l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(4 février 2013)

La Commission reconnaît l'importance des business angels, car ils sont essentiels pour financer les entreprises en phase d'amorçage et les jeunes entreprises, ainsi que pour contribuer à la croissance économique et aux avancées technologiques. Les business angels apportent à la fois des capitaux et une expérience en matière de gestion, ce qui augmente les chances de survie des entreprises en phase de démarrage ([1]).

La Commission a favorisé le développement du marché des business angels — dès la fin du siècle dernier, elle a financé des projets de création de réseaux de business angels. Cependant, les outils d'activation des investissements des business angels se trouvent principalement entre les mains des États membres, (par exemple, les incitations fiscales aux investisseurs privés pour qu'ils investissent dans les entreprises). La politique de la Commission consiste à identifier et diffuser les bonnes pratiques susceptibles d'améliorer les conditions d'investissement pour les business angels. En 2012, une étude de marché a été réalisée sur les caractéristiques du marché des business angels et les meilleures pratiques des États membres en ce qui concerne les politiques et les programmes de soutien au financement des business angels ([2]). De plus, le rapport du groupe d'experts de 2012 sur l'appariement entre entreprises innovantes et investisseurs adéquats au niveau transnational fournit des idées intéressantes en ce qui concerne le financement des business angels ([3]).

Les réseaux de business angels jouent fréquemment un rôle essentiel. Ils fournissent souvent, entre autres, des services de mise en relation et de formation et améliorent donc l'efficacité de l'appariement entre business angels et entrepreneurs en donnant aux business angels plus de chances de trouver les entrepreneurs appropriés. Au niveau de l'UE, on peut aussi mentionner le «European Angels Fund» ([4]). Enfin, la proposition Horizon 2020 prévoit des mesures qui ciblent aussi les business angels ([5]).

([1]) En outre, l'importance des business angels dans la fourniture de capital-risque est de plus en plus grande, puisque l'apport d'un financement aux entreprises en phase de démarrage et en début d'activité est devenu, dans une certaine mesure, plus dépendant des business angels, le marché du capital-risque dans l'UE ayant connu une contraction ces dernières années.

([2]) Le rapport final et la synthèse peuvent être consultés à l'adresse suivante:. (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/risk-capital/business-angels/).

([3]) Le rapport du président du groupe d'experts sur l'appariement entre entreprises innovantes et investisseurs adéquats (expert group on the cross-border matching of innovative firms with suitable investors) peut être consulté à l'adresse suivante:. http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2510&Lang=FR.

([4]) Le European Angels Fund», géré par le Fonds européen d'investissement, fournit des fonds propres aux business angels et aux autres investisseurs non institutionnels pour le financement de sociétés innovantes sous la forme de co-investissements. Pour plus de précisions, veuillez consulter le site suivant: (http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/equity/eaf/).

([5]) La proposition Horizon 2020 prévoit d'examiner la faisabilité et la pertinence de mesures visant à sensibiliser les sociétés de capital-risque et les business angels au potentiel de croissance des PME innovantes associées aux programmes de financement de l'Union, ainsi que la possibilité d'un soutien à des mécanismes de préparation à l'investissement comprenant des actions d'incubation, de tutorat et de parrainage de PME et promouvant leur interaction avec des investisseurs potentiels (y compris les business angels).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011119/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Business angels

Business angels are individual investors who provide some of their own capital for innovatory start-up firms with growth potential, as well as devoting part of their time free of charge to the undertakings concerned, giving them the benefit of their skills, experience and contacts.

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission already made its position known regarding the emergence of business angels?

2. Does the Commission intend to carry out a market study regarding European business angels?

3. Does it consider it desirable to develop the potential of business angel network managers in the Union?

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

The Commission recognises the importance of business angels, as they are crucial in financing seed and early-stage firms as well as contributing to economic growth and technological advances. They provide both capital and managerial experience, which increase the likelihood of start-up enterprises surviving ([1]).

The Commission has acted in favour of business angel market development — dating back to the end of the last century when it funded projects for setting up angel networks. However, tools to activate business angel investment are mainly in the hands of Member States, for example tax incentives for private investors to invest in enterprises. The Commission's policy is to identify and spread good practices that can help improve the conditions for business angel investment. In 2012 a market study was carried out on the characteristics of the business angels market and Member States' best practices as regards policies and programmes supporting business angel financing ([2]). Moreover, the 2012 expert group report on the cross-border matching of innovative firms with suitable investors provides interesting inputs regarding business angel funding ([3]).

Business angel networks often play a crucial role, as they bring angels together. They often provide matching and other services and training, thus increasing the efficiency of matching angels and entrepreneurs by making it likelier that angels find suitable entrepreneurs. At the EU level one may also mention the European Angels Fund ([4]). Finally, Horizon 2020 proposal foresees measures targeting also business angels ([5]).

([1]) Moreover, business angels are increasingly important in providing risk capital, since the supply of start-up and early stage equity finance has to some extent become more dependent on business angels due to the fact that the venture capital market in the EU has decreased during recent years.

([2]) Final report and executive summary can be accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/risk-capital/business-angels/.

([3]) Report of the Chairman of the expert group on the cross-border matching of innovative firms with suitable investors can be accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetailDoc&id=6008&no=1.

([4]) The European Angels Fund, managed by the European Investment Fund, provides equity to Business Angels and other non-institutional investors for the financing of innovative companies in the form of co-investments; more details are available at: http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/equity/eaf/.

([5]) Horizon 2020 proposal foresees to explore the feasibility and relevance of measures to raise the awareness of venture capital firms and business angels about the growth potential of innovative SMEs involved in Union funding programmes; as well as possible support to investment readiness schemes covering incubating, coaching and mentoring SMEs and fostering their interaction with potential investors (including business angels).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011120/12
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Merci non comunitarie in trasbordo nei porti dell'Unione

La materia disciplinata dal regolamento (CE) n.1383/2003 detta le misure normative intese a vietare l'introduzione, l'immissione in libera pratica, l'esportazione, la riesportazione, il collocamento in zona franca o in deposito franco, nonché il vincolo a un regime sospensivo di «merci contraffatte» e di «merci usurpative». Detto regolamento stabilisce inoltre le procedure da seguire per la domanda di intervento dell'autorità doganale e individua i mezzi di prova che attestano la titolarità del diritto di cui si chiede la tutela nonché le modalità dello scambio di informazioni tra gli Stati membri e la Commissione che consentono sia il monitoraggio dei fenomeni fraudolenti che l'adozione di un'adeguata analisi dei rischi finalizzata a orientare i controlli. Sono state tuttavia riscontrate delle anomalie pratiche nell'applicazione della disciplina prevista da tale regolamento.

Innanzitutto è stato evidenziato da alcune compagnie di navigazione come le amministrazioni doganali effettuino interventi preventivi alle merci oggetto di trasbordo, senza elementi concreti atti a far nascere un sospetto che tali merci siano contraffatte e che verranno dirottate fraudolentemente verso i consumatori dell'Unione. Infine, un ulteriore dubbio è sorto riguardo le spese di custodia e la successiva distruzione dei carichi sequestrati dalla dogana, che secondo quanto previsto dal regolamento (CE) n. 1383/2003 e dal regolamento (CE) n. 1821/2004 dovrebbero essere a carico del titolare del diritto di proprietà intellettuale che si presume violato.

Si prega pertanto la Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali sono i parametri che inducono l'amministrazione a nutrire il sospetto che una determinata partita di merce (non comunitaria) stivata all'interno di un contenitore in trasbordo nei porti nazionali sia contraffatta o usurpativa, visto anche quanto riconosciuto dalla Corte di Giustizia dell'UE con la sentenza del 1° dicembre 2011 nelle cause riunite C-446/09 e C-495/09?

2. Quali indicazioni gli organi della Commissione hanno fornito o intendono fornire agli Stati membri affinché l'esercizio dei poteri ispettivi preventivi avvenga in linea con le disposizioni del regolamento e della Corte di Giustizia?

3. Condivide essa il principio secondo cui deve essere il titolare del diritto di proprietà intellettuale ad accollarsi le spese derivanti dalla sospensione dello svincolo o dal mantenimento del blocco sulla merce sospettata di violare diritti alieni di proprietà intellettuale? Quali azioni intende essa intraprendere affinché tale obbligo venga sempre osservato?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(31 gennaio 2013)

1. Le autorità doganali possono legittimamente bloccare le merci che si trovano in una delle situazioni di cui all'articolo 1, paragrafo 1, del regolamento (CE) n. 1383/2003 ([1]), comprese le merci non comunitarie trasbordate in porti situati nel territorio dell'UE, qualora sospettino che le merci in questione violino i diritti di proprietà intellettuale stabiliti dalla normativa dell'Unione e degli Stati membri in materia di proprietà intellettuale. La sospetta violazione deve fondarsi su elementi ragionevoli derivanti dalla valutazione, caso per caso, del complesso delle informazioni a disposizione delle autorità doganali.

2. Nel febbraio 2012 la Commissione ha pubblicato orientamenti relativi all'applicazione del regolamento sulle merci in transito. Tali orientamenti possono essere consultati sul sito internet della Commissione ([2]).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1383/2003 del Consiglio, del 22 luglio 2003, relativo all'intervento dell'autorità doganale nei confronti di merci sospettate di violare taluni diritti di proprietà intellettuale e alle misure da adottare nei confronti di merci che violano tali diritti.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_controls/counterfeit_piracy/legislation/index_en.htm

3. Per quanto riguarda le spese sostenute per il blocco delle merci sospettate di violare diritti di proprietà intellettuale all'interno dell'UE, il regolamento (CE) n. 1383/2003 prevede una distinzione tra i costi sostenuti nell'ambito della cosiddetta procedura semplificata (articolo 11), che dovrebbero essere a carico del titolare del diritto, e quelli sostenuti secondo la procedura di cui all'articolo 13, il cui pagamento è determinato dagli organi giurisdizionali in conformità alla legislazione nazionale. Sebbene nella domanda d'intervento delle autorità doganali i titolari del diritto debbano accettare di sostenere i costi di magazzinaggio, ciò non impedisce loro di chiedere un risarcimento all'autore della violazione o ad altre persone che potrebbero essere considerate responsabili ai sensi della legislazione dello Stato membro interessato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011120/12
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Non-EU goods in transhipment in EU ports

Regulation (EC) No 1383/2003 lays down measures to prohibit the entry, release for free circulation, export, re-export, placing in a free zone or free warehouse, or entry for a suspensive procedure of 'counterfeit' and 'pirated' goods. The regulation also establishes the procedures to be followed by parties applying for action by the customs authorities and identifies the proof to be provided to show that the applicant holds the rights for the goods in question, and lays down the procedures for exchanges of information between the Member States and the Commission for the purposes of monitoring and of developing appropriate risk analyses for control purposes. There have nevertheless been some anomalies in the application of these provisions in practice.

Firstly, it has been reported by some shipping companies that the customs authorities take preventive action in respect of goods being transhipped without having any concrete grounds for suspecting that the goods are counterfeit or being fraudulently diverted to EU consumers. Doubt has also arisen concerning the costs of storing and destroying consignments seized by customs, which, according to Regulations (EC) No 1383/2003 and (EC) No 1821/2004, should be borne by the holder of the intellectual property right which the goods are suspected of infringing.

Would the Commission therefore please answer the following questions:

1. What factors lead the administration to suspect that a certain (non-Community) consignment of goods stored in a container in transhipment in national ports is counterfeit or pirated, also taking account of the findings of the EU Court of Justice in its judgments in Cases C 446/09 and C/495/09?

2. What guidance has the Commission given or does it intend to give to the Member States to ensure that their powers of preventive inspection are kept in line with the regulation and the Court of Justice rulings?

3. Does the Commission agree with the principle that the holder of the intellectual property right must bear the costs arising from suspension of release or detention of the goods suspected of infringing foreign intellectual property rights? What action does it intend to take to ensure that this obligation is always complied with?

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

1. The customs authorities may legitimately detain goods placed in one of the situations referred to in Article 1(1) of Regulation (EC) 1383/2003 ([1]), including non-Community goods transhipped in ports located in the territory of the EU, where they suspect that the goods in question relate to an infringement of intellectual property rights as conferred by the laws on Intellectual Property of the Union and its Member States. The suspicion of infringement must be based on reasonable indications arising from the assessment, on a case-by-case basis, of the body of elements of information available to the Customs authorities.

2. In February 2012 the Commission issued guidelines on the application of the regulation on goods in transit. These guidelines can be found on the Commission website ([2]).

3. As regards the costs of detention of goods suspected of infringing IPRs in the EU, Regulation (EC) 1383/2003 makes a distinction between costs incurred under the so-called simplified procedure (Article 11), which should be paid by the right-holder, and those incurred under the procedure of Article 13, the payment of which is determined by the courts according to national law. Although right-holders have to agree to bear the costs of storage in their application for action by customs, this does not preclude them from seeking compensation from the infringer or other persons that might be considered liable according to the legislation of the Member State concerned.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1383/2003 of 22 July 2003 concerning customs action against goods suspected of infringing certain intellectual property rights and the measures to be taken against goods found to have infringed such rights.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_controls/counterfeit_piracy/legislation/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011121/12
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Aumento delle ore d'insegnamento per docenti di scuola secondaria senza adeguamento della retribuzione

Nella notte tra il 9 e il 10 ottobre scorso il Consiglio dei ministri italiano ha approvato la cosiddetta «legge di stabilità», ovvero la legge che si occupa delle previsioni di bilancio per il 2013 e del bilancio del triennio 2013-2015. Tra le varie misure previste da tale pacchetto ve ne è una riguardante l'aumento delle ore lavorative settimanali degli insegnanti delle scuole medie e superiori. Per i professori di medie e superiori scatterebbe un aumento di sei ore settimanali, da 18 a 24, senza un corrispettivo incremento di stipendio e con in cambio solamente due settimane di ferie retribuite nel periodo estivo. Tale aumento di ore lavorative potrà essere utilizzato come segue: per la copertura di spezzoni di orario disponibili nell'istituzione scolastica di titolarità; per l'attribuzione di supplenze temporanee per tutte le classi di concorso per cui abbia titolo; e per i posti di sostegno, purché in possesso del relativo diploma di specializzazione. Tale incremento dell'orario lavorativo è stato giustificato dal governo italiano come una misura necessaria per far avvicinare l'Italia alle medie orarie di lavoro dei docenti previste negli altri paesi europei.

Si prega la Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Non ritiene essa necessaria una riforma dell'istruzione che armonizzi in tutti gli Stati membri la professione d'insegnante e le relative retribuzioni, anche alla luce del recente studio «In Education at a glance 2012» svolto dall'Organizzazione per la Sicurezza e la Cooperazione in Europa?

2. Non ritiene essa che tale situazione sia assolutamente inaccettabile, prima di tutto in quanto a tale aumento delle ore lavorative non corrisponderà un adeguamento salariale e, in secondo luogo, in quanto a seguito di questo cambiamento il differenziale tra lo stipendio di un insegnante tedesco di scuola superiore con 15 anni di servizio e quello di un insegnante italiano con la stessa esperienza raggiungerà quota 83 %?

3. Non ritiene essa che questo aumento delle ore lavorative comporterà un abbassamento della qualità dell'insegnamento e che, in particolare a causa del numero ingestibile e troppo elevato di classi per i docenti, si arriverà a una distruzione dell'organizzazione scolastica attuale?

4. Non ritiene essa allarmante che il saldo previsto, in termini di perdita di posti di lavoro, sia di almeno 25.000 cattedre per i posti comuni e di altre 4000 se la norma fosse estesa anche agli insegnanti di sostegno?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(23 gennaio 2013)

L'onorevole deputato saprà già che, conformemente all'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, la responsabilità del contenuto e dell'organizzazione dei sistemi di istruzione e formazione ricade esclusivamente sugli Stati membri. In ciò rientrano anche le disposizioni relative all'orario di lavoro del personale docente.

La Commissione non prevede pertanto di proporre un'armonizzazione della professione docente o dello stipendio dei docenti nell'Unione europea.

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dell'esistenza di prove esperienziali a indicare che l'allungamento dell'orario di lavoro degli insegnanti produrrebbe necessariamente un calo della qualità dell'insegnamento o dell'apprendimento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011121/12
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Teaching hours increased for secondary school teachers without a corresponding pay adjustment

On the night of 9-10 October 2012 the Italian Government approved a 'Stability Bill' on budget forecasts for 2013 and the 2013-2015 three-year budget. The package includes a measure increasing the working hours of middle and high school teachers by six hours a week, from 18 to 24 hours, with no corresponding increase in salary, the only compensation being two weeks of paid summer holiday. The additional hours can be used as follows: to cover hours available at the school where the teacher is employed; for temporary supply teaching for all the subject areas for which the teacher is qualified; and for remedial teaching, provided that the teacher holds the relevant specialised qualification. This increase in working hours has been justified by the Italian Government as a necessary measure to bring Italy more into line with the average teaching hours in other European countries.

Could the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission not consider that an education reform is needed to harmonise the teaching profession and teachers' pay in all the Member States, particularly in the light of the recent OECD study 'Education at a glance 2012'?

2. Does the Commission not consider that the situation described is absolutely unacceptable, above all because the increase in working hours is not accompanied by a pay adjustment and secondly because the result of this change will be that the salary of a German secondary school teacher with 15 years of seniority will be 83% higher than that of an Italian teacher with the same experience?

3. Does the Commission not consider that this increase in working hours will lower the quality of teaching and, particularly in view of the excessively high and unmanageable number of classes that teachers will have to take, wreck the current school system?

4. Does the Commission not consider it alarming that the resulting job losses are expected to be at least 25 000 in the case of ordinary teaching posts and another 4 000 if the provision is extended to include remedial teachers?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2013)

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

The Commission therefore has no plans to propose a harmonisation of the teaching profession or teachers' pay across the European Union.

The Commission is not aware of any research evidence suggesting that increasing teachers' working hours will necessarily result in a lower quality of teaching or learning.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-011122/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: Retard pris dans la réalisation du gazoduc GALSI

La société nationale algérienne des hydrocarbures Sonatrach vient d'annoncer que la décision sur la réalisation du projet de gazoduc GALSI devant relier l'Algérie à l'Europe via la Sardaigne est reportée au 30 mai 2013 pour des «raisons techniques».

Selon certains observateurs, la détermination du prix du gaz livré serait, en réalité, un des obstacles principaux à l'avancement de ce projet. D'autres redoutent que le soutien affiché de l'Italie aux projets South Stream et Trans Adriatic Pipelines ait mal été interprété par l'Algérie.

L'Union européenne ne peut cependant pas faire l'impasse sur une coopération énergétique renforcée avec l'Algérie, un de nos partenaires majeurs dans le cadre de l'Union pour la Méditerranée. Dans la mesure où 8 milliards de m^3 de gaz par an pourraient être acheminés via le gazoduc transcontinental GALSI, la sécurité d'approvisionnement et l'indépendance énergétique de l'Union européenne sont en jeu.

1. Comment la Commission réagit-elle face à l'annonce de la société Sonatrach?

2. Compte-t-elle afficher son soutien à la réalisation rapide du projet de gazoduc GALSI et de quelle manière?

3. Quelles mesures envisage-t-elle de mettre en œuvre pour concrétiser la coopération énergétique gazière avec l'Algérie?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(16 janvier 2013)

Il appartient au promoteur du projet de décider si les conditions du marché justifient ou non la mise en œuvre du projet.

La Commission soutient le projet de gazoduc GALSI par une subvention d'un montant de 120 millions d'euros dans le cadre du programme énergétique européen pour la relance (PEER) ([1]). Cette subvention ne sera décaissée qu'au fur et à mesure de la signature des contrats de fournitures des conduites et des travaux de construction, et ensuite, en fonction de l'avancement de la construction.

La Commission est sur le point de finaliser la négociation d'un protocole d'accord avec le gouvernement algérien qui servira de base à une coopération renforcée dans le secteur énergétique. Dans le même temps, le service européen pour l'action extérieure négocie avec le gouvernement algérien un nouveau plan d'action dans le cadre de la politique européenne de voisinage qui prévoit également une nouvelle étape dans la coopération en matière d'énergie.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/eepr/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011122/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Delays in constructing the GALSI gas pipeline

Sonatrach, Algeria's national oil and gas company, recently announced that it would postpone taking a decision on the construction of the planned GALSI gas pipeline, which would link Algeria to Europe via Sardinia, until 30 May 2013, citing 'technical reasons'.

Some observers claim that setting the price of the gas delivered is one of the main obstacles preventing the project from advancing. Others fear that Italy's support for the South Stream and Trans Adriatic Pipeline projects may have been misinterpreted by Algeria.

It is impossible for the EU to avoid closer energy cooperation with Algeria, which is one of our major partners in the Union for the Mediterranean. Given that 8 billion m^3 of gas could be channelled through the GALSI transcontinental gas pipeline, the EU's security of supply and energy independence are on the line.

1. What is the Commission's response to Sonatrach's announcement?

2. Does it intend to show its support for the swift construction of the GALSI gas pipeline? If so, how?

3. What steps will it take to make energy cooperation with Algeria a reality?

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

It is for the project promoter to decide if the market conditions justify the construction of the project or not.

The Commission is supporting GALSI through a EUR 120 million grant under the European Energy Programme for Recovery (EEPR) ([1]). This grant will only be disbursed as and when the contracts for pipe procurements and construction works are signed, and then according to the progress of construction.

The Commission is about to finalise the negotiation of a memorandum of understanding with the Algerian government that will be the basis for enhanced cooperation in the energy sector. At the same time, the European External Action Service is negotiating with the Algerian government a new European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan that also includes next step in energy cooperation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/eepr/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011123/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 december 2012)

Betreft: Fyra treindienst tussen Brussel en Amsterdam

Op 9 december 2012 zal de hogesnelheidstreindienst Fyra tussen Brussel en Amsterdam in gebruik worden genomen. Deze lijn zal worden uitgebaat door de Nationale Maatschappij der Belgische Spoorwegen (NMBS) en de Nederlandse High Speed Alliance, een samenwerkingsverband van de Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) en de Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij (KLM). Als gevolg daarvan zal de intercitytrein die momenteel Brussel en Amsterdam verbindt en wordt uitgebaat door de NMBS en de NS, worden afgeschaft. Hierdoor zullen de prijzen voor de passagiers die deze lijn gebruiken, gevoelig stijgen. Daarnaast zal de reserveringsverplichting en de lagere frequentie van de hogesnelheidstrein de flexibiliteit voor de reizigers ernstig beperken. Verder worden ook een groot aantal haltes afgeschaft: de hogesnelheidstrein zal enkel de stations van Amsterdam, Schiphol, Rotterdam, Antwerpen en Brussel-Zuid aandoen en niet langer de stations van Den Haag, Dordrecht, Roosendaal en Mechelen en Brussel-Centraal.

Is het volgens de Commissie mogelijk dat — in het huidige regelgevende kader en met de huidige stand van zaken van de spoorwegen in België en Nederland — een andere spoorwegmaatschappij de intercitylijn tussen Amsterdam en Brussel kan bedienen?

Denkt de Commissie dat de kans groot is dat — in de huidige marktomstandigheden — een andere spoorwegmaatschappij deze intercitylijn zal gaan uitbaten?

Hoe kijkt de Commissie aan tegen het feit dat het afschaffen van een groot aantal haltes een belemmering gaat vormen voor het grensoverschrijdend verkeer, in het bijzonder voor personen in de grensgebieden?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(15 januari 2013)

1. Volgens artikel 10, lid 3 quater, van Richtlijn 91/440/EG ([1]) betreffende de ontwikkeling van de spoorwegen in de Gemeenschap, als gewijzigd bij Richtlijn 2007/58/EG ([2]), (hierna: de richtlijn) mogen lidstaten het recht passagiers te laten in- en uitstappen op stations in dezelfde lidstaat op het traject van een internationale passagiersvervoerdienst beperken wanneer een exclusief recht voor het vervoer van passagiers tussen deze stations is toegekend uit hoofde van een concessiecontract dat vóór 4 december 2007 is gegund op basis van een eerlijke op concurrentie stoelende aanbestedingsprocedure en overeenkomstig de toepasselijke beginselen van het EU-recht. Nederland heeft dergelijke exclusieve rechten toegekend aan het samenwerkingsverband HSA. Volgens de informatie waarover de Commissie beschikt, heeft de aan HSA verleende concessie alleen betrekking op de hogesnelheidslijn. De exclusieve rechten vallen onder de vereisten van de richtlijn inzake vrije toegang. De Commissie is derhalve van oordeel dat er geen juridische bezwaren zijn tegen het aanbieden van klassieke internationale treindiensten op deze route door een andere exploitant. Dat recht kan alleen worden beperkt indien het economisch evenwicht van de concessie in het gedrang zou komen of indien het vervoer van internationale passagiers niet het hoofddoel van de nieuwe vervoersdienst is [artikel 10, leden 3 bis en 3 ter, van de richtlijn].

2. De Commissie kan niet vooruit lopen op commerciële beslissingen van spoorwegondernemingen. Het spreekt voor zich dat de invoering van alternatieve diensten vooraf moet worden gegaan door een degelijke kosten-batenanalyse.

3. De Commissie is op de hoogte van de problemen met het regionaal grensoverschrijdend verkeer. Dankzij de overeenkomst van 3 december 2012 tussen de Nederlandse en de Belgische autoriteiten lijken die echter grotendeels opgelost.

([1]) PB L 237 van 24.8.1991, blz. 25.
([2]) PB L 315 van 3.12.2007, blz. 44.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011123/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Fyra train service between Brussels and Amsterdam

On 9 December 2012, the Fyra high-speed train service between Brussels and Amsterdam is to be launched. This service is to be operated by Belgian Railways (NMBS/SNCB) and the Dutch High Speed Alliance, a consortium established by Netherlands Railways (NS) and the Dutch airline KLM. Consequently, the existing intercity train service between Brussels and Amsterdam, operated by NMBS and the NS, is to be discontinued. As a result, passengers using this line will face significant fare rises. In addition, there will a considerable loss of flexibility for passengers, as reservation will be compulsory and the trains will run less frequently. Moreover, many stations will no longer be served: the high-speed train will call only at Amsterdam, Schiphol, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Brussels South, and unlike the service which it is replacing, will not call at The Hague, Dordrecht, Roosendaal, Mechelen or Brussels Central.

Does the Commission believe that, given the present regulatory framework and the present situation with regard to railways in Belgium and the Netherlands, it would be possible for a different rail company to operate the intercity service between Amsterdam and Brussels?

Does the Commission think it is likely — given the current market situation — that a different rail company might operate this intercity service?

What view does the Commission take of the fact that doing away with a large number of stops will create an obstacle to cross-border traffic, particularly for people in border regions?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 January 2013)

1. According to Article 10 (3c) of Directive 91/440/EEC ([1]) on the development of the Community's railways as amended by Directive 2007/58/EC ([2]) (hereinafter: the directive), Member States may limit the right to pick up and set down passengers at stations within the same Member State on the route of an international passenger service where an exclusive right to convey passengers between those stations has been granted under a concession contract awarded before 4 December 2007 on the basis of a fair competitive tendering procedure and in accordance with the relevant principles of Community law. The Netherlands have provided such exclusive rights to the HAS consortium. However, according to the Commission's knowledge, the scope of the current HAS concession is limited to the high-speed connection, and the exclusive rights are subject to the open access requirements of the directive. This means that, in the Commission's view, it is not excluded legally for another operator to start conventional international rail services on this route. This right may only be restricted if the economic equilibrium of a concession would be compromised or if the principal purpose of the service would not be to carry international passengers [Article 10 (3a) and (3b) of the directive].

2. The Commission cannot prejudge commercial decisions of railway companies. Obviously any attempt to start alternative services has to rely on a sound cost-benefit analysis.

3. The Commission is aware of the concerns regarding cross-border regional traffic. However, it appears that those concerns have been addressed to a large extent by the agreement of 3 December 2012 between the Dutch and Belgian authorities.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1991:237:0025:0028:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:315:0044:0050:EN:PDF.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011124/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(5 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Investigación del accidente de Oswaldo Payá

El pasado 22 de julio se produjo un accidente en el que murieron los disidentes cubanos Oswaldo Payá y Harol Cepera. Oswaldo Payá fue uno de los miembros fundadores y líder del Movimiento Cristiano de Liberación, labor por la cual recibió en el año 2002 el reconocimiento del Parlamento Europeo que le otorgó el Premio Sajarov de Derechos Humanos. En el accidente se vieron implicados dos ciudadanos europeos. El ciudadano español Ángel Carromero era el que iba al volante del coche siendo condenado a cuatro años de cárcel por un delito de homicidio.

Las causas del accidente no están claras y algunas fuentes denuncian que fue provocado por otro vehículo que les embistió repetidamente. Ante la polémica, la Vicepresidenta y Alta Representante anunció el pasado mes de septiembre que tanto el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior como la delegación de la UE en la Habana estaban investigando el caso. Por todo lo anterior me permito preguntarle:

— ¿En qué punto se encuentra la investigación?

— ¿Piensa informar públicamente al respecto?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de febrero de 2013)

A diferencia de lo afirmado en la prensa, la AR/VP no ha anunciado que el SEAE y la Delegación de la UE en La Habana estuvieran investigando el accidente de automóvil en el que murió el Sr. D. Oswaldo Payá, galardonado con el Premio Sájarov. La AR/VP indicó en la respuesta a la pregunta E-007458/2012 del PE que estaba su curso una investigación (a nivel nacional) y que «el SEAE, en su sede y a través de la Delegación de la UE en La Habana, está siguiendo el caso de cerca, haciendo uso de la información fiable de la que se dispone sobre la situación y recopilada de varias fuentes, tanto en Cuba como en el exterior». Por consiguiente, no existe ninguna investigación del SEAE ni de la Delegación de la UE en La Habana sobre este asunto. No ha habido ningún anuncio sobre el resultado de la investigación. Sin embargo, los tribunales cubanos han condenado al Sr. Carromero a una pena de prisión de cuatro años, a raíz de lo cual ha sido devuelto a España para cumplir su sentencia en virtud del acuerdo bilateral correspondiente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011124/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Investigation into the car crash which killed Oswaldo Payá

On 22 July 2012, Cuban dissidents Oswaldo Payá and Harol Cepero were killed in a car crash. Oswaldo Payá was one of the founding members and the leader of the Christian Liberation Movement, for which he was awarded Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2002. Two EU citizens were also involved in the accident. Spanish citizen Ángel Carromero, who was driving the car, has been sentenced to four years in prison for manslaughter.

The cause of the accident is not clear; some sources claim that the crash occurred because the car was rammed repeatedly by another vehicle. In September 2012, the Vice-President and High Representative announced, in response to the controversy surrounding the case, that the European External Action Service and the EU delegation in Havana were investigating the incident.

— What stage has been reached in the investigation?

— Will the public be informed of the outcome?

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

Contrary to what was reported in the press, the HR/VP has not announced that the EEAS and the EU Delegation in Havana were investigating the car accident in which Sakharov Prize, Mr Oswaldo Payá, died. The HR/VP indicated in the reply to EP Question E-007458/2012 that an investigation (at national level) was ongoing, and that 'The EEAS, at its Headquarter and through the EU Delegation in Havana, is following the matter closely, taking recourse to the reliable information available on the situation, compiled from various sources, in Cuba and outside'. There is therefore no investigation by the EEAS nor by the EU delegation in Havana on this case. There has been no announcement on the outcome of the investigation. However, the Cuban Courts have handed down a decision sentencing Mr Carromero to a prison sentence of four years, following which he was returned to Spain to serve his sentence there under a relevant bilateral agreement.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011125/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Agresión al lugar de interés comunitario «Marjal d'Almenara» (Castellón)

En el LIC «Marjal d'Almenara» (ES5223007) y la ZEPA «Marjal i Estanys d'Almenara» (ES0000450) se han producido aterramientos, desecaciones, transformaciones, construcciones y vertidos incompatibles con la conservación y protección del espacio natural protegido desde su declaración como tal.

La eliminación de 27 hectáreas de humedal para plantar caquis, el aterramiento de parcelas, el vertido de aguas contaminadas procedentes de diversas actividades directamente al humedal (el camping, los karts y Las Marismas), la construcción de un piso piloto dentro del espacio natural protegido, las continuas desecaciones que causan estragos a la biodiversidad, las afecciones del campo de ultraligeros, la escandalosa mortalidad de vertebrados en las carreteras que atraviesan el humedal y un largo etcétera de actuaciones propias del abandono y la nefasta gestión comprometen seriamente la continuidad del LIC, ZEPA y humedal catalogado.

La administración autonómica permite continuar la paulatina degradación de esta ZEPA y LIC.

Por todo ello se pregunta:

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de enero de 2013)

La Comisión observa que el paraje «Marjal d'Almenara» ha sido declarado lugar de importancia comunitaria (LIC ES5223007) con arreglo a la Directiva de Hábitats ([1]), y que el espacio «Marjal i Estanyis d'Almenara» ha sido seleccionado como Zona de Especial Protección para las Aves (ZEPA ES0000450) en virtud de la Directiva de Aves ([2]).

De acuerdo con lo dispuesto en el artículo 6 de la Directiva de Hábitats, los Estados miembros deben adoptar las medidas apropiadas para evitar el deterioro de los hábitats naturales y las alteraciones significativas que repercutan en las especies que hayan motivado la designación de las zonas. Los Estados miembros deben fijar también las medidas de conservación necesarias de esos lugares. La responsabilidad de velar por el cumplimiento de la Directiva de Hábitats corresponde principalmente a los Estados miembros.

La Comisión ha solicitado recientemente a todos los Estados miembros información sobre la situación en cuanto a la designación de lugares de importancia comunitaria, así como datos que demuestren el cumplimiento de las obligaciones que impone el artículo 6, apartado 1, de esa misma Directiva en relación con el establecimiento de las medidas necesarias de conservación que respondan a las exigencias ecológicas de los espacios.

La Comisión no dispone por el momento de información suficiente para determinar los daños potenciales a los hábitats y especies presentes en los espacios a los que se refiere la pregunta.

([1]) 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).

([2]) 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 de 26.1.2010).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011125/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Destruction of the Marjal d'Almenara site of Community importance, in Castellón, Spain

The site of Community importance (SCI) Marjal d'Almenara (ES5223007) and the special bird protection area (SBPA) Marjal i Estanys d'Almenara (ES0000450) have been affected by a number of conservation problems — from the silting-up and drainage of the wetland, and changes in land use, to construction work and the discharge of contaminated water into wetland areas, all of which are incompatible with the sites' status.

Neglect and dire mismanagement are seriously undermining the future of the SCI, SBPA and officially recognised wetland. For example, 27 hectares of wetland have been destroyed to plant persimmons, parts of the wetland are silting up, contaminated water from various sources (campsites, go-karting facilities and a business undertaking known as Las Marismas) is flowing directly into the wetland, a show home has been built in the protected area, constant drainage of the wetland is proving detrimental to local biodiversity, a microlight airfield is causing noise nuisance, and shockingly high numbers of animals are being killed on the roads that pass through the wetland.

The authorities of the autonomous community are doing nothing to stop the gradual destruction of this SBPA and SCI.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to address these issues?

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

The Commission notes that the site 'Marjal d'Almenara' has been designated as a site of Community importance (SCI ES5223007) under the Habitats Directive ([1]), and that the site 'Marjal i Estanyis d'Almenara' has been selected as special protection area (SPA ES0000450) under the Birds Directive ([2]).

According to the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, Member States shall take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of natural habitats as well as significant disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated. Member States shall also establish the necessary conservation measures for the sites. The responsibility to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive relies primarily with Member States.

The Commission has recently requested information from all Member States on the state of progress in relation to the designation of Sites of Community Importance as well as to demonstrate the compliance with the obligations under Article 6.1 of the Habitats Directive concerning the establishment of the necessary conservation measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the sites.

The Commission does not have sufficient details at this stage to investigate the potential damage to habitats and species in the sites to which this question refers.

([1]) 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.
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-011126/12
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5. december 2012)

Om: Sommer- og vintertid

Der blev indført sommer/vintertid i EU i 1980 med den begrundelse, at det ville medføre besparelser på elektriciteten.

Tal fra det danske selskab DONG påviser, at en sådan besparelse ikke længere er gældende i Danmark. Til gengæld er det forbundet med både besvær og udgifter for virksomheder som eksempelvis tog- og busselskaber at skulle ændre deres køreplan, som følge af skiftet mellem sommer og vintertid.

Kommissionen bedes derfor oplyse, hvorvidt der på europæisk plan eksisterer en besparelse på elektricitet, som følge af sommer/vintertid?

Kommissionen bedes endvidere oplyse, hvorvidt der eksisterer andre påviselige besparelser der i dag forsvarer den fortsatte brug af sommer/vintertid?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(11. februar 2013)

Kommissionen udsendte i 2007 en rapport om anvendelsen af bestemmelserne vedrørende sommertid ([1]), som bekræftede tidligere undersøgelsesresultater, nemlig at enerigbesparelserne er små i forhold til det samlede forbrug (f.eks. var besparelsen i Frankrig på 0,014 % af det samlede elforbrug i 2005).

Kommissionen er ikke bekendt med andre undersøgelser foretaget efter offentliggørelsen af sin rapport i 2007, der viser større besparelser som følge af overgangen til sommertid.

Under alle omstændigheder mener Kommissionen fortsat, at det er hensigtsmæssigt at anvende sommertidsbestemmelserne i direktivet om sommertid ([2]), således som forklaret i tidligere svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-004724/2012, H-103/2010, E-009802/2011 og E-9209/2011 ([3]).

([1]) Kommissionens rapport til Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet om anvendelsen af sommertid i Den Europæiske Union ((KOM(96)0106 endelig).
([2]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2000/84/EF af 19. januar 2001 (EFT L 31 af 2.2.2001).
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011126/12
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Summer time and winter time

Summer time and winter time were introduced in the EU in 1980 on the ground that this would result in electricity savings.

Figures from the Danish company DONG show that such savings are no longer being made in Denmark. On the contrary, there are both difficulties and costs for businesses such as train and bus operators, for example, in that they have to modify their timetables as a result of the switch between summer time and winter time.

Would the Commission therefore say whether there are electricity savings at European level as a result of summer time and winter time?

Would the Commission further say whether there are other demonstrable savings which today justify the continued use of summer time and winter time?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

In 2007 a Commission report on the application of summertime arrangements ([1]) confirmed the results of earlier findings, namely that energy savings are small when compared to total consumption (In France, for instance, savings of 0.014% of overall electricity consumption in 2005).

The Commission is not aware of any studies that were undertaken after the publication of its report in 2007 and that show more significant savings caused by summertime.

This being said, the Commission continues to believe that the summer time arrangements as established by the directive on summertime arrangements ([2]) remain suitable, as explained in previous answers to written questions E-004724/2012, H-103/2010, E-009802/2011 and E-9209/2011 ([3]).

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of summer-time in the European Union, COM/96/0106 Final.
([2]) Directive 2000/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 January 2001, OJ L 31, 2.2.2001.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011127/12
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(5 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Exportul de animale către țări terțe

Având în vedere condițiile teribile la care sunt supuse animalele în timpul transportului în țările terțe — lipsa tratamentului veterinar, manipularea brutală și adăposturile necorespunzătoare, metodele de sacrificare medievale, personalul neformat care are responsabilitatea acestor aspecte — poate Comisia să precizeze ce acțiuni au fost întreprinse pentru încurajarea dezvoltării unui temei juridic pentru protecția animalelor de fermă în țări în care nu există un cadru juridic esențial și/sau îmbunătățirea normelor actuale privind protecția animalelor care se află mult sub standardele considerate acceptabile în UE?

Ce acțiuni intenționează Comisia să realizeze privind subvențiile pentru exportul de bovine vii de reproducere către țări terțe și când măsurile avute în vedere vor fi puse în aplicare?

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

Comisia promovează bunăstarea animalelor în afara UE și include sistematic acest subiect în negocierile bilaterale purtate în cadrul acordurilor de liber schimb cu țări terțe ([1]).

Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1/2005 al Consiliului privind protecția animalelor în timpul transportului ([2]) se aplică, în general, în cazul în care animalele sunt transportate în interiorul UE, iar Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1099/2009 al Consiliului din 24 septembrie 2009 privind protecția animalelor în momentul uciderii ([3]) prevede ca abatoarele din țările terțe care exportă carne către UE să respecte standarde de bunăstare echivalente cu cele prevăzute în regulament.

Pentru a verifica respectarea acestor cerințe, serviciul de audit al Comisiei (Oficiul Alimentar și Veterinar) efectuează audituri în unități din țările terțe autorizate să exporte carne către UE. În plus, Comisia joacă un rol activ în Organizația Mondială pentru Sănătatea Animalelor (OIE) și în Organizația pentru Alimentație și Agricultură (FAO), organisme în cadrul cărora se desfășoară activități în privința bunăstării animalelor, într-un context global.

Strategia UE pentru protecția și bunăstarea animalelor 2012-2015 ([4]) include, ca obiectiv cheie, continuarea și extinderea sprijinului pentru cooperarea internațională.

În ceea ce privește a doua întrebare a distinsului membru al Parlamentului, respectarea cerințelor UE referitoare la bunăstarea animalelor în timpul transportului animalelor către primul loc de descărcare din țara terță de destinație finală este o condiție pentru acordarea de restituiri la export pentru animalele vii din specia bovină ([5]). Din 2005 nu s-au mai acordat restituiri la exportul de bovine vii destinate sacrificării. În plus, restituirile la export pentru animalele vii reproducătoare de rasă pură din specia bovină destinate reproducerii au fost reduse la zero în septembrie 2012 ([6]) și, prin urmare, în prezent, în UE nu se mai acordă nicio restituire la export pentru bovine vii.

([1]) Chile, Canada, Noua Zeelandă, Coreea de Sud, Australia.
([2]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1/2005 al Consiliului privind protecția animalelor în timpul transportului și al operațiunilor conexe, JO L 3, 5.1.2005.
([3]) JO L 303, 18.11.2009.
([4]) COM(2012) 6 final.
([5]) Articolul 168 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1234/2007 al Consiliului de instituire a unei organizări comune a piețelor agricole și privind dispoziții specifice referitoare la anumite produse agricole („Regulamentul unic OCP"), JO L 299, 16.11.2007, precum și Regulamentul (UE) nr. 817/2010 al Comisiei de stabilire a normelor de aplicare în temeiul Regulamentului (CE) nr. 1234/2007 al Consiliului în ceea ce privește cerințele privind bunăstarea animalelor vii din specia bovină în timpul transportului pentru acordarea restituirilor la export, JO L 245, 17.9.2010.
([6]) Regulamentul de punere în aplicare (UE) nr. 859/2012 al Comisiei de stabilire a restituirilor la export în sectorul cărnii de vită și mânzat, JO L 255, 21.9.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011127/12
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Export of animals to third countries

Given the terrible conditions which animals suffer in transport in third countries — the lack of veterinary treatment, the brutal handling and inadequate accommodation, and the medieval slaughter methods, with untrained staff in charge of these aspects — can the Commission state what action it has taken to encourage the development of a legal basis for the protection of farm animals in countries that lack the essential legal framework, and/or for the improvement of existing animal protection rules that fall far below the standards considered acceptable in the EU?

What action does the Commission intend to take regarding subsidies for exports of live breeding bovines to third countries, and when will any envisaged measures be implemented?

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

The Commission is promoting animal welfare outside the EU and systematically includes this matter in bilateral negotiations conducted in the context of Free Trade Agreements with third countries ([1]).

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]) in general applies when animals are transported within the EU and the Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing ([3]) requires that slaughterhouses in third countries exporting meat to the EU comply with welfare standards equivalent to those in the regulation.

The Commission's audit service (Food and Veterinary Office) carries out audits in establishments from third countries approved for exporting meat to the EU to check compliance with these requirements. Furthermore, the Commission is active in the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and in the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) where work is undertaken on animal welfare, in a global context.

The EU strategy for the Protection and Welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([4]) includes, as a key objective, to continue and expand the support for international cooperation.

As regards the Honourable Member's second question, compliance with EU animal welfare requirements throughout the transport of the animals to the first place of unloading in the third country of final destination is a condition for granting of export refunds for live bovine animals ([5]). Export refunds for live cattle intended for slaugther have not been granted since 2005. In addition, export refunds for live pure bred breeding bovine animals intended for reproduction have been put to zero in September 2012 ([6]) and thus there are currently no export refunds granted for live bovines in the EU.

([1]) Chile, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea, Australia.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.
([3]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009.
([4]) COM(2012) 6 final.
([5]) Article 168 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (Single CMO Regulation), OJ L 299, 16.11.2007, and Commission Regulation (EU) No 817/2010 laying down detailed rules pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards requirements for the granting of export refunds related to the welfare of live bovine animals during transport, OJ L 245, 17.9.2010.
([6]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 859/2012 fixing the export refunds on beef and veal, OJ L 255, 21.9.2012.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011128/12
lill-Kummissjoni
Joseph Cuschieri (S&D)
(5 ta' Diċembru 2012)

Suġġett: Diskriminazzjoni kontra ċ-ċittadini tal-UE f'Malta

Nixtieq inressaq għall-attenzjoni tal-Kummissjoni l-każ ta' 80 ċittadin tal-UE li qed jgħixu f'Malta li allegatament qed jiġu ddiskriminati fl-isforzi tagħhom li jibbenefikaw mir-rati tat-tariffi residenzjali dwar servizzi importanti li qed jitolbu dritt fuqhom.

In-numru tal-persuni li jagħmlu t-talba huwa mistenni li jiżdied fil-ġranet li ġejjin, u hija mistennija li tibda proċedura legali kontra ARMS Ltd, il-kumpanija responsabbli għall-kontijiet tas-servizzi importanti kkontestati mill-aħħar ta' Novembru 2012.

Dawn iċ-ċittadini tal-UE, li ingħaqdu bħala grupp imsejjaħ Grupp ta' Azzjoni Legali Kollettiva ARMS, jitolbu li jirċievu kontijiet ta' servizzi importanti fl-hekk imsejħa "rata domestika", li hija kważi 30 fil-mija ogħla mill-orħos tariffa "residenzjali".

Huma jsostnu wkoll li qed jintalbu b'mod inġust li jipproduċu diversi dokumenti biex jippruvaw li huma residenti f'Malta, filwaqt li ċ-ċittadini Maltin li japplikaw għandhom juru biss il-karti tal-identità tagħhom biex jagħtu prova tar-residenza tagħhom.

Rapporti tal-midja jissuġġerixxu li l-Kummissjoni diġa' ressqet il-kwistjoni għall-attenzjoni tal-awtoritajiet Maltin. Minħabba l-viġilanza tal-Kummissjoni fis-salvagwardja tad-drittijiet indaqs garantiti mill-prinċipji tas-suq uniku, x'azzjoni tippjana li tieħu fir-rigward taċ-ċirkustanzi deskritti hawn fuq?

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

Il-Kummissjoni hi konxja tas-sitwazzjoni msemmija mill-Onorevoli Membru.

Il-Kummissjoni rċeviet diversi lmenti minn ċittadini tal-Unjoni li qed jirrisjedu f'Malta dwar it-tariffi mraħħsa tal-ilma u l-elettriku. Jidher li t-tariffi tal-ilma u tal-elettriku mraħħsa imposti mill-Automated Revenue Management Services Ltd kienu disponibbli għaċ-ċittadini tal-Unjoni taħt ċerti kundizzjonijiet biss.

Skont l-informazzjoni disponibbli għall-Kummissjoni, ARMS Ltd. qed titlob liċ-ċittadini tal-UE li mhumiex Maltin biex jippreżentaw ċertifikat ta' reġistrazzjoni flimkien ma' karta tal-identità valida jew passaport sabiex jissottomettu d-"dikjarazzjoni għal tibdil fin-numru ta' persuni fir-residenza" ([1]). Id-"dikjarazzjoni għal tibdil fin-numru ta' persuni fir-residenza" hija formola użata biex tindika l-għadd ta' persuni li jgħixu f'indirizz partikolari. Is-sottomissjoni tal-formola msemmija hija importanti minħabba l-fatt li japplikaw rati differenti skont l-istatus u l-għadd ta' persuni li jgħixu f'indirizz partikolari. Jidher li ċ-ċittadini Maltin biss għandhom jippreżentaw il-karta tal-identità Maltija tagħhom biex jissottomettu d-"dikjarazzjoni għal tibdil fin-numru ta' persuni fir-residenza" u jibbenefikaw minn tariffi mraħħsa tal-ilma u l-elettriku.

Għaldaqstant, il-Kummissjoni nediet proċedura ta' ksur kontra Malta u bagħtet Ittra ta' Avviż Formali fis-27 ta' Settembru 2012. L-awtoritajiet Maltin wieġbu għall-Ittra ta' Avviż Formali permezz tal-ittra tal-21 ta' Diċembru 2012.

Il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qed tanalizza t-tweġiba tal-awtoritajiet Maltin.

([1]) https://www.smartutilities.com.mt/wps/portal/Public%20Area/ARMS.PublicArea.UsefulDownloads/ARMS.publicArea.Downloads/!ut/p/c5/hY7JDoJAEEQ_qYthGLwisjnKKghcyMQQJGHxYEz8eyGe0arjq-ouqmnxpF59p579PKmBSqpFI1NXwDU4llc6CM6pk-8PKQM3F16JxvYsn5snlGlFwEIjS5BnOgL9T_u6_hONJnK9kJ4GL4yXBD_u7OQCFlnsX_srxxeFlHm6TDfymFqM5bB5A2w1GVM!/dl3/d3/L0lDUmlTUSEhL3dHa0FKRnNBL1lCUmZ3QSEhL210/%20.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011128/12
to the Commission
Joseph Cuschieri (S&D)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Discrimination against EU nationals in Malta

I would like to bring to the attention of the Commission the case of 80 EU citizens living in Malta who are allegedly being discriminated against in their efforts to benefit from residential tariff rates on utilities for which they claim to have a right.

The number of claimants is expected to increase in the coming days, and a legal procedure against ARMS Ltd, the company responsible for the contested utility billing, is expected to begin by the end of November 2012.

These EU citizens, who have united as a group called the ARMS Class Action Group, claim to receive utility bills charged at the so-called 'domestic rate', which is about 30% higher than the cheaper 'residential' tariff.

They also claim that they are unjustly asked to produce multiple documents to prove that they are residents in Malta, while Maltese nationals who apply need only show their ID cards to prove their residency.

Media reports suggest that the Commission has already brought the issue to the attention of the Maltese authorities. Given the Commission's vigilance in safeguarding the equal rights guaranteed by the principles of the single market, what action does it plan to take with regard to the circumstances described above?

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

The Commission is aware of the situation mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The Commission received a number of complaints from Union citizens residing in Malta concerning reduced water and electricity tariffs. Apparently, the reduced water and electricity tariffs charged by Automated Revenue Management Services Ltd were available to Union citizens only under certain conditions.

According to the information available to the Commission, ARMS Ltd requests non-Maltese EU citizens to submit a registration certificate together with a valid ID card or passport in order to submit the 'change in number of persons declaration'. ([1]) The 'change in number of persons declaration' is a form used to indicate the number of persons living at a given address. The submission of the mentioned form is important due to the fact that different rates are applied depending on the status and the number of people living at a given address. Apparently, Maltese citizens only need to submit their Maltese identity card in order to submit the 'change in number of persons declaration' and benefit from reduced water and electricity tariffs.

Therefore, the Commission launched an infringement procedure against Malta and sent a Letter of Formal Notice on 27 September 2012. The Maltese authorities replied to the Letter of Formal Notice with letter of 21 December 2012.

The Commission is currently analysing the reply of the Maltese authorities.

([1]) https://www.smartutilities.com.mt/wps/portal/Public%20Area/ARMS.PublicArea.UsefulDownloads/ARMS.publicArea.Downloads/!ut/p/c5/hY1LDoIwAETP4gk6tKW4RYSCVT7FIrJpWBhCluDCeH5LXKszyzcf0hHnuX-NQ_8cl7m_k5Z0wiqdCCQ-R5GoGNlJx2a31xQ8cPwqbCTDlAdHoKANQHO_rmBqhoz9aV_WP2E9YVijpAeZly7BD9uoOoMWIf3wX_srxxeFlHm6TDfymFqM5bB5A2w1GVM!/dl3/d3/L0lDU0lKSWdra0EhIS9JTlJBQUlpQ2dBek15cUEhL1lCSlAxTkMxTktfMjd3ISEvN19LUkY2MEY1NDBPRktFMElNUkVVQkRSMjBLNQ!!/?PC_7_KRF60F540OFKE0IMREUBDR20K5_WCM_CONTEXT=/wps/wcm/connect/arms_pa/arms_en/services/list+of+services/cn+update+the+registered+number+of+persons+on+your+account.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011130/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Batterie di missili NATO sul confine della Turchia con la Siria

Il 4 novembre 2012 i ministri degli Affari esteri NATO hanno approvato l'installazione di missili patriot sul territorio turco. La decisione è stata presa in risposta ai timori di possibili lanci della Siria di missili armati di testate chimiche.

Il Segretario generale della Nato, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, ha dichiarato che «è responsabilità della NATO proteggere le popolazioni e i territori delle nazioni alleate». Al contempo, secondo quanto riportato dal New York Times, Rasmussen ha assicurato che l'alleanza non interverrà in Siria per fermare le violenze. Attualmente sono in corso valutazioni su dieci potenziali siti per la collocazione dei missili patriot, che hanno un raggio d'azione di 16 miglia.

Il ministro degli Affari esteri turco, Ahmet Davutoglu, ha affermato che il regime siriano dispone, secondo le stime, di 700 missili, e ha aggiunto che i missili NATO sono necessari a scopo difensivo.

1. Qual è la posizione dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente in merito alla decisione della NATO sul dispiegamento di batterie di missili Patriot al confine della Turchia con la Siria?

2. Come valuta il VP/HR la possibilità di lancio da parte del regime siriano di armi chimiche e biologiche verso obiettivi all'interno o al di là dei confini siriani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2013)

In base alla Carta delle Nazioni Unite, ciascun paese ha il diritto naturale all'autodifesa e a utilizzare, a tal fine, sistemi di armi difensive come i missili Patriot. La Turchia ha deciso di chiedere all'Alleanza NATO il potenziamento delle sue capacità di difesa aerea per scoraggiare eventuali attacchi missilistici da parte della Siria e difendere la sua popolazione e il suo territorio. L'UE non può pronunciarsi sugli accordi raggiunti all'interno della NATO. Nelle conclusioni del Consiglio europeo del 18-19 ottobre 2012, il Consiglio ha condannato con fermezza l'agressione della Turchia da parte delle forze siriane.

L'UE è seriamente preoccupata per il potenziale utilizzo di armi chimiche da parte della Siria o per il rischio di una diffusione accidentale di tali armi. Qualsiasi impiego delle armi chimiche sarebbe ritenuto totalmente inacccetabile e illeggittimo in base al diritto internazionale e il governo siriano e le altri parti non dovrebbero mai ricorrere a tale ozpione. L'UE e la comunità internazionale hanno puntualmente ribadito questo messaggio attarverso i canali della diplomazia pubblica e privata.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011130/12
to the Commission(Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — NATO missile batteries on the Turkish border with Syria

On 4 November 2012, the NATO foreign ministers agreed to place NATO Patriot missile installations on Turkish soil. This decision was taken in response to fears that Syria may launch missiles armed with chemical warheads.

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said that it is 'NATO's responsibility to protect populations and territories of NATO allied nations'. At the same time, the *New York Times* noted, he emphasised that the alliance would not intervene in Syria to stop the violence. There are currently surveys into ten potential sites for the Patriot missiles, which have a range of 16 miles.

Turkey's Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, said that the Syrian regime is estimated to have 700 missiles. He added that the NATO missiles are needed as a precaution.

1. What is the position of the High Representative/Vice-President with regard to NATO's decision to place Patriot missile batteries on Turkey's border with Syria?

2. What is the assessment of the HR/VP of the potential for the Syrian regime to launch chemical and biological weapons at targets either within or beyond Syria's borders?

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

Pursuant to the United Nations Charter, every country has the inherent right of self-defence and is entitled to use, for that purpose, defensive weapons systems such as Patriot missiles. Turkey decided to request the NATO Alliance for augmentation of its air defence capabilities to deter threats of missile attacks from Syria and defend its population and territory. The EU is not in a position to comment on arrangements made within NATO. In the European Council Conclusions of 18-19 October 2012, the Council strongly condemned the aggression by the Syrian forces against Turkey.

The EU is gravely concerned about the potential use of Syria's chemical weapons or the possibility of accidental dissemination of these weapons. Any use of chemical weapons would be completely unacceptable, would be unlawful under international law and the Syrian government and other actors should never resort to that option. The EU and the wider international community have consistently emphasised this message through the channels of public and private diplomacy.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011131/12
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 décembre 2012)

Objet: VP/HR — Vers un monde sans enfants soldats

L'enrôlement d'enfants soldats a été érigé en crime de guerre par le Statut de la Cour Pénale Internationale mais, de nos jours encore, 250 000 enfants sont utilisés à des fins militaires dans le monde.

En cette année 2012, nous célébrons le dixième anniversaire du «Protocole facultatif à la Convention des droits de l'enfant relatif à l'implication des enfants dans les conflits armés», mais aussi le cinquième anniversaire des «Principes de Paris», un ensemble d'engagements concrets pris lors de la conférence «Libérons les enfants de la guerre» organisée en 2007 par la France et l'Unicef. Aujourd'hui, ce sont plus de 100 États qui soutiennent cette action.

Au niveau européen, des Lignes directrices sur les enfants et les conflits armés ont été adoptées en 2003 et ont donné lieu à l'élaboration d'une stratégie de mise en œuvre ciblant 19 pays prioritaires. Cette stratégie a été révisée en décembre 2010.

1. Comment la Commission juge-t-elle l'état d'avancement des engagements de Paris de 2007?

2. Quelles actions la Commission a-t-elle financé au titre de l'Instrument de Stabilité s'agissant des enfants soldats, notamment en matière de démobilisation?

3. Plusieurs témoignages circulent actuellement sur la présence d'enfants soldats dans les rangs des groupes armés qui contrôlent le Nord du Mali. De son côté, l'organisation de défense des Droits de l'homme Human Rights Watch a récemment accusé les rebelles syriens d'utiliser des enfants lors de combats ou pour des opérations militaires. La Commission suit-elle ces deux problèmes de près et quelle réponse compte-t-elle y apporter?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(25 janvier 2013)

En 2012, l'UE a mené une campagne de lobbying au niveau mondial afin de promouvoir la ratification de deux protocoles facultatifs, l'un à la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant et l'autre à la convention n° 182 de l'OIT ([1]) sur les pires formes de travail des enfants, ainsi que la signature des Principes de Paris. Depuis 2007, ces principes sont devenus une référence pour les États, les organisations internationales et la société civile lorsqu'il s'agit de remédier à la situation d'enfants associés à des forces ou à des groupes armés.

La priorité «Enfants et jeunes, paix et sécurité» figure parmi les cinq qui ont été fixées pour les appels à propositions locaux concernant des activités de consolidation de la paix qui seront lancés par les délégations de l'UE dans le cadre du programme d'action annuel 2012 du volet «Préparation aux situations de crise» de l'instrument de stabilité. La sélection des délégations participant à cet exercice a été finalisée en septembre-octobre 2012 et les appels à propositions sont en cours d'élaboration. Les délégations en El Salvador, en Inde et au Kirghizstan ont retenu cette priorité pour leurs appels à propositions.

Les projets financés comprendront des actions visant à:

— prévenir le recrutement actif d'enfants dans les conflits armés et à soutenir leur réintégration,

— prévenir d'autres formes de violence en luttant contre le trafic d'enfants et d'autres crimes contre les enfants et à

— garantir que les négociations de paix et les processus de réconciliation menés au niveau national prennent en compte les intérêts des enfants.

([1]) Organisation internationale du travail.

Au Mali, il est prévu que la protection de l'enfance soit intégrée dans la prochaine mission de formation à la gestion de crise et, en ce qui concerne la Syrie, l'UE a appelé à la protection des groupes vulnérables, parmi lesquels les enfants, dans les conclusions du Conseil d'octobre et de décembre 2012. L'UE entretient des contacts étroits avec la commission d'enquête des Nations unies et avec le bureau de la représentante spéciale du Secrétaire général de l'ONU pour les enfants et les conflits armés, ainsi qu'avec des organisations de la société civile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011131/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Towards a world without child soldiers

The conscription of child soldiers is considered a war crime under the Statute of the International Criminal Court; however, some 250 000 children are still being forced to serve as soldiers globally.

In 2012 we mark the tenth anniversary of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, as well as the fifth anniversary of the Paris Principles, which are a collection of specific commitments given at a conference organised by France and Unicef in 2007 entitled 'Free Children from War'. To date, more than 100 states have given their backing to this initiative.

At European level, guidelines on children and armed conflicts were adopted in 2003 that led to an implementation strategy being developed focusing on 19 priority countries. This strategy was revised in December 2010.

1. In the Commission's view, what progress has been made with regard to the commitments given in Paris in 2007?

2. What actions has the Commission financed under the Instrument for Stability concerning child soldiers, with particular reference to their demobilisation?

3. Several reports point to the presence of child soldiers in the ranks of the armed groups controlling northern Mali. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch recently accused Syrian rebel groups of using children in battle and in military operations. Is the Commission monitoring these two problems, and how does it plan it address them?

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

In 2012, the EU led a global lobbying campaign to promote ratification of two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO ([1]) Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour as well as the signing of the Paris Principles. Since 2007, the Paris Principles have become a reference for States, international organisations and civil society when addressing the situation of children associated with armed groups and forces.

'Children and youth, peace and security' was included among the five priorities for the local peace building calls for proposals to be launched by EU Delegations under the 2012 Annual Action Programme of the Crisis Preparedness Component of the Instrument for Stability. The selection of the Delegations participating in this exercise was finalised in September/October 2012 and the corresponding calls are currently under preparation. The delegations in El Salvador, India and Kyrgyzstan have picked up this priority for their call.

Funded projects will include actions to:

— prevent the active recruitment of children in armed conflicts and support their reintegration;

— prevent other forms of violence by combating trafficking and other crimes against children;

— ensure that national peace-negotiations and reconciliation processes are child-sensitive.

In Mali, child protection is to be integrated in the forthcoming crisis management training mission. And in Syria, the EU has called for the protection of vulnerable groups, including children, in Council conclusions from October and December 2012. The EU is in close contact with the UN Commission of Inquiry and the Office of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict as well as with civil society organisations.

([1]) ILO = International Labour Organisation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011132/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: La Commissione deve tutelare la salute dei cittadini dell'UE compromessa dai telefoni cellulari

I giudici della Corte d'Appello di Brescia hanno riconosciuto che un tumore del nervo trigemino che affligge un manager italiano, Innocente Marcolini, è stato generato dall'uso costante del telefono cellulare senza l'ausilio di un auricolare. Anche un suo collega è affetto dalla stessa patologia: il riconoscimento di tali cause da parte di un tribunale di secondo grado certifica la pericolosità di tali apparecchi.

1. Ha la Commissione attuato studi di pericolosità sui telefoni cellulari prima di consentirne la commercializzazione?

2. Quali certificazioni essa richiede per garantire la salute e la sicurezza dei suoi cittadini?

3. Ritiene essa opportuno indire una campagna di sensibilizzazione sui rischi che un uso eccessivo dei telefoni cellulari comporta per la salute dell'individuo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(14 febbraio 2013)

1. La Commissione chiede regolarmente aggiornamenti delle prove scientifiche disponibili e verifica se queste continuano a corroborare i limiti stabiliti nella raccomandazione del Consiglio (1999/519/CE) ([1]) relativa alla limitazione dell'esposizione della popolazione ai campi elettromagnetici. Il comitato scientifico dei rischi sanitari emergenti recentemente identificati ha il mandato permanente di valutare i rischi derivanti dai campi elettromagnetici, compresi quelli provenienti dai telefoni cellulari. Conformemente alla sua ultima conclusione del 2009 ([2]), tre assi probatori (studi epidemiologici, in vivo e in vitro) indicano che, stando alle conoscenze attuali, l'esposizione alla radiazione dei telefoni cellulari non è suscettibile di determinare un aumento dell'incidenza del cancro.

2. Le apparecchiature radio immesse sul mercato dell'UE devono essere conformi alla direttiva 1999/5/CE ([3]), che comprende disposizioni per la protezione della salute e sicurezza degli utilizzatori delle apparecchiature e del pubblico in generale. Le norme tecniche armonizzate che conferiscono la presunzione di conformità a tali disposizioni intendono assicurare che l'esposizione dei cittadini ai campi elettromagnetici non superi i limiti stabiliti nella raccomandazione di cui sopra. Gli articoli 168 e 169 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea lasciano agli Stati membri la responsabilità primaria per la protezione della salute umana. La raccomandazione del Consiglio 1999/519/CE menzionata sopra non è vincolante e non osta a che uno Stato membro mantenga o introduca misure più rigorose. L'Italia ha già definito limiti di esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici più rigorosi di quelli previsti nella raccomandazione.

3. Allo stadio attuale delle conoscenze, l'esposizione alla radiazione che proviene dai telefoni cellulari non dovrebbe portare a un aumento dell'incidenza del cancro negli esseri umani, ragion per cui la Commissione non prevede attualmente di condurre una campagna di sensibilizzazione nel merito.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:IT:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf
([3]) Direttiva 1999/5/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 9 marzo 1999, riguardante le apparecchiature radio e le apparecchiature terminali di telecomunicazione e il reciproco riconoscimento della loro conformità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011132/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: The Commission's duty to protect EU citizens' health from the dangers posed by mobile phones

The judges of the Brescia Court of Appeal have recognised that a tumour on the trigeminal nerve, developed by Mr Innocente Marcolini, an Italian manager, was caused by constant use of a mobile phone without an earphone. One of his colleagues has also developed the same disease: the recognition by a Court of Appeal that these tumours have been caused by mobile phone use confirms the danger of using such devices.

1. Did the Commission carry out a study of the dangers posed by mobile phones before allowing them to be placed on the market?

2. What documentation does the Commission require to guarantee EU citizens' health and safety?

3. Is the Commission intending to launch an awareness raising campaign to inform the general public about the health risks of excessive mobile phone use?

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

1. The Commission regularly requests updates of scientific evidence available and checks whether this continues to support the limits laid down in Council Recommendation (1999/519/EC) ([1]) on the limitation of exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF). The independent Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks has a standing mandate to evaluate the risks from EMF, including those emanating from mobile phones. According to its latest conclusion of 2009 ([2]), three lines of evidence (epidemiological, *in vivo* and *in vitro* studies) show that, under current knowledge, exposure to mobile phones radiation is unlikely to lead to an increase of cancer incidence.

2. Radio equipment placed on the EU market must comply with Directive 1999/5/EC ([3]), which includes requirements on the protection of health and safety of users of equipment and of the general public. The harmonised technical standards which provide presumption of conformity with such requirements aim to ensure that citizens' exposure to EMF does not exceed the limits established by the abovementioned Recommendation. Articles 168 and 169 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union leave the primary responsibility for the protection of human health to the Member States. Council Recommendation 1999/519/EC mentioned earlier is not binding and shall not prevent any Member State from maintaining or introducing more stringent measures. Italy has already established more stringent EMF exposure limits than those foreseen in the recommendation.

3. Given that current knowledge exposure to mobile phones radiation is unlikely to lead to an increase of cancer incidence in humans, at this point, the Commission does not plan an awareness raising campaign on the matter.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1999:199:0059:0070:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_022.pdf
([3]) Directive 1999/5/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 1999 on radio equipment and telecommunications terminal equipment and the mutual recognition of their conformity.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011133/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Opportunità che la Commissione blocchi i fondi del programma «Attrattori Culturali 2007-2013» per il Sud Italia

L'Italia ha dovuto restituire alla Commissione un miliardo e mezzo di euro stanziati per il programma «Attrattori Culturali 2007-2013» che non sono mai stati impegnati, nonostante gli innumerevoli progetti stilati in questi anni, mai diventati operativi. Altri due miliardi potrebbero dover essere restituiti. Si tratta dei programmi operativi e attuativi interregionali per il Sud, ovvero lo strumento principale attraverso cui promuovere e sostenere lo sviluppo socio-economico delle regioni del Mezzogiorno attraverso la valorizzazione, il rafforzamento e l'integrazione su scala interregionale del patrimonio culturale, naturale e paesaggistico in esse custodito.

La Commissione aveva previsto per tali obiettivi una dotazione complessiva di circa 2 miliardi di euro, di cui una quota di poco superiore al miliardo di euro (ovvero 1.031 milioni) a valere sui fondi strutturali del FESR e del relativo cofinanziamento nazionale, e una leggermente inferiore (898 milioni) resa disponibile dalle risorse aggiuntive della programmazione nazionale del Fondo Aree Sottoutilizzate (FAS), come si legge sul relativo sito. Tali fondi non solo non sono stati spesi, ma sono stati riallocati per finanziare altre voci di spesa che non hanno nulla a che fare con la cultura. Inoltre permane il problema dei cosiddetti «progetti di sponda» — 655,8 milioni di euro su 2 miliardi complessivi, il 64,8 % del totale, di cui 220,8 milioni deliberati nel 2011 — altrimenti detti «progetti coerenti»: spese pubbliche già finanziate, inserite nei rendiconti comunitari allo scopo di ottenere un secondo finanziamento, in modo da incassare risorse fresche da destinare ad altre attività.

1. Può la Commissione quantificare a quanto ammontino finora i fondi restituiti e da restituire da parte dell'Italia in questo ambito?

2. Quanti fondi illecitamente stanziati ha finora scoperto?

3. Non intende la Commissione bloccare l'esborso per questi «progetti coerenti»?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

1. Il programma 2007-2013 «Attrattori culturali, naturali e turismo» aveva una dotazione pubblica iniziale di 1.015 milioni di euro. Tuttavia, in seguito alla modifica richiesta dalle autorità italiane nel dicembre 2012, lo stanziamento è stato ridotto a 682 milioni di euro. Tale riduzione deriva dal disimpegno automatico di 4 milioni di euro (regola «N +2») per il 2012 e dall'adesione al piano nazionale «Piano Azione Coesione» di 329 milioni di euro.

A tutto il 31 ottobre 2012, stando ai dati forniti dalle autorità italiane, il livello degli impegni e dei pagamenti del programma ammontava rispettivamente a 277 milioni di euro (27 %) e a 166 milioni di euro (16 %). I fondi ancora da spendere alla fine del periodo ammontavano pertanto a 516 milioni di euro. Tutti i pagamenti da versare al programma sono stati interrotti a motivo della descrizione insoddisfacente del sistema di gestione e controllo, una nuova versione della quale dovrebbe essere trasmessa fra breve alla Commissione per valutazione e approvazione.

2. La Commissione non è a conoscenza di eventuali importi illegali stanziati o concessi nell'ambito del programma. Se in futuro emergessero prove nel merito, la Commissione prenderà tutte le misure necessarie per tutelare gli interessi finanziari dell'UE.

3. Non vi è nessuna disposizione giuridica che vieti un'assistenza UE a progetti retrospettivi, a patto che i progetti cofinanziati siano in linea con le regole unionali e nazionali applicabili per il periodo d'attuazione e con i criteri di selezione di cui ai pertinenti programmi. La decisione di sostenere tali progetti rientra nella responsabilità unica delle autorità di gestione che sono tenute a verificarne la conformità alle disposizioni vigenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011133/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Does the Commission intend to freeze funds for the 2007-2013 Cultural Attractions Programme for Southern Italy?

Italy has had to reimburse the Commission the 1.5 billion euros that had been earmarked for the 2007-2013 Cultural Attractions Programme, but which were never spent despite countless projects being devised over the period, but never actually implemented. A further two billion euros may have to be returned. This amount corresponds to Southern Italy's interregional operational and implementation programmes, i.e. the main instrument for promoting and sustaining socioeconomic development in Southern Italy by enhancing, consolidating and integrating the cultural, natural and environmental heritage at interregional level.

The Commission had allocated a total of 2 billion euros to achieve these objectives. This sum included an amount slightly in excess of 1 billion euros (1 031 million) paid out from the ERDF structural funds, the corresponding national co-funding and a slightly smaller amount (898 million) paid out from the additional resources of the national programming of the Fund for Under-utilised Areas, as stated on the relevant website. Not only were these funds not spent, but in addition they were reallocated to finance other budgetary headings that have nothing to do with culture. Furthermore, the problem of the so-called 'support projects' (progetti di sponda) — 655.8 million euros out of a total of 2 billion, i.e. 64.8% of the overall amount, of which 220.8 million euros had been committed in 2011, has still not been solved. These are also known as 'retrospective projects' (progetti coerenti), i.e. public expenditure that has already been financed, entered in Community accounts with a view to receiving further funding, so as to receive extra money to be used to fund other activities.

1. Can the Commission state how much Italy has reimbursed to date in this regard and what amount is still outstanding?

2. Of these funds, what illegally allocated amounts has the Commission identified to date?

3. Does the Commission not intend to block payments for these 'retrospective projects'?

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

1. The 2007-2013 'Attrattori culturali, naturali e turismo' programme had an initial total public allocation of EUR 1.015 billion. However, following the modification requested by the Italian authorities in December 2012 the allocation was reduced to EUR 682 million. The reduction resulted from the automatic de-commitment of EUR 4 million ('N +2' rule) for 2012 and the adhesion to the national Piano Azione Coesione of EUR 329 million.

As of 31 October 2012, according to the data provided by the Italian authorities, the level of commitments and payments of the programme amounted respectively to EUR 277 million (27%) and EUR 166 million (16%). The funds still to be spent by the end of the period therefore equal EUR 516 million. All payments to the programme are interrupted on the grounds of the unsatisfactory description of the management and control system, a new version of which should soon be transmitted to the Commission for assessment and approval.

2. The Commission is not aware of any illegal amount allocated or granted under the Programme. Should any evidence in this respect emerge in the future, the Commission will take all necessary steps to protect the EU's financial interests.

3. There is no legal provision prohibiting EU assistance to retrospective projects provided that the co-financed projects comply with all applicable EU and national rules for the implementation period and with the selection criteria provided for by the relevant programmes. The decision to support such projects falls within the sole responsibility of the managing authorities who are called upon to verify compliance with the applicable provisions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011134/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Opportunità che la Commissione indaghi sugli incidenti aerei provocati dalla stanchezza

L'Associazione europea dei piloti (Eca) denuncia in uno studio che un pilota su tre dichiara di essersi appisolato ai comandi ma, quel che è peggio, il 92 % dei piloti tedeschi afferma di aver pilotato nonostante fosse troppo stanco per farlo. Sembra che molti incidenti siano dovuti in effetti a problemi di fatica; spesso, inoltre, inconvenienti dovuti a tale problematica non vengono segnalati all'ente nazionale di sicurezza o all'ENAC per evitare conseguenze.

L'EASA sta pensando di aumentare il tempo di volo notturno portando a 20 ore consecutive le ore di volo: al momento le compagnie prevedono che un pilota possa usufruire di 20 minuti di sonno durante le lunghe tratte. Tale tempo di recupero sembra oggettivamente insufficiente per tutelare la sicurezza dei passeggeri.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza di incidenti aerei provocati dalla stanchezza dei piloti aerei?

2. Come intende tutelare la sicurezza dei passeggeri europei da possibili errori dovuti alla stanchezza dei piloti?

3. La Commissione prevede uno studio per valutare meglio le esigenze di riposo dei piloti e stabilire tempi di lavoro e turnazioni a livello europeo per tale categoria che consentano un recupero della fatica ottimale?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2013)

La normativa europea riguardante l'affaticamento degli equipaggi di volo è tra le più sicure del mondo. In base alle informazioni ricevute dall'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza aerea (EASA), quasi tutti gli incidenti aerei dovuti alla stanchezza negli ultimi dieci anni riguardano compagnie aeree non-UE. Per quanto riguarda le compagnie aeree europee, soltanto nel caso di un grave inconveniente (28 ottobre 2007, JetX, 737-800, Keflavik — nessun decesso) e di un incidente (2001, Crossair, BAe146, Zurigo — 24 vittime) la stanchezza ha rappresentato uno dei fattori determinanti. Nel primo caso, l'equipaggio ha effettuato il riposo durante il volo in un sedile in classe economica, il che è vietato dalla proposta elaborata dall'EASA. Nel secondo caso, il comandante non ha rispettato i requisiti minimi di riposo prima di prendere servizio.

Sebbene i dati del passato siano rassicuranti, la Commissione ha chiesto all'EASA di riesaminare le norme vigenti al fine di determinare se siano necessari chiarimenti e miglioramenti, in considerazione degli sviluppi internazionali e delle conoscenze scientifiche e operative più recenti. Dopo tre anni di collaborazione con esperti del settore, di consulenza scientifica e di consultazione pubblica, l'Agenzia ha recentemente raccomandato alla Commissione una serie di adeguamenti tecnici intesi ad aumentare la sicurezza delle disposizioni in vigore. La Commissione sta valutando le proposte dell'EASA prima di prendere una decisione sulla via da seguire.

Nell'intento di migliorare costantemente la sicurezza aerea, l'EASA intende raccogliere i dati relativi alle effettive operazioni di volo per poter valutare l'efficienza delle norme in termini di protezione contro l'affaticamento dell'equipaggio, una volta che siano attuate le nuove norme.

La Commissione ha fornito ulteriori informazioni concernenti gli altri aspetti citati dall'onorevole parlamentare nelle risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-009003/2012 ed E-010585/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011134/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Does the Commission intend to investigate aviation accidents caused by pilot fatigue?

The European Cockpit Association (ECA) has published a study deploring the fact that one out of three pilots admits to having fallen asleep while flying. Worse still, 92% of German pilots admit to having worked despite being too tired to do so. It would appear that many accidents are caused by fatigue-related problems. Furthermore, problems caused by fatigue often go unreported to the National Safety Body or the National Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC) so as to avoid any repercussions for those involved.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is currently considering increasing night flight-time to 20 consecutive hours. At present, airlines allow pilots to sleep for 20 minutes during long journeys. This recovery time does not appear to be sufficient by any objective criteria to ensure passenger safety.

1. Is the Commission aware of aviation accidents caused by pilot fatigue?

2. How does the Commission intend to ensure that the safety of European passengers is not jeopardised by errors caused by pilot fatigue?

3. Does the Commission intend to carry out a study to better assess pilots' rest requirements and determine their working times and shifts at European level to prevent fatigue and ensure pilots are properly rested when on duty?

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

European regulations on aircrew fatigue are among the safest in the world. According to information received from European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), almost all aircraft accidents involving fatigue in the past 10 years happened to non-EU airlines. Only 1 major incident (28.10.2007, JetX, 737-800, Keflavik — no fatality) and 1 accident (2001 Crossair, BAe146, Zürich — 24 victims) on European airlines included fatigue as a contributing factor. In the first case, the flight crew had its in-flight rest in an economy seat, which would be forbidden by the proposal developed by EASA; in the second case, the commander failed to comply with the minimum rest requirements prior to initiating his duty.

In spite of the safe track record, the Commission asked EASA to review the current rules in order to determine if clarifications and improvements are needed taking into account latest international developments, scientific and operational knowledge. After three years of work with fatigue experts, scientific review and public consultation, the Agency recently recommended to the Commission a number of technical adaptations to the current rules for safety improvement. The Commission is currently assessing EASA's proposals before taking a decision on the way forward.

With the aim of continuously improving air safety, EASA will collect data from actual air operations with the view of assessing the efficiency of the rules in terms of protection against crew fatigue, once the new rules would be implemented,

Further information concerning other aspects mentioned by the Honourable Member has been provided by the Commission in its answers to written questions E-009003/2012 and E-010585/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011135/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Opportunità che la Commissione vigili sugli incentivi nascosti nel gioco d'azzardo

Il governo spagnolo ha inserito nella manovra fiscale in atto la possibilità di dedurre dalle vincite al gioco d'azzardo l'ammontare delle perdite. Ovvero, in pratica, saranno tassati solo gli utili delle giocate, abbattendo l'imponibile e incentivando, di fatto, le scommesse.

Questa manovra ha, ovviamente, attratto investitori che intendono quindi privilegiare il territorio iberico per installare nuovi casinò sfruttando tali agevolazioni, creando una distorsione di mercato rispetto alle altre nazioni europee.

1. Non ritiene la Commissione che questa possibilità di deduzione violi le norme del mercato interno, agevolando di fatto le sale da gioco spagnole?

2. Intende intraprendere azioni per evitare distorsioni di mercato in tale settore?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(1º febbraio 2013)

Gli Stati membri, secondo la giurisprudenza pertinente della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea, possono fissare gli obiettivi della propria politica in materia di gioco d'azzardo e definire il livello di protezione desiderato nell'interesse generale. Gli Stati membri possono anche determinare l'organizzazione e il controllo dell'offerta oltre alle modalità di svolgimento del gioco, aspetti fiscali compresi. Occorre nondimeno procedere in modo coerente e sistematico, senza ostacolare il perseguimento degli obiettivi generali della politica degli Stati membri in materia di gioco d'azzardo. In base ai fatti segnalati dall'onorevole deputato, la Commissione non è in grado di valutare se le modalità d'imposizione dei servizi di gioco d'azzardo in Spagna siano discriminatorie o altrimenti violino le libertà fondamentali del mercato interno.

Per valutare pienamente la compatibilità dello strumento fiscale in questione con le norme UE, la Commissione chiede cortesemente all'onorevole deputato di fornire ulteriori informazioni sulla legge e sul relativo articolo inerente al trattamento fiscale indicato nell'interrogazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011135/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Does the Commission intend to prevent hidden incentives to gambling?

Through the fiscal instrument in question, the Spanish Government has introduced the possibility of deducting losses from gambling winnings. This means in practice that only the profits of gambling will be taxed, reducing the taxable amount and as a result, encouraging betting.

This instrument has, obviously, attracted investors who as a result intend to give Spain preference when setting up new casinos, thus skewing the market with regard to other European Member States.

1. Does the Commission not consider that this ability to deduct losses contravenes the standards of the internal market, as it has the effect of promoting gambling in Spain?

2. Does the Commission intend to take action to avoid market distortions in this sector?

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

Member States, in accordance with the relevant case-law of the Court of Justice of the EU, may set the objectives of their gambling policy and define the level of protection sought in the public interest. Member States may also determine the organisation and control of the offer together with how gambling is carried out, including related tax matters. Nonetheless, this must be pursued in a consistent and systematic manner and not run counter to the achievement of the overall objectives of the Member State's gambling policy. On the basis of the facts indicated by the Honourable Member of Parliament, the Commission can not assess whether the way gambling services are taxed in Spain are discriminatory or otherwise violate the fundamental freedoms of the internal market.

In order to fully assess the compatibility of the fiscal instrument in question with EU rules the Commission would respectfully ask the Honourable Member of Parliament to provide further information on the law and respective article providing for the tax treatment described in the question.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011136/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Stato di diritto in Kosovo: pochi progressi

La Corte dei conti europea ha sottoposto ad audit l'assistenza dell'UE al Kosovo nel campo dello Stato di diritto (soprattutto nella parte settentrionale del paese) rilevando che detta assistenza non è stata sufficientemente efficace, sebbene gli investimenti in aiuti al Kosovo abbiano comportato un esborso di circa di € 116 per abitante.

Inoltre, secondo la relazione, l'assistenza alla polizia e al sistema giudiziario ha dato solo modesti risultati, mentre i livelli di criminalità organizzata e di corruzione restano elevati. Il sistema giudiziario continua a risentire di ingerenze politiche, inefficienza, mancanza di trasparenza e mancato rispetto di leggi e sentenze.

Gli interventi dell'UE non hanno ottenuto risultati apprezzabili nella lotta alla corruzione, che resta fonte di seria preoccupazione.

Premesso che l'UE non risulta aver finora affrontato la situazione sopra descritta a un livello politico adeguato, non ritiene la Commissione di dover esprimere una valutazione, anche alla luce dei rilievi sopra indicati della Corte dei conti europea?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

La relazione della Corte dei conti europea cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato risponde al quesito generale: «L'assistenza dell'Unione europea al Kosovo ([1]) nel campo dello Stato di diritto è efficace?». La Corte esamina un campione di otto progetti IPA e di otto azioni di guida, controllo e consulenza svolte dalla missione dell'Unione europea per lo sviluppo dello Stato di diritto in Kosovo (EULEX). Con riguardo all'assistenza IPA gestita dalla Commissione, la Corte conclude che i progetti «sono stati in genere gestiti in maniera adeguata».

Le risposte della Commissione alle risultanze e alle osservazioni della Corte sono riportate alla fine della relazione. La Commissione conferma che lo Stato di diritto pone ancora seri problemi in Kosovo ma che l'assistenza dell'UE contribuisce notevolmente a consolidare le istituzioni fondate sullo Stato di diritto, che vanno trasformandosi da strutture a guida internazionale in strutture locali democraticamente responsabili.

([1]) Tale designazione non pregiudica le posizioni riguardo allo status ed è in linea con la risoluzione 1244 (1999) dell'UNSC e con il parere della CIG sulla dichiarazione di indipendenza del Kosovo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011136/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Rule of law in Kosovo: little progress

The European Court of Auditors has carried out an audit of EU assistance to Kosovo in the field of the rule of law (particularly in the north of the country). The audit found that the assistance was not sufficiently effective, even though investment aid to Kosovo has resulted in a disbursement per habitant of approximately EUR 116.

According to the report, assistance to the police and the judiciary has yielded modest results, while levels of organised crime and corruption remain high. The judiciary continues to be affected by political interference, inefficiency, lack of transparency and non-compliance with legislation and judgments.

EU action has not achieved significant results in the fight against corruption, which continues to be a major concern.

Given that to date the EU has not tackled the situation described above at an appropriate political level, does the Commission believe it should give an opinion in the light of the abovementioned findings of the European Court of Auditors?

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

The European Court of Auditors' report referred to by the Honourable Member addressed the overall question 'Is EU assistance to Kosovo ([1]) in the field of rule of law effective?' The Court examined a sample of eight IPA projects and eight mentoring, monitoring and advising actions carried out by the EU's rule of law mission EULEX. With regard to Commission-managed IPA assistance, the Court concluded that projects 'were generally adequately managed'.

The Commission's replies to the Court's findings and observations are included at the end of the report. In its replies the Commission confirms that considerable challenges in the field of rule of law remain in Kosovo, but that nevertheless EU assistance has provided crucial support to the consolidation of rule of law institutions, which have been in transition from internationally-led entities to locally accountable structures.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011137/12
aan de Commissie
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(5 december 2012)

Betreft: Treinverbinding Nederland-België vanaf 9 december 2012

Vanaf 9 december aanstaande zal de huidige internationale treinverbinding tussen Amsterdam en Brussel, die sinds 1957 bestaat, worden afgeschaft. Niet vanwege het feit dat er geen vraag is naar deze lijn, de trein zit altijd bomvol, maar omdat het samenwerkingsverband van de NS en de NMBS heeft bedacht dat er meer kan worden verdiend aan reizigers.

De huidige reguliere trein zal vervangen worden door een hoge snelheidstrein („Fyra"). Dit heeft tot gevolg dat de reizigers geconfronteerd zullen worden met het volgende:

— Het prijsverschil tussen de Beneluxtrein en de Fyra is enorm;

— Men dient verplicht te reserveren voor een bepaald tijdstip. Een trein eerder of later nemen is onmogelijk, tenzij men bereid is voor hoge tarieven flexibiliteit te kopen;

— De reisfrequentie van de trein wordt gehalveerd;

— De trein gaat voorbij aan bepaalde steden, waaronder Den Haag, dat niet een geheel onbelangrijke rol in het internationale toneel speelt;

— Voordeeltarieven zijn slechts zeer beperkt verkrijgbaar. Abonnementen helemaal niet;

— De reiziger heeft geen alternatief, aangezien de Beneluxlijn niet blijft bestaan. Dit in tegenstelling tot het binnenlandse verkeer, waar Fyra als alternatief fungeert.

De Belgische en Nederlandse reizigersorganisaties Rover en TreinTramBus, hebben de Europese Commissie reeds een uitgebreide klacht gezonden, waarin genoemde benadeling van de reiziger uitgebreid beschreven staat: http://www.treintrambus.be/images/stories/klacht_rover-ttb_inzake_treinverbinding_nl-be_vanaf_9-12-2012_v2.pdf

Deelt de Commissie mijn mening dat de er sprake is van misbruik van de monopoliepositie van NS en de NMBS, door de reiziger op te zadelen met een minder flexibele, duurderde lijn, die tot gevolg heeft dat er een barrière wordt opgeworpen tussen Nederland en België, zonder dat er redelijke alternatieven zijn? Zo niet, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Almuniaon namens de Commissie
(24 januari 2013)

Op grond van artikel 102 VWEU is het verboden dat een of meer ondernemingen misbruik maken van een machtspositie op de interne markt of op een wezenlijk deel daarvan. Uit de informatie waarover de Commissie momenteel beschikt, kan echter niet zonder meer worden geconcludeerd dat de NS en de NMBS inbreuk hebben gemaakt op artikel 102 VWEU.

In artikel 102 VWEU is bepaald dat misbruik met name kan bestaan in het opleggen van *„onbillijke aan- of verkoopprijzen of van andere onbillijke contractuele voorwaarden"*. De rechtsnorm voor de vaststelling van buitensporig hoge (excessieve) prijzen ligt zeer hoog. Uit prijsvergelijkingen tussen de hogesnelheidstrein Fyra, die meer comfort biedt, en de vroegere intercitytrein komen niet noodzakelijk buitensporig hoge tarieven voor de Fyra naar voren. Bovendien liggen de Fyratarieven nog steeds lager dan die van de Thalys, die ook hogesnelheidstreindiensten op de lijn Amsterdam-Brussel aanbiedt. Voorts staat op de Fyra-website dat er inmiddels wel abonnementen verkrijgbaar zijn.

Wat betreft de verplichting om zitplaatsen vooraf te boeken, en het daaruit voortvloeiende verlies aan flexibiliteit, is de Commissie niet bevoegd om beperkingen op te leggen, aangezien het beginsel van verplichte boeking is erkend bij Verordening 1371/2007 betreffende de rechten van reizigers in het treinverkeer ([1]). Het zou hoe dan ook twijfelachtig zijn om verplichte boeking als een onbillijke contractuele voorwaarde in de zin van artikel 102 VWEU te beschouwen.

Tot slot lijkt het akkoord van 3 december 2012 tussen de Nederlandse en de Belgische autoriteiten om vanaf 8 april 2013 een hogesnelheidsverbinding tussen Antwerpen en Breda te exploiteren, grotendeels tegemoet te komen aan de bezorgdheid over een gebrek aan spoorverbindingen tussen Nederland en België. Hoewel het er niet naar uitziet dat Den Haag door de Fyra zal worden bediend, is het (al dan niet) opnemen van bepaalde steden in een bepaalde treinroute geen kwestie die in het kader van EU-mededingingsregels kan worden behandeld.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1371/2007 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 23 oktober 2007 betreffende de rechten en verplichtingen van reizigers in het treinverkeer, PB L 315, van 3.12.2007, blz. 14. Zie met name artikel 3, lid 9, en artikel 9, lid 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011137/12
to the Commission
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(5 December 2012)

Subject: Train services between the Netherlands and Belgium from 9 December 2012

As from 9 December this year, the existing international train service between Amsterdam and Brussels, which has been operating since 1957, is to be discontinued. Not because there is no demand for it — on the contrary, the trains are always crammed with passengers — but because the consortium set up by the NS and NMBS/SNCB has reached the conclusion that more money can be made from passengers in this way.

The present regular train will be replaced with a high-speed train ('Fyra'). The consequences for passengers will be as follows:

— The difference in fares between the Benelux train and Fyra is enormous;

— It will be compulsory to reserve a seat for a particular time. It will be impossible to take the previous or the next train unless one is willing to purchase flexibility at a high price;

— Trains will be half as frequent;

— The train will by-pass certain cities, including The Hague, whose role on the international stage is not entirely negligible;

— Cheap fares will only be available to a very limited extent, and season tickets not at all;

— Passengers will have no alternative, as the Benelux service will no longer operate. This is in contrast to the situation in domestic rail services, where Fyra operates as an alternative.

The Belgian and Dutch passengers' organisations Rover and TreinTramBus have already submitted a detailed complaint to the European Commission describing the above disadvantages to passengers: http://www.treintrambus.be/images/stories/klacht_rover-ttb_inzake_treinverbinding_nl-be_vanaf_9-12-2012_v2.pdf

Does the Commission agree that the NS and NMBS are abusing their monopoly by forcing travellers to accept a service which is less flexible and more expensive and will erect a barrier between the Netherlands and Belgium, while there are no reasonable alternatives? If not, why not?

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

Article 102 TFEU prohibits the abuse by undertakings of their dominant position within the internal market or in a substantial part thereof. From the information currently at the disposal of the Commission, it is not evident that the NS and NMBS have infringed Article 102 TFEU.

Article 102 TFEU provides that an abuse may consist in *'unfair selling prices or other unfair trading conditions'*. The legal standard for establishing abusively high (excessive) prices is very high. Price comparisons between the Fyra high-speed train — which has a higher comfort level — and the previous intercity train would not necessarily indicate excessively high fares for Fyra. In addition, Fyra's fares remain below those charged by Thalys, which offers high-speed train services on the Amsterdam-Brussels route as well. Also the website of Fyra indicates that subscriptions have in the meantime been made available.

As regards the need to pre-reserve seats and the resulting loss of flexibility, the Commission cannot limit compulsory advance reservation which is recognised by Regulation 1371/2007 on rail passenger' rights ([1]). It would in any event be doubtful that compulsory advance reservation could be considered an unfair trading condition under Article 102 TFEU.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p.14. See in particular Articles 3(9) and 8(4) thereof.

Finally, it appears that concerns about a lack of rail connections between the Netherlands and Belgium have been addressed to a large extent by the agreement of 3 December 2012 between the Dutch and Belgian authorities to operate a high-speed rail service between Antwerp and Breda as of 8 April 2013. While it seems that The Hague will not be served by Fyra, the inclusion (or not) of certain cities on a given rail route is not an issue that can be addressed under EU competition rules.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-011138/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Verbas atribuídas às RUP entre 1994 e 2013

Tendo em conta que:

— O artigo 349.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia estabelece que a UE tem em conta a situação social e económica das Regiões Ultraperiféricas (RUP), devendo o Conselho «adotar medidas específicas destinadas, em especial, a estabelecer as condições de aplicação dos tratados a essas regiões, incluindo as políticas comuns»;

— A Comunicação da Comissão Europeia sobre «As Regiões Ultraperiféricas da União Europeia: uma parceria para o crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo» (COM(2012) 0287), datada de 20 de junho de 2012, salienta que «pretende apoiar as RUP na exploração de oportunidades de crescimento tendo em conta os seus trunfos e potencial»;

— O relatório do Parlamento Europeu sobre «O papel da política de coesão nas Regiões Ultraperiféricas da União Europeia no contexto da "Europa 2020"» refere que estas regiões devem ter «direito a um tratamento diferenciado e de conjunto, o que lhes permite tirar partido do nível máximo de apoios, independentemente do seu nível de desenvolvimento, de forma que as suas singularidades sejam suficientemente tidas em conta e protegidas»;

— Segundo a resposta dada pelo Comissário da Política Regional, Johannes Hahn, a uma pergunta por mim efetuada (E-0783/2010), foi possível entender que estas regiões receberam o seguinte financiamento entre 1994 e 2013:

— Ilhas Canárias: 5 866 milhões de Euros;

— Região Autónoma dos Açores: 2 970 milhões de Euros;

— Região Autónoma da Madeira: 2 147 milhões de Euros.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o montante que a Região Autónoma da Madeira, Região Autónoma dos Açores e Ilhas Canárias receberam em cada um dos três últimos períodos de programação de fundos estruturais, nomeadamente em 1994-1999, 2000-2006 e 2007-2013?

2. Qual o montante que a Região Autónoma da Madeira, Região Autónoma dos Açores e Ilhas Canárias receberam, de forma discriminada, por cada fundo estrutural (e.g.: FEDER, FSE, Fundo de Coesão, entre outros), em cada um dos períodos de programação financeira de 1994-1999, 2000-2006 e 2007-2013?

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

Os subsídios atribuídos às regiões ultraperiféricas da Madeira, dos Açores e das Ilhas Canárias ao abrigo dos fundos estruturais, desde o período de programação de 1994-1999 até ao atual período de 2007-2013, são os seguintes:

	1994-1999	2000-2006	2007-2013
Madeira	544 337 000	913 521 059	680 549 004
Açores	782 884 000	1 001 409 601	1 331 349 049
Canárias	1 676 033 297	2 906 547 940	1 765 693 155

Tal como consta da resposta à questão E-000783/2010 ([1]) do Senhor Deputado, convém lembrar que os montantes indicados compreendem todos os fundos estruturais, incluindo as contribuições do Fundo de Coesão, exceto no que se refere ao período de 2007-2013, em que os montantes não compreendem as contribuições atribuídas à agricultura e à pesca (que já não estão incluídas na categoria de fundos estruturais).

O Senhor Deputado encontrará em anexo um quadro com os montantes discriminados por fundo relativos a cada um dos três períodos de programação. ([2])

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

([2]) A discriminação por montante apresentada difere ligeiramente dos números constantes da resposta anterior devido à atualização das informações relativas a alguns deles (por exemplo, os montantes do Fundo de Coesão para 2007-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011138/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Funding allocations to the outermost regions

Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union establishes that the EU shall take into account the social and economic situation of the outermost regions (ORs) and that the Council shall 'adopt specific measures aimed, in particular, at laying down the conditions of application of the Treaties to those regions, including common policies'.

The Commission's communication 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' (COM(2012)0287), of 20 June 2012, emphasises the aim of supporting the outermost regions in exploiting opportunities for growth based on their assets and potential.

Parliament's report on 'the role of Cohesion Policy in the outermost regions of the European Union in the context of EU 2020' states that these regions 'are entitled to differentiated and holistic treatment, enabling them to benefit from the maximum level of support, irrespective of their level of development, so that their specific features are sufficiently considered and protected'.

According to the answer given by Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn to a question submitted by myself (E-0783/2010), I understand that these regions received the following amounts of funding between 1994 and 2013:

— Canary Islands: EUR 5 866 million;

— Autonomous Region of the Azores: EUR 2 970 million;

— Autonomous Region of Madeira: EUR 2 147 million.

Can the Commission say:

1. How much the Autonomous Regions of Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands received in the way of structural funds during each of the last three programming periods, namely: 1994-1999, 2000-2006 and 2007-2013?

2. Exactly how much the Autonomous Regions of Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands received from each structural fund (e.g. ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, etc.) during each of the financial programming periods (1994-1999, 2000-2006 and 2007-2013)?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(7 février 2013)

Les allocations accordées aux régions ultrapériphériques de Madère, des Açores et des îles Canaries au titre des Fonds structurels depuis la période de programmation de 1994-1999 jusqu'à l'actuelle période 2007-2013 sont les suivantes:

	1994-1999	2000-2006	2007-2013
Madère	544 337 000	913 521 059	680 549 004
Açores	782 884 000	1 001 409 601	1 331 349 049
Canaries	1 676 033 297	2 906 547 940	1 765 693 155

Comme indiqué dans la réponse à la question E-0783/2010 ([1]) de l'Honorable Parlementaire, il faut rappeler que «les montants indiqués comprennent tous les fonds structurels, y compris les contributions du fonds de cohésion, sauf pour la période 2007-2013 où les montants ne comprennent pas les contributions allouées à l'agriculture et à la pêche (qui ne sont plus dans la catégorie des fonds structurels)».

La Commission prie l'Honorable Parlementaire de bien vouloir trouver en annexe un tableau présentant les montants ventilés par Fonds pour chacune des trois périodes de programmation ([2]).

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

([2]) La ventilation des montants indiqués diffère légèrement de celle de la réponse précédente en raison de la mise à jour des informations relatives à certains chiffres (par exemple, les montants du Fonds de cohésion pour 2007-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011139/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: European Regional Development Fund

My attention has been drawn to complaints made by several municipalities in Latvia that the Cabinet of Ministers in Latvia is not respecting the principles of good governance laid down in the European Regional Development Fund Regulation. An alliance of several municipalities in Latvia is contesting the discriminatory manner in which projects have been selected for the allocation of funds from the budget, showing contempt for consultation with regional and local authorities, and blatantly allocating project funds to three preferred cities on the basis of political favour and not in accordance with the merits of individual project proposals from other regions of the country. In these times of economic austerity, Europe simply cannot afford loose budget supervision giving way to political cronyism and lining the pockets of the party faithful. These funds must be used properly and administered fairly to create jobs and achieve economic growth.

Can the Commission, as a matter of urgency, state what steps it is taking to supervise ERDF spending in Latvia to ensure that projects there are selected by a thorough process that ensures better and more effective spending to promote growth and jobs?

Can the Commission also clarify what powers it has to intervene at a pre-selection stage where corrective action would prevent taxpayers' money being spent in a manner that runs counter to the criteria and objectives of the European Regional Development Fund?

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

1. Following receipt of a similar complaint, the Commission has requested the Latvian authorities to provide information about the selection procedure in the affected measure and information about legal acts describing the set-up and functions of the Coordination Council recommending project ideas in this measure.

To make a qualified judgment about the issue Commission needs substantiated evidence of concrete cases. In the received complaint, such evidence was not provided. However, the Commission welcomes any further detailed information about concrete cases where it is suspected that correct selection procedures were not followed.

2. It is the Member State's responsibility to manage and implement programmes and to ensure that projects are selected in accordance with criteria applicable to the programme and that projects comply with applicable EU and national rules. The Commission is able to investigate either on its own initiative, on the basis of its ongoing monitoring of programme implementation and through audit work, or following complaints about any possible misuse of funds.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011141/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Carlo Casini (PPE) e Leonardo Domenici (S&D)
(6 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili chiarimenti sulla «Guida al consumo awake»

Il settore della carta tissue (carta utilizzata per ottenere prodotti monouso) sta attraversando una fase congiunturale particolarmente difficile caratterizzata da una drastica riduzione dei consumi e dai connessi riflessi negativi sui livelli produttivi e occupazionali.

Inoltre, il settore è già caratterizzato da una serie di problematiche riconducibili ai costi energetici, alle difficoltà connesse alla costruzione di impianti di termovalorizzazione per lo smaltimento degli scarti di lavorazione, agli elevati costi di trasporto e a carenze di carattere infrastrutturale.

La Commissione europea ha pubblicato di recente una «Guida al consumo awake» contenente consigli utili per uno stile di vita orientato a consumi più consapevoli e sostenibili.

Tra i vari suggerimenti indicati nella guida vi è anche l'utilizzo di strofinacci di tessuto, in luogo degli asciugatutto di carta, per l'igiene domestica in cucina e nel bagno.

Numerosi studi e pubblicazioni hanno evidenziato come la diffusione dei più comuni batteri (*E. Coli, Staphilococcus aureus, Campylobacter*), soprattutto in luoghi sensibili come la cucina di una casa o i bagni pubblici, sia soggetta a una drastica riduzione proprio grazie all'utilizzo di prodotti usa e getta come quelli di carta tissue.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, nonché dell'importanza dell'efficienza delle risorse e dell'utilizzo di prodotti sostenibili, può la Commissione:

1. far sapere se per la redazione della guida sono state consultate associazioni di categoria e di consumatori;

2. indicare se ritiene di poter fornire al consumatore un'informazione completa con riferimento ai vantaggi connessi all'utilizzo di un prodotto di carta in termini di sicurezza alimentare e di igiene personale;

3. delineare il quadro generale della situazione?

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

La *Guida al consumo Awake* è frutto di attente ricerche documentarie e sul campo, nell'ambito delle quali sono state condotti sondaggi d'opinione, analisi di studi e interviste ai consumatori in cinque Stati membri dell'UE. La Guida rientra nella campagna «Generation Awake!», che mira a diffondere tra i cittadini i messaggi dell'iniziativa-faro dell'UE «Un'Europa efficiente nell'impiego delle risorse», nata nell'ambito della strategia Europa 2020.

La campagna tocca temi che vanno dalle risorse naturali, quali il legno, l'acqua, il suolo, i metalli e i minerali, ad aspetti trasversali come il cibo, i trasporti e l'energia, nell'intento di indurre i consumatori a fare un uso più sostenibile delle risorse naturali. Affinché i messaggi siano comunicati con efficacia al pubblico destinatario, le informazioni fornite sono di carattere generale, di facile comprensione e non intendono presentare nel dettaglio tutti gli aspetti dei prodotti d'uso quotidiano menzionati nel sito web. È per questo motivo che la campagna non approfondisce temi quali la sicurezza alimentare e l'igiene personale.

Per quanto riguarda l'uso della carta, la Guida promuove l'uso efficiente e sostenibile dei prodotti di carta, sollecitando i consumatori a scegliere prodotti a base di fibre riciclate o la cui fabbricazione comporti un impatto ambientale minimo, attestato da appositi certificati o marchi (come, ad esempio, Forest Stewardship Council, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, Ecolabel europeo).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011141/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Carlo Casini (PPE) and Leonardo Domenici (S&D)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Should the 'Awake Consumption Guide' be clarified?

The tissue paper sector (paper used to produce disposable products) is currently experiencing a very difficult economic downturn due to a drastic drop in consumption and the ensuing negative repercussions on production and employment levels.

In addition, the sector is already facing a series of problems due to energy costs, the difficulties disposing of processing waste related to the construction of waste-to-energy plants, high transport costs and insufficient infrastructure.

The European Commission recently published the 'Awake Consumption Guide,' providing useful advice on how to adopt lifestyle choices aimed at better informed and more sustainable consumption.

Among other things, the guide suggests using a cloth instead of paper towels for cleaning the kitchen and the bathroom.

Numerous studies and publications have pointed out that the spread of the most common bacteria (E. Coli, Staphilococcus aureus and Campylobacter), especially in the key areas such as domestic kitchens or public toilets, is dramatically reduced by using disposable products such as those made of paper towel.

In the light of the above, and considering the importance of the efficient use of resources and sustainable products, could the Commission please:

1. State whether the Guide was drafted following consultation with trade and consumer associations?

2. Indicate whether it can provide consumers with comprehensive information on the advantages of using paper products with regard to food safety and personal hygiene?

3. Explain the overall context of this situation?

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

The Awake Consumption Guide was drafted following thorough desk and country research covering analyses of studies, opinion polls, as well as interviews with consumers conducted in five EU Member States. The Guide is part of the Generation Awake campaign, which promotes the messages of the Resource Efficient Europe flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 strategy to the general public.

The campaign messages cover natural resources such as timber, water, soil, air, metals and minerals as well as cross cutting issues such as food, transport and energy. It promotes a more sustainable use of natural resources by consumers. In order to efficiently communicate with the target audience, information is provided in a general, easy-to-understand manner, and excludes provision of detailed information related to all aspects of the use of daily products that the website refers to. Hence the scope of the campaign does not include food safety and personal hygiene in a comprehensive manner.

With regards to the use of paper, the Guide promotes the efficient and sustainable use of paper products, encouraging consumers to look for products made from recycled fibres or made with minimum environmental impact confirmed by relevant certificates or logos (e.g. Forest Stewardship Council, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, the EU Ecolabel).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011142/12
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(6 december 2012)

Betreft: Codering van noodcontactnummers in mobiele telefoons

Wanneer ambulancediensten in een noodgeval contact moeten opnemen met de naasten van een patiënt kunnen zij meestal beroep doen op de in de mobiele telefoon van de patiënt opgeslagen lijst met contactpersonen. Maar soms is het zeer moeilijk om snel de juiste contactpersoon in de lijst terug te vinden.

Amendement 1 op aanbeveling E.123 van de Internationale Telecommunicatie-unie bepaalt een taalneutrale en gestandaardiseerde code voor het opslaan van noodcontactnummers in mobiele telefoontoestellen, volgens de formule 0nX (waarbij n staat voor een cijfer van 1 tot 9 en X voor een eenduidig begrip, zoals „partner"). Hierdoor zal het noodcontactnummer altijd bovenaan de lijst van contactpersonen verschijnen.

Tegelijk circuleren alternatieve coderingen voor noodcontactnummers, zoals de ICE-code (In Case of Emergency) die ook via een aantal mobiele applicaties gebruikt wordt.

Plant de Commissie initiatieven om de Europese burgers te informeren over het nut van codering van noodcontacten in mobiele telefoons?

Kan de Commissie stappen ondernemen om de verwarring veroorzaakt door het gebruik van verschillende coderingswijzen in de EU, te voorkomen?

Erkent de Commissie de wenselijkheid van een geüniformiseerd systeem van codering?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(17 januari 2013)

De Europese Commissie vindt het zeer belangrijk dat toegang tot de hulpdiensten voor alle burgers efficiënt verloopt. Zij volgt de uitvoering van de desbetreffende bepalingen van het regelgevingskader voor elektronische communicatie daarom nauwlettend. Dit kader bepaalt dat de toegang tot het noodnummer 112 gratis is en dat de beller kan worden gelokaliseerd om snelle en efficiënte interventie mogelijk te maken.

Als de hulpdiensten de familie van de patiënt snel kunnen bereiken, zou hun interventie inderdaad efficiënter kunnen verlopen. De uitvoering van aanbeveling E.123 van de Internationale Telecommunicatie-unie is echter een bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

Vooreerst is het belangrijk om mensen bewust te maken van het bestaan van het noodnummer 112. Dit nummer geldt overal in de EU, maar jammer genoeg zijn betrekkelijk weinig mensen hiervan op de hoogte (ongeveer 26 % begin 2012). De Commissie dringt er bij de lidstaten op aan om deze situatie dringend te verbeteren en zal de prestaties systematisch vergelijken om de vooruitgang te monitoren. Een geüniformeerd systeem van codering zou deze inspanningen nog kunnen versterken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011142/12
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Coding of emergency numbers in mobile telephones

When ambulance services need to contact a patient's family or friends in an emergency, they can generally use the list of contacts stored in the patient's mobile telephone. However, sometimes it is very difficult to find the right contact on the list.

Amendment 1 to Recommendation E.123 of the International Telecommunications Union provides for a standardised, language-neutral code for the storage of emergency contact numbers in mobile phones, using the formula 0nX (where n stands for a figure from 1 to 9 and X for an unambiguous concept such as 'partner'). As a result, the emergency contact number will always appear at the head of the list of contacts.

At the same time, alternative codings are in use for emergency contact numbers, such as the ICE code (In Case of Emergency), which is also used by a number of mobile applications.

Is the Commission planning initiatives to inform European citizens about the usefulness of coding of emergency contacts in mobile phones?

Can the Commission take steps to eliminate the confusion arising from the use of different methods of coding in the EU?

Does the Commission recognise the desirability of a uniform coding system?

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

The European Commission attaches great importance to the availability of emergency services to all citizens in an efficient manner. It, therefore, closely monitors the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Regulatory Framework for electronic communications. The regulatory framework allows for free access to the 112 emergency number and caller location to enable quick and efficient intervention.

The possibility for emergency services to contact the patient's family quickly may indeed improve the efficiency of emergency intervention. However, the implementation of ITU Recommendation E.123 falls within the competence of Member States.

In a first instance, attention should be focused on raising awareness of the EU-wide 112 emergency number which remains unfortunately at relatively low levels (around 26% in early 2012). The Commission is urging Member States to take the necessary actions urgently to improve the situation, and will be benchmarking performance to monitor progress. These efforts could be further enhanced by the implementation of a uniform coding system.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011143/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Qualificação como entidade sujeita às regras da contratação pública
Tendo em conta que:

— Existem sociedades comerciais de direito privado que desenvolvem atividades que são passíveis de serem financiadas por fundos comunitários no exercício do seu objeto social, seja através de serviços por si prestados ou como concessionários de serviços anteriormente explorados por entidades públicas, como sejam as atividades de realização de cursos de ensino e formação profissional/profissionalizante financiados ao abrigo do FSE;

— No âmbito da sua atividade, estas empresas são financiadas ao abrigo dos programas operacionais no âmbito dos diversos quadros comunitários de apoio, nomeadamente programas cofinanciados pelo FSE;

— Estas sociedades têm vindo a ser qualificadas como entidade adjudicante pela autoridade de gestão do programa operacional que é cofinanciado pelo FSE, por entender que as mesmas devem ser consideradas como um «organismo de direito público», de acordo com a legislação comunitária e nacional em vigor;

— O n.° 2 do artigo 2.° do Código dos Contratos Públicos (CCP) vigente em Portugal acolheu o conceito comunitário de «organismo de direito público», recorrendo à estipulação dos mesmos pressupostos que já haviam sido adotados pela Diretiva n.° 2004/18/CE, no n.° 9 do artigo 1.°;

— Estas sociedades não preenchem o conceito de «organismo de direito público» por não se encontrarem preenchidos os requisitos para tal, nomeadamente, exercerem uma atividade com caráter comercial, não serem beneficiárias de financiamento público relevante para efeitos da verificação do conceito de organismo público ao abrigo da legislação e jurisprudência nacional e comunitária, e não serem financiadas pelas entidades referidas no n.° 1 do artigo 2.° do CCP, ou sequer por «financiamento público» em sentido amplo;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Pode a Comissão confirmar a não aplicação do estatuto de «organismo de direito público» às sociedades que reúnam tais requisitos e, consequentemente, que elas não se encontram sujeitas às regras da contratação pública para efeitos de financiamento do FSE?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão

(7 de fevereiro de 2013)

Em conformidade com a Diretiva 2004/18/CE ([1]), todos os contratos abrangidos pelo seu âmbito de aplicação devem ser adjudicados de acordo com os princípios gerais da igualdade de tratamento, da não-discriminação e da transparência e na observância dos procedimentos formais nela previstos.

O artigo 1.°, n.° 9, da Diretiva define como «entidade adjudicante», «o Estado, as autarquias locais e regionais, os organismos de direito público e as associações formadas por uma ou mais autarquias locais ou regionais ou um ou mais organismos de direito público». Define também um «organismo de direito público» comum qualquer organismo que cumpra cumulativamente as seguintes condições: ter sido criado para satisfazer especificamente necessidades de interesse geral com caráter não industrial ou comercial, ser dotado de personalidade jurídica e ser maioritariamente financiado por fundos públicos.

Essa definição foi interpretada pelo Tribunal de Justiça, que clarificou diversos aspetos relacionados com as condições cumulativas citadas. É necessário determinar para cada caso específico se um determinado organismo, incluindo uma empresa privada, corresponde à definição de «organismo de direito público».

Atendendo à informação fornecida pelo Senhor Deputado, a Comissão não está em posição de avaliar se as empresas em causa cumprem as três condições.

A Comissão salienta que, em certos casos, os contratos celebrados por organismos que não podem ser considerados como entidades adjudicantes mas foram subsidiados diretamente por essas entidades em mais de 50 % devem também ser adjudicados em conformidade com as normas da diretiva ([2]).

([1]) Diretiva 2004/18/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 31 de março de 2004, relativa à coordenação dos processos de adjudicação de contratos de empreitada de obras públicas, de contratos públicos de fornecimento e de contratos públicos de serviços (JO L 134 de 30.4.2004).

([2]) Artigo 8.° da Diretiva 2004/18/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011143/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Qualification as a body subject to public procurement rules

Certain private commercial companies carry out activities which may be financed by Community funds as part of their main social purpose, either through the services they provide, or as concessionaries providing services previously covered by public bodies, or through the provision of teaching and professional training courses funded by the European Social Fund.

To carry out these activities, these companies receive funding from operational programmes under the various Community support frameworks, namely programmes which are co-funded by the ESF.

These companies are usually categorised as 'contracting authorities' by the managing bodies of ESF-funded operational programmes, on the understanding that they should be viewed as bodies governed by public law, in line with current EU and national law.

Article 2(2) of the Portuguese Public Procurement Code (CCP) admits the Community concept of a 'body governed by public law', establishing the same criteria for their recognition adopted by Article 9(1) of Directive 2004/18/EC.

These companies do not fit the concept of a body governed by public law, as they do not fulfil these criteria, namely that they should carry out a commercial activity, not receive public funding entitling them to be classified as a public body under the terms of national and Community law and jurisprudence and should not receive funding from public bodies referred to under Article 2(1) of the CCP or from 'public funds' in the broader sense.

Can the Commission confirm the non-application of the status of 'body governed by public law' to companies with these characteristics and that they are not, therefore, subject to public procurement rules as far as ESF funding is concerned?

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

In accordance with Directive 2004/18/EC ([1]), all contracts falling within its scope should be awarded in accordance with the general principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination and transparency and the formal procedures provided for therein should apply.

Article 1(9) of the directive defines 'contracting authorities' as 'the State, regional or local authorities, bodies governed by public law, associations formed by one or several of such authorities or one or several of such bodies governed by public law.' It also defines a 'body governed by public law' as any body that meets three cumulative conditions: it must meet specific needs in the general interest that are not commercial or industrial in character, it must have legal personality, and it must, for the most part, be publicly financed.

That definition has been interpreted by the Court of Justice which has clarified several aspects related to the cumulative conditions above. Whether a specific body, including a private company, meets the definition of 'body governed by public law' needs to be determined in each specific case.

In view of the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission is not in a position to assess whether the companies in question meet those three conditions.

The Commission notes, that in certain cases, contracts concluded by bodies which do not qualify as contracting authorities but have been subsidised directly by those authorities for more than 50% shall also be awarded in compliance with the rules of the directive ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (OJ L 134, 30.4.2004).
([2]) See Article 8 of Directive 2004/18/EC.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011144/12
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Recomendaciones de la Comisión para reducir el desempleo de los jóvenes

A la vista de las alarmantes cifras de paro entre los jóvenes europeos (un 23 % de media en la Unión Europea y un 54 % en España), la Comisión Europea ha presentado hoy en su Comunicación «Moviendo los jóvenes hacia el empleo» una serie de recomendaciones con el objetivo de que los Estados miembros ofrezcan a los menores de 25 años una oferta de trabajo o de prácticas durante los cuatro meses posteriores al término de su educación o desde que empiezan a estar desempleados.

La Comisión propone que este ambicioso proyecto se financie en parte a través del Fondo Social Europeo. Para ello sería necesario que las próximas perspectivas financieras para el periodo 2014-2020 asignen a este instrumento al menos el 25 % de los recursos destinados a la política de cohesión, dotado con 76 000 millones de euros (8 053 millones de euros para España) en el periodo 2007-2013. Sin embargo, la última propuesta debatida en el último Consejo Europeo continúa concentrado los recortes en el capítulo de la cohesión.

— ¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión para obligar a los Estados miembros, especialmente a aquellos que tienen altas tasas de desempleo juvenil, a cumplir con estas recomendaciones?

— ¿Es consciente la Comisión de que en algunos países como España estas recomendaciones suponen intensificar el apoyo a las grandes y medianas empresas (PYMES) —cuyo número está decreciendo como consecuencia de la crisis— que son las principales creadoras de empleo y de contractos ¿? de prácticas?

— ¿Qué propuestas concretas va a presentar para impulsar el apoyo a las PYMES?

— ¿Por qué no se plantea la Comisión crear un fondo específico para estas recomendaciones?

— Siguiendo las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo de enero de 2012, la Comisión ha reasignado en España, desde principios de este año, partidas comprometidas de los Fondos Estructurales pendientes de asignación (un total de 82 000 millones de euros) a proyectos ligados al desempleo juvenil. ¿Tiene información la Comisión acerca de esta reasignación y de los programas que se han impulsado?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2013)

1. Además de su paquete de medidas en favor del empleo juvenil ([1]), la Comisión entabló negociaciones con los Estados miembros a la espera de la adopción, a principios de 2013, de una recomendación para que establezcan una garantía juvenil. Los Fondos Estructurales de la UE podrían respaldar estas medidas en 2014-2020. La Comisión supervisará su aplicación en el marco del Semestre Europeo.

2. Las PYME, en efecto, representan más del 67 % de los puestos de trabajo del sector privado (un 75,6 % en España) y sus necesidades específicas se tienen debidamente en cuenta en todas las políticas y programas pertinentes de la UE, incluida la reciente Comunicación sobre política industrial ([2]).

3. El apoyo al desarrollo de las PYME será prioritario en la programación 2014-2020 de la propuesta de Programa para la Competitividad de las Empresas y para las PYME, la iniciativa Horizonte 2020 y los Fondos de la Política de Cohesión.

4. La propuesta de Reglamento sobre el Fondo Social Europeo (FSE) incluye una prioridad específica en materia de inversión en favor de la integración sostenible en el mercado laboral de los «ni-ni». Las negociaciones sobre los futuros programas operativos también se centrarán en el apoyo del FSE a las garantías juveniles y a las actividades relacionadas con la Alianza para la Formación de Aprendices anunciada en el paquete de medidas en favor del empleo juvenil y en la Comunicación sobre un nuevo concepto de educación ([3]).

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final, de 5 de diciembre de 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 582 final, de 10 de octubre de 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 669, de 20 de noviembre de 2012.

5. En 2012, se reasignaron 294,2 millones de euros de recursos españoles del FSE para apoyar la empleabilidad de los jóvenes y los servicios públicos de empleo, y 975 millones de euros de los fondos del FEDER para a apoyar a las PYME en el sector agroalimentario en regiones con una elevada tasa de paro juvenil, a fin de facilitar el acceso a la financiación de las PYME innovadoras y apoyar a los sectores industriales estratégicos y la construcción y la renovación de infraestructuras de educación y formación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011144/12
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Commission recommendations for reducing youth unemployment

In light of the alarming European youth unemployment figures (averaging 23% in the EU and 54% in Spain), the Commission today presented a series of recommendations in its communication 'Moving youth into employment', aimed at encouraging Member States to offer under-25s a job offer or traineeship within four months of finishing their education or becoming unemployed.

The Commission proposes that this ambitious project be funded through the European Social Fund. To do this, the forthcoming 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework will need to allocate to the ESF at least 25% of cohesion funding, the budget for which was EUR 76 million (of which EUR 8053 million went to Spain) during the 2007-2013 period. However, the latest proposal discussed in the most recent European Council continued to focus on cuts to cohesion policy.

— What steps does the Commission intend to take to force Member States to comply with these recommendations, particularly those with a high youth unemployment rate?

— Is the Commission aware that in some countries, such as Spain, these recommendations mean increasing support to small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), which are the main creators of employment and traineeships, and whose numbers are decreasing due to the crisis?

— What specific proposals will the Commission present to increase support to SMEs?

— Why does it not consider the creation of a specific fund to support these recommendations?

— Following the conclusions of the European Council of January 2012, the Commission has in Spain, since the beginning of this year reallocated amounts issuing from the Structural Funds but still unallocated (a total of EUR 82 billion), to projects linked to youth unemployment. Does the Commission have any information about this reallocation and the programmes which have benefited from it?

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

1. Further to its Youth Employment Package (YEP) ([1]), the Commission started negotiations with Member States expecting the adoption in early 2013 of a recommendation for them to establish a Youth Guarantee. EU Structural Funds could support such schemes in 2014-20. The Commission will monitor their implementation within the European Semester exercise.

2. SMEs are indeed accounting for more than 67% of private sector jobs (75.6% in Spain) and their specific needs are duly taken into account in all EU relevant policies and programmes, including the recent Industrial Policy Communication ([2]).

3. Support to SMEs' development will be high on the 2014-20 agenda of proposed Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, Horizon 2020 and Cohesion Policy funds.

4. The proposed European Social Fund (ESF) Regulation includes a dedicated investment priority for the sustainable labour market integration of NEETs. Negotiations on future operational programmes will also focus on ESF support for Youth Guarantees and for activities within the frame of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships announced in YEP and in the Rethinking Education Communication ([3]).

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 final of 5 December 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 582 final of 10 October 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 669 of 20 November 2012.

5. In 2012, Spanish ESF resources worth EUR 294.2 million were rechanneled into supporting young people's employability and public employment services; while ERDF Funds worth EUR 975 million were reallocated to support SMEs in the agro-food sector in regions with high youth unemployment rate, to ease access to finance for innovative SMEs, to support strategic industrial sectors, as well as the construction and renovation of education and training infrastructures.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011145/12
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(6 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Destrucción de proyectos europeos de cooperación en Gaza

Durante los 8 días comprendidos entre el pasado 14 y el 21 de noviembre, Israel lanzó su terrorífica ofensiva sobre Gaza que ha causado incalculables pérdidas en la franja y que continuó hasta el alto el fuego declarado gracias a la mediación de Egipto. Esta ofensiva, con el objetivo declarado de detener los ataques con cohetes contra el territorio de Israel por parte de Hamás, supuso un continuo bombardeo de una de las regiones más densamente pobladas del planeta.

Durante esta ofensiva murieron 166 personas y 1 235 resultaron heridas en la Franja de Gaza, mientras que murieron tres ciudadanos en el lado israelí. Pero más allá de estas irrecuperables pérdidas y daños sobre vidas humanas, la ofensiva ha causado importantes daños materiales en equipamientos e infraestructuras que el sistema económico de Gaza tardará en ser capaz de reconstruir. El portavoz de Hamás, Taher al-Nunu, informó que la **ofensiva israelí a la Franja de Gaza causó pérdidas económicas que ascienden los 1 245 millones de dólares.** Los bombardeos provocaron la destrucción de 200 viviendas y al menos 8 mil se vieron afectadas por las explosiones.

Esta destrucción del patrimonio inmobiliario en la franja de Gaza tiene sus consecuencias, no solo sobre las propiedades de los palestinos residentes en la franja, sino también sobre los proyectos de cooperación y desarrollo llevados a cabo por diferentes organizaciones y Estados. Dentro de estos proyectos de cooperación al desarrollo*, uno de los principales agentes financiadores es la Unión Europea, que según datos de la Delegación en los Territorios Ocupados de Palestina ascendieron a aproximadamente unos 300 millones de euros en 2011. Entre estos proyectos se encuentran algunos referentes a la construcción de infraestructuras públicas en Gaza, que Israel considera como «edificios terroristas». En las respuestas a la preguntas parlamentaria E-8665/2010 la Comisión argumentaba que las «subvenciones concedidas a ONG casi siempre se transfiere al beneficiario al final del proyecto»*. Ante esta declaración deseamos preguntar:

1. *¿En cuánto cifra la Comisión las pérdidas en los proyectos financiados por la UE en Gaza durante la operación «Pilar Defensivo»?*

2. *¿Qué proporción de estos daños se han producido en bienes de proyectos no finalizados o cuya propiedad continuaba en manos de la UE?*

3. *¿Ha presentado la Comisión alguna queja por los daños en estos bienes, todavía propiedad de la Unión?*

4. *¿Considera la Comisión que se debe suspender el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel hasta que Israel responda por los daños causados en los bienes e intereses de la cooperación de la UE?*

Respuesta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de febrero de 2013)

1. Tras el reciente conflicto y a petición de la Oficina del Representante de la UE en Jerusalén Este (EUREP), el Grupo de Gestión Internacional (IMG) realizó una encuesta telefónica preliminar entre los beneficiarios del programa de reconstrucción del sector privado de Gaza para determinar si habían resultado afectados por la operación israelí.

De los 781 beneficiarios que respondieron, 192 registraron daños. De estos 192, el IMG ha clasificado los daños como sigue: 20 beneficiarios registraron «daños graves»; 75, «daños medios», y 97, «daños menores». La Comisión no ha recibido todavía ninguna evaluación de los daños realizada por la Autoridad Palestina. Aunque los resultados de esta encuesta preliminar deben tratarse con prudencia, es probable que sea alto el valor de los activos financiados por la UE destruidos durante las recientes operaciones de Israel.

EUREP ha pedido a IMG que proceda a una evaluación más detallada de los daños, realizando asimismo visitas sobre el terreno, lo que contribuirá a determinar el valor de los activos financiados por la UE dañados.

2. Este extremo todavía no se ha determinado por el momento. La evaluación aludida proporcionará seguramente esa información.

3. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría al punto 2. La UE se reserva el derecho a presentar una denuncia cuando esté en posesión de un informe detallado.

4. La UE sigue creyendo que una estrecha relación tanto con Israel como con los palestinos es la mejor base para potenciar la confianza en el papel de Europa como protagonista clave en el proceso de paz, en consonancia con su Resolución sobre Jerusalén y Cisjordania, de 5 de julio de 2012 (OP3).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011145/12
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Damage to European cooperation projects in Gaza

On 14th November 2012, Israel launched a deadly offensive against the Gaza Strip. The operation, which caused death and destruction, continued for eight days until the Egypt-brokered ceasefire took effect. The offensive was aimed at stopping Hamas from firing rockets at Israeli territory and involved constant bombing of what is one of the world's most densely populated areas.

During the offensive, 166 people were killed and a further 1 235 wounded in Gaza, while three Israeli citizens were killed. The offensive also caused considerable damage to goods, property and infrastructure, and the Gazan economy lacks the capacity to repair and rebuild quickly. According to Taher al-Nunu, the spokesperson for Hamas, the Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip caused up to USD 1.245 billion worth of damage. Two hundred homes were destroyed in the bombing, and at least 8 000 others have been damaged by the explosions.

However, damage to property in the Gaza Strip has consequences not only for Palestinians living in the area but for the cooperation and developments projects run by various organisations and countries. The European Union is one of the main financial contributors to these development cooperation projects. According to data from the delegation to the occupied Palestinian territories, Union funding amounted to approximately EUR 300 million in 2011. Some projects are focused on the construction of public infrastructure in Gaza, which Israel classifies as 'terrorist facilities'. In its answer to parliamentary Question E-8655/2010, the Commission said that any equipment supplied through 'grants with NGOs is almost always transferred to the beneficiary at the end of the project'.

1. What is the Commission's estimate of the cost of the damage done to EU-funded projects in Gaza by Operation Pillar of Defence?

2. How much of the damage has been caused to goods and property that are used in projects which have not been completed or that still belong to the EU?

3. Has the Commission lodged a complaint about the damage, given that the goods and property still belong to the Union?

4. Does it think that the EU-Israel Association Agreement should be suspended until Israel accepts responsibility for the damage it has caused to EU goods and property and to cooperation with the Union?

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

1. Following the recent conflict, and at the request of the EU Representative Office in East Jerusalem (EUREP), the International Management Group (IMG) undertook a preliminary phone-based survey among beneficiaries of the Private Sector Reconstruction Programme for Gaza to determine whether or not they had been affected by the Israeli operation.

Out of 781 beneficiaries who responded, 192 recorded damage. Of these 192, IMG has classified the damage as follows: 20 beneficiaries recorded 'major' damage; 75 'medium level' damage; and 97 'minor' damage. The Commission has not yet received any damage assessment from the Palestinian Authority. While the results of this preliminary survey should be treated with some caution, it is likely that the value of EU-financed assests destroyed by the recent Israeli operations is significant.

EUREP has asked IMG to proceed with a more thorough assessment of the damage (including field visits) which will help to determine the value of the EU-financed damaged assets.

2. At the moment this has not yet been determined. The assessment referred to above should provide this information.

3. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to point 2. The EU reserves the right to lodge a complaint when in possession of a detailed report.

4. The EU continues to believe that a strong relationship with both Israel and the Palestinians provides the best platform from which to enhance trust in Europe's role as a key actor in the peace process, in line with Parliament's 5 July 2012 resolution (OP3) on Jerusalem and the West Bank.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011146/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 Δεκεμβρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Παραβιάσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στη Νότια Υεμένη

Η νέα έκθεση της Διεθνούς Αμνηστίας για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα στην Υεμένη με τίτλο «Conflict in Yemen: Abyan's Darkest Hour» περιγράφει την κατάσταση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στην Ν. Υεμένη, μέρος της οποίας έχει επέλθει στην κυριαρχία της συγγενούς τρομοκρατικής οργάνωσης με την Al-Qaeda, Ansar Al-Shaira.

Μεταξύ άλλων, αναφέρονται περιπτώσεις όπου κατηγορούμενοι κρίθηκαν από αυτοσχέδια δικαστήρια και εφαρμόζοντας το ισλαμικό δίκαιο, καταδικάστηκαν σε δημόσια εκτέλεση, σταύρωση, ακρωτηριασμούς και άλλα βασανιστήρια.

Η Ansar Al-Shaira, εκμεταλλευόμενη το κενό που δημιουργήθηκε από την εμφύλια σύρραξη του 2011, εδραιώθηκε στην περιοχή, εφαρμόζοντας σε πολλές περιπτώσεις κοινωνική πολιτική, αντικαθιστώντας το κράτος. Η κλιμάκωση της κατάστασης έχει οδηγήσει πάνω από 250 000 πολίτες να εγκαταλείψουν την χώρα.

Λαμβάνοντας υπ' όψη την κατάσταση στην περιοχή, τις πράξεις βίας και τις παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, το ψήφισμα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου (7.7.2011) που εκφράζει την αλληλεγγύη του προς τον λαό της Υεμένης, καθώς και τις προσπάθειες της μεταβατικής κυβέρνησης με στόχο τον εκδημοκρατισμό της χώρας, ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος της Ένωσης, Catherine Ashton:

1. Κατά πόσο προτίθεται να προβεί σε δήλωση-στήριξη προς την κυβέρνηση της Υεμένης, προτρέποντας την αποκλιμάκωση της έντασης μεταξύ των αντιμαχόμενων μερών, προκειμένου η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση να συμβάλει στην παύση της συνεχιζόμενης παραβίασης βασικών ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων στην χώρα, καθώς και να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλίες για τον καλύτερο συντονισμό των προσπαθειών της διεθνούς κοινότητας στον πόλεμο κατά της τρομοκρατίας;

2. Κατά πόσο προτίθεται να υποστηρίξει την προσπάθεια της κυβέρνησης της Υεμένης για την προώθηση της μεταρρύθμισης και εξορθολογισμού των ενόπλων δυνάμεων στο πλαίσιο του κράτους δικαίου και του διεθνούς ανθρωπιστικού δικαίου, προκειμένου να αποφευχθούν οι παράπλευρες απώλειες αμάχων κατά τη διάρκεια πολεμικών επιχειρήσεων;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Φεβρουαρίου 2013)

Η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος παρακολουθεί συνεχώς την κατάσταση στην Υεμένη, μεταξύ άλλων μέσω της Αντιπροσωπείας της ΕΕ στη Sana'a. Καθόλη τη διάρκεια του 2012, η κ. Ashton εξέφρασε κατ' επανάληψη την υποστήριξή της στις μεταρρυθμιστικές προσπάθειες του προέδρου Hadi και προειδοποίησε τους «ταραξίες» να μην εκτροχιάσουν αυτή τη διαδικασία. Οι πράξεις βίας και τρομοκρατίας καταδικάζονται σε τακτική βάση μέσω δηλώσεων και συμπερασμάτων του Συμβουλίου, καθώς και μέσω των διαύλων του ΟΗΕ. Η ΕΕ διαδραματίζει ιθύνοντα ρόλο διασφαλίζοντας ότι η διαδικασία εθνικού διαλόγου καλύπτει όλα τα θέματα και εστιάζεται ειδικότερα στον ρόλο της νεολαίας, των γυναικών και της ευρύτερης κοινωνίας των πολιτών.

Η αναδιάρθρωση των σωμάτων ασφαλείας της Υεμένης αποτελεί ουσιώδη συνιστώσα της συμφωνίας μετάβασης και η κυβέρνηση σημειώνει πρόοδο όσο αφορά την υλοποίησή της. Η ΕΕ συνδράμει ενεργά την κυβέρνηση στις προσπάθειές της για την αναδιάρθρωση του τομέα ασφάλειας των πολιτών. Εξετάζεται το ενδεχόμενο να παρασχεθεί περαιτέρω ουσιαστική υποστήριξη με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στις πτυχές διακυβέρνησης και στη μεταρρύθμιση του τομέα ασφάλειας των πολιτών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011146/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights abuses in southern Yemen

The recent Amnesty International report on human rights in Yemen entitled 'Conflict in Yemen: Abyan's Darkest Hour' describes the human rights situation in southern Yemen, part of which has come under the control of Ansar al-Shari'a, a terrorist organisation affiliated to al-Qaeda.

Among other incidents, it mentions instances in which defendants were judged by impromptu courts applying Islamic law and sentenced to public execution, crucifixion, mutilation and other forms of torture.

Taking advantage of the vacuum created by the 2011 civil war, Ansar al-Shari'a established itself in the region, in many cases practising its own social policy, and replacing the state. The escalation of the situation has led to over 250 000 people fleeing the country.

Bearing in mind the situation in the region, the acts of violence and human rights violations, the European Parliament resolution (07.07.2011) expressing solidarity with the people of Yemen and the transitional government's efforts to democratise the country, will the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, say:

1. Does she intend to make a statement of support to the Government of Yemen, urging an easing of tension between the warring parties so as to allow the European Union to help stop the ongoing violations of basic human rights in the country and take steps to better coordinate efforts by the international community in the war on terror?

2. Does she intend to support the efforts of the Government of Yemen to push ahead with the reform and reorganisation of the armed forces within the framework of the rule of law and international humanitarian law in order to avoid collateral civilian casualties during military operations?

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

The HR/VP continuously monitors the situation in Yemen *inter alia* through the EU Delegation in Sana'a. Throughout this year, on several occasions, the HR/VP has expressed support for President Hadi in his reform efforts and warned 'spoilers' not to derail that process. Acts of violence and terrorism are regularly condemned through statements and Council Conclusions as well as through the UN channels. The EU plays a leading role in assuring that the National Dialogue process is all inclusive focusing specifically on the role of the youth, women and civil society at large.

The restructuring of the security forces in Yemen is a substantial element of the transition agreement. The Government is making headway with its implementation. The EU activiley accompanies the Government in its efforts of restructuring the civil security sector. Further substantial support is being considered with specific emphasis on governance aspects and civil Security Sector Reform.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011147/12
aan de Commissie
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) en Esther de Lange (PPE)
(6 december 2012)

Betreft: Discriminatie van ouderen in medisch onderzoek moet stoppen

Volgens Eurostat zal tegen 2060 de bevolking van 65 jaar of ouder 29,5 % van de totale bevolking van de EU-27 uitmaken (in vergelijking met 17,4 % in 2010). Het aandeel van de bevolking van 80 jaar of ouder zal tussen 2010 en 2060 verdrievoudigen. Dit heeft gevolgen voor de medische hulpverlening en ook voor het medicijngebruik:

— oudere patiënten gebruiken al meer dan 30 % van de voorgeschreven geneesmiddelen en meer dan 40 % van de receptvrije geneesmiddelen. In sommige landen nemen zij bijna 60 % van de totale uitgaven aan geneesmiddelen voor hun rekening;

— polyfarmacie neemt toe: volgens recente studies gebruikt bijna 40 % van de ouderen ten minste vijf geneesmiddelen; 12 % tot 20 % neemt er tien of meer;

— ongewenste voorvallen met geneesmiddelen doen zich zeer vaak voor bij oudere patiënten: gezien de hoeveelheid voorgeschreven geneesmiddelen die door ouderen worden genomen, is het duidelijk dat zij het grootste risico lopen op ongewenste voorvallen met geneesmiddelen, met alle gevaarlijk gevolgen van dien;

— veiligheid en doeltreffendheid: artsen zijn verplicht geneesmiddelen te gebruiken bij patiënten voor wie die geneesmiddelen nooit werden getest.

Desalniettemin wordt in het voorstel van 2012 van de Commissie voor een herziening van de richtlijn betreffende klinische proeven niet verwezen naar de deelname van patiënten van 65 jaar of ouder aan klinische proeven.

Kan de Commissie tegen deze achtergrond aangeven:

1. waarom zij bij het opstellen van het huidige voorstel voor de herziening van de richtlijn betreffende klinische proeven niet verwezen heeft naar de deelname van oudere patiënten aan klinische proeven?

2. of zij van plan is oudere patiënten op één of andere manier te betrekken bij klinische proeven (bijvoorbeeld door een commissie geriatrische geneesmiddelen op te richten als onderdeel van het Europees Geneesmiddelenbureau)?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie

(30 januari 2013)

Het voorstel van de Commissie voor een verordening van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende klinische proeven met geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik en tot intrekking van Richtlijn 2001/20/EG ([1]) is niet het passende instrument om de door de geachte Parlementsleden vermelde kwesties aan te pakken.

Het voorstel beoogt geen regels vast te stellen m.b.t. de aard van het onderzoek (bijv. onderzoek naar specifieke ziekten of groepen zoals vrouwen of ouderen), maar wel m.b.t. de wijze waarop alle klinische proeven, onafhankelijk van de betrokken producten, doelstellingen en doelgroepen, moeten worden aangevraagd, toegestaan en uitgevoerd. Als ouderen echter worden uitgesloten van een klinische proef, moet de opdrachtgever de uitsluitingscriteria rechtvaardigen en toelichten in het protocol dat moet worden ingediend om toestemming voor de klinische proef te krijgen.

Wat de tweede vraag betreft, wijst de Commissie de geachte Parlementsleden erop dat het Europees Geneesmiddelenbureau (EMA) in 2011 een Geriatric Expert Group heeft opgericht die wetenschappelijk advies geeft aan het Comité voor geneesmiddelen voor menselijk gebruik (CHMP) en het EMA-secretariaat over kwesties m. b. t. ouderen. Bovendien heeft het EMA richtsnoeren ([2]) bekendgemaakt om te garanderen dat een representatief aantal oudere patiënten deelneemt aan de klinische proeven.

([1]) COM(2012) 369 definitief. 2012/0192 (COD).
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/10/WC500005218.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011147/12
to the Commission
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) and Esther de Lange (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Need to end discrimination against older people in medical research

According to Eurostat, those aged 65 years or over will account for 29.5% of the population of EU-27 by 2060 (compared to 17.4% in 2010). The share of those aged 80 years or over will triple between 2010 and 2060. This has implications for healthcare provision and also for medicine use:

— older patients already use more than 30% of prescribed medicines and more than 40% of over-the-counter medicines. In some countries, they account for up to 60% of total pharmaceutical expenditure:

— polypharmacy is on the increase: according to recent studies, up to 40% of the older population uses at least 5 medicines; 12% to 20% uses 10 or more;

— adverse medicine events (ADEs) are very common in older patients: given the quantities of medicines prescribed and taken by older people, it is clear that older subjects have the highest risk of developing ADEs, with all the dangerous consequences this entails;

— safety and efficacy: physicians (are obliged to) use medicines for patients for whom these medicines have never been tested.

Despite the above, the 2012 Commission proposal for a revised Clinical Trials Directive makes no reference to the inclusion of patients of 65 years or older in clinical trials.

In view of the above, will the Commission indicate:

1. Why it failed to make any reference to the inclusion of older patients in clinical trials when finalising the current proposal for a revised Clinical Trials Directive?

2. Whether it intends to include older patients in clinical trials in any way (e.g. by setting up a formal geriatric medicine committee within the EMA)?

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

The Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on clinical trials on medicinal products for human use and repealing Directive 2001/20/EC [1] is not the appropriate tool to address the issues raised by the Honourable Members.

The proposal does not aim at regulating what kind of research should be conducted (e.g. on particular diseases or groups such as women or the elderly), but how all clinical trials — independently of their subject, goals and target populations — should be applied for, authorised and conducted. However, if elderly persons are excluded from the clinical trial, the sponsor is obliged to justify and explain the exclusion criteria in the protocol to be submitted for obtaining the authorisation to conduct the clinical trial.

Concerning the second question, the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Members that the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has created in 2011 a Geriatric Expert Group providing scientific advice to the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) and the European Medicines Agency secretariat on issues related to the elderly. Furthermore, EMA has issued guidelines [2] aiming at ensuring that a representative number of older patients is included in the clinical trials.

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[1] COM(2012) 369 final. 2012/0192 (COD).
[2] http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2009/10/WC500005218.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011148/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de diciembre de 2012)

Asunto: Seguimiento de la pregunta parlamentaria E-008550/2012, relativa al transporte de animales — número de animales inspeccionados durante su transporte a España

En relación con mi pregunta parlamentaria E-008550/2012 y la respuesta de la Comisión, parece que aquella no fue comprendida correctamente, ya que la respuesta no tiene en cuenta los datos incluidos.

Los hechos expuestos en la pregunta llevan a pensar que los controles oficiales realizados en España no son eficaces o adecuados.

Por consiguiente, se solicita a la Comisión que responda a las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Puede complementar su respuesta a mi pregunta parlamentaria E-008550/2012?

2. En cuanto a la respuesta al segundo punto de esa pregunta:

— ¿En qué consiste exactamente la «gran importancia que se concede al bienestar de los animales en el artículo 13 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE)», ya que, según indicó la Comisión, «en este artículo no se impone ninguna obligación concreta a la Unión ni a los Estados miembros»?

3. En cuanto a la respuesta al tercer punto de esa pregunta:

— ¿Qué aspectos podrían dificultar la aplicación de la legislación si se aprueba un límite máximo de ocho horas de desplazamiento, siendo que (como se explica en la pregunta en cuestión) la legislación sería mucho menos compleja (al quedar obsoletos los requisitos adicionales para el transporte de larga distancia)?

— ¿Qué clase de evaluación consideraría adecuada la Comisión para averiguar si un cambio en la legislación con el fin de establecer un límite máximo de ocho horas de desplazamiento facilitaría la aplicación de la legislación, o bien la dificultaría?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de enero de 2013)

1. Con arreglo al artículo 26 del Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 ([1]), sobre los controles oficiales, los Estados miembros deben velar por que existan los recursos económicos adecuados para facilitar los recursos humanos y de otro tipo necesarios para efectuar los controles oficiales por cualesquiera medios que se consideren oportunos, incluida la imposición general o el establecimiento de tasas o gravámenes.

2. El artículo 13 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea concede una importancia de principio al bienestar de los animales cuando dispone que, al formular y aplicar las políticas de la Unión en materia de agricultura, pesca, transporte, mercado interior, investigación y desarrollo tecnológico y espacio, la Unión y los Estados miembros han de tener plenamente en cuenta las exigencias en materia de bienestar de los animales como seres sensibles. La preocupación por el bienestar de los animales debe equilibrarse con los objetivos del Tratado vinculados a dichas políticas, así como con otros objetivos de interés general.

3. La respuesta original señalaba que la Comisión, como práctica general, prefiere no formular conclusión alguna en relación con la aplicabilidad de la legislación de la Unión sin disponer de una evaluación de impacto adecuada del asunto. A falta de pruebas científicas que respalden la introducción de un límite de ocho horas de tiempo de transporte para todas las especies, la Comisión no considera que la realización de dicha evaluación de impacto esté justificada; por tanto, en este caso no se plantea la cuestión de qué tipo de evaluación se precisaría.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 29 de abril de 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).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011148/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Follow-up to Parliamentary Question E-008550/2012 on animal transport — number of animals inspected during transport in Spain

With reference to my Parliamentary Question E-008550/2012 and the Commission's reply to it, it seems that the question was misunderstood, since the answer does not take into account the data included.

It is apparent from the facts set out in the question that official controls conducted in Spain are not effective or appropriate.

Accordingly, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Could it supplement its answer to my Parliamentary Question E-008550/2012?

2. Concerning the reply given to the second part of that question:

— In what exactly does the 'general importance given to animal welfare by Article 13 of the Treaty' consist, given that, as the Commission stated, Article 13 'does not impose any concrete obligations upon the Union and the Member States'?

3. Concerning the reply given to the third part of that question:

— Which aspects could possibly lead to more difficult enforcement with a maximum eight-hour journey limit in place, given that (as explained in the aforementioned question) the legislation would be much less complex (since all the additional requirements for long-distance transport would be obsolete)?

— What kind of assessment would the Commission consider appropriate in order to ascertain whether a change to the legislation for the purpose of establishing a maximum eight-hour journey limit would make it easier or more difficult to enforce?

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

1. According to Article 26 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls ([1]) 'Member States shall ensure that adequate financial resources are available to provide the necessary staff and other resources for official controls by whatever means considered appropriate, including through general taxation or by establishing fees or charges'.

2. Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives general importance to animal welfare by providing that, when formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space policies, the Union and the Member States shall take into account that animals are sentient beings. Animal welfare concerns must be balanced against the objectives of the Treaty attached to these policies as well as against other objectives of general interest.

3. The original reply pointed out that the Commission as a general practice preferred not draw any conclusions regarding the enforceability of Union legislation in the absence of a proper impact assessment of the issue. In the absence of scientific evidence supporting the introduction of an eight hour transport time limit for all species, the Commission does not consider that performing such an impact assessment is warranted and consequently the question of which type of assessment would be required does not arise in this case.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rule OJ L 165, 30.4.2004.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011149/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Förderung von Online-Sprachkursen

Das Generaldirektorat Bildung und Kultur der Europäischen Kommission fördert im Rahmen des Programms für lebenslanges Lernen das Projekt „Slovake.eu", das kostenlose Online-Kurse für die slowakische Sprache anbietet.

1. Fördert die Kommission weitere Online-Sprachkurse? Wenn ja, welche Projekte sind dies, und welche Sprachen lehren diese jeweils? Falls es sich um mehr als zehn Projekte handelt, wird die Kommission um eine Aufschlüsselung in Tabellenform nach Projekt und Sprache ersucht.

2. Auf welche Summe beläuft sich die Förderung pro Sprache?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(23. Januar 2013)

Die Kommission fördert mehrere Projekte auf dem Gebiet des Sprachenlernens, hauptsächlich im Rahmen der Schwerpunktaktivität 2 (Sprachen) des Programms für lebenslanges Lernen.

Von 2007 bis 2011 hat die Kommission vor allem zwei Online-Sprachkurse gefördert, und zwar einen für Slowakisch und einen für Deutsch.

Bei dem ersten Projekt handelt es sich um das von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannte „Slovake.eu" (Bezugsnr. 2009 — 504873-LLP-1-2009-1-SK-KA2-KA2MP). Dieser Kurs umfasst die Stufen A1 und A2 des gemeinsamen europäischen Referenzrahmens für Sprachen. Das Projekt wurde 24 Monate lang mit insgesamt 255 819 EUR gefördert.

Das zweite größere Projekt ist „Deutsch online" (Bezugsnr. 2011 — 519124-LLP-1-2011-1-SK-KA2-KA2MP). Dieser Kurs umfasst die Stufen A1 bis B1 des gemeinsamen europäischen Referenzrahmens für Sprachen. Das Projekt wurde 24 Monate lang mit insgesamt 364 391 EUR gefördert.

Die Kommission fördert zudem weitere Projekte, die IKT-Tools als Ressourcen für das Sprachenlernen entwickeln. Ein umfassenderes Verzeichnis der Projekte im Bereich des Sprachenlernens kann der Herr Abgeordnete den Projektkompendien auf der Website der Exekutivagentur für Bildung, Audiovisuelles und Kultur ([1]) entnehmen.

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/project_compendia_en.php.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011149/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Support for online language courses

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture supports, in the framework of the lifelong learning programme, the 'Slovake.eu' project which provides online Slovak language courses free of charge.

1. Does the Commission support any other online language courses? If so, what are the projects in question and what languages are taught in each case? If there are more than ten such projects, the Commission is requested to provide a breakdown by project and by language in table format.

2. What is the amount of support provided per language?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2013)

The Commission supports several projects on language learning, mainly in the framework of Key Activity 2 (Languages) of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

From 2007 to 2011 the Commission has supported two main online language courses, one for Slovak and one for German.

The first project is 'Slovake.eu' (reference 2009 — 504873-LLP-1-2009-1-SK-KA2-KA2MP), which the Honourable Member mentions. This course covers levels A1 and A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The project received a grant amounting to EUR 255 819 for a duration of 24 months.

The second main project is 'Deutsch online' (reference 2011 — 519124-LLP-1-2011-1-SK-KA2-KA2MP). This course covers levels A1 to B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The project has received a grant amounting to EUR 364 391 for 24 months.

The Commission also supports other projects that develop resources for language learning through ICT tools. For a more complete list of projects supported in the field of language learning, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the Project Compendia on the website of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency ([1]).

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/project_compendia_en.php.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011150/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Europäische Online-Universitäten

Einige US-amerikanische Bildungsprojekte, darunter insbesondere „Coursera“ , „Udacity“ und „EdX“ , bieten kostenlose Universitätskurse oder Kurse auf Universitätsniveau über das Internet an. Einige Projekte wie die „University of the People“ wollen komplette Studienprogramme mit zertifizierten Abschlüssen online anbieten.

1. Sieht die Kommission die Möglichkeit, eigene, der EU unterstehende Online-Universitäten — ähnlich staatlichen Hochschulen in den Mitgliedstaaten — einzurichten?

2. Fördert die Kommission bereits bestehende Fernuniversitäten oder den Aufbau neuer Fernuniversitäten?

3. Fördert die Kommission bereits bestehende Online-Universitätsprojekte oder den Aufbau neuer Online-Universitätsprojekte?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(31. Januar 2013)

Die jüngsten Entwicklungen in der Hochschulbildung, die sich infolge der Nutzung neuer Technologien und der drastischen Zunahme neuer Online-Ressourcen ergeben haben, führen weltweit zu einem Wandel in der Bildungslandschaft.

Die Europäische Kommission wird daher Anfang 2013 eine neue Strategie zur „Öffnung der Bildungssysteme“ vorlegen, eine EU-Initiative zum verstärkten Ausbau des Bildungsangebots und der Fertigkeiten durch den Einsatz neuer Technologien. Diese Initiative schließt an die Strategie der Kommission „Neue Denkanstöße für die Bildung“ vom November 2012 und an die EU-Strategie zur Modernisierung der Hochschulbildung an, die im September 2011 verabschiedet wurde.

Ungeachtet dessen obliegt die Gestaltung der Bildungssysteme ausschließlich den Mitgliedstaaten und/oder den regionalen Behörden; die EU ist nicht befugt, auf EU-Ebene Online-Universitäten einzurichten. Dennoch kann viel getan werden, um die Mitgliedstaaten und ihre Hochschuleinrichtungen dabei zu unterstützen, die Vorteile der neuen Technologien zu nutzen und im Rahmen von EU-Förderprogrammen wie dem geplanten Angebot „Erasmus für alle“ sowie von Kooperationsstrategien mit anderen Mitgliedstaaten zusammenzuarbeiten ([1]).

Schon jetzt werden sowohl Fernuniversitäten als auch virtuelle Mobilitätsprogramme „herkömmlicher“ Hochschuleinrichtungen durch EU-Programme gefördert. Online-Universitätsprojekte beispielsweise sind in den Erasmus-Projektkompendien zusammengefasst: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/multilateral-projects_de.htm

Besonders interessant sind in diesem Zusammenhang die Projekte „Virtuelle Hochschulen“, die im Kompendium für 2010 auf Seite 77ff. beschrieben sind:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/documents/erasmus_compendium_2010_de.pdf

([1]) Siehe auch die Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-011025/12 unter: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=AB42BF08307B69D26C64F32934237840.node1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011150/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: European online universities

In the USA several education projects, in particular 'Coursera', 'Udacity' and 'EdX', offer university or university-level courses free of charge via the Internet. Projects such as the 'University of the People' aim to offer complete study programmes online that lead up to certified diplomas.

1. Does the Commission see any possibility to establish online universities at EU level, along the lines of state-run higher-education institutions in the Member States?

2. Does the Commission support existing distance-learning universities or the setting up of new distance-learning universities?

3. Does the Commission support existing online university projects or the setting up of new online university projects?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2013)

The very latest developments in higher education, which result from the use of new technologies and the dramatic expansion of new online resources, are significantly reshaping the education landscape across the world.

For this reason, early in 2013, the European Commission is expected to present a new strategy on 'Opening Up Education', a European initiative to enhance education and skills development through new technologies. This comes as a follow-up to both the 'Rethinking Education' package adopted by the Commission in November 2012 and the EU Strategy on the Modernisation of Higher Education, adopted in September 2011.

Nonetheless, the organisation of education systems is the sole responsibility of Member States and/or regional administrations; the EU has no competence to establish online universities at the EU level. However, much can be done to support Member States and their higher education institutions to harness the benefits of new technologies and to cooperate across borders both via EU funding programmes, such as the future 'Erasmus for All' programme, and through policy cooperation between Member States ([1]).

Both distance-learning universities and virtual-mobility programmes at 'traditional' higher education institutions are already supported through EU programmes. For examples of online university projects, see the Compendia of Erasmus projects: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/multilateral-projects_en.htm

§Of particular interest will be the 'virtual campus' projects, from page 49 onwards of the 2010 Compendium (http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/compendium2010_en.pdf).

([1]) See also response to E-011025/12 available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011151/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Förderung öffentlicher und privater Bahnhofsumbauten und -erweiterungen

In Österreich sollen Medienberichten zufolge Bahnhöfe öffentlicher Verkehrsgesellschaften an private Investoren verkauft werden. Bei einigen Bahnhöfen in Deutschland, so zum Beispiel beim Hauptbahnhof in Stuttgart, werden Umbau- oder Erweiterungsmaßnahmen im Rahmen der Europäischen Verkehrsnetze durch EU-Gelder gefördert.

1. Ist es bei der Vergabe von EU-Fördergeldern für Umbau- oder Erweiterungsmaßnahmen von Bahnhöfen relevant, ob sich ein Bahnhof in privater oder öffentlicher Hand befindet?

2. Falls sowohl bei privaten als auch bei in öffentlicher Hand befindlichen Bahnhöfen EU-Fördergelder für Projekte zur Verfügung gestellt werden, wird die Kommission um folgende Auskünfte ersucht: Wie viele Bahnhofsprojekte für Bahnhöfe in privater Hand und wie viele Bahnhofsprojekte für Bahnhöfe in öffentlicher Hand wurden seit 2004 im Rahmen der Europäischen Verkehrsnetze gefördert?

3. Gibt es nach Erhalt von EU-Fördergeldern für Bahnhofsumbauten oder -erweiterungen Beschränkungen für die Privatisierung beziehungsweise den Verkauf von Bahnhöfen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(5. Februar 2013)

1. Nein.

2. In der Mehrzahl der Fälle sind die Bahnhöfe Eigentum von staatseigenen Infrastrukturbetreibern oder Eisenbahnunternehmen. In sehr wenigen Ausnahmefällen befinden sich die Bahnhöfe in privater Hand.

Im Rahmen des TEN-V-Programms ([1]) sind Finanzhilfen für Baumaßnahmen an Bahnhöfen ausdrücklich ausgeschlossen. Es ist nicht das Gebäude als solches, sondern vielmehr die Funktion des Bahnhofs, die im Fokus der TEN-V-Politik der EU steht. Der Bahnhof ist ein Ort, zu dem bzw. von dem aus Menschen und Güter befördert werden und der den Übergang auf andere Verkehrsmittel ermöglicht.

Wie bei der Kohäsionspolitik und entsprechend dem Prinzip der geteilten Mittelverwaltung fällt die Durchführung in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten. Dem Herrn Abgeordneten wird daher nahegelegt, sich direkt mit den Verwaltungsbehörden in Verbindung zu setzen. Die Kontaktdaten finden Sie auf der folgenden Website: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/manage/authority/authority_de.cfm

3. Falls ein Vorhaben innerhalb von fünf Jahren nach dessen Abschluss eine wesentliche Änderung erfährt, wird der EU-Beitrag zu diesem Projekt wieder eingezogen. Gemäß Artikel 57 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1083/2006 des Rates ergibt sich eine wesentliche Änderung aus einem Wechsel der Besitzverhältnisse bei einer Infrastruktur oder aus der Einstellung einer Produktionstätigkeit, die die Art oder die Durchführungsbedingungen des Vorhabens beeinträchtigt oder einem Unternehmen oder einer öffentlichen Körperschaft einen ungerechtfertigten Vorteil verschafft.

([1]) Siehe Verordnung (EG) Nr. 680/2007 des Rates vom 20. Juni 2007 über die Grundregeln für die Gewährung von Gemeinschaftszuschüssen für transeuropäische Verkehrs- und Energienetze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011151/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Funding of renovation and development of public and privately-owned railway stations

According to media reports, stations in Austria owned by public transport companies are to be sold to private investors. Some stations in Germany, for example Stuttgart Hauptbahnhof, have received EU funds for renovation and development works under the European transport networks.

1. Does the fact that a station is publically or privately owned have any bearing on the award of EU funds for renovation or development?

2. If EU funds are made available for both private and publically-owned stations, the following information is requested of the Commission: how many projects involving privately-owned stations and how many projects involving publically-owned stations have been funded in connection with the European transport networks since 2004?

3. Once EU funds have been received for station renovation or development, are there any restrictions concerning the privatisation or sale of stations?

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

1. No.

2. In the majority of cases railway stations are owned by state-owned infrastructure managers or railway undertakings. In very few exceptional cases railway stations are owned by private entities.

The TEN-T Programme ([1]) explicitly excludes funding for buildings in stations. It is not the building, but rather the function of the station which is the focus of the EU's TEN-T policy. It is a place where people and goods are shipped/transported to and from and which ensures intermodal links to other means of transport.

As for cohesion policy, due to the shared management principle, the implementation is the responsibility of the Member States. Therefore the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authorities. Contact details can be found at the following address: http:// ec.europa.eu/ regional_policy /manage /authority/authority_en.cfm

3. If a project, within 5 years of its completion, undergoes a substantial modification, the EU contribution to such a project is recovered. As referred to in Article 57 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 substantial modification is caused by a change in the nature of the ownership of the insfrastructure in question or the cessation of a productive activity affecting the nature of the implementation conditions of the operation or giving to a firm or a public body an undue advantage.

([1]) As referred to in Regulation (EC) No 680/2007 laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of the trans-European transport and energy networks.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011152/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Ottantatré milioni di profili Facebook: possibile violazione della direttiva 2009/136/CE sull'e-privacy

Facebook, il più famoso social network al mondo, conta ad oggi più di un miliardo di utenti registrati; di questi circa ottantatré milioni risultano essere «fake user», ossia profili falsi o duplicati. Tra i falsi account, circa il 4,8 % è costituito da profili «duplicati» ovvero da utenti che, oltre al proprio account personale, ne creano un secondo identico o di fantasia. Ammontano invece a circa l'1,5 % gli account «indesiderabili», cioè i profili falsi creati soprattutto per veicolare spam sulla rete.

Secondo le ultime stime, ogni giorno nel mondo oltre un milione di persone sono vittime della criminalità informatica. Soprattutto è preoccupante il pericolo della cosiddetta cyberpedofilia e del «grooming» da parte di utilizzatori di Facebook che hanno account falsi.

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

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione sopracitata;

2. quali misure ha adottato e/o intende adottare per contrastare il crescente fenomeno dei crimini informatici in Europa e tutelare, in tal modo, gli utenti della rete;

3. se sono state violate la direttiva 2009/136/CE, la direttiva 2009/19/CE, la direttiva 2002/20/CE e la direttiva quadro 2002/21/CE, modificate dalla direttiva 2009/140/CE, nonché la direttiva 2011/92/UE?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(28 gennaio 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione e condivide pienamente le preoccupazioni in merito all'aumento degli incidenti informatici e alle eventuali gravi ripercussioni sull'economia e sulla società dell'UE. Gli incidenti informatici possono essere causati non solo da atti criminali, ma anche da catastrofi naturali, errori umani o guasti tecnici.

Dal 2001, la Commissione ha preso una serie di iniziative per contrastare il crescente fenomeno della criminalità informatica in Europa e proteggere gli utenti della rete. La lotta alla criminalità informatica è integrata da iniziative sulla sicurezza di internet. Anche il quadro normativo riveduto per le telecomunicazioni ha istituito un quadro giuridico per la tutela dei cittadini e stabilito disposizioni specifiche sulla sicurezza. La strategia della Commissione per un'internet migliore per i ragazzi ([1]) mira a creare un ambiente sicuro per i minori, in cui sia i genitori che i figli possano disporre degli strumenti necessari per la loro protezione online.

Per intensificare la lotta alla criminalità informatica nell'UE e accrescere il livello di sicurezza, la Commissione sta elaborando, assieme al servizio europeo per l'azione esterna, una strategia congiunta per la sicurezza informatica, prevista per gli inizi del 2013.

In base all'attuale esame della Commissione, la situazione descritta non viola le direttive 2002/19/CE e 2002/20/CE, né la direttiva quadro 2002/21/CE modificata dalla direttiva 2009/140/CE, né la direttiva 2011/92/UE. L'articolo 13 della direttiva 2002/58/CE modificata dalla direttiva 2009/136/CE si applica alle «comunicazioni indesiderate», che includono la cosiddetta pratica dello «spamming», ma solo in presenza di specifiche condizioni. Alcuni aspetti della situazione descritta potrebbero rientrare nel campo di applicazione dell'articolo 13, purché sussistano tali condizioni.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-better-internet-children;
https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/ceo-coalition-make-internet-better-place-kids

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011152/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: 83 million Facebook profiles in possible violation of Directive 2009/136/EC concerning e-privacy

At present there are more than 1 billion registered users of Facebook, the world's most famous social network. Out of this figure, around 83 million are 'fake users', i.e. false or duplicate profiles. Around 4.8% of false accounts are 'duplicate' profiles, i.e. profiles of users who, in addition to their personal account, have created a second or fantasy identity. At the same time, around 1.5% of accounts are 'undesirable,' i.e. false accounts created chiefly for the purpose of spamming the network.

According to the latest estimates, every day more than 1 million people around the world fall victim to cybercrime. Of particular concern is the threat of cyber-paedophilia and grooming by Facebook users with false accounts.

In light of the above, can the Commission indicate:

1. if it is aware of the situation described above;

2. what measures it has taken and/or intends to take in order to combat the growing phenomenon of cybercrime in Europe and to protect network users;

3. whether Directives 2009/136/EC, 2009/19/EC and 2002/20/EC, the framework Directive 2002/21/EC amended by Directive 2009/140/EC, and Directive 2011/92/EU have been breached?

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

The Commission is fully aware of this situation, and fully shares concerns about the rise of cyber incidents and potential serious negative impacts on the EU economy and society. Such incidents might be caused by criminals but also by natural events, human errors or technical failures.

Since 2001, the Commission has adopted a number of policy initiatives to combat the growing phenomenon of cybercrime in Europe and to protect network users. The fight against cybercrime is completed by initiatives addressing Internet security. The revised Telecom regulatory framework also introduced a legal framework to protect citizens and specific provisions on security. The Commission's 'Strategy for a Better Internet for Children' ([1]), aims at creating a safe environment for children where parents and children are given the tools necessary for ensuring their protection online.

To step up the fight against cybercrime in the EU and to increase the level of security the Commission, with the European External Action Service, is currently working on a joint European Strategy for Cyber Security planned for early 2013.

The Commission's current assessment is that directives 2002/19/EC and 2002/20/EC, the framework Directive 2002/21/EC amended by Directive 2009/140/EC, and Directive 2011/92/EU are not breached by the situation described. Article 13 of Directive 2002/58/EC as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC applies to 'Unsolicited communications' which includes so called spamming behaviours but only under strict conditions. Some aspects of the situation described could possibly fall under Article 13 where these strict conditions are met.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/european-strategy-better-Internet-children
https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/ceo-coalition-make-Internet-better-place-kids.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-011153/12
a Bizottság számára
Gáll-Pelcz Ildikó (PPE)
(2012. december 6.)

Tárgy: Az egységes európai égbolt kezdeményezésből fakadó jogszabályi kötelezettségekről

Számos tagállam nem teljesítette az egységes európai égbolt (SES) kezdeményezésből fakadó jogszabályi kötelezettségeit, emiatt továbbra is késik a funkcionális légtérblokkok kialakítása. A kezdeményezés szerint a jelenlegi tagállami rendszereket európai dimenziójúvá kell alakítani. A tagországoknak 2012. december 4-ig kellett volna törvényben biztosítaniuk a jelenlegi 27 tagállami légtér helyett 9 funkcionális légtérblokk létrehozását, ez azonban nem valósult meg.

1. Reális kitűzött cél maradhat-e a 2030-ra történő teljesítés, abban az esetben is, ha a tagállamoknak a mostani részfeladatokat sem sikerül befejezniük?

2. Siim Kallas közlekedésért felelős biztos kijelentette, hogy a határidő lejárta után kötelezettségszegési eljárást fog indítani az összes renitens tagországgal szemben. Mikor kívánja megnevezni ezen tagállamokat, s milyen időtávon belül kívánja az eljárásokat elindítani?

3. 1993 óta 54 százalékkal nőtt a kontinens légi forgalma, ez részben a gazdasági aktivitásnak, részben az 1993-as piacnyitásnak köszönhető. A Bizottság szerint meddig lehet biztonságosan kezelni e megnövekedett forgalmat a funkcionális légtérblokkok létrehozása nélkül?

Siim Kallas úr válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. január 16.)

1. A Bizottság az elkövetkező hetekben az EU Pilot projektekkel kezdve kötelezettségszegési eljárásokat készül indítani egyes tagállamok ellen, a nem teljesített jogi követelményekre összpontosítva. Ezek után valószínűleg a működési követelmények további elemzésére kerül sor. A funkcionális légtérblokkokról szóló első EU Pilot projekt közzététele 2013 elejére várható.

2. A funkcionális légtérblokkok hiányában a kapacitás további korlátozása Európa légterének megóvása érdekében mindenképpen késedelmekhez vezetne. Néhány funkcionális légtérblokk már ma is kapacitási célkitűzései alatt teljesít. A forgalom megélénkülésekor, amely jelenleg 2015-re várható, de már 2014-ben megkezdődhet, a torlódás tovább fokozódik majd, – noha a biztonságot nem veszélyezteti – hacsak addigra nem történik javulás a funkcionális légtérblokkok tekintetében.

3. A Bizottság nyomon követi ezeket az egyéb tényezőket, és minden releváns problémára felhívja a tagállamok figyelmét, hogy azok még az előírt határidő lejárta előtt meghozhassák korrekciós intézkedéseiket.

4. A Bizottság tisztelettel kérdezi Gáll-Pelcz asszonyt, hogy milyen 2030-as határidőre utal.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011153/12
to the Commission
Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Legislative obligations resulting from the Single European Sky initiative

A number of Member States have not satisfied the legislative obligations resulting from the Single European Sky (SES) initiative, causing a further delay in establishing functional airspace blocks. Under the initiative, the systems currently in operation in the Member States must be combined in a European dimension. The Member States should have ensured, through legislation, the establishment of nine functional airspace blocks in place of the current 27 airspaces of the Member States by 4 December 2012, but this did not happen.

1. Is the 2030 deadline still realistic, given that the Member States are not even capable of performing the current individual tasks?

2. Commissioner for Transport Siim Kallas has stated that infringement proceedings will be initiated against those countries not complying with the requirements by the deadline stipulated. When does he intend to name these countries, and when does he intend to initiate the proceedings?

3. The volume of air traffic in Europe has increased by 54% since 1993 as a result partly of economic activity and partly of the opening-up of the market in 1993. In the Commission's view, how long can this increase in traffic be safely handled in the absence of functional airspace blocks?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2013)

1. The Commission is preparing infringement procedures against Member States starting in the next weeks with EU Pilots, focusing on the legal requirements not met. A further analysis on the operational requirements may follow. The first EU Pilot on Functional Airspace Blocks (FABs) will be published in early 2013.

2. In the absence of FABs, additional capacity restrictions, which protect Europe's skies, would still generate delays. Several FABs perform under their capacity targets already today. When traffic picks up, which is currently expected in 2015 but could also occur from 2014, this congestion will further deteriorate even though safety will not be jeopardised, unless FABs can be improved by then.

3. The Commission will monitor these other elements and, flag up any relevant issues with Member States to foster corrective action by them ahead of regulatory deadlines.

4. The Commission respectfully asks Mrs Gáll-Pelcz which deadline in 2030 she is referring to.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011154/12
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(6 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Verifica dello stato di diritto in Campania

Premesso che ancora di recente è stato perpetrato un orrendo crimine da parte di killer della camorra a Scampia, in Campania, addirittura all'interno di un asilo; che da molte parti in Italia si chiede l'intervento dell'esercito in Campania per ristabilirvi la legalità; e che, come da recenti segnalazioni della Corte dei Conti europea, vi è fondato sospetto sull'utilizzo dei fondi europei da parte della camorra,

1. Non ritiene la Commissione di dover disporre che il Commissario competente si rechi immediatamente in Campania, e in particolare a Scampia, per verificarvi la sussistenza dei parametri di rispetto della legalità, presupposto per il funzionamento dello spazio unico di libertà e giustizia previsto dal Programma di Stoccolma (2010-2014)?

2. Non intende la Commissione attuare un'urgente verifica sull'utilizzo dei fondi europei in Campania, Sicilia, Calabria e Puglia, al fine di controllare ogni e qualsiasi possibilità di utilizzo di detti fondi da parte di organizzazioni criminali di stampo mafioso?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(18 gennaio 2013)

I trattati non conferiscono alla Commissione alcuna competenza per intervenire in Campania al fine di ristabilire la legge e l'ordine. Gli Stati membri sono i responsabili del rispetto della legge e dell'ordine a livello nazionale nonché delle attività operative tra cui perseguire i criminali.

Relativamente alla seconda parte dell'interrogazione, la Commissione segue attentamente le politiche anti-corruzione in tutti gli Stati membri tramite il meccanismo di notifica dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione istituito nel giugno 2011. La relazione dell'UE sulla lotta alla corruzione sarà pubblicata ogni due anni a partire dal 2013.

Tutti i programmi dei fondi strutturali prevedono la verifica preventiva del rispetto dei loro sistemi di gestione e controllo e viene concordata con la Commissione una strategia nazionale di audit, a cui si aggiungono le verifiche contabili effettuate dalla Commissione stessa. Per attenuare i maggiori pericoli per la legalità e la regolarità della spesa, i programmi, le regioni e gli Stati membri maggiormente a rischio vengono individuati attraverso le varie indagini di verifica contabile. Riguardo all'Italia meridionale, la Commissione rinvia alle proprie risposte ai quesiti da 33 a 41 delle interrogazioni scritte indirizzate al commissario Hahn nel quadro della procedura di discarico del 2011, oltre alla risposta al quesito 34 relativo alla Campania.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011154/12
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Monitoring the rule of law in Campania

A horrendous crime has yet again been recently perpetrated by killers belonging to the Camorra, in Scampia, Campania — in a nursery, of all places. All over Italy there are calls for the army to intervene in Campania to restore law and order. Moreover, according to recent reports by the European Court of Auditors, there is good reason to believe that EU funds may have been used by the Camorra.

1. Does the Commission not agree that it should immediately send the Commissioner responsible to Campania, in particular to Scampia, to verify whether the law is indeed being complied with, which is a prerequisite for the functioning of the single area of freedom and justice provided for by the Stockholm Programme (2010-2014)?

2. Will the Commission not carry out urgent checks on the use of EU funds in Campania, Sicily, Calabria and Puglia, in order to check whether these funds may have been used in any way by mafia-style criminal organisations?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 January 2013)

The Treaties do not grant the Commission any competence to intervene in Campania to restore law and order. Member States are responsible for the maintenance of law and order at national level and for operational activities, including the prosecution of criminals.

The Commission also follows closely the anti-corruption policies in all Member States through the EU anti-corruption reporting mechanism set up in June 2011. The EU Anti-Corruption Report will be published every two years, starting in 2013.

All Structural Funds' programmes undergo a preventive verification of the compliance of their management and control systems and a national audit strategy is agreed with the Commission. The Commission also carries out audits. In order to mitigate the main risks to the legality and regularity of the expenditure, the riskiest programmes, regions and Member States are targeted through the various audit enquiries. As regards Southern Italy, the Commission would like to refer to its reply to Questions 33 to 41 of the written questions to Commissioner Hahn under the 2011 discharge procedure, as well as to the reply under Question 34 regarding Campania.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011155/12
an die Kommission
Burkhard Balz (PPE)
(6. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Schreiben der European Banking Authority (EBA) betreffend die Trilogverhandlungen zur Umsetzung der Basel III-Empfehlungen

Die EBA hat in einem Schreiben vom 5. November an den Ratsvorsitz, die Kommission und verschiedene Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlamentes ihre Bedenken über den Stand der Trilogverhandlungen zur Umsetzung der Basel III-Eigenkapitalvorschriften angemeldet. Unter Berufung auf Kontakte mit verschiedenen Interessenvertretern vertritt die EBA die Meinung, dass einzelne der gegenwärtig im Trilog zwischen Rat, Kommission und europäischem Parlament verhandelten Regelungen unangemessen wären. Die EBA unterstellt, dass Genossenschaftsbanken und Sparkassen beim gegenwärtigen Stand der Beratungen gegenüber Banken in der Rechtsform der AG bevorzugt würden.

1. Nach Gesprächen mit welchen Stakeholdern ist die EBA zu dieser Meinung gekommen?

2. Hat die EBA einen neutralen und transparenten Meinungsbildungsprozess initiiert?

3. Aufgrund welcher inhaltlicher Faktoren hat die EBA dieses Schreiben verfasst?

4. Wie ist die Auswahl der genannten Aspekte zu erklären?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(19. Februar 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Europäische Bankenaufsichtsbehörde (EBA) gebeten, die Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten zu beantworten. Die Antwort der Behörde wird die Kommission dem Herrn Abgeordneten so rasch wie möglich weiterleiten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011155/12
to the Commission
Burkhard Balz (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Letter from the European Banking Authority (EBA) concerning the trialogue negotiations for the transposition of the Basel III recommendations

In a letter to the Presidency of the Council, the Commission and various Members of the European Parliament on 5 November, the EBA expressed its concerns in relation to the status of the trialogue negotiations on the transposition of the Basel III capital requirements framework. Citing contacts with various stakeholders, the EBA expressed the opinion that individual provisions of the regulations currently under negotiation between the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament were inappropriate. The EBA believes that cooperative banks and savings banks were given preferential treatment in the discussions as they now stand, compared to banks with the legal form of public limited companies.

1. With which stakeholders did the EBA meet before reaching this opinion?

2. Did the EBA initiate an impartial and transparent opinion-forming process?

3. What were the factors upon which the EBA based this letter?

4. How can the choice of the relevant aspects be explained?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2013)

The Commission has asked the European Banking Authority (EBA) to provide a response to the questions raised by the Honourable Member. The Authority's reply will be sent by the Commission to the Honourable Member as soon as possible.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011156/12
adresată Comisiei
Nessa Childers (S&D), Minodora Cliveti (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) şi Emer Costello (S&D)
(6 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Legislația în materie de egalitate și pacienții care suferă de cancer

În anul 2008, în Europa au fost înregistrate peste trei milioane (3 208 882 ([1])) de cazuri de cancer. În plus, îmbătrânirea populației europene va determina creșterea continuă a acestui număr ([2]). Datorită progreselor înregistrate în tratarea cancerului, nu numai că ratele de supraviețuire sunt în creștere, dar mulți pacienți trăiesc mai mult cu această boală, cancerul fiind considerat într-o măsură tot mai mare drept boală cronică. Aproape jumătate dintre europenii care au supraviețuit cancerului au o vârstă mai mică de 65 de ani, iar mulți dintre aceștia sunt capabili și, în multe cazuri, dornici să lucreze. Cu toate acestea, mulți dintre ei întâmpină probleme la locul de muncă din momentul în care sunt diagnosticați și au dificultăți în accesarea unor prime de asigurare echitabile și rezonabile, uneori mulți ani după ce au supraviețuit cancerului. Drept urmare, unele state membre au extins legislația în materie de egalitate și/sau combatere a discriminării, precum și semnificația noțiunii de dizabilitate, astfel încât aceasta să acopere inclusiv pacienții care suferă de cancer și de alte boli cronice.

Poate Comisia să indice măsura în care pacienții care suferă de cancer sunt acoperiți, din momentul în care au fost diagnosticați, de actuala directivă privind ocuparea forței de muncă și de directiva propusă privind combaterea discriminării?

Dat fiind faptul că legislația în materie de combatere a discriminării a fost revizuită în ultimii trei ani, dar nu face nicio referire la pacienții care suferă de boli cronice, a luat Comisia în considerare posibilitatea unei legislații alternative, care ar putea fi mai extinsă și mai pozitivă în ceea ce privește domeniul de aplicare, cum ar fi, de exemplu, o legislație în materie de egalitate care să aibă la bază modelele olandez, belgian, britanic sau irlandez?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(5 februarie 2013)

Directiva 2000/78/CE ([3]) de creare a unui cadru general în favoarea egalității de tratament în ceea ce privește încadrarea în muncă și ocuparea forței de muncă instituie un cadru juridic pentru combaterea discriminării pe o serie de motive, inclusiv pe motive de handicap. Această directivă interzice discriminarea directă și indirectă, precum și hărțuirea și comportamentele constând în a ordona cuiva să practice o discriminare în ceea ce privește ocuparea forței de muncă. În plus, articolul 5 din directivă prevede principiul amenajării corespunzătoare pentru persoanele cu handicap care impune angajatorilor să ia toate măsurile corespunzătoare, în funcție de nevoi, într-o situație concretă, pentru a permite unei persoane cu handicap să aibă acces la un loc de muncă, să îl exercite sau să avanseze sau să aibă acces la formare, cu condiția ca aceste măsuri să nu presupună o sarcină disproporționată pentru angajator.

Directiva 2000/78/CE se aplică în cazurile în care cancerul a avut drept consecință un handicap. Curtea de Justiție a Uniunii Europene a clarificat deja conceptul de handicap și, în prezent, examinează un caz care se referă în mod specific la relația dintre boli și handicap ([4]). Comisia se așteaptă ca hotărârea care va fi pronunțată în acest caz să clarifice întrebarea referitoare la măsura și condițiile în care pacienții cu boli cronice sunt protejați de dispozițiile privind handicapul ale directivei.

([1]) GLOBOCAN 2008, IARC —23.4.2012.
([2]) J. Ferlay, P. Autier, M. Boniol, M. Heanue, M. Colombet & P. Boyle, „Estimates of the cancer incidence and mortality in Europe in 2006, Annals of Oncology", 7 februarie, 2007.
([3]) Directiva 2000/78/CE a Consiliului din 27 noiembrie 2000 de creare a unui cadru general în favoarea egalității de tratament în ceea ce privește încadrarea în muncă și ocuparea forței de muncă (JO L 303, 2 decembrie 2000, p. 16).
([4]) Cauzele conexate C335/11 și C-337/11, Ring și Werge.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011156/12
za Komisijo
Nessa Childers (S&D), Minodora Cliveti (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) in Emer Costello (S&D)
(6. december 2012)

Zadeva: Zakonodaja o enakosti in bolniki z rakom

Leta 2008 so bili v Evropi zabeleženi trije milijoni primeri raka (3.208.882 ([1])). Te številke bodo zaradi staranja evropskega prebivalstva samo še naraščale ([2]). Zaradi izboljšav v zdravljenju te bolezni se zvišuje stopnja preživetja, številni bolniki pa dlje živijo z boleznijo, kar se vse pogosteje razvršča kot kronična bolezen. Skoraj polovica bolnikov, ki preživi raka, je mlajša od 65 let in večina je zmožna, pogosto tudi voljna, delati. Vendar se številni posamezniki po postavljeni diagnozi srečujejo s težavami na delovnem mestu in pri dostopanju do pravičnih in razumnih zavarovalnih premij – včasih še leta po tem, ko so preživeli raka. Zaradi tega so nekatere države članice razširile svojo zakonodajo proti diskriminaciji in za enakost tako, da zajema tudi bolnike z rakom in drugimi kroničnimi boleznimi.

Ali more Komisija navesti, do katere mere bolnike z rakom že od postavitve diagnoze že obravnavata veljavna direktiva o zaposlovanju in predlagana protidiskriminacijska direktiva?

Glede na to, da že tri leta poteka revizija protidiskriminacijske zakonodaje in v njej bolniki s kroničnimi boleznimi niso omenjeni, ali Komisija razmišlja o možnosti alternativne zakonodaje, ki bi utegnila imeti širše in bolj pozitivno področje uporabe, kakor to velja za zakonodajo o enakosti po vzoru nizozemske, belgijske, britanske ali irske?

Odgovor Viviane Reding v imenu Komisije
(5. februar 2013)

Direktiva 2000/78/ES ([3]) o splošnih okvirih enakega obravnavanja pri zaposlovanju in delu določa pravni okvir za boj proti diskriminaciji zaradi vrste razlogov, vključno z invalidnostjo. Ta direktiva prepoveduje neposredno in posredno diskriminacijo, nadlegovanje in navodilo, ki napeljuje k diskriminaciji na področju zaposlovanja. Poleg tega člen 5 Direktive določa načelo razumne prilagoditve za invalidne osebe, ki od delodajalcev zahteva, da sprejmejo vse ustrezne ukrepe, kadar so v posameznem primeru potrebne, da se invalidu omogoči dostop do zaposlitve, sodelovanje ali napredovanje pri delu ali vključitev v usposabljanje, razen če bi taki ukrepi nesorazmerno obremenili delodajalca.

Če je invalidnost posledica obolenja za rakom, se uporabi Direktiva 2000/78/ES. Sodišče Evropske unije je že pojasnilo pojem invalidnosti in trenutno obravnava zadevo, ki se izrecno nanaša na razmerje med boleznimi in invalidnostjo ([4]). Komisija pričakuje, da bo prihodnja odločitev v tej zadevi pojasnila odgovor na vprašanje, v kakšnem obsegu in pod kakšnimi pogoji so bolniki s kroničnimi boleznimi zaščiteni z določbami Direktive, povezanimi z invalidnostjo.

([1]) GLOBOCAN 2008, Mednarodna agencija za raziskovanje raka, 23. april 2012.
([2]) J. Ferlay, P. Autier, M. Boniol, M. Heanue, M. Colombet in P. Boyle, Estimates of the cancer incidence and mortality in Europe in 2006 (Ocene pojavnosti raka in smrtnosti zaradi raka v Evropi v letu 2006, ni na voljo v slovenščini), Annals of Oncology, 7. februar 2007.
([3]) Direktiva Sveta 2000/78/ES z dne 27. novembra 2000 o splošnih okvirih enakega obravnavanja pri zaposlovanju in delu (UL L 303, 2.12.2000, str. 16).
([4]) Združeni zadevi C-335/11 in C-337/11, Ring in Werge.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011156/12
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (S&D), Minodora Cliveti (S&D), Alojz Peterle (PPE) and Emer Costello (S&D)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Equality legislation and cancer patients

In 2008, over 3 million (3 208 882 ([1])) cancer cases were recorded in Europe. In addition, the ageing of the European population will cause these numbers to continue to increase ([2]). Due to improvements in the treatment of cancer, not only are survival rates increasing, but many patients are living longer with the illness, which is increasingly classified as a chronic disease. Almost half of Europe's cancer survivors are under 65 years old and most of them are able, and in many cases willing, to work. However, many of these individuals face problems at work from the point of diagnosis, and challenges in accessing insurance at fair and reasonable premiums, sometimes many years after they have survived cancer. As a result, some Member States have widened their anti-discrimination and/or equality legislation and understanding of disability to include coverage for patients with cancer and other chronic diseases.

Can the Commission give an indication of the extent to which cancer patients are covered by the current Employment Directive and the proposed anti-discrimination directive from the point of diagnosis?

Given that the anti-discrimination legislation has been undergoing revision for three years, and does not make any mention of patients with chronic diseases, has the Commission considered the possibility of alternative legislation that could be broader and more positive in scope, such as equality legislation based on the Dutch, Belgian, UK or Irish models?

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

Directive 2000/78/EC ([3]) establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation lays down a legal framework for combating discrimination on a number of grounds, including disability. This directive prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, as well as harassment and instruction to discriminate in employment. Moreover, Article 5 of the directive lays down the principle of reasonable accommodation for disabled persons which requires employers to take all appropriate measures, where needed in a particular case, to enable a person with a disability to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training, unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer.

Where cancer has led to disability, Directive 2000/78/EC is applicable. The Court of Justice of the European Union has already clarified the concept of disability and it is currently considering a case specifically dealing with the relationship between diseases and disability ([4]). The Commission expects the forthcoming ruling in this case to shed light on the question to which extent and under which conditions patients with chronic diseases are protected by the disability-related provisions of the directive.

([1]) GLOBOCAN 2008, International Agency for Research on Cancer, 23 April 2012.
([2]) J. Ferlay, P. Autier, M. Boniol, M. Heanue, M. Colombet and P. Boyle, 'Estimates of the cancer incidence and mortality in Europe in 2006', Annals of Oncology, 7 February 2007.
([3]) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (OJ L 303 of 2 December 2000 p. 16).
([4]) Joined cases C335/11 and C-337/11, Ring and Werge.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-011157/12
a Bizottság számára
Gáll-Pelcz Ildikó (PPE)
(2012. december 6.)

Tárgy: A gyerekeknek szóló reklámok szabályozásáról

Az utóbbi évtizedben óriási sebességgel változott meg a kommunikációs technológia, s ezzel együtt a reklámozás felületei is kibővültek, mely által a gyerekek is egyszerűbben megszólíthatóvá váltak. A legnagyobb élelmiszer- és italgyártó cégek évekkel ezelőtt vállalták, hogy a túl zsíros, túl cukros vagy túl sós termékeiket a jövőben nem reklámozzák gyerekeknek, a szeptember végén nyilvánosságra hozott jelentés (A Junk-Free Childhood 2012) pedig azt vizsgálta, hogy ez a cél mennyire teljesült. A vizsgálat arra jutott, hogy még a cégek saját felméréseiből is az derül ki, hogy az egészségtelen ételek gyermekeknek való reklámozása az elmúlt hat évben alig negyedével esett vissza, sőt egyes országokban újra nőni kezdett: vagyis az EU Pledge-nek elnevezett kódex – amelyben hat éve számos európai iparági nagyvállalat vállalta a saját önszabályozását – sem érte el a kívánt eredményt. A legtöbb cég ugyan egyetért abban, hogy a fizetett online reklámok terén korlátozniuk kell magukat, de nem így látják ugyanezt a saját honlapjaikkal kapcsolatban, így azok továbbra is tele vannak boldog gyerekek képeivel, online játékokkal, kirakósokkal, letölthető ajándékokkal, amelyek mind a gyerekeket célozzák.

Mindezek alapján az alábbi kérdéseket tenném fel a Bizottságnak:

A Bizottság nem érzi-e úgy, hogy az önkorlátozáson túl további uniós szintű szabályozásra van szükség?

Milyen szankciók kiszabását helyezné kilátásba a Bizottság a szabályokat megsértő vállalatokkal szemben?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. február 4.)

A Bizottság elkötelezetten foglalkozik a magas zsír-, cukor-, illetve sótartalmú élelmiszerek gyermekeknek szóló reklámjaival kapcsolatos kérdésekkel, és 2007 óta a táplálkozással, túlsúllyal és elhízással kapcsolatos egészségügyi kérdésekre vonatkozó európai stratégiában ([1]) megfogalmazottak szerint szorgalmazza uniós intézkedések bevezetését.

A stratégia végrehajtása terén elért eredményekről szóló 2010. decemberi jelentés ([2])ismertette az „EU Pledge" elnevezésű kezdeményezés első pozitív vívmányait. A szóban forgó kezdeményezés keretében vállalatok egy csoportja kötelezettséget vállalt arra, hogy az élelmiszertermékekkel és az italokkal kapcsolatos reklámokkal nem célozzák meg a 12 éven aluli gyermekeket, illetve csak meghatározott táplálkozási kritériumoknak megfelelő termékeket reklámoznak. A jelentés rámutatott arra, hogy a kezdeményezés hatására az abban részt vevők több mint harmadával csökkentették a termékeikre szánt televíziós reklámidőt. Időközben a kezdeményezés megerősödött: már kiterjed vállalati márkák weboldalaira is, szigorúbb meghatározást alkalmaz a gyermekeknek szóló média fogalmára (a gyermekek részaránya a közönségben a korábbi 50% helyett 35%), valamint az eddigi vállalat-specifikus kritériumokat felváltani hivatott közös táplálkozási kritériumok ([3]) kerültek meghatározásra.

Az uniós fellépés másik fő eszköze ezen a területen az audiovizuális médiaszolgáltatásokról szóló 2010/13/EU irányelv ([4]). Ebben az összefüggésben a Bizottság támogatja a tagállamokat annak ösztönzésében, hogy az audiovizuális médiaszolgáltatók a gyermekeket célzó élelmiszerreklámokra vonatkozó magatartási kódexet állítsanak össze.

Az irányelv végrehajtásáról szóló, 2012 májusában közzétett első jelentés szerint az említett rendelkezés hatására a legtöbb tagállam új kódexet hozott létre, illetve bővítette a meglévőt. Ezenkívül olyan kezdeményezések láttak napvilágot, mint az egészséges élelmiszereket népszerűsítő kampányok a televízióban és az interneten. A 2014-ben esedékes második végrehajtási jelentés foglalkozni fog a szóban forgó magatartási kódexek hatékonyságával.

([1]) A táplálkozással, túlsúllyal és elhízással kapcsolatos egészségügyi kérdésekre vonatkozó európai stratégiáról, COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/implementation_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.eu-pledge.eu/sites/eu-pledge.eu/files/releases/EU_Pledge_Nutrition_White_Paper_Nov_2012.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:HU:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011157/12
to the Commission
Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Regulating advertisements aimed at children

Communication technology has changed with lightning speed in recent decades, and with this has come an increase in the ease with which children can be targeted by advertisements. Leading food and drink producers undertook some years ago that they would not in future target children with advertisements for products containing excessive amounts of fat, sugar or salt. A report published at the end of September ('A junk-free childhood 2012') investigated the extent to which this objective has been fulfilled. According to the study, the companies' own data showed that the amount of advertising for unhealthy foods aimed at children had fallen by barely a quarter in the past six years, whilst in some countries it had actually increased; meanwhile, the 'EU Pledge', whereby six years ago a number of major European companies pledged to undertake self-regulation, had similarly failed to achieve the desired result. Most companies agree that they must restrict themselves in the area of paid online advertising, yet they do not adopt the same approach to their own homepages, which remain full of pictures of happy children, online games, puzzles and gifts to download, all of which are aimed at children.

In light of this, I would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

Does the Commission not feel that there is a need for further EU-level regulation in addition to self-imposed restrictions?

What penalties would the Commission propose putting forward for companies which violate the regulations?

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

The Commission is committed to address issues related to advertising of foods high in fat, salt and/or sugar to children and since 2007, it has promoted EU action as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related Health issues ([1]).

The first results of the 'EU Pledge' — an initiative by a group of companies who pledge not to advertise food and beverage products to children under twelve, or only to advertise products that meet specific nutrition criteria — were highlighted in the Implementation Progress Report of December 2010 ([2]). This report showed that the Pledge led to over one third less TV advertising by pledge participants. In the meantime, the Pledge was reinforced: it now includes company-owned brand websites; uses a stricter definition of 'children's media' (35% of the audience is children instead of 50% as before); and developed common nutrition criteria ([3]) aimed at replacing the existing company-specific criteria.

Another major instrument for EU action in this area is the Audiovisual Media Service Directive 2010/13/EU ([4]). In this context, the Commission supports Member States in encouraging audiovisual media service providers to set up codes of conducts on advertising of foods to children.

The first Application Report on the directive published in May 2012 showed that this provision led most of the Member States to set new codes or extend the existing codes. It also triggered initiatives, such as healthy food promotion campaigns on Television and Internet. The 2nd Application Report due in 2014 will examine the effectiveness of such codes of conduct.

([1]) A Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues, COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/implementation_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.eu-pledge.eu/sites/eu-pledge.eu/files/releases/EU_Pledge_Nutrition_White_Paper_Nov_2012.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011158/12
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Electricity generation costs and investments in the UK

The Commission may be aware that the British Government is putting in place plans for electricity generation which involve substantial investment. These plans involve the cost of investment being passed on to electricity consumers.

However, mindful of the need to avoid energy-intensive industries moving abroad, the British Government proposes special measures to mitigate the impact of higher prices on the companies involved. It will compensate for the cost of this mitigation by applying yet higher prices to other users ([1]).

Does the Commission have any views on the legality of this plan, under either (a) EU competition law or (b) state aid rules?

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

The services of the Commission are currently discussing with the UK authorities their plan to temporarily relieve some energy-intensive businesses from the ETS carbon price and from proposed carbon fuel levies. At least part of such plans might give rise to state aid.

The discussion is still ongoing and informal at this stage. However, the Commission notes that under state aid rules, a possibility exists to declare as aid compatible with the internal market certain temporary reliefs for energy-intensive users in specific sectors from the ETS carbon price passed through in electricity costs, under the conditions set out in the ETS Guidelines ([2]).

([1]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20539981.
([2]) Guidelines on certain state aid measures in the context of the greenhouse gas emission allowance trading scheme post-2012, OJ C 158, 4, 5.6.2012, p.4.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011161/12
an die Kommission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(6. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten im Gegensatz zum Rechtssystem und Artikel 9 EUV

Im Rahmen des umfassenden Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen EU-Kanada (CETA) wird ein gerichtsähnlicher Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Investor-Staat-Streitigkeiten (ISDS) etabliert, um Streitigkeiten zwischen Investoren und den beiden am Abkommen beteiligten Parteien beizulegen.

Der Mechanismus zur Beilegung von Streitigkeiten gibt Investoren die Möglichkeit, zur Verfolgung ihrer Interessen den Staat zu verklagen. Gleichzeitig können sie sich für ihre Klage auch des herkömmlichen Gerichtssystems bedienen.

1. Warum ist das herkömmliche Gerichtssystem nicht gut genug für Investoren, aber gut genug für alle anderen Bürger?

Artikel 9 des Vertrags über die Europäische Union besagt, dass die Union „die Gleichheit ihrer Bürgerinnen und Bürger [achtet], denen ein gleiches Maß an Aufmerksamkeit seitens der Organe […] zuteil wird“ .

2. Wie kann angesichts der zusätzlichen „Aufmerksamkeit“, die Investoren durch den ISDS-Mechanismus gewährt wird, das CETA-Kapitel zum Investitionsschutz mit dem Vertrag vereinbar sein?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(5. Februar 2013)

1. Ziel der Aufnahme eines Mechanismus 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) ist der angemessene Schutz von europäischen Investoren in Kanada.

Es gab 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. Der ISDS-Mechanismus garantiert, dass die europäischen Investoren in Kanada ein internationales Gericht anrufen können und bietet ihnen so einen wirksamen Rechtsbehelf.

Es geht hier nicht um die Frage, ob die nationalen Gerichte „gut genug“ sind. Es geht vielmehr darum, die Durchsetzung der im Abkommen enthaltenen Normen zu ermöglichen. Diese Normen können, müssen aber nicht in den einschlägigen nationalen Gesetzen enthalten sein (in Kanada sind sie es häufig nicht).

2. Um in den Genuss des ISDS zu gelangen, muss der Investor die Staatsangehörigkeit der anderen Vertragspartei haben oder von einem Staatsangehörigen der anderen Vertragspartei kontrolliert werden. Mit anderen Worten werden die betroffenen Rechte gewährt, weil der Investor ein ausländischer Investor ist. Die Rechte werden gegenseitig gewährt, d. h. EU-Investoren erhalten Rechte in Kanada und kanadische Investoren erhalten Rechte in der EU. Eine solche gegenseitige Gewährung von Rechten im Rahmen eines internationalen Abkommens ist mit den EU-Verträgen vereinbar und entspricht der vom Parlament in seiner Entschließung vom 6. April 2011 zum Ausdruck gebrachten Forderung. In Absatz 32 dieser Entschließung vertrat das Parlament die Ansicht, „dass neben zwischenstaatlichen Streitbeilegungsverfahren auch Streitbeilegungsverfahren zwischen Investoren und dem Staat Anwendung finden müssen, um einen umfassenden Investitionsschutz zu gewährleisten“.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011161/12
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) och Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(6 december 2012)

Angående: Mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare i motsats till rättssystemet och artikel 9 i EU-fördraget

Genom det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada inrättas en domstolsliknande mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat för att lösa tvister mellan investerare och de båda parterna i avtalet.

Tvistlösningsmekanismen ger investerarna möjlighet att stämma staten för att tillgodose sina intressen. Samtidigt kan de också vända sig till det vanliga domstolssystemet för att göra detta.

1. Varför duger inte det vanliga domstolssystemet åt investerare när det duger åt alla andra medborgare?

I artikel 9 i fördraget om Europeiska unionen föreskrivs att unionen ska ”… respektera principen om jämlikhet mellan sina medborgare, som ska få lika uppmärksamhet från unionens institutioner …” ([1]).

2. Investerare ägnas extra ”uppmärksamhet” genom mekanismen för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat, men hur kan då kapitlet om skydd för investeringar i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel vara förenligt med fördraget?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(5 februari 2013)

1. Syftet med att införa en mekanism för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat i det övergripande avtalet om ekonomi och handel mellan EU och Kanada är att ge europeiska investerare ett adekvat skydd i Kanada.

Det har i flera fall förekommit expropriering av utländska investerare i Kanada, där de berörda investerarna nekats kompensation och tillgång till kanadensiska domstolar. Genom att garantera tillgång till en internationell domstol kan denna mekanism säkerställa att europeiska investerare i Kanada får verkningsfulla prövningsmöjligheter om en liknande situation uppstår.

Det handlar inte om huruvida nationella domstolar är ”tillräckligt bra”, utan om att göra det möjligt att genomdriva de bestämmelser som ingår i avtalet. Dessa bestämmelser ingår inte alltid i relevant nationell lagstiftning – och i Kanada är det vanligt att de saknas.

2. För att kunna åberopa mekanismen för tvistlösning mellan investerare och stat måste investeraren vara medborgare i den andra avtalsparten eller kontrolleras av en medborgare i den andra avtalsparten. Rättigheterna beviljas alltså på grund av att investeraren är en utländsk investerare. Rättigheterna ges på ömsesidig bas, så att EU-investerare har rättigheter i Kanada liksom kanadensiska investerare har det i EU. Ett sådant ömsesidigt beviljande av rättigheter genom ett internationellt avtal är förenligt med EU-fördragen och tillgodoser Europaparlamentets begäran i resolutionen av den 6 april 2011. I punkt 32 i den resolutionen anser Europaparlamentet att ”om man vill kunna garantera ett omfattande investeringsskydd måste man vid sidan av ett system för tvistlösning mellan stater även ha ett system för tvistlösning mellan en investerare och en stat”.

([1]) Konsoliderad version av fördraget om Europeiska unionen, avdelning II, artikel 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011161/12
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE), Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Investor-state dispute settlement mechanism as opposed to the legal system and Article 9 TEU

The EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) sets up a court-like investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism to resolve disputes between investors and the two parties to the agreement.

The dispute settlement mechanism grants investors the means to sue the state in pursuit of their interests. At the same time, they can also use the ordinary court system to sue.

1. Why is the ordinary court system not good enough for investors, yet good enough for all other citizens?

Article 9 of the Treaty on European Union states that the Union shall observe '…the equality of all its citizens, who shall receive equal attention from its institutions…' ([1]).

2. Given the additional 'attention' granted to investors by the ISDS mechanism, how can the investment protection chapter of CETA be compatible with the Treaty?

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

1. The aim pursued when including an investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism in the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is to provide adequate protection to European investors in Canada.

There have been several examples of expropriation of foreign investors in Canada, where compensation and access to Canadian courts has been denied. By guaranteeing access to an international tribunal, the ISDS mechanism will ensure that if similar situations arise, European investors in Canada would be granted an effective remedy.

This is not a question of whether domestic courts are 'good enough'. Rather this is a question of permitting enforcement of the standards included in the agreement. These standards may or may not be contained in relevant domestic laws (in Canada they are frequently not).

2. In order to benefit from ISDS, the investor must be a national of the other Contracting Party, or be controlled by a national of the other Contracting Party. In other words, the rights in question are granted because the investor is a foreign investor. The rights are given on a reciprocal basis, i.e. EU investors in Canada obtain rights, as do Canadian investors in the EU. Such a mutual conferral of rights through an international agreement is compatible with the Union treaties and responds to the request of Parliament in its resolution of 6 April 2011. In paragraph 32 of that resolution, Parliament took the view that 'in addition to state-to-state dispute settlement procedures, investor-state procedures must also be applicable in order to secure comprehensive investment protection'.

([1]) Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, Title II, Article 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011162/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Eco-Design Directive and heating appliances

Will the Commission state what are its estimates of the potential benefits for the environment and for consumers of improving the efficiency of boilers and other heating appliances?

What are the reasons for the Commission's failure to bring forward the necessary measures to include such equipment within the scope of the Eco-Design Directive, and when will it do so?

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

1. Ecodesign and energy labelling regulations under Directives 2009/125/EC ([1]) and 2010/30/EU ([2]) are important instruments for achieving the EU's target of 20% energy savings. The Commission will provide the estimated environmental and cost savings when the proposals for different heating appliances are finalised.

2. The Commission services are working on a number of heating appliances on the basis of the Ecodesign Working Plans. It is planned that Energy Labelling Delegated Acts on heaters and water heaters be adopted by the Commission in the first quarter of the year. Furthermore, it is planned that Ecodesign Implementing Regulations and Energy Labelling Delegated acts be adopted by the Commission on solid fuel boilers and local space heaters during the course of 2013.

([1]) OJ L 285, 31.10.2009.
([2]) OJ L 153, 18.6.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011163/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Marocco: il caso del gruppo di Gdeim Izik e tortura nel carcere di Salé

L'evacuazione forzata del campo di Gdeim Izik da parte dell'esercito marocchino, nel novembre 2010, ha condotto alla deportazione di 24 prigionieri saharawi nel carcere di Salé, vicino a Rabat. Negli ultimi due anni il gruppo di detenuti è stato trattenuto senza cauzione; il processo è stato recentemente sospeso per la seconda volta, senza che abbia ancora avuto luogo alcuna udienza. Il cosiddetto gruppo di Gdeim Izik è composto da attivisti politici accusati di cospirazione contro le autorità pubbliche.

Nel novembre del 2012, la Rete euromediterranea per i diritti umani (EMHRN), presente in veste di osservatore al processo, ha espresso grandissima preoccupazione per la situazione dei 24 prigionieri, tenuto conto delle condizioni di detenzione, in evidente violazione del diritto internazionale e dei diritti umani. In particolare, gli imputati affermano di essere stati torturati; le loro dichiarazioni sono state confermate da alcuni familiari, che hanno osservato visibili segni di maltrattamento.

Oltretutto, il processo è stato trasferito a un tribunale militare, sebbene nessuno tra gli imputati sia un militare o sia accusato di crimini contro la sicurezza esterna dello Stato. È pertanto in discussione la legittimità stessa del processo.

Dal loro arresto, nel 2010, i 24 attivisti hanno intrapreso quattro scioperi della fame allo scopo di attirare l'attenzione pubblica sulle condizioni della loro detenzione e sull'ingiusto processo, al di fuori dei tribunali ordinari.

Alla luce dei fatti suesposti:

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza del caso e dei suoi drammatici sviluppi?

2. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante invitare le autorità marocchine a intervenire, in applicazione degli obblighi loro derivanti dal diritto internazionale, al fine di garantire il rispetto dei diritti umani dei detenuti?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue da vicino la situazione del Sahara occidentale e la questione dei 24 prigionieri saharawi detenuti nel carcere di Salé. L'AR/VP conferma il suo pieno sostegno agli sforzi profusi dal Segretario generale delle Nazioni Unite e encomia l'operato del suo inviato personale, l'Ambasciatore Christopher Ross. L'Alta Rappresentante incoraggia inoltre le parti a lavorare per raggiungere una soluzione politica equa, durevole e reciprocamente accettabile che garantisca l'autodeterminazione della popolazione del Sahara occidentale, conformemente alle pertinenti risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite.

I diritti dell'uomo sono regolarmente al centro delle riunioni degli organi paritari previsti dall'accordo di associazione UE/Marocco. L'AR/VP ritiene che nel complesso il Marocco stia compiendo passi avanti verso un rispetto maggiore dei diritti umani, anche se molto rimane ancora da fare. I servizi del SEAE hanno sollevato la questione dei prigionieri saharawi in occasione degli incontri del dialogo politico e durante l'ultima riunione del sottocomitato per i diritti umani (Rabat, 16/17.10.2012). Negli ultimi anni, le relazioni tra l'UE e il Marocco hanno compiuto progressi significativi e hanno contribuito al processo di riforma. L'UE sostiene il lavoro del Consiglio nazionale marocchino per i diritti dell'uomo, l'organo ufficiale competente anche a controllare gli standard di detenzione, che ha recentemente pubblicato una relazione ampliamente pubblicizzata sulle condizioni carcerarie in cui chiede una profonda riforma del sistema.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011163/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Morocco: Gdaim Izik Group case and torture in Salé prison

The forced evacuation of the Gdaim Izik camp by the Moroccan army in November 2010 led to the deportation of 24 Sahrawi prisoners to Salé prison, near Rabat. The group of detainees has been held there without bail for the past two years and the trial was recently put on hold for the second time, without any hearing so far. The group, known as the Gdaim Izik Group, is composed of political activists accused of criminal conspiracy against public authorities.

In November 2012 the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), an observer at the trial, expressed its greatest concern for the situation of the 24 detainees, given that their detention conditions are in clear violation of international law and human rights. In particular, the defendants claim to have been tortured; their statements have been confirmed by relatives, who have seen visible signs of ill-treatment.

Furthermore, the trial has been transferred to a military tribunal, even though none of the defendants is a military officer or charged with offences against the external security of the state. The very legitimacy of this trial is therefore at issue.

Since their imprisonment in 2010, the 24 detained activists have gone on four hunger strikes in order to bring public attention to the conditions of their imprisonment and their unfair trial outside the ordinary courts of law.

In the light of the abovementioned facts:

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this case and of the dramatic developments in relation to it?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to call on the Moroccan authorities to intervene, in accordance with their duties under international law, in order to secure respect for the detainees' human rights?

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

The HR/VP is following closely the situation in Western Sahara and the issue of the 24 Sahrawi prisoners currently detained in prison in Salé. She reaffirms her full support for the UN Secretary-General's efforts, commends the work of his Personal Envoy Ambassador Christopher Ross and encourages the parties to work towards achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in agreement with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Human rights are regularly addressed in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the EU/Morocco Association Agreement. The HR/VP considers that overall Morocco is making progress towards more compliance with human rights principles, although further improvements are necessary. EEAS services did raise the question of the prisoners in political dialogue meetings and during the last sub-committee on Human Rights (Rabat, 16/17.10.12). EU-Morocco relations have made significant progress in recent years and have contributed to a process of reform. The EU provides support to the Moroccan National Council for Human Rights, an official body which has within its mandate to monitor detention standards and which has recently produced a widely publicised report on prison conditions, calling for widespread reform of the system.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011164/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 décembre 2012)

Objet: Extraction minière et Droits de l'homme au Pérou
Avec une croissance avoisinant les 7 % du PIB par an, le Pérou tire ses principaux revenus des investissements dans le secteur extractif, surtout minier. Le Pérou est colonisé par des multinationales qui en ont fait leur nouvel eldorado. En témoignent les quelque 20 % du sous-sol national qui leur ont été vendus par l'État. Avec la demande sans cesse croissante des minerais sur les marchés mondiaux, les projets vont se multiplier dans le pays, menant à de plus en plus de conflits socio-environnementaux si le secteur n'est pas régulé de manière responsable par l'État.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle réagir quant à la répression de la contestation sociale exprimée légitimement par les communautés affectées et condamner les graves impacts environnementaux subis par les écosystèmes?

2. La Commission peut-elle veiller à ce que le Service européen pour l'action extérieure assure une vigilance active des cas de criminalisation de la contestation sociale, en offrant protection et reconnaissance aux défenseurs des Droits de l'homme?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle encourager le renforcement de la responsabilité sociétale des entreprises européenne et de leurs filiales exerçant des activités au Pérou en leur imposant des normes socio-environnementales fortes et contraignantes?

4. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis qu'une directive sur le «reporting non financier» est souhaitable? Il s'agirait en l'occurrence d'un reporting non financier des entreprises qui ne les oblige pas seulement à rendre compte de leur politique et de leur gestion des risques en matière de Droits de l'homme, mais également à faire rapport de leurs impacts et de la manière dont elles identifient, empêchent et atténuent ceux-ci?

5. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur le fait que les populations affectées ne soient pas consultées préalablement à l'installation de projets extractifs, ce qui pourtant faciliterait leur participation aux prises de décisions, notamment via l'application de la convention 169 de l'OIT?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission

(25 janvier 2013)

Les conflits sociaux en rapport avec des projets d'extraction demeurent l'un des principaux défis que le Pérou doit relever. Cette question a été abordée à l'occasion de la visite que le Président Humala a effectuée auprès des institutions européennes en juin dernier. Elle figure également à l'ordre du jour du dialogue politique de haut niveau instauré entre l'UE et le Pérou. Des efforts soutenus doivent être fournis pour garantir la protection pleine et entière des droits humains et environnementaux, mais certaines mesures importantes ont déjà été prises, à savoir l'adoption de la loi sur la consultation préalable des peuples indigènes et de ses dispositions d'application ainsi que la nouvelle procédure d'approbation des évaluations d'impact sur l'environnement.

L'Union européenne soutient ces efforts par l'intermédiaire du dialogue bilatéral et au moyen de ressources financières.

La Commission n'a pas l'intention de fixer des normes contraignantes en matière de responsabilité sociale des entreprises, mais encourage les entreprises européennes à appliquer les lignes directrices internationales établies dans ce domaine, telles que les principes directeurs des Nations unies relatifs aux entreprises et aux Droits de l'homme, les principes directeurs de l'OCDE à l'intention des entreprises multinationales et la déclaration de l'OIT sur les entreprises multinationales et la politique sociale.

La Commission élabore actuellement des orientations en matière de Droits de l'homme destinées aux entreprises de certains secteurs d'activité, notamment le pétrole et le gaz, qui devraient être publiées en mai 2013. Ces orientations peuvent être particulièrement utiles dans le cas du Pérou.

La Commission travaille également sur une mesure législative destinée à renforcer la communication d'informations non financières par les grandes entreprises, en l'occurrence sur leurs politiques, risques et résultats dignes d'être pris en considération.

Grâce aux mesures incitatives et aux engagements qu'il prévoit, l'accord commercial entre l'UE et le Pérou contribuera également à améliorer encore la situation. Le gouvernement péruvien a récemment publié un document portant notamment sur les Droits de l'homme et les questions environnementales et l'UE a proposé d'aider à sa mise en œuvre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011164/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Mining and human rights in Peru

Growth in Peru stands at 7% of GDP per year, with investments in the extractive industries, and particularly mining, accounting for the lion's share of the country's income. Peru has been colonised by multinationals, for whom the country is the new Eldorado. This is demonstrated by the fact that the state has sold around 20% of Peru's underground area to multinationals. With an ever-increasing demand for minerals on the world markets, the number of mining schemes in Peru will multiply, leading to more and more social and environmental strife if the sector is not regulated responsibly by the State.

1. Is the Commission intending to react to the clampdown on legitimate demonstrations by local people in the areas concerned? Will it condemn the grave environmental damage that has been caused to ecosystems in Peru?

2. Can the Commission see to it that the European External Action Service responds actively to any criminalisation of social dissent by offering protection and recognition to human rights defenders?

3. Is the Commission intending to encourage European firms and related companies operating in Peru to step up corporate social responsibility by obliging them to comply with tough, binding social and environmental standards?

4. Does that Commission agree that there is a need for a 'non-financial reporting' directive? In this case this would mean non-financial reporting that not only requires companies to report on their policy and risk management strategy with regard to human rights, but also to report on their impact and on the ways in which they identify, prevent and mitigate such risks.

5. What is the Commission's position on the fact that the communities affected are not consulted before mining projects are set up, when such prior consultation would allow them to participate in the decision-making process under ILO Convention 169?

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

Social conflicts over extractive projects remain one of the major challenges for Peru. This issue was raised during the visit of President Humala to the EU institutions last June. It is also on the agenda of the EU-Peru high level policy dialogue. Sustained efforts are necessary to guarantee the full protection of human and environmental rights, but some important steps have already been taken: the adoption of the Law on prior consultation of indigenous people and its regulation or the new approval process of the Environmental Impact Assessments.

The European Union is supporting these efforts, through bilateral dialogue and EU funds.

The Commission does not intend setting binding standards on corporate social responsibility, but does encourage European companies to adhere to international CSR guidelines, such as the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the ILO Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.

The Commission is currently developing human rights guidance for enterprises in certain business sectors, including the oil and gas sector, to be published in May 2013. This guidance may be especially relevant in the context of Peru.

The Commission is also working on a legislative measure to strengthen the disclosure of non-financial information by large companies. These disclosures would address a company's relevant policies, risks and results.

Through the incentives and the commitments it contains, the EU Trade Agreement with Peru will also contribute to the further improvement of the situation. The Peruvian government has recently published a document i.a. on human rights and environmental issues and the EU offered assistance in its implementation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011165/12
alla Commissione
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione dei diritti umani in Italia nel caso Hirsi

Sull'onda della crisi economica che ha colpito parte dell'Europa, a fine anno sono state varate importanti misure di austerità. Alcuni organismi internazionali hanno criticato il modo in cui l'Italia ha trattato rom, musulmani, migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati. A settembre, il Commissario per i diritti umani del Consiglio d'Europa ha sottolineato in una relazione che la dichiarazione «dell'emergenza nomadi» del 2008 era stata alla base di diffusi sgomberi degli insediamenti rom, spesso in violazione delle norme internazionali sui diritti umani.

La dichiarazione autorizzava «commissari delegati» in varie regioni a derogare a numerose leggi nei casi che riguardavano gli abitanti di «insediamenti nomadi». La relazione ha anche sottolineato il brusco aumento di arrivi via mare dall'Africa del Nord dall'inizio dell'anno, che ha messo a dura prova il sistema di accoglienza per migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati. Il Commissario ha sollecitato le autorità a rafforzare la capacità di accoglienza del paese nonché il sistema di integrazione per rifugiati e altri beneficiari di protezione internazionale. Ha anche chiesto alle autorità di garantire che, quando incontrano in mare imbarcazioni in difficoltà, l'incolumità e il soccorso delle persone a bordo abbiano priorità assoluta su tutte le altre considerazioni. A maggio, il Comitato consultivo della Convenzione quadro del Consiglio d'Europa per la tutela delle minoranze nazionali ha reso noto il suo terzo parere sull'Italia. Ha rilevato un aumento dei comportamenti razzisti e xenofobi nei confronti di alcuni gruppi quali rom, musulmani, migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo.

Il 18 settembre la Corte europea dei diritti umani ha condannato l'Italia nel «caso Hirsi» per violazione della Convenzione dei diritti umani, in particolare dell'articolo 3 (trattamenti degradanti e tortura) violato dall'Italia in occasione di un respingimento in Libia. Per quel fatto il nostro paese dovrà risarcire 15 000 euro alle vittime. La Corte europea ha quindi posto con questa sentenza un freno ai respingimenti indiscriminati per mare. Il nostro ministro dell'Interno Cancellieri ha sostenuto che la sentenza va rispettata e che saranno prese iniziative volte a evitare successive violazioni dei diritti umani, sulla base della sentenza che verrà valutata con grande attenzione.

Alla luce di questi avvenimenti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ritiene che si possano realizzare delle politiche contro l'immigrazione illegale;

2. in che modo queste possano essere attuate senza entrare in contrasto con la Convenzione dei diritti umani?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(6 febbraio 2013)

1. Ridurre l'immigrazione clandestina rappresenta chiaramente una sfida comune per l'Unione europea e i suoi Stati membri. Si tratta di una componente essenziale di una politica migratoria globale che garantisca il diritto alla protezione internazionale e consenta meccanismi di ingresso efficienti per una migrazione ben gestita. L'UE cerca di prevenire la migrazione irregolare in vari modi complementari, ad esempio combattendo la tratta di esseri umani, sanzionando i datori di lavoro che impiegano immigrati clandestini, migliorando la gestione delle frontiere esterne e rafforzando la cooperazione con i paesi terzi.

2. Nel recepire la normativa UE, gli Stati membri sono vincolati dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali; essi devono garantire che le misure adottate in materia di immigrazione irregolare e gestione delle frontiere siano proporzionate, non discriminatorie e rispettose dei diritti fondamentali, compreso il principio di «non respingimento». Devono mettere in atto garanzie procedurali adeguate, secondo quanto stabilito dal codice frontiere Schengen, dalla direttiva rimpatri e dall'acquis dell'Unione in materia di asilo. La Commissione riconosce che l'attuazione di queste politiche costituisce una sfida per gli Stati membri. Tuttavia, essa segue da vicino l'applicazione del diritto dell'UE e assicura il seguito di eventuali violazioni al fine di garantire la tutela dei diritti fondamentali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011165/12
to the Commission
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Violation of human rights in Italy in the Hirsi case

In the wake of the economic crisis that has stricken part of Europe, at the end of the year some major austerity measures were launched. A number of international organisations have criticised the way in which Italy has treated Roma, Muslims, migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. In September, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe pointed out in a report that the 2008 declaration of the state of 'nomad emergency' had paved the way for the widespread forced evictions of Roma settlements, often in breach of international human rights laws.

The declaration had authorised 'commissioners' in various regions to depart from a number of laws in cases involving the inhabitants of 'nomad settlements'. The report also noted the sharp increase in arrivals by sea from North Africa since the beginning of the year, which had put a strain on the reception system for migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. The Commissioner urged the authorities to strengthen their country's migrant reception capacity and the system for integrating refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection. He also asked the authorities to ensure that, when encountering vessels in distress at sea, the safety and rescue of those on board took priority over all other considerations. In May, the Advisory Committee of the framework Convention of the Council of Europe for the Protection of National Minorities published its third opinion on Italy. It reported an increase in racist and xenophobic behaviour towards certain groups such as Roma, Muslims, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

On 18 September, the European Court of Human Rights ruled against Italy in the Hirsi case, on grounds of violation of the Convention of Human Rights, in particular Article 3 (degrading treatment and torture), which was infringed by Italy during a forced return to Libya. Our country, for that matter, will have to pay EUR 15 000 in compensation to the victims. With this judgment the European Court of Human Rights has therefore put a stop to indiscriminate expulsions at sea. Our Interior Minister, Ms Cancellieri, has stated that the judgment should be respected and that measures will be taken to prevent further violations of human rights, based on this judgment which will be assessed very carefully.

In the light of these events, can the Commission say:

1. whether it believes that policies to combat illegal immigration can actually be pursued;

2. how such policies can be implemented without conflicting with the Convention on Human Rights?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

1. Reducing irregular migration is clearly a common challenge for the EU and its Member States. It is a necessary part of a comprehensive migration policy that guarantees the right to international protection and allows for efficient entry mechanisms to permit managed migration. The EU seeks to prevent irregular migration in several complementing ways, including by tackling human trafficking, sanctioning employers of irregular migrants, enhancing the border management at the external border and strengthening the cooperation with third countries.

2. When implementing EC law, Member States are bound by the Charter of Fundamental Rights; they must ensure that the measures they adopt regarding irregular migration and border management are proportionate, non-discriminatory, and respectful of fundamental rights, including the principle of *non-refoulement*. They must ensure that the proper procedural guarantees are in place as required in terms of the Schengen Borders Code, the Return Directive and the EU asylum *acquis*. The Commission recognises that the implementation of these EU policies is challenging for Member States. Nevertheless, the Commission monitors closely the application of EC law and follows up any infringements to ensure that the protection of fundamental rights is guaranteed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011166/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Omicidi politici in Cambogia

Il governo cambogiano ha coperto centinaia di omicidi politici: negli ultimi 20 anni, esecutivo e premier hanno garantito l'impunità o incentivato almeno 300 assassini.

Invece di punire, si «premiano e promuovono» mandanti ed esecutori.

Il governo cambogiano ha garantito l'impunità a «centinaia di omicidi di matrice politica», tollerati se non incentivati dalla politica del pugno di ferro adottata dal premier Hun Sen, al potere da quasi 30 anni. Secondo quanto emerge da una relazione di Human Rights Watch (HRW), sarebbero state ammazzate oltre 300 persone negli ultimi 20 anni in assassini motivati da finalità o interessi politici. Inoltre, sul versante delle indagini non vi sono state inchieste «credibili» sfociate in catture o condanne, anche perché in diversi casi «i colpevoli hanno ricevuto protezione» da ambienti vicini all'esecutivo.

Nella relazione si sottolinea che «invece di perseguire i funzionari responsabili dei crimini», fra cui morti violente e abusi vari, il primo ministro «li ha promossi e premiati».

Phnom Penh, la capitale, respinge al mittente le accuse lanciate da HRW, difendendo l'operato dei vertici governativi, il rispetto dei diritti umani nonché la correttezza delle procedure e bollando come «luogo comune» il fatto che nel paese regni l'impunità.

Si rischia un ritorno alla violenza se il governo non adotterà riforme concrete, fra cui quella elettorale per un voto «libero e giusto».

Alla luce di tali elementi, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra menzionati;

2. se ritiene possibile intervenire a tale riguardo;

3. se ha intenzione di proporre azioni concrete per frenare tale situazione che viola i diritti umani?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(15 febbraio 2013)

I timori in materia di rispetto dei diritti umani in Cambogia sono stati affrontati ai massimi livelli con le autorità nazionali, in occasione dell'incontro tra il Primo ministro cambogiano, Hun Sen, e il presidente del Consiglio europeo, Herman Van Rompuy, avvenuto durante la visita di quest'ultimo in Cambogia dal 2 al 4 novembre scorso.

In questa circostanza, l'UE ha fortemente sottolineato l'importanza del rispetto dei diritti umani e dello stato di diritto.

L'Unione europea, attraverso la sua delegazione a Phnom Penh, osserva da vicino la situazione dei diritti umani, anche seguendo i processi.

L'UE ha sostenuto, e continuerà a sostenere, la transizione democratica del paese, in particolare verso il buon governo e un sistema legale e giudiziario più affidabile.

Grazie al fondo UE per la promozione del buon governo e del rispetto dei diritti umani in Cambogia, l'UE destina 7,5 milioni di euro al sostegno alle sezioni straordinarie dei tribunali della Cambogia e al rafforzamento del Comitato cambogiano per i diritti umani. Nel quadro dello strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani, dal 2003 sono stati finanziati altri 60 nuovi progetti per un totale di 15,5 milioni di euro, volti principalmente a sostenere diritti, libertà di espressione e migliori condizioni di detenzione per le popolazioni indigene.

Attualmente, l'UE sta valutando gli strumenti più adatti per favorire un clima propizio a elezioni libere e regolari, nelle quali gli elettori, i candidati e i commentatori possano esercitare i loro diritti politici di base. A questo proposito potrebbe essere opportuno organizzare una missione di esperti elettorali per seguire la preparazione delle elezioni parlamentari che si terranno a luglio. L'UE segue attentamente anche l'attuazione da parte del governo cambogiano delle raccomandazioni formulate dal relatore speciale dell'ONU sui diritti umani in Cambogia, il professor Surya Subedi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011166/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Political assassinations in Cambodia

The Cambodian Government has been covering up hundreds of political assassinations — over the last 20 years, the government and prime minister have ensured impunity for, or encouraged, at least 300 assassinations.

Instead of being punished, the instigators and perpetrators are being 'rewarded and promoted'.

The Cambodian Government has guaranteed impunity for 'hundreds of politically motivated murders', which have been tolerated if not encouraged by the iron fist policy adopted by Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has been in power for nearly 30 years. According to a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), more than 300 people have been killed over the past 20 years in assassinations carried out for political reasons. Moreover, as far as the investigations are concerned, there have been no 'credible' investigations that have resulted in the assassins being caught or sentenced, also because, in many cases, the guilty parties received protection from sources close to the government.

The report points out that 'instead of prosecuting officials responsible for killings and other serious abuses, Prime Minister Hun Sen has promoted and rewarded them'.

Phnom Penh, the capital, rejects the accusations by Human Rights Watch, defending the actions of its government leaders and their respect for human rights and for due process, and saying that the so-called culture of impunity in the country was a 'cliché'.

There is a risk of a return to violence unless the government undertakes tangible reforms, including electoral reform for a 'free and fair' vote.

In the light of this information, can the Commission say:

1. whether it is aware of these facts;

2. whether it believes that any action can be taken;

3. whether it intends to propose any specific measures to curb this situation of infringement of human rights?

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

Human rights concerns in Cambodia have been discussed at the highest level with the national authorities, when the President of the European Council, Mr Van Rompuy met Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen during his visit to Cambodia on 2-4 November.

In these discussions, the EU strongly underlined the importance of respect for Human Rights and the rule of law.

The European Union, through its Delegation in Phnom Penh, is closely following the Human Rights situation, including by monitoring trials.

The EU has supported, and will continue to support Cambodia's democratic transition, in particular good governance and a more accountable legal and judicial system.

Through the EU-Cambodia Good Governance and Human Rights Facility, the EU committed EUR 7.5 million to support the Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia and strengthen the Cambodian Human Rights Committee. Sixty other projects have been funded since 2003 for a total of EUR 15.5 million under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, primarily supporting Indigenous people's rights, freedom of expression and prison conditions.

The EU is now considering the best appropriate tools to support an environment conducive to free and fair elections, where the voters, the candidates and the commentators can exert their basic political rights. An Election Experts' mission to follow the preparation of the parliamentary elections next July could be envisaged. The EU also pays particular attention to the follow-up by the Cambodian government of the recommendations formulated by the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Cambodia, Prof. Subedi.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011167/12
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(6 december 2012)

Betreft: Stand van zaken Aanbeveling Raad inzake letselpreventie en bevordering van veiligheid

Elk jaar worden ongeveer 7 miljoen EU-burgers opgenomen in het ziekenhuis als gevolg van een letsel. Daarenboven worden zo'n 35 miljoen mensen op de spoedafdelingen behandeld voor letsels. Ongevallen en letsels vormen ook een belangrijke doodsoorzaak, in het bijzonder bij kinderen en adolescenten. Letselpreventie kan een cruciale bijdrage leveren aan cost efficiency.

Om een antwoord te bieden op deze uitdaging, nam de Raad op 31 mei 2007 een Aanbeveling aan over letselpreventie en de bevordering van veiligheid (2007/C 164 /01).

De implementatie van deze aanbeveling lijkt echter bijzonder traag te verlopen. De EU-Werkgroep voor letselpreventie en bevordering van veiligheid zou sinds 2009 niet meer door de Europese Commissie zijn samengeroepen. Bovendien was de Commissie in de Aanbeveling gevraagd om binnen 4 jaar met een evaluatierapport te komen, maar is dit rapport nog steeds niet beschikbaar.

In die context volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Wat is de huidige stand van zaken met betrekking tot de in de Aanbeveling aan de Commissie gerichte verzoeken?

2. Hoe evalueert de Commissie de huidige implementatie van de Aanbeveling in de lidstaten?

3. Wanneer kan het evaluatierapport van de Commissie worden verwacht en welke acties zal de Commissie in de nabije toekomst terzake nemen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(22 januari 2013)

In de Aanbeveling van de Raad van 31 mei 2007 over letselpreventie en de bevordering van veiligheid (2007/C 164/01) wordt de Commissie verzocht „vier jaar na goedkeuring van deze aanbeveling in een verslag te evalueren of de voorgestelde maatregelen goed werken en of er verdere stappen nodig zijn".

Die evaluatie is aan de gang, en het eindverslag zal dit voorjaar worden gepubliceerd ([1]). In 2010 is reeds een tussentijds verslag gepubliceerd ([2]). Nationale contactpunten van de Wereldgezondheidsorganisatie inzake de preventie van letsel en geweld hebben informatie verstrekt over de vooruitgang bij de verwezenlijking van cruciale elementen van zowel de WHO-resolutie EUR/RC55/R9 als de Aanbeveling van de Raad over letselpreventie en de bevordering van veiligheid. Deze informatie is geanalyseerd om een overzicht van de situatie in de regio en landenprofielen op te stellen, met inbegrip van een inventaris van nationale beleidsmaatregelen inzake de preventie van letsel en geweld.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/policy/injury/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/docs/injuries_who_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011167/12
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: State of play with regard to the Council Recommendation on preventing injury and promoting safety

Each year, some 7 million EU citizens are admitted to hospital due to injury. In addition, some 35 million people are treated for injury at A&E departments. Accidents and injury are also a major cause of death, particularly in children and adolescents. Accident prevention can make a crucial contribution to cost efficiency.

In order to respond to this challenge, the Council adopted a recommendation on the prevention of injury and the promotion of safety (2007/C 164 /01) on 31 May 2007.

However, the implementation of this recommendation seems to be proceeding extremely slowly. The Commission has apparently not convened the EU Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Group since 2009. Moreover, in the recommendation the Commission was asked to compile an evaluation report within four years, but this report is still not available.

1. What is the present state of play with regard to the requests addressed to the Commission in the recommendation?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the current implementation of the recommendation in the Member States?

3. When can the Commission's evaluation report be expected, and what measures will the Commission take in this regard in the near future?

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

The Council Recommendation on the prevention of injury and the promotion of safety (2007/C 164 /01) adopted on 31 May 2007 invites the Commission 'to carry out an evaluation report four years after the adoption of this recommendation to determine whether the measures proposed are working effectively and to assess the need for further actions.'

The evaluation is ongoing, and the final report is due to be published in spring this year ([1]). An intermediate report was already published in 2010 ([2]). National Focal Points on Injury and Violence Prevention from WHO provided information on progress in delivering key items of both the WHO resolution EUR/RC55/R9 and the Council Recommendation on the prevention of injury and the promotion of safety. This information was analysed to provide a regional overview and country profiles, including an inventory of national policies on preventing injuries and violence.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/policy/injury/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/docs/injuries_who_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011168/12
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(6 december 2012)

Betreft: Oneerlijke concurrentie tussen Zaventem en Charleroi

De luchthaven van Zaventem heeft zwaar te lijden onder de oneerlijke concurrentie die ze ondervindt van Ryanair, die opereert vanuit de luchthaven van Charleroi. Ryanair kan immers werken volgens een andere loonregelgeving (Ierse) en ontvangt forse Waalse subsidies. Een rechtstreeks gevolg daarvan is dat de Belgische luchtvaartmaatschappijen die vanaf Zaventem vliegen het moeilijk hebben en zelfs overwegen om Zaventem te verlaten, hetgeen uiteraard een desastreuze impact zou hebben op de werkgelegenheid.

Ik heb de Commissie al herhaaldelijk geïnterpelleerd over deze kwestie (zie mijn vragen E-004658/2012, P-007253/2011, E-005038/2011 en E-1087/2010).

Op 5 december lekte in de Vlaamse pers een vertrouwelijke nota van de Belgische staatssecretaris voor mobiliteit uit inzake een noodplan voor de luchtvaartsector. Volgens deze informatie lijkt de Belgische federale regering hiermee duidelijk te erkennen dat er inderdaad mededingingsproblemen zijn tussen de luchthavens van Zaventem en Charleroi.

In die context graag volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de plannen van de Belgische regering voor de luchtvaartsector?

2. De bevoegde staatssecretaris kreeg in juni 2012 het mandaat om bij de Commissie af te toetsen of maatregelen zoals de vermindering van sociale bijdragen of vrijstelling van de doorstorting van de bedrijfsvoorheffing verenigbaar zijn met het Europees recht. Heeft deze toetsing inmiddels plaatsgevonden? Welke maatregelen werden door de staatssecretaris aan de Commissie voorgelegd en welke feedback heeft de Commissie gegeven?

3. Kan de Commissie een stand van zaken geven over mogelijke Europese maatregelen om o.a. de oneerlijke concurrentie met buitenlandse luchtvaartmaatschappijen aan banden te leggen, zoals aangekondigd op 27 september 2012?

4. Kan de Commissie een stand van zaken geven over het lopende onderzoek naar staatssteun? In juli 2012 gaf commissaris Kallas aan dat de Commissie zou trachten het dossier in de komende maanden af te ronden.

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(6 februari 2013)

1. België heeft het plan waarnaar in de pers wordt verwezen, niet formeel aangemeld. In november 2012 heeft de Commissie België verzocht inlichtingen over de voorgenomen maatregelen te verstrekken.

2. België heeft de Commissie informeel op de hoogte gesteld van een reeks mogelijke maatregelen. De Belgische autoriteiten zijn daarbij geattendeerd op de desbetreffende staatssteunregels, zoals onder meer de in artikel 108, lid 3, VWEU vastgelegde verplichting om elke staatssteunmaatregel aan te melden en om te wachten met de uitvoering van de maatregel totdat de Commissie deze heeft goedgekeurd.

3. Bij Verordening (EU) nr. 465/2012 ([1]) van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 22 mei 2012 is een speciale regel ingevoerd, op grond waarvan voor de vaststelling van het socialezekerheidsstelsel voor leden van het cockpit- en het cabinepersoneel het „thuisbasis"-criterium wordt gehanteerd. Onder het begrip „thuisbasis" wordt de locatie verstaan waar het bemanningslid in de regel een dienstperiode of een reeks dienstperioden aanvangt en beëindigt, en waar de luchtvaartmaatschappij niet verantwoordelijk is voor de accommodatie van het bemanningslid in kwestie. Deze regel is reeds van toepassing op nieuw in dienst genomen personeel. Voor bestaande situaties geldt een overgangsperiode van niet langer dan tien jaar, tenzij het betrokken bemanningslid om onmiddellijke toepassing van de regel verzoekt.

([1]) „tot wijziging van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004 betreffende de coördinatie van de socialezekerheidsstelsels en Verordening (EG) nr. 987/2009 tot vaststelling van de wijze van toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004", PB L 149 van 8.6.2012, blz. 4.

4. Het enige momenteel lopende onderzoek heeft betrekking op steunmaatregel SA.14093 betreffende Brussels South Charleroi Airport en Ryanair. In deze zaak heeft de Commissie, nadat zij op 21 maart 2012 de formele procedure had uitgebreid, opmerkingen van België en van derden ontvangen. In december 2012 heeft België op de door derden geformuleerde opmerkingen gereageerd. De Commissie is deze informatie thans aan het analyseren en blijft zich inspannen om de zaak zo spoedig mogelijk af te ronden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011168/12
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Unfair competition between Zaventem and Charleroi

Zaventem airport is reeling under the impact of unfair competition from Ryanair, operating from Charleroi airport. Ryanair is able to operate under different wage regulations (Ireland's) and receives substantial subsidies from Wallonia. One direct consequence is that the Belgian airlines operating from Zaventem are experiencing difficulties and are even considering leaving Zaventem, which would naturally have a disastrous impact on employment.

I have already repeatedly tabled questions to the Commission regarding this matter (cf. my questions E-004658/2012, P-007253/2011, E-005038/2011 and E-1087/2010).

On 5 December a confidential memorandum from the Belgian State Secretary for Mobility concerning an emergency plan for the aviation industry was leaked to the Flemish press. According to this information, the Belgian Federal Government seems to clearly acknowledge that there are indeed competition problems between Zaventem and Charleroi airports.

1. Is the Commission aware of the Belgian Government's plans for the aviation industry?

2. In June 2012, the State Secretary received a mandate to ask the Commission whether such measures as reducing social insurance contributions or exemption from the requirement to transfer income tax levied at source on wages and salaries would be compatible with European law. Has the State Secretary submitted these issues to the Commission? Which measures did the State Secretary submit to the Commission and what feedback did the Commission provide?

3. Can the Commission indicate the state of play with regard to possible European measures, *inter alia* to combat unfair competition with foreign airlines, as announced on 27 September 2012?

4. Can the Commission indicate the state of play with regard to the current investigation into state aid? In July 2012, Commissioner Kallas stated that the Commission would seek to complete its consideration of the issue during the next few months.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2013)

1. Belgium has not formally notified the plan referred to in the press. The Commission asked Belgium in November 2012 to provide information about the envisaged measures.

2. Belgium informally presented a range of possible measures to the Commission. The Belgian authorities' attention was drawn to the relevant state aid rules including the obligation under Article 108(3) TFEU to notify any state aid measure and to wait until the Commission has approved it to implement it.

3. Regulation 465/2012 ([1]) of the Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2012 created a special rule whereby the social security system for flight and cabin crew members is determined according to the 'home base' criterion, i.e. the location from where the crew member normally starts and ends a (series of) duty period(s) and where the airline is not responsible for his/her accommodation. This rule already applies to personnel newly hired. A transitional period of maximum 10 years applies to existing situations unless the crew member concerned requests an immediate application.

4. The only currently ongoing investigation is case SA.14093 concerning Brussels South Charleroi Airport and Ryanair. In this case, following the extension of formal proceedings on 21 March 2012, the Commission received observations from Belgium and third parties. Belgium commented on third-party observations in December 2012. The Commission is analysing this information, and remains committed to closing the case as soon as possible.

([1]) 'amending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004', OJ L 149,8.6.12, p.4.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011169/12
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(6 december 2012)

Betreft: Commissie wil job of opleiding voor alle jongeren binnen de vier maanden na afstuderen

België en de andere landen van de Europese Unie moeten een jeugdgarantieregeling invoeren. Dat vindt de Europese Commissie. Het mechanisme zorgt ervoor dat alle jongeren tot 25 jaar binnen de vier maanden nadat ze afgestudeerd of werkloos geworden zijn een baan hebben, voortgezet onderwijs kunnen volgen of een leerlingencontract of een stageplaats aangeboden krijgen.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „EU-Commissie wil job of opleiding voor alle jongeren binnen de vier maanden na afstuderen” ([1])?

2. Is de commissie met de PVV van mening dat sociale voorzieningen, werkgelegenheid en werkloosheid nationale aangelegenheden zijn?

3. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat de Commissie met dit voorstel enkel tot mislukken gedoemde socialistische maakbaarheidsidealen nastreeft? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Hoe denkt de Commissie dat de motivatie en ambitie van jongeren zich ontwikkelt als „de staat” banen en werk regelt?

5. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat zij zich reeds met veel teveel zaken bemoeit die eigenlijk bij de beslissingsbevoegdheid van de lidstaten thuishoort?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(14 februari 2013)

De jeugdwerkloosheid in Europa heeft dramatische gevolgen voor onze economieën, onze samenlevingen en vooral voor de jongeren zelf. Daarom sprak de Europese Raad zijn steun uit voor het in december 2012 door de Commissie geïntroduceerde werkgelegenheidspakket voor jongeren met maatregelen die de lidstaten en de sociale partners ten uitvoer kunnen brengen.

De jongerengarantie houdt in dat jongeren een deugdelijk aanbod krijgen voor een baan, voortgezet onderwijs, een plaats in het leerlingstelsel of een stage, om er zo voor te zorgen dat de overgang van school naar werk vergemakkelijkt wordt en dat werkloosheid en inactiviteit worden aangepakt, gelet tenslotte op het cruciale belang daarvan voor economische groei en voor de concurrentiekracht van de lidstaten en van de EU.

De Commissie erkent dat er geen standaardaanpak mogelijk is waarmee een jongerengarantie tot stand kan worden gebracht. In de bovengenoemde maatregelen wordt rekening gehouden met de diversiteit en de verschillende uitgangsposities van de lidstaten met betrekking tot het respectieve peil van de jeugdwerkloosheid en de capaciteiten van de verschillende actoren op de arbeidsmarkt.

Titel IX van het verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie voorziet in de coördinatie van het door de lidstaten op het vlak van werkgelegenheid gevoerde beleid, dat nog is versterkt door het bij Verordening nr. 1175/2011 gecodificeerde Europees semester.

([1]) http://www.standaard.be/artikel/detail.aspx?artikelid=DMF20121205_00392321.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011169/12
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Commission's desire for all young people to find a job or training course within four months of graduation

The Commission takes the view that Belgium and the other EU Member States ought to introduce a youth guarantee scheme. This would ensure that, within four months of graduation or becoming unemployed, all young people under 25 would find a job, be able to undergo further education or be offered an apprenticeship or traineeship.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'EU-Commissie wil job of opleiding voor alle jongeren binnen de vier maanden na afstuderen' [EU Commission wishes all young people to find a job or training course within four months of graduation]? ([1])

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that social welfare, employment and unemployment are matters for national policy-making?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that, in making this proposal, the Commission is merely pursuing socialist ideals regarding the extent to which social change can be imposed from above which are doomed to failure? If not, why not?

4. How does the Commission think that the motivation and ambitions of young people will be affected if 'the State' finds them jobs and work?

5. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is already interfering in far too many fields where it is really the Member States that have the authority to take decisions?

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

Youth unemployment in Europe has dramatic consequences for our economies, our societies and, above all, for young people themselves. Therefore, the European Council supported the presentation by the Commission of the Youth Employment Package (December 2012) with measures to be taken forward by the Member States and social partners.

The Youth Guarantee foresees that a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship should be offered to young people in order to improve school-work transitions, fighting unemployment and inactivity, which ultimately are crucial for economic growth and competitiveness of Member States and of the EU.

The Commission recognises that there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach when establishing a Youth Guarantee. The diversity and different starting points of the Member States as regards the respective levels of youth unemployment and capacities of the various labour market actors are taken into consideration by the said text.

Title IX of the European Treaty provides for a coordination of Member States policies in the field of employment, which has been further reinforced through the European Semester as codified by Regulation 1175/2011.

([1]) http://www.standaard.be/artikel/detail.aspx?artikelid=DMF20121205_00392321.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011170/12
ao Conselho
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Recuperação das quotas leiteiras

Sucedem-se as revoltas, os protestos e as manifestações entre os produtores de leite. A desregulação do setor, o papel da grande distribuição na formação dos preços, o significativo aumento dos custos de produção e a estagnação ou redução dos preços no produtor levam a fortes quebras no rendimento das explorações e intensificam uma crise prolongada, levando à ruína milhares de produtores.

Este é o resultado da política de liberalização da UE, que o chamado «pacote do leite» não veio nem vai alterar.

Agora, no âmbito da reforma da PAC, prepara-se reversão de decisões tomadas noutros setores, travando a prevista liberalização. É o caso do açúcar — com a previsível recuperação das quotas.

Em face do exposto, pergunto ao Conselho:

1. Caso se confirme a referida evolução no setor do açúcar, considera a possibilidade de propor idêntica evolução no setor do leite, tendo em conta a situação desastrosa que hoje se vive, recuperando as quotas leiteiras, conforme vêm já reivindicando vários países?

2. Qual o ponto de situação da discussão relativamente a este assunto? Que países defendem atualmente o regresso das quotas leiteiras e que países se opõem?

3. Que razões poderiam levar a um tratamento distinto do setor do leite? Como se pode justificar a recuperação de instrumentos de regulação e de distribuição da produção no setor do açúcar e não no setor do leite?

Resposta
(4 de março de 2013)

Em 19 de janeiro de 2009, o Conselho adotou o Regulamento (CE) n.° 72/2009 que adapta a Política Agrícola Comum (a reforma «exame de saúde») ([1]).

De acordo com as disposições pertinentes do referido regulamento, foram introduzidos aumentos graduais das quotas a partir da campanha de comercialização de 2009/2010 de forma a permitir uma transição harmoniosa para uma situação sem quotas. Além disso, a Comissão foi convidada a apresentar dois relatórios ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho sobre a evolução da situação do mercado e as consequentes condições para a supressão faseada e harmoniosa do regime de quotas leiteiras, acompanhados, se necessário, de propostas adequadas.

Esses dois relatórios foram apresentados pela Comissão em 8 de dezembro de 2010 ([2]) e em 10 de dezembro de 2012, respetivamente ([3]). Não foram acompanhados de quaisquer propostas. Ambos os relatórios concluíram que numa grande maioria dos Estados-Membros estava bem encaminhada uma «aterragem suave» e que não era necessária qualquer alteração do quadro existente.

O Conselho tomou nota desses relatórios durante as suas reuniões de 13-14 de dezembro de 2010 e de 18-20 de dezembro de 2012.

([1]) JO L 30 de 31.1.2009, p. 1-15.
([2]) 17243/10.
([3]) 17611/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011170/12
to the Council
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Restoring milk quotas

There have been riots, protests and demonstrations among dairy farmers. Deregulation of the sector, the role of large retailers in setting prices, the steep rise in production costs and the stagnation of or drop in the prices paid to producers are causing farmers' incomes to fall sharply and worsening a prolonged crisis, leaving thousands of producers ruined.

This is the result of the EU's liberalisation policy, which the so-called 'milk package' did not and will not change.

Now, as part of the reform of the common agricultural policy, preparations are being made to reverse decisions made in other sectors, putting the brakes on the planned liberalisation. This is the case in the sugar industry, where quotas will likely be restored.

1. If this change in the sugar industry takes place, is the Council considering proposing similar changes in the milk industry, given the disastrous situation we are currently facing: namely, the restoration of milk quotas, as several countries are already demanding?

2. What is the current state of play regarding the debate on this issue? Which countries currently support the return of milk quotas and which countries oppose it?

3. Why might the milk industry be treated differently? How can it be justified to restore regulatory and production distribution instruments in the sugar industry and not in the milk industry?

Reply
(4 March 2013)

On 19 January 2009 the Council adopted Regulation (EC) No 72/2009 on modifications to the common agricultural policy (the 'Health Check' reform) ([1]).

According to the relevant provisions of that regulation, gradual increases of quotas as from the marketing year 2009/2010 were introduced so as to allow for a smooth transition to a situation without quotas. Furthermore, the Commission was invited to present two reports to the European Parliament and the Council regarding the evolution of the market situation and the consequent conditions for a smooth phasing-out of the milk quota system, accompanied if necessary by appropriate proposals.

These two reports were presented by the Commission on 8 December 2010 ([2]) and on 10 December 2012 ([3]) respectively. They were not accompanied by any proposals. Both reports concluded that the soft landing was on track in a vast majority of Member States and that no change to the existing framework was required.

The Council took note of these reports during its meetings of 13-14 December 2010 and of 18-20 December 2012.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1 2009, pp. 1-15.
([2]) 17243/10.
([3]) 17611/12.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011171/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Recuperação das quotas leiteiras

Sucedem-se as revoltas, os protestos e as manifestações entre os produtores de leite. A desregulação do setor, o papel da grande distribuição na formação dos preços, o significativo aumento dos custos de produção e a estagnação ou redução dos preços no produtor levam a fortes quebras no rendimento das explorações e intensificam uma crise prolongada, levando à ruína milhares de produtores.

Este é o resultado da política de liberalização da UE, que o chamado «pacote do leite» não veio nem vai alterar.

Agora, no âmbito da reforma da PAC, prepara-se reversão de decisões tomadas noutros setores, travando a prevista liberalização. É o caso do açúcar — com a previsível recuperação das quotas.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Caso se confirme a referida evolução no setor do açúcar, considera a possibilidade de propor idêntica evolução no setor do leite, tendo em conta a situação desastrosa que hoje se vive, recuperando as quotas leiteiras, conforme vêm já reivindicando vários países?

2. Que razões poderiam levar a um tratamento distinto do setor do leite? Como se pode justificar a recuperação de instrumentos de regulação e de distribuição da produção no setor do açúcar e não no setor do leite? Terá a ver com o facto de os principais países que serão beneficiados com as quotas para o açúcar serem os mesmos que serão beneficiados com a ausência de quotas no leite?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(4 de fevereiro de 2013)

1. Não existe nenhuma proposta da Comissão com vista a modificar a decisão tomada pelo Conselho em 2003 de abolir o regime de quotas leiteiras em 2015. Tal como é mencionado nas conclusões do segundo relatório «boa aterragem» ([1]), em 2013 será efetuada uma análise, por peritos independentes, da evolução previsível do setor leiteiro a partir de 2015. A Comissão apresentará um relatório ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho, até 30 de junho de 2014, sobre o funcionamento no terreno das disposições «pacote leiteiro», no qual avaliará, nomeadamente, o impacto sobre os produtores de leite e a produção de leite nas regiões desfavorecidas, no quadro do objetivo geral da manutenção da produção nessas regiões, e se debruçará sobre possíveis incentivos a que os agricultores adiram a acordos de produção conjunta.

2. A legislação atualmente em vigor ([2]) prevê a supressão do regime de quotas em 2015, tanto para o açúcar como para o leite, e não existe nenhuma proposta da Comissão para alterar este *status quo*. As razões pelas quais a supressão progressiva das quotas leiteiras foi confirmada no «exame de saúde» da PAC de 2008 continuam a ser válidas: as quotas leiteiras constituem um entrave ao desenvolvimento do setor leiteiro europeu, retirando-lhe a flexibilidade de que necessita para aproveitar a expansão do mercado mundial.

([1]) Relatório da Comissão ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho «evolução da situação do mercado e consequentes condições para a supressão faseado e suave do regime de quotas leiteiras» (ver COM(2012) 741 final).

([2]) Parte II, título I, capítulo III, do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1234/2007 do Conselho, de 22 de outubro de 2007, que estabelece uma organização comum dos mercados agrícolas e disposições específicas para certos produtos agrícolas (Regulamento «OCM única»).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011171/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Restoring milk quotas

There have been riots, protests and demonstrations among dairy farmers. Deregulation of the sector, the role of large retailers in setting prices, the steep rise in production costs and the stagnation of or drop in the prices paid to producers are causing farmers' incomes to fall sharply and worsening a prolonged crisis, leaving thousands of producers ruined.

This is the result of the EU's liberalisation policy, which the so-called 'milk package' did not and will not change.

Now, as part of the reform of the common agricultural policy, preparations are being made to reverse decisions made in other sectors, putting the brakes on the planned liberalisation. This is the case in the sugar industry, where quotas will likely be restored.

1. If this change in the sugar industry takes place, is the Commission considering proposing similar changes in the milk industry, given the disastrous situation we are currently facing: namely, the restoration of milk quotas, as several countries are already demanding?

2. Why might the milk industry be treated differently? How can it be justified to restore regulatory and production distribution instruments in the sugar industry and not in the milk industry? Is it because the main countries that will benefit from the sugar quotas are the same countries that will benefit from the lack of milk quotas?

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

1. There is no Commission proposal on the table to change the decision taken by the Council in 2003 to abolish the milk quota system in 2015. As mentioned in the conclusions of the 2nd soft landing report ([1]), an analysis will be carried out in 2013 by independent experts of future developments in the milk sector from 2015 onwards. The Commission will report to the European Parliament and the Council by 30 June 2014 on the concrete operation of the Milk Package provisions, assessing, in particular, the effects on milk producers and milk production in disadvantaged regions in connection with the general objective of maintaining production in such regions, and covering potential incentives to encourage farmers to enter into joint production agreements.

2. The legislation currently in place ([2]) foresees the removal of the quota system in 2015 both for sugar and milk, and there is no proposal from the Commission to change this status-quo. The reason why the phasing-out of milk quotas was confirmed in the 2008 CAP Health Check remains valid: milk quotas act as a constraint for the European milk sector depriving it from the necessary flexibility to benefit from expanding world markets.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the evolution of the market situation and the consequent conditions for smoothly phasing-out the milk quota system (see COM(2012) 741 final).

([2]) Part II, Title I, Chapter III of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 of 22 October 2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (Single CMO Regulation).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011172/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Acordos de Livre Comércio envolvendo produtos da pesca e de aquacultura

De acordo com o Comissário do Comércio Internacional, Karel De Gucht, vários acordos de livre comércio que estão neste momento a ser negociados pela UE — nomeadamente com o Canadá, com países da América Latina, com países ACP e com países asiáticos — envolvem a liberalização de trocas comerciais no domínio dos produtos da pesca e de aquacultura.

Recorde-se que a entrada no mercado comunitário de produtos da pesca e de aquacultura a preços extremamente baixos (permitidos por condições de produção, designadamente no plano das normas ambientais e laborais, distintas das que têm de ser observadas pelos produtores europeus) tem vindo a ser denunciada por inúmeros produtores e suas organizações como um fator adicional de pressão para a baixa dos preços de primeira venda do pescado, agravando o problema dos rendimentos no setor.

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

1. Que produtos da pesca e da aquacultura estão envolvidos em cada um dos acordos citados pelo Comissário De Gucht?

2. Tendo o Comissário referido que a Comissão procedeu a uma análise dos «interesses defensivos da UE» nestas negociações, que «interesses defensivos», em concreto, estão identificados em cada um dos acordos?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(22 de janeiro de 2013)

Todos os produtos e respetivas tarifas pautais são considerados quando se negoceiam acordos de comércio livre. Este é o caso, em particular, dos produtos de pesca onde nenhum produto, incluindo produtos de aquicultura, está, *a priori*, excluído das negociações. Porém, vale a pena sublinhar que a Nomenclatura Combinada da União Europeia não distingue se os produtos de pesca têm origem na aquicultura ou na captura de peixe selvagem.

A sensibilidade dos produtos no contexto das negociações comerciais tem de ser avaliada caso a caso. Isto depende bastante, em particular, da capacidade de exportação e competitividade do país com o qual são feitas as negociações.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011172/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Free trade agreements involving fisheries and aquaculture products

According to the Commissioner for international trade, Karel de Gucht, several free trade agreements currently being negotiated by the EU — particularly those with Canada and various Latin American, ACP and Asian countries — involve the liberalisation of trade exchanges in fisheries and aquaculture products.

It should be remembered that countless producers and producer organisations have complained about the entry into the Community market of fisheries and aquaculture products at extremely low prices (due to different production conditions, particularly in terms of environmental and labour standards, to those required of European producers), which they point to as an additional factor pushing down prices at the initial point of sale, adding to the sector's income problems.

Could the Commission provide the following information:

1. What fisheries and aquaculture products are involved in each of the agreements mentioned by Commissioner de Gucht?

2. Given that the Commissioner stated that the Commission had undertaken an analysis of the 'EU's defensive interests' in these negotiations, what specific 'defensive interests' are identified in each of these agreements?

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

All products and corresponding tariff lines are considered when negotiating free trade agreements. This is in particular the case of fisheries products, where no products, including aquaculture produts, are *a priori* excluded from negotiations. It is worth noting however that the European Combined Nomenclature does not make any difference whether fishery products are from aquaculture or wild catch.

The sensitivity of products in the context of trade negotiations needs to be assessed on a case by case basis. In particular, it depends very much on the export capacity and competitiveness of the country with which negotiations are carried out.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011173/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio aos investimentos em eficiência energética

A nova diretiva sobre o desempenho energético dos edifícios introduz uma série de requisitos novos em comparação com a anterior diretiva, nomeadamente em relação ao desempenho energético mínimo dos edifícios, estabelecendo padrões mais elevados. Tal exigirá, necessariamente, investimentos consideráveis.

Recentemente, Robert Nuij, responsável pela certificação energética na Comissão Europeia, afirmou que «até abril de 2014 os Estados-Membros devem estabelecer estratégias de longo prazo para mobilizar investimentos que se concentrem na reabilitação do stock nacional de construção». Esses «roteiros de reabilitação» deverão assegurar melhorias substanciais nos edifícios existentes.

Tratando-se estes de investimentos importantes, desde logo por razões ambientais, sendo potencialmente geradores de emprego e dinamizadores da atividade económica, numa altura em que o setor da construção enfrenta uma gravíssima crise, a verdade é que os programas FMI-UE, como o que está em curso em Portugal, têm levado a uma redução brutal quer do investimento público quer do investimento privado, ambos reduzidos a níveis de indigência, o que dificilmente permitirá as necessárias intervenções. Os possíveis cortes no próximo Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (2014-2020) poderão agravar ainda mais estas dificuldades.

Tendo em conta as afirmações de Robert Nuij, segundo as quais «a Comissão está empenhada em estimular os investimentos em eficiência energética», pergunto:

De que forma vai a Comissão estimular e apoiar os investimentos em eficiência energética, junto dos setores público e privado?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(25 de janeiro de 2013)

A Comissão continua a apoiar os investimentos em eficiência energética das seguintes formas:

1. Propondo um aumento do financiamento da política de coesão destinado às medidas de economia hipocarbónica (principalmente através da circunscrição do FEDER a tais medidas, o que resultaria numa dotação mínima de 17 mil milhões de euros); promovendo a utilização de instrumentos financeiros e a supressão do limite de 4 % de apoio aos investimentos em energia sustentável no setor da habitação. Em 2013, a Comissão elaborará orientações destinadas a ajudar os Estados-Membros a selecionar e avaliar projetos de eficiência energética e a utilizar instrumentos financeiros inovadores.

2. Através do Fundo Europeu para a Eficiência Energética, prestando assistência técnica e financiamento (através de instrumentos de dívida, de capital e de garantia) a projetos comercialmente viáveis que reforcem o mercado europeu dos contratos no domínio do desempenho energético na UE ([1]).

3. Em terceiro lugar, dando apoio específico para desenvolver e lançar investimentos no âmbito da componente «Aceitação pelo mercado das inovações no domínio da energia» do programa Horizonte 2020, seguindo o modelo do mecanismo ELENA.

Além disso, a Comissão lançou uma campanha à escala da UE para promover os contratos no domínio do desempenho energético e as empresas de serviços energéticos ([2]) através de discussões específicas por país e do reforço das capacidades das principais partes interessadas, bem como para apoiar os Estados-Membros no âmbito da aplicação da Diretiva Eficiência Energética ([3]).

([1]) Para mais informações, consultar: http://www.eeef.eu/.
([2]) Para mais informações, consultar: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/financing/campaign_en.htm
([3]) Diretiva 2012/27/UE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de outubro de 2012, relativa à eficiência energética, que altera as Diretivas 2009/125/CE e 2010/30/UE e revoga as Diretivas 2004/8/CE e 2006/32/CE (JO L 315 de 14.11.2012, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011173/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Support for investment in energy efficiency

The new energy performance of buildings directive introduces a series of new requirements in relation to the previous directive, particularly in terms of setting higher minimum energy efficiency requirements for buildings. This will inevitably require considerable investment.

Recently, the Commission's policy officer for energy certification, Robert Nuij, said that Member States should, by April 2014, determine long-term strategies to mobilise investment in the rehabilitation of national building stock. These 'rehabilitation road maps' should lead to substantial improvements in existing buildings.

Although significant investment is involved, for environmental reasons, which could potentially generate employment and revitalise economic activity at a time when the construction sector is facing a serious crisis, the truth is that the EU-IMF programmes, such as that being applied in Portugal, have led to a drastic reduction in both public and private investment, which have virtually disappeared, and that this will make it difficult to undertake the necessary work. Possible cuts in the next multiannual financial framework (2014-2020) could further exacerbate these difficulties.

In view of Robert Nuij's comments, according to which the Commission is determined to encourage investment in energy efficiency, can the Commission say how it intends to promote and support investment in energy efficiency by the public and private sectors?

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

The Commission continues to support investments in energy efficiency in the following ways:

1. The Commission's proposed increase to cohesion policy funding for low carbon economy measures (mainly through ring-fencing of the ERDF for such measures, which would result in a minimum allocation of EUR 17 billion); expansion of the use of financial instruments; and removal of the 4% limit on support for sustainable energy investments in housing. In 2013 the Commission will develop guidelines to assist Member States in the selection and evaluation of energy efficiency projects and the use of innovative financial instruments.

2. Through the European Energy Efficiency Fund, providing technical assistance and financing (via debt, equity and guarantee instruments) to commercially viable projects strengthening the European energy performance contracting market in the EU ([1]).

3. Thirdly, specific support to develop and launch investments under the 'Market uptake of energy innovation' component of Horizon 2020, modelled on the ELENA Facility.

Moreover, the Commission has launched an EU-wide campaign to promote energy performance contracting and energy service companies ([2]) through country-specific discussions and capacity building of core stakeholders, as well as to support Member States with the implementation of the energy efficiency directive ([3]).

([1]) For more information, please see: http://www.eeef.eu/.
([2]) For more information, please see: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/financing/campaign_en.htm
([3]) Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC (OJ L315 of 14.11.2012, p.1).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011174/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Prevenção do cancro do colo-rectal

A europacolon Portugal — Associação de Luta Contra o Cancro do Intestino é uma Associação sem fins lucrativos que promove a prevenção do cancro do colo-rectal, difundindo o conhecimento da doença e os seus sintomas, apoiando os pacientes, familiares/cuidadores, na área psico-emocional, no esclarecimento dos seus direitos e criando parcerias com a comunidade médica.

Recentemente, esta associação apresentou publicamente um «Livro Branco sobre o Cancro do Intestino na Europa». Refira-se que o cancro colo-rectal incide anualmente em 450 000 novos casos na Europa, com uma mortalidade superior a 230 000 pessoas. A implementação do rastreio de base populacional permitiria diminuir significativamente os novos casos da doença.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que iniciativas promoveu ou pensa promover no âmbito do combate ao cancro do intestino, em especial no domínio da prevenção?

2. Que medidas pode adotar ou apoiar tendo em vista a implementação do rastreio de base populacional?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(22 de janeiro de 2013)

Com base na Recomendação do Conselho de 2 de dezembro de 2003 sobre o Rastreio do Cancro, os Estados-Membros são convidados a implementar, a nível nacional, programas populacionais de rastreio do cancro da mama, do colo do útero e colorretal, com garantias apropriadas de qualidade a todos os níveis ([1]).

Para auxiliar os Estados-Membros no rastreio do cancro, a Comissão apoia a definição de orientações europeias para o rastreio destes três tipos de cancro. Tal inclui as orientações europeias para garantir a qualidade do rastreio e do diagnóstico do cancro colorretal publicadas em 2010, que constituem uma referência de boas práticas para o rastreio deste cancro.

Além disso, no quadro da Parceria Europeia de Ação contra o Cancro ([2]), apoiada pelo programa da UE no domínio da saúde, está em curso a organização da Escola Europeia de Gestão do Rastreio. Trata-se de um curso de formação intensiva de duas semanas sobre os princípios, a organização, a avaliação, a planificação e a gestão dos programas de rastreio do cancro. Outra atividade neste contexto foi o «Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme Workshop», que teve lugar em Liverpool, em março de 2012.

A Comissão continuará a apelar aos Estados-Membros no sentido de utilizarem os instrumentos disponíveis da UE na luta contra o cancro colorretal, em especial as orientações europeias. Além disso, a Comissão apoia um certo número de ações que podem contribuir para a prevenção do cancro colorretal, incluindo a Semana Europeia contra o Cancro, a divulgação do Código Europeu contra o Cancro e a ação sobre certos fatores de risco como o tabagismo, o consumo excessivo de álcool, a nutrição e a atividade física.

([1]) Ver: http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/cancer/index_en.htm#fragment3.
([2]) Ver: http://www.epaac.eu/home.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011174/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Prevention of colorectal cancer

EuropaColon Portugal (Association to Combat Intestinal Cancer) is a non-profit organisation which works to prevent colorectal cancer by creating awareness of the illness and its symptoms, providing psycho-emotional support to patients, their families and carers and helping them to understand their rights, and creating partnerships with the medical community.

This association recently presented a 'White Paper on intestinal cancer in Europe'. It should be noted that 450 000 new cases of colorectal cancer are detected every year in Europe, with over 230 000 people dying from the disease. Screening programmes for the target population could help to significantly reduce the number of new cases.

Can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What initiatives has it promoted or is it considering promoting in order to combat intestinal cancer, particularly in terms of prevention?

2. What measures could be adopted or supported with a view to setting up a screening programme?

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

Based on the Council Recommendation of 2 December 2003 on cancer screening, Member States are invited to implement nationwide population-based screening programmes for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer, with appropriate quality assurance at all levels ([1]).

To assist Member States with cancer screening, the Commission supports the development of European Guidelines on screening for these three types of cancer. This includes the European Guidelines for quality assurance in colorectal cancer screening and diagnosis published in 2010, which provide a benchmark for best practice in colorectal cancer screening.

In addition, in the framework of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer ([2]) supported by the EU Health Programme, the European School of Screening Management is being organised. This is a two-week intensive training course on the principles, organisation, evaluation, planning and management of cancer screening programmes. Another activity in this context is the Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme Workshop which took place in Liverpool in March 2012.

The Commission will continue inviting Member States to make use of the EU mechanisms available to them in the fight against colorectal cancer, in particular the European Guidelines. In addition, the Commission supports a number of actions which can contribute to preventing colorectal cancer. These include the European Week against Cancer, the dissemination of the European Code against Cancer, and action on risk factors such as smoking, alcohol abuse, nutrition and physical activity.

([1]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/cancer/index_en.htm#fragment3.
([2]) http://www.epaac.eu/home.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011175/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Qualidade do ar no interior da cabine dos aviões

Organizações de trabalhadores do setor da aviação têm vindo a manifestar a sua preocupação com um grave problema que persiste desde há muitos anos, relacionado com a qualidade do ar no interior da cabine dos aviões. A ausência de filtros no ar que alimenta a cabine e a sua consequente contaminação com óleos aquecidos dos motores poderá criar sérios problemas de saúde (a passageiros e a trabalhadores) e de segurança. A Global Cabin Air Quality Executive é uma das entidades que tem vindo a alertar para este problema. Esta organização critica os padrões de qualidade propostos pelo Comité Europeu de Normalização, que acusa de favorecerem os interesses da indústria de aviação e de negligenciarem os interesses de passageiros e trabalhadores do setor.

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

1. Que conhecimento tem e que avaliação faz deste problema?

2. Que medidas tomou ou pensa tomar a este respeito?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(11 de março de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do debate mundial em torno da qualidade do ar na cabine dos aviões. No que diz respeito ao risco de contaminação do ar da cabine, a preocupação da Comissão é, obviamente, a proteção da saúde e a segurança dos passageiros e da tripulação.

Não existem provas, nesta fase, de uma relação de causa-efeito entre a exposição ao ar da cabine (em geral ou na sequência de incidentes) e problemas de saúde das tripulações e dos passageiros nos aviões comerciais ([1]). A Comissão e a AESA continuam, contudo, a acompanhar atentamente as investigações e as avaliações em curso realizadas por diferentes organismos neste domínio, a fim de garantir a aplicação oportuna e adequada das ações, da sua competência, que possam ser necessárias.

No que se refere à questão das normas, a Comissão está consciente de que existe uma norma europeia voluntária ([2]) e um projeto de norma em fase de desenvolvimento ([3]) relativas à qualidade do ar na cabine dos aviões.

As normas voluntárias não contêm valores-limite para a exposição dos trabalhadores e do público em geral. Porém, a norma EN 4618 contém alguns valores indicativos acordados entre as partes interessadas, uma vez que não existe legislação relativa à qualidade do ar na cabine dos aviões.

A Comissão tem conhecimento de que o CEN registou as críticas da Global Cabin Air Quality Executive e prometeu levar a cabo um inquérito entre os seus membros nacionais acerca do futuro das normas EN 4168:2009 e prEN 4666:2009. Este processo ainda está pendente e as suas conclusões finais não estão disponíveis.

Não existindo base jurídica para intervir neste processo privado de normalização, a Comissão limita-se a acompanhar estas discussões na qualidade de observador. Com efeito, a Comissão tem um interesse geral em apoiar a participação dos representantes dos trabalhadores e dos consumidores no processo de normalização europeia, a fim de garantir que as normas europeias satisfazem as necessidades de toda a sociedade.

([1]) Para mais esclarecimentos, o Senhor Deputado pode consultar a resposta da Comissão à pergunta E-009668/2011, disponível no endereço http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) (EN 4618: 2009).
([3]) (prEN 4666: 2009).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011175/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Air quality in aircraft cabins

Employee organisations in the aviation sector express concern at a serious problem which has persisted for a number of years now, related to air quality inside aircraft cabins. The fact that air fed into the cabin space is unfiltered, and hence becomes polluted with hot oil from the engines, can create serious health and safety problems for passengers and staff alike The Global Cabin Air Quality Executive is one of the bodies which has issued warnings about this problem. The organisation criticises the quality control parameters set by the European Committee for Standardisation, which it accuses of favouring the interests of the aviation industry to the detriment of those of passengers and aviation workers.

In light of the above, can the Commission say:

1. To what extent is it aware of this problem, and what is its view of it?

2. What steps has it taken or does it intend to take in relation to the issue?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

The Commission is aware of the worldwide debate around the aircraft cabin air quality. With regard to the risk of contamination of cabin air, the Commission's concern is of course to protect the safety an health of passengers and flight and cabin crew members.

There is no evidence, at this stage, of a causal association between cabin air exposures (either general or following incidents) and ill-health of crews and passengers in commercial aircraft ([1]). The Commission and EASA continue however to follow carefully ongoing research and assessment done by different bodies in this area in order to ensure timely and appropriate actions under its remit which could be necessary.

With regard to the issue of standards, the Commission is aware that there is one voluntary European standard ([2]) and one draft standard under development ([3]) dealing with aircraft internal air quality.

Voluntary standards do not contain limit values for exposure of workers or of general public. However EN 4618 contains some indicative values agreed between stakeholders as there is no legislative regulation about cabin air quality.

The Commission is aware that CEN took note of the criticism of the Global Cabin Air Quality Executive and promised to have an enquiry among its national members on the future of EN 4168:2009 and prEN 4666:2009. This process is still pending and final conclusions are not yet available.

While there is no legal basis for the Commission to intervene in this private standardisation process, the Commission follows these discussions as an observer. Indeed the Commission has a general interest to support participation of representatives of workers and consumers in European standardisation processes to ensure that European standards fulfill the needs of the whole society.

([1]) For further explanations we refer the Honourable member to the Commission reply to Question E-009668/2011 available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) (EN 4618:2009).
([3]) (prEN 4666:2009).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011176/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Novo Acordo de Pescas UE-Mauritânia

Tendo em conta as críticas que têm vindo a ser feitas por diversos representantes do setor das pescas ao novo Acordo de Pescas UE-Mauritânia, negociado pela Comissão Europeia, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que licenças estão neste momento a ser utilizadas ao abrigo deste acordo?

2. Qual o número de embarcações dos Estados-Membros nas águas mauritanas, de que países são estas embarcações e em que pescarias se concentram?

3. Que embarcações (e de que países) deixaram as águas mauritanas desde que expirou o anterior acordo?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(1 de fevereiro de 2013)

O Protocolo garante o acesso prioritário da frota da UE às águas mauritanas e todas as outras frotas de países que não pertençam à UE têm que respeitar as mesmas condições técnicas e financeiras.

Atualmente, 28 navios da UE decidiram utilizar as possibilidades, e 8 estão em vias de o fazer. No total, 122 licenças poderiam estar disponíveis para todas as categorias.

As licenças atualmente em uso ao abrigo deste protocolo são as seguintes:

— Categoria 2 (arrastões para pescada negra): Espanha — 2 licenças;

— Categoria 3 (navios de pesca de espécies demersais): Espanha — 4 licenças;

— Categoria 5 (atuneiros cercadores): Espanha —12 licenças, França — 8 licenças (esperadas);

— Categoria 6 (atuneiros com canas e palangreiros de superfície): Espanha — 7 licenças, França — 1 licença;

— Categoria 7 (pequenos pelágicos): Lituânia — 2 licenças.

Os seguintes navios deixaram águas da Mauritânia desde que o protocolo anterior expirou:

— Arrastões de camarão (Espanha, Itália, Portugal);

— Arrastões de cefalópodes, uma vez que não foi atribuído um excedente de cefalópodes pela Mauritânia (Espanha, Itália, Grécia);

— Navios com covos para caranguejo (Espanha);

— Arrastões congeladores de pesca pelágica (Alemanha, Países Baixos, Lituânia — com exceção de dois navios que ainda pescam atualmente, Letónia, Polónia, Reino Unido, França).

A Comissão Europeia insistiu em que os segmentos do setor, que ainda não tenham dado início às suas operações de pesca, o façam. A fim de eventualmente ajustar as novas condições técnicas aquando da próxima reunião do comité misto, importa que o setor demonstre possuir uma experiência concreta no exercício das atividades de pesca sob essas condições.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011176/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: New EU-Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement

In view of the criticisms from various representatives of the fisheries sector regarding the new EU-Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement, negotiated by the Commission:

1. What licences are currently being used under this agreement?

2. How many vessels belonging to Member States are operating in Mauritanian waters? Which Member States do these vessels belong to and on which fisheries are they focusing?

3. Which vessels (belonging to which countries) have left Mauritanian waters since the previous agreement expired?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(1 February 2013)

The Protocol ensures a priority access for the EU fleet to the Mauritanian waters and all other non-EU fleets must respect the same technical and financial conditions.

Currently 28 EU vessels have decided to use these opportunities, and 8 are in the process. In total, 122 licences could be available for all categories.

The licences currently being used under the Protocol are the following:

— Category C (black hake trawlers): Spain — 2 licences;

— Category C (demersal vessels): Spain — 4 licences;

— Category C (tuna seiners): Spain — 12 licences, France — 8 licences (expected);

— Category C (pole and line tuna vessels and surface longliners): Spain — 7 licences, France — 1 licence;

— Category C (small pelagics): Lithuania — 2 licences.

Since the previous Protocol expired, the following vessels have left Mauritanian waters:

— Trawlers fishing for shrimp (Spain, Italy, Portugal);

— Trawlers fishing for cephalopods, due to no attribution of the cephalopods surplus by Mauritania (Spain, Italy, Greece);

— Potter fishing for crab (Spain);

— Pelagic freezer trawlers (Germany, the Netherlands, Lithuania — with the exception of two vessels which do currently fish, Latvia, Poland, United Kingdom, France).

The European Commission has strongly invited the segments of the industry which have not yet started their fishing operations to go and fish. There is a need to demonstrate a concrete experience of the industry with the new technical conditions to possibly adjust some of them at the forthcoming Joint Committee meeting.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011177/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Pressões ilegítimas para a privatização da CP Carga

Notícias na imprensa portuguesa referem que a Comissão Europeia estará a pressionar o governo português para avançar para o processo de privatização da CP Carga (empresa incluída na lista de privatizações que constam do memorando FMI-UE).

A CP Carga gere três terminais logísticos ferroviários (Bobadela, Leixões e Loulé) e operacionaliza outros nove (Darque, Tandim, Mangualde, Guarda, Fundão, Leiria, Poceirão, Vale da Rosa e Praias do Sado).

A administração da empresa prevê um aumento de 4,5 % na tonelagem de mercadorias exportadas este ano, face a 2011, assim como um crescimento de 51 % nos resultados líquidos e de 60 % nos resultados operacionais.

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

1. Confirma as pressões sobre o governo português para a privatização da empresa?

2. Como as justifica à luz do disposto no artigo 345.° do TFUE, segundo o qual, supostamente, a UE seria neutral do ponto de vista do regime de propriedade deste serviço?

3. Que Estados-Membros ainda não efetuaram o «unbundling»?

4. Que avaliação faz do processo de concentração monopolista em curso no setor, bem evidenciado no facto da multinacional alemã DB controlar mais de 60 % do mesmo a nível europeu?

5. Tem noção das consequências que poderão advir para Portugal da perda de controlo sobre um setor estratégico como é o transporte ferroviário de mercadorias (com a sua provável entrega ao capital estrangeiro)?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(11 de fevereiro de 2013)

A privatização da CP Carga é uma das medidas (medida 3.31 do Memorando de Entendimento de 17 de maio de 2011), aprovadas pelo Governo Português com a Comissão Europeia, o Fundo Monetário Internacional e o Banco Central Europeu («Tróica»).

A Tróica avalia regularmente o grau de cumprimento das medidas contidas no Memorando de Entendimento por parte das autoridades portuguesas, encorajando-as a dar todos os passos necessários, incluindo a privatização de várias empresas estatais, como condição para beneficiar do programa de assistência financeira. As privatizações geram receitas públicas que podem ser usadas para amortizar a dívida pública, que atingiu um nível muito elevado.

A Comissão está a acompanhar de perto as restantes distorções de mercado e as estruturas não otimizadas do setor ferroviário europeu. Atualmente, 13 Estados-Membros (Bulgária, República Checa, Dinamarca, Estónia, Finlândia, Grécia, Países Baixos, Portugal, Roménia, Espanha, Suécia, Eslováquia e Reino Unido) introduziram a separação institucional no seu setor ferroviário. Seis outros Estados-Membros estão em fase de reforma da estrutura institucional do seu sector ferroviário nacional (Bélgica, França, Hungria, Irlanda, Itália e Polónia).

O Quarto Pacote Ferroviário, que está atualmente a ser elaborado pela Comissão, contém as medidas que, na opinião da Comissão, garantem uma verdadeira igualdade de condições para todos os operadores do setor do transporte ferroviário em toda a União Europeia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011177/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Unlawful pressure to privatise CP Carga

According to reports in the Portuguese press, the Commission is pressuring the Portuguese Government into privatising CP Carga (a company on the privatisation list contained in the IMF-EU Memorandum).

CP Carga manages three rail logistics terminals (Bobadela, Leixões and Loulé) and operates a further nine (Darque, Tandim, Mangualde, Guarda, Fundão, Leiria, Poceirão, Vale da Rosa and Praias do Sado).

The company's management anticipates a 4.5% increase in the tonnage of goods exported this year compared with 2011, as well as an increase of 51% in net income and a 60% rise in turnover.

1. Can the Commission say whether it is pressuring the Portuguese Government to privatise the company?

2. How does it justify this pressure, in the light of Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in accordance with which the EU is supposed to be neutral with regard to the ownership of this service?

3. Which Member States have still not implemented unbundling?

4. What view does the Commission take of the ongoing monopolisation of rail freight, highlighted by the fact that the German multinational DB controls over 60% of the sector in Europe?

5. Is it aware of the consequences that losing control over a strategic sector such as rail freight (which is likely to be taken over by foreign capital) may have on Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2013)

The privatisation of CP Carga is one of the measures (measure 3.31 of the memorandum of understanding of 17 May 2011) agreed by the Portuguese Government with the European Commission, International Monetary Fund and European Central Bank ('Troika').

The Troika regularly assesses the degree of compliance by the Portuguese authorities with the measures contained in the memorandum of understanding, encouraging them to take all necessary steps, including the privatisation of several State-owned companies as a condition to benefit from the financial assistance programme. Privatisations generate public revenues that can be used to amortise the public debt, which has attained a very high level.

The Commission is following closely the remaining market distortions and suboptimal structures of the European railway sector. Currently, 13 Member States (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) have introduced institutional separation in their railway sector. Six other Members States are in the process of reforming the institutional structure of their national rail sector (Belgium, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy and Poland).

The 4th Railway Package, which is currently being prepared by the Commission, contains the measures which will, in Commission's view, achieve a true level playing field for all railway transport operators across the Union

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011178/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Projeto de ordenamento fundiário de Moreira e Barroças e Taias — Monção

O projeto de ordenamento fundiário de Moreira e Barroças e Taias, no concelho de Monção, no norte de Portugal, reveste-se da maior importância para a atividade agro-pecuária local, nomeadamente para a sua principal cultura, o vinho alvarinho (destino de 99 % da área a beneficiar em Moreira e 72 % da área de Barrocas e Taias).

As autoridades nacionais competentes (DGADR/Ministério da Agricultura) emitiram já pareceres favoráveis ao avanço dos projetos envolvidos. Sobre o Projeto de Execução da Rede de Rega consideram que «o projeto se encontra bem elaborado e apresentado, tendo sido introduzidas as alterações necessárias ao seu bom entendimento e implementação pelo que se propõe a sua aprovação». Sobre o projeto de execução de caminhos agrícolas — depois de considerar que foram «produzidas alterações significativas à versão inicial do projeto de execução dos caminhos do POF de Moreira e Barroças e Taias» considera-se «que o projeto de execução reúne condições de implementação».

Todavia, persistem problemas de financiamento, nomeadamente incertezas quanto ao acolhimento pelo Proder destes investimentos em 2013.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tendo em conta o tipo de projetos — rede de rega e caminhos agrícolas — e a região em causa, qual a percentagem máxima de cofinanciamento comunitário passível de ser garantida?

2. Tendo em conta a reprogramação das verbas destinadas ao desenvolvimento rural, tem a Comissão conhecimento do acolhimento destes projetos no Proder? Sabe, ademais, informar-me se estão garantidas as verbas destinadas à reconversão da vinha (cerca de 870 mil euros do programa VITIS)?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(4 de fevereiro de 2013)

A Comissão informa o Senhor Deputado de que a taxa máxima de cofinanciamento aplicada a todas as medidas e regiões do Proder é atualmente de 85 %.

Como é do conhecimento do Senhor Deputado, compete aos Estados-Membros, no quadro da gestão partilhada dos programas de desenvolvimento rural, selecionar os projetos e efetuar os contratos e pagamentos respetivos. Para obter informações sobre a seleção dos projetos, queira, pois, contactar diretamente a autoridade de gestão do Proder através do seguinte endereço de correio eletrónico: st.proder@gpp.pt.

A reestruturação e a reconversão da vinha integram-se no programa de apoio nacional de Portugal ao setor da vinha para o período de 2009 a 2013. Este programa é financiado pelo FEAGA (primeiro pilar da política agrícola comum) e o montante destinado a todas as suas medidas em 2013 é de 65 milhões de euros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011178/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Land consolidation project in Moreira and Barroças e Taias in the municipality of Monção

The land consolidation project in Moreira and Barroças e Taias, in the municipality of Monção in northern Portugal, is hugely important for the local agricultural and livestock industry, and particularly for their main product, Alvarinho wine (produced in 99% of the area to benefit in Moreira and 72% of the area in Barroças e Taias).

The competent national authorities (General Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development/Ministry of Agriculture) have issued favourable opinions on the progress of the projects concerned. They consider the Irrigation Network Construction Project to be well prepared and presented, and the changes required for it to be properly understandable and implemented to have been made; accordingly, they have approved it. Since finding that significant changes had been made to the initial version of the Rural Roads Construction Project of the Moreira and Barroças e Taias land consolidation project, they consider it to comply with the implementation conditions.

Funding problems remain, however, including uncertainties as to whether the Rural Development Programme (Proder) will receive these investments in 2013.

1. In view of the type of projects — an irrigation network and rural roads — and the region in question, what is the maximum percentage of EU co-financing likely to be guaranteed?

2. In view of the reprogramming of rural development funds, is the Commission aware of whether these Proder projects will receive such funds? In addition, are the funds earmarked for the conversion of vineyards (around EUR 870 000 from the VITIS programme) guaranteed?

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

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that the maximum EU co-financing rate applied to all measures and regions in Proder is currently 85%.

As the Honourable Member is aware, in the framework of the shared management of Rural Development programmes, Member States are responsible for the selection, contracting and payments of projects. In order to get any information related to the selection of projects, the Honourable Member may wish to contact directly the Proder Managing Authority at the following e-mail: st.proder@gpp.pt.

Regarding the restructuring and conversion of vineyards, they are integrated into the Portuguese national support program (2009-2013) for the wine sector, funded by the EAGF (first pillar of the common agricultural policy). The amount allocated for all program measures in 2013 is EUR 65 million.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011179/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Revoltas populares contra a entrega a privados da gestão dos serviços de água

Em Paços de Ferreira, concelho do norte de Portugal, a população tem vindo a manifestar-se contra as tarifas de água e de saneamento praticadas no município, na sequência da concessão do setor a uma empresa privada, a AGS. Afirmam que o preço da água tem aumentado anualmente (com exceção do ano de 2010) na ordem dos seis por cento.

Este é mais um exemplo de como a entrega a privados da gestão do setor da água se traduz numa súbita elevação do preço do serviço e, com frequência, numa degradação da sua qualidade.

Em perguntas anteriores, tive já oportunidade de apresentar à Comissão Europeia outros exemplos. É o caso da pergunta E-002214/2010 (de abril de 2010). Nessa ocasião, a Comissão afirmou que «não dispõe de nenhum estudo sobre as consequências da privatização de serviços de abastecimento de água».

Tendo em conta as posições que a Comissão Europeia tem vindo a assumir, defendendo abertamente a privatização dos serviços de água nalguns Estados-Membros (ver pergunta escrita E-009662/12), solicito que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Ao contrário do que sucedia até abril de 2010, passou a Comissão a dispor de algum estudo sobre as consequências da privatização dos serviços de abastecimento de água e de saneamento, nomeadamente no que diz respeito ao aumento dos preços das tarifas e a consequente exclusão de acesso a este bem público, bem como à qualidade dos serviços prestados?
2. Em caso afirmativo, qual(ais) a(s) conclusão(ões) deste(s) estudo(s)?

3. Em caso negativo, como justifica então as posições que tem vindo a assumir neste domínio?

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

1. A Comissão cofinanciou uma série de projetos que se debruçam sobre estas questões de uma forma geral ([1]). No entanto, a Comissão não dispõe de qualquer estudo específico sobre as consequências da privatização dos serviços de abastecimento de água em Portugal. Trata-se de uma questão que incumbe às autoridades nacionais analisar, no quadro das suas competências nacionais neste domínio, tal como estabelecido no artigo 345.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia. A Comissão sugere ao Senhor Deputado que contacte a autoridade de gestão do programa «Valorização do Território» ou o serviço nacional responsável pela política de abastecimento de água, ou seja, a «Agência Portuguesa para o Ambiente» para mais informações.

([1]) Projectos de IDT: Euromarket — (http://www.wise-rtd.info/en/info/water-and-liberalisation-european-water-scenarios), (http://www.uclouvain.be/cps/ucl/doc/espo/documents/D5_Final_Report.pdf) e (http://infoscience.epfl.ch/record/54837/files/CDM%20WP%20-%20Evolution%20of%20the%20Water%20Sector%20in%20Europe%20-%20An%20institutional%20analysis%20of%20possible%20scenarios.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011179/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Public outrage at the privatisation of water services

The residents of Paços de Ferreira, a municipality in northern Portugal, have been protesting against the cost of water and sanitation there, following the takeover of the utility by a private company, AGS. They claim that the price of water has gone up by around 6% every year (except in 2010).

This is yet another example of how privatisation of the water sector leads to a sudden increase in the price and, often, a deterioration in the quality of the service.

In previous questions, I have presented other examples to the Commission. One such question is E-002214/2010 (April 2010). On that occasion, the Commission said that it 'does not dispose of any study on the consequences of the privatisation of water supply services'.

In view of the positions adopted by the Commission in this area, openly supporting the privatisation of water services in some Member States (see Question E-009662/2012):

1. Unlike in April 2010, does the Commission now have at its disposal any study on the consequences of the privatisation of water supply and sanitation services, in particular as regards the increase in tariff prices and the resultant exclusion from access to this public commodity, and as regards the quality of the services provided?

2. If so, what are the conclusions of this/these study/studies?

3. If not, how can it then justify the positions it has adopted in this area?

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

1. The Commission has (co-)financed a number of projects which analyse these issues in a general manner ([1]). However, the Commission does not dispose of any specific study on the consequences of the privatisation of water supply services in Portugal. This is a matter for the national authorities to analyse as part of their national competences in this area, as set out in Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The Commission suggests the Honourable Member to contact the managing authority of the 'Valorização do Território' programme or the national service responsible for water supply policy, namely the 'Agência Portuguesa para o Ambiente' for further information.

([1]) RTD project: EUROMARKET — http://www.wise-rtd.info/en/info/water-and-liberalisation-european-water-scenarios; http://www.uclouvain.be/cps/ucl/doc/espo/documents/D5_Final_Report.pdf and http://infoscience.epfl.ch/record/54837/files/CDM%20WP%20-%20Evolution%20of%20the%20Water%20Sector%20in%20Europe%20-%20An%20institutional%20analysis%20of%20possible%20scenarios.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011180/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Facilitação do acesso aos apoios comunitários no domínio da aquacultura

A Comissão Europeia tem vindo a afirmar a intenção de apostar fortemente no desenvolvimento da aquacultura na UE. Todavia, em Portugal, muitos pequenos empresários do setor queixam-se hoje da grande dificuldade em aceder aos fundos comunitários, devido à burocracia excessiva e às incomportáveis exigências financeiras.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que medidas estão previstas para facilitar o acesso dos pequenos empresários do setor, assim como daqueles que se queiram lançar na atividade, ao financiamento comunitário?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(4 de fevereiro de 2013)

O desenvolvimento de um setor da aquicultura mais competitivo e ecológico é atualmente apoiado pelo Fundo Europeu das Pescas (FEP), destinado a micro, pequenas e médias empresas. Para o próximo período de 2014 a 2020, a Comissão propôs estender o apoio ao incentivo a novos aquicultores, aos serviços de gestão, de aconselhamento e de substituição e ao investimento em capital humano.

Em resultado da crise económica e financeira, o acesso das pequenas e médias empresas ao crédito bancário tornou-se, efetivamente, mais difícil. Para atenuar este problema, a revisão em curso do programa operacional do FEP introduz um instrumento de engenharia financeira por meio de um fundo de garantia, com cofinanciamento do FEP, para facilitar o acesso das pequenas e médias empresas ao crédito.

No período de programação em curso, a Comissão Europeia desenvolveu, juntamente com o Fundo Europeu de Investimento ([1]), recursos europeus comuns para as micro e médias empresas, que promovem a utilização de instrumentos de engenharia financeira para melhorar o acesso das PME ao financiamento através de intervenções dos fundos estruturais.

Em 2013 terão início discussões informais para a programação dos fundos estruturais da UE para o período de 2014 a 2020. A Comissão está muito atenta à necessidade de melhorar o acesso das PME ao crédito bancário e o projeto de regulamento do FEDER encoraja a utilização de instrumentos financeiros no próximo período de programação. A Comissão espera que os acordos de parceria incluam estes instrumentos. A engenharia financeira pode ter um papel importante no financiamento de atividades aquícolas na Europa. A investigação e a inovação têm igualmente um papel importante no desenvolvimento de novos processos e produtos da aquicultura que respeitem o ambiente.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/instruments/jeremie_en.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011180/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Facilitating access to EU funding for aquaculture

The Commission has stated that it intends to invest heavily in the development of aquaculture in the EU. In Portugal today, however, many small business owners in the sector complain that it is very difficult to access EU funding, due to excessive bureaucracy and unaffordable financial requirements.

What measures are planned to facilitate access to EU funding for small business owners in the sector, as well as those who want to enter the business?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2013)

The development of a more competitive and environmentally-friendly aquaculture industry is currently supported by the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and aimed at micro, small and medium-size enterprises. For the next period 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed to expand support to encourage new aquaculture farmers, to management, advisory and relief services and to investment in human capital.

As a result of the economic and financial crisis, access to bank credit by small and medium enterprises indeed has become more difficult. To mitigate this problem, the ongoing review of the EFF operational programme introduces a financial engineering instrument by means of a Guarantee Fund with EFF co-financing, to facilitate access to credit by small and medium-size enterprises.

Within the current programming period, the European Commission developed together with the European Investment Fund ([1]): Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises. It promotes the use of financial engineering instruments to improve access to finance for SMEs via Structural Funds interventions.

Informal discussions for the programming of EU structural funds for 2014-2020 will start in 2013. The Commission is very attentive to the needs to improve access to bank credit for SMEs and the ERDF draft regulation encourages the use of financial instruments for the next programming period. The Commission expects the Partnerships Agreements to include such instruments. Financial engineering can have an important role for financing aquaculture activities in Europe. Research and innovation has also a major role in the development of new processes and aquaculture products in an environmentally-friendly way.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/instruments/jeremie_en.cfm.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011181/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de dezembro de 2012)

Assunto: Forças militares multinacionais permanentes UE/NATO

De acordo com um estudo recente do Parlamento Europeu, Portugal integra um grupo de Estados-Membros que atualmente participam em forças militares multinacionais permanentes da UE/NATO. De um total de dez forças multinacionais permanentes, segundo o estudo, seis estão baseadas nos tratados da UE, decorrendo as restantes do âmbito da NATO.

Ou seja, ao mesmo tempo que se força cortes nos orçamentos nacionais, afetando as funções sociais dos Estados, em domínios como a saúde, a educação, a segurança social e outros, gerando desemprego, pobreza e fome, permite-se que continue (e aumente) o gasto de recursos públicos envolvido nestas forças militares multinacionais, às quais está associado um manifesto caráter de ingerência, agressão e domínio neocolonial.

Assim, perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Que verbas do orçamento da UE estão afetas a estas forças militares multinacionais permanentes?

2. Tem conhecimento dos custos para os Estados-Membros decorrentes da participação nestas forças?

3. Concretamente, tem conhecimento sobre quais os meios — materiais e humanos — afetos por Portugal a estas forças multinacionais permanentes? E qual o seu custo?

4. Existe uma articulação entre as forças multinacionais da UE e da NATO? Trata-se de uma articulação de comando? Quem comanda?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(25 de janeiro de 2013)

1. Em conformidade com o artigo 41.°, n.° 2, do TUE, as «despesas decorrentes de operações que tenham implicações no domínio militar ou da defesa» não podem ser imputadas ao orçamento da UE. Por conseguinte, uma vez que as forças militares multinacionais têm implicações no domínio da defesa, qualquer financiamento por parte da UE desrespeitaria o disposto no artigo 41.°, n.° 2, não podendo portanto ser considerado.

2. A UE não é informada dos custos da participação dos Estados-Membros em forças militares multinacionais, dado que as decisões relativas a essa participação e às posteriores implicações orçamentais são tomadas a nível nacional.

3. Ver resposta à pergunta 2.

4. Existe uma coordenação formal entre a sede da Organização do Tratado do Atlântico Norte (NATO) em Sarajevo e a operação militar da União Europeia EUFOR Althea na Bósnia e Herzegovina. Existe uma coordenação informal entre as forças multinacionais da UE e da NATO destacadas para as mesmas áreas. Não existem casos de comando conjunto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011181/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Permanent multinational EU/NATO military forces

According to a recent study by Parliament, Portugal is one of several Member States that currently participate in permanent multinational EU/NATO military forces. According to the study, 6 of the 10 permanent multinational forces are derived from the EU Treaties, and the rest fall within the scope of NATO.

In other words, while cuts are being imposed on national budgets, affecting the social functions of Member States in areas including health, education and social security, leading to unemployment, poverty and hunger, the expenditure of public funds on these multinational military forces, which clearly go hand in hand with intervention, aggression and neo-colonialism, is being allowed to continue (and increase).

1. What EU budget funds are allocated to these permanent multinational military forces?

2. Does the Commission know how much it costs Member States to participate in these forces?

3. In particular, is it aware of the human and material resources that Portugal allocates to these permanent multinational forces? How much do they cost?

4. Is there any coordination between the EU and NATO multinational forces? Do they have joint command? Who is in charge?

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

1. In accordance with Article 41.2 TEU, 'expenditure arising from operations having military or defence implications' cannot be charged to the EU budget. Since multinational military forces have defence implications, any EU funding would therefore fail to respect the provisions of Article 41.2, and hence cannot be envisaged.

2. The EU is not informed of the costs of the participation of Member States in multinational military forces, since the decisions for such participation and subsequent budget implications are taken at the National level.

3. Please see the answer to question 2.

4. There is a formal coordination between North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Headquarters in Sarajevo and the EU military operation EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is an informal coordination between the EU and NATO multinational forces which are deployed in the same areas. There is no case of joint command.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011182/12
adresată Comisiei
Ioan Mircea Paşcu (S&D)
(6 decembrie 2012)

Subiect: Intrebare referitoare la folosirea fondurilor europene dedicate cooperării transfrontaliere dintre România și Ungaria

O parte dintre fondurile europene alocate proiectului „Legendele sătmărene" / „Legends of Szatmár" LESZ HURO/0901 din cadrul Programului de Cooperare Transfrontaliera Ungaria — România 2007-2013 au fost folosite pentru a promova mesaje revizioniste, de denaturare a istoriei și antieuropene. Fondurile FEDR acordate, în perioada 1 octombrie 2010 — 31 martie 2012, organizațiilor „Szatmár Leader Közhasznú Egyesület" din Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Ungaria (79 580,74 €) și Asociației Culturale Nagykároly és Vidéke din Carei, România (44 705,44 €) au fost folosite și pentru elaborarea unui site web „Traseul legendelor sătmărene" (http://www.szatmarilegendak.hu) a unor broșuri de informare/ghiduri turistice cu același nume, redactate în limbile română, maghiară, engleză și germană. Textele au fost redactate și tipărite în Ungaria de organizația non-guvernamentală maghiară, care a coordonat proiectul. Secțiunile de istorie și etnografie ale celor două surse, finanțate cu banii contribuabililor europeni, au o abordare general ostilă care denaturează realitățile istorice, formulează judecăți de valoare peiorative și ofensatoare la adresa românilor (ex. popor primitiv) și șvabilor și incită, implicit, la tensiuni interetnice.

1. Având în vedere sensibilitatea extrem de acută în regiune față de denaturarea adevărului istoric în scopuri politice; având totodată în vedere și contribuțiile pozitive ale programelor de cooperare între guvernele, cetățenii și organizațiile civice din România și Ungaria, susținute de Uniunea Europeană; dorim să știm ce modalități de auditare și control are Comisia asupra modului de utilizare a proiectelor finanțate din cadrul Fondului European pentru Dezvoltare Regională în ceea ce privește respectarea valorilor Uniunii și ale drepturilor fundamentale ale cetățenilor europeni.

2. Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru remedierea gravelor deficiențe prezentate și asigurarea folosirii fondurilor europene pentru cooperarea dintre statele cu frontieră comună și nu împotriva acestei cooperări?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(4 februarie 2013)

Comisia este de acord cu privire la contribuția pozitivă a programului UE de cooperare transfrontalieră între România și Ungaria, care implică guvernele, cetățenii și organizațiile societății civile din cele două țări. Sunt sprijinite numeroase proiecte în domeniul patrimoniului cultural transfrontalier, selecționate și gestionate de organismele competente comune reprezentate de autoritățile române și maghiare.

Programul în cauză este pus în aplicare în conformitate cu principiul gestionării partajate. Statelor membre le revine responsabilitatea comună de gestionare și punere în aplicare a programului, precum și de asigurare a respectării criteriilor aplicabile la selecționarea proiectelor și a conformității proiectelor cu normele UE și naționale aplicabile. Comisia poate investiga, fie din proprie inițiativă, pe baza procesului continuu de monitorizare a punerii în aplicare a programului și prin intermediul activității de audit, fie în urma unor reclamații cu privire la orice posibilă utilizare abuzivă a fondurilor.

Comisia înțelege natura delicată a aspectelor legate de interpretarea datelor istorice. În ceea ce privește conținutul publicației în cauză, menționate de distinsul membru, responsabilitatea aparține autorilor și nu reflectă punctele de vedere ale Uniunii Europene. Comisia a atras atenția autorității de management cu privire la această problemă. Autoritatea de management a răspuns că proiectul a fost verificat, îndeplinește condițiile programului și a fost selecționat pentru finanțare de către comitetul de selecție a proiectelor.

Pentru informații suplimentare, Comisia sugerează distinsului membru să contacteze direct autoritatea de management: Agenția Națională pentru Dezvoltare (șef de serviciu: dna Horváth), tel: +36-1-474-9213, nikoletta.horvath@nfu.gov.hu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011182/12
to the Commission
Ioan Mircea Paşcu (S&D)
(6 December 2012)

Subject: Use of European funds for cross-border cooperation between Romania and Hungary

Some of the European funds allocated to the project 'Legendele sătmărene' / 'Legends of Szatmár' LESZ HURO/0901 under the Hungary-Romania cross-border cooperation programme 2007-2013 have been used to promote a revisionist, anti-European message which distorts history. The ERDF funds allocated to the organisations 'Szatmár Leader Közhasznú Egyesület' in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hungary (EUR 79 580.74) and the Asociației Culturale Nagykároly és Vidéke in Carei, Romania (EUR 44 705.44) between 1 October 2010 and 31 March 2012 have been used to create a website tracing the legends of Szatmár (http://www.szatmarilegendak.hu) and to publish a number of information brochures and tourist guides with the same title, in Romanian, Hungarian, English and German. These brochures were written and printed in Hungary by the Hungarian non-governmental organisation which coordinated the project. The sections on history and local culture in both the website and the brochures, which were financed using European funds, follow a generally hostile approach which misrepresents the historical facts, makes pejorative and offensive value judgments against both Romanians (who are described as primitive) and Swabians, and implicitly incites inter-ethnic tension.

1. The distortion of historical facts for political purposes is an extremely sensitive issue in this region. It is also important to note the positive contribution made by cooperation programmes between governments, citizens and civil society organisations in Romania and Hungary, with support from the European Union. In this light, what arrangements does the Commission have in place to monitor and audit the use of projects financed under the European Regional Development Fund in relation to respect for the EU's values and the fundamental rights of European citizens?

2. What steps will the Commission take to remedy the serious shortcomings described above and guarantee that European funds are used to promote rather than undermine cooperation between states which share a common border?

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

The Commission agrees about the positive contribution being made by the EU's cross-border cooperation programme between Romania and Hungary, which involves governments, citizens and civil society organisations in the two countries. Numerous projects are supported within the framework of cross-border culture heritage, selected and managed by the competent joint bodies represented by both the Romanian and Hungarian authorities.

The programme concerned is implemented under the shared management principle. It is the Member States' joint responsibility to manage and implement the programme and to ensure that projects are selected in accordance with criteria applicable to the programme and that projects comply with applicable EU and national rules. The Commission is able to investigate either on its own initiative, on the basis of its ongoing monitoring of programme implementation and through audit work, or following complaints about any possible misuse of funds.

The Commission understands the sensitivities about the interpretation of historical facts. Regarding the content of the specific publication mentioned by the Honourable Member, the responsibility lies with the authors and does not reflect the views of the European Union. The Commission has drawn the attention of the managing authority to this particular issue. The managing authority has responded that the project was checked, it fulfills the programme conditions and was selected for funding by the project selection committee.

For more information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority: National Development Agency, (Head of Department: Ms Horváth), Tel: +36-1-474-9213, nikoletta.horvath@nfu.gov.hu

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011183/12
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Erhebung von Schutzzöllen auf chinesisches Porzellan

Die EU-Kommission hat am 15.11.2012 gegen China wegen zu unter Marktpreisen angebotenen Porzellanprodukten Schutzzölle verhängt. Dies soll der Verhinderung von Dumpingpreisen für die einheimische Tafelgeschirrindustrie dienen. Allerdings betreffen die Schutzzölle auch Betriebe der Veredelungsbranche, die Rohprodukte z. B. mit Werbeaufdrucken bedrucken. Sie tangieren die Tafelgeschirrindustrie in keiner Weise, werden aber von den Schutzzöllen in ihrer Existenz bedroht.

Plant die Kommission für diesen kleinen Teilbereich der Porzellanindustrie Ausnahmeregelungen? Hat die Kommission vor, Tafelgeschirrindustrie und Veredelungsbranche unterschiedlich zu behandeln? Wie lange sollen die Schutzzölle aufrechterhalten werden

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(1. Februar 2013)

Mit der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1072/2012 der Kommission vom 14. November 2012 wurden vorläufige Antidumpingmaßnahmen auf die Einfuhren von Geschirr und anderen Artikeln aus Keramik für den Tisch- oder Küchengebrauch mit Ursprung in der Volksrepublik China eingeführt. Bei der Entscheidung, ob es im Interesse der Union liegt, derartige Maßnahmen einzuführen, wurden die Interessen anderer Wirtschaftszweige, auch der Werbebranche, gebührend geprüft. Auf der Grundlage dessen und anderer relevanter Faktoren gelangte man vorläufig zu dem Schluss, dass Maßnahmen im allgemeinen Interesse der EU liegen. Diese Feststellungen wurden allen interessierten Parteien mitgeteilt, die die Möglichkeit haben, ihre Stellungnahmen und Anmerkungen abzugeben. Auf dieser Grundlage wird die Kommission bis zum 15. Mai 2013 einen Vorschlag für endgültige Maßnahmen erarbeiten. Sollten endgültige Maßnahmen eingeführt werden, gelten sie in der Regel für einen Zeitraum von fünf Jahren gemäß den Bestimmungen von Artikel 11 der Antidumping-Grundverordnung der EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011183/12
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Imposition of safeguard duties on Chinese porcelain

On 15 November 2012, the Commission imposed safeguard duties on Chinese porcelain products sold below market prices. The intention is to protect the domestic tableware industry by preventing dumping. However, the safeguard duties also affect enterprises in the processing sector that print advertising on raw products, for example. These enterprises have no effect on the tableware industry; however, their existence is threatened by the safeguard duties.

Is the Commission planning derogations for this small section of the porcelain industry? Does the Commission intend to treat the tableware industry and the processing sector differently? For how long are the safeguard duties to be maintained?

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

Provisional anti-dumping measures were imposed on imports of ceramic tableware and kitchenware originating in the People's Republic of China by Commission Regulation (EU) No 1072/2012 of 14 November 2012. When deciding whether it would be in the interest of the Union to impose such measures, the interests of other economic sectors including that of the advertising industry were duly considered. On the basis of this and other relevant factors, it was provisionally concluded that measures would be in the overall interest of the EU. Those findings were disclosed to all interested parties who have the opportunity to present their comments and observations. On that basis, the Commission will prepare a proposal for definitive measures by 15 May 2013. If definitive measures were to be imposed, they would be normally valid for a period of 5 years subject to the provisions of Article 11 of the basic EU Anti-Dumping regulation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011185/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Beteiligungsprojekte für Sonnenkraftwerke

Im November 2012 wurde ein Sonnenkraftwerk auf dem Gelände des nie ans Netz gegangenen Atomkraftwerks Zwentendorf in Österreich eröffnet. Die 2.300 installierten Solarpaneele wurden über ein Bürgerbeteiligungsmodell finanziert, bei dem Bürger Anteilsscheine für das Sonnenkraftwerk erwerben und so den Bau des Kraftwerks mitfinanzieren konnten. Viele andere Bürgerbeteiligungsprojekte in Europa werden jedoch von Finanzmarktaufsichtsbehörden blockiert.

1. Sieht die Kommission die Finanzierung von Energieprojekten durch Bürger oder mit Bürgerbeteiligung als positiv an?

2. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um Projekt-Finanzierung durch Bürgerbeteiligungsmodelle, wie das im österreichischen Zwentendorf, zu vereinfachen und zu fördern?

3. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass Bürgerbeteilungsprojekte unabhängig von anderen Finanzleistungen reguliert werden sollten, um die häufigere Nutzung solcher Projekte zu ermöglichen?

4. Sieht die Kommission in Bürgerbeteiligungsprojekten eine Gefahr für die Kreditfinanzierung von Projekten durch Banken?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011650/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(20. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Bürgerbeteiligungsprojekte in Europa

Im November 2012 wurde auf dem Gelände des Atomkraftwerks Zwentendorf in Österreich ein Sonnenkraftwerk eröffnet, dessen Solarpaneele über ein Bürgerbeteiligungsmodell finanziert wurden. Bei dem Bürgerbeteiligungsprojekt erwarben Bürger Anteilsscheine an dem Sonnenkraftwerk und finanzierten so den Bau des Kraftwerks mit. Einige andere Bürgerbeteiligungsprojekte, wie im Fall des österreichischen Schuhproduzenten Heini Staudinger, der sein Unternehmen mit Bürgerbeteiligung ausbauen wollte, wurden jedoch in den letzten Jahren von Finanzmarktaufsichtsbehörden blockiert. Dies betraf vor allem Geschäftserweiterungen.

Welche Möglichkeiten sieht die Kommission, Bürgerbeteiligungsprojekte oder andere wechselseitige Hilfestellungen zwischen Unternehmen und Bürgern so zu gestalten oder spezifisch zu regulieren, dass die Projekte trotz zunehmend komplexer Finanzmarktregulierungen möglich sind?

Was muss nach Ansicht der Kommission unternommen werden, um den administrativen und finanziellen Aufwand von partizipativen Beteiligungsprojekten möglichst gering zu halten, gleichartig jedoch die Interessen der Anleger zu wahren und Unternehmern zukünftig Geschäftsgründungen oder -erweiterungen durch direkte Beteiligung von Bürgern („Kleinanlegern") zu erleichtern?

Welche Modelle zur Stärkung regionaler Wirtschaftskreisläufe, bei denen Bürger als Anteilseigner beteiligt sind, hält die Kommission für sinnvoll?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(11. März 2013)

Die Finanzierung von Projekten im Wege offener, an eine breite Öffentlichkeit gerichteter Aufrufe wird häufig als „Crowdfunding" oder auch „Schwarmfinanzierung" bezeichnet. Die Träger einer solchen Initiative können Mittel direkt oder über einen webbasierten Intermediär einwerben. Crowdfunding kann als Finanzierungsquelle äußerst hilfreich sein, um über die Möglichkeit einer Miteigentümerschaft lokale Unterstützung für Projekte zu mobilisieren. Es birgt aber auch gewisse Betrugs- oder Investorenrisiken.

Beim Crowdfunding von Beteiligungskapital können verschiedene EU-Rechtsvorschriften zur Anwendung gelangen ([1]).

Angesichts der großen Vielfalt an Geschäftsmodellen und Finanzierungszielen ist eine Einzelfallbewertung erforderlich, um zu ermitteln, inwieweit die genannten EU-Vorschriften, einschließlich der darin vorgesehenen Ausnahmen, anwendbar sind. Die Durchführung bestimmter Projekte kann bereits durch Inanspruchnahme dieser Ausnahmen ermöglicht werden.

Die Kommission hat eine Studie finanziert und veröffentlicht, die einen Überblick über die bisherigen Erfahrungen mit einer gemeinschaftlichen Eigentümerschaft und anderen Beteiligungsmodellen bei Projekten im Bereich der erneuerbaren Energien vermittelt ([2]).

In Anbetracht dieser Rahmenbedingungen, des dynamischen Charakters des Phänomens sowie des Umstands, dass Crowdfunding zur Deckung des Finanzierungsbedarfs der Realwirtschaft beitragen könnte, bemüht sich die Kommission derzeit um ein vertieftes Verständnis der verschiedenen Aspekte dieser Finanzierungsform. Der Erwerb besserer Kenntnisse über diesen noch neuen Sektor, unter anderem auf der Grundlage einer Beobachtung der Marktentwicklung ([3]) sowie der rechtlichen Entwicklungen auf nationaler Ebene, wird es der Kommission ermöglichen, unter Wahrung der Grundsätze der Subsidiarität und Verhältnismäßigkeit Überlegungen dazu anzustellen, ob hier möglicherweise die Festlegung eines spezifischen Rahmens erforderlich ist.

In dem unlängst vorgelegten „Aktionsplan Unternehmertum 2020“ werden die Mitgliedstaaten aufgefordert, „den Änderungsbedarf des geltenden nationalen Finanzrechts zu bewerten, … insbesondere im Hinblick auf Plattformen für Gruppenfinanzierungen“ ([4]).

([1]) Unter anderem die Prospektrichtlinie (Richtlinie 2003/71/EG), die MiFID (Richtlinie 2004/39/EG) und die E-Geld-Richtlinie (Richtlinie 2009/110/EG).

([2]) Die Ergebnisse können auf der Website http://www.reshare.nu eingesehen werden.

([3]) Die Kommission hat bereits erste Schritte in diese Richtung unternommen: Eine Bestandsaufnahme der Marktentwicklungen beim Crowdfunding war Gegenstand eines von der GD Unternehmen und der GD CNECT im November 2012 gemeinsam organisierten Workshops. Regulierungsaspekte werden außerdem in den Gesprächen mit der US-Regierung im Rahmen des Transatlantischen Wirtschaftsrats erörtert.

([4]) KOM(2012)795 endg.: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/public-consultation/files/report-pub-cons-entr2020-ap_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011185/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Civic partnership investment projects for solar power plants

In November 2012, a solar power plant was opened 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 involved members of the public buying share certificates in the solar power plant, enabling them to part-finance the construction of the power plant. However, many other civic partnership projects in Europe are being blocked by financial market supervisory bodies.

1. Does the Commission take a positive view of the financing of energy projects by members of the public or through civic partnership?

2. Is the Commission planning measures to simplify and encourage the financing of projects through civic partnership models, such as that in Zwentendorf?

3. Does the Commission take the view that civic partnership projects should be regulated separately from other financial services, so as to enable such projects to be used more often?

4. Does the Commission believe that civic partnership projects pose a threat to the financing of projects through bank loans?

Question for written answer E-011650/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(20 December 2012)

Subject: Civic participation projects in Europe

In November 2012 a solar power station was set up on the grounds of Zwentendorf nuclear power station in Austria, with funding for solar panels coming from a civic participation scheme. In this project ordinary people bought shares in the solar power station, thus helping to finance its construction. However, over the past few years a few other civic participation projects, such as Austrian shoe manufacturer Heini Staudinger's plan to crowdfund the expansion of his company, have been vetoed by financial market regulators. Most of these projects would have involved business expansion.

What does the Commission think about the options for developing or specifically regulating civic participation projects and other forms of cooperation between business and the public so that they can go ahead in spite of increasingly complex financial market regulation?

What does the Commission think should be done to cut back administrative and financial obstacles to crowd-funding to the minimum, while at the same time safeguarding investor interests and making it easier for businesses to start up or expand through the direct involvement of ordinary people ('small investors')?

Which approaches to supporting regional economic activity with ordinary citizens involved as shareholders would the Commission be in favour of?

Joint answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 March 2013)

Financing of various projects through open calls to the wider public is often referred to as community or crowd funding. Promoters of an initiative can collect funds directly or use a web-based intermediary. While crowd funding may constitute a financing source, and may be very helpful in building local support for projects through the possibility of co-ownership, it may also bear some risks in terms of fraud or investor.

As far as equity crowdfunding is concerned, several EU legislations might be applicable ([1]).

([1]) Including the Prospectus Directive 2003/71/EC, the directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) and the e-money Directive2009/110/EC.

Given the great variety of business models and funding targets, a case-by-case assessment is necessary in order to determine the applicability of the above EU rules, including of the exemptions provided therein. The use of these exemptions may already allow the development of some of these projects.

The Commission has funded and published a study summarising experiences with community ownership and other benefit sharing mechanisms for renewable energy projects ([2]).

In light of the above framework, the dynamic nature of this phenomenon and considering that crowdfunding could contribute to the need for financing the real economy, the Commission is now working on better understanding the various aspects of this activity. As a better knowledge of this emerging sector will be acquired, including on the basis of the monitoring of both market ([3]) and national legislative developments, the Commission will consider whether a specific framework might be needed, in full compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

The recent 'Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan' invites Member States to assess the need of amending current national financial legislation including in view of facilitating platforms for crowd funding ([4]).

([2]) The outcome is available at the website http://www.reshare.nu.

([3]) The Commission has taken initial steps in this direction: a stock-taking of crowdfunding market developments has been the subject of a workshop, jointly organised by DG Enterprise and DG CNECT, in November 2012. Discussions on the regulatory aspects have also taken place with the US government in the framework of the Transatlantic Economic Council.

([4]) COM(2012) 795 final, http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/public-consultation/files/report-pub-cons-entr2020-ap_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011186/12
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Europäisch-Chinesisches Jahr der Jugend 2011

Zwischen China und der Europäischen Union wurde das Jahr 2011 zum „Europäisch-Chinesischen Jahr der Jugend" erklärt. Über einen gemeinsamen Aktionsplan sollten die gemeinsamen Aktivitäten im Rahmen des Kooperationsjahres koordiniert werden.

1. Welches sind nach Ansicht der Kommission die wichtigsten Effekte, die das Europäisch-Chinesische Jahr der Jugend auf die Beziehungen zwischen der EU und der Volksrepublik China hatte?

2. Gab es Bereiche, in denen die Kommission mit den Ergebnissen des Europäisch-Chinesischen Jahres der Jugend nicht zufrieden ist?

3. Wurden alle Programmziele erreicht?

4. Welche Folgeaktivitäten plant die Kommission, damit das Europäisch-Chinesische Jahr der Jugend nicht nur kurzfristig, sondern auch langfristig positive Effekte für die Jugendbeziehungen zwischen der EU und der Volksrepublik China hat?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(7. Februar 2013)

Folgendes Dokument der Kommission enthält einen Überblick über die im Rahmen des Europäisch-chinesischen Jahres der Jugend 2011 durchgeführten Maßnahmen:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/eu-china-year-youth-publication_en.pdf

Das Jahr ermöglichte es, die Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Union und China um einen neuen Sektor — den Dialog mit der Jugend — zu erweitern. Zum ersten Mal erzielte die Jugend einen solchen Grad der Wahrnehmung in den Außenbeziehungen der Union.

Die Kommission verbuchte das Jahr als Erfolg, was auch durch eine unter den Teilnehmern an den Aktivitäten des Jahres durchgeführte Umfrage bestätigt wurde. Insbesondere gaben 86 % der Personen an, im Anschluss an ihre Teilnahme an dem Jahr an einem Projekt, einer Folgemaßnahme oder einer anderen Initiative beteiligt zu sein.

Die drei vorrangigen Ziele des Jahres wurden erreicht:

— Die Förderung des interkulturellen Dialogs führte zu zahlreichen persönlichen Begegnungen zwischen jungen Menschen aus Europa und China, so zum Beispiel über im Rahmen des Programms Jugend in Aktion unterstützte Projekte.

— Das gesteigerte Interesse junger Menschen für die Beziehungen zwischen der EU und China zeigte sich an zahlreichen Diskussionen und Stellungnahmen zu Themen, die mittelfristig beide Seiten betreffen.

— Das Jahr leitete einen Kooperationsprozess ein, der sich sowohl auf politischer Ebene im Rahmen des im Frühjahr 2012 begonnenen „High Level People-to-People Dialogue" (Politischer Dialog mit China) als auch auf der Ebene der Zivilgesellschaft fortsetzt.

Die Kommission plant die Umsetzung der Folgemaßnahmen, die anlässlich der Unterzeichnung der Gemeinsamen Erklärung vom 18. April 2012 beim ersten Treffen des „High Level People-to-People Dialogue" vereinbart wurden:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/china_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011186/12
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: The EU-China Year of Youth 2011

Together, China and the European Union declared 2011 the 'EU-China Year of Youth'. A joint plan of action was to coordinate common activities as part of the year-long cooperation.

1. In the Commission's view, what have been the most important effects of the EU-China Year of Youth on relations between the EU and the People's Republic of China?

2. Were there any areas in which the Commission was not satisfied with the results of the EU-China Year of Youth?

3. Have all the objectives of the programme been achieved?

4. What follow-up activities is the Commission planning so that the EU-China Year of Youth has both short-term and long-term positive effects on youth relations between the EU and the People's Republic of China?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(7 février 2013)

La Commission a rendu compte des activités mises en œuvre au cours de l'Année dans la publication suivante:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/eu-china-year-youth-publication_en.pdf

L'Année a permis d'ouvrir la coopération entre l'Union et la Chine à un secteur nouveau, celui du dialogue avec la jeunesse. C'était la première fois que la jeunesse apparaissait à ce niveau de visibilité dans les relations extérieures de l'Union.

La Commission considère que l'Année a été un succès, confirmé par une enquête menée parmi les participants aux activités de l'Année. Notamment, 86 % d'entre eux déclaraient être impliqués dans un projet, une activité de suivi ou autre initiative postérieurs à leur participation initiale à l'Année.

Les trois objectifs principaux de l'Année ont été atteints:

— la promotion du dialogue interculturel a résulté de nombreux échanges personnels entre jeunes Européens et Chinois, par exemple à travers des projets soutenus par le programme Jeunesse en Action;

— l'encouragement des jeunes à se sentir concernés par les relations UE-Chine s'est traduit par de nombreuses discussions et prises de position sur des sujets d'intérêt commun dans une perspective de moyen terme;

— l'Année a amorcé un processus de coopération qui se poursuit, au niveau politique dans le cadre du «High level People to people Dialogue» initié au printemps 2012, ainsi qu'au niveau de la société civile.

La Commission entend mettre en œuvre les mesures de suivi qui ont été envisagées lors de la signature de la déclaration commune du 18 avril 2012, à l'occasion de la première rencontre dans le cadre du «High level People to people Dialogue»:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/china_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011187/12
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(7. Dezember 2012)

Betrifft: Geringfügige Präsenz von gentechnisch verändertem Material in Saatgut und Lebensmitteln

Obwohl bereits eine beachtliche Zahl von gentechnisch veränderten Pflanzen (GVP) in die EU importiert und als Lebens- und Futtermittel verwendet werden dürfen, besteht nach europäischen Rechtsvorschriften in der EU im Hinblick auf Spuren von nicht in der EU aber in anderen Ländern zugelassenen GVP eine Nulltoleranz. Jeder noch so geringe Nachweis einer GVP in Lebens- und Futtermitteln sowie im Saatgut führt zur Aberkennung der Verkehrsfähigkeit betroffener Produktchargen. Daraus ergibt sich ein wirtschaftliches Risiko für Züchter, Händler und Landwirte aller Wirtschaftssysteme.

Die EU-Kommission hat bereits 2011 auf diese Rechtsunsicherheit im Bereich Futtermittel reagiert und eine Verordnung zum verlässlichen Nachweis gentechnisch veränderter Organismen verabschiedet. Bei Lebensmitteln und Saatgut gibt es noch keine entsprechenden Regelungen.

Am 22. März 2012 haben 13 Staaten in Vancouver, Kanada eine Position zum Thema Low Level Presence (LLP) gentechnisch veränderter Organismen verabschiedet. Darin wird vorgeschlagen, die Zulassungsvoraussetzungen und -verfahren für gentechnisch veränderte Organismen einander anzugleichen.

Hinsichtlich der Konsequenzen dieser Entscheidung für die Europäische Union möchte ich folgende Fragen an die Kommission richten:

1. Hat die Europäische Union an der Sitzung in Vancouver teilgenommen. Wenn ja, hat sie auf den Inhalt der Gespräche Einfluss nehmen können?

2. Unterstützt die EU das Ziel dieser Staaten, die Zulassungsbedingungen und -voraussetzungen zwecks Vereinheitlichung einander anzugleichen?

3. Welche politischen und rechtlichen Schlussfolgerungen zieht die Kommission aus der Erklärung von Vancouver hinsichtlich des existierenden Unionsrahmens für GMOs?

4. Ist es richtig, dass es aus praktischen Erwägungen nahezu unmöglich ist, LLP auszuschließen?

5. Gedenkt die Kommission für Lebensmitteln und Saatgut eine den Futtermitteln entsprechende Regelung zu LLP zu verabschieden?

6. Isoliert sich die EU nicht zusehends von einem sich abzeichnenden internationalen Konsensus die Regulierung der GMOs betreffend?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(31. Januar 2013)

1. Die Europäische Union hat an der ersten Sitzung in Vancouver im März 2012 nicht teilgenommen, jedoch zusammen mit anderen eingeladenen Beobachterländern an der zweiten Sitzung in Rosario (Argentinien) im September 2012. Die Nulltoleranzpolitik der EU für nicht zugelassene GVO ist allen Ländern, die an dieser Konferenz teilgenommen haben, gut bekannt und wurde in ähnlichen internationalen Foren wiederholt vorgestellt.

2. Die EU hat einen Rahmen für die Zulassung von GVO in Lebensmitteln und Futtermitteln sowie für ihre absichtliche Freisetzung in die Umwelt festgelegt. Die EU-Vorschriften über GVO sehen keine Möglichkeit für die Anerkennung von Zulassungen vor, die in einem Drittland erteilt wurden.

3. Die Kommission erwartet aus den Erklärungen von Vancouver und Rosario keine politischen oder rechtlichen Konsequenzen für den geltenden EU-Rechtsrahmen für GVO.

4. Die Kommission stellt fest, dass die Anzahl der GVO, die von Handelspartnern der EU vertrieben werden, und die damit einhergehenden Risiken des Vorhandenseins von Spuren dieser GVO ständig steigen.

5. Die Kommission prüft derzeit die Durchführung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 619/2011 ([1]), mit der die Anwendung der Nulltoleranzpolitik auf nicht zugelassenes genetisch verändertes Ausgangsmaterial in Futtermitteln („Verordnung über geringfügige Spuren in Futtermitteln“) harmonisiert wird, und insbesondere bewertet und sammelt sie weiterhin alle erforderlichen Daten und Informationen, um entscheiden zu können, ob eine Erweiterung des Anwendungsbereichs auf Lebensmittel und Saatgut in Betracht gezogen werden könnte.

6. Die EU nimmt weiterhin an der Arbeit internationaler Foren teil, wie etwa dem Codex (Netz zur Entwicklung der Informationsplattform der FAO zur Bewertung der Sicherheit von genetisch veränderten Lebensmitteln), dem Protokoll von Cartagena über die biologische Sicherheit und an der OECD, wo dieses Thema ebenfalls erörtert wird.

([1]) ABl. L 166 vom 25.6.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011187/12
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Low-level presence of genetically modified material in seeds and foods

Although a considerable number of genetically modified plants (GMPs) are already imported into the EU and may be used in foodstuffs and animal feed according to European legal provisions, there is zero tolerance in the EU in relation to traces of GMPs that are permitted in other countries, but not in the EU. Even the slightest evidence of a GMP in foodstuffs, animal feed or seeds will lead to the withdrawal of the affected product batches from circulation. This constitutes an economic risk for breeders, dealers and farmers in all economies.

In 2011, the Commission already responded to this legal uncertainty in the area of animal feed and adopted a regulation for the reliable detection of genetically modified organisms. Corresponding regulations do not yet exist for foodstuffs and seeds.

On 22 March 2012 in Vancouver, 13 states agreed a position on the low-level presence (LLP) of genetically modified organisms. This proposes harmonising the conditions and procedures for granting authorisations for genetically-modified organisms.

With regard to the consequences of this decision for the European Union, I have the following questions for the Commission:

1. Did the European Union attend the meeting in Vancouver? If so, was it able to influence the substance of the discussions?

2. Does the EU support the objective of these states to harmonise the conditions and procedures for granting authorisations for genetically modified organisms for the purpose of standardisation?

3. What political and legal consequences does the Commission expect for the existing European Union framework for GMOs from the Vancouver Declaration?

4. Is it true that from a practical perspective, it is almost impossible to exclude LLP?

5. Is the Commission considering adopting an LLP regulation for foodstuffs and seeds similar to the regulation for animal feed?

6. Is the EU not increasingly isolating itself from a developing international consensus in relation to the regulation of GMOs?

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

1. The European Union did not attend the first meeting in Vancouver in March 2012, but participated with other invited observing countries in the second meeting held in Rosario, Argentina in September 2012. The EU zero tolerance policy on non-authorised GMOs is well known to all of the countries which participated in this conference, and has been repeatedly presented in other similar international fora.

2. The EU has put in place a framework for the authorisation of GMOs for food, feed and deliberate release into the environment. The EU GMO legislation does not provide room for recognising authorisations which have been given in a third country.

3. The Commission does not expect any political or legal consequences for the existing European Union framework for GMOs following the Vancouver and Rosario Declarations.

4. The Commission recognises the increasing number of GMOs which are commercialised by EU trading partners and associated risks to trace presence.

5. The Commission is examining the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 619/2011 ([1]) harmonising the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy on non-authorised genetically modified (GM) material in feed ('Low Level Presence feed Regulation') and in particular is evaluating and continuing to collect all the necessary data and information to determine whether an extension of the scope to food and seed could be envisaged.

6. The EU continues to participate in international fora such as Codex (network to develop the FAO GM Food Safety Assessment Information Platform), Cartagena protocol on biosafety and the OECD, where this issue is also under discussion.

([1]) OJ L 166, 25.06.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011188/12
to the Commission
Richard Ashworth (ECR)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: Accession of Poland to the EU

I write to you concerning an issue brought to my attention by one of my constituents in the south-east of England. He was one of a number of families who were removed from their land during the occupation of 1939-1945.

Did the Polish Government and the Commission make any undertakings or engage in any discussions or dialogues regarding such land during the accession process?

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

According to Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the provisions of the Treaty shall in no way prejudice the rules in Member States governing the system of property ownership (as already Article 295 EC Treaty did before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty). Issues concerning restitution and compensation of nationalised property are thus in principle a matter of sole national competence. Subject to the respect of the principle of non-discrimination, Member States are free to determine the scope of property restitution and the choice of conditions and institutional modalities under which they agree to restore the property rights of former owners for property expropriated or nationalised before the right to property was protected in those countries as a fundamental right (i.e. before Article 1 of Protocol 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights became applicable in the countries concerned).

The restitution of property has therefore not been a requirement during the accession process of Poland or other countries of the fifth enlargement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011189/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(7 dicembre 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ingiusta detenzione di un avvocato per i diritti umani in Iran

Nel settembre del 2010, una donna iraniana, avvocato per i diritti umani e membro del Centro iraniano dei difensori dei diritti umani (DHRC), è stata chiamata dall'ufficio del procuratore presso il carcere di Evin, in Iran, a rispondere alle accuse di «propaganda contro il regime», «connivenza e riunione finalizzate ad attentare alla sicurezza nazionale», nonché affiliazione a un'organizzazione illegale, nello specifico il DHRC. In precedenza la sua abitazione e il suo ufficio erano stati perquisiti e i suoi beni erano stati congelati. Dopo un interrogatorio da parte di un magistrato (in assenza del difensore della donna), la suddetta è stata arrestata. Nel mese di gennaio 2011, l'imputata è stata condannata a 11 anni di reclusione dalla sezione 26 del tribunale della rivoluzione islamica, successivamente ridotti a sei anni nel settembre del 2011.

Durante la detenzione, la donna ha dovuto affrontare periodi prolungati di isolamento, imposti come misura contro gli svariati scioperi della fame, unico mezzo di protesta contro le restrizioni arbitrarie al suo diritto di visita e in risposta alle pressioni esercitate verso i membri della sua famiglia. In precedenza era stata illegalmente trasferita in un centro di detenzione facente capo al ministero dell'Intelligence, nonostante la giurisdizione spettasse, in linea di principio, al tribunale della rivoluzione islamica. Inoltre, il suo diritto di visita è stato arbitrariamente limitato e addirittura sospeso per un certo periodo. Infine, la donna sarebbe stata torturata allo scopo di ottenere una confessione.

Alla luce dei fatti suesposti, può la Commissione rispondere a quanto segue:

È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza del caso? Quali misure potrebbero essere adottate al fine di ottenere la liberazione dell'avvocato per i diritti umani detenuto in Iran?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue da vicino il caso di Nasrin Sotoudeh. Il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE), che fa pressione in tutti i modi sulle autorità iraniane perché lo rivedano, ha reso diverse dichiarazioni e ha organizzato un'iniziativa a novembre a Teheran. L'AR/VP si compiace per il conferimento, da parte del Parlamento europeo, del premio Sakharov per la libertà di pensiero a Nasrin Sotoudeh e ha appreso con sollievo che il 4 dicembre scorso l'attivista iraniana ha interrotto lo sciopero della fame, durato 49 giorni, dopo che il governo iraniano aveva ritirato il divieto di viaggiare all'estero imposto alla figlia.

L'AR/VP chiede sistematicamente all'Iran di mettere fine alla repressione dei difensori dei diritti umani e il SEAE è impegnato a sostenere gli attivisti iraniani su diversi fronti anche con dichiarazioni su casi specifici e organizzando iniziative a Teheran e a Bruxelles. In termini più generali l'UE continua a fare pressione sull'Iran perché garantisca i diritti civili e politici di tutti gli iraniani, conformemente agli accordi internazionali firmati dal paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011189/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(7 December 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Unfair detention of human rights lawyer in Iran

In September 2010, a human rights lawyer and member of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC), an Iranian human rights organisation, was summoned by the Prosecutor's Office based in Evin prison, Iran, to face allegations of 'propaganda against the system', 'collusion and gathering with the aim of acting against national security' and membership of an illegal organisation, namely the DHRC. Her home and office had previously been searched and her assets frozen. After questioning by a magistrate (which her lawyer was prevented from attending), the abovementioned lawyer was arrested. In January 2011, she was sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment by Branch 26 of the Islamic Revolution Court, subsequently reduced on appeal to six years in September 2011.

During her detention, the lawyer has faced long periods of solitary confinement, imposed as a countermeasure against her several hunger strikes, her only means of protest against the arbitrary restrictions on her right to visitation and against the pressures on her family members. Earlier, she was illegally transferred to a detention centre belonging to the Ministry of Intelligence, regardless of the fact that she is, in principle, under the jurisdiction of the Islamic Revolution Court. Moreover, her right to visitation was arbitrarily restricted and even suspended for a certain period of time. Finally, she was reportedly tortured in order to force her confession.

In the light of the abovementioned facts:

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the case referred to above, and what measures could be adopted in order to guarantee the release of human rights defenders detained in Iran?

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

The HR/VP has been following the case of Ms Nasrin Sotoudeh very closely. The EEAS has used all tools available in urging the Iranian authorities to review Ms. Sotoudeh's case, including several statements and a demarche carried out in Tehran in November. The HR/VP welcomed the European Parliament's decision to award the Sakharov Price for Freedom of Thought to Ms. Sotoudeh, and was relieved to learn that Sotoudeh ended her 49-day hunger strike on 4 December after the Iranian authorities lifted the travel ban on her daughter.

The HR/VP has consistently been calling on Iran to cease its repression of human rights defenders, and the EEAS is undertaking a sustained effort on many fronts to support activists within the country. This has included statements on individual cases as well as demarches carried out in Tehran and Brussels. More generally, the EU continues to call upon Iran to ensure that the civil and political rights of all its citizens are upheld, in accordance with the international covenants Iran is signatory to.