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

(2014/C 11 E/01)

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(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002946/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(14 maart 2013)

Betreft: Regeling met betrekking tot uitstaande schulden voetbalclubs

Op 25 april 2012 sloten de Spaanse clubs een akkoord met de overheid, in de vorm van een Protocol, om hun uitstaande schuld (ongeveer 750 miljoen aan belastingen en 600 miljoen euro aan sociale zekerheidsbijdragen) tegen 2020 te vereffenen.

In antwoord op eerdere parlementaire vragen, liet de Europese op 15 februari 2013 weten dat ze deze regeling onderzoekt.

Kan de Commissie meedelen welke de resultaten zijn van dit onderzoek en met name of het mogelijk gaat om staatssteun die dient te worden aangemeld?

Zo niet, kan de Commissie meedelen op welke termijn een resultaat van dit onderzoek verwacht kan worden?

Kan de Commissie reeds uitspraak doen over de vraag of deze regeling het gelijke speelveld voor Europese voetbalclubs verstoort?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(8 mei 2013)

Zoals de Commissie reeds heeft verklaard in haar antwoorden op de schriftelijke vragen E-005751/2012, E-005768/2012, E-011276/2012 en E-273/2013, is zij op de hoogte van de verslagen over de significante hoeveelheid belastingen en socialezekerheidsbijdragen die professionele voetbalclubs nog aan de Spaanse regering zijn verschuldigd.

Zoals in het antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-9429/2012 reeds werd uiteengezet, kan staatssteun die professionele voetbalclubs een voordeel levert, de concurrentie vervalsen en de handel tussen lidstaten ongunstig beïnvloeden in de zin van artikel 107, lid 1, VWEU. Dergelijke steun dient bij de Commissie te worden gemeld om niet als illegaal te worden beschouwd.

Aangezien het onderzoek nog loopt en de Commissie momenteel bezig is met het analyseren van de informatie waarover zij beschikt, kan zij nog geen uitspraak doen over deze kwestie of over de mogelijke duur van het onderzoek.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002946/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Settlement of football clubs' outstanding debts

On 25 April 2012, Spanish football clubs reached an agreement with the government, in the form of a Protocol, to pay off their outstanding debt (around EUR 750 million in taxes and EUR 600 million in social security contributions) by 2020.

In response to previous Parliamentary questions, the Commission announced on 15 February 2013 that it was investigating this settlement.

Can the Commission say what the results of those investigations are and in particular whether this is possibly a case of state aid which should be notified?

If not, can the Commission indicate how soon the investigation can be expected to yield a result?

Can the Commission give its view yet on whether the settlement interferes with the level playing field for European football clubs?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

As the Commission has explained in its answers to written questions E-005751/2012, E-005768/2012, E-011276/2012 and E-273/2013, it is aware of reports on substantial amounts of taxes and social security contributions which professional football clubs owe to the Spanish Government.

As explained in the answer to Written Question E-9429/2012, State aid providing an advantage to a professional football club would have the potential to distort competition and affect trade between Member States in the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU. Such aid would need to be notified to the Commission, in order not to become illegal.

Since the investigation is ongoing and the Commission is currently analysing the information in its possession, it is not yet in a position to comment on the issues raised or on the time the investigation will last.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002947/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL) en Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(14 maart 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — EU-actie n.a.v. aanval op christelijke gemeenschap in Lahore

Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de recente aanval op de christelijke gemeenschap in Lahore, waarbij o.a. 180 huizen zijn afgebrand? Zo ja, wat is de reactie van de EU delegatie? Zo nee, waarom is er geen reactie geweest van de EU delegatie?

Is de Commissie bekend met het feit dat leden van de provinciale staten van Punjab en een lid van het nationale parlement, onder wie leden van de regerende politieke partij PML-N, deel hebben genomen aan het geweld ([1])? Is de Commissie van plan de rol van de politici in het geweld te bespreken tijdens het volgende mensenrechtenoverleg tussen de EEAS en de Pakistaanse overheid?

Is de Commissie bekend met het feit dat het geweld voortkomt uit een geschil over landrechten, waarbij de blasfemiewetgeving is misbruikt om de christenen van het land te verdrijven? Zo ja, is de Commissie bereid om tijdens het volgende mensenrechtenoverleg tussen de EEAS en de Pakistaanse overheid aan te dringen op aanpassing van de blasfemiewetgeving om zo misbruik te voorkomen?

Is de Commissie de mening dat het ontbreken van een goed onderwijssysteem, waarbij in het onderwijscurriculum een negatief beeld wordt neergezet van minderheden, vrouwen in India, als een belangrijke oorzaak kan worden gezien van de negatieve beeldvorming over minderheden? Zo ja, ziet de Commissie hierbij een rol voor de EU om door middel van haar onderwijsprojecten de negatieve beeldvorming te doorbreken?

Is de Commissie van mening dat de EU in haar rol als handelspartner zich kritischer zou moeten uitspreken en meer druk zou moeten zetten op de naleving van de mensenrechten en het behalen van de mensenrechtenbenchmarks?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(26 juni 2013)

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van de aanval op christenen in Lahore. De EU heeft meermaals haar bezorgdheid geuit over de onverdraagzaamheid en het geweld tegenover christenen en andere minderheden, en is zich zeer bewust van de kwetsbare positie van religieuze minderheden in Pakistan en het mogelijke misbruik dat kan voortvloeien uit de blasfemiewetten. Aantijgingen tegen individuele politici benadrukken de behoefte aan voortgezette steun van de EU aan democratische instellingen en samenwerking met de regering.

In de conclusies van de RBZ ([2]) van 11 maart worden alle gewelddaden tegen kwetsbare religieuze minderheden in Pakistan scherp veroordeeld en worden autoriteiten opgeroepen daders voor de rechter te brengen. In de conclusies wordt eveneens het voornemen van de EU benadrukt om zich meteen na de vorming van de nieuwe Pakistaanse regering in te zetten voor de doelstellingen van het vijfjarige inzetplan EU-Pakistan, waarin de mensenrechten een prioriteit vormen. De EU heeft zich reeds uitgesproken over de blasfemiewetten ([3]) en zal zich blijven inzetten voor de volledige bescherming van eenieders recht op vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging, zowel in Pakistan als in de rest van de wereld.

Een belangrijk deel van de EU-ontwikkelingshulp voor Pakistan gaat naar onderwijs. Bovendien zal de EU steun verlenen aan projecten voor capaciteitsopbouw in federale en provinciale instellingen met het oog op een beter bewustzijn en een betere bescherming van de mensenrechten, een betere toegang tot justitie voor kwetsbare groepen en een versterking van maatschappelijke organisaties.

Pakistan is een begunstigde van het SAP ([4]) van de EU. Wanneer de relevante internationale toezichthoudende organen in Pakistan of in een ander begunstigd land ernstige en systematische schendingen van belangrijke internationale mensen- en arbeidsrechten vaststellen, kunnen de preferentiële voorwaarden voor dat land in het gedrang komen.

([1]) http://www.humanrights.asia/news/ahrc-news/AHRC-STM-057-2013
([2]) RBZ = Raad Buitenlandse Zaken.
([3]) Zie de antwoorden op de eerdere schriftelijke vragen E-010472/2012 en E-004204/2012: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.
([4]) SAP = stelsel van algemene preferenties.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002947/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL) and Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU action in response to the attack on the Christian community in Lahore

Is the Commission aware of the recent attack on the Christian community in Lahore, in which, *inter alia*, 180 houses were burned down? If so, what is the response of the EU delegation? If not, why has there not been any response from the EU delegation?

Is the Commission aware that members of the Punjab Provincial Assembly and a member of the national Parliament, including members of the governing political party PML-N, took part in the violence? ([1]) Will the Commission discuss the role played by the politicians in the violence during the next round of consultations on human rights between the EEAS and the Government of Pakistan?

Is the Commission aware that the violence arose from a dispute over land rights, in connection with which the law on blasphemy was misused in order to drive Christians off the land? If so, will the Commission, during the next human rights consultations between the EEAS and the Government of Pakistan, call for the law on blasphemy to be amended so as to prevent its being abused?

Does the Commission consider that the absence of a satisfactory education system, and the fact that the educational curriculum presents a negative image of minorities and women in India, can be regarded as a major cause of the adverse image of minorities which prevails in the country? If so, does the Commission believe that the EU should play a role in this regard by combating the negative images through its education projects?

Does the Commission consider that the EU, in its role as a trading partner, ought to express more critical views and to bring more pressure to bear to secure respect for human rights and attainment of the human rights benchmarks?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the attack on Christians in Lahore. The EU has repeatedly expressed its concern about intolerance and violence towards Christians and other minority groups, and is well aware of the vulnerable situation of religious minorities in Pakistan and the potential for abuse that the blasphemy laws present. Allegations against individual politicians underline the need for continued EU support for democratic institutions and engagement with the government.

The FAC ([2]) conclusions of 11 March strongly condemned all acts of violence against vulnerable religious minorities in Pakistan and urged authorities to bring perpetrators to justice. They also underline EU plans to engage promptly with the next Pakistani government on the objectives of the EU-Pakistan 5-Year Engagement Plan in which human rights, is a priority. The EU has made its views on the blasphemy laws clear ([3]) and will continue to focus on the need to fully protect every individual's right to freedom of religion and belief, in Pakistan or elsewhere.

EU support for education in Pakistan is a major component of its development assistance. Moreover the EU will be funding capacity-building projects in federal and provincial institutions to improve awareness and protection of human rights, access to justice for vulnerable groups and strengthen civil society organisations.

Pakistan is a beneficiary country of the EU's GSP ([4]). As for any other beneficiary, when the relevant international monitoring bodies report serious and systematic violations of core international human and labour rights continued enjoyment of these preferences may be challenged.

([1]) http://www.humanrights.asia/news/ahrc-news/AHRC-STM-057-2013.
([2]) FAC = Foreign Affairs Council.
([3]) See replies to previous written questions E-010472/2012 and E-004204/2012; http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm
([4]) GSP = Generalised Scheme of Preferences.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002948/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Normativa europea de ferrocarriles en el Reino de España

El pasado 1 de marzo, el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea resolvió que el Gobierno español «se ha extralimitado en la administración del sector ferroviario». Los jueces afirman que el proceso de liberalización puesto en marcha «es contrario a la normativa comunitaria» ([1]) concretamente a la Directiva 2001/14/CE y a la Directiva 91/440/CEE.

La primera reprimenda por parte del Tribunal viene por el canon que deben pagar las empresas por hacer uso de la red ferroviaria. En este sentido, la legislación europea determina que le corresponde a un gestor independiente determinar el canon que han de abonar los operadores, «mientras que en el caso de España ha sido el Estado quien ha definido tanto el marco normativo de tarifación como los cánones específicos».

La segunda anomalía se ha percibido en el régimen de incentivos. Los Estados están obligados a conceder estos subsidios con el fin de «reducir al mínimo las perturbaciones» que ocasiona un operador que, históricamente, ha contado con el «afecto» de la Administración. El Tribunal de Luxemburgo ha comprobado que la legislación española, si bien prevé la existencia de estas ayudas, «no basta» para cumplir con la exigencia de establecer «efectivamente» un sistema de incentivos.

1. ¿Qué plazo de tiempo tiene el Reino de España para dar cumplimiento a la sentencia?

2. ¿Puede informar la Comisión de la cantidad económica que han supuesto las costas de este juicio?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de mayo de 2013)

El artículo 260, apartado 1, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea dispone que «si el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea declarare que un Estado miembro ha incumplido una de las obligaciones que le incumben en virtud de los Tratados, dicho Estado estará obligado a adoptar las medidas necesarias para la ejecución de la sentencia del Tribunal». La práctica actual de la Comisión es preguntar al Estado miembro, en el plazo de un mes a partir de la sentencia del Tribunal, qué medidas ha adoptado o tiene previsto adoptar para dar cumplimiento a dicha sentencia. Tras la sentencia del Tribunal en el asunto C-483/10, de 28 de febrero de 2013, la Comisión pidió a España, el 25 de marzo, que le comunicase esas medidas a más tardar el 25 de mayo. Si España sigue sin cumplir su obligación, la Comisión puede volver a someter el asunto al Tribunal, conforme al artículo 260, apartado 2, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea y solo entonces podrá pedir la imposición de sumas a tanto alzado o multas coercitivas.

En relación con su segunda pregunta, la Comisión no dispone de información alguna para evaluar el coste del procedimiento de infracción. En el caso de las costas a que se condena a la parte que pierde el juicio según el artículo 138 del Reglamento de Procedimiento del Tribunal de Justicia, es habitual no aplicar el pago de las mismas entre las instituciones y los Estados miembros.

([1]) http://www.logisticaprofesional.com/2013/03/la-ue-sentencia-que-espana-se-ha-extralimitado-en-la-administracion-del-sector-ferroviario/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002948/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: EU rules on railways in Spain

On 28 February 2013, the European Union's Court of Justice ruled that the Spanish Government had exceeded its powers in managing the railway sector. The judges declared that steps taken to liberalise railways in Spain were contrary to EU rules ([1]), specifically Directives 2001/14/EC and 91/440/EEC.

The Court's first reprimand to Spain concerned the charge that companies should have to pay to use the railway network. European legislation lays down that the responsibility of determining the charges payable by railway operators should lie with an independent manager, whereas in the case of Spain, the State has both established the charging framework and set the actual tariffs.

The second inconsistency with EU rules which the Court identified concerned incentives. States are obliged to offer these subsidies with the aim of minimising the possible disruption experienced by a railway operator which has previously received the support of the administration. The Court in Luxembourg found that although Spanish legislation did provide for the possibility of granting such subsidies, this was not sufficient to actually implement the incentive scheme.

1. How long does Spain have to take action to comply with this ruling?

2. Can the Commission say how much this court case cost?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Article 260(1) of the Treaty on the Functionning of the European Union (TFEU) states that 'if the Court of Justice of the European Union finds that a Member State has failed to fulfil an obligation under the Treaties, the State shall be required to take the necessary measures to comply with the judgment of the Court'. Current Commission practice is to enquire within one month of the Court's ruling which measures were adopted or scheduled to be adopted by the Member State to comply with the Court's judgment. Following the Court's ruling in Case C-483/10 dated 28 February 2013, the Commission asked Spain on 25 March to inform it of such measures by 25 May. Should Spain still not comply, the Commission may bring Spain back to the Court in accordance with Article 260(2) TFEU and only at this stage, lump sums or penalty payments may be requested.

On your second question, the Commission does not have any information enabling it to assess the cost of this infringement procedure. As regards the costs to which the unsuccessful party is to be ordered in accordance with Article 138 of the rules of procedure of the Court of Justice, it is customary between the institutions and the Member States not to apply the payment of these costs.

([1]) http://www.logisticaprofesional.com/2013/03/la-ue-sentencia-que-espana-se-ha-extralimitado-en-la-administracion-del-sector-ferroviario/.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002949/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(14 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κατατάξεις ευρωπαϊκών πόλεων

Στο πλαίσιο αναζήτησης βέλτιστων μεθόδων για τον καθορισμό των πόλεων που προάγουν την ευημερία και την ποιότητα ζωής σε πλήθος ερευνών (UN Habitat, Economist Intelligence Unit κ.λπ.) με κατατάξεις πόλεων, μεταξύ αυτών και ευρωπαϊκών, χρησιμοποιούνται διάφορα κριτήρια και παράμετροι. Την ίδια στιγμή η ΕΕ διαθέτει σχετικά συγκριτικά στοιχεία και δείκτες για τις πόλεις της μέσω του Urban Audit ([1]), αλλά και για την «αντίληψη για την ποιότητα ζωής σε 75 ευρωπαϊκές πόλεις» ([2]) που καταγράφει τις απόψεις των ευρωπαίων πολιτών. Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει τις διεθνείς κατατάξεις και τι συμπεράσματα εξάγει για τις ευρωπαϊκές πόλεις;

2. Διαθέτει εργαλεία και στατιστικά δεδομένα, πλήρη και επικαιροποιημένα για τη συγκριτική κατάταξη των ευρωπαϊκών πόλεων με σκοπό την ανάδειξη των βέλτιστων πρακτικών αλλά και των αδυναμιών τους;

3. Θα μπορούσε να αξιοποιηθεί προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση η εμπειρία από το «The Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities» ([3]), το οποίο παρέχει ένα κοινό πλαίσιο και εργαλεία για βιώσιμη αστική ανάπτυξη αλλά και βοηθάει τις πόλεις να καταγράψουν τις σχετικές δυνατότητες τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

1. Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για τις διάφορες έρευνες κατάταξης των πόλεων που αναφέρονται στην ερώτηση. Οι κατατάξεις αυτού του είδους βασίζονται σε αξιολόγηση της σχετικής σημασίας των δεικτών. Ο κύριος λόγος για τον οποίο συγκεντρώνονται στατιστικά δεδομένα για κοινωνικά και οικονομικά φαινόμενα, όπως οι πόλεις, είναι για να σχηματιστεί, από διαφορετικές οπτικές, μια όσο το δυνατόν πιο αντικειμενική εικόνα. Τα συμπεράσματα από τις εν λόγω στατιστικές θα αντλήσουν οι χρήστες τους.

2. Η Επιτροπή έχει δημιουργήσει μία δέσμη στατιστικών και εργαλείων, όπως ο αστικός έλεγχος, η έρευνα για την αντίληψη της ποιότητας ζωής στις πόλεις και ο αστικός άτλαντας. Ο αστικός έλεγχος συνίσταται σε συλλογή στατιστικών δεδομένων που καλύπτουν εύρος θεμάτων και πάνω από 800 πόλεις της Ευρώπης. Ωστόσο, ελλείψει κανονιστικής νομικής βάσης, το σύνολο των δεδομένων δεν είναι πλήρες. Η έρευνα για την αντίληψη της ποιότητας ζωής στις ευρωπαϊκές πόλεις, η οποία βασίζεται πλέον σε 500 τηλεφωνικές συνεντεύξεις σε 78 ευρωπαϊκές πόλεις, διεξάγεται τακτικά από το 2004. Τα εν λόγω εργαλεία επιτρέπουν συγκρίσεις σε πανευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο και μπορούν να χρησιμεύσουν ως βάση για την ανάλυση σχετικά με τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές και τις αδυναμίες. Ωστόσο, δεν έχουν σχεδιαστεί για την κατάταξη των πόλεων.

3. Στόχος του πλαισίου αναφοράς για τις βιώσιμες πόλεις (RFSC) είναι να βοηθήσει τις πόλεις να εφαρμόσουν την εν λόγω ολοκληρωμένη προσέγγιση και να διευκολύνει τον διάλογο για την αειφόρο ανάπτυξη σε αστικό περιβάλλον, εντός και μεταξύ των πόλεων. Ως διακυβερνητική πρωτοβουλία, έχει καταστεί σαφές ήδη από τη δημιουργία του RFSC ότι, όχι μόνο θα αποφύγει την πάσης φύσεως κατάταξη, αλλά θα δώσει στις αστικές περιοχές την ευκαιρία να προβάλλουν τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές τους και στη συνέχεια να συγκρίνουν τις προσεγγίσεις και τα αποτελέσματα, μέσω της δυνατότητας δικτύωσης που παρέχει το εν λόγω εργαλείο.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region_cities/regional_statistics/data/database
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/urban/survey2009_en.pdf
([3]) http://app.rfsc.eu/userfiles/Final%20report%20Nicis%20testing%20RFSC.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002949/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: European City Rankings

Vying with each other for the best way of determining which cities promote well-being and quality of life, a number of different surveys (UN Habitat, Economist Intelligence Unit, etc.) have ranked cities, including European cities, according to various criteria and parameters. The EU also has comparative data and indicators for EU cities in the form of the Urban Audit ([1]) and the 'Survey on Perception of Quality of Life in 75 European Cities' ([2]) which records the views of European citizens. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How does it judge international city rankings and what conclusions does it draw for European cities?

2. Does it have any tools and complete and up-to-date statistical data regarding the comparative rank of European cities with a view to highlighting best practices but also their weaknesses?

3. Could experience from the 'Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities' ([3]) be used to this end, since it provides a common framework and tools for sustainable urban development and also helps cities register their potential?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the different surveys ranking cities referred to in the question. Rankings of that type are based on an assessment of the relative importance of indicators. The principle objective of statistics collected on social and economic phenomena, such as cities, is to provide a picture from different perspectives as objectively as possible. The conclusions on the statistics obtained are left to users of the statistics.

2. A range of statistics and tools — such as the Urban Audit, the Survey on Perception of Quality of Life in Cities and the Urban Atlas — have been developed by the Commission. The Urban Audit is a statistical data collection covering a comprehensive set of themes and more than 800 cities in Europe. However, due to the lack of a regulatory legal base the dataset is not complete. The perception survey on quality of life in European cities — now based on 500 telephone interviews in 78 European cities — has also been regularly conducted since 2004. These tools allow for European comparisons and can serve as a base for analysis on best practices and weaknesses. However, they have not been designed for ranking cities.

3. The aim of the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC) is to help cities apply the integrated approach and to facilitate the dialogue on sustainable urban development within and amongst cities. As an intergovernmental initiative, it has been made clear from the inception of the RFSC that it would avoid ranking of any sort — rather, it should allow urban areas to highlight their best practices and compare approaches and results through the networking aspect of the tool.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region_cities/regional_statistics/data/database.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/urban/survey2009_en.pdf
([3]) http://app.rfsc.eu/userfiles/Final%20report%20Nicis%20testing%20RFSC.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002950/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προστασία Ελλήνων δανειοληπτών από τις πρακτικές των distress funds

Την ήδη αυξημένη ανησυχία χιλιάδων υπερχρεωμένων Ελλήνων δανειοληπτών που εν μέσω έντονης οικονομικής και κοινωνικής κρίσης αδυνατούν για αντικειμενικούς λόγους να ανταποκριθούν στις δανειακές τους υποχρεώσεις, ενισχύουν πρόσφατα δημοσιεύματα για το έντονο ενδιαφέρον ξένων κεφαλαίων — «distress funds» — να αγοράσουν ελληνικά δάνεια. Με το τραπεζικό σύστημα να αντιμετωπίζει τον ολοένα διογκούμενο αριθμό μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων (21% στεγαστικά, 37% καταναλωτικά) και επισφαλειών συνδυαστικά με την πίεση για βελτίωση των δεικτών κεφαλαιακής επάρκειας, δημιουργούνται οι «κατάλληλες» προϋποθέσεις προσέλκυσης τέτοιων επενδυτικών κεφαλαίων. Είναι γνωστό άλλωστε ότι η λειτουργία τους στηρίζεται σε κερδοσκοπικά κίνητρα χωρίς να εξετάζουν τις βασικές αιτίες αδυναμίας πληρωμής ή προεκτάσεις κοινωνικού χαρακτήρα πχ. εάν ένα δάνειο ανήκει σε άνεργο, ευπαθείς ομάδες κ.ά.

Ως εκ τούτου, είναι ορατός ο κίνδυνος τα distress funds να αποκτήσουν μεγάλο μέρος των δανείων ελληνικών τραπεζών με πολύ χαμηλό τίμημα και στη συνέχεια να αισχροκερδήσουν στρεφόμενοι ακόμα και νομικά κατά δανειοληπτών που αδυνατούν να πληρώσουν το χρέος τους αποκομίζοντας έστω και μέρος των απαιτήσεών τους οι οποίες θα είναι σαφώς μεγαλύτερες από το κόστος εξαγοράς των δανείων.

Δεδομένης της ανησυχίας που έχει δημιουργήσει στα χιλιάδες υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά αυτό το ενδεχόμενο, αλλά και της υποχρέωσης της Επιτροπής να προστατεύει τους καταναλωτές από πρακτικές αισχροκέρδειας και ασυδοσίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια η θέση της στο ζήτημα; Προτίθεται να λάβει μέτρα προστασίας των Ελλήνων δανειοληπτών και των ευπαθών ομάδων από ενδεχόμενες πρακτικές αισχροκέρδειας των distress funds;

2. Ποιες οι δυνατότητες επαναδιαπραγμάτευσης και διακανονισμού για τους όρους πληρωμής που έχει ο δανειολήπτης από τη στιγμή που αλλάζει ο πιστωτής;

3. Προβλέπεται η δημιουργία νομικού πλαισίου μεταβίβασης χαρτοφυλακίων μη εξυπηρετούμενων οφειλών από χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα σε funds ή εταιρείες διαχείρισης ληξιπρόθεσμων οφειλών;

4. Πώς προστατεύονται οι δανειολήπτες από κερδοσκοπικές κινήσεις και αμφιλεγόμενες και παράνομες πρακτικές είσπραξης των απαιτήσεων (π.χ. ψυχολογική πίεση); Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να θέσει σε λειτουργία τους απαραίτητους ελεγκτικούς μηχανισμούς;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαΐου 2013)

Τα νοικοκυριά αντιμετωπίζουν δυσχερή οικονομική κατάσταση λόγω της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Ελλάδα. Οι ελληνικές αρχές, σε διαβούλευση με τους εταίρους του προγράμματος, επιδιώκουν την εξεύρεση ισορροπημένης λύσης, με τη μεταρρύθμιση του ισχύοντος πλαισίου για τα υπερχρεωμένα νοικοκυριά, προκειμένου να προστατεύσουν, μέσω της αναστολής των κατασχέσεων και της επιμήκυνσης του χρόνου αποπληρωμής των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων, τις οικογένειες χαμηλού εισοδήματος που αντιμετωπίζουν σημαντική απώλεια εισοδήματος και, λόγω αυτού, αδυνατούν να ανταποκριθούν στις υποχρεώσεις εξόφλησης των δανείων. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει γνώση ότι τα «distress funds» (ταμεία που αγοράζουν προβληματικό ενεργητικό) εμπλέκονται σήμερα στη διαχείριση μη εξυπηρετούμενων κεφαλαιακών στοιχείων. Η συνεχιζόμενη ανακεφαλαιοποίηση και ενοποίηση του τραπεζικού τομέα θα βοηθήσει τις ελληνικές τράπεζες να αντεπεξέλθουν στο σημερινό υψηλό επίπεδο μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων, χωρίς να χρειαστεί να καταφύγουν σε έκτακτη εκποίηση των δανειακών χαρτοφυλακίων τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002950/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Protecting Greek borrowers from distress funds

The grave concern felt by thousands of indebted Greek borrowers who, in the midst of a severe economic and social crisis, are unable for objective reasons to meet their repayment obligations, has been heightened by recent publications on the intense interest shown by foreign capital -'distress funds'- in buying up Greek debt. With the banking system facing a growing number of non-performing loans (21% mortgage loans and 37% consumer loans) and bad loans, together with pressure to improve capital ratios, the 'right' conditions are being created to attract such investment funds. It is also known that their operations are based on profit-seeking without examining the root causes of default or its social implications i.e. whether the borrowers are unemployed, vulnerable groups, etc.

There is therefore a real danger that distress funds may acquire a large share of Greek bank loans at a very low price and then seek to maximise their profits, going so far as to take legal action against borrowers who fail to pay their debts: even if they obtain only some of the money they demand, that will still be significantly more than the cost of buying up the loans.

Given the worry this has caused thousands of indebted households in Greece, and the Commission's obligation to protect consumers from profiteering and irresponsible practices, will the Commission say:

1. What is its position on this matter? Does it intend to take measures to protect Greek borrowers and vulnerable groups from possible profiteering by distress funds?

2. What leeway does the borrower have for renegotiating and settling the terms of payment when the creditor changes?

3. Is any provision made for the creation of a legal framework for the transfer of non-performing debt portfolios from financial institutions to debt arrears management funds or companies?

4. How are borrowers protected from speculative interests and controversial and illegal debt collection practices (e.g. psychological pressure)? Will it put in place the necessary control mechanisms?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Households are facing a difficult financial situation due to the economic crisis in Greece. The Greek Authorities, in consultation with the programme partners, are seeking to find a balanced solution in the reform of the existing framework for indebted households to protect, through a moratorium on seizures and a rescheduling of non-performing loans, low-income families facing a significant loss of income which make them currently unable to observe their repayment obligations. The Commission is not aware of distress funds currently becoming involved in the management of non-performing funds. The ongoing recapitalisation and consolidation of the banking sector will help Greek banks withstand the current high level of non-performing loans without having to resort to fire sale of their loan portfolios.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002951/13
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: UK convergence programme

I refer to the Commission Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on the United Kingdom's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on the United Kingdom's convergence programme for 2012-2017 (COM(2012)0309) ([1]).

Recommendation 2 states:

'Address the destabilising impact of high and volatile house prices and high household debt by implementing a comprehensive housing reform programme […]. Pursue further reforms to the mortgage and rental markets, financial regulation and property taxation to prevent excessive volatility and distortions in the housing market.'

Will the Commission kindly explain what type of reforms it has in mind, especially with regard to property taxation?

Under what obligation is the UK to implement these recommendations?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The analysis supporting the second country-specific recommendation proposed by the European Commission in 2012 as part of its assessment of the United Kingdom's national reform programme is mentioned in recital (11) of the respective Council Recommendation ([2]) and detailed in the 2012 Commission Staff Working Document assessing the UK national reform programme ([3]) and in the first in-depth review of the UK economy under the macroeconomic imbalances procedure ([4]). The second in-depth review for the UK ([5]) was published on April 10, 2013, updating the analysis contained in the previous documents. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to these documents, which contain the Commission's views on possible policy action and reforms to improve the functioning of the UK housing market and to address the high levels of UK household debt. In particular, the Honourable Member is referred to the policy challenges section of the second in-depth review (pages 61/62) and to the Country specific recommendations of the 2013 European Semester ([6]) and the respective Staff Working Document. .

It is in the best interest of the Member State to implement the country-specific recommendations addressed to it in the context of the European Semester. Under the Treaty, the Member States have agreed to coordinate their economic policies at the EU level. In this context, the country-specific recommendations are proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council after endorsement by the European Council.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/csr2012_uk_en.pdf

([2]) Council Recommendation of 10 July 2012 the National Reform Programme 2012 of the United Kingdom and delivering a Council opinion on the Convergence Programme of the United Kingdom, 2012-2017 (2012/C 219/27). Available from:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/20_scps/2012/04_council/uk_2012-07-10_council_recommendation_en.pdf

([3]) Commission Staff Working Document — Assessment of the 2012 national reform programme and convergence programme for the United Kingdom (COM(2012) 309 final). Available from:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/20_scps/2012/02_staff_working_document/uk_2012-05-30_swd_en.pdf

([4]) Macroeconomic imbalances — United Kingdom, DG ECFIN Occasional Paper 110, July 2012. Available from:. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/pdf/ocp110_en.pdf

([5]) In-depth review for the United Kingdom in accordance with Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, SWD(2013) 125 final. Available from: . http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp143_en.pdf

([6]) COM(2013) 378 of 29 May 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002952/13
to the Council
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: European Agency for Fundamental Rights — simple definition

I refer to your reply of 25 February 2013 to my Written Question E-011371/2012.

You have not provided a clear definition for each of the words 'racism' and 'xenophobia', as I requested.

You state that 'the framework decision defines offences concerning racism and xenophobia and thus ensures that such behaviour constitutes an offence throughout the EU Member States'.

Your answer refers only to offences that relate to 'racism and xenophobia'.

These terms are referred to often but are meaningless without a definition.

Xenophobia means fear of strangers — a state of mind. How can you make a state of mind a criminal offence? Racism is sometimes used to mean hatred or incitement to hatred. However, it is often used to refer to words that neither express hatred nor incite it in others. What do you mean by it?

These words also feature prominently in 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.

Will you please provide an all-embracing definition of both these terms, so that my constituents will know exactly what is meant whenever the Council refers to these words in its documents?

If the Council cannot define what it means when it employs these terms, how can the public do so, and how can they constitute criminal offences?

Are these words deliberately undefined in order to frighten the public and politicians away from discussing immigration or ethnicity?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

As stated in the Council's reply to the Honourable Member's Question E-011371/12, 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 ([1]) defines a common EU-wide criminal law and criminal justice approach to combating racism and xenophobia.

This framework Decision defines offences concerning racism and xenophobia and thus ensures that such behaviour constitutes an offence throughout the EU Member States. This serves as a minimum harmonisation of what is understood as such offences of 'racism and xenophobia' across the EU.

The definition of criminal offences concerning racism and xenophobia used in Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA extends only to the intentional conduct specified in Article 1 (1)(a)-(d). This is confirmed in Recital 6: 'This framework Decision is limited to combating particularly serious forms of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law'.

Such offences are constituted by the following conduct, when done intentionally: 'publicly inciting to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin'. The same applies to doing so 'by public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material'. This conduct has thus been defined in a clear fashion in accordance with the principle of legal certainty and cannot be said to be undefined or unclear.

([1]) OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002953/13
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: European Agency for Fundamental Rights — simple definition

I refer to your reply of 14 February 2013 to my Written Question E-011372/2012.

You have not provided a clear definition for each of the words 'racism' and 'xenophobia', as I had requested.

In the footnote to the answer given, you refer to 'Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions or racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law'.

I am not asking for your definitions of all the 'forms and manifestations' that 'racism and xenophobia' can cause or take.

I am merely asking that you provide a definition of each term, as used by the Commission and as employed, for example, in the aforementioned Framework Decision. This is regardless of whether certain manifestations constitute offences or whether they are not currently regarded as such.

If it cannot define what it means when it employs these terms, how are members of the public, or my constituents, to comprehend the Commission's views, statements or opinions, be they written or spoken?

Will you please provide your all-embracing definition of each word, as the Commission understands them whenever it employs them?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission refers to its reply to the Written Question E-011372/2012.

In its work, the Commission uses the concepts of racism and xenophobia in the meaning defined in relevant EC law, including Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia, to which the Honourable Member refers. In the context of this instrument (Article 1), these concepts refer to 'violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin'. The Commission also applies, as appropriate, the definitions used in relevant international human rights instruments and by relevant international human rights bodies, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination ([1]) and the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance ([2]).

([1]) See Article 1 of ICERD, available at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx
([2]) See e.g. ECRI General Policy Recommendation No 7, available at http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri /activities/gpr/en/recommendation_n7/ecri03-8%20recommendation%20nr%207.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002957/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Fraud in Europe

In 2009, it was estimated that the value of suspected fraud cases involving EU funds amounted to EUR 280 million, or some 0.2% of the EU's total budget. It is therefore apparent that fraud is a major problem and that more must be done to tackle cross-border fraud.

What is the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) currently doing to ensure that such crime is reduced and eradicated in the EU?

Does OLAF work on joint operations with anti-fraud units in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

1. The protection of the EU financial interests is a shared responsability of both the Member states and the Commission, OLAF in particular (art 325 TFEU). The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to OLAF's website ([1]) where information on OLAF's activities, its caseload and results can be accessed.

Furthermore, OLAF, acting as a service of the Commission, contributes to the establishment and implementation of the Commission's actions, strategies and programmes fighting fraud, such as a new comprehensive EU strategy on stepping up efforts to fight against cigarette smuggling planned for mid- 2013.

The Honourable Member is also invited to refer to the Commission's replies to questions E-002243/12 and E-001887/12.

2. Close and regular cooperation between all the competent authorities is an obligation in art 325 TFEU.

With regard to cooperation in investigations, the so-called coordination cases ([2]) account for the major part of the OLAF caseload in agriculture and customs-related areas, including counterfeits and smuggling.

With regard to cooperation in the custom policy area, the Commission regularly initiates and organises Joint Customs Operations (JCOs) with the Member States Custom Authorities. JCOs carried out by Member States are supported by OLAF. Two domains are currently in the focus: the smuggling of cigarettes and of counterfeit goods (with an emphasis on potentially dangerous goods, posing a risk for the environment, the safety or the public health for the consumers). Member States' customs administrations and the Commission regularly meet to discuss the cooperation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/about-us/reports/olaf-report/index_en.htm

([2]) Coordination cases are cases that could be the subject of an external investigation, but where OLAF's role is to contribute to investigations being carried out by other national or Community services by, among other things, facilitating the gathering and exchange of information and ensuring operational synergy among the relevant national and Community services; the main investigative input is provided by other authorities. OLAF's role includes facilitating contacts and encouraging the responsible authorities to work together.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002958/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Dialogue in the Balkans

In light of the recent meeting of Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative Catherine Ashton with the presidents of Serbia and Kosovo, could the EEAS clarify what commitments the two states have made to promote and support their assurances of peaceful dialogue?

Fresh dialogue has produced a number of significant achievements thanks to the constructive engagement of both sides. However, the international community must continue with the efforts needed to achieve further progress.

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

Since October 2012, HR/VP Ashton has facilitated eleven meetings between Prime Ministers Dacic and Thaci. In addition, on 6 February 2013 a meeting took place in Brussels between President Jahjaga and President Nikolic. The regular exchanges between the Prime Ministers as well as the first ever meeting of the Presidents have not only produced important political agreements but also shown the interest of both sides in normalising relations.

At their tenth meeting on 19 April, Prime Ministers Dacic and Thaci initialled a 'First agreement on principles governing the normalisation of relations'. That agreement contains a set of principles and arrangements which give the Kosovo Serb community a new vision of their future by addressing their concerns and needs in a way that preserves the functionality of the Kosovo institutions and legal framework. Both sides have committed to and are currently in the process of implementing this as well as past agreements of the dialogue. At their last meeting on 21/22 May, the Prime Ministers agreed on an Implementation Plan which has been formally adopted in Belgrade and Pristina. The Implementation Plan contains measures and actions that constitute a basis for translating all the elements of the First Agreement into reality. Work on the specific elements set out in the Implementation Plan is ongoing.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002959/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Kidnappings following French intervention in Mali

Since the French military intervention in Mali in January 2013, there would appear to have been an increase in the number of foreigners being kidnapped on the African continent. Seven French tourists were kidnapped in February 2013, and European oil workers were kidnapped in Nigeria the week before.

1. Does the EEAS know how many European citizens have been kidnapped since the intervention in Mali? Is there a credible link between the intervention in Mali and the spike in the number of kidnappings by Islamists?

2. What is the EEAS doing to ensure the swift release of those individuals kidnapped, and what can be done to discourage such acts of kidnapping in Africa?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante M^me^ Ashton au nom de la Commission
(14 juin 2013)

L'UE déplore et condamne fermement toutes les atteintes à l'intégrité physique et morale des otages. Si l'UE n'est pas en mesure d'intervenir directement dans la gestion opérationnelle de la sécurité des ressortissants européens, de la responsabilité des Etats-membres, elle agit par le biais de sa coopération extérieure (renforcement des capacités locales).

Si la situation actuelle a pu exacerber le risque, il convient de rappeler que les enlèvements et les assassinats revendiqués par des groupes terroristes de la région saharo-sahélienne sont récurrents depuis la fin des années 2000. Ils ont touché des citoyens de différents Etats-membres. Ils sont en partie liés au déficit de capacités de prévention et de lutte contre la criminalité et le terrorisme dans les États de la région.

Dans cette perspective, consciente de la dégradation des conditions politiques, économiques et sécuritaires au Sahel, l'UE s'est engagée dès 2011 dans la mise en œuvre d'une Stratégie pour la sécurité et le développement au Sahel, qui vise notamment à réduire le risque criminel, en particulier terroriste. Son effort extérieur est mené en cohérence avec le champ «Justice et Affaires intérieures».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002960/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Child poverty in Europe

In recent years, child poverty has reached unprecedented levels. Poverty has a drastic effect on childhood and harms a child's future prospects. The 'Eurochild' network suggests that 19% of children in the EU are at risk of poverty. Furthermore, it is absolutely crucial that a child-centred approach is taken to addressing child poverty.

1. Can the Commission explain what is currently being done to address the issue of child poverty?

2. Would the Commission agree that a child-centred approach is the best way to help the most vulnerable in our society?

3. Is there an EU-wide approach to preventing child poverty, or does the responsibility lie solely with individual Member States?

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

Policies to address and prevent child poverty fall primarily within Member States' competences. However, EU cooperation can complement their efforts, leading to a better understanding of the determinants of child poverty and successful policy approaches.

The Europe 2020 strategy has given a new impetus to joint efforts to address child poverty. Many Member States have mentioned the issue as an important challenge in their National Reform Programmes and several Country Specific Recommendations adopted in July 2012 are directly relevant ([1]) .

The 'EU Agenda for the rights of the child' ([2]) reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to ensure that the child's best interests are at the centre of all relevant EU actions and policies.

This year the Commission adopted the recommendation *Investing in children — breaking the cycle of disadvantage ([3])* as part of the Social Investment Package ([4]), which proposes a common framework through policy guidance and indicators to help the EU and Member States focus on successful social investment towards children.

In the recommendation, the Commission emphasised the need to recognise children as independent rights holders. The Commission believes that tackling the disadvantages that children face in the early years is an important means to address poverty, and that early intervention is essential for developing more effective policies.

Furthermore, various EU financial instruments address the issue directly or indirectly, such as the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European School Fruit and School Milk schemes, and the European Food aid programme for the Most Deprived People.

([1]) such as those adopted for the UK, ES or BG.
([2]) COM(2011)60 final, 15.2.2011.
([3]) C(2013)778 final, 20.2.2013.
([4]) COM(2013)083 final, 20.2.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002961/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Dai Balcani armi illegali verso l'UE

Il giornale di Banja Luka «Glas Srpske», citando funzionari francesi dell'ambasciata francese di Sarajevo e di Belgrado, riferisce che le armi provenienti dai paesi dei Balcani occidentali oggetto del commercio illegale sono almeno per un 30 % destinate al mercato clandestino dei paesi dell'UE e in genere dell'Europa occidentale.

Inoltre, si apprende che nei Balcani occidentali operano due grandi reti, albanese e panslava, costituite da piccoli gruppi di commercianti, attualmente indagati. Nel traffico sono coinvolte persone d'origine balcanica che scambiano le armi con droga o sigarette, mentre sono sempre più numerosi i casi di trafficanti in Bosnia, dove resta ancora una gran quantità di armi risalenti alle guerre degli anni '90. Vengono commercializzati soprattutto bazooka, lanciarazzi, kalashnikov, bombe a mano ed esplosivi.

Può la Commissione far sapere con quali concrete iniziative intende far fronte a questo mercato di armi illegali, soprattutto nei confronti dei paesi con i quali l'UE ha intrapreso i negoziati di adesione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(15 maggio 2013)

Le questioni legate allo Stato di diritto, compresa la lotta a vari tipi di criminalità, sono al centro del processo di allargamento. Per esempio, nell'ambito della liberalizzazione dei visti, i paesi in via di adesione hanno dovuto rispettare un certo numero di impegni in materia di cooperazione fra le autorità di contrasto, gestione integrata delle frontiere, sicurezza dei documenti e rispetto dei diritti fondamentali. Questi elementi hanno contribuito in misura determinante a rafforzare la capacità di lotta al crimine transfrontaliero, quale il traffico di armi.

Nel contesto dei negoziati di adesione, l'acquis pertinente è illustrato ai paesi candidati nel cosiddetto «processo di controllo». Per quanto riguarda le armi, oltre a rispettare il protocollo UNTOC ([1]), i paesi in via di adesione devono allineare la legislazione nazionale ad altri sei strumenti ([2]). Nel caso del Montenegro — l'unico paese che si stia attualmente preparando ad avviare negoziati riguardanti il capitolo 24 (giustizia, libertà e sicurezza) — il parametro fissato per l'apertura dei negoziati comprende anche la necessità di attuare una strategia sulle armi leggere e di piccolo calibro.

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che la lotta al crimine organizzato (compresi narcotraffico, traffico di armi e tratta di esseri umani) continua a essere un problema nella regione dei Balcani occidentali e segue da vicino la situazione, con missioni periodiche di valutazione e mediante relazioni annuali ([3]). Al vertice dei ministri della Giustizia e degli Affari interni con i Balcani occidentali, tenutosi a Tirana a novembre 2012, i partecipanti hanno adottato una dichiarazione sul controllo della diffusione di armi di piccolo calibro. La Commissione continua a monitorare l'attuazione della dichiarazione nelle relazioni bilaterali con i paesi interessati.

([1]) Protocollo delle Nazioni Unite contro la fabbricazione e il traffico illeciti di armi da fuoco, loro parti e componenti e munizioni, addizionale alla convenzione delle Nazioni Unite contro la criminalità transnazionale organizzata.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 2012/258 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 14 marzo 2012, che attua l'articolo 10 del protocollo delle Nazioni Unite sulle armi da fuoco, GU L 94 del 30.3.2012; direttiva 2009/43/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 maggio 2009, che semplifica le modalità e le condizioni dei trasferimenti all'interno delle Comunità di prodotti per la difesa, GU L 146 del 10.6.2009; direttiva 2008/51/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 maggio 2008, che modifica la direttiva 91/477/CEE del Consiglio, relativa al controllo dell'acquisizione e della detenzione di armi, GU L 179 dell'8.7.2008; decisione 2011/428/PESC del Consiglio, del 18 luglio 2011, a sostegno dell'Ufficio per gli affari del disarmo delle Nazioni Unite per l'attuazione del programma di azione delle Nazioni Unite per prevenire, combattere e sradicare il commercio illegale di armi leggere e di piccolo calibro in tutti i suoi aspetti, GU L 188 del 19.7.2011; decisione 2010/765/PESC del Consiglio, del 2 dicembre 2010, sull'azione dell'UE volta a contrastare il commercio illecito di armi leggere e di piccolo calibro (SALW) per via aerea, GU L 327 dell'11.12.2010.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002961/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Illegal arms shipments from the Balkans to the EU

Citing French diplomats working at their country's embassies in Sarajevo and Belgrade, the Banja Luka newspaper *Glas Srpske* claims that at least 30% of the illegal arms shipments intended for the underground market in the EU Member States, and in western Europe in general, come from the countries of the western Balkans.

In addition, the article in question states that two large-scale networks, one Albanian and one involving nationals of several different Slavic countries, each of which is made up of small groups of traders, are operating completely unmolested in the western Balkans. Arms are exchanged for drugs or cigarettes. Trafficking is becoming ever more widespread in Bosnia, where there are still large quantities of arms left over from the wars which took place in the 1990s. The arms most commonly traded are bazookas, rocket launchers, Kalashnikovs, hand grenades and explosives.

What practical steps does the Commission plan to take to combat this illegal arms trading, in particular in those countries with which the EU has opened accession negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Issues related to the rule of law, including the fight against various types of crime, are at the heart of the enlargement process. For example, in the context of the visa liberalisation process, enlargement countries had to meet a number of commitments related to law enforcement cooperation, integrated border management, document security and respect of fundamental rights. These substantially contributed to strengthening their capacity to fight cross border crime such as arms trafficking.

In the context of the accession negotiations, the relevant *acquis* is explained to the candidate countries during the so called 'screening process'. As regards arms and weapons, in addition to the UNTOC Protocol ([1]), enlargement countries have to align their legislation with six other instruments ([2]). In the case of Montenegro — the only country currently preparing to start the negotiations on Chapter 24 (Justice, freedom and security) — the opening benchmark necessary for starting the negotiations covers also the need to implement a strategy on small arms and light weapons.

The Commission is aware that the fight against organised crime (including drugs, arms and people trafficking) remains a challenge in the Western Balkan region. The Commission monitors the situation closely both through its regular assessment missions and the yearly Progress Reports ([3]). At the Tirana Justice and Home Affairs ministerial summit with the western Balkans in November 2012, participants adopted a declaration on controlling the spread of small arms. The Commission continues to monitor the implementation of this declaration in its bilateral relations with the countries concerned.

([1]) Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime.

([2]) Regulation 2012/258/EC of Parliament and the Council of 14 March 2012, implementing article10 of the UN Firearms Protocol; OJ L 94, 30.3.2012;
Directive 2009/43/EC of Parliament and the Council of 6 May 2009 simplifying terms and conditions of transfers of defence-related products within the Community Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 146, 10.6.2009;
Directive 2008/51/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 amending Council Directive 91/477/EEC on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons; OJ L 179, 8.7.2008;
Council Decision 2011/428/CFSP of 18 July 2011 in support of United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs activities to implement the United Nations Programme of Actions to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, OJ L 188, 19.7.2011;
Council Decision 2010/765/CFSP of 2 December 2010 on EU action to counter the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALW) by air, OJ L 327, 11.12.2010.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-002962/13
alla Commissione
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(14 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la ricostruzione di Città della Scienza

Il 3 marzo un vasto incendio ha distrutto Città della Scienza, polo tecnologico multifunzionale della città di Napoli, considerato, a livello internazionale, un punto di eccellenza.

Il complesso comprende, tra l'altro: lo Science Centre, primo museo scientifico interattivo italiano che attrae nelle sue aree espositive circa 350.000 visitatori l'anno; un incubatore di imprese, che comprende 34 imprese, soprattutto operanti nei settori ICT, ambientale e dell'industria creativa; un centro di alta formazione; un centro congressi. Sono oltre 500 i lavoratori coinvolti nel complesso, di cui 70 dipendenti della Fondazione Città della Scienza. Si tratta di una perdita importante per la città e per la sua economia.

Già in passato l'Unione europea ha valutato l'importanza di tale sito, garantendo un'attenzione anche finanziaria che ha consentito a Città della Scienza di diventare quel punto di eccellenza che era fino a pochi giorni fa.

Per le medesime considerazioni, la Commissione europea si è detta pronta a valutare la possibilità di una partecipazione diretta alla ricostruzione.

Può la Commissione chiarire in quali termini intende intervenire, considerata anche l'emergenza occupazionale che scaturisce dall'evento descritto? Quali sono le azioni finanziabili e i tempi per tale finanziamento?

Può la Commissione chiarire se è vero che, nell'ipotesi di dislocamento della Città della Scienza nell'area di Bagnoli, per la stessa sarebbe possibile utilizzare le risorse previste per il rilancio dell'ex acciaieria?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(10 aprile 2013)

La Commissione opera a stretto contatto con le autorità italiane per identificare la linea d'azione più appropriata. Attualmente, essa non è in condizione di quantificare i finanziamenti che potrebbero essere stanziati per la ricostruzione della Cittá della Scienza, né di indicare le azioni che potrebbero essere cofinanziate o il calendario per la loro realizzazione. La Commissione è pronta ad esaminare le proposte presentate dalle autorità italiane sull'uso dei Fondi strutturali nel contesto dei programmi UE nazionali e regionali.

I Fondi strutturali, e in particolare il Fondo sociale europeo, possono supportare misure volte a mitigare le conseguenze di questo incendio sui lavoratori della Città della Scienza. La responsabilità di identificare e avviare tali misure è però delle autorità italiane. La Commissione è pronta ad assistere la regione e la città di Napoli nella definizione di tali misure.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002962/13
to the Commission
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for rebuilding City of Science (Città della Scienza)

On 3 March 2013 a huge fire destroyed City of Science, a multipurpose technology complex in Naples with an international reputation as a centre of excellence.

The complex included the Science Centre, Italy's leading interactive science museum whose exhibition area attracted around 350 000 visitors a year; a business start-up centre with 34 companies operating mainly in the sectors of ICT, the environment and the creative industries; an advanced training centre and a conference centre. Over 500 people worked in the complex, including 70 employees of the City of Science Foundation. This is an enormous loss for Naples and its economy.

The European Union has already, in the past, highlighted the importance of the complex, thereby ensuring that City of Science attracted attention and even funding, which helped to turn it into the centre of excellence that it was until a few days ago.

The same considerations have led the Commission to announce that it is prepared to look into the possibility of making a direct contribution to rebuilding the centre.

Can the Commission state what kind of assistance it intends to provide, bearing in mind also the employment problem arising from the fire? What actions can be financed and what are the timescales for such financing?

Can the Commission confirm whether, in the event that City of Science is relocated within the Bagnoli district, it would be possible to use the resources earmarked for the reopening of the former steelworks?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2013)

The Commission is working closely with the Italian authorities to identify the most appropriate course of action. At the moment, it is not in a position to quantify the funds which might be allocated to the reconstruction of the Cittá della Scienza, the actions that could be co-financed, or the time frame for their realisation. The Commission stands ready to examine any proposals of the Italian authorities concerning the use of the structural funds in the context of the EU national and regional programmes.

The Structural Funds, and in particular the European Social Fund, may support measures to mitigate the impact of the fire on workers who were working at the Cittá della Scienza. Yet, the responsibility for identifying and launching such measures lies with the Italian authorities. The Commission is ready to assist the region and the city of Naples in defining such measures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002963/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) — cholera eradication

Following the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010 and the subsequent cholera outbreak, the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) has played a central role in assisting Haiti, at an initial cost of EUR 213 million.

Is the Commission continuing to assist the Haitian Government in the relocation of displaced persons and in supporting livelihood incentives and providing water and sanitation services in Haiti?

Has the cholera outbreak in Haiti been eradicated? Does ECHO assist in the treatment and eradication of cholera across the developing world?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

With a remaining caseload of approximately 320 000 displaced people still living in makeshift camps three years after the earthquake, one of the top priorities of the Commission is to speed up the relocation process in support of the Haitian Government efforts. The Commission is contributing to provision of basic services (water and sanitation, protection, disaster preparedness) to camps that are not prioritised for closure in 2013, to avoid a further deterioration of living conditions and potential cholera outbreaks, with EUR 20 million in 2012 and EUR 10 million in 2013. It is also supporting neighbourhood reconstruction and rehousing efforts in Port au Prince through an urban development programme including access to basic services such as water and sanitation and livelihood opportunities.

Since the epidemic began in October 2010, 651 339 cases of cholera and 8 053 deaths were registered by March 2013. The worst peaks of the epidemic seem to be over, but cholera is now endemic. Rainy seasons or any tropical storm or hurricane can trigger new outbreaks.

Approximately 3 million people benefitted from the assistance provided by the Commission in Haiti during the acute phase of the cholera epidemic. 2013 has to be considered as a transition year where the integration of cholera response into the national health system is pursued, while a response capacity in case of major outbreaks is maintained. Actions funded by the EU will contribute to the National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti (2013-2022) launched by the Haitian Governement.

When national authorities do not have the necessary response capacity, the Commission responds to cholera outbreaks worldwide with the objective of saving lives.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002964/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(14 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Πιέσεις για την άρση του εμπάργκο όπλων στη Συρία

Η κατάσταση στη Συρία επιδεινώνεται όλο και περισσότερο. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, η ΕΕ επέβαλε κυρώσεις και απαγόρευσε την πώληση, προμήθεια, μεταφορά ή εξαγωγή οπλισμού και κάθε είδους συναφούς υλικού στη Συρία (Απόφαση 2011/273/ΚΕΠΠΑ του Συμβουλίου της 9ης Μαΐου 2011 και Απόφαση 2012/739/ΚΕΠΠΑ του Συμβουλίου της 29ης Νοεμβρίου 2012 για την αναθεώρηση και κατάργηση της). Στις 13 Φεβρουαρίου 2013, το Συμβούλιο αποφάσισε να παρατείνει αυτά τα περιοριστικά μέτρα μέχρι την 1η Ιουνίου (Απόφαση 2012/739/ΚΕΠΠΑ σχετικά με περιοριστικά μέτρα κατά της Συρίας), με αναθεώρηση, προκειμένου να επιτραπεί η παροχή μη θανατηφόρου στρατιωτικού εξοπλισμού και τεχνικής βοήθειας για την προστασία των αμάχων.

Σύμφωνα με δηλώσεις του Πρωθυπουργού της Μεγάλης Βρετανίας και του Γάλλου Υπουργού Εξωτερικών, ωστόσο, το Λονδίνο και το Παρίσι θα επιδιώξουν την άρση του ευρωπαϊκού εμπάργκο όπλων προκειμένου να προμηθεύσουν με όπλα τους εξεγερθέντες.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

Μια τέτοια απόφαση αντιβαίνει στη νομικά δεσμευτική Κοινή Θέση 2008/944/ΚΕΠΠΑ του Συμβουλίου για τον καθορισμό κοινών κανόνων που διέπουν τον έλεγχο των εξαγωγών στρατιωτικής τεχνολογίας και εξοπλισμού και, συγκεκριμένα, στο κριτήριο αριθ. 3, σύμφωνα με το οποίο τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεούνται να «μη χορηγούν άδεια εξαγωγής στρατιωτικής τεχνολογίας ή εξοπλισμού που προκαλούν ή παρατείνουν ένοπλες συγκρούσεις ή επιτείνουν υφιστάμενες εντάσεις ή συγκρούσεις στη χώρα τελικού προορισμού»;

Αν ναι, προτίθεται να θέσει το ζήτημα στο πλαίσιο της σχετικής συζήτησης του Συμβουλίου;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαΐου 2013)

Η απόφαση 2013/109/ΚΕΠΠΑ του Συμβουλίου, της 28ης Φεβρουαρίου 2013, τροποποιεί τις παρεκκλίσεις από την απαγόρευση της προμήθειας όπλων στη Συρία, επιτρέποντας την παροχή μη φονικού εξοπλισμού και τεχνικής βοήθειας μόνο για την προστασία των αμάχων. Οι παραδόσεις αυτές πρέπει να εγκρίνονται εκ των προτέρων από τις αρμόδιες εθνικές αρχές.

Μέχρι στιγμής δεν υπάρχει συναίνεση ανάμεσα στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ σχετικά με περαιτέρω παρεκκλίσεις από την απαγόρευση των εξαγωγών όπλων. Στις συζητήσεις για το θέμα αυτό, ελήφθησαν υπόψη οι σχετικές διατάξεις της κοινής θέσης 2008/944/ΚΕΠΠΑ για τον καθορισμό κοινών κανόνων που διέπουν τον έλεγχο των εξαγωγών στρατιωτικής τεχνολογίας και εξοπλισμού. Το θέμα παραμένει στην ημερήσια διάταξη για να συζητηθεί στο Συμβούλιο τον Μάιο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002964/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Pressure to lift the arms embargo on Syria

The situation in Syria is further deteriorating. In this context, the EU has imposed sanctions prohibiting the sale, supply, transfer or export of arms and related matériel of all types to Syria (Council Decision 2011/273/CFSP of 9 May 2011 and Council Decision 2012/739/CFSP of 29 November 2012 reviewing and repealing it). On 13 February 2013, the Council decided to extend these restrictions until 1 June (Decision 2012/739/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria), through a review in order to allow the provision of non-lethal military equipment and technical assistance so as to protect civilians.

According to statements by the UK Prime Minister and the French Foreign Minister, however, London and Paris will be seeking the lifting of the European arms embargo in order to supply weapons to the insurgents.

In view of the above, will the High Representative say:

Is such a decision contrary to the legally binding Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment, in particular Criterion Three, according to which 'Member States shall deny an export licence for military technology or equipment which would provoke or prolong armed conflicts or aggravate existing tensions or conflicts in the country of final destination'?

If so, does she intend to raise the matter in the discussions on this subject in the Council?

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

Council Decision 2013/109/CFSP of 28 February 2013 amends the derogations to the prohibition on the supply of arms to Syria, allowing for the provision of non-lethal equipment and technical assistance only for the protection of civilians. Such deliveries must be authorised in advance by the competent national authorities.

So far there has been no consensus among EU Member States on further derogations to the arms embargo. In the discussions on this matter, relevant provisions of Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment have been taken into account. The issue remains on the agenda for discussions in the Council in May.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002965/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: European economic downturn in 2013

A recent report by the European Commission has stated that there will be a further downturn in the eurozone, and that the economic deficit is likely to persist. As it is now evident that the eurozone economy will contract in 2013, how is the Commission planning to restore confidence in the economy of the internal market?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission's Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2013 laid out the economic priorities for Member States and at EU level to regain short term confidence and laying the foundations for sustainable growth and jobs in the future. The AGS underlined that Member States should implement structural reforms aimed at reducing macroeconomic imbalances, improving competitiveness and the better functioning of the labour market. These include supporting innovation and investment in, and the use of information and communications technology (ICT).

Further action is needed to remove unjustified restrictions and improve competition in product and services markets, including in the areas of retail trade, regulated professions, construction, tourism, business services and network industries. The better functioning of the Single Market also requires action at EU level. For more favourable business environment, key reforms areas include judicial system and enhanced use of e-government and e-procurement. For improving the resilience of the labour market, the tax burden on labour should be further reduced and employment legislation simplified.

Furthermore, confidence in the Eurozone will be improved by taking ambitious steps towards a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), implying further development of fiscal, financial, economic and political union. The Commission, in this regard, has set out a roadmap for the short, medium and long term in its 'blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU'.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002966/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in Western Sahara

It is very important to improve the human rights situation in Western Sahara. Problems still persist with regard to freedom of speech and assembly.

1. Does the European External Action Service (EEAS) currently have any programmes operating in Western Sahara? If so, what are they and how are they funded?

2. Is the EU working with regional actors to encourage and promote democracy in Western Sahara?

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

The EU remains concerned about the implications of the Western Sahara conflict. The EU has repeatedly called on all parties to refrain from violence and to respect human rights.

The EU reaffirms its 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.

In the framework of EU-Morocco political dialogue, human rights are regularly discussed at meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. The EU Delegation in Rabat is in contact with regional civil society organisations to track the situation.

The EU has recently signed a bilateral cooperation assistance programme 'Protecting and promoting human rights in Morocco' (EUR 2.9 million, Spring envelope). Over the next three years, this programme will notably strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Council on Human Rights (CNDH) and its regional Commissions. The CNDH will be reinforced in terms of professional skills and monitoring capacity of the human rights situation. The EU welcomes the opening of the CNDH regional Commissions operating in Dakhla and Laayoune (Western Sahara). No other projects are co-financed in Western Sahara.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002967/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean

Major natural gas deposits have been discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean with gas reserves sufficient to support both Cyprus' and Israel's domestic energy needs for decades. Whilst this is welcome news for the whole of Europe, there is also reason to be concerned about the geo-political risks associated with these natural gas discoveries. Disputes involving Israel/Lebanon and Cyprus/Greece/Turkey respectively, mainly revolve around the right to exploit resources in certain contested areas.

This is further complicated by the fact that neither Israel, Syria nor Turkey is signatory to the UN Convention of the Law of the Seas (Unclos).

How will the EU ensure that this discovery does not become a regional dispute over resources?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission recalls that offshore prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons should be performed according to international law, notably as regards the delimitation of maritime zones.

It is important to avoid that the newly discovered resources become a source of tension. Rather, the discovery of natural resources should contribute to prosperity and peace in the region. The Commission has been regularly conveying this message in its contacts with the relevant Governments.

The European Union has stressed the sovereign rights of EU Member States to explore and exploit their natural resources in accordance with the EU *acquis* and international law, including the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos).

The issue raised by the Honourable Member also underlines once again the urgent need for a solution to the Cyprus problem and the Commission encourages all parties to treat it constructively. A settlement would open up the range of options for the exploitation of hydrocarbon resources in the economically most advantageous way for the benefit of all Cypriots. As stated in its answer to Question E-3163/12, sharing the revenue of any natural resource exploration between the two communities is of interest for both communities and can create an incentive to achieve real progress toward a comprehensive settlement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002968/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syrian opposition talks

In light of the recent announcement that the USA and the UK have promised to increase non-military aid to the Syrian opposition, could the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative state what funding the EU will provide to opposition forces in Syria and whether this increase will be in line with that of the UK and USA?

Will the EU be present at the talks in Rome with representatives of the Syrian opposition? Are there any specific proposals that the EU plans to bring forward to resolve the conflict?

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

The EU is currently working on ways to better assist the opposition, but at this point it is not possible to refer to any concrete amounts of possible assistance.

HR/VP attended a dinner with participants of the Rome meeting, but did not attend the meetings next day on 28 February. As HR/VP stated in her recent speech to the EP, the EU is working on the diplomatic front, and is providing humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance to bring about a peaceful transition in Syria. The EU remains firm in its support of JSR Brahimi and the President of the Syrian Opposition Coalition President Moaz al-Khatib in their efforts to promote dialogue between conflicting sides based on the Geneva Communiqué from June 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002969/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Shale oil investment

Recent finds of shale gas in Northern Ireland have been described as 'the next energy revolution'. It has been claimed that the exploitation of shale oil would result in lower oil prices, resulting in higher global GDP.

The consultancy firm PWC has claimed that 'shale oil has the potential to reshape the global economy, increasing energy security, independence and affordability in the long term'. It would seem that there are sizable benefits in sight for the shale oil industry, not only in Northern Ireland but across the Member States.

How is the Commission assisting and supporting research into investments in this new energy source?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The exploitation of unconventional gas and oil is subject to an ongoing debate in Europe with diverging views among Member States.

The Commission is carefully studying the possible benefits and risks of such new sources of oil and natural gas and the need for further action.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002970/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Harassment in the workplace

The issue of harassment in the workplace, in the sense of employees being assaulted by members of the public, is not a new phenomenon. Cases of such assault at the workplace have increased drastically in recent years. According to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 6% of all those employed in the EU-27 countries have experienced violence or threats of violence.

Is the Commission aware of this issue, and are there any EU-wide proposals to counter this rising threat at the workplace?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission regards tackling violence and harassment at work, whether it involves co-workers within the organisation or parties from outside, such as members of the public, as an important aspect of EU efforts to improve working conditions and health and safety at work.

To date the Commission's efforts in this area have mainly involved working with the European social partners. It supported the European social partner negotiations on a Framework Agreement on harassment and violence at work, which was signed by BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC in 2007. The European social partners have since produced a report on its implementation. The Commission will undertake its own evaluation, based on the European social partners' report and a study to be commenced this year, which will allow it to gauge the need for, and the usefulness of, any further initiative at EU level.

As regards violence and harassment at work involving parties from outside the organisation in particular, the Commission supported the European social partners representing five sectors (healthcare, education, local and regional government, commerce and private security) in their efforts to reach agreement in September 2010 on guidelines to tackle the issue. The European social partners will report on their progress later this year.

In addition, the European social partners in the railway sector undertook a separate initiative, supported by the Commission, to tackle insecurity and the feeling of insecurity in rail passenger transport, which led to a European social partner joint recommendation in December 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002971/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — 2013 Kenyan elections

With Kenyans going to the polls in early March for the first time since the violent clashes following the 2007 presidential elections, will the EEAS be observing the elections to ensure that they remain both peaceful and democratic?

After the 2007 elections, ethnic violence left over 1 000 people dead and 600 000 internally displaced. How will the EEAS be ensuring that ethnic tensions remain peaceful and calm throughout the duration of the elections?

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

Since November 2012, the EU has been following closely the electoral process in Kenya through deployment of electoral experts to specifically assess voter registration. An EU EOM ([1]) was then deployed to Kenya from 19 January 2013 to 4 April 2013, following all aspects of the process. The EU EOM already issued its preliminary conclusions on the electoral process on 6 March 2013 and will soon publish a more comprehensive and detailed report. In addition to the deployment of a fully-fledged EOM, diplomatic representatives from the different Member States as well as the EU Delegation participated as diplomatic observers in the Kenya 2013 elections. Moreover the EU supported a local nationwide observation exercise carried out by an umbrella organisation, ELOG, comprising the country's most prominent NGOs ([2]). In particular, the EU contributed to the preparation of the local monitoring exercise.

The EU has been engaged in addressing the causes and mitigating the consequences of the post-election violence since this took place in 2007-2008. It is worth mentioning the support to the Kofi Annan panel mediating the crisis, the Peace building Partnership supporting non-state actors' capacities to prevent and resolve conflicts in areas affected by post-election violence and various EIDHR ([3]) and NSA/LA ([4]) projects in the course of the years. The EU supported three projects in preparation of the 2013 election focusing on engaging youth and elders groups in effective dialogue, monitoring of vernacular radio broadcasters and Civic education.

The HR/VP also issued a declaration on behalf of the EU, congratulating the people of Kenya for the largely peaceful elections and encouraging them to maintain the peaceful and democratic spirit.

([1]) EU EOM = EU Election Observation Mission.
([2]) NGO = Non-governmental organisation.
([3]) EIDHR = European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.
([4]) NSA/LA = Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002973/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Youth Opportunities Initiative

The EU's 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' was created in 2012 to implement policies and allow for young people throughout the Member States to avail of opportunities in employment and education.

With rising youth unemployment across Europe, it is crucial that the Commission continues to assist young people who require guidance and assistance.

1. Has the initiative been successful in giving young people employment and educational qualifications?

2. With 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' to end in 2013, will the initiative be renewed?

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

1. Implementation of the 18 EU-level actions planned under the Youth Opportunities Initiative (YOI) is well advanced. Many Member States have taken action to boost youth employment, developed youth employment plans, and stepped up education and training programmes. In the 8 Member States ([1]) with the highest youth unemployment rates, about EUR 16 billion have been targeted for accelerated delivery or reallocation. This funding will help around 780 000 young people and 55 000 SMEs as well as support other growth enhancing measures.

The Staff Working Document accompanying the Youth Employment Package ([2]) adopted on 5 December 2012 contains details on the EU actions and the measures taken by all Member States and Croatia.

2. The proposal for a regulation on the ESF for the 2014-20 programming period includes a dedicated ESF investment priority for the sustainable labour-market integration of young people not in employment, education or training. Member States with high youth unemployment rates are expected to gear their 2014-20 programming documents on actions to facilitate the transition from school to work and on Youth Guarantee schemes.

This will be further boosted by the EUR 6 billion Youth Employment Initiative ([3]) (half of which from an earmarked ESF allocation) adopted by the Commission on 12 March 2013. It will support measures set out in the Youth Employment Package and in particular of the Youth Guarantee ([4]). This funding will be open to all regions where youth unemployment is over 25%.

([1]) EL, ES, IE, IT, LV, LT, PT, SK.
([2]) COM(2012) 727-728 — 729 final of 5 December 2012.
([3]) COM(2013)144, 145, 146.
([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002974/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Air pollution

The European Environment Agency (EEA) estimates that the health costs associated with air pollution in Europe reach EUR 45 billion annually. It estimates that air pollution causes 100 million sick days and 350 000 premature deaths in Europe each year.

I understand that Member States rely on transporting goods via roads and motorways. However, it is apparent that stricter legislation is required in order to ensure that pollution does not have an adverse effect on citizens.

1. What legislation is currently in place to address air pollution in Europe?

2. What is being done to encourage greener/cleaner forms of transport?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

In the EU there is an extensive body of legislation on air pollution and air quality. The main legislative instruments are the Air Quality Directive ([1]) and the National Emission Ceiling Directive ([2]). The former lays down EU ambient air quality standards whereas the latter sets upper limits for each Member State for the total emissions of certain pollutants ([3]).

The White Paper on Transport ([4]) sets out 40 actions to create sustainable transport. The implementation of these actions is currently ongoing. This includes the development of technologies such as reducing emissions from traditional power-trains, designing new power trains, promoting e-mobility and more sustainable and cleaner alternative fuels. Other actions which will directly or indirectly reduce emissions are e.g. sustainable urban management, low emission zones and innovative transport solutions.

([1]) Directive 2008/50/EC, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008L0050:EN:NOT
([2]) Directive 2011/81/EC, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2001L0081:20090420:EN:PDF
([3]) Sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and ammonia.
([4]) COM(2011) 144, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0144:FIN:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002975/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Political instability in Pakistan

Pakistan's political system has gone through a turbulent time in the past weeks, culminating in the ousting of Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani. Whilst such turmoil is not unusual in Pakistan, which has a history of military coups and judicial intervention, there is cause for concern about the stability of the region as a whole following the removal of the Prime Minister.

1. Have the European External Action Service (EEAS) and other regional actors met to discuss developments in Pakistan?

2. Is the EEAS currently providing any form of assistance to Pakistan? Will the EEAS assist Pakistani authorities in their efforts to promote democracy in order to ensure that instability does not flourish?

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

The ousting of Prime Minister Gilani took place in April 2012 following action by the Supreme Court. He was replaced in office by Prime Minister Raja Ashraf. The government completed its term in office in March 2013 which is a welcome sign of democracy becoming established. Parliamentary elections took place on 11 May 2013.

The EU is committed to supporting Pakistan's democratic institutions. This commitment is underlined in the new political framework for dialogue and cooperation agreed in 2012 — the EU-Pakistan 5-Year Engagement Plan. The aim is to build a strategic relationship by forging a partnership rooted in shared values, principles and commitments. The 5-Year Engagement Plan is overseen by the ministerial-level Strategic Dialogue which was launched in June 2012 in Islamabad by the HR/VP and Foreign Minister Khar. The Engagement Plan provides for deeper cooperation and dialogue on, amongst other priorities: security, democracy and governance.

Pakistan is an important recipient of EU development aid. This includes support to electoral reform and to the performance of the provincial and national assemblies. Other areas that will have a long term stabilising effect on democracy in Pakistan are the EU's support to civil society, human rights, and basic education. In view of the forthcoming elections in Pakistan, the EU is providing an Election Observation Mission as a tangible sign of support for the elections process.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002977/13
do Komisji
Tadeusz Zwiefka (PPE)
(14 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Uniwersalne ładowarki do telefonów komórkowych

W 2009 r. 14 firm produkujących telefony komórkowe podpisało porozumienie w sprawie prac nad ujednoliceniem ładowarek. W rezultacie wspólnych prac nad projektem prototyp takiej ładowarki opartej na standardzie micro-USB przedstawiono w 2011 r. Komisja Europejska zapowiedziała, że trafią one na rynek konsumencki jeszcze w tym samym roku.

Pomimo wprowadzenia na rynek uniwersalnych ładowarek, producenci aparatów telefonicznych wciąż dołączają do nich ładowarki pasujące jedynie do danego modelu, niekompatybilne z innymi telefonami. Stanowi to duży problem dla środowiska, a także niedogodność dla użytkowników w Unii Europejskiej.

W związku z tym chciałbym zwrócić się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja monitoruje rynek telefonii komórkowej sprawdzając, w jaki sposób producenci stosują w praktyce nowe normy techniczne, lub czy w najbliższym czasie planowane jest przeprowadzenie analizy pod tym kątem?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza ds. transportu Antonia Tajaniego w imieniu Komisji
(23 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Z niedawnego sprawozdania z postępu prac przedłożonego przez sygnatariuszy protokołu ustaleń wynika, że wypełnili oni swoje zobowiązania wynikające z tego protokołu. Obecnie szacuje się, że 90 % nowych urządzeń wprowadzonych do końca 2012 r. na rynek przez sygnatariuszy protokołu ustaleń oraz innych producentów spełnia wymogi dotyczące ujednoliconych możliwości ładowania. Świadczy to o tym, że dobrowolne porozumienie zostało z powodzeniem zrealizowane z korzyścią dla obywateli.

Komisja jest przekonana, że rozszerzenie inicjatywy mającej na celu harmonizację ładowarek do nowych kategorii produktów, takich jak telefony komórkowe nowej generacji, przy jednoczesnym uwzględnieniu innowacji technologicznych, oraz innych małych urządzeń elektronicznych, takich jak kamery cyfrowe, tablety i odtwarzacze muzyki, może przynieść korzyści konsumentom i producentom. W związku z tym Komisja przygotowuje się obecnie do przeprowadzenia badania oceniającego wyniki osiągnięte w ramach protokołu ustaleń i analizuje możliwości odpowiednich działań następczych, obejmujących m.in. dobrowolną umowę lub wprowadzenie nowych przepisów prawnych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002977/13
to the Commission
Tadeusz Zwiefka (PPE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Universal chargers for mobile telephones

In 2009, 14 mobile telephone manufacturers signed an agreement to work on standardising chargers. The fruit of their collaboration was a prototype charger based on the micro-USB standard which was unveiled in 2011. The Commission announced that the chargers would reach the consumer market that same year.

Although universal chargers have been placed on the market, mobile telephone manufacturers are still matching their telephones with chargers which can only be used with a given model and which are incompatible with other telephones. This is a major environmental problem and causes inconvenience for EU consumers.

Is the Commission, as part of its monitoring of the mobile telephone market, investigating how manufacturers are applying the new technical standards? If not, does it intend to do so in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

A recent progress report provided by the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signatories has shown that they have met their obligations under the MoU. It is now estimated that 90% of the new devices put on the market by the MoU signatories and other manufacturers by the end of 2012 support the common charging capability. This indicates that the voluntary agreement has been successful in delivering benefits for citizens.

The Commission is convinced that consumers and manufacturers can benefit from an extension of the initiative on harmonisation of chargers to new categories of products such as the new generation of mobile phones while taking into account technological innovations and other small electronic devices, such as digital cameras, tablets and music players. Therefore the Commission is preparing the launch of a study evaluating the results achieved with the MoU and considering options for appropriate follow-up including voluntary agreement and legislation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002978/13
a la Comisión
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(14 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Apoyo de la UE al autoempleo de los jóvenes

El desempleo juvenil ha alcanzado unos niveles insostenibles. La tasa de desempleo en la EU asciende al 22,8 % y en algunos Estados miembros excede del 50 %. Iniciativas como el Paquete sobre empleo juvenil y la Iniciativa de empleo juvenil ayudarán a reconducir esta situación.

El fomento del espíritu empresarial y el autoempleo entre los jóvenes debe ser un elemento clave en la lucha contra el desempleo entre los jóvenes.

¿Qué acciones, proyectos o programas está desarrollando o financiando la UE para promover el espíritu empresarial y el autoempleo entre los jóvenes?

¿Propondrá o adoptará la Comisión nuevas iniciativas al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de abril de 2013)

La Comisión ha hecho de la lucha contra el elevado desempleo de los jóvenes una prioridad capital. El trabajo por cuenta propia o autoempleo, que se reconoce cada vez más como una opción profesional para los jóvenes ([1]), y el emprendimiento desempeñan un papel crucial en esos esfuerzos. La Recomendación sobre el establecimiento de la Garantía Juvenil, acordada el 28 de febrero de 2013 ([2]), también reconoce que los incentivos al trabajo por cuenta propia y la creación de empresas pueden contribuir a hacer que los planes de garantía juvenil sean un éxito.

La acción para abordar el desempleo juvenil está impulsándose en la mayor parte de los Estados miembros. Un informe conjunto CE-OCDE describe las actividades relativas al emprendimiento juvenil ([3]) en Europa. El Plan de acción sobre emprendimiento 2020 ([4]), adoptado el 9 de enero de 2013, establece un programa exhaustivo para apoyar el emprendimiento. En su pilar n° 3 se insiste en la necesidad de llegar a diversos grupos, incluidos los jóvenes.

El Programa de acción en el ámbito del aprendizaje permanente y el Programa «La juventud en acción» promueven el emprendimiento entre los jóvenes y ayudan a desarrollar sus competencias de emprendimiento. El Programa Erasmus para Jóvenes Emprendedores contribuye a dotar a los aspirantes a emprendedores europeos con las competencias necesarias para iniciar o gestionar con éxito una pequeña empresa en Europa.

La UE tiene intención de apoyar el acceso al crédito para la creación de empresas y las PYME en general por medio de la facilidad de garantía del Programa PIC para las PYME ([5]). En dicha facilidad se incluye un capítulo específico para préstamos destinados a microcréditos; además, ofrece garantías de crédito a organizaciones de microcréditos que conceden préstamos a microempresas.

Por su parte, Microfinanciación Progress ([6]) permite a personas no financiables, incluidos los jóvenes, solicitar préstamos. Ello continuará ocurriendo en 2014-20 si se adopta el Programa para el Cambio y la Innovación Sociales ([7]). La Comisión también alienta a las autoridades de gestión del FSE a que apoyen a los jóvenes creadores de empresas.

([1]) Véase Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe [Educación para el emprendimiento en la escuela en Europa; documento en inglés], Agencia Ejecutiva en el Ámbito Educativo, Audiovisual y Cultural (marzo de 2012). http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/135EN.pdf

([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/es/13/st06/st06944.es13.pdf

([3]) Policy Brief on Youth Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Activities in Europe [Informe sobre políticas relativas al emprendimiento juvenil: actividades de emprendimiento en Europa; documento en inglés] en: http://www.oecd.org/regional/leed/Youth%20Policy%20Brief.pdf

([4]) Relanzar el espíritu emprendedor en Europa [COM(2012) 795 final de 9 de enero de 2013]; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0795:FIN:ES:PDF

([5]) El PIC (Programa Marco para la Innovación y la Competitividad) dispone de un presupuesto superior a los 1 100 000 000 de euros para instrumentos financieros y está gestionado por el FEI.

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=836&langId=es

([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1093

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002978/13
to the Commission
Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: EU support for youth self-employment

Youth unemployment has reached unsustainable levels. The EU youth unemployment rate now stands at 22.8%, while in some Member States the figure is over 50%. Measures such as the youth unemployment package and the youth employment initiative will help to remedy the situation.

Encouraging entrepreneurship and youth self-employment should be a key element in tackling youth unemployment.

What measures, projects or programmes is the EU developing or funding to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment among young people?

Will the Commission propose or launch new initiatives aimed at doing so?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

The Commission has made tackling high youth unemployment a top priority. Self-employment, which is increasingly recognised as a career option for young people ([1]) and entrepreneurship play a crucial role in these efforts. The recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee, agreed upon on 28 February 2013 ([2]), also recognises that incentives for self-employment and start-ups can help to make Youth Guarantee schemes a success.

Action to tackle youth unemployment is gaining momentum in most Member States. A joint EC-OECD policy brief ([3]) maps youth entrepreneurial activities in Europe. The Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan ([4]), adopted on 9 January 2013, sets out a comprehensive blueprint for supporting entrepreneurship. Its Action Pillar 3 stresses the need to reach out to various groups, including young people.

The Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action programmes promote entrepreneurship among young people and help develop their entrepreneurial skills. Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs helps provide aspiring European entrepreneurs with the skills necessary to start and/or successfully run a small business in Europe.

The EU seeks to support access to credit for start-ups and SMEs in general through the SME guarantee facility of the CIP ([5]) Programme. A specific window for microcredit loans is included in this facility. It provides loan guarantees to microcredit organisations granting loans to micro-enterprises.

Progress Microfinance ([6]) enables non-bankable individuals, including young people, to apply for loans. This will continue to be the case in 2014-20, if the Programme for Social Change and Innovation ([7]), is adopted. The Commission also encourages the ESF managing authorities to support young businesses starters.

([1]) See Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (March 2012), at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/135EN.pdf
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf
([3]) Policy Brief on Youth Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Activities in Europe, at: http://www.oecd.org/regional/leed/Youth%20Policy%20Brief.pdf
([4]) Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe (COM(2012) 795 final of 9 January 2013), at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0795:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) The CIP (Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme) has a budget of over 1.1 billion EUR for financial instruments and is managed by the EIF.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=836&langId=en
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1093

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002979/13
aan de Commissie
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(14 maart 2013)

Betreft: Iraanse invloed in Bosnië

Volgens het artikel „Iran op de Balkan: geschiedenis en vooruitzichten" van Gordon N. Bardos dat onlangs verscheen in het nummer van januari/februari 2013 in het tijdschrift *World Affairs*, bestaan er al jaren nauwe banden tussen Iran en Bosnië en Herzegovina. Deze betrekkingen werden aangewakkerd door de voormalige president van Bosnië, Alija Izetbegovic. In september 2012 beweerde de krant *Dnevni Avaz* uit Sarajevo dat pro-Iraanse facties in de Bosnische regering para-intelligente groeperingen hebben gereactiveerd die verbonden zijn aan het islamitische regime van de voormalige leider Izetbegovic. In oktober onthulde het wekelijkse nieuwsblad *Slobodna Bosna* dat alleen al in de eerste maanden van 2012 tweehonderd Iraanse „zakenmannen" een visum voor Bosnië hadden gekregen, samen met een niet nader genoemde Iraanse diplomaat die door Israëlische intelligentiefunctionarissen in verband is gebracht met plaatsen waar vorig jaar aanvallen zijn gepleegd op Israëlische burgers. Verder hebben Bosnië en de omringende landen te maken met een toename in het aantal Wahhabi-bewegingen die een netwerk van extra-territoriale, volgens de sharia bestuurde enclaves hebben ontwikkeld. De afgelopen twee decennia zijn dit veilige havens geworden en aanwervingsgebieden voor jihadisten uit de hele wereld, onder het mom van „jeugdkampen".

1. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de invloed van Iran en de Wahhabi-beweging op de westelijke Balkan?

2. Vindt de Commissie dat deze invloed een destabiliserende factor is voor de veiligheidssituatie op de Balkan?

3. Heeft bovenstaande situatie invloed op het proces van EU-integratie voor Bosnië en Herzegovina?

4. Bestaat er in het geval van een aanval van Israël of de Verenigde Staten op de nucleaire installaties van Iran gevaar op een Iraanse tegenaanval op de Balkan, gezien de infrastructuur die daar is opgezet door (pro-)Iraanse groeperingen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(7 mei 2013)

Op basis van de beschikbare informatie is de Commissie van mening dat de wahabitische (salafistische) invloed in de westelijke Balkan, met inbegrip van Bosnië en Herzegovina, vrij beperkt is. Net zoals in verschillende Europese landen zijn er ook in de westelijke Balkan enkele radicale groepen aanwezig, maar ze zijn klein in aantal en lijken niet verbonden te zijn aan de officiële islamitische gemeenschap.

Iran onderhoudt inderdaad goede diplomatieke relaties met Bosnië en Herzegovina. De invloed van Iran reikt echter niet tot de Servische en Kroatische delen van het land, en weegt niet op tegen de veel grotere politieke en economische voordelen die Bosnië en Herzegovina kan halen uit integratie met het Westen, met inbegrip van toetreding tot de EU.

Bosnië en Herzegovina is een mogelijke kandidaat voor toetreding tot de EU. Het vooruitzicht op de EU is de topprioriteit voor Bosnië en Herzegovina, ook al wordt het huidige proces van integratie in de EU aangetast door het onvermogen van de politieke leiders van het land om tot een overeenkomst te komen over belangrijke vereisten van de EU-agenda.

De EU streeft een diplomatieke oplossing voor de Iraanse nucleaire kwestie na. De Commissie is niet van plan te speculeren over mogelijke gevolgen van hypothetische aanvallen in de westelijke Balkan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002979/13
to the Commission
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)
(14 March 2013)

Subject: Iranian influence in Bosnia

According to a recent article by Gordon N. Bardos in the January/February 2013 issue of the *World Affairs* journal entitled 'Iran in the Balkans: A History and a Forecast', very close ties have existed for years between Iran and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These were encouraged by the former Bosnian President, Alija Izetbegovic. In September 2012, the Sarajevo newspaper *Dnevni Avaz* claimed that pro-Iranian factions in the Bosnian government were reactivating para-intelligence cells tied to the Islamist regime of former leader Izetbegovic. In October, the weekly news magazine *Slobodna Bosna* revealed that two hundred Iranian 'businessmen' had been granted visas to enter Bosnia in the first six months of 2012 alone, along with an unnamed Iranian diplomat whom Israeli intelligence officials have tracked in places where attacks have been carried out on Israeli citizens in the last year. Furthermore, Bosnia and surrounding countries have experienced an increase in Wahhabi movements that have developed a network of extra-territorial, Sharia-run enclaves. Over the past two decades, these have become safe havens and recruiting grounds for jihadists from around the world, under the veil of being 'youth camps'.

1. How do you assess the Iranian and Wahhabi influence in the western Balkans?

2. Do you expect this influence to be a destabilising factor for the security situation in the Balkans?

3. Does the above affect the process of EU integration for Bosnia and Herzegovina?

4. In the event of an Israeli or US strike on Iran's nuclear installations, would there be a risk of an Iranian counterstrike in the Balkans, in view of the infrastructure built up by (pro-) Iranian cells?

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

On the basis of the available information, the Commission considers that the Wahhabi (Salafist) influence is rather limited in the western Balkans, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Some radical groups are present, like in several European countries, but they are small in numbers and do not seem connected to the official Islamic community.

Iran's good diplomatic relations with BiH are a matter of fact. However Iranian influence does not extend to the Serbian and Croatian components in the country, and is balanced by the far greater political and economic benefits that BiH can draw from Western integration, including accession to the EU.

BiH is a potential candidate to the EU. The EU perspective is the top priority for BiH even though the current EU integration process is affected by the inability of BiH political leaders to reach an agreement on key requirements of the EU agenda.

The EU pursues a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The Commission does not intend to speculate on possible repercussions of hypothetical strikes in the western Balkans region.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002980/13
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(15 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia declara abusiva la Ley española de desahucios

El Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea ha ratificado esta mañana el dictamen de la Abogada general del Tribunal, emitido el pasado 8 de noviembre, y ha confirmado que la Ley española de desahucios vulnera la normativa comunitaria, en concreto la Directiva 93/13/CEE del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 1993, sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con consumidores.

La sentencia (Asunto C-415/11) subraya que el régimen procesal español menoscaba la efectividad de la protección que pretende garantizar la Directiva, en la medida en que los consumidores podrían no obtener la suspensión de la ejecución, incluida la expulsión de su domicilio, hasta que un tribunal pueda evaluar el carácter abusivo de las cláusulas de su contrato de préstamo.

En su repuesta (E-010346/2012) a una pregunta escrita sobre esta cuestión, la Comisión se comprometió a estudiar este tema una vez conocida la sentencia, cuanto más para asegurar el cumplimiento de los principios de equivalencia y eficacia. ¿Qué actuaciones va a desarrollar la Comisión para asegurar el cumplimiento por parte de España de la Directiva en vigor?

La Comisión también publicó el año pasado un documento de trabajo (SEC(2011)0357 final) sobre las medidas nacionales destinadas a prevenir las ejecuciones hipotecarias. ¿Puede informar la Comisión de si las mejores prácticas propuestas en el documento están siendo incorporadas por los Estados miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de mayo de 2013)

A raíz de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea de 14 de marzo de 2013 en el asunto C-415/11, la Comisión ha sido informada de que España está cambiando actualmente sus normas sobre ejecuciones hipotecarias y desahucios. No se ha solicitado a ninguna fuente de la Comisión que aporte sus observaciones informales sobre los proyectos de modificación de las normas españolas de procedimiento en esta materia. La Comisión seguirá supervisando el proceso legislativo para garantizar que cualquier futura modificación sea conforme con la Directiva 93/13/CEE, tal como ha sido interpretada por el Tribunal de Justicia.

El objetivo del documento de trabajo de la Comisión sobre las medidas y prácticas nacionales para evitar los procedimientos de ejecución hipotecaria ([1]) era proporcionar ejemplos y orientación a los Estados miembros. A este respecto, se les instó a inspirarse en las diferentes prácticas desarrolladas en la EU. Hasta la fecha, la Comisión no ha recibido información de los Estados miembros sobre cómo han llevado a cabo estas prácticas. Además, la Comisión desea señalar que el acuerdo político alcanzado sobre la Directiva de crédito hipotecario contiene un artículo sobre demoras y ejecuciones hipotecarias según el cual los Estados miembros tendrán que garantizar que los prestamistas se muestren razonablemente tolerantes cuando tienen que tratar con consumidores que se encuentran en dificultades financieras. Una vez que el texto haya sido adoptado formalmente, los Estados miembros dispondrán de dos años para incorporarlo a sus legislaciones nacionales y la Comisión supervisará muy de cerca este proceso.

([1]) SEC(2011) 357.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002980/13
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Court of Justice rules Spanish eviction law unfair

This morning the Court of Justice of the European Union upheld the Advocate General's opinion, issued on 8 November 2012, and ruled that Spanish eviction law violates EC law, specifically Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts.

The judgment (Case C-415/11) stresses that the Spanish judicial system undermines the effectiveness of the protection which the directive seeks to ensure, insofar as consumers cannot obtain suspension of enforcement, including eviction from their home, until a court can assess whether the terms of the loan agreement are unfair.

In its answer to a written question (E-010346/2012) on the issue, the Commission undertook to give further consideration to this matter after delivery of the judgment, to ensure compliance with the principles of equivalence and effectiveness. What action will the Commission take to ensure that Spain complies with the directive in force?

Last year the Commission also published a working paper (SEC(2011)0357 final) on national measures to avoid foreclosure. Are the Member States implementing the best practices set out in that paper?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Following the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 14 March 2013 in Case C-415/11, the Commission has been made aware that Spain is currently changing its rules on mortgage foreclosures and evictions. No Commission sources have been asked to provide informal comments on draft amendments to the relevant Spanish rules of procedure. The Commission will continue to monitor the legislative process to make sure that any future amendment is in compliance with Directive 93/13/EEC as interpreted by the Court.

The aim of the Commission staff working paper on national measures to avoid foreclosures ([1]) was to provide examples and guidance to Member States. In this regard, they were invited to seek inspiration from the different practices developed in the EU. So far, the Commission has not received information from the Member States on how they have implemented these practices. In addition, the Commission would like to point out that the political agreement reached on the Mortgage Credit Directive contains an article on arrears and foreclosures according to which Member States will have to ensure that creditors apply reasonable forbearance when being confronted with consumers in payment difficulties. Once the text has been formally adopted, Member States will have two years to transpose it into national law and the Commission will carefully monitor this process

([1]) SEC(2011)357.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002981/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Περαιτέρω ενίσχυση του Frontex στην Ελλάδα για την αντιμετώπιση της μεταναστευτικής πίεσης στα νοτιοανατολικά σύνορα της ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που παρέθεσε η Επιτροπή, αναφέρεται πως, σε συνέχεια του αιτήματος του διοικητικού συμβουλίου του Frontex, η Επιτροπή το 2012 υπέβαλε στην αρμόδια για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχή πρόταση για την αποδέσμευση 4,5 εκατ. ευρώ για την ενίσχυση του επιχειρησιακού προϋπολογισμού του Οργανισμού. Από το ποσό των 4,5 εκατ. ευρώ, 3,7 εκατ. ευρώ διατίθενται για την ενίσχυση των κοινών θαλάσσιων επιχειρήσεων, και συγκεκριμένα των επιχειρήσεων «Ποσειδών» και «Αινείας» στην Ελλάδα, και 0,8 εκατ. ευρώ για την ενίσχυση των κοινών επιχειρήσεων στα νοτιοανατολικά χερσαία σύνορα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Θεωρεί πως, σε συνέχεια της έκτακτης χρηματοδότησης κατά το 2012, θα πρέπει η Ελλάδα να λάβει περαιτέρω έκτακτη ενίσχυση το 2013 για την αντιμετώπιση της μεταναστευτικής πίεσης στα θαλάσσια σύνορά της με την Τουρκία;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί διαρκώς, μαζί με τον οργανισμό Frontex, την κατάσταση στην ανατολική Μεσόγειο, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των ελληνικών εξωτερικών θαλάσσιων συνόρων.

Προς το παρόν, οι πόροι που διατίθενται στον οργανισμό Frontex καλύπτουν τον προβλεπόμενο συντονισμό των επιχειρησιακών δραστηριοτήτων εντός της γεωγραφικής περιοχής στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου.

Σε περίπτωση που οι εγγεγραμμένες στον προϋπολογισμό πιστώσεις αποδειχθούν ανεπαρκείς για την αντιμετώπιση μιας απρόβλεπτα αυξημένης μεταναστευτικής πίεσης σε ορισμένα τμήματα των εξωτερικών συνόρων της Ένωσης, η Επιτροπή σε στενή συνεργασία με τον οργανισμό Frontex, θα διατυπώσει σχετικό αίτημα στην αρμόδια για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχή, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα όρια των διαθέσιμων δημοσιονομικών πόρων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002981/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Increased support for Frontex in Greece to combat pressure from immigration on the southeast borders of the EU

According to Commission sources, following a request from the management board of Frontex, the Commission filed a proposal with the budgetary authority in 2012 to release EUR 4.5 million in order to increase Frontex's operational budget. Of the sum of EUR 4.5 million, EUR 3.7 million has been ring-fenced to support joint operations at sea, specifically the 'Poseidon' and 'Aeneas' operations in Greece, and EUR 0.8 million has been ring-fenced to support joint operations on the southeast land border.

Does the Commission consider that, following on from extraordinary financing during 2012, Greece should receive further extraordinary support in 2013 in order to combat the pressure from immigration on its maritime border with Turkey?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2013)

The Commission is constantly monitoring, together with the Frontex Agency, the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, including the Greek external maritime border.

For the time being the resources allocated to the Frontex Agency cover the planned coordination of operational activities in the geographical area to which the Honourable Member of Parliament refers.

In case the budget allocation would prove to become insufficient to address an unforeseen increased migration pressure at some parts of the Union's external borders, the Commission will, in close cooperation with the Frontex Agency, formulate an appropriate request to the Budgetary Authority taking into account the limits of the available financial resources.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002982/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποτίμηση της μέχρι σήμερα επιτυχίας των ομολόγων έργου (project bonds)

Η ΕΕ με την συμβολή της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων, καθιέρωσε με τον Κανονισμό (ΕΕ) αριθ. 670/2012, την πρωτοβουλία των ομολόγων έργου με σκοπό τη χρηματοδότηση μεγάλων ευρωπαϊκών έργων στον τομέα των μεταφορών, της ενέργειας και της τεχνολογίας. Η πιλοτική φάση της πρωτοβουλίας ξεκίνησε εντός του 2012 έπειτα από τη σύναψη της σχετικής συμφωνίας μεταξύ Επιτροπής και ΕΤΕ (7 Οκτωβρίου 2012).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το στάδιο υλοποίησης της πιλοτικής αυτής δράσης;

2. Έχει ξεκινήσει η κινητοποίηση ποσών για τη στήριξη έργων που η πρωτοβουλία προβλέπει;

3. Ποιο είναι το ύψος των κεφαλαίων που έχουν μέχρι σήμερα κινητοποιηθεί;

4. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το κατά πόσο μέσω των σχετικών διακρατικών δράσεων του πιλοτικού προγράμματος η Ελλάδα έχει μέχρι στιγμής επωφεληθεί;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Απριλίου 2013)

Στο παρόν στάδιο της πιλοτικής φάσης της πρωτοβουλίας ομολόγων έργου, η ΕΤΕπ ασχολείται με πολυάριθμα έργα και στους τρεις τομείς των ΔΕΔ-Μεταφορών, ΔΕΔ-Ενέργειας και των ΤΠΕ. Πρόκειται για περίπλοκη διαδικασία, αλλά σε γενικές γραμμές τα στάδια μπορεί να θεωρηθεί ότι έχουν ως εξής:

1) Η ΕΤΕπ αξιολογεί την καταλληλότητα του έργου και λαμβάνει επιβεβαίωση της επιλεξιμότητας από την Επιτροπή,

2) Η ΕΤΕπ αξιολογεί περαιτέρω το έργο και αναπτύσσει με τους αναδόχους έργων πακέτο χρηματοδότησης,

3) Ο ανάδοχος έργου ή η αναθέτουσα αρχή, δηλαδή οι τρίτοι επιλέγουν την περισσότερο ανταγωνιστική λύση.

Υπάρχουν υποψήφια έργα σε όλα τα προαναφερθέντα στάδια. Το τελευταίο στάδιο μπορεί να υλοποιηθεί αργότερα εντός του 2013 για τα πλέον προχωρημένα έργα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002982/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Assessment of success to date of project bonds

The EU, with the assistance of the European Investment Bank, enacted Regulation (EU) No 670/2012, the project bond initiative, with a view to financing major European projects in the transport, energy and technology sector. The pilot stage of the initiative started in 2012, following signature of the relevant agreement between the Commission and the EIB (7 October 2012).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it in a position to advise me of progress reached in the pilot stage?

2. Has it started granting financing to support projects provided for under the initiative?

3. How much has been granted in financing to date?

4. Is it in a position to say if Greece has benefitted to date under cross-border actions in the pilot programme?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

At this stage in the pilot phase of the project bond initiative the EIB is working on numerous projects in all three sectors of TEN-transport, TEN-energy and ICT. This is a complex process, but broadly speaking the steps can be considered to be as follows:

1. EIB assesses the suitability of the project and receives confirmation of eligibility from the Commission,

2. EIB assesses the project further and develops a financing package together with the project developers,

3. The project developer or tendering authority, i.e. third parties selects the most competitive solution.

There are candidate projects at all these stages. The last step may take place later in 2013 for the most advanced projects.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002983/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εξελίξεις στη δυνατότητα έκδοσης κοινών χρεογράφων στην ευρωζώνη

Σύμφωνα με την απάντηση της Επιτροπής σε προηγούμενα ερωτήματα (E-007815/2012, E-007953/2012), η Επιτροπή μελετά περαιτέρω ορισμένες πτυχές που συνδέονται με τη δυνατότητα έκδοσης κοινών χρεογράφων ώστε, παράλληλα με τις συνεχιζόμενες προσπάθειες εξυγίανσης και μεταρρύθμισης των κρατών μελών, να καταστεί η κοινή έκδοση βιώσιμη επιλογή μεσοπρόθεσμα, από πολιτική και οικονομική άποψη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποιες είναι οι τελευταίες εξελίξεις στη μελέτη της Επιτροπής για τη δυνατότητα έκδοσης κοινών χρεογράφων στην ευρωζώνη;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

Στο σχέδιό της για μια βαθιά και ουσιαστική ΟΝΕ, η Επιτροπή θεώρησε ότι, μεσοπρόθεσμα, η έκδοση κοινών χρεογράφων στο πλαίσιο ενός ταμείου απόσβεσης και ευρωομολόγων θα μπορούσαν να αποτελούν πιθανά στοιχεία μιας βαθιάς και ουσιαστικής ΟΝΕ υπό ορισμένες αυστηρότατες προϋποθέσεις. Η κατευθυντήρια αρχή θα είναι ότι οποιαδήποτε μέτρα για την περαιτέρω αμοιβαιοποίηση του κινδύνου πρέπει να συμβαδίζουν με μεγαλύτερη δημοσιονομική πειθαρχία και ολοκλήρωση.

Η Επιτροπή θα συστήσει ομάδα εμπειρογνωμόνων για να εμβαθύνει την ανάλυση, τα αποτελέσματα της οποίας αναμένονται την άνοιξη του 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002983/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Developments in terms of facility to issue joint bonds in the euro area

According to the Commission's reply to previous questions (E-007815/2012, E-007953/2012), the Commission is still studying certain aspects of the facility to issue joint bonds so that, alongside continuing efforts to restructure and reform the Member States, joint bonds will offer a viable medium-term option from a political and economic point of view.

What developments have emerged from the Commission's study into the facility to issue joint bonds in the euro area?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

In its Blueprint for a Deep and Genuine EMU, the Commission considered that, in the medium-term, joint issuance within the framework of a redemption fund and eurobills could be possible elements of deep and genuine EMU under certain rigorous conditions. The guiding principle would be that any steps to further mutualisation of risk must go hand-in-hand with greater fiscal discipline and integration.

The Commission will establish an Expert Group to deepen the analysis, the results of which are expected in spring 2014.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002985/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μείωση επιτοκίων δανεισμού στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με την απόφαση του Eurogroup στις 20 Νοεμβρίου 2012 αναφορικά με την πορεία υλοποίησης του ελληνικού προγράμματος, υπήρξε πρόβλεψη σύμφωνα με την οποία, όταν η Ελλάδα επιτύχει πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα, οι εταίροι μας θα λάβουν όλα τα αναγκαία μέτρα για να μειώσουν τα επιτόκια στα δάνειά μας, ώστε η χώρα να μπορέσει να περιορίσει το επίπεδο του χρέους της. Καθώς σύμφωνα με τα τελευταία δημοσιονομικά στοιχεία προκύπτει πως οι εύστοχες κυβερνητικές πολιτικές και κυρίως οι πρωτοφανείς θυσίες του ελληνικού λαού αποδίδουν αποτελέσματα και κατά τους πρώτους δύο μήνες του 2013 καταγράφεται πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα στον ελληνικό προϋπολογισμό, ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

Προτίθεται άμεσα να προτείνει τη μείωση των επιτοκίων δανεισμού προς την Ελλάδα, ώστε να υλοποιηθεί η σχετική πρόβλεψη της απόφασης του Eurogroup;

Απάντηση
(1 Ιουλίου 2013)

Υπενθυμίζεται ότι, στη δήλωση της 27ης Νοεμβρίου 2012, η Ευρωομάδα αποφάσισε να εξετάσει «*[…] further measures and assistance, including inter alia lower co-financing in structural funds and/or further interest rate reduction of the Greek Loan Facility, if necessary, for achieving a further credible and sustainable reduction of Greek debt-to-GDP ratio, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, as envisaged in the current MoU, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme, in order to ensure that by the end of the IMF programme in 2016, Greece can reach a debt-to-GDP ratio in that year of 175% and in 2020 of 124% of GDP, and in 2022 a debt-to-GDP ratio substantially lower than 110%*». Στη δήλωση αναφέρεται επίσης ότι οιαδήποτε απόφαση για περαιτέρω μείωση των επιτοκίων επί της δανειακής διευκόλυνσης της Ελλάδας (δάνεια που χορηγήθηκαν δυνάμει του πρώτου ελληνικού προγράμματος) είναι προαιρετική, μεταξύ άλλων πιθανών μέτρων, και εξαρτάται από την επίτευξη ετήσιου πρωτογενούς πλεονάσματος και την τήρηση όλων των όρων του δεύτερου προγράμματος από μέρους της Ελλάδας.

Παρά τη θετική τάση των στοιχείων του ελλείμματος, η Ελλάδα δεν έχει επιτύχει μέχρι στιγμής πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα και, όπως αναφέρεται στην τελευταία δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας της 13ης Μαΐου 2013 για την Ελλάδα, δεν πληρούνται ακόμη ορισμένες προϋποθέσεις του προγράμματος.

Παρά ταύτα, το Συμβούλιο δεν είναι αρμόδιο να λαμβάνει θέση επί ζητημάτων που εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών της ευρωζώνης τα οποία ενεργούν στο πλαίσιο του ΕΜΣ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002985/13
to the Council
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Reduction in borrowing rates in Greece

According to the decision adopted by the Eurogroup on 20 November 2012 on progress in the implementation of the Greek programme, provision has been made so that, when Greece achieves a primary surplus, our partners will take all measures needed to reduce our borrowing rates, so that the country can bring down its debt level. Given that, according to the latest government finance data, successful government policies and, more importantly, the unprecedented sacrifices made by the Greek people are bearing fruit and, in the first two months of 2013, an unprecedented surplus was recorded in the Greek budget, will the Council say:

Does it have any immediate intention to propose a reduction in lending rates to Greece, so that the relevant provision of the Eurogroup decision can be applied?

Reply
(1 July 2013)

It may be recalled that, in its statement of 27 November 2012, the Eurogroup decided to consider '[…] further measures and assistance, including inter alia lower co-financing in structural funds and/or further interest rate reduction of the Greek Loan Facility, if necessary, for achieving a further credible and sustainable reduction of Greek debt-to-GDP ratio, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, as envisaged in the current MoU, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme, in order to ensure that by the end of the IMF programme in 2016, Greece can reach a debt-to-GDP ratio in that year of 175% and in 2020 of 124% of GDP, and in 2022 a debt-to-GDP ratio substantially lower than 110%'. The statement also stipulated that any decision to further reduce interest rates on the Greek Loan Facility (loans under the first Greek programme) was an option, together with other possible measures, and was conditional on Greece achieving an annual primary surplus and on full implementation of all conditions of the second programme.

Despite the positive trend of the deficit figures, Greece has not yet achieved a primary surplus for the time being and, as mentioned in the latest Eurogroup statement on Greece on 13 May 2013, some programme conditions still need to be implemented.

The above is without prejudice to the fact that it is not for the Council to take a position on questions which fall within the powers of euro area Member States acting within the ESM framework.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002987/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — La pena dell'amputazione incrociata in Sudan

Intorno alla fine di febbraio 2013 le agenzie per i diritti umani hanno chiesto alle autorità sudanesi di porre fine a ogni forma di punizione corporale non in linea con gli strumenti internazionali firmati dal Sudan. Gli organismi di controllo hanno riferito che un tribunale sudanese ha condannato un detenuto, Adam Al-Muthna, 30 anni, all'amputazione incrociata per un furto di 1 000 sterline sudanesi avvenuto durante una rapina a mano armata nel 2006. L'amputazione incrociata, con la quale vengono amputati la mano destra e il piede sinistro, è stata eseguita da medici governativi. Punizioni disumane e crudeli come queste contrastano con i diritti umani fondamentali e violano i principi di etica medica delle Nazioni Unite riguardanti il ruolo del personale sanitario. Nel 1986 il Sudan ha firmato la convenzione delle Nazioni Unite contro la tortura, ma non l'ha ancora ratificata.

Il ministro degli Esteri canadese John Baird ha definito tali decisioni «un'espressione barbarica della sharia, […] punizioni crudeli e disumane in netto contrasto con le norme internazionali», chiedendo una riforma delle leggi sudanesi.

Secondo un avvocato di REDRESS, un'organizzazione britannica per i diritti umani, in Sudan si ricorre spesso a tali punizioni corporali come strumento di repressione contro coloro che non si conformano al concetto di ordine morale delle autorità.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza dei casi di amputazione incrociata verificatisi in Sudan?

2. Quali misure ha adottato il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per porre immediatamentefine a tali punizioni corporali e sollecitare il governo sudanese a ratificare i principi dietica medica delle Nazioni Unite riguardanti il ruolo del personale sanitario e a riformarele leggi del Sudan?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente condanna con forza la pratica abominevole dell'amputazione giudiziaria recentemente inflitta in Sudan. Medici governativi, violando doveri fondamentali della professione medica, hanno amputato la mano destra e il piede sinistro a un uomo condannato per rapina da un tribunale di Khartoum il 14 febbraio.

Tale pena costituisce una violazione delle norme internazionali in materia di diritti umani, compreso l'articolo 5 della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo. In quanto parte del Patto internazionale delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti civili e politici, il Sudan ha assunto l'impegno a non sottoporre nessuno a tortura, né a pene o trattamenti inumani o degradanti. L'AR/VP esorta le autorità sudanesi a fermare l'irrogazione di pene crudeli e inumane, a porre fine alle amputazioni incrociate, a rendere le leggi del Sudan conformi agli obblighi internazionali assunti dal paese in materia di diritti umani e a ratificare la Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite contro la tortura, che il Sudan ha sottoscritto nel 1986.

Il direttore responsabile per l'Africa del SEAE ha manifestato le preoccupazioni dell'AR/VP sul caso dell'amputazione nel corso di un incontro con l'Ambasciatore del Sudan presso l'Unione europea il 7 marzo a Bruxelles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002987/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sudanese cross-amputation punishment

In late February 2013 international human rights agencies called on the Sudanese authorities to stop forms of corporal punishment which do not comply with the international instruments signed by Sudan. It has been reported by monitoring organisations that a Sudanese court sentenced a 30-year-old prisoner named Adam Al-Muthna to cross-amputation for stealing 1 000 Sudanese pounds in an armed robbery in 2006. The cross-amputation, which involves amputating the right hand and the left foot, was conducted by government doctors. Inhumane and cruel punishments such as this are against basic human rights and constitute a violation of the United Nations Principles of Medical Ethics For Health. Sudan signed the United Nations Convention Against Torture in 1986 but has not yet ratified it.

The Canadian Foreign Minister, John Baird, called such sentences 'a barbaric expression of Shar'ia law, […] cruel and inhumane punishments that are completely at odds with international norms', and called for a reform of Sudanese laws.

According to a counsel at the British human rights organisation REDRESS, such corporal punishments are frequently used in Sudan as an instrument of repression against those who do not conform with the authorities' concept of moral order.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these cases of cross-amputation in Sudan?

2. What steps has the Vice-President/High Representative undertaken to end such corporal punishment immediately and to call upon the Sudanese Government to ratify the UN Principles of Medical Ethics for Health and to reform Sudan's Laws?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President strongly condemns the abhorrent practice of judicial amputation, which was recently carried out in Sudan. Government doctors, against their basic duties as health professionals, amputated the right hand and left foot of a man convicted for robbery by court order in Khartoum on 14 February.

Such punishment is in breach of international human rights standards, including Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Sudan has given a commitment that no one will be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. The HR/VP calls on the Sudanese authorities to stop ordering cruel and inhumane punishments, to put an end to cross amputations, to bring Sudan's laws into conformity with its international human rights obligations and to ratify the UN Convention against Torture, which Sudan signed in 1986.

EEAS Managing Director for Africa has raised the HR/VP's concerns about the amputation case in a meeting with the ambassador of Sudan to the European Union on 7 March in Brussels.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002988/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Negazione dell'Olocausto da parte di un alto funzionario egiziano

Alla fine di gennaio 2013 Fox News ha riferito che un Alto Rappresentante del governo egiziano, Fathi Shihab-Eddim, responsabile di nominare i direttori di tutti i giornali statali del paese, ha negato l'Olocausto sostenendo che il suo mito è un'industria inventata dall'America e che i servizi segreti degli Stati Uniti, in cooperazione con gli omologhi delle nazioni alleate durante la Seconda guerra mondiale, hanno creato l'Olocausto per screditare l'immagine dei loro avversari in Germania e giustificare la guerra e le distruzioni massicce a danno delle strutture militari e civili delle potenze dell'Asse, e soprattutto per colpire Hiroshima e Nagasaki con la bomba atomica. Egli ha altresì affermato che i sei milioni di ebrei assassinati, in realtà, non vennero uccisi, ma furono portati negli Stati Uniti.

Può la Commissione rispondere alle seguenti domande:

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza di queste affermazioni antisemite che negano l'Olocausto?

2. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sollevare la questione relativa alla negazione dell'antisemitismo e dell'Olocausto nell'ambito delle discussioni con il governo egiziano?

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

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza delle dichiarazioni a cui si fa riferimento e condanna fermamente qualsiasi tipo di negazione dell'Olocausto. In particolare, l'Unione europea condanna severamente tutte le manifestazioni di intolleranza religiosa, incitamento, molestia o violenza contro persone o comunità sulla base dell'origine etnica o della fede religiosa.

Di conseguenza, l'UE solleva sempre questioni riguardanti i diritti umani in occasione dei contatti bilaterali con l'Egitto, in particolare durante i dialoghi politici e di cooperazione con tale paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002988/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Holocaust denial by senior Egyptian official

In late January 2013, Fox News reported that a senior representative of the Egyptian Government, Fathi Shihab-Eddim, who is responsible for appointing editors to all state-run Egyptian newspapers, had denied the Holocaust by stating that 'the myth of the Holocaust is an industry that America invented' and that 'the US intelligence agencies, in cooperation with their counterparts in allied nations during World War II, created [the Holocaust] to destroy the image of their opponents in Germany, and to justify war and massive destruction against military and civilian facilities of the Axis powers, and especially to hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the atomic bomb'. He also claimed that the six million Jews killed were in fact not killed but moved to the US.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these anti-Semitic statements denying the Holocaust?

2. Will the Vice-President/High Representative raise the issue of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial in its discussions with the Egyptian Government?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the statements referred to and firmly condemns any kind of statements denying the Holocaust. Notably, the EU strongly condemns all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief.

Accordingly, the EU always raises human rights related issues in bilateral contacts with Egypt, particularly in the context of EU-Egypt political and cooperation assistance dialogues.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002989/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Aumentare la consapevolezza dei cittadini riguardo all'importanza di una buona alimentazione e uno stile di vita corretto per prevenire le malattie

La settimana della prevenzione contro il cancro (16-24 marzo 2013) promossa da un'associazione che mira ad informare la popolazione sui tumori, offre lo spunto per sottolineare quanto una dieta sana e bilanciata abbinata all'attività fisica e all'abbandono di abitudini malsane, quali alcol e fumo, siano la strategia vincente nella lotta contro molti processi cancerogeni. È noto che il 35 % dei casi di malattie oncologiche scaturisca dalle cattive abitudini che una buona parte della popolazione è restia ad abbandonare. Il consumo di frutta, verdura, pesce e di una quantità di carne limitata, sembra essere la chiave di una vita serena e al riparo dalle malattie. In particolare, l'olio extravergine di oliva è ottimo per proteggere l'apparato digerente e difendersi dal carcinoma alla mammella. In Italia è pratica consolidata sensibilizzare la popolazione con un'azione diretta nelle piazze, ove i cittadini possono sottoporsi a visite di screening, fissare visite specialistiche e quindi avere a disposizione il parere di esperti, nonché ricevere opuscoli informativi e contribuire a finanziare la ricerca, ricevendo in dono bottiglie d'olio di qualità.

Considerato che: — il Codice europeo contro il cancro raccomanda di evitare di fumare e di essere esposti al tabacco; — solo nel 2011 le chiamate alla Linea Verde di alcune associazioni italiane sono state 18mila,di cui il 28 % per problemi legati al fumo e il 16 % a disturbi alimentari; — illustri autorità del mondo della ristorazione si battono ogni anno per incoraggiare a mangiare sano senza rinunciare al piacere della tavola; — in Europa il problema della sedentarietà tra i giovani e meno giovani è molto sentito;

Sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

— se reputa opportuno incentivare iniziative che trasmettano quanto la salute sia importante e preziosa;

— se ritiene di dover accostare a tali interventi una capillare diffusione di materiale informativo nei Paesi Europei;

— se sia necessario sensibilizzare ulteriormente i giovani ad adottare sempre uno stile di vita sano, in modo che diventi un valore per le generazioni future?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2013)

La Commissione organizza numerose iniziative per promuovere uno stile di vita sano.

Il Codice europeo contro il cancro ([1]) comprende undici punti principali fondati su solide basi scientifiche e facilmente traducibili in pratica che consigliano ai cittadini come prevenire alcuni tipi di tumore adottando uno stile di vita più salutare e incentivano altresì la partecipazione a programmi di prevenzione, screening inclusi. Il codice, che è attualmente in fase di aggiornamento, viene promosso in occasione degli eventi più importanti, quale la settimana europea contro il cancro che si tiene ogni anno nel mese di maggio.

A partire dal 2002 la Commissione ha organizzato campagne informative e di prevenzione contro il tabagismo a livello europeo rivolte specificamente ai giovani. La più recente, «Gli ex fumatori sono irresistibili» ([2]), è già conosciuta da più di 300 milioni di europei.

Uno dei cinque obiettivi principali della lotta dell'UE contro l'alcol ([3]) consiste inoltre nell'«informare, educare e sensibilizzare i cittadini sulle conseguenze di un consumo nocivo e dannoso di alcol». La Commissione ha avviato un'iniziativa comune con gli Stati membri al fine di incoraggiare la condivisione dei metodi migliori e di aumentare la consapevolezza dei cittadini sugli effetti negativi causati dal consumo di alcol.

Dal 2007 la Commissione ha inoltre organizzato numerose iniziative per promuovere uno stile di vita più salutare, in linea con quanto si afferma nella Strategia europea sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([4]) e in base anche alla collaborazione con altri Stati membri e gruppi di interesse dell'UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/cancer/index_en.htm#fragment2
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/ex_smokers_are_unstoppable/index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2006)625 definitivo.
([4]) COM(2007)279 definitivo del 30.5.2007.

Mediante un progetto pilota del Parlamento europeo mirante a promuovere abitudini alimentari più sane e mediante il programma Frutta nelle scuole ([5]) la Commissione intende favorire l'adozione di una dieta più salutare per bambini, donne in stato di gravidanza e anziani.

([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002989/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Raising public awareness of the importance of a good diet and the right lifestyle to prevent disease

Cancer Prevention Week (16-24 March 2013), promoted by an association that provides public information about tumours, provides an opportunity to stress how much a healthy and balanced diet, together with physical exercise and giving up unhealthy habits, such as drinking alcohol and smoking, are the way to beat many forms of cancer. In 35% of cases, cancer is caused by bad habits that a large proportion of the population is reluctant to give up. Eating fruit, vegetables, fish and a limited amount of meat is the key to a healthy, disease-free life. In particular, extra virgin olive oil is excellent for protecting the digestive system and warding off breast cancer. In Italy, it is established practice to raise public awareness through direct action in the street, where people can be undergo screening, arrange specialist check-ups and thus get an expert opinion, as well as receive information pamphlets and make donations to research, receiving a bottle of good-quality of oil in return.

The European Code Against Cancer recommends avoiding smoking and exposure to tobacco. In 2011 alone, the telephone helplines of several Italian associations received 18 000 calls, 28% of which were for smoking-related issues and 16% for eating disorders. Every year, leading world authorities on nutrition strive to encourage people to eat healthily without sacrificing the pleasure of eating. In Europe, the sedentary lifestyles of people of all ages is a widespread problem.

— Does the Commission think it should encourage initiatives to communicate how important and precious health is?

— Does it think it should pair this action with widespread dissemination of information throughout the EU?

— Does it think it is necessary to further raise awareness among young people to always adopt a healthy lifestyle, in order to benefit future generations?

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

The Commission has undertaken many initiatives to raise awareness and encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

The European Code Against Cancer ([1]) comprises 11 evidence-based user-friendly recommendations to citizens on how to help avoid certain cancers by adopting healthier lifestyles and encouraging people to take part in prevention programmes including screening. The Code, which is currently being updated, is promoted on all relevant occasions, such as the European Week Against Cancer, held annually in May.

Since 2002, the Commission has organised pan-European information and prevention campaigns against smoking and specifically targeting young people. The most recent one, 'Ex-smokers are unstoppable' ([2]) has already reached over 300 million Europeans.

In addition, one of the five priorities of the EU alcohol strategy ([3]) is to 'inform, educate and raise awareness on the impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption'. The Commission has started a Joint Action with the Member States to exchange good practice to inform people on the harm caused by alcohol consumption.

Furthermore, since 2007, the Commission has promoted action as set out in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues ([4]) including through partnerships with Member States and EU Stakeholders to promote healthy lifestyles.

Through a pilot project aiming at promoting healthy diets supported by the European Parliament and through the EU School Fruit Scheme ([5]) the Commission contributes to establishing healthier eating habits in children, pregnant women as well as elderly people.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/diseases/cancer/index_en.htm#fragment2
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/ex_smokers_are_unstoppable/index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2006) 625 final.
([4]) COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002990/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Data center che rispettino l'ambiente: quali prospettive

L'utilizzo di reti informatiche, che consentono il traffico di dati e informazione sulla rete Internet, determina il 3 % dell'inquinamento globale. Questa realtà è da inquadrarsi in un panorama più vasto in cui ci si chiede sempre più spesso come ridurre le emissioni di CO_2 e come salvaguardare al meglio l'ambiente. L'Italia ha dato il suo contributo creando un data center che funziona a basso impatto ambientale e impiega sempre un numero di server proporzionato alla quantità di lavoro da svolgere in modo da contenere gli sprechi. Questi data center lavorano grazie a un algoritmo statistico che analizza in tempo reale il carico di dati, i servizi vengono distribuiti tra diversi blade server, che minimizzano l'occupazione di spazio; i server superflui vengono spenti e lavorano alla massima potenza solamente quelli necessari, mentre se aumenta il carico, vengono riattivati quelli spenti. L'innovativo sistema permette un risparmio energetico notevole e una perfetta gestione dei livelli di servizio e della capacità residua, ed è estendibile all'infinito. I data center si trovano nelle principali città italiane, Milano e Roma, e sono stati pensati per andare incontro alle necessità di flessibilità e affidabilità dei clienti di tipo business; sono costituiti da impianti e infrastrutture che garantiscono efficienza energetica in modo tale da ricavarne un basso impatto ambientale e la riduzione dei costi di gestione: un risparmio energetico del 50 % e una dispersione di 220 mila tonnellate di CO_2 in meno rispetto a un data center «tradizionale» di pari dimensione.

Considerato che alcuni data center in Europa sono dotati di ben 13 data center globali e 50 locali e dominano lo scenario del cloud computing grazie all'operato di data center come alcuni di quelli italiani, che permettono una dispersione di 220mila tonnellate in meno di CO_2 rispetto a un data center normale, mentre i ricavi ottenuti con il sistema finlandese nel 2010 sono stati pari a 8,6 miliardi di euro, divenendo così un sistema leader nel campo del cloud computing nel 2014.

Può la Commissione dire se ritiene importante e indispensabile:

— incentivare e sostenere la creazione di nuovi data center a basso impatto ambientale nei Paesi dell'Unione europea;

— appoggiare la ricerca di finanziamenti per questo tipo di interventi;

— incrementare le ricerche che permetterebbero di costruire data center sempre più rispettosi dell'uomo e dell'ambiente.

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole del numero crescente di nuovi data centre e del loro ruolo alquanto significativo in termini di consumo energetico. La Commissione desidera rinviare l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione E-008823/2012 dell'onorevole Ioannis Tsoukalas. Vi si espongono alcuni dei motivi per cui il gruppo di prodotti «server aziendali» è stato incluso nel piano di lavoro per la progettazione ecocompatibile 2012-2014 ([1]).

Nel maggio 2013 si avvierà uno studio preparatorio sulla progettazione ecocompatibile che analizzerà, per i data centre, l'efficienza energetica e l'efficienza nell'uso delle risorse al fine di determinare il loro contributo al risparmio nell'uso dell'energia e delle risorse ottenibile mediante soluzioni di software (ad esempio, virtualizzazione, cloud computing) e/o mediante soluzioni hardware. I risultati dello studio preparatorio consentiranno alla Commissione di contemplare, nel 2014, l'introduzione di requisiti in tema di progettazione ecocompatibile e, se del caso, di etichettatura energetica per questi prodotti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/documents/eco-design/working-plan/files/comm-swd-2012-434-ecodesign_en.pdf

Le iniziative di ricerca finanziate dalla Commissione nell'ambito del PQ7 incoraggiano l'aumento dell'efficacia ambientale dei data centre. Tra le iniziative finanziate vi sono progetti quali All4Green (www.all4green-project.eu) e il precedente Fit4Green (www.fit4green.eu), che promuovono lo sviluppo di sistemi come quelli menzionati nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputato. La Commissione sta inoltre negoziando diverse nuove proposte nell'ambito del PQ7 in relazione alla ricerca su data centre rispettosi dell'ambiente con un'attenzione particolare per l'uso di sistemi energetici rinnovabili, la connessione a reti intelligenti e il riutilizzo del calore prodotto durante il funzionamento dei data centre. I nuovi progetti di ricerca dovrebbero iniziare più avanti nel corso del 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002990/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Prospects for environmentally friendly data centres

The use of computer networks, which allow data and information to be exchanged on the Internet, causes 3% of worldwide pollution. This should be seen against the wider background in which we are increasingly wondering how to reduce CO_2 emissions and how best to protect the environment. Italy has given its contribution by establishing a data centre that has a low environmental impact and always uses a number of servers in proportion to the amount of work to be done, in order to reduce waste. These data centres operate by using a statistical algorithm that analyses the data load in real time, the services are then distributed among various blade servers, which minimise the occupation of space; redundant servers are shut down and only those that are necessary work at full power; if the load increases, the ones that are switched off are switched on again. This innovative system provides significant energy savings and perfect service level management and capacity management, and can be extended indefinitely. The data centres are located in the main Italian cities, Milan and Rome, and were designed to meet the need for flexibility and reliability of business clients. They consist of facilities and infrastructure that provide energy efficiency whilst having a low environmental impact and reduced operating costs, providing energy savings of 50% and a dispersion of 220 000 tonnes less of CO_2 than a 'traditional' data centre of the same size.

Some data centres in Europe have as many as 13 global data centres and 50 local ones and dominate the cloud computing scene thanks to the operation of data centres such as some of the Italian ones, which disperse 220 thousand tonnes less CO_2 than a normal data centre; the revenue obtained from the Finnish system in 2010, for example, amounted to EUR 8.6 billion, making it a leader in the field of cloud computing in 2014.

Does the Commission therefore not agree that it would be of the utmost importance to:

— encourage and support the establishment of new low-environmental-impact data centres in EU countries;

— support the search for funding for such measures;

— increase research that would result in the building of increasingly environmentally-friendly data centres?

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

The Commission is aware of the rapid growth in the number of new data centres and of their relatively significant contribution in terms of energy consumption. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to E-008823/2012 by M. Ioannis Tsoukalas. These are among the reasons why the product group 'Enterprise Servers' has been included in the Ecodesign Working Plan 2012-2014 ([1]).

An Ecodesign preparatory study will be launched in May 2013, which will analyse the energy and resource efficiency of Data Centres, assessing the contributions to energy saving and resource use, which can be achieved either by software (e.g. virtualisation, cloud computing) and/or hardware solutions. The results of the preparatory study will allow the Commission to eventually consider requirements for Ecodesign, and possibly Energy Labelling, for these products in 2014.

Commission-funded research efforts under FP7 further support the increase of the environmental effectiveness of data centres. Funded initiatives such as the projects All4Green (www.all4green-project.eu) and the earlier Fit4Green (www.fit4green.eu) support the development of systems like the ones mentioned in the Honourable Member's question. Further, the Commission is currently negotiating a number of new proposals under FP7 for research on environmentally friendly data centres with extended focus on the use of renewable energy systems, connection to the smart grid, and re-use of heat that is produced during the operation of data centres. The new research projects are expected to start later in 2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/documents/eco-design/working-plan/files/comm-swd-2012-434-ecodesign_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002991/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Cura dell'HIV nei pazienti in età pediatrica: quali prospettive per il futuro

La lotta contro il virus dell'HIV ha sempre rappresentato una delle maggiori sfide raccolte dalla medicina. Recentemente nel Mississippi una bambina nata sieropositiva è stata curata immediatamente dopo la nascita con una terapia antiretrovirale per diciotto mesi consecutivi e sembrerebbe essere guarita. Questa ipotesi, che per alcuni medici è da ritenersi azzardata, sembra essere stata confermata dal fatto che dopo diversi mesi di sospensione della cura gli esiti degli esami sono stati nuovamente negativi. Secondo la dottoressa che ha redatto il rapporto sulla piccola paziente, questo risultato è molto positivo, poiché aprirebbe la strada a una nuova possibilità di trattare e sconfiggere tale malattia in futuro. In questo caso è stata effettuata una cura funzionale, che è efficace se la presenza virale è invisibile ai test standard, ma viene riscontrata grazie all'uso di metodi ultrasensibili. Questo ha permesso il blocco della formazione della riserva virale e, di conseguenza, nel sangue della bimba non sono state riscontrate tracce del virus. Come spiega il Direttore del Dipartimento dell'Istituto Superiore di Sanità italiano, l'utilizzo di farmaci con effetto antiretrovirale è comune ma è innovativo il loro impiego al primo stadio della malattia più diffusa al mondo, quale l'HIV. Nonostante sia insolito che una bambina possa nascere con l'HIV in Occidente, dove le cure contro il virus sono di facile accesso a tutte le madri, il caso sembrerebbe suggerire che si tratti di un virus non invincibile. Rimane tuttavia sempre da verificare se i pazienti siano davvero sieropositivi o portatori di anticorpi trasmessi dalla madre.

Considerato che: — questo è il secondo caso di guarigione dall'HIV documentato in Occidente; — in Africa la percentuale di bambini che ogni anno contraggono la malattia è alta; — se il virus non è presente nel sangue ciò non esclude che possa trovarsi in organi o tessuti e questo rende necessarie analisi specifiche;

Sono a chiedere alla Commissione se ritiene importante:

— finanziare nuove ricerche che possano trovare cure efficaci e radicali al fine di contrastare considerevolmente la lotta all'HIV;

— impostare programmi clinici che possano redigere linee guida necessarie ad incrementare le best practices in materia di trattamento e cura di malattie infettive in pazienti in età pediatrica;

— promuovere una campagna informativa nei Paesi europei, che sensibilizzi le madri verso un'attenta tutela della salute propria e, di riflesso, anche quella dei loro figli.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2013)

Mediante il settimo programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico (FP7, 2007-2013) la Commissione ha destinato più di 145 milioni di euro ad attività di ricerca sull'HIV/AIDS tra le quali si annovera anche la ricerca in merito a terapie innovative ([1]). Tale programma destina in modo mirato 74 milioni di euro a tipologie di cura nuove ed efficaci.

La prevenzione e la cura dell'AIDS nei pazienti in età pediatrica spettano *in primis* agli Stati membri. Accanto a tali interventi a livello nazionale, la Commissione ha posto in opera un programma quadro al fine di migliorare le condizioni di salute nei vari gruppi a rischio, bambini compresi, con la comunicazione dal titolo «La lotta contro l'HIV/AIDS nell'Unione europea e nei paesi vicini, 2009-2013» ([2]).

Mediante il programma salute dell'UE (EU Health Programme) ([3]) la Commissione favorisce altresì lo scambio delle pratiche ottimali relative a prevenzione, diagnosi e cura dell'HIV/AIDS anche nei pazienti in età pediatrica ([4]).

Il settimo programma quadro promuove anche studi di osservazione e test clinici miranti a prevenire la trasmissione della patologia da madre a figlio e attinenti alla farmacovigilanza relativa alle cure pediatriche ([5]). Tali studi sono in linea con i principi guida dell'Organizzazione mondiale della Sanità (OMS) e della European AIDS Clinical Society.

([1]) Progetti HIT HIDDEN HIV e Silent HIV, finanziati da fondi UE rispettivamente pari a 5 milioni di euro e 2 milioni di euro.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/sti_prevention/hiv_aids/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/2008-2013/.
([4]) SIALON, EUROSUPPORT, ACTIVATE, SCALE UP HARM REDUCTION.
([5]) EUROCORD 12 milioni di euro; PENTA-LABNET, un milione di euro.

Al giorno d'oggi si organizzano diverse campagne informative a livello nazionale al fine di sensibilizzare madri e figli alla tutela della propria salute. La Commissione intende inoltre aiutare gli operatori sanitari a promuovere attività di screening e di consulenza per limitare la trasmissione secondaria delle infezioni dalle madri ai propri figli o compagni ([6]).

([6]) EUROSUPPORT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002991/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Curing HIV in children — what outlook for the future?

The fight against the HIV virus has always been one of the major challenges facing medicine. Recently, in Mississippi, a baby girl born HIV-positive was treated immediately after birth with antiretroviral therapy for 18 consecutive months and has apparently been cured. This declaration of a 'cure', which some doctors consider to be hasty, appears to have been confirmed by the fact that several months after the discontinuation of treatment, the results of the tests were once again negative. According to the doctor who wrote the report on her young patient, this is a very positive outcome as it could pave the way for a new opportunity to treat and conquer this disease in the future. In this case, functional treatment was given, which is effective if the presence of the virus is invisible to standard tests but is found by using ultrasensitive methods. This blocked the formation of the viral reserve and, consequently, no traces of the virus were found in the child's blood.

As explained by the director of the relevant department of the Italian National Institute of Health, the use of antiretroviral drugs is common, but what is innovative is their use at the first stage of the most prevalent disease in the world — HIV. Although it is unusual for a child to be born with HIV in the West, where treatment for the virus is easily accessible to all mothers, this case would seem to suggest that it is a virus that is not invincible. However, it should always be verified whether the patients really are HIV-positive or whether they are carriers of antibodies passed on from the mother.

This is the second documented case of somebody being cured of HIV in the West. In Africa, meanwhile, a high percentage of children contract the disease each year. Moreover, if the virus is not present in the blood it does not mean that it cannot be found in organs or tissues; this means that specific tests are needed.

Does the Commission therefore not think it is important to:

— fund new research with a view to finding effective and radical treatments with which to combat HIV successfully;

— develop clinical programmes and draw up guidelines that are necessary in order to disseminate best practices in the treatment and cure of infectious diseases in children;

— promote an information campaign in European countries, to raise awareness among mothers of the need to carefully protect their own health and, accordingly, also that of their children?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission has invested over EUR 145 million to support research on HIV/AIDS, including research on innovative therapeutic approaches ([1]), through the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013). This includes EUR 74 million dedicated novel and effective treatment interventions.

Prevention and treatment of HIV in children is primarily a responsibility of the Member States. To complement such national policies, the Commission has established a framework to improve health in various risk groups, including children, through the communication 'Combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries' ([2]).

In addition, the Commission supports exchange of best practice on prevention, detection and treatment of HIV/AIDS — including in children ([3]) — under the EU Health Programme ([4]). Observational studies and clinical trials on prevention of mother-to-child transmission and pharmacovigilance on treatment in children ([5]) are further supported by FP7. These studies contribute to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the European AIDS clinical society treatment guidelines.

([1]) Projects HIT HIDDEN HIV and Silent HIV with EU contributions of EUR 5 million and EUR 2 million.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/sti_prevention/hiv_aids/index_en.htm
([3]) SIALON, EUROSUPPORT, ACTIVATE, SCALE UP HARM REDUCTION.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/2008-2013/
([5]) EUROCORD EUR 12 million; PENTA-LABNET, EUR 1 million.

Information campaigns to raise awareness among mothers and children of the need to protect their health are currently being carried out nationally. The Commission takes forward capacity building among health professionals to promote screening and counselling to reduce secondary transmission of infections from women to their children and partners ([6]).

([6]) EUROSUPPORT.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002992/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Grappa — indicazione geografica italiana e obbligo di imbottigliamento nella zona di produzione: quali rischi per la reputazione della denominazione

Contrariamente a quanto indicato nella tendenziosa interrogazione scritta n. E-001377/2013, le disposizioni di cui al DPR 297/97 (nella specie l'obbligo d'imbottigliamento della «Grappa» — indicazione geografica italiana— all'interno del territorio italiano) prevedono la stretta osservanza della normativa comunitaria in materia vitivinicola, a cominciare dallo stesso regolamento (CE) n. 110/2008. Tali norme sono un efficace strumento di valorizzazione della produzione vitivinicola di qualità e tipica italiana, costituendo il settore vitivinicolo di qualità una delle principali voci dell'export nazionale e contribuendo in maniera determinante all'affermazione del «made in Italy» all'estero. Le finalità del provvedimento sono evidentemente conformi alla normativa europea: la garanzia di qualità del prodotto, l'informazione dei consumatori in ordine alla qualità, come riflesso sul tessuto produttivo di un sistema di certificazione della qualità garantito per legge, la presenza di norme sulla tutela delle DO e delle IGT: di fatto, tutte materie di competenza statale «tutela della concorrenza» e «enti pubblici nazionali» (art.117, Cost). Tale interpretazione è confermata dalla Corte Costituzionale, con sentenza 20 luglio 1995, n. 333: «spetta allo Stato definire il procedimento per il riconoscimento della denominazione di origine dei vini, in quanto la relativa tutela deve essere disposta in modo unitario sul piano nazionale, anche in considerazione dei riflessi che essa ha sul commercio internazionale e con riguardo alla complessità degli interessi connessi alla produzione e distribuzione di vini pregiati». Si ricorda, inoltre, che anche la Corte di Giustizia in data 16 maggio 2000 è stata chiara, nel respingere il ricorso proposto dal Belgio in merito all'obbligo dell'imbottigliamento del vino a «Denominacion de origen calificada Rioja» nella zona di produzione dello stesso.

Le stesse motivazioni possono, dunque, ritenersi applicabili all'indicazione geografica italiana «Grappa» al fine garantire ai consumatori la certezza che tutte le fasi dell'indicazione geografica siano eseguite sotto il controllo e la responsabilità all'interno della zona di produzione. Di contro, si vuole evidenziare che l'art. 3 del Regolamento (CEE) n. 2048/89 non dispone controlli sull'autenticità obbligatori e sistematici in tutti gli Stati ma solo «sistematicamente o per sondaggio»;

Considerato che: alcune tipologie di grappa, come la grappa bianca oppure aromatizzata sono meglio rappresentate in Italia che non in Germania; — le marche note in Germania sono poche e piuttosto prendono il loro nome dai grandi vini italiani;

La Commissione non ritiene che il degrado qualitativo di un simile prodotto come la grappa, imbottigliato al di fuori della regione di produzione, dovuto al realizzarsi dei rischi connessi all'operazione di imbottigliamento, potrebbe nuocere alla reputazione della denominazione?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(30 aprile 2013)

A seguito di una prima analisi della scheda tecnica dell'indicazione geografica italiana (IG) «Grappa», i servizi della Commissione hanno ritenuto necessario chiedere alle autorità italiane ulteriori chiarimenti circa l'obbligo di imbottigliare le bevande spiritose coperte dalla IG solo nell'area di produzione (in questo caso, tutto il territorio italiano). In particolare, la Commissione ha chiesto di indicare i motivi che hanno indotto l'Italia ad adottare tale misura e di dimostrare che tale misura è necessaria per proteggere la qualità e la reputazione dell'indicazione geografica e che è basata su criteri oggettivi e non discriminatori.

Le autorità italiane hanno recentemente inviato una risposta, che è ora in corso di traduzione. I servizi della Commissione potranno analizzare la base giuridica della questione solo alla luce dei chiarimenti ricevuti.

I servizi della Commissione restano vigili ai fini dell'esame della scheda tecnica delle indicazioni geografiche, in particolare per quanto riguarda l'inclusione di eventuali misure restrittive ingiustificate che potrebbero ostacolare la libera circolazione delle merci nell'UE.

Infine, per quanto riguarda i controlli, gli articoli 22 e 24 del regolamento (CE) n. 110/2008 ([1]) prevedono l'obbligo per gli Stati membri di garantire protezione e controllo sufficienti delle bevande spiritose, anche in relazione alle indicazioni geografiche.

([1]) GU L 39 del 13.2.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002992/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Grappa — Italian geographical indication and requirement to bottle product in area of production — risks to the reputation of a PDO/IGT product

Contrary to what is stated in the tendentious Written Question E-001377/2013, the provisions of Presidential Decree DPR 297/97 (the obligation to bottle Grappa — an Italian-geographical indication — in Italy) require strict compliance with Community legislation on wine, starting with Regulation (EC) No 110/2008. These rules are an effective tool for exploiting traditional Italian quality wine production, since quality wine is one of the main national exports and contributes significantly to the success of Italian-made products abroad. The aims of the measure clearly comply with EU rules: the guarantee of product quality, consumer information on quality, as reflected by a legally guaranteed system of quality certification, rules on the protection of Designations of Origin and IGTs: indeed, all of these are matters that fall within the remit of the government in relation to 'Protection of Competition' and 'national public authorities' (Article 117 of the Constitution). This interpretation was confirmed by the Constitutional Court in its judgment No 333 of 20 July 1995, in which it ruled that it was up to the State to determine the procedure for the recognition of the designation of origin of wines, since the relevant protection had to be given in a uniform manner nationally, also in consideration of its effects on international trade and with regard to the complexity of interests connected to the production and distribution of fine wines. It should also be noted that the Court of Justice, too, on 16 May 2000 was clear in rejecting the appeal brought by Belgium regarding the obligation to bottle 'Denominacion de origen calificada Rioja' wine in its area of production.

The same reasons may thus be deemed to apply to the Italian geographical indication of Grappa, to assure consumers that all stages of the IGT procedure are implemented under the control and responsibility of the area of production. Conversely, it should be highlighted that Article 3 of Regulation (EEC) No 2048/89 does not provide for compulsory and systematic controls on authenticity in all Member States, but merely for controls that are carried out 'systematically or by sampling'.

Given that certain types of grappa, such as white or flavoured grappa, are better represented in Italy than in Germany, and given that there are few well-known brands in Germany, most of which are named after great Italian wines, does the Commission not agree that any deterioration in quality of a product such as grappa, when bottled outside its region of production, could harm the reputation of the product due to the risks associated with the bottling operations?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

Following a first analysis of the technical file of the Italian geographical indication (GI) 'Grappa', the Commission services considered necessary to ask Italy for some clarifications in relation to the obligation to bottle the spirit drinks covered by that GI only in the area of production (in this case, the entire Italian territory). The Commission asked in particular to outline the reasons that led Italy to the establishment of such measure and to provide evidence that such measure is necessary to protect the quality and reputation of the geographical indication and based on objective and non-discriminating criteria.

Italy sent recently a reply, which is currently being translated. The legal analysis of this issue, by the Commission services, will only be possible in the light of the clarifications received.

The Commission services remain vigilant when examining the technical files of geographical indications, in particular as regards the inclusion of any unjustified restrictive measure that could undermine the free movement of goods in the EU.

Finally, as regards controls, Articles 22 and 24 of Regulation (EC) No 110/2008 ([1]) provide an obligation for Member States to ensure efficient protection and control of spirit drinks, including on geographical indications.

([1]) OJ L 39, 13.2.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002993/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Osteoporosi, donne e campagne di sensibilizzazione: quali attività sul territorio europeo

L'osteoporosi è una malattia sistemica dello scheletro, caratterizzata da una ridotta massa ossea e dal deterioramento della microarchitettura del tessuto osseo, con conseguente aumento della fragilità e predisposizione alle fratture, soprattutto dell'anca, del femore, della colonna vertebrale e del polso, una condizione clinica di cui oltre 5 milioni di italiani soffrono. Solitamente è la patologia cronica dell'età avanzata più prevenibile: secondo studi recenti, oltrepassati i cinquanta anni, una donna italiana su tre comincia ad avere le ossa più fragili. Nella maggior parte dei casi questa patologia è sottodiagnosticata e sottotrattata, per cui è importante sviluppare programmi di prevenzione mirati. Per questo motivo è necessario promuovere presso la popolazione femminile opportune attività di sensibilizzazione e prevenzione. In Italia è stata promossa una campagna d'informazione e sensibilizzazione rivolta alle persone di sesso femminile per favorire un'adeguata mineralizzazione delle ossa nell'età giovanile, contrastare le perdite minerali che avvengono dopo la menopausa e chiarire l'importanza di uno stile di vita attivo e di un'alimentazione equilibrata a tutte le età.

Considerato che bastano pochi suggerimenti per mettere ciascuno in grado di adottare abitudini alimentari e fisiche corrette per prevenire malattie che si manifestano in età avanzata e che soprattutto dopo la menopausa si manifesta uno squilibrio fra riassorbimento e formazione ossea, processo determinato principalmente dalla carenza di estrogeni che hanno di per sé un'azione protettiva nei confronti del tessuto osseo, può la Commissione dire se:

— intende aumentare le conoscenze in campo epidemiologico e di eterogeneità territoriale per rispondere a necessità che ancora non trovano una soluzione, come le patologie diffuse tra alcune fasce di popolazione, per le quali l'informazione e la prevenzione spesso sono carenti e in certe aree europee assenti;

— ritiene buona pratica promuovere e diffondere sul territorio europeo campagne di sensibilizzazione mirate alla popolazione femminile che siano supportate da visite gratuite, esami strumentali e incontri informativi sul tema dell'osteoporosi?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole dell'eterogeneità territoriale con cui l'osteoporosi si manifesta in Europa e dell'epidemiologia di tale condizione patologica. La Commissione ha raccolto alcuni dati in proposito al fine di trovare una soluzione ai problemi associati all'osteoporosi. Si ritiene che le pubblicazioni seguenti siano particolarmente importanti:

1. Il riassunto sulle statistiche delle lesioni per il periodo 2008-2010, pag. 16, «Hotspot older people» ([1]).

2. Il rapporto sulla salute della popolazione femminile, pag. 50, sezione relativa all'osteoporosi ([2]).

Tali documenti sono accompagnati da dati raccolti da Eurostat su «Le operazioni e i trattamenti chirurgici effettuati negli ospedali (all'anca e al ginocchio)» e «Le cause di decesso conseguente a caduta suddivise per gruppi di età e per sesso».

Spetta ai singoli Stati membri riuscire a garantire procedure adeguate di controllo e di diagnosi. Ogni Stato membro dovrebbe organizzare campagne di sensibilizzazione in linea con gli obiettivi e le esigenze regionali e nazionali.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/data_collection/docs/idb_report_2013_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/data_collection/docs/idb_report_2013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002993/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Osteoporosis, women and awareness-raising campaigns: activities in the EU

Osteoporosis is a systemic skeletal disease characterised by low bone mass and microarchitectural deterioration of bone tissue, leading to enhanced bone fragility and a consequent increase in fracture risk, especially in the hip, femur, spinal column and wrist. This medical condition affects over 5 million Italians. It is generally the most preventable chronic disease of old age: according to recent studies, bones start to become more brittle in one in three Italian women over the age of 50. In most cases, this disease is underdiagnosed and undertreated, meaning it is important to develop targeted prevention programmes. That is why suitable awareness and prevention activities should be promoted among the female population. In Italy, an information and awareness campaign aimed at women has been launched to promote adequate bone mineralisation in young people, to tackle the demineralisation that happens after the menopause and to stress the importance of an active lifestyle and a balanced diet at any age.

It only takes a few pointers to enable everyone to adopt the right eating and physical habits to prevent diseases that develop in old age. After the menopause, an imbalance develops between bone resorption and bone formation, a process caused primarily by a lack of oestrogens which, in themselves, have a protective function in respect of bone tissue.

— Does the Commission intend to improve understanding of epidemiology and regional diversity to address issues that have not yet been resolved, such as diseases that are widespread among certain sections of the population, for which there is often very little in the way of information and prevention and, in some parts of Europe, nothing at all?

— Does it consider it good practice to promote and hold awareness-raising campaigns targeted at the female population throughout the EU, supported by free check-ups, diagnostic procedures and information sessions on osteoporosis?

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

The Commission is aware of the regional diversity of the onset of osteoporosis in Europe including the epidemiology of the condition. In this regard, the Commission has gathered data to help understand the problems associated with osteoporosis. In particular, the following publications are of relevance:

1. Summary of injury statistics for the years 2008-2010, page 16 'Hotspot older people' ([1]).

2. Women's health report, page 50, section on osteoporosis ([2]).

These are complemented by data sets gathered by Eurostat on 'Surgical operations and procedures performed in hospitals (hips and knee)' and 'Causes of death due to falls by age group and sex'.

As regards providing check-ups and diagnostic procedures on the condition, these are actions that fall under the exclusive competence of Member States. Awareness-raising campaigns tailor-made to regional and national targets and needs would need to be developed by the Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/data_collection/docs/idb_report_2013_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/women_report_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002994/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Futuro per progetti che mirano alla sicurezza europea in ambito energetico

Negli ultimi anni è stato possibile riscontrare, a livello internazionale, un notevole sviluppo delle fonti di energia rinnovabili. Alcuni paesi dell'area mediterranea si stanno indirizzando verso progetti che prevedono lo sfruttamento di energie come quella eolica. Esempi calzanti sono il Piano solare mediterraneo (PSM) e la determinazione di alcune regioni a esportare questo tipo di energia rinnovabile in Europa, con l'impegno di verificare la sicurezza di tali modalità di approvvigionamento. Il PSM ambisce ad aumentare la percentuale di energia fotovoltaica per raggiungere determinati livelli entro il 2020 e creare una rete collaborativa tra paesi che garantiscano una connessione tra le due coste del Mediterraneo, condizione indispensabile per la buona riuscita del progetto su un piano di scambio bilaterale.

Degno di menzione è Desertec, un programma ideato nel 2009 che ha come scopo il rifornimento energetico dei paesi europei venendo incontro alla relativa domanda senza danneggiare l'ambiente: sicurezza, pace e stabilità sociale sono le parole chiave di un futuro che farà sempre più appello alla energia globale sostenibile. Visti i vari rapporti di collaborazione bilaterale sorti tra città europee e nordafricane, quali Rabat e Algeri, volti alla creazione di città solari e vista la ferma volontà da parte del Medio Oriente di iniziare piani di collaborazione con l'Europa, con gli anni si è passati a uno stretto accordo tra Abu Dhabi e la Scozia che permetterà a quest'ultima di esportare entro il 2020 il 50 % dell'energia prodotta a basso impatto ambientale.

Questo tipo di collaborazioni contribuirà a sviluppare la ricerca, l'innovazione tecnologica e l'economia, ma richiederà anche una scrupolosa ricerca di finanziamenti, permettendo così una coabitazione più serena tra culture e popoli diversi tra di loro e un notevole sviluppo dei paesi nordafricani.

Può la Commissione riferire se:

— reputa opportuno prendere in considerazione tali progetti e contribuire tramite incontri e convegni a informare e sensibilizzare i cittadini;

— ritiene importante proporre linee guida per la realizzazione e il corretto sviluppo di nuovi progetti bilaterali;

— considera la possibilità di appoggiare e incoraggiare collaborazioni con paesi vicini, per cercare di creare un'estesa ed efficace rete politica di vicinato?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(6 maggio 2013)

1. La Commissione sostiene attivamente il Piano solare mediterraneo fornendo assistenza tecnica attraverso il fondo di investimento per la politica di vicinato. Mediante la rete sulle energie pulite l'UE promuove le attività di cooperazione tra i vari soggetti interessati nell'Unione europea e nei paesi del Golfo. Inoltre, facilita lo sviluppo di progetti avviati nell'ambito di iniziative industriali indipendenti come Desertec e MEDGRID. Nella sua comunicazione «Energie rinnovabili» del giugno 2012, la Commissione ha annunciato l'obiettivo di aprire gradualmente la strada a una comunità dell'energia UE-Mediterraneo meridionale.

L'azione di informazione di sensibilizzazione viene svolta da diversi soggetti, che ottengono le informazioni di base dai consueti canali di informazione della Commissione ([1]) e partecipando agli incontri periodici di informazione con il Parlamento europeo e la BEI.

2. Come indicato nella suddetta comunicazione, la Commissione sta lavorando a un documento orientativo globale (che verrà pubblicato quest'estate) relativo all'attuazione dei meccanismi di cooperazione in base alla direttiva sulle energie rinnovabili. Il documento affronterà anche la questione della cooperazione tra gli Stati membri dell'UE e i paesi terzi in materia di energie rinnovabili.

([1]) Siti web, info point, segretariato dell'UPM, opuscoli ed eventi relativi ai progetti.

3. L'incontro ministeriale sull'energia previsto per l'11 dicembre, al quale parteciperanno tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione per il Mediterraneo, dovrebbe condurre all'approvazione di un piano generale per l'attuazione degli obiettivi del Piano solare mediterraneo, che costituirà il primo documento politico globale dedicato esclusivamente alle questioni regionali riguardanti le energie rinnovabili e l'efficienza energetica. Il piano propone azioni comuni sviluppate congiuntamente dai principali soggetti interessati su entrambe le sponde del Mediterraneo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002994/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(15 March 2013)

Subject: Future of European energy security projects

In recent years, there has been considerable international growth in renewable energy sources. A number of Mediterranean countries are turning to projects that involve the use of energy sources such as wind. The Mediterranean Solar Plan (MSP) and the decision of several regions to export this kind of renewable energy to Europe, with a pledge to ensure that this kind of energy supply is secure, are good examples of this. The MSP seeks to increase the proportion of photovoltaic energy to certain levels by 2020 and to create a collaborative network between countries to link both sides of the Mediterranean, which is crucial in order for the project to succeed on the basis of bilateral trade.

Also worthy of note is Desertec, a programme devised in 2009 with the aim of supplying energy to European countries, satisfying demand without harming the environment. Security, peace and social stability are the keywords for a future in which increasing demands will be made on global sustainable energy. In view of the various bilateral collaborative links between European and North African cities, such as Rabat and Algiers, aimed at creating solar cities, and in view of the Middle East's eagerness to establish cooperation plans with Europe, over the years Abu Dhabi and Scotland have come to an agreement which will enable Scotland to export 50% of the environmentally friendly energy it produces by 2020.

Though it will require diligent fund-raising, this kind of cooperation will contribute to the development of research, technological innovation and the economy, thus enabling different cultures and peoples to live together in greater harmony and North African countries to develop significantly.

Does the Commission think it should give consideration to such projects and make a contribution by holding consultations and meetings to inform the public and raise awareness?

Does it think guidelines should be proposed for the establishment and proper development of new bilateral projects?

Is it considering the possibility of supporting and promoting cooperation with neighbouring countries, in an attempt to create an extensive and effective neighbourhood policy network?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1. The Commission is actively supporting the Mediterranean Solar Plan, through technical assistance via the Neighbourhood Investment Facility. Through the Clean Energy Network, the EU supports cooperation activities among various players across the EU and the Gulf countries. It also facilitates project developments initiated by independent industrial initiatives such as Desertec and MEDGRID. In its communication on 'Renewable Energy' of June 2012 the Commission announced the aim to gradually pave the way towards an EU-Southern Mediterranean Energy Community.

Information and public awareness is raised through the different multipliers who get their base information from the Commission's usual communication channels ([1]) and by having regular information sessions together with the European Parliament and the EIB.

2. As announced in the abovementioned Communication, the Commission is working on a comprehensive guidance document on the implementation of cooperation mechanisms under the Renewable Energy Directive, to be released this summer. It will *inter alia* address renewable energy cooperation between EU Member States and third countries.

3. The Ministerial Meeting on Energy scheduled for 11 December 2013, where all Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean will participate, is expected to endorse a master plan for the implementation of the Mediterranean Solar Plan objectives. This master plan will constitute the first comprehensive political document exclusively concerned with region-specific renewable energy and energy efficiency issues. It proposes common actions to be jointly developed by the main stakeholders of both sides of the Mediterranean Sea.

([1]) Websites, info points, UfM secretariat, project brochures and events.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-002995/13
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2013 m. kovo 18 d.)

Tema: Vilniaus aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimas

Praėjo vieneri metai nuo to laiko, kada ES užsibrėžė prioritetus, kuriuos reikia įgyvendinti iki 3-iojo ES ir Rytų partnerystės aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimo, vyksiančio Vilniuje. Šiuos prioritetus sudaro: sutartinių santykių su Rytų partnerystės šalimis stiprinimas pagal asociacijos susitarimus, glaudaus bendradarbiavimo ir visapusiškos laisvosios prekybos zonos numatymas ir vizų režimo supaprastinimo ir liberalizavimo procesas.

Kaip Komisija planuoja užtikrinti, kad minėti ES tikslai būtų pasiekti iki aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimo Vilniuje, ypač kad būtų pasirašytas susitarimas su Ukraina ir parafuoti susitarimai su Moldova, Gruzija ir Armėnija?

Kokia numatoma Moldovos vizų režimo liberalizavimo veiksmų plano įgyvendinimo pabaigos perspektyva ir ar numatoma pakankama tokių planų, skirtų Gruzijai ir Ukrainai, antrojo etapo įgyvendinimo pažanga?

Š. Fülės atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. gegužės 15 d.)

Kaip neseniai pripažinta Europos kaimynystės politikos pažangos ataskaitose, derybose dėl asociacijos susitarimų su Moldova, Armėnija ir Gruzija buvo daroma nuolatinė pažanga. Komisija nepamiršo vasario mėn. Užsienio reikalų tarybos susitikimo išvadose įvardytų tikslų siekti pažangos rengiant šiuos asociacijos susitarimus bei glaudaus bendradarbiavimo ir visapusiškus laisvosios prekybos susitarimus, kad jie būtų baigti iki Aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimo Vilniuje. ES išlieka pasirengusi pasirašyti asociacijos susitarimą bei glaudaus bendradarbiavimo ir visapusišką laisvosios prekybos susitarimą su Ukraina, kai tik Ukrainos valdžios institucijos imsis ryžtingų veiksmų ir padarys akivaizdžią pažangą 2012 m. gruodžio mėn. Tarybos išvadose apibrėžtose svarbiausiose srityse, galbūt iki Rytų partnerystės aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimo Vilniuje.

Vizų režimo liberalizavimo veiksmų planų įgyvendinimą kontroliuoja šalys partnerės, nors tikslinėmis ES finansinės ir techninės paramos priemonėmis siekiama paspartinti esmines reformas. Moldovoje Komisijos tarnybos ir Europos išorės veiksmų tarnyba kartu su valstybių narių ekspertais neseniai atliko vertinimo vizitus. Iki vasaros atostogų bus paskelbta Moldovos vizų režimo liberalizavimo veiksmų plano antrojo etapo ataskaita – tai bus pagrindas to, ką realiai bus galima pasiekti Vilniuje. ES tikisi, kad Ukraina labiau pasistengs laiku įgyvendinti vizų režimo liberalizavimo veiksmų plano pirmojo etapo kriterijus. Komisija ir Taryba atidžiai stebės pažangą, daromą įgyvendinant šiuos kriterijus, kad būtų susitarta dėl antrojo kriterijų vertinimo etapo pradžios. Vizų išdavimo tvarkos supaprastinimo susitarimas su Gruzija jau galioja nuo 2011 m. kovo mėn. Vyksta pradiniai vizų režimo liberalizavimo veiksmų plano įgyvendinimo etapai.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002995/13
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Vilnius Summit

It is one year since the EU set out the priorities to be achieved by the time of the 3rd EU — Eastern Partnership Summit, to be held in Vilnius, which include a deepening of contractual relations with the Eastern Partnership countries through Association Agreements, providing also for the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs), and through the visa facilitation and liberalisation processes.

How does the Commission plan to secure the achievement of the aforementioned EU objectives in time for the Vilnius Summit, notably the signing of the agreement with Ukraine and the initialling of agreements with Moldova, Georgia, and Armenia?

What are the prospects for finalising the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP) with Moldova and achieving sufficient progress with Georgia and Ukraine to start the second phase of implementation of the VLAP?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Association Agreement negotiations with the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia have made steady progress, as was recently recognised in the European Neighbourhood Policy progress reports. The Commission recalls the ambitions outlined in the Conclusions of the February Foreign Affairs Council, which called for progress on these Association Agreements/DCFTAs with a view to their finalisation by the time of the Vilnius Summit. The EU remains ready to sign the Association Agreement/DCFTA with Ukraine as soon as the Ukrainian authorities demonstrate determined action and tangible progress in the key areas spelt out in the Council Conclusions of December 2012, possibly by the time of the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit.

The pace of implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plans (VLAP) is in the hands of the partner countries, although targeted EU financial and technical support is aimed at accelerating key reforms. Regarding the Republic of Moldova, the Commission services and the European External Action Service (EEAS), accompanied by Member States experts, have recently completed a series of assessment visits. A report on the second phase of the VLAP for Moldova will be issued before the summer break forming the basis for what can be realistically delivered at Vilnius. The EU looks forward to increased efforts by Ukraine towards the early fulfilment of the benchmarks of the first phase of the VLAP**.** The progress in the fulfilment of benchmarks will be closely examined by the Commission and the Council, with a view to reaching agreement to initiate the assessment of the second phase of benchmarks. Visa Faciliation Agreement with Georgia is already in place since March 2011. The VLAP is in its initial stages of implementation.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-002996/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(18 martie 2013)

Subiect: Statisticile demografice în Uniunea Europeană

În data de 13 martie 2013, Parlamentul European a adoptat un Raport referitor la componența Parlamentului European în perspectiva alegerilor din 2014.

Raportul adoptat conține în Anexă o Propunere de decizie a Consiliului European privind stabilirea componenței Parlamentului European. Această decizie prevede modificări ale numărului de reprezentanți în Parlamentul European aleși în fiecare stat membru. Astfel, la articolul 2 al acestei propuneri se specifică faptul că populația totală a statelor membre se calculează de către Comisie (Eurostat) pe baza datelor furnizate de către statele membre.

Care vor fi principalele criterii pe baza cărora va fi definită populația totală a unui stat?

Răspuns dat de dl Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(11 aprilie 2013)

Eurostat strânge date privind populația de la institutele naționale de statistică prin intermediul colectărilor anuale de date demografice. Datele statistice referitoare la populație se furnizează în raport cu data de 1 ianuarie a fiecărui an.

Aceste colectări de date se fac în prezent în mod voluntar și sub rezerva utilizării definițiilor și metodelor naționale. Definițiile, conceptele și metodele demografice adoptate în statele membre sunt diferite (conceptele de populație legală, populație rezidentă permanent, populație înregistrată, populație *de jure* etc.) și prezintă un risc ridicat de eterogenitate, incomparabilitate, inconsecvență și întârziere aferente datelor în cauză.

Eurostat încurajează toate țările să furnizeze statisticile demografice pe baza conceptului de populație în mod obișnuit rezidentă, însă ele nu sunt obligate să îndeplinească aceste cerințe din cauza absenței unui cadru juridic.

Comisia a adoptat în 2011 o propunere legislativă care urmărește să ofere primele statistici oficiale armonizate referitoare la populația totală din statele membre. Această inițiativă vizează obținerea unor cifre oficiale de cea mai înaltă calitate referitoare la populația totală din UE, care sunt deosebit de importante pentru instituțiile Uniunii și pentru statele membre. Propunerea Comisiei garantează faptul că datele referitoare la populația totală sunt comparabile între țări, deoarece se aderă în mod strict și obligatoriu la conceptul de reședință obișnuită.

Propunerea legislativă a Comisiei face în prezent obiectul discuțiilor în cadrul Consiliului și al Parlamentului European.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002996/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Demographic statistics in the European Union

On 13 March 2013, the European Parliament adopted a report on the composition of the European Parliament with a view to the 2014 elections,

The annex to the report contains a proposal for a decision of the European Council establishing the composition of the European Parliament. That decision envisages changes to the number of representatives elected to the European Parliament in each Member State. Article 2 specifies that the total population of the Member States will be calculated by the Commission (Eurostat) on the basis of data provided by the Member States.

What will be the main criteria on the basis of which the total population of each state will be determined?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2013)

Eurostat collects population data from the National Statistical Institutes by means of the annual demographic data collections. Population stocks are provided referring to 1 January of each year.

These data collections are at the moment on a voluntary basis and subject to the use of national definitions and methods. Demographic definitions, concepts and methods adopted in the Member States are diverse (concepts of legal population, permanent resident population, registered population, de jure population, etc) and convey a high risk of heterogeneity, non-comparability, inconsistency and lack of timeliness of the data concerned.

Eurostat encourages all countries to provide demographic statistics based on the concept of usual resident population; however the countries are not obliged to fulfil these requirements, due to the lack of a legal framework.

The Commission adopted in 2011 a legislative proposal aimed at providing the first-ever harmonised official statistics of the total population in Member States. This initiative aims at producing the highest quality official figures of the total population in the EU which are of key importance for Union institutions and Member States. The Commission proposal ensures that total population data are comparable between countries by means of a strict and mandatory adherence to the concept of usual residence.

The Commission legislative proposal is currently under discussion in the Council and in the European Parliament.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002997/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Embestida a embarcación e indefensión de los inmigrantes ilegales en España

Un video difundido en la página web de la cadena de radio española SER, publicado el pasado 11 de marzo, registró la brutal embestida de una embarcación de la Guardia Civil española a una pequeña patera llena de inmigrantes ilegales cuando ésta se había detenido. En una primera versión, anterior a la publicación del video, la Guardia Civil argumentaba haber sido impactados por la patera.

Esta actuación de la patrullera de la Guardia Civil Cabaleiro supone una de las más graves actuaciones de este cuerpo en el tema de la migración marítima hacia España. El impacto de la patrullera arrolló a la embarcación donde se encontraban 25 jóvenes marroquíes intentando llegar a la costa de las islas Canarias. Como resultado del mismo, murió uno de los ocupantes y desaparecieron otros siete. Más allá del choque —aún por esclarecer el dolo y la culpabilidad que pudiera tener la citada patrullera de la Guardia Civil-, los agentes no llamaron inmediatamente después a los servicios de salvamento, incurriendo en una posible negligencia criminal que podría haber supuesto la vida a las víctimas. Los agentes también violaron sus propios protocolos por los que debían haber avisado a los servicios de salvamento marítimo en el momento de la detección de dicha embarcación. Estas múltiples infracciones suponen un verdadero escándalo sobre la actuación de la Guardia Civil en este caso, pero reviste aún más gravedad la posibilidad de quedar impunes dichos crímenes.

La Defensora del Pueblo de España ha mostrado su preocupación por la expulsión de 14 de los 17 inmigrantes que sobrevivieron al suceso, limitando las posibilidades de un desarrollo normal del proceso judicial. De esta forma, con las expulsiones exprés se viola además el derecho a testificar en procedimientos judiciales abiertos en España y, por tanto, su protección ante crímenes cometidos por las autoridades españolas. Los actos citados podrían vulnerar la Ley 8/2000, así como la Directiva 2005/85/CE y la Directiva 2008/115/CE a escala europea. A escala internacional, la Convención de Ginebra sobre el Estatuto de los Refugiados y, por supuesto, la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos.

¿Exigirá la Comisión a España que haga volver a los inmigrantes deportados hasta que se culmine un proceso legal que garantice la completa persecución de los posibles crímenes? ¿Considera que la legislación relativa a la expulsión de inmigrantes ilegales puede producir la indefensión de los derechos de los mismos en este tipo de casos? ¿Piensa tomar medidas para que la agencia Frontex pueda evitar este tipo de indefensión de los derechos de los inmigrantes?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de mayo de 2013)

1. y 2. La Comisión no tiene competencias para pedir directamente a un Estado miembro que suspenda un procedimiento de retorno porque un inmigrante en situación irregular sea la víctima de un delito que está siendo investigado. No obstante, la necesidad de que un inmigrante irregular se quede en el territorio de un Estado miembro para defender sus derechos ante un tribunal podría ser una circunstancia o razón particular que justificaría, de conformidad con la Directiva 2008/115/CE relativa al retorno, que España ampliara el periodo de salida voluntaria (artículo 7, apartado 2) o concediera un permiso de residencia u otra autorización que otorgase un derecho de estancia (artículo 6, apartado 4). Además, si un inmigrante solicita asilo en el territorio de la UE, su solicitud debe ser completamente evaluada y adecuadamente resuelta antes de que pueda iniciarse ningún procedimiento de retorno.

3. El incidente difundido por la cadena de radio SER no se produjo en el contexto de una operación de vigilancia de fronteras coordinada por Frontex. La operación conjunta HERA, que tiene lugar en la región del incidente denunciado, terminó el 15 de diciembre de 2012 y volverá a comenzar el 4 de julio de 2013. Durante una operación conjunta, la Agencia y los Estados miembros tienen que asegurarse de que la protección de los derechos fundamentales está garantizada hasta que dicha operación termina. Los guardacostas, cuando patrullan en el mar, están obligados a respetar también el principio de no devolución (*non-refoulement*), por el cual un Estado no puede obligar a una persona a regresar a un territorio en el que pueda estar expuesta a persecución. El Estado miembro de acogida debe establecer, de conformidad con la legislación nacional, medidas disciplinarias o de otra índole adecuadas para los casos de violación de derechos fundamentales. Si esas violaciones son de carácter grave y hay probabilidad de que persistan, el Director Ejecutivo de la Agencia suspenderá la operación conjunta o le pondrá fin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002997/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Attack on boat and defencelessness of illegal immigrants in Spain

A video broadcast on the website of the Spanish radio station SER, released on 11 March 2013, recorded the brutal attack by a Spanish Civil Guard vessel on a small boat carrying illegal immigrants, once the latter had stopped. In an initial version of events, prior to the video's release, the Civil Guard had argued that the small boat had crashed into them.

This act by the Civil Guard patrol boat *Cabaleiro* is one of the most serious issues of conduct by this body relating to maritime migration to Spain. The impact of the patrol boat capsized the smaller boat which held 25 young Moroccans attempting to reach the coast of the Canary Islands. As a result, one of the occupants died and another seven went missing. Aside from the collision, and further highlighting the deceit and culpability of the aforementioned Civil Guard patrol boat, the officers did not call the rescue services immediately after the event, potentially an act of criminal negligence that could have cost the lives of the victims. The officers also violated their own protocols, according to which they should have alerted the sea rescue services on detecting the aforementioned boat. These multiple offences suggest a real scandal in terms of the Civil Guard's conduct in this case. However, what is even more serious is the possibility that the officers may receive impunity for these crimes.

Spain's Ombudsman has expressed his concern about the deportation of 14 of the 17 immigrants who survived the event, limiting the possibility of a normal judicial process. Thus, with the hasty deportations comes a breach of the victims' right to testify in open court proceedings in Spain and, therefore, of their right of defence against crimes committed by the Spanish authorities. The cited acts may breach Spanish Law 8/2000, as well as EU Directive 2005/85/EC and Directive 2008/115/EC. At international level, they may contravene the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and, of course, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Will the Commission demand that Spain return the deported immigrants until the culmination of legal proceedings that guarantee a full investigation into the potential crimes? Does it believe that the legislation relating to the deportation of illegal immigrants may prevent their rights from being defended in this kind of case? Will it take measures to ensure that the Frontex agency can prevent such situations in which the rights of immigrants are not defended?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1 and 2. The Commission has no power to directly ask a Member State to suspend a return procedure because an irregular immigrant is the victim of a criminal offence which is under investigation. However, the need for an irregular immigrant to stay on the territory of a Member State to defend its rights in Court could be an individual circumstance/reason which may justify under the Return Directive 2008/115/EC that Spain extends the period for voluntary departure (Article 7(2)) or grants a residence permit or other authorisation offering a right to stay (Article 6(4)). Moreover, if a migrant applies for asylum on the territory of the EU, his or her application must be fully assessed and properly disposed of before any return proceedings can be initiated.

3. The incident reported by the radio station SER did not occur in the context of a border surveillance operation coordinated by Frontex. The Joint Operation HERA, which takes place in the region of the reported incident, ended on 15 December 2012 and will restart on 4 July 2013. During a joint operation, the Agency and the Member States need to ensure that the protection of fundamental rights is guaranteed throughout the operation. In patrolling the seas, coast guards are also obliged to respect the *non-refoulement* principle, whereby a State may not oblige a person to return to a territory where he or she may be exposed to persecution. The home Member State must provide for appropriate disciplinary or other measures in accordance with national law where there is a violation of fundamental rights. In case such violations are of a serious nature and are likely to persist, the Executive Director of the Agency shall suspend or terminate the joint operation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002999/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: Cyberkrieg und -kriminalität

Die Cyber-Kriminalität nimmt in der Europäischen Union und weltweit rapide zu; es ist kaum noch möglich, die einzelnen Akteure zu identifizieren und/oder Staaten zuzurechnen, geschweigen denn anzuklagen. Es handelt sich um anonyme und transnationale Aktionen, die zwischen den Kategorien Cyber-Krieg und Cyber-Kriminalität stehen und nur auf supranationaler Ebene bekämpft werden können. Besonders problematisch ist die Tatsache, dass die virtuellen „Waffen" im Cyber-Krieg jeder Privatperson mit genügend Know-how zur Verfügung stehen und sich dementsprechend nur schwer kontrollieren lassen.

1. Ist der Kommission diese Problematik bekannt und wenn ja, gibt es bereits Kooperationen auf EU-Ebene oderProjekte zur Verbesserung der Zusammenarbeit?

2. Wird dabei die Tatsache berücksichtigt, dass es in vielen Fällen sowohl um polizeiliche als auch um militärische Kompetenzen geht?

3. Wurden bereits Kooperationen im Zuge von pooling and sharing zu Cyber-Sicherheit verwirklicht?

4. Gibt es bereits Pläne zum Schutz wichtiger Infrastrukturen (Strom- und Wasserwerke, Verkehr/Telekommunikation)?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(16. Mai 2013)

Der Europäischen Kommission ist sich dessen bewusst, dass die Datennetze in Europa und anderswo in der Welt ständig neuen Bedrohungen ausgesetzt sind.

Als Reaktion hierauf hat die Kommission in enger Zusammenarbeit mit den EU-Mitgliedstaaten und anderen Institutionen und Agenturen eine Strategie erarbeitet. Im Februar 2013 nahm sie gemeinsam mit der Hohen Vertreterin eine Cybersicherheitsstrategie ([1]) an, in der die EU ihre Vorstellungen darlegt, wie die Cybersicherheit verbessert werden kann, und Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Widerstandsfähigkeit auf nationaler und EU-Ebene sowie eine koordinierte Reaktion auf dieses weltweite Problem skizziert, die auch einen Dialog zwischen zivilen und militärischen Akteuren umfasst. Gleichzeitig hat die Kommission den Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über die Netz- und Informationssicherheit (NIS) angenommen, die einen angemessenen Schutz des öffentlichen und des privaten Sektors gegen zufällige Störungen und böswillige Angriffe und eine gemeinsame Reaktion darauf sicherstellen soll, wenn die Auswirkungen grenzüberschreitend sind. Anbieter elektronischer Kommunikationsdienste müssen bereits entsprechende Anforderungen ([2]) erfüllen. Mit der NIS-Richtlinie sollen auch Betreiber kritischer Infrastrukturen und öffentliche Verwaltungen solchen Anforderungen nachkommen müssen. Zur weiteren Verbesserung der Widerstandsfähigkeit hat die Kommission zudem eine Überarbeitung der Richtlinie ([3]) zum Schutz kritischer Infrastrukturen eingeleitet; sie möchte in der ersten Jahreshälfte 2013 einen neuen Ansatz vorschlagen. Die Europäische Agentur für Netz- und Informationssicherheit (ENISA) leistet durch ihre Unterstützung der Europäischen Kommission und der Mitgliedstaaten mit Fachwissen und Ratschlägen zur Netz- und Informationssicherheit ebenfalls einen wesentlichen Beitrag.

Im Bereich der Cyberkriminalität leistet das neu eingerichtete Europol-Zentrum zur Bekämpfung der Cyberkriminalität (EC3) den Mitgliedstaaten bei Ermittlungen in Sachen Cyberstraftaten operationelle und analytische Unterstützung.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/cybercrime/docs/join_2013_1_de.pdf

([2]) Artikel 13a der Richtlinie 2002/21/EG über einen gemeinsamen Rechtsrahmen für elektronische Kommunikationsnetze und -dienste (Rahmenrichtlinie).

([3]) Richtlinie 2008/114/EG über die Ermittlung und Ausweisung europäischer kritischer Infrastrukturen und die Bewertung der Notwendigkeit, ihren Schutz zu verbessern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002999/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Cyber warfare and cyber crime

The number of cyber crime incidents is growing rapidly in the European Union and worldwide. It has become virtually impossible to identify the individuals involved and/or to locate where they come from, let alone prosecute them. These activities are anonymous and transnational. They fall between the categories of cyber warfare and cyber crime and can be tackled only at supranational level. A particular problem is the fact that virtual 'weapons' in cyber warfare are available to any individual with sufficient expertise and, as a result, they are very hard to control.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem and, if so, do we already have cooperative efforts at EU level to tackle cyber crime or projects to improve such cooperation?

2. Is account being taken of the fact that tackling cyber crime in many cases involves both police and military intervention?

3. Are cooperative efforts being implemented as part of the pooling and sharing of information on cyber security?

4. Are there already plans for the protection of critical infrastructure (electricity and water utilities, transport/telecommunications grids)?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The European Commission is aware of the ever-evolving cybersecurity threat facing Europe and the rest of the world.

In response to this threat, the Commission has designed its policy in close cooperation with EU Member States and other institutions and agencies. In February 2013, the Commission and the High Representative adopted a Cyber security strategy ([1]), which outlines the EU's vision on how to enhance security in cyberspace, setting out actions required to ensure resilience at national and EU level, as well as a coordinated response to this global issue, including dialogue between civilian and military actors. The Commission has simultaneously adopted a proposal for a directive on network and information security (NIS), aimed at ensuring that the public and the private sector are adequately protected against incidents and able to react to them jointly when they have cross-border implications, be it attacks or accidental events. Providers of electronic communications services are already subject to such requirements ([2]). The NIS Directive would extend these requirements to providers of critical infrastructure and public administrations. To further enhance resilience, the Commission has also started a review of the Critical Infrastructure Protection Directive ([3]) with a view to proposing a new approach in the first half of 2013. The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) also plays a key role in assisting the European Commission and Member States with expertise and advice on network and information security matters.

In the area of cybercrime, Europol's newly-established Cybercrime Centre (EC3) provides operational and analytical support to Member States' cybercrime investigations.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/cybercrime/docs/join_2013_1_en.pdf

([2]) Article 13a of Directive 2002/21/EC on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services (Framework Directive).

([3]) Directive 2008/114/EC on the identification and designation of European critical infrastructures and the assessment of the need to improve their protection.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003000/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: „Zensur" von Kinderbüchern

Im Zuge der Debatte um Geschlechterstereotypen und *political correctness* wird immer wieder ein „Umschreiben"/„Anpassen" von Kinderbüchern gefordert, die nicht diesen Anforderungen entsprechen. Besonders häufig betrifft dies historische Kinderbücher, die aus dem Geist ihrer Zeit einen anderen Wortschatz (und andere Motive) enthalten, als in der Gegenwart opportun scheint.

1. Verfolgt die Kommission diese Entwicklungen? Wenn ja, wie gedenkt die Kommission die Mitgliedstaaten zu diesem Thema zu „leiten"?

2. Wie beabsichtigt die Kommission — falls sie solche Änderungen für notwendig hält — die Mitgliedstaaten im Hinblick darauf zu beraten, dass möglicherweise der „Zeitgeist" und auch der Ausdruck von kultureller Identität verloren gehen?

3. Gibt es Projekte für Kinder, die eine geschichtsorientierte Thematisierung dieser sprachlichen Veränderungen zum Ziel haben?

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(14. Mai 2013)

Der Kommission sind keine konkreten Beispiele für die von der Frau Abgeordneten beschriebene Anpassung oder Umschreibung von Kinderbüchern bekannt. Die Kommission ist in jedem Fall nicht befugt, den Mitgliedstaaten im Hinblick auf derartige Entscheidungen von Privatpersonen oder Einzelunternehmen Anweisungen zu erteilen.

Die Abschaffung rigider Geschlechterrollen, die der Chancengleichheit von Frauen und Männern im Wege stehen, ist eine Querschnittsaufgabe im Rahmen der Strategie der Europäischen Kommission für die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern, die alle EU-Politikbereiche betrifft.

In den Jahren 2009 und 2012 organisierte die Kommission Maßnahmen zum Austausch bewährter Verfahren mit dem Schwerpunkt auf nicht geschlechterspezifischen schulischen und beruflichen Entscheidungen für Mädchen und Jungen, die Lehrkräfte und Schülerschaft für Geschlechterrollen sensibilisieren sollten.

Die EU unterstützt außerdem Comenius-Projekte, die auf die Abschaffung von Geschlechterstereotypen und den Ausbau der Zusammenarbeit von Schulen aus verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten abzielen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003000/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: 'Censorship' of children's books

In the course of the debate on gender stereotypes and political correctness there have been repeated calls for children's books not meeting the requirements to be 'rewritten' or 'adapted'. This frequently concerns older books written according to the spirit of their age and hence at variance, in terms of their vocabulary (and other themes), with what seems appropriate today.

1. Is the Commission following these developments? If so, how does it propose to 'guide' Member States on this subject?

2. How will the Commission seek to impress upon Member States that such changes — assuming that it considered them to be necessary — might erase the spirit of other ages as well as depriving books of their power to express a distinctive cultural identity?

3. Are there any projects for children aimed at highlighting changes in language over time?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any concrete examples of the adaptation or rewriting of childrens' books along the lines described by the Honourable Member. In any event, the Commission does not have any competence to guide Member States with respect to decisions of this kind made by private individuals or individual companies.

Eliminating rigid gender roles constituting an obstacle to gender equality is treated as a cross-cutting issue in the Commission's 'Strategy for equality between women and men' and is dealt with in all EU policies.

In 2009 and 2012, the Commission organised exchanges of good practices focusing on non-stereotypical educational choices for girls and boys, aiming at raising awareness of teachers and pupils on gender roles.

The EU also supports Comenius projects focusing on eliminating gender stereotypes and enhancing cooperation between schools from different Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003001/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(18 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Βανδαλισμοί σε ελληνικό στρατιωτικό νεκροταφείο στην ΠΓΔΜ

Περιστατικά, όπως η πρόσφατη βεβήλωση ελληνικού στρατιωτικού νεκροταφείου στην πόλη Βαλάντοβο της Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβικής Δημοκρατίας της Μακεδονίας (ΠΓΔΜ), βλάπτουν σοβαρά το κλίμα εμπιστοσύνης που προσπαθούν να οικοδομήσουν στις μεταξύ τους σχέσεις η Αθήνα και τα Σκόπια και δεν συμβιβάζονται με την έννοια της καλής γειτονίας.

Ερωτάται, κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή αν έχει λάβει γνώση του συγκεκριμένου περιστατικού και αν προτίθεται να ζητήσει από τις αρχές της ΠΓΔΜ να καταδικάσουν απερίφραστα την αποτρόπαια αυτή πράξη, φροντίζοντας για την αποτελεσματική διαλεύκανση της υπόθεσης και την αποκατάσταση των ζημιών στο ελληνικό νεκροταφείο.

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003005/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(18 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Βανδαλισμοί σε ελληνικό στρατιωτικό νεκροταφείο στην πόλη Βαλάντοβο της ΠΓΔΜ

Εκτεταμένο βανδαλισμό υπέστη ελληνικό στρατιωτικό νεκροταφείο που χρονολογείται από τον Α' Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο, στην πόλη Βαλάντοβο της Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβικής Δημοκρατίας της Μακεδονίας. Σύμφωνα με εκτιμήσεις, οι ζημιές που προκλήθηκαν είναι σημαντικές.

Το γεγονός αυτό προκάλεσε την αντίδραση της Ελλάδας. Σε επίσημο διάβημα διαμαρτυρίας προς το Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών της ΠΓΔΜ, η Ελλάδα απαιτεί από τις αρχές των Σκοπίων να καταδικάσουν το γεγονός, να εργαστούν για τον εντοπισμό και την τιμωρία των ενόχων, καθώς και για την αποκατάσταση των υλικών ζημιών.

Η απαράδεκτη αυτή ενέργεια μίσους δεν μπορεί παρά να αξιολογηθεί ως επακόλουθο της μισαλλόδοξης και ακραία εθνικιστικής ρητορικής και δράσης που έχει υιοθετήσει ο πρωθυπουργός και η κυβέρνηση των Σκοπίων επί σειρά ετών έναντι γειτονικών χωρών, οι οποίες μάλιστα είναι μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (συγκεκριμένα η Ελλάδα και η Βουλγαρία).

Σε συνέχεια των ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει ενημερωθεί για το συγκεκριμένο περιστατικό και πώς το σχολιάζει;

2. Προτίθεται να ζητήσει από την Κυβέρνηση των Σκοπίων να προβεί στις απαραίτητες ενέργειες για τον εντοπισμό και την τιμωρία των υπόπτων;

3. Θα καταγράψει το συγκεκριμένο γεγονός στην επόμενη έκθεση προόδου της εν λόγω υποψήφιας προς ένταξη χώρας;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το περιστατικό. Η Επιτροπή επισημαίνει ότι στις 15 Μαρτίου 2013, το Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών της Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβικής Δημοκρατίας της Μακεδονίας εξέδωσε ανακοίνωση καταδικάζοντας τους βανδαλισμούς στο Ελληνικό 1 Στρατιωτικό Νεκροταφείο του Α' Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου, επισημαίνοντας ότι οι αρχές θα λάβουν τα αναγκαία μέτρα ώστε να διαπιστώσουν τα πραγματικά περιστατικά γύρω από το συμβάν.

Η Επιτροπή αποδίδει ιδιαίτερη σημασία στις σχέσεις καλής γειτονίας και στην περιφερειακή συνεργασία, που συνιστούν σημαντικό μέρος της προόδου της πορείας της χώρας προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε έκθεση στις 16 Απριλίου 2013 σχετικά με την εφαρμογή των μεταρρυθμίσεων στο πλαίσιο του Διαλόγου Υψηλού Επιπέδου για την Προσχώρηση και την προαγωγή των σχέσεων καλής γειτονίας. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή θα συντάξει έκθεση όσον αφορά τις σχέσεις καλής γειτονίας, ως συνήθως, στην οικεία προσεχή ετήσια έκθεση προόδου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003001/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Vandalism of Greek military cemetery in FYROM

Incidents such as the recent desecration of a Greek military cemetery in the town of Valentovo in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FRYOM) seriously undermine efforts which Athens and Skopje are making to establish a climate of confidence in relations between them and conflict with the concept of good neighbourly relations.

In light of the above, will the Commission say if it is aware of this particular incident and if it intends to ask the FYROM authorities to roundly condemn this appalling behaviour and ensure that the case is investigated thoroughly and the damage to the Greek cemetery repaired?

Question for written answer E-003005/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Vandalism of Greek military cemetery in the town of Valentovo (FYROM)

The Greek military cemetery in the town of Valentovo in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which dates back to the First World War, has been seriously vandalised. According to reports, considerable damage was caused.

This incident has provoked reaction on the part of Greece. In an official protest to the FYROM Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece has called for the authorities in Skopje to condemn this act, to work to identify and punish the perpetrators and to repair the damage.

This unacceptable act of hatred is obviously an inevitable consequence of the fanaticism and extreme nationalistic rhetoric and action adopted over the last few years by the Prime Minister and government in Skopje against neighbouring EU Member States (specifically Greece and Bulgaria).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it been advised of this particular incident and what are its comments on it?

2. Does it intend to ask the Skopje government to take the necessary action to identify and punish the suspects?

3. Will this particular incident be recorded in the next progress report on the candidate country in question?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the incident. The Commission notes that on 15 March 2013 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia issued a statement condemning the vandalism of the Greek World War 1 Military Cemetery, indicating that authorities would take necessary measures in order to establish the facts surrounding the incident.

The Commission attaches particular importance to good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation which form an essential part of the country's progress towards the European Union. The Commission adopted a report on 16 April 2013 on implementation of reforms within the framework of the High Level Accession Dialogue and promotion of good neighbourly relations. The Commission will moreover report on good neighbourly relations, as usual, in its forthcoming annual progress report.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003002/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ολοκλήρωση των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων για το 2007 και το 2008 για την αντιμετώπιση της παράνομης μετανάστευσης στην Ελλάδα

Με παλαιότερη απάντησή της σε ερώτησή μου (E-000201/2012), η Επιτροπή ανέφερε πως εξετάζονται οι τελευταίες εκθέσεις για την εφαρμογή των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων 2007 και 2008 που υποβλήθηκαν στην Επιτροπή για τα τέσσερα Ταμεία του γενικού προγράμματος «Αλληλεγγύη και διαχείριση των μεταναστευτικών ροών».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ολοκληρώθηκε η σχετική προσπάθεια; Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το ποσοστό των απορροφήσεων από την Ελλάδα;

2. Διαθέτει προσωρινά στοιχεία αναφορικά με τις απορροφήσεις από τα τέσσερα ταμεία για την περίοδο 2009-2011; Είναι σε θέση να μου τα παραθέσει;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαΐου 2013)

Όπως περιγράφεται ήδη στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην κοινοβουλευτική ερώτηση E-0201/2012, η διαδικασία περάτωσης των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων που συγχρηματοδοτήθηκαν στο πλαίσιο των κονδυλίων «SOLID» είναι μια περίπλοκη διαδικασία που απαιτεί διάφορους ελέγχους και επαληθεύσεις.

Μέχρι σήμερα το ετήσιο πρόγραμμα 2007 της Ελλάδας στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Ένταξης Υπηκόων Τρίτων Χωρών είναι το μοναδικό που έχει ήδη περατωθεί, με ποσοστό υλοποίησης 84%. Δεδομένου ότι για τα άλλα ετήσια προγράμματα για το 2007, 2008 και 2009 η διαδικασία συνεχίζεται ακόμη, τα τελικά ποσά που βαρύνουν τα αντίστοιχα ετήσια προγράμματα δεν έχουν ακόμη αποφασιστεί. Ωστόσο, με βάση τα επικαιροποιημένα στοιχεία που παρέχονται στην Επιτροπή σχετικά με τα συνδυασμένα ετήσια προγράμματα που υλοποιούνται στο πλαίσιο των αντίστοιχων Ταμείων, το μέσο ποσοστό υλοποίησης είναι περίπου 81% για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο για τους Πρόσφυγες (ΕΤΠ), 78% για το Ταμείο Ένταξης Υπηκόων Τρίτων Χωρών, περίπου 40% για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Επιστροφής και 44% για το Ταμείο Εξωτερικών Συνόρων. Όσον αφορά την εφαρμογή των μέτρων έκτακτης ανάγκης του ΕΤΠ για το 2008 και το 2009 στην Ελλάδα, τα στοιχεία που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή δείχνουν κατάσταση χαμηλής απορρόφησης που φτάνει μέσο ποσοστό 17%.

Όσον αφορά τα ετήσια προγράμματα 2010 και 2011, οι τελικές εκθέσεις σχετικά με την εφαρμογή των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων 2010 δεν έχουν ακόμη υποβληθεί στην Επιτροπή, ενώ οι τελικές εκθέσεις σχετικά με την εφαρμογή των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων 2011 μπορούν να υποβληθούν έως τις 31 Μαρτίου 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003002/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Completion of 2007 and 2008 annual programmes to address illegal immigration in Greece

In reply to my previous question (E-000201/2012), the Commission stated that recent reports on the 2007 and 2008 annual programmes submitted to the Commission on the four funds involved in the general programme 'Solidarity and management of migration flows' are undergoing review.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has the endeavour in question been completed? Is it in a position to say what percentage was taken up by Greece?

2. Does it have provisional statistics on the take-up from the four funds for the period 2009-2011? Is it in a position to provide this information?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

As already described in the Commission's reply to parliamentary Question E-0201/2012, the closure process for annual programmes co-financed under the SOLID Funds is a complex exercise requiring various checks and verifications.

To date the 2007 Greek annual programme under the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF) is the only one already closed, with an implementation rate of 84%. Since for the other 2007, 2008 and 2009 annual programmes the process in still ongoing, the final amounts chargeable to the respective annual programmes are not yet decided. However, up-to-date information provided to the Commission for the combined annual programmes under the respective Funds indicates an average implementation rate of approximately 81% for the European Refugee Fund (ERF), 78% for the EIF, nearly 40% for the Return Fund and 44% for the External Borders Fund. Regarding the implementation of ERF Emergency Measures for 2008 and 2009 in Greece, information available to the Commission indicates a situation of low absorption reaching an average rate of 17%.

For the annual programmes 2010 and 2011, the final reports on the implementation of the 2010 annual programmes have not yet been submitted to the Commission while the final reports on the implementation of the 2011 annual programmes are only due by 31 March 2014.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003003/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αξιολόγηση της μέχρι σήμερα λειτουργίας της ευρωπαϊκής πύλης για τη μετανάστευση

Η ευρωπαϊκή διαδικτυακή πύλη για τη μετανάστευση ξεκίνησε τη λειτουργία της τον Νοέμβριο του 2011. Σκοπός της είναι να παρέχει πρακτικές πληροφορίες σε μετανάστες και πιθανούς μετανάστες, ενώ περιλαμβάνει ενότητα σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα και τους κινδύνους που αφορούν την παράνομη μετανάστευση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία από το πρώτο έτος λειτουργίας της πύλης αναφορικά με τον αριθμό των επισκεπτών, την εθνικότητα και τις πληροφορίες που κατά κύριο λόγο ζητήθηκαν;

2. Αξιολογεί ως επιτυχημένο το πρώτο έτος λειτουργίας της διαδικτυακής πύλης της ΕΕ για τη μετανάστευση;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Μαΐου 2013)

1. Το 2012, η διαδικτυακή πύλη της ΕΕ για τη μετανάστευση δέχτηκε περίπου 62 259 μοναδικούς επισκέπτες, με σταδιακή αύξηση των μοναδικών επισκεπτών από περίπου 4 000 το μήνα κατά τη διάρκεια του πρώτου τριμήνου σε περίπου 7 000 το μήνα κατά το τελευταίο τρίμηνο του έτους. Κατά τη διάρκεια του πρώτου τριμήνου του 2013, καταγράφηκαν κατά μέσο όρο πάνω από 9 300 μοναδικοί επισκέπτες το μήνα.

Η διαδικτυακή πύλη προορίζεται για πιθανούς μετανάστες, για υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών που βρίσκονται ήδη στην ΕΕ και για άλλα ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη, όπως κυβερνήσεις και ΜΚΟ. Οι επισκέψεις στη διαδικτυακή πύλη προήλθαν από ολόκληρο τον κόσμο, ενώ η πλειοψηφία των επισκεπτών από το εσωτερικό της ΕΕ. Το υψηλότερο ποσοστό επισκέψεων από χώρες εκτός της ΕΕ προήλθε από τις ΗΠΑ, την Κίνα, τη Ρωσία, την Ινδία και τον Καναδά (περίπου 20% των επισκέψεων). Μία ακόμη ένδειξη της προέλευσης αποτελούν οι 5 κορυφαίες γλωσσικές ρυθμίσεις του φυλλομετρητή: αγγλικά, γαλλικά, κινέζικα, ισπανικά και ρώσικα.

Οι πληροφορίες που κατά κύριο λόγο ζητήθηκαν σχετίζονταν με τις θεωρήσεις, με τον τρόπο με τον οποίο μπορεί κάποιος να μεταναστεύσει στην ΕΕ και με τους μετανάστες που βρίσκονται ήδη εντός της ΕΕ.

2. Ναι. Ο αριθμός των επισκεπτών αυξάνεται σταθερά και οι γενικές παρατηρήσεις είναι θετικές. Η Επιτροπή συνέχισε να αναπτύσσει την πύλη το 2012, με τη δρομολόγηση της ισπανικής έκδοσης τον Ιανουάριο του 2013 και με την αραβική έκδοση, η οποία βρίσκεται επί του παρόντος στο στάδιο ανάπτυξης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003003/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Evaluation of operation to date of European immigration portal

The European immigration portal came online in November 2011. Its purpose is to provide practical information for immigrants and potential immigrants and it has a section on rights and risks in connection with illegal immigration.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have information on the first year's operation of the portal in terms of the number of visitors, their nationality and the main information sought?

2. Does it consider that the first year's operation of the EU Immigration Portal has been a success?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

1. In 2012 there were around 62 259 unique visitors to the EU Immigration Portal, with traffic gradually increasing from about 4 000 unique visitors per month in the first quarter to about 7 000 unique visitors per month in the last quarter of the year. In the first quarter of 2013 an average of over 9 300 unique visitors per month has been recorded.

The Portal is intended for potential immigrants, third-country nationals already in the EU and other stakeholders such as governments and NGOs. Visits to the Portal originated from the entire world, with the majority within the EU. The top 5 of non-EU visits originated in the US, China, Russia, India and Canada (about 20% of the visits). Another indicator of origin is the top 5 of the browser language settings: English, French, Mandarin, Spanish and Russian.

The main information sought is on visa, on how to migrate to the EU and for migrants already in the EU.

2. Yes. The traffic has steadily increased and general feedback is positive. The Commission continued the development of the Portal in 2012, with a Spanish language version launched in January 2013 and an Arabic language version currently in development.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003004/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αφαίρεση της πάλης από τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνες του 2020

Η Εκτελεστική Επιτροπή της Διεθνούς Ολυμπιακής Επιτροπής (ΔΟΕ), στα πλαίσια της αναδιοργάνωσης του προγράμματος των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων, αποφάσισε να εισηγηθεί στη Γενική Συνέλευσή της την αφαίρεση του αθλήματος της πάλης από τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνες του 2020. Η οριστική απόφαση θα ληφθεί στη Σύνοδο της ΔΟΕ τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2013 στο Μπουένος Άιρες.

Η πάλη αποτελεί το αρχαιότερο Ολυμπιακό Άθλημα, το οποίο εμφανίσθηκε το 708 π.Χ., ενώ σε αυτό διαγωνίζονται αθλητές από τους πρώτους Σύγχρονους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνες του 1896. Το κατά τον Πλάτωνα «άθλημα των αθλημάτων» είναι απόλυτα συνυφασμένο με τις Ολυμπιακές αξίες και την ιερή τελετή της Ολυμπιακής Φλόγας, η μεταφορά της οποίας — μέσω των λαμπαδηδρόμων — παγκοσμίως, ξεκινά από την Παλαίστρα της Αρχαίας Ολυμπίας, τον χώρο δηλαδή στον οποίο οι παλαιστές της Αρχαιότητας διαγωνίζονταν.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ποια είναι η θέση του για την εξέλιξη αυτή;

2. Προτίθεται να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλίες ευαισθητοποίησης των εθνικών κυβερνήσεων και των εθνικών ολυμπιακών επιτροπών των κρατών μελών, για την υπεράσπιση του αθλήματος ως μέρος της ευρωπαϊκής παράδοσης και της ευρωπαϊκής πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς;

Απάντηση
(28 Μαΐου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο θα ήθελε να υπενθυμίσει στον αξιότιμο βουλευτή ότι, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 6 ΣΛΕΕ, η αρμοδιότητα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στον τομέα του αθλητισμού περιορίζεται στη διεξαγωγή δράσεων για την υποστήριξη, τον συντονισμό ή τη συμπλήρωση των δράσεων των κρατών μελών. Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 165 ΣΛΕΕ, η Ένωση συμβάλλει στην προώθηση των ευρωπαϊκών επιδιώξεων στον χώρο του αθλητισμού, λαμβάνοντας υπόψη παράλληλα τις ιδιαιτερότητές του, τις δομές του και τη συνεργασία μεταξύ των αρμόδιων για τον αθλητισμό φορέων.

Συνεπώς, το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει αυτό το θέμα, δεδομένου ότι δεν εμπίπτει στις αρμοδιότητές του.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003004/13
to the Council
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Exclusion of wrestling from the 2020 Olympic Games

The executive board of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has decided, as part of its restructuring of the Olympic Games programme, to propose to the IOC Session that the sport of wrestling be excluded from the 2020 Olympic Games. A final decision will be taken at the IOC Session in Buenos Aires in September 2013.

Wrestling is the oldest Olympic sport, dating back to 708 B.C., and athletes have competed in it since the first modern Olympic Games in 1896. What Plato called the 'sport of sports' is absolutely in keeping with Olympic values and the ceremony of the Olympic Flame begins its journey around the world, passing from one torch bearer to another, at the Palaistra in Ancient Olympia.

Will the Council answer the following:

1. What is its position on this development?

2. Does it intend to take steps to raise awareness among national governments and national Olympic committees in the Member States in order to defend the sport as part of European tradition and European cultural heritage?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council would like to remind the Honourable Member that, pursuant to Article 6 TFEU, European Union's competence in the area of sport is limited to carrying out actions to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States. In addition, under Article 165 TFEU, the Union shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues, while taking account of the specific nature of sport, its structures and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports.

Consequently, the Council has not discussed this question, as it does not fall within its sphere of competence.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003006/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(18 mars 2013)

Angående: Arkitekturer som en relevant produktmarknad och säker start med UEFI

Under det senaste året har det vid flera tillfällen talats i media om risken för att systemet för säker start Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI) skapar låsningsmekanismer för oberoende utvecklare och slutanvändare av programvaruprodukter, vilket jag tidigare har uppmärksammat kommissionen på i de skriftliga frågorna E-011160/2012, E-011084/2012, E-000162/2013 och E-002247/2013 (den sistnämnda ännu obesvarad). Kommissionen anger särskilt i sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-000162/2013 att ”OEM-företagen [(original equipment manufacturers) enligt kommissionens uppgifter måste] erbjuda slutanvändarna möjlighet att desaktivera UEFI säkerhetsstart”. Jag har dock blivit uppmärksammad på att UEFI säkerhetsstart med Microsofts nycklar är obligatoriskt i ARM:s instruktionsuppsättning ([1]). Detta beror uppenbarligen på att Microsoft anser att deras skyldighet att öppna sitt operativsystem endast omfattar x86-instruktionsuppsättningar. ARM-arkitekturen har blivit ett allt attraktivare alternativ för olika typer av elektronik för slutanvändare, inbegripet persondatorer. Till följd av revolutionen med mobila enheter körs dessutom ett stort och ökande antal enheter med ARM-processorer, snarare än i de mycket vanliga x86-arkitekturerna som används i persondatorer.

Delar kommissionen Microsofts uppfattning att företagets skyldighet att öppna sina plattformar endast omfattar de plattformar som baseras på x86-arkitekturer?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(15 maj 2013)

För att det ska gå att fastställa om en överträdelse av artikel 102 i fördraget om missbruk av dominerande ställning har ägt rum måste det först visas att ett företag har en dominerande ställning på en relevant marknad. Utan att det påverkar den exakta marknadsdefinitionen finns det ett antal mobila operativsystem på marknaden som tillhandahåller liknande tjänster som Microsoft. Det förefaller därför osannolikt att Microsoft för närvarande har en dominerande ställning på marknaden.

Men kommissionen följer noga utvecklingen på marknaden för att se till att alla marknadsaktörer fortsätter att omfattas av konkurrens, innovation och lika villkor.

([1]) Se exempelvis http://www.softwarefreedom.org/blog/2012/jan/12/microsoft-confirms-UEFI-fears-locks-down-ARM/ eller http://atechnologyjobisnoexcuse.com/2013/why-secure-boot-makes-people-freak-out/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003006/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Architectures as a relevant product market and UEFI Secure Boot

Over the past year, it has been repeated in the media that the Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI) Secure Boot system — which I have previously drawn to the Commission's attention in Written Questions E-011160/2012, E-011084/2012, E-000162/2013 and E-002247/2013 (the last of which has not yet been answered) — risks creating lock-in mechanisms for independent developers and end-users of software products. In particular, in its reply to Written Question E-000162/2013, the Commission states that 'on the basis of the information currently available to the Commission it appears that the OEMs [original equipment manufacturers] are required to give end users the option to disable the UEFI Secure Boot'. However, it has been brought to my attention that UEFI Secure Boot with Microsoft-signed keys is mandatory on the ARM instruction set architecture (ISA) ([1]). Apparently this is because Microsoft feels that the obligation to open up its operating system only applies to x86 ISAs. ARM architecture has become an increasingly attractive choice for several types of end-user electronics, including personal computers. Also, because of the mobile revolution, an increasingly large amount of devices run on ARM central processing units rather than on the very common x86 architectures used in personal computers.

Does the Commission share the Microsoft Corporation's view that the obligation to open up its platforms only applies to those based on x86 architectures?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

In order to establish whether an infringement of Article 102 of the Treaty, on abuse of a dominant position, has taken place, it must first be demonstrated that a company holds a dominant position in a relevant market. Without prejudice to the precise market definition, there are a number of mobile operating systems on the market which provide similar services to Microsoft's. It therefore seems unlikely that Microsoft holds a dominant position on the market at present.

However, the Commission closely monitors developments in the market so as to ensure that competition, innovation and a level playing field are preserved amongst all market players.

([1]) See for instance http://www.softwarefreedom.org/blog/2012/jan/12/microsoft-confirms-UEFI-fears-locks-down-ARM/ or http://atechnologyjobisnoexcuse.com/2013/why-secure-boot-makes-people-freak-out/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003007/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Claim for compensation for a flight delay

I have been contacted by a constituent who tells me that he and his wife suffered a flight delay on 9 November 2012 when they returned to London Gatwick Airport from Tenerife South Airport.

Their flight was scheduled to leave at 14.10 but the delay resulted in it landing at Gatwick 4 hours and 50 minutes late.

My constituent wrote to the airline on 26 November to provide them with the necessary details and to seek compensation for this delay under Regulation (EC) No 261/2004. He told the airline that the length of the scheduled flight was 2 910 km, and therefore he is seeking EUR 800 in compensation, EUR 400 per passenger.

My constituent tells me that 112 days have passed since the delay and that the airline is still investigating the cause of it, without providing any payment for damages.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. Whether the airline is in breach of EC law by not yet providing any funds to my constituent?

2. What action my constituent can take to ensure that he receives his compensation from the airline, which he is entitled to under EC law?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1. Under Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 ([1]), in case of a delay at the departure airport, passengers are entitled to care by the airline (such as refreshments, meals and, where applicable, accommodation). The extent of the delay triggering the right to care depends on the length of the flight (three hours for intra-EU flights of more than 1 500 km). The above mentioned full assistance must always be offered by the airlines to stranded passengers even if the delay was caused by extraordinary circumstances.

In case of a long delay of flight, causing passengers' arrival to the final destination with a delay of at least three hours, and following the so-called Sturgeon ([2]) and TUI ([3]) rulings of the EU Court of Justice, passengers may be entitled to financial compensation (EUR 400 per passenger for intra-EU flights of more than 1 500 km). Such a delay does not, however, entitle passengers to compensation if the air carrier can prove that the long delay was caused by extraordinary circumstances which could not have been avoided even if all reasonable measures had been taken.

2. When passengers consider that the airline did not comply with EU law, they might complain to the competent national enforcement body (NEB) in the country where the incident happened ([4]). Although NEBs can assist passengers with their claims, their evaluation is not legally binding on air carriers. Passengers wishing to pursue this matter further may wish to consider seeking legal advice in due time on the means of redress available at the national level. Depending on the nature of the claim, the European Small Claims Procedure ([5]) may be of assistance ([6]). For further assistance regarding the means of redress, passengers can contact the European Consumer Centres Network in their country of residence ([7]).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, OJ L 46, 17.2.2004, p. 1.
([2]) Case C-402/07.
([3]) Case C-629/10.
([4]) The list can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/2004_261_national_enforcement_bodies.pdf
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 861/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 establishing a European Small Claims Procedure, OJ L 199, 31.7.2007, pp. 1-22.
([6]) More information can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/judicialatlascivil/html/sc_information_en.htm
([7]) The list of ECCs can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/redress/ecc_network/ecc_network_centers.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003008/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: EU-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement

The Commission's progress in Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with Malaysia is welcome — FTAs with ASEAN nations will benefit both European citizens and the citizens of those countries by opening trade and reducing trade barriers.

Given the importance of these negotiations, is the Commission aware of the French Government's proposed Health Law, for example, which is expected to include measures to restrict the import of some Asian and African agricultural food products?

As the Commission will be aware, the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement makes it clear that it only permits restrictions on imports on health grounds if there is scientific evidence of damage to health and if there has been a process of risk assessment.

Will the Commission make representations to the French Government to underline the importance of the FTA negotiations, and also to underline the responsibility of EU governments to abide by the principles of open trade, non-discrimination and the EU's previously agreed international obligations?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The EU has been in negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Malaysia since September 2010. Seven rounds have been held so far and steady progress is being made.

Each EU Member State is responsible for the implementation of EC law within its own legal system, which should not be in breach of the relevant international obligations. In addition, conforming to their international and EU obligations, EU Member States have to notify any legislation that could possibly impact on trade or on the functioning of the EU market.

The Commission is aware and follows developments on the French Government's proposed Health Law. Under the Treaties, the Commission is responsible for ensuring that EC law is correctly applied. Consequently, where a Member State fails to comply with EC law or acts in contradiction of EC law, the Commission has powers to try to bring the infringement to an end and, where necessary, may refer the case to the European Court of Justice.

Should this be the case, the Commission will immediately remind the EU Member State in question of the abovementioned principles before considering any possible further action.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003460/13
aan de Commissie
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(27 maart 2013)

Betreft: Mededinging — onderhoud van vliegtuigen

Onderhoud van vliegtuigen (MRO, maintenance, repair and overhaul) gebeurt vandaag door 3 types bedrijven: de constructeurs (original equipment manufacturers), de luchtvaartmaatschappijen zelf en onafhankelijke bedrijven.

Er lijkt een risico te bestaan op het misbruik van de monopoliepositie door de constructeurs, wat zou leiden tot verhoogde prijzen voor de luchtvaartmaatschappijen hetgeen op zijn beurt mogelijk zou worden doorgerekend naar de consument.

In het verleden heeft de Europese Commissie actie ondernomen n.a.v. een gelijkaardige situatie in de auto-industrie.

In die context graag volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Hoe evalueert de Commissie de huidige situatie in deze sector op vlak van eerlijke concurrentie?

2. Welke acties neemt de Commissie om een eerlijke concurrentie tussen constructeurs, luchtvaartmaatschappijen en onafhankelijke bedrijven op vlak van MRO te garanderen?

3. Welke stappen zet de Commissie om te verzekeren dat constructeurs de nodige technische documentatie delen opdat andere bedrijven eveneens MRO diensten kunnen uitvoeren en opdat in dit kader geen oneerlijke prijzen of licenties worden gehanteerd?

4. Is de Commissie van plan om een onderzoek te openen naar deze situatie? Zo ja, wanneer? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(14 mei 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van deze kwestie, die gezien haar aard niet tot de Europese industrie is beperkt.

Voor het beheer van het technische aspect van deze kwestie wordt de Commissie bijgestaan door het Europees Agentschap voor de veiligheid van de luchtvaart (EASA). Gezien het belang van dit thema heeft het EASA tussen 2009 en 2012 activiteiten verricht in samenwerking met de burgerluchtvaartautoriteiten van de Verenigde Staten (FAA) en Canada (TCCA) om een aantal kwesties met betrekking tot de instructies voor de blijvende luchtwaardigheid (*Instructions for Continuing Airworthiness* — ICA) aan te pakken en gebieden van gemeenschappelijk belang van het EASA, de FAA en de TCCA te identificeren. De beschikbaarheid van ICA blijft controversieel vanwege de verschillende standpunten en meningen naargelang de industriesector en eveneens vanwege de juridische gevolgen ervan, zoals intellectuele eigendom. Bijgevolg heeft het EASA besloten om in juni 2013, samen met de industrie, de FAA en de TCCA, te starten met de opstelling van regelgeving in dit verband.

De vraag of de EU-mededingingsregels hierdoor geschonden zijn, kan enkel worden onderzocht via een grondige beoordeling van de specifieke omstandigheden, in het bijzonder de marktstructuur en de mogelijkheid dat een of meer ondernemingen een sterke marktpositie hebben, het optreden van dergelijke ondernemingen en de mogelijke rechtvaardiging van een dergelijk optreden. Ondernemingen die van dit optreden nadeel ondervinden, kunnen een klacht indienen bij de Commissie. De Commissie kan eveneens besluiten om ambtshalve op te treden.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003009/13
komissiolle
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(18. maaliskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Lentoliikenteen huolto-, korjaus- ja tarkastuspalvelut

Lentoliikenteen maailmanlaajuisten huolto-, korjaus- ja tarkastuspalvelujen markkinoiden arvo on 49,5 miljardia Yhdysvaltain dollaria. Tällä hetkellä alkuperäiset laitevalmistajat (OEM) sekä lentoyhtiöt ja riippumattomat huolto-, korjaus- ja tarkastuspalvelujen tarjoajat jakavat markkinat keskenään. On merkkejä siitä, että jotkut (moottoreiden ja komponenttien alan) OEM-valmistajat käyttävät hyväkseen hallitsevaa asemaansa kasvattaakseen markkinaosuuttaan ja saavuttaakseen loppujen lopuksi monopoliaseman markkinoilla. Tästä aiheutuisi lopulta korkeampia kustannuksia lentoyhtiöille ja kuluttajille.

Mitä komissio aikoo tehdä lopettaakseen OEM-valmistajien kilpailunvastaiset toimet, joita ovat epäoikeudenmukaisten tai kohtuuttomien hintojen asettaminen, teknisten asiakirjojen saannin rajoittaminen, OEM-valmistajien varaosien käytön asettaminen ehdoksi takuille, lisenssisopimusten myöntäminen sekä kohtuuttomien hintojen asettaminen testauslaitteille ja työkaluille?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama yhteinen vastaus
(14. toukokuuta 2013)

Komissio on tietoinen tästä kysymyksestä, joka luonteensa vuoksi ei rajoitu vain Euroopan teollisuuteen.

Euroopan lentoturvallisuusvirasto (EASA) avustaa komissiota tähän asiaan liittyvissä hallinnollisissa ja teknisissä kysymyksissä. Aiheen tärkeyden vuoksi EASA on toteuttanut vuosina 2009–2012 jatkuvaan lentokelpoisuuteen (ICA) liittyviä toimia ja koordinoinut ne Yhdysvaltain siviili-ilmailuviranomaisten (FAA) ja Kanadan siviili-ilmailuviranomaisten (TCCA) kanssa. Lisäksi EASA on pyrkinyt yksilöimään yhteisiä kiinnostuksen kohteita FAA:n ja TCCA:n kanssa. ICA:n saatavuus on edelleen varsin kiistanalainen asia, koska näkemykset ja mielipiteet vaihtelevat teollisuudenalasta riippuen ja koska asiaan liittyy oikeudellisia näkökohtia, kuten teollisuus- ja tekijänoikeudet. Tämän vuoksi EASA on päättänyt aloittaa kesäkuussa 2013 asiaa koskevien sääntöjen laatimisen yhdessä teollisuuden, FAA:n ja TCCA:n kanssa.

Mahdollista EU:n kilpailusääntöjen rikkomista voidaan tarkastella vain arvioimalla perusteellisesti vallitsevat olosuhteet, erityisesti markkinoiden rakenne ja sen mahdollisuus, että yhdellä tai useammalla yrityksellä on määräävä asema markkinoilla, tällaisten yritysten toiminta ja toiminnan mahdolliset perustelut. Mainitusta toiminnasta kärsineet yritykset voivat tehdä kantelun komissiolle ja/tai komissio voi päättää toimia asiassa omasta aloitteestaan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003009/13
to the Commission
Eija-Riitta Korhola (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Aviation maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services

The global aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) market is valued at USD 49.5 billion. It is currently shared between original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and airline and independent MRO services. There are signs that some OEMs (in the field of engines and components) are abusing their dominant position to increase their market share, with the ultimate goal of gaining a monopoly over the market. This would ultimately lead to higher costs for airlines and consumers.

What will the Commission do to stop anti-competitive practices on the part of OEMs, such as setting unfair or prohibitive prices, restricting access to technical documentation, making warranties conditional on the usage of OEM spare parts, issuing licensing agreements and setting prohibitive prices for test and tooling equipment?

Question for written answer E-003460/13
to the Commission
Mark Demesmaeker (Verts/ALE)
(27 March 2013)

Subject: Competition — aircraft maintenance

Aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (or 'MRO') is currently performed by three types of businesses: the original equipment manufacturers (the manufacturers), the airlines themselves and independent companies.

There would appear to be a risk that the manufacturers could abuse their monopoly position, which would lead to higher prices for the airlines, which, in turn, could then be passed on to consumers.

The Commission has previously taken action in response to a similar situation in the automotive industry.

In view of this, I have the following questions for the Commission:

1. How does the Commission evaluate the current situation in this sector in respect of fair competition?

2. What action is the Commission taking in order to guarantee fair competition between manufacturers, airlines and independent companies in respect of MRO?

3. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that the manufacturers share the necessary technical documentation so that other companies can also carry out MRO services and so that there is no unfair pricing or licensing in this connection?

4. Is the Commission planning to launch an investigation into this situation? If so, when? If not, why not?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of this issue which, given its nature, is not limited to the European industry.

With regard to the management of the technical aspect of this issue, the Commission is assisted by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). Given the importance of this topic EASA conducted activities between 2009 and 2012, in coordination with the civil aviation authorities of United States (FAA) and Canada (TCCA), in order to address a number of issues related to the Instructions for Continuing Airworthiness (ICA) and identify a number of areas of common interests for EASA, FAA and TCCA. The availability of ICA remains quite controversial because of the different views and opinions depending on the industry sector and also because of legal implications such as intellectual property. As a consequence, EASA has decided to start in June 2013 a rulemaking action on this subject, together with Industry, FAA and TCCA.

The question as to whether the EU competition rules may have been infringed can only be addressed through an in-depth assessment of the particular circumstances at hand, in particular of the market structure and the possibility that one or more undertakings may hold market power, the conduct of such undertakings and possible justification for such conduct. Undertakings affected by the conduct in question can introduce a complaint before the Commission and/or the Commission can decide to act *ex officio*.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003010/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE) and Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Challenges facing SMEs

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a key role in shaping Europe's economy, accounting for 99% of enterprises and providing more than two thirds of private-sector employment. However, the financial crisis is having a severe impact on many small companies in the EU. In November 2011, the Commission published a policy initiative on minimising regulatory burdens for SMEs ([1]) which had SME-friendly ideals at its helm and came under the auspices of the 'Think Small First' principle.

In this connection, could the Commission outline the current status of implementation of this policy, particularly with regard to the publication of an annual scoreboard detailing newly imposed exemptions for SMEs, which will play an essential role in allowing SMEs to pursue their business goals without unnecessary red tape in the form of cumbersome regulation?

The report summarising the results of the Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform survey entitled 'Anti-Crisis Policies in Regions and Cities Two Years On' ([2]) points out that among the most pressing issues faced by SMEs during and after the financial crisis were 'difficulties in access to credit', 'liquidity problems' and 'business closures and bankruptcies'. What direct efforts are being made to encourage the Member States to stimulate the provision of loans and venture capital to SMEs?

In this context, what efforts is the Commission making to ensure that Member State SMEs have access to credit? What assistance can the Commission give to SMEs which are currently experiencing difficulties in accessing credit?

Further to the Commission's response to Written Question E-012363/2011, could it outline what steps have been taken to reinvigorate venture capital financing and to ensure that it fulfils its potential role in helping SMEs develop and grow?

What course of action is currently open to SMEs being denied access to credit?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The most recent statement on the implementation by the Commission of its policy initiative on minimising regulatory burdens for SMEs is contained in its communication of 7 March 2013 ([3]) including the first edition of the scoreboard.

With regard to SME access to finance, in 2011 the Commission adopted an Action Plan ([4]) which lists a series of actions aimed at tackling this issue. To encourage lending to SMEs, the review of the Capital Requirements Directive will reduce the capital charges for exposures to SMEs through the application of a supporting factor. In 2011 the Commission proposed a regulation which acts as a voluntary EU-wide passport for venture capital fund managers and simplifies cross-border fundraising ([5]).

The Commission is also addressing the difficult access to finance situation for SMEs through a variety of financial instruments. The equity and loan guarantee facilities of the current CIP programme ([6]) are made available to SMEs through financial intermediaries ([7]). For the period 2014-2020, the Commission has put forward proposals for a new generation of financial instruments. With a proposed budget of EUR 1.4 billion, the new COSME programme would improve access to finance for SMEs via an equity and a loan guarantee facility. These two facilities will complement financial instruments in the new Horizon 2020 programme, which will support research and innovation.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'Minimising regulatory burden for SMEs: Adapting EU regulation to the needs of micro-enterprises' (COM(2011)0803).
([2]) https://portal.cor.europa.eu/europe2020/news/Pages/AntiCrisisPoliciesinRegionsCities.aspx.
([3]) COM(2013)122.
([4]) An action plan to improve access to finance for SMEs, COM(2011) 870 final.
([5]) The regulation was formally approved by the European Parliament and the Council in March 2013. After the fine-tuning of certain technical issues by the European Commission, it should come into effect in summer 2013.
([6]) Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-2013, the financial instruments of which are managed by the European Investment Fund on behalf of the European Commission.
([7]) such as banks, mutual guarantee societies and venture capital funds.

Support to SME access to finance is provided by a number of operational programmes co-funded by structural funds. For the period 2014-2020, such support co-financed by the ESI Funds ([8]) might be made available by managing authorities in Member States, based on an obligatory *ex-ante* assessment of the needs for such intervention in a given geographical area covered by the relevant operational programme.

([8]) European Structural and Investment.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003011/13
aan de Commissie
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(18 maart 2013)

Betreft: De overheid als wanbetaler; lidstaten die de richtlijn betreffende late betalingen niet hebben omgezet in nationale wetgeving

In de aangenomen Europese richtlijn betreffende late betalingen is in 2011 opgenomen dat ondernemers kunnen afdwingen dat de overheid binnen dertig kalenderdagen haar rekeningen aan private partijen (ondernemers) voor een geleverde dienst of goed dient te betalen.

Tot 16 maart 2013 hadden lidstaten de tijd om deze richtlijn om te zetten in hun nationale wetgeving zodat dat alle ondernemers bij elke overheid in de Europese Unie kunnen afdwingen dat rekeningen binnen 30 dagen worden betaald. Eén dag vóór de deadline van 16 maart hebben slechts negen van de zevenentwintig landen in hun nationale wetgeving staan dat de overheid haar rekeningen binnen 30 dagen moet betalen. Dat betekent dat een meerderheid van de landen deze richtlijn gewoon niet heeft omgezet. Dit soort voorbeelden blijft ervoor zorgen dat de interne markt niet optimaal functioneert en ondernemers in verschillende lidstaten niet weten waar ze aan toe zijn bij levering van een dienst of goed aan de overheid. Daarom de volgende vragen:

1. Deelt de Commissie mijn mening dat de omzetting van deze richtlijn te traag of niet gebeurd is, hetgeen de interne markt verstoort?

2. Wat gaat de Commissie nu concreet doen om de landen die de richtlijn nog niet in nationale wetgeving hebben omgezet dat alsnog zo snel mogelijk te laten doen? Kan de Commissie deze landen een ultimatum stellen om deze wetgeving zo snel mogelijk om te laten zetten?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(13 mei 2013)

1. Tot op heden hebben achttien lidstaten de Commissie ervan in kennis gesteld dat hun omzettingsmaatregelen zijn afgerond: Cyprus, Malta, Italië, Ierland, Nederland, Spanje, Slowakije, Bulgarije, Zweden, Litouwen, Frankrijk, Polen, Finland, Slovenië, Oostenrijk, Estland, Luxemburg en het Verenigd Koninkrijk. De Commissie kan daarom bevestigen dat sommige lidstaten laat zijn met het omzetten in nationale wetgeving van de richtlijn betreffende late betalingen.

2. Overeenkomstig artikel 258 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU) heeft de Commissie het recht om inbreukprocedures in te leiden indien zij van oordeel is dat een lidstaat een van de krachtens de Verdragen op hem rustende verplichting niet is nagekomen. Indien de betrokken staat het desbetreffende advies niet binnen de door de Commissie vastgestelde termijn opvolgt, kan de Commissie de zaak aanhangig maken bij het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie. In het specifieke geval dat een lidstaat de richtlijn niet omzet binnen de vastgestelde termijn, kan de Commissie het Hof vragen om de betrokken lidstaat een financiële sanctie op te leggen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003011/13
to the Commission
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Public authorities in default: Member States which have not transposed the Late Payments Directive into national legislation

The adopted EU Late Payments Directive stated in 2011 that economic operators can force public authorities to settle their bills owed to private parties (economic operators) for a service or good supplied within 30 calendar days.

Member States had up until 16 March 2013 to transpose this directive into their national legislation, thereby enabling all economic operators to force any public authorities in the European Union to settle bills within 30 days. One day before the 16 March deadline, only nine of the 27 Member States have included in their national legislation the provision that public authorities must settle their bills within 30 days. This means that a majority of Member States have not transposed this directive at all. Cases like this continue to prevent the internal market from operating to its maximum potential and economic operators in various Member States from knowing where they stand when supplying a service or goods to public authorities. I would therefore like to ask:

1. Does the Commission agree with me that the transposition of this directive is too slow or has not taken place, which is disrupting the internal market?

2. What practical measures is the Commission now going to take to get the Member States which have not yet transposed the directive into their national legislation to do so as soon as possible? Can it issue these Member States with an ultimatum to get them to transpose this legislation as soon as possible?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

1. Eighteen Member States have currently notified their complete transposing measures to the Commission: Cyprus, Malta, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Sweden, Lithuania, France, Poland, Finland, Slovenia, Austria, Estonia, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom. The Commission can therefore confirm that some Member States are late in transposing the Late Payments Directive.

2. According to Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Commission has the right to initiate infringement proceedings if a Member State has failed to fulfil an obligation under the Treaties. If the State concerned does not comply with the opinion within the period laid down by the Commission, the latter may bring the matter before the Court of Justice of the European Union. In the specific case of a Member State that fails to implement the directive within the deadline, the Commission may ask the Court to impose a financial penalty on the concerned Member State.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003012/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(18 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Criticità attinenti al sistema della raccolta differenziata dei rifiuti negli Stati membri dell'UE

Gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, al pari di tutti gli Stati più sviluppati, si trovano a dover gestire lo smaltimento e, ove possibile, il riciclo di enormi quantità di rifiuti domestici.

Tale attività comporta costi elevati e non riesce comunque ad annullare interamente l'impatto negativo dei rifiuti sull'ambiente naturale e, di conseguenza, sulla salute umana.

Una delle misure più efficaci per facilitare lo smaltimento dei rifiuti, adottata, in forza della sua efficacia, ormai da molti Stati membri, consiste nell'organizzare una raccolta differenziata dei rifiuti domestici, lasciando al cittadino in compito di operare una preselezione ed una presuddivisione dei propri rifiuti, al fine di abbattere i costi di smaltimento e facilitare il riciclo dei materiali.

Tuttavia, benché tale strumento si sia rivelato assai utile, permangono alcune criticità che ne riducono l'efficacia, in particolare:

— alcuni Stati membri non hanno ancora adottato, o hanno adottato solo in parte, il sistema della raccolta differenziata;

— tra quelli che praticano la raccolta differenziata vi sono rilevanti differenze di metodologia, sicché un cittadino europeo che si trovi temporaneamente in uno Stato dell'UE diverso dal proprio può trovarsi in difficoltà;

— moltissimi prodotti non riportano sulla confezione indicazioni atte a consentire al cittadino di individuare come smaltire correttamente la confezione stessa nonché il prodotto, una volta concluso il ciclo vitale dello stesso;

— molti prodotti adottano confezioni esageratamente grandi rispetto al contenuto e/o composte di diversi materiali difficili da separare, producendo così un surplus di rifiuti ardui da smaltire;

Può la Commissione precisare quali misure intende adottare per favorire una maggiore uniformità nella gestione della raccolta differenziata nell'area UE, e per risolvere, o quantomeno attenuare, le criticità sopra elencate?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2013)

La legislazione europea in materia di rifiuti impone agli Stati membri di istituire, entro il 2015, sistemi di raccolta differenziata almeno per la carta, il metallo, la plastica e il vetro ([1]). I sistemi di raccolta differenziata devono essere definiti a livello nazionale, tenendo conto delle circostanze nazionali e anche regionali, e nel rispetto del principio di sussidiarietà. La Commissione non prevede l'armonizzazione dei sistemi nazionali di raccolta differenziata.

Per quanto riguarda le informazioni da includere su prodotti e imballaggi per indicare come smaltirli in quanto rifiuti, la questione è regolamentata a livello europeo per determinati flussi di rifiuti problematici, quali le batterie o i prodotti elettronici. Per altri prodotti e imballaggi, gli Stati membri possono decidere, tenendo conto delle circostanze nazionali, se e come informare i cittadini sulle modalità più efficienti di recupero o smaltimento. Per gli imballaggi, l'uso di marchi e simboli di identificazione per la riciclabilità dei prodotti è volontario; tuttavia, in caso di utilizzo di un sistema di identificazione, quest'ultimo deve essere conforme alla decisione 97/129/CE ([2]) che istituisce un sistema di identificazione per i materiali di imballaggio.

Infine, gli imballaggi eccessivi e la composizione degli imballaggi sono presi in considerazione fra i requisiti essenziali della direttiva sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio ([3]) (allegato II). La Commissione sta effettuando un riesame di questo e di altri testi legislativi in materia di rifiuti per valutarne, fra l'altro, l'efficacia.

([1]) Articolo 11, paragrafo 1, della direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti, GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([2]) GU L 50 del 20.2.1997.
([3]) Direttiva 94/62/CE sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio, GU L 365 del 31.12.1994.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003012/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Problems relating to the system of collection of separated waste in EU Member States

The European Union's Member States, like all developed countries, have to manage the disposal and, where possible, the recycling of enormous quantities of household waste.

Although it involves high costs, it does not fully eliminate the negative impact of waste on the natural environment and, thus, on human health.

One of the most effective measures for facilitating the disposal of waste, and one which many Member States have now adopted as a result, consists of organising separated collection of household waste. This leaves it up to citizens to pre-select and sort their own waste, with the aim of reducing disposal costs and facilitating the recycling of materials.

However, although this tool has proved quite useful, there are still some problems that make it less effective, specifically:

— the fact that some Member States have not yet adopted, or have adopted only partially, a system for the collection of separated waste;

— among Member States practising separated collection there are significant differences in the methods used, so that a European citizen who is temporarily in an EU State other than his own may encounter problems;

— a very large number of products do not have information on their packaging so that citizens can identify how to dispose correctly of the packaging itself and the product, once the product's life is over;

— many products are highly over-packaged in relation to their contents and/or have packaging made up of different materials which are difficult to separate, thus producing a surplus of waste that is difficult to dispose of.

Can the Commission say what measures it intends to take to encourage greater uniformity in the management of separated collection in the EU and to resolve, or at least reduce, the problems listed above?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

European waste legislation requires Member States to set up separate collection systems by 2015 for at least paper, metal, plastic and glass ([1]). Separate collection systems are to be established nationally, taking into account national or even regional circumstances, and in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The Commission does not envisage any harmonisation of national separate collection systems.

As regards the information to be placed on products and their packaging on how to best treat them once they become waste, this matter has been regulated at the European level for certain problematic waste streams such as batteries or electronics. For other products and packaging, Member States can decide, taking into account national circumstances, whether and how to inform their citizens about the best recovery or disposal routes. For packaging, the use of marking and identification symbols for a product's recyclability is voluntary; if identification is used, however, it needs to comply with Decision 97/129/EC ([2]) establishing the identification system for packaging materials.

Finally, over-packaging and composition of packaging have been addressed in the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive's ([3]) essential requirements (Annex II). The Commission is undertaking a review of this (and other) pieces of waste legislation in order to, amongst others, assess their effectiveness.

([1]) Article 11.1 of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 50, 20.2.1997.
([3]) Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste, OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003013/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(18 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Groźby Komisji Europejskiej wobec Węgier po uchwaleniu konstytucji

Po uchwaleniu nowej konstytucji Węgry stały się celem ataku ze strony Komisji Europejskiej. W komentarzu po głosowaniu przewodniczący Barroso skrytykował decyzję suwerennie wybranego Parlamentu węgierskiego. Wyraził również żal, że „eksperci w Brukseli nie mogli się wcześniej zapoznać ze zmianami i zapowiedział szczegółową ich analizę".

1. Na podstawie jakich zapisów Komisja pozwala sobie na ocenę konstytucji uchwalonej przez suwerennie wybraną większość reprezentującą wolę i dążenia narodu węgierskiego?

2. Jakie zapisy nowej konstytucji są, zdaniem Komisji, sprzeczne z prawem unijnym?

3. Od kiedy i na podstawie jakich zapisów suwerenne państwa mają konsultować swoje decyzje ustrojowe z unijną biurokracją oraz Komisją?

4. Na podstawie jakich zapisów Komisja wysuwa groźby nałożenia kar za przyjęcie przez demokratycznie wybraną większość zmian ustrojowych nieoddziaływających poza Węgry?

5. Jakie kary mogą spotkać Węgry za przyjęcie konstytucji? Czy ich ewentualne przyznanie nie jest próbą wpływania na suwerenną decyzję demokratycznie wybranej konstytuanty?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(27 maja 2013 r.)

1. W dniu 11 marca 2013 r. parlament węgierski przyjął czwartą zmianę ustawy zasadniczej Węgier. Komisja przeprowadziła szczegółową analizę prawną przyjętych zmian w sposób obiektywny, bezstronny i sprawiedliwy. Komisja, stojąc na straży traktatów, nadzoruje pod kontrolą Trybunału Sprawiedliwości stosowanie prawa Unii przez władze krajowe (art. 258 TFUE). Na podstawie tej analizy Komisja wysłała do władz Węgier trzy pisma administracyjne z prośbą o wyjaśnienia oraz dodatkowe informacje w celu zakończenia analizy prawnej.

2. Obawy Komisji odnoszą się w szczególności do zgodności z prawem UE klauzuli zawartej w czwartej zmianie dotyczącej wyroków Europejskiego Trybunału Sprawiedliwości pociągających za sobą zobowiązania płatnicze (art. 17), uprawnień nadanych przewodniczącemu Krajowego Biura Sądownictwa w zakresie przydzielania spraw (art. 14), oraz ograniczeń publikacji politycznych materiałów promocyjnych (art. 5).

Warto również zwrócić uwagę na przeprowadzaną obecnie przez Komisję Wenecką ocenę ostatnich zmian węgierskiej konstytucji. Komisja Wenecka ma przygotować w terminie 15-16 czerwca 2013 r. opinię w sprawie zgodności tych zmian z zasadami praworządności i standardami Rady Europy. Oczekuje się, że węgierskie władze odpowiednio uwzględnią tę opinię i podejmą wobec niej stanowisko w pełni zgodne z zasadami, normami i wartościami zarówno UE, jak i Rady Europy.

3. Zgodnie z zasadą lojalnej współpracy Unia i państwa członkowskie wzajemnie się szanują i udzielają sobie wzajemnego wsparcia w wykonywaniu zadań wynikających z Traktatów (art. 4 ust. 3 TUE).

4 i 5. Jest zbyt wcześnie, by odnosić się do stosowania sankcji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003013/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD), Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Commission threatening Hungary following adoption of new constitution

After adopting its new constitution, Hungary found itself under attack from the Commission. Following the vote, President Barroso criticised the decision of the freely elected Hungarian Parliament. He also expressed regret that experts in Brussels had not had the chance to familiarise themselves with the changes and give a detailed analysis.

1. On what legal basis is the Commission providing this assessment of a constitution that has been passed by a freely elected majority representing the will and aspirations of the Hungarian people?

2. What provisions of the new constitution does the Commission believe to be in contravention of EC law?

3. Since when and on what legal basis are Member States required to consult the EU bureaucracy and the Commission on issues concerning their political systems?

4. On what legal basis is the Commission threatening to impose sanctions in response to the adoption by a democratically elected majority of changes to the political system that only apply within Hungary?

5. What sanctions could Hungary face for adopting the new constitution? If sanctions are imposed, would this not represent an attempt to interfere with a sovereign decision taken by a democratically elected parliament?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

1. On 11 March 2013 the Hungarian Parliament adopted the Fourth amendment to the Fundamental Law of Hungary. The Commission has conducted a detailed legal analysis of the amendments, in an objective, non-partisan and fair manner. As guardian of the Treaties, the Commission oversees the application of Union law by national authorities under the control of the European Court of Justice (Article 258 TFEU). Based on this analysis, the Commission has sent three administrative letters to the Hungarian authorities asking for clarifications and further elements in order to complete the legal analysis.

2. The concerns of the Commission relate in particular to the conformity with EC law of the clause in the Fourth amendment on European Court of Justice judgments entailing payment obligations (Art. 17), of the powers given to the President of the National Office for the Judiciary to transfer cases (Art. 14) and, of the restrictions on the publication of political advertisements (Art. 5).

Reference is also made to the ongoing assessment of the recent amendments to the Hungarian Constitution conducted by the Venice Commission, which will prepare an opinion on 15-16 June 2013 on the compatibility of the amendments with the principles of the rule of law and Council of Europe standards. The Hungarian authorities are expected to take due account of this opinion and address it in full accordance with both EU and Council of Europe principles, rules and values.

3. Pursuant to the principle of sincere cooperation, the Union and the Member States shall, in full mutual respect, assist each other in carrying out tasks which flow from the Treaties (Article 4(3) TEU).

4 and 5. It is premature at this stage to refer to the application of sanctions.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003014/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 martie 2013)

Subiect: N-nitroamine şi impactul acestora asupra sănătății umane

Potrivit unor studii recente, substanțele chimice din vopseaua de păr permanentă pot reacționa cu fumul de țigară sau cu alți poluanți din aer, dând naştere unor substanțe cu puternic potențial cancerigen – N-nitroamine. Utilizarea acestor substanțe în produsele cosmetice a fost interzisă, însă ele pot apărea spontan în urma unor simple reacții chimice. Vopseaua de păr a fost asociată cu mai multe tipuri de cancer, printre care cel de sân, de ovare și de creier şi cu leucemia.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă dispune de informații ştiințifice cu privire la acest semnal de alarmă tras de cercetători.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(8 mai 2013)

Riscurile potențiale pentru sănătate care pot fi asociate prezenței nitrozaminelor în produsele cosmetice sunt abordate de Directiva 76/768/CEE ([1]). privind produsele cosmetice, care va fi înlocuită la 11 iulie 2013 de Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1223/2009 privind produsele cosmetice ([2]).

În special, utilizarea de nitrozamine și alchil- și alcanolamine secundare și a sărurilor lor (care formează nitrozamine), ca atare, este interzisă în toate produsele cosmetice ([3]). În plus, pentru anumite ingrediente cosmetice care pot elibera compușii în cauză, adică dialchilamide și dialcanolamide ale acizilor grași, monoalchilamine, monoalcanolamine și sărurile lor, legislația stabilește o limită maximă de concentrație de nitrozamine de 50g / kg ([4]).

În martie 2012, Comitetul științific pentru siguranța consumatorilor a adoptat un aviz științific privind Nitrozaminele și aminele secundare în produsele cosmetice (SCCS/1458/11) ([5]) pentru evaluarea riscurilor potențiale pentru sănătatea umană constituite de prezența nitrozaminelor sau a substanțelor chimice cu grupuri aminice secundare care pot da naștere unor compuși N-nitrozo în produsele cosmetice. Concluziile avizului au confirmat că legislația actuală și limita de concentrație oferă un grad ridicat de protecție a consumatorilor.

([1]) Directiva 76/768/CEE a Consiliului din 27 iulie 1976 privind apropierea legislațiilor statelor membre cu privire la produsele cosmetice (JO L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169).
([2]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1223/2009 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 30 noiembrie 2009 privind produsele cosmetice (JO L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59).
([3]) Anexa II/410; Anexa II/411 la Regulamentul privind produsele cosmetice (CE) nr. 1223/2009.
([4]) Anexa III/60;61;62 din Regulamentul (CE) No 1223/2009 privind produsele cosmetice.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_o_090.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003014/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: N-nitrosamines and their impact on human health

According to recent studies, the chemicals contained in permanent hair dyes can react with tobacco smoke or other air pollutants to create substances with a strong carcinogenic potential, namely N-nitrosamines. The use of these substances in cosmetic products was banned, but they can appear spontaneously as a result of simple chemical reactions. Hair dyes have been linked to several types of cancer, including breast, ovarian and brain cancer, as well as leukaemia.

Can the Commission clarify whether it has any scientific information concerning this alarm bell sounded by researchers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The possible health risks that may be associated with the presence of nitrosamines in cosmetic products are addressed by the Cosmetics Directive 76/768/EEC ([1]), to be replaced on 11 July 2013 by the Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([2]).

In particular, the use of nitrosamines and secondary alkyl- and alkanolamines and their salts (which form nitrosamines) as such is prohibited in all cosmetic products ([3]). In addition, for certain cosmetic ingredients which may release the compounds at hand, i.e. dialkyl and dialkanolamides fatty acids, monoalkylamines, monoalkanolamines and their salts, the legislation sets a maximum concentration limit of nitrosamines of 50g/kg ([4]).

In March 2012, the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety adopted a scientific opinion on Nitrosamines and Secondary Amines in Cosmetic Products (SCCS/1458/11) ([5]) to evaluate the potential risks to human health of the presence of nitrosamines or of chemicals with secondary amine groups which may give rise to N-nitroso compounds in cosmetics. The conclusions of the opinion confirmed that the current legislation and concentration limit provide a high degree of consumer protection.

([1]) Council Directive 76/768/EEC of 27 July 1976 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products (OJ L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169).
([2]) Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 (OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59).
([3]) Annex II/410; Annex II/411 of Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009.
([4]) Annex III/60;61;62 of Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_o_090.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003015/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 martie 2013)

Subiect: Sistemul Atwater de calcul al numărului de calorii

Anumiți cercetători susțin, într-un studiu recent, că numărul de calorii trecut pe eticheta multor alimente din magazine și preparate din restaurante (sistemul Atwater) este incorect, existând diferențe mari de calorii între alimentele crude și cele procesate. Cele mai mari diferențe ar exista în cazul alimentelor bogate în carbohidrați.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă ar putea avea în vedere recomandarea utilizării unor noi modalități de calcul al numărului de calorii.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(30 aprilie 2013)

Comisia cunoaște existența unor studii care prezintă diferențe în privința conținutului energetic al produselor alimentare în funcție de modul lor de preparare (dacă sunt crude sau procesate). Cu toate acestea, în avizul recent privind valorile nutriționale de referință pentru energie ([1]), EFSA a recunoscut că energia poate varia, de exemplu, în funcție de diferitele tipuri de carbohidrați, dar nu a ridicat problema diferenței de energie oferită de alimentele crude și cele procesate.

În Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 privind informarea consumatorilor ([2]) cu privire la produsele alimentare, factorii de conversie utilizați pentru a calcula energia furnizată de consumul unui aliment sunt cei recomandați la nivel internațional în orientările Codex privind etichetarea cu indicarea valorii nutriționale ([3]).

În acest context, Comisia nu intenționează să propună noi metode sau noi factori de conversie pentru determinarea conținutului energetic al produselor alimentare.

([1]) Aviz științific privind valorile nutriționale de referință pentru energie — Grupul pentru produse dietetice, nutriție și alergii din cadrul EFSA, Jurnalul EFSA 2013; 11(1): 3005 http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3005.pdf

([2]) JO L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([3]) Orientările Codex privind etichetarea cu indicarea valorii nutriționale, CAC/GL 2-1985, modificate ultima dată în 2012. .http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/standards/34/CXG_002e.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003015/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Atwater calorie count system

In a recent study, certain researchers stated that the calorie count (based on the Atwater system) specified on the labels of many foods in stores and prepared in restaurants is incorrect, as there are significant differences between the calorie counts of raw and processed foods. They claim that the greatest differences are seen in carbohydrate-rich foods.

Can the Commission state whether it may consider recommending the use of new methods for calculating the number of calories?

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

The Commission is aware of studies showing differences in the energy content of foods depending on their preparation, raw or processed. However, in its recent opinion on Dietary Reference Values for energy ([1]), EFSA recognised that the energy can vary among, for example, the different types of carbohydrates, but did not raise the issue of the difference of available energy between raw and processed foods.

In Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on food information consumers ([2]), the conversion factors used to calculate the energy provided by the consumption of a food are the ones recommended at international level in Codex Guidelines on Nutrition labelling ([3]).

In this context, the Commission does not intend to propose new methods or new conversion factors for the determination of the energy content of food products.

([1]) Scientific Opinion on Dietary Reference Values for energy — EFSA Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies EFSA Journal 2013;11(1):3005 (http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3005.pdf).
([2]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([3]) Codex Guidelines on Nutrition labelling CAC/GL 2-1985 lastly amended in 2012 http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/standards/34/CXG_002e.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003016/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 martie 2013)

Subiect: Comerțul ilegal cu pesticide contrafăcute

Se apreciază că până la un sfert din pesticidele aflate în prezent pe piață în unele state membre ale UE provin de pe piața pesticidelor ilegale, contrafăcute.

Comerțul ilegal cu pesticide contrafăcute, organizat de rețele infracționale extrem de puternice, este în acest moment neglijat.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze care este strategia urmată pentru combaterea acestui fenomen, care presupune riscuri enorme pentru sănătate.

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(2 mai 2013)

Comisia are cunoștință de problema pe care o descrieți. Aceasta a făcut obiectul unei evaluări realizate în comun de Europol și de Comisie în noiembrie 2011 ([1]).

Europol a creat un fișier de lucru pentru analiza mărfurilor contrafăcute și a elaborat un program de combatere a criminalității legate de proprietatea intelectuală. Aceste instrumente presupun o cooperare strategică și operațională între autoritățile de aplicare a legii din statele membre ale UE și partenerii Europol în domeniul criminalității legate de proprietatea intelectuală.

În cadrul următorului ciclu de elaborare a politicilor UE în materie de criminalitate organizată și de infracțiuni grave comise la nivel internațional pentru perioada 2013-2017 vor continua dezbaterile cu privire la posibilitatea de a acorda prioritate măsurilor de combatere a mărfurilor contrafăcute, în special a celor nocive pentru sănătate și siguranță.

Comisia se ocupă în prezent de revizuirea Directivei 2004/48/CE privind respectarea drepturilor de proprietate intelectuală, problema fiind urmărită și de Observatorul European al Încălcărilor Drepturilor de Proprietate Intelectuală, care, în noiembrie 2012, a organizat împreună cu Europol o conferință comună pe tema pesticidelor ilegale.

La nivel internațional, Comisia participă la rețeaua OCDE privind comerțul ilegal cu pesticide, care a fost creată în 2011 în scopul îmbunătățirii schimbului de informații, a coordonării și a cooperării în domeniul combaterii comerțului ilegal cu pesticide.

Începând cu 2011, comerțul ilegal cu pesticide a fost inclus în domeniul de aplicare al auditurilor la care sunt supuse sistemele de control al produselor de protecție a plantelor din statele membre și care sunt efectuate de către Oficiul Alimentar și Veterinar.

Comisia sprijină Alianța mondială împotriva comerțului ilegal cu pesticide.

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/oc-scan_11_2011_growing_trade_in_counterfeit_pesticides_0.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003016/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Illegal trade in counterfeit pesticides

It is estimated that up to a quarter of the pesticides currently available on the market in some Member States originate from the illegal, counterfeit pesticides market.

The illegal trade in counterfeit pesticides, organised by extremely powerful criminal networks, is currently overlooked.

Can the Commission clarify what strategy it is pursuing to tackle this issue entailing huge health risks?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issue described. Europol produced a joint assessment with the Commission dedicated to the issue in November 2011 ([1]).

Europol developed an analysis work file dedicated to counterfeit goods and an Intellectual Property Crime (IPC) programme. These involve strategic and operational cooperation in the IPC area between Law Enforcement Agencies from EU Member States and Europol's partners.

Within the upcoming EU policy cycle 2013-2017 for organised and serious international crime, debate is ongoing on the possibility to give priority to the tackling of counterfeit goods, notably those harmful to health and safety.

The Commission is reviewing Directive 2004/48/CE on the enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights and the European Observatory on infringement or Intellectual Property Rights is also following the issue and organised in November 2012 with Europol a joint conference on illegal pesticides.

At the international level the Commission participates in the OECD Network on Illegal Trade of Pesticides, which was created in 2011 so as to improve the exchange of information and to better coordinate and cooperate in the fight against illegal trade of pesticides.

As from 2011, illegal trade of pesticides has been added to the scope of the audits on plant protection products control systems performed in Member States by the Food and Veterinary Office.

The Commission supports the Global Alliance against the Illegal Trade of Pesticides.

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/oc-scan_11_2011_growing_trade_in_counterfeit_pesticides_0.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003017/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(18 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Sparizione di Sombath Somphone in Laos

Il 7 febbraio 2013 il Parlamento europeo ha approvato una risoluzione sul Laos relativa alla sparizione di Sombath Somphone ([1]), nella quale ha espresso profonda preoccupazione per questo caso. In particolare, la risoluzione invita il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante (VP/HR) a seguire da vicino le indagini del governo del Laos sulla scomparsa di Sombath Somphone.

1. Quali azioni ha intrapreso il VP/HR per dare seguito a questa risoluzione al fine di garantire il rilascio di Sombath Somphone in condizioni di sicurezza?

2. Ha il VP/HR sollevato la questione di tale scomparsa nell'ambito delle sue relazioni con le autorità della Repubblica democratica popolare del Laos?

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

Dal 15 dicembre 2012 la delegazione dell'UE a Vientiane è in contatto con la moglie del Sig. Somphone e ha posto tale questione in primo piano in tutte le sue riunioni con alti funzionari del Laos e rappresentanti della società civile.

Il 21 dicembre 2012 l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton ha già preso pubblicamente posizione rilasciando una dichiarazione attraverso il suo portavoce.

L'UE ha intrapreso un'iniziativa presso il vice primo ministro e ministro degli Affari esteri e il SEAE ha informato i diplomatici del Laos della profonda preoccupazione manifestata da membri del Parlamento europeo.

Inoltre, il 4 febbraio 2013 a Vientiane, l'UE ha organizzato un dialogo sui diritti umani con il Laos in cui il caso del Sig. Somphone è stato al centro dell'attenzione. Il 28 febbraio, la delegazione a Vientiane ha incontrato il responsabile delle indagini.

Un senatore dei Paesi Bassi, il Sig. Arthur Elzinga, si è recato in visita nel Laos dal 6 al 9 marzo 2013 e in tale occasione — insieme con la delegazione dell'UE nel paese — ha presentato la risoluzione del Parlamento europeo al Parlamento del Laos e al vice primo ministro e ministro degli Affari esteri.

È questa l'occasione più recente delle tante in cui il caso del Sig. Somphone è stato sollevato presso le autorità del Laos. La sua scomparsa rappresenta una questione particolarmente grave di cui l'UE si sta occupando non solo attraverso i consueti canali diplomatici, ma anche in stretta collaborazione con paesi che condividono gli stessi valori.

([1]) Testo approvato, P7_TA(2013)0058.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003017/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Disappearance of Sombath Somphone in Laos

On 7 February 2013, Parliament adopted a resolution on Laos regarding the disappearance of Sombath Somphone ([1]), in which it expressed its deep concerns about this case. In particular, the resolution calls on the Vice-President/High Representative (VP/HR) to monitor closely the Lao Government's investigations into the disappearance of Mr Somphone.

1. What action has the VP/HR taken to follow up on this resolution in order to ensure the safe release of Sombath Somphone?

2. Has the VP/HR raised the issue of this disappearance in her relations with the authorities of the Lao People's Democratic Republic?

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

Since 15 December 2012, the EU Delegation in Vientiane has been in contact with Mr Somphone's spouse and has kept this issue high on the agenda in all its meetings with high-ranking Laotian officials and civil society representatives.

HRVP Ashton reacted publicly already on 21 December 2012 by way of a statement by her spokesperson.

A demarche by the EU was delivered to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Laotian diplomats have also been informed by the EEAS of the deep concern expressed by Members of the European Parliament.

Furthermore, the EU held a Human Rights dialogue with Laos on 4 February 2013 in Vientiane. The matter of Mr Somphone featured prominently at this dialogue. On 28 February, the Delegation in Vientiane met with the Chief of the investigation.

A Dutch Senator, Mr Arthur Elzinga, visited Laos 6-9 march 2013 and on that occasion — together with the EU Delegation in Laos — he presented the European Parliament's Resolution to the Parliament of Laos and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

This is the latest example of the many times the matter of the disappearance of Mr Somphone has been raised with the Lao authorities. His disappearance is a very serious matter which the EU is pursuing not merely through the usual diplomatic channels, but also in close cooperation with like-minded countries.

([1]) Text adopted, P7_TA(2013)0058.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003018/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Power line technology apparatus (EN 50561-1 standard)

The European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC), which has responsibility for standardisation in the electrotechnical engineering field, has been working to formulate a new industry standard for power line technology (PLT) apparatus (EN 50561-1). The resulting interference caused to radio reception in the vicinity of such technology is well-established. There would appear to be significant doubt about whether the draft standard can satisfy the essential requirements of the Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive (2004/108/EC). The requirements under the directive include the following: 'Equipment shall be so designed and manufactured […] as to ensure that […] the electromagnetic disturbance generated does not exceed the level above which radio and telecommunications equipment or other equipment cannot operate as intended'.

CENELEC proposals appear not to meet this requirement under the directive, given that fixed notches have been introduced into the emission spectrum from devices across some 15% of the high frequency (HF) radio spectrum in order to keep interference from PLT devices at a level which would satisfy the essential requirements of the EMC Directive. In the remaining 85% of the HF spectrum, there are no fixed notches, and it is axiomatic that interference levels do not comply with the essential requirements of the directive.

Further to the response received in reference to my Written Question E-007745/2012, and given that the draft EN 50561 standard does not meet the essential requirements of the EMC Directive as currently written (other than in the small percentage of 'notched' frequencies), can the Commission confirm that it will not be publishing the draft as a harmonised standard in the OJ? Arguments that there have been few complaints would seem to be irrelevant to the requirements of the directive.

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission will continue to implement the provisions of EU legislation in support of the internal market, including those related to the consistency of standards with the requirements foreseen in the law.

The Commission has addressed Mandate 313 to CENELEC and ETSI to develop harmonised standards for telecommunications networks, including PLT. At the moment the draft standard EN50561-1 for PLT, which was approved by a large majority of the National Standardisation Organisations, is under examination by the Commission in view of a possible publication of its reference in the Official Journal as a harmonised standard in support of the EMC Directive ([1]).

The Commission is considering contributions from different parties as well as from experts of Member States' national administrations. A decision will be taken in light of the results of the examination of the different contributions provided.

In any case, Member States always have the possibility to raise an objection to any harmonised standard when they have justified reasons to consider that the standard does not comply with the essential requirements set in the EU legislation.

The Commission will continue to work in order to ensure the full application of EU legislation.

([1]) Directive 2004/108/EC.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003019/13
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Biomass

Directive 2009/28/EC establishes a common framework for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources. This includes each Member State having a target calculated according to the share of energy from renewable sources in its gross final consumption for 2020.

1. With regard to the uptake of biomass, how much does the Commission believe will be imported from outside the Union?

2. What plans does it have to encourage EU self-sufficiency in biomass production?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

1. Estimates from the National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPs) submitted under Directive 2009/28/EC ([1]) indicate a need for biomass imports of 21.4 Million tons of oil equivalent (Mtoe) per year, corresponding to approximately 15% of EU primary energy from biomass supply in 2020.

2. According to Article 4.1 of Directive 2009/28/EC, in the abovementioned NREAPs Member States shall include measures to develop existing biomass resources and mobilise new biomass resources for different uses.

In the framework of the EU's rural development policy, in the 2007-2013 period the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development ([2]) can be used to support investments for the production of renewable energy, energy infrastructure, plantation of short rotation coppice, pre-commercial thinning and pruning, or small scale production of woodchips or pellets.

With regards to the next programming period 2014-2020 the following has been proposed as a priority for rural development ([3]): facilitating the supply and use of renewable energy, of by-products, waste, residues as well as other non-food raw material.

([1]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 16. Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC.

([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/legal-proposals/com627/627_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003020/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Situación de los caballos en Galicia

A pesar de mostrar una postura pública a favor de la necesidad de identificar a los caballos de forma efectiva, tal y como obliga la normativa europea, la Xunta de Galicia se mantiene en una peligrosa indefinición. Peligrosa para los animales, pues se dan continuos casos de maltrato a través de la colocación en sus patas de toda clase de artefactos: cables, cuerdas, cepos. Y también para las personas, que llegan a sufrir los efectos de un caballo no identificado en graves accidentes de circulación y destrozos de terrenos de aprovechamiento agrícola.

La Asociación Animalista Libera y la Fundación Franz Weber remitieron en los últimos meses un escrito a la Consellería de Medio Rural explicando que la falta de identificación de los caballos impedía conocer con exactitud el origen y las condiciones de los mismos, de cara a una hipotética trazabilidad alimentaria, además de resultar imposible para las autoridades judiciales y las fuerzas de seguridad dar con los responsables de prácticas de maltrato animal como las descritas con anterioridad. Y todo ello a pesar de que se trata de una exigencia comunitaria. Las dos organizaciones internacionales han subrayado en no pocas ocasiones que la cabaña equina sigue sin estar identificada en un 80 %, con lo que existen «caballos fantasma» por los montes gallegos.

Un reportaje televisivo en 2010 ya avanzaba la situación que se estaba dando en Galicia ([1]) y casi tres años después siguen los hallazgos de caballos maltratados ([2]), con graves heridas y deformaciones, y, por supuesto, sin culpables, porque no se sabe a quién pertenecen. Lo mismo ocurre en caso de accidentes de circulación, cuando la víctima humana no puede recurrir a una aseguradora que no existe por los daños causados.

Las líneas de ayudas económicas para identificar a los caballos no parecen servir, a la vista de las estimaciones y de las denuncias de la Asociación Animalista Libera y la Fundación Franz Weber.

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de algún avance en la situación de los caballos con cepos en Galicia y la identificación efectiva del ganado equino en la comunidad?

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión desarrollar alguna iniciativa para acabar con estas prácticas crueles?

¿Sabe la Comisión que las estimaciones calculan que al menos el 80 % de los caballos de Galicia están sin identificar?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Tras su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-002704/2012 ([3]), y a pesar de que esta cuestión se planteó de nuevo a las autoridades competentes españolas, la Comisión aún no ha recibido información oficial de que se haya producido algún progreso en relación con la mejora de la situación de los caballos que viven en condiciones semisalvajes en Galicia y con su identificación.

Por otra parte, para garantizar una mejor identificación de los équidos en el conjunto de la UE, la Comisión ha solicitado recientemente a todos los Estados miembros que faciliten información sobre la aplicación de la legislación pertinente ([4]) para el análisis y la posterior adopción de medidas administrativas y, en su caso, legislativas.

([1]) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s93ocG4m98Q
([2]) http://youtu.be/nFmxcsMi-Pc
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Reglamento (CE) n° 504/2008 de la Comisión, de 6 de junio de 2008, por el que se aplican las Directivas 90/426/CEE y 90/427/CEE por lo que se refiere a los métodos de identificación de los équidos. DO L 149 de 7.6.2008, p. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003020/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Situation concerning horses in Galicia

Despite maintaining a public stance in favour of the need to effectively identify horses, as stipulated by EU regulations, the Galician regional government remains dangerously vague on the matter. This state of affairs is dangerous for the animals, given the continual cases of ill-treatment involving placing all kinds of artefacts on their feet such as cables, rope and shackles, and is also dangerous for people, who suffer the effects of an unidentified horse in serious road traffic accidents and in the destruction of agricultural land.

In the last few months, the Libera Animal Rights Association and the Franz Weber Foundation submitted a report to the Council for Rural Affairs explaining that the lack of identification for horses was preventing their exact origin and condition from being known, with a view to hypothetical food traceability, as well as rendering it impossible for the legal authorities and security forces to identify those responsible for animal cruelty such as that described previously. Moreover, this is all in spite of the fact that this is a Community requirement. The two international organisations have highlighted on a number of occasions that approximately 80% of equine livestock is still unidentifiable, with the result that there are 'ghost horses' roaming the Galician mountains.

A television report in 2010 brought the situation in Galicia to the fore ([1]) yet, almost three years on, ill-treated horses with serious injuries and deformities ([2]) continue to be discovered. There are of course no culprits because no one knows who they belong to. The same happens in the event of road traffic accidents, when the human victim cannot turn to an insurance company that does not exist in the light of the damage caused.

The lines of financial support to provide identification for the horses seem to be inadequate, according to the estimations and condemnations of the Libera Animal Rights Association and the Franz Weber Foundation.

Is the Commission aware of any progress in the situation of shackled horses in Galicia and the effective identification of the equine livestock in the autonomous region?

Is it planning to establish any initiative to bring an end to these cruel practices?

Is it aware that estimates suggest that at least 80% of horses in Galicia have no identification?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Further to its reply to Written Question E-002704/2012 ([3]), and despite that this issue was specifically raised again with the Spanish competent authorities, the Commission has not yet received official information of any progress in improving the situation of the horses living under semi-wild conditions in Galicia and their identification.

In addition, in order to ensure improved identification of equidae in the whole EU, the Commission has recently requested all Member States to provide information on the implementation of relevant legislation ([4]) for analysis and further administrative and, where necessary, legislative measures.

([1]) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s93ocG4m98Q.
([2]) http://youtu.be/nFmxcsMi-Pc.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([4]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 504/2008 of 6 June 2008 implementing Council Directives 90/426/EEC and 90/427/EEC as regards methods for the identification of equidae. OJ L 149, 7.6.2008, p. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003021/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Iran

An NGO in my constituency has informed me that under the current regime in Iran the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are consistently denied and abused, including through the use of mental and physical torture.

What action is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to raise these issues with the Iranian Government and ensure that human rights are upheld?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the severely problematic human rights situation with regard to LGBT in Iran.

The EU has expressed, on several occasions, its concern about human rights violations in the country and has called on Iran to refrain from discriminatory policies, including with specific regard to discriminations on the basis of sexual orientations. It will continue to call on the Iranian authorities to ensure that all Iranian citizens enjoy full respect and protection of the rights granted to them in the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran has freely subscribed.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003022/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Data on EU funding to the West Bank and Gaza

The Commission's EuropeAid Donor Atlas 2012 provides no data whatsoever on EU funding to the West Bank and Gaza. The website of the European Union Technical Assistance Office in Gaza also has no figures available, and the country cooperation page on the EuropeAid portal does not list the total funding for the West Bank and Gaza.

Can the Commission:

1. please provide me with figures for the total amount of EU aid to the West Bank and Gaza for each of the years 2007-2012, inclusive;

2. make this information publically available on the Donor Atlas and on other relevant websites;

3. explain why data on EU aid to the West Bank and Gaza is not included in the Donor Atlas; and

4. reassure my constituents that it knows exactly how much money it is spending in the West Bank and Gaza?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

1. The Honourable Member will find in annex a table, updated in March 2013, providing data on all EU commitment appropriations for Palestine starting from the year 2000. The Honourable Member can verify that the Commission knows exactly how much money goes, through different instruments, to Palestine and the Palestinian people.

2. There has been, as a matter of fact, a technical problem with the Donor Atlas in retrieving data for Palestine. The problem was caused by the Development Cooperation Directorate of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) changing its way to refer to Palestine. Once spotted, the Commission has worked to fix it with the shortest delay.

EuropeAid publishes detailed project level aid information through the International Aid Transparency Initiative, IATI. This information is updated monthly and includes information on all aid managed by EuropeAid from 2010 onwards.

In addition, the EuropeAid website ([1]), is updated regularly and offers an overview of funds allocated to Palestine from all budget lines and instruments under its management. Since the website is designed to be addressed to a non-specialist audience, data is aggregated and it is not possible to provide details on every single programme in this format.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/occupied_palestinian_territory/occupied-palestinian-territory_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003023/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Produtos sem glúten

Fomos alertados para a dificuldade sentida pelos doentes celíacos (intolerantes a alimentos que contêm glúten) de consumirem apenas produtos sem glúten, sobretudo quando se trata de refeições preparadas, refeições prontas ou mesmo na restauração, na medida em que na maioria dos casos não há qualquer indicação da presença de glúten.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento das dificuldades sentidas pelos doentes celíacos? O que pondera fazer quanto a esta situação, no sentido de tornar obrigatória a menção da presença de glúten em todas as refeições preparadas, refeições prontas e na restauração?

2. Pretende propor regras no sentido de tornar obrigatória a menção «contém glutén» na rotulagem dos alimentos comercializados e nas refeições servidas na restauração?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(30 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão atribui grande importância a uma correta informação dos consumidores que sofrem da doença celíaca. O Regulamento (CE) n.° 41/2009 da Comissão ([1]) institui regras harmonizadas relativas à composição e à rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios adequados a pessoas com intolerância ao glúten e harmoniza as condições para a rotulagem de um género alimentício como «isento de glúten» ou como tendo um «teor muito baixo de glúten». Isto garante que as pessoas que sofrem da doença celíaca são corretamente informadas sobre a presença no mercado de diferentes géneros alimentícios adequados às suas necessidades e ao seu nível de sensibilidade.

Além disso, a Diretiva 2000/13/CE, relativa à rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios ([2]), prevê que a presença de substâncias conhecidas pela sua capacidade de desencadearem reações alérgicas ou intolerâncias deve sempre ser indicada no rótulo respetivo. A lista da UE de tais substâncias (anexo III-A da diretiva) inclui também cereais que contêm glúten e produtos à base de glúten. Assim sendo, sempre que esses cereais sejam utilizados no fabrico ou na preparação de um género alimentício e ainda se encontrem presentes no produto acabado, mesmo sob uma forma modificada, a sua presença deve ser indicada na lista dos ingredientes, independentemente da sua quantidade.

Com vista a uma melhor proteção dos consumidores, o novo Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios ([3]) prevê a prestação obrigatória de informação sobre os alergénios, mesmo no caso dos géneros alimentícios não pré-embalados, incluindo os alimentos preparados e entregues por serviços de restauração coletiva e restaurantes. Por conseguinte, a partir de 13 de dezembro de 2014, a informação sobre a presença de alergénios (incluindo os cereais que contêm glúten) terá de estar disponível e facilmente acessível nas ementas dos restaurantes. Os Estados-Membros podem adotar medidas nacionais relativas aos meios através dos quais as informações sobre os alergénios são disponibilizadas.

([1]) JO L 16 de 21.1.2009, p. 3.
([2]) Diretiva 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de março de 2000, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes à rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29.
([3]) JO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003023/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Gluten-free products

We have been alerted to the fact that coeliacs (people intolerant to foods containing gluten) find it difficult to consume only gluten-free products, as ready meals, convenience food and restaurant food in particular often fail to indicate the presence of gluten.

1. Is the Commission aware of the difficulty facing coeliacs? What action will it take to make it compulsory to indicate the presence of gluten in all ready meals, convenience food and restaurant food?

2. Will it establish regulations to make it compulsory to include 'contains gluten' on the labels of food sold to consumers and on restaurant menus?

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

The Commission attaches great importance to the correct information of coeliac consumers. Commission Regulation (EC) No 41/2009 ([1]) sets harmonised rules on the composition and labelling of foodstuffs for people intolerant to gluten and harmonises conditions for labelling a food as 'gluten-free' or 'very low gluten'. This ensures that coeliacs are adequately informed on the presence of the market of different foods appropriate for their needs and for their level of sensitivity.

In addition, Directive 2000/13/EC on food labelling ([2]) foresees that the presence of substances known for their ability to trigger allergic reactions or intolerances must always be indicated on the label. The EU list of such substances (Annex IIIa of the directive) also includes cereals containing gluten and products thereof. As such, whenever such cereals are used in the manufacture or preparation of a food and still present in the finished product, even if in altered form, their presence must be indicated in the list of ingredients regardless of their quantity.

With the view to better protect the consumer, the new Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on food information to consumers ([3]) provides for mandatory provision of information on allergens also in the case of non-pre-packed foods, including foods prepared and delivered by catering establishments and restaurants. Therefore, from 13 December 2014, information about the presence of allergens (including cereals containing gluten) in the restaurant menus will have to be available and easily accessible. Member States may adopt national measures concerning the means through which information on allergens is to be made available.

([1]) OJ L 16, 21.1.2009, p. 3.
([2]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.
([3]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003024/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Cancro do estômago

Cientistas de Israel e da China descrevem no British Journal of Cancer o modo como um simples teste ao hálito permite detetar cancro do estômago, o que poderá permitir diagnósticos precoces e, assim, reduzir as mortes associadas a esta patologia. Os primeiros testes tiveram como universo apenas 130 pacientes com diferentes queixas a nível do estômago, tendo provado uma precisão de mais de 90 por cento na deteção de cancros em fases iniciais e outros em fases avançadas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta investigação?

2. Pondera tomar medidas no sentido de aconselhar os Estados-Membros a implementarem programas de deteção precoce do cancro do estômago usando, nomeadamente, esta nova tecnologia?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada pela Comissária Máire Gheoghegan-Quinn à pergunta parlamentar E-3167/13 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003024/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Stomach cancer

Scientists from Israel and China have reported in the *British Journal of Cancer* that a simple breath test can detect stomach cancer, which may enable early diagnoses and therefore reduce deaths related to this disease. The first tests were conducted on a sample of 130 patients presenting with various stomach complaints and were over 90% accurate in detecting cancer in its early and advanced stages.

1. Is the Commission aware of this research?

2. Will it take measures to advise the Member States to implement stomach cancer early detection programmes specifically using this new technology?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given by Commissioner Gheoghegan-Quinn to the Parliamentary Question E-3167/13 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003026/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Rotulagem de produtos alimentares

Nas últimas semanas têm surgido, um pouco por toda a Europa, notícias sobre a presença de nutrientes não identificados em produtos alimentares (carne de cavalo, amendoins, proteínas, etc). Tais notícias, mais do que criarem um problema de saúde pública, vêm alertar para a existência de uma deficiente rotulagem dos produtos alimentares, sobretudo nas refeições preparadas e nos alimentos processados, na medida em que esta omite a presença de vários componentes. Muitos desses componentes são frequentemente associados a reações alérgicas ou são, até mesmo, nutrientes considerados proibidos por religiões, crenças ou modos de vida.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Na medida em que as situações de errada (ou enganadora) rotulagem de produtos alimentares se têm repetido nos últimos meses, pondera rever a legislação aplicável à rotulagem de produtos alimentares de modo a tornar obrigatória a menção a todos os componentes presentes, ainda que esta presença seja apenas residual?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003032/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Presença de amendoins em refeições preparadas

Na sequência do escândalo relacionado com a utilização de carne de cavalo em refeições preparadas e produtos processados, as entidades reguladoras dos vários Estados-Membros têm estado particularmente atentas. Tem sido noticiada, com assustadora regularidade, a presença de amendoins em refeições preparadas e produtos processados, sem que a mesma esteja devidamente identificada na rotulagem. Tendo em conta que os amendoins são um produto altamente alergénico, sendo causa de alergia alimentar grave tanto nos adultos como nas crianças,

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da utilização de amendoins em refeições preparadas e alimentos processados sem que tal seja corretamente identificado na rotulagem? O que pondera fazer quanto a esta situação, na medida em que estamos em presença de uma rotulagem enganosa?

2. Pretende alterar as regras aplicáveis à rotulagem e à identificação dos alimentos processados e refeições preparadas comercializadas no sentido de tornar obrigatória a menção à presença de amendoins?

Resposta conjunta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

Em conformidade com a Diretiva 2000/13/CE relativa à rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios ([1]) e sob reserva de algumas exceções, todas as substâncias utilizadas no fabrico ou na preparação de um género alimentício e ainda presentes no produto acabado devem ser indicadas na lista dos ingredientes, independentemente da sua quantidade. No entanto, não é aplicável qualquer isenção em matéria de rotulagem quando um ingrediente em causa é conhecido pela sua capacidade de desencadear reações alérgicas ou intolerâncias. A lista da UE de tais substâncias (anexo III-A da diretiva) inclui também amendoins e produtos à base de amendoins. As regras supramencionadas aplicam-se aos géneros alimentícios pré-embalados que são vendidos como pré-embalados ao consumidor final e, consequentemente, abrangem refeições pré-confecionadas e géneros alimentícios transformados.

As atuais regras de rotulagem da União, quando corretamente aplicadas, são suficientes para garantir que os consumidores são informados da presença de todos os ingredientes, incluindo os alergénios, nas refeições pré-confecionadas prontas a consumir e nos géneros alimentícios transformados.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de março de 2000, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes à rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29.

Os Estados-Membros são responsáveis pela aplicação do direito da União e devem verificar, através de controlos oficiais, se as regras da UE são cumpridas pelos operadores das empresas do setor alimentar em todas as fases de produção, transformação e distribuição. A Comissão é responsável por garantir que a legislação da UE é aplicada corretamente em todo o seu território e por tomar as medidas apropriadas, caso as adotadas a nível nacional não sejam suficientes para obviar ao risco em questão.

No que diz respeito às medidas tomadas na sequência do escândalo associado à carne de cavalo, a Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para a sua resposta à pergunta escrita E-001513/2013 ([2]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003026/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Food product labelling

In recent weeks reports have surfaced across Europe regarding the presence of unidentified nutrients in food products (horsemeat, peanuts, proteins, etc.). This news, aside from creating a public health problem, draws our attention to inadequate food product labelling, particularly with regard to ready meals and processed foods, which omits the presence of several components. Many of these components are often linked to allergic reactions or are even banned by some religions, beliefs and lifestyles.

Since repeated cases of erroneous (or misleading) food product labelling have come to light in recent months, will the Commission review legislation on this labelling to make it compulsory to indicate the presence of all components in food, no matter how small the quantities?

Question for written answer E-003032/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Presence of peanuts in ready meals

The regulatory authorities in the Member States have been particularly vigilant following the scandal involving the use of horsemeat in ready meals and processed food products. According to alarmingly frequent reports, ready meals and processed foods have been found to contain peanuts, without their presence being properly indicated on the labelling. Peanuts are a highly allergenic product and can cause severe food allergies in both adults and children.

1. Is the Commission aware of the use of peanuts in ready meals and processed foods without their presence being properly indicated on the labelling? What action does it intend to take regarding this misleading labelling?

2. Will it amend the rules governing the labelling and identification of processed foods and ready meals placed on the market to make it compulsory to mention the presence of peanuts?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

According to Directive 2000/13/EC on food labelling ([1]) and subject to few exceptions, all substances used in the manufacture or preparation of a food and still present in the finished product must be indicated in the list of ingredients, regardless of their quantity. However, no labelling exemption applies when an ingredient in question is known for its ability to trigger allergic reactions or intolerances. The EU list of such substances (Annex IIIa of the directive) also includes peanuts and products thereof. The abovementioned rules apply to the pre-packed foods to be sold as such to the final consumer and therefore, cover ready meals and processed food products.

These current Union labelling rules, when correctly enforced, are sufficient to ensure that the consumer is informed about the presence of all ingredients, including allergens, in the pre-packed ready meals and processed foods.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of Union law and shall verify, through official controls, that the EU rules are fulfilled by food business operators at all stages of production, processing and distribution. From its side, the Commission has the responsibility to ensure that EU legislation is properly implemented across the whole EU and take appropriate measures if action taken at national level is not sufficient to counteract the concerned risk.

With regard to its action taken following the horsemeat scandal, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001513/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003027/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: «Desktop» — componentes

Considerando os objetivos de redução das emissões de carbono que a UE se propôs atingir, bem como o limitado tempo de vida útil que o material informático, em especial os computadores de mesa, tem hoje em dia:

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem alguma regulamentação em vista para, no que concerne ao «upgrade», estimular a substituibilidade dos componentes informáticos por forma a diminuir custos, tanto ambientais como para os consumidores?

2. Que medidas tomou ou pretende tomar para incrementar a compatibilidade de componentes de modo a facilitar o «upgrade» ao invés de uma substituição completa do material informático, com todos os custos ambientais e para o consumidor associados?

Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão elaborou recentemente um projeto de regulamento que estabelece requisitos de conceção ecológica para computadores, incluindo computadores de mesa e portáteis. O projeto de regulamento foi votado pelo Comité de Regulamentação a 28 de fevereiro de 2013 e está neste momento a ser analisado pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho ([1]).

Os trabalhos técnicos preparatórios mostraram que a insubstituibilidade das baterias instaladas em computadores portáteis (nomeadamente, em computadores-tablete e ardósias digitais) era um aspeto ambiental significativo. Por conseguinte, o projeto de regulamento estabelece que no caso dos computadores portáteis cujas baterias não podem ser facilmente substituídas pelo consumidor, este facto deve constar de um aviso bem visível na embalagem externa, na documentação técnica e num sítio da Internet. Desta forma, os consumidores poderão fazer escolhas informadas e optar por computadores portáteis cujas baterias podem ser substituídas pelo utilizador. A Comissão voltará a avaliar esta questão quando proceder à revisão do regulamento, daqui a três anos e meio, e decidirá se serão necessários requisitos adicionais.

Além disso, a Diretiva REEE ([2]) prevê a responsabilidade do produtor pelo equipamento, incluindo computadores, e incentiva a cooperação entre produtores e operadores de instalações de reciclagem para promover os modelos que facilitem a reutilização, o desmantelamento e a valorização de REEE, seus componentes e materiais.

([1]) O texto do projeto de regulamento pode ser consultado no registo de comitologia: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&s2isBahw+DAddrBTmu4HY9fqiqW8NAWEDbsxbodKVJl/I4e00Leqo6bxse1tPdnz

([2]) Diretiva 2012/19/UE relativa aos resíduos de equipamentos elétricos e eletrónicos (REEE) (reformulação); JO L 197 de 24.7.2012, p. 38.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003027/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Desktop computers — components

Given the EU's carbon emission reduction targets, as well as the limited useful life of modern hardware, particularly desktop computers:

1. Does the Commission plan to establish regulations on upgrades to promote the replaceability of computer components, so as to reduce both environmental costs and costs to consumers?

2. What measures has it taken or will it take to increase the compatibility of components, thereby facilitating upgrades rather than the complete replacement of computer hardware, with all the environmental costs and costs to consumers that entails?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission has recently prepared the draft Regulation lying down ecodesign requirements for computers, including desktop computers and notebooks. The draft Regulation was voted by the Regulatory Committee on 28 February 2013 and is now being scrutinised by the European Parliament and the Council ([1]).

The preparatory technical work has shown that the irreplaceability of batteries installed in notebook computers (e.g. tablet computers and slate computers) was a significant environmental aspect. Consequently, the draft Regulation requires that notebook computers in which batteries cannot be easily replaced by a consumer should provide clearly visible warning on the external packaging, in a technical documentation and on a website. This will allow consumers to make informed decisions and to choose notebook computers with user-replaceable batteries. The Commission will re-assess this matter when reviewing the regulation in three and a half years and will decide if additional requirement is necessary.

In addition, the WEEE Directive ([2]) establishes producer responsibility for equipment including computers, and encourages cooperation between producers and recyclers to promote a design facilitating the re-use, dismantling and recovery of components and material of WEEE.

([1]) The text of the draft Regulation is available in the comitology register: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&s2isBahw+DAddrBTmu4HY9fqiqW8NAWEDbsxbodKVJl/I4e00Leqo6bxse1tPdnz

([2]) Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) (recast); OJ L 197/38, 24.7.2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003029/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Vestígios fecais detetados em produtos de pastelaria

Na semana passada, foi tornado público que foi encontrado material fecal em produtos de pastelaria comercializados por uma grande cadeia de móveis para uso doméstico de baixo custo. Esta cadeia já esclareceu que tais produtos foram retirados do mercado e que «o eventual consumo deste produto não apresenta qualquer risco para a saúde humana».

Ainda assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está a acompanhar a situação da presença de material ou vestígios fecais em produtos alimentares comercializados na Europa? Para além dos casos já conhecidos de produtos da cadeia em causa, sabe de outros produtos em que se possa colocar este mesmo problema?

2. Considera que a presença de material ou vestígios fecais pode colocar riscos de segurança alimentar e saúde pública?

3. Que medidas tomou ou pensa tomar para assegurar a segurança alimentar dos consumidores europeus, nomeadamente no que respeita à presença de material fecal em alimentos?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

1. Os Estados-Membros devem verificar a conformidade com os requisitos da UE através de um sistema de controlos oficiais. O Serviço Alimentar e Veterinário (SAV) da Comissão audita os Estados-Membros relativamente a esta verificação. Os resultados da monitorização de *Salmonella* e *Escherichia coli* êntero-hemorrágica (VTEC), agentes patogénicos que podem estar presentes como consequência da contaminação fecal nos alimentos e de qualquer surto causado por agentes patogénicos (fecais) nos produtos de panificação e outros alimentos, devem ser comunicados à Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos (AESA) que publica os resultados e analisa as tendências ([1]).

2. A contaminação fecal é uma indicação da presença de agentes patogénicos fecais tais como *Salmonella* e VTEC e deve, portanto, ser considerada um risco.

3. A Comissão considera que as normas atuais relativas à higiene dos géneros alimentícios ([2]) e os sistemas de controlo e execução dos Estados-Membros são adequados para identificar e lidar com a contaminação fecal de alimentos. Estes não excluem o incumprimento por parte de um número limitado de operadores de empresas do setor alimentar, contra os quais devem ser tomadas medidas por parte das autoridades dos Estados-Membros.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2597.htm
([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 852/2004 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 29 de abril de 2004, relativo à higiene dos géneros alimentícios (JO L 139 de 30.4.2004, p. 1. Retificação no JO L 226 de 25.6.2004, p. 3) e Regulamento (CE) n.° 853/2004 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 29 de abril de 2004, que estabelece regras específicas de higiene aplicáveis aos géneros alimentícios de origem animal (JO L 139 de 30.4.2004, p. 55. Retificação no JO L 226 de 25.6.2004, p. 22).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003029/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Traces of faecal matter found in bakery products

Last week it was revealed that bakery products sold by a large low-cost household furniture chain contained faecal matter. This chain has confirmed that these products have been withdrawn from the market and claimed that the possible consumption of this product poses no risk to human health.

1. Is the Commission monitoring the situation regarding the presence of faecal matter or traces of faecal matter in food products sold throughout Europe? Apart from the cases which have already come to light, namely products from this chain, is it aware of any other products that may pose the same problem?

2. Does it believe that the presence of faecal matter or traces of faecal matter may pose food safety and public health risks?

3. What measures has it taken or will it take to guarantee food safety for European consumers, in particular regarding the presence of faecal matter in food?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1. The Member States must verify compliance with the EU requirements by a system of official controls. The Commissions' Food and Veterinary Office audits Member States on this verification. Results of monitoring of 'Salmonella' and verocytotoxin-producing 'Escherichia coli' (VTEC), pathogens that may be present as the consequence of faecal contamination, in food and any outbreak caused by (faecal) pathogens in bakery products and other food must be reported to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), who publishes the results and analyses trends ([1]).

2. Faecal contamination is an indication of the potential presence of faecal pathogens such as 'Salmonella' and VTEC and must therefore be considered as a risk.

3. The Commission considers that current rules on food hygiene ([2]) and Member States' control and enforcement systems are capable of identifying and handling faecal contamination of food. They do not exclude non-compliance by a limited number of food business operators, against which action must be taken by Member States' authorities.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2597.htm
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 1, corrected by OJ L 226, 25.6.2004, p. 3) and Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin (OJ L 139, 30.4.2005, p. 55, correctred by OJ L 226, 25.6.2004, p. 22).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003030/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Carne e demais proteínas animais em refeições vegetarianas

Na sequência do escândalo relacionado com a utilização de carne de cavalo em refeições preparadas e produtos processados, as entidades reguladoras dos vários Estados-Membros têm estado particularmente atentas. Em Portugal foi noticiado que foi encontrada a presença de carne e proteínas animais em refeições preparadas, enganosamente apresentadas ao consumidor como «vegetarianas».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da utilização de carne e outras proteínas animais em refeições identificadas como vegetarianas para o consumidor? O que pondera fazer quanto a esta situação, na medida em que estamos em presença de uma rotulagem enganosa?

2. Pretende alterar as regras aplicáveis à rotulagem e à identificação dos alimentos processados e refeições preparadas comercializadas como «vegetarianas», ou como «adequadas para vegetarianos», para que seja obrigatoriamente identificada a sua cabal composição?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

1. Ao abrigo das regras vigentes ([1]), a rotulagem dos géneros alimentícios não deve induzir em erro o consumidor, em especial no que se refere às suas características, incluindo a sua verdadeira natureza e conteúdo. As práticas de rotulagem fraudulentas e enganosas podem ser eliminadas através da aplicação apropriada dos requisitos da legislação alimentar da União, que compete às autoridades nacionais competentes. Estas autoridades têm de realizar controlos oficiais apropriados e impor sanções dissuasoras e eficazes. A próxima proposta da Comissão sobre os controlos oficiais procurará reforçar mais ainda o sistema existente, incluindo as disposições em matéria de sanções.

2. Ao abrigo das regras vigentes ([2]), todos os ingredientes têm de ser indicados no rótulo dos alimentos pré-embalados destinados ao consumidor final. Quanto aos alimentos que não são pré-embalados, cabe aos Estados-Membros regulamentar se todos os seus ingredientes têm também de ser indicados. A fim de garantir uma informação adequada dos consumidores e para não os induzir em erro ou confundir sobre a composição dos alimentos rotulados como «vegetarianos», o Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios ([3]), que entra em vigor em 13 de dezembro de 2014, confere poderes à Comissão para adotar atos de execução, a fim de harmonizar as condições para a prestação das informações relacionadas com a adequação dos géneros alimentícios para o consumo por vegetarianos ou *vegans*, numa base voluntária.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de março de 2000, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes à rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([2]) Id.

([3]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de outubro de 2011, relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios, que altera os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 1924/2006 e (CE) n.° 1925/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, e revoga as Diretivas 87/250/CEE da Comissão, 90/496/CEE do Conselho, 1999/10/CE da Comissão, 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE da Comissão e o Regulamento (CE) n.° 608/2004 da Comissão, JO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003030/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Meat and other animal proteins in vegetarian meals

The regulatory authorities in the Member States have been particularly vigilant following the scandal involving the use of horsemeat in ready meals and processed food products. According to reports in Portugal, the presence of meat and animal proteins has been detected in ready meals misleadingly sold to consumers as 'vegetarian'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the use of meat and other animal proteins in 'vegetarian' meals sold to consumers? What action does it intend to take regarding this misleading labelling?

2. Will it amend the rules governing the labelling and identification of processed foods and ready meals sold as 'vegetarian' or as 'suitable for vegetarians' to make it compulsory to indicate their exact composition?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

1. Under existing rules ([1]), the labelling of foods must not mislead the consumer, particularly as to the characteristics of the food including its true nature and content. Fraudulent and deceptive labelling practices can be eliminated with appropriate enforcement of Union food law requirements, which lies with the national competent authorities. They must conduct appropriate official controls and impose dissuasive and effective sanctions. The forthcoming Commission proposal on official controls will aim at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

2. Under existing rules ([2]), all ingredients must be mentioned on the label of pre-packaged foods when destined for the final consumer. As regards non-prepacked foods, it is for the Member States to regulate whether all ingredients of such foods must also be mentioned. In order to ensure that consumers are appropriately informed and to prevent misleading and confusing them as to the composition of foods labelled as 'vegetarian', Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([3]), which enters into application on 13 December 2014, empowers the Commission to adopt implementing acts to harmonise the conditions for the provision of the information related to suitability of a food for vegetarians or vegans on a voluntary basis.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([2]) Id.

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003031/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Composição das salsichas em lata

Há um ano, a Deco (associação portuguesa de defesa dos consumidores) analisou 15 amostras de salsicha em lata e concluiu que a maioria tem água a mais, proteínas de qualidade sofrível e excesso de gordura, amidos e sal. Como não existe legislação específica quanto à composição das salsichas e enchidos em geral, os produtores são livres de adicionar o que bem entenderem.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento destas conclusões da Deco sobre a composição das salsichas? A atual composição das salsichas e demais enchidos pode colocar um problema de saúde pública? Ou configurará mais um crime de fraude económica em que os consumidores estão a ser enganados quanto à qualidade e propriedades dos produtos adquiridos?

2. Os elevados níveis de gordura, amidos e sal, pelas implicações que tais componentes têm na saúde humana, não deveriam ser devidamente identificados para salvaguarda dos consumidores? Pondera tomar medidas nesse sentido?

3. Sem que tal coloque em causa os produtos tradicionais que merecem a devida proteção, pretende criar legislação específica sobre a composição das salsichas e dos enchidos industriais comercializados?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(30 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não se encontra em posição de acompanhar a evolução dos mercados relacionados com categorias específicas de alimentos. Na ausência de informações pormenorizadas sobre as constatações assinaladas pelo Senhor Deputado, a Comissão não pode apreciar o caráter da potencial violação das normas da UE em relação aos alimentos em questão.

Ao abrigo da Diretiva da UE em matéria de rotulagem dos alimentos ([1]), todas as substâncias utilizadas no fabrico ou preparação de um género alimentício e ainda presentes no produto acabado devem ser indicadas na lista dos ingredientes, por ordem de peso decrescente. A fim de permitir que os consumidores façam escolhas alimentares mais saudáveis, o novo Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 ([2]) exige também que a declaração nutricional informe acerca do valor energético e das quantidades de nutrientes, tais como os lípidos, os ácidos gordos saturados, os hidratos de carbono, os açúcares, as proteínas e o sal. A rotulagem nutricional será obrigatória a partir de 13 de dezembro de 2016.

No que diz respeito a disposições da UE relativas à rotulagem da água adicionada aos produtos à base de carne, a Comissão gostaria de fazer referência à sua resposta à questão escrita E-5036/2012 ([3]).

Excetuando casos de alimentos protegidos ao abrigo da legislação da UE sobre a «qualidade» ([4]), não existe legislação que regule a composição dos alimentos em questão em geral a nível da UE. Tendo em conta o princípio da subsidiariedade e na ausência de provas que indiquem provocar a falta dessa harmonização distorções significativas no funcionamento do mercado interno, a iniciativa legislativa nesta matéria é deixada ao critério dos Estados-Membros no respetivo território.

([1]) Diretiva 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de março de 2000, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes à rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 109 de 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([2]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1169/2011 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de outubro de 2011, relativo à prestação de informação aos consumidores sobre os géneros alimentícios, que altera os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 1924/2006 e (CE) n.° 1925/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho e revoga as Diretivas 87/250/CEE da Comissão, 90/496/CEE do Conselho, 1999/10/CE da Comissão, 2000/13/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE da Comissão e o Regulamento (CE) n.° 608/2004 da Comissão, JO L 304 de 22.11.2011, p. 18.

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2012-008311+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

([4]) Regulamento (UE) n. ° 1151/2012 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 21 de novembro de 2012, relativo aos regimes de qualidade dos produtos agrícolas e dos géneros alimentícios, JO L 343 de 14.12.2012, p. 1.

Todavia, a supramencionada diretiva harmoniza a utilização do termo «carne» quando indicado na lista de ingredientes de produtos à base de carne (incluindo salsichas), mediante a introdução de limites numéricos máximos apenas para os lípidos associados e para o tecido conjuntivo, em função do tipo de carne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003031/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Composition of tinned sausages

One year ago, DECO (the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection) analysed 15 samples of tinned sausages and concluded that the majority contained too much water, proteins of barely acceptable quality and excessive levels of fat, starch and salt. As there is no specific legislation on the composition of sausages and sausage products in general, producers are free to add whatever they want.

1. Is the Commission aware of DECO's findings on the composition of sausages? Could the current composition of sausages and other sausage products pose a public health risk? Is this more a case of economic fraud since consumers are being misled about the quality and properties of the products they buy?

2. Due to the human health implications of these components, should high fat, starch and salt levels be properly identified to protect consumers? Will the Commission take action in this regard?

3. Without jeopardising traditional products that deserve adequate protection, will it establish specific legislation on the composition of industrial sausages and sausage products placed on the market?

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

The Commission is not in a position to follow developments on the markets related to the specific categories of foods. In the absence of detailed information on the findings referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission cannot assess the character of the potential breach of EU rules in relation to the foods in question.

According to the EU Directive on food labelling ([1]), all substances used in the manufacture or preparation of a food and still present in the finished product must be mentioned in the list of ingredients, in descending order of weight. In order to enable consumers to make healthier dietary choices, the new Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([2]) also requires the nutrition declaration informing about the energy value and the amounts of nutrients such as fat, saturates carbohydrates, sugars protein and salt. Nutrition labelling will become mandatory from 13 December 2016.

With regard to EU provisions concerning the labelling of added water in meat products, the Commission would like to make reference to its answer to Written Question E-5036/2012 ([3]).

Excluding cases of foods protected under EU 'quality' legislation ([4]), there is no legislation governing the composition of the foods in question in general at EU level. In the light of subsidiarity and in the absence of evidence that the lack of such harmonisation causes any significant distortion in the functioning of the internal market, the legislative initiative in this field is left to the Member States within their territories.

However, the aforesaid Directive harmonises the use of the term 'meat' when indicated in the list of ingredients of meat products (including sausages) by introducing maximum numerical limits only for associated fat and connective tissue, depending on the species of the meat.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2012-008311+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, P.1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-003033/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: Tiermehl in Fischfutter

Ab 1. Juni 2013 darf Fisch in der Europäischen Union wieder mit Tiermehl aus Schweinen und Hühnern gefüttert werden. Ein vor zwölf Jahren als Reaktion auf die Rinderkrankheit BSE erlassenes Verbot läuft am 1. Juni aus, wie die Kommission mitteilt. Damit darf an Fische und andere in Aquakultur gezüchtete Tiere wieder Tiermehl aus nicht-wiederkäuenden Tieren wie Schweinen und Hühnern verfüttert werden.

In mehreren Ländern der Europäischen Union warnen Experten vor dieser Entwicklung. Die französische Umweltministerin Delphine Batho fordert Warnungen für den Verbraucher und zieht Parallelen zwischen dem Pferdefleischskandal und dem Einsatz von Tiermehl in der Aquakultur. Um den Verbraucher zu schützen, forderte sie eine Kennzeichnung „ohne Einsatz von Tiermehl" für Fisch, um indirekt jenen Fisch zu kennzeichnen, der mit Tiermehl gefüttert wurde.

1. Wie schätzt die Kommission das Risiko für BSE-Übertragungen auf Fische, die mit Tiermehl gefüttert werden, ein?

2. Gibt es Pläne, Fleischerzeugnisse hinsichtlich der Verfütterung von Tiermehl zu kennzeichnen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(16. April 2013)

Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 56/2013 ([1]) zielt auf eine Wiederzulassung der Verwendung der aus nicht-wiederkäuenden Tieren (d. h. hauptsächlich aus Schweinen und Geflügel) stammenden verarbeiteten tierischen Proteine als Futter für Zuchtfische und andere in Aquakultur gezüchtete Tiere ab. Die am 1. Juni 2013 in Kraft tretende Verordnung steht im Einklang mit den aktuellen wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen, nach denen das Übertragungsrisiko für bovine spongiforme Enzephalopathie (BSE) zwischen nicht-wiederkäuenden Tieren als vernachlässigbar eingestuft wird, unter der Bedingung, dass die Rückführung in die Futtermittelkette derselben Tierart (Kannibalismus) vermieden wird.

1. Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 56/2013 legt sehr strenge Anforderungen hinsichtlich der Rückverfolgbarkeit sowie analytische Kontrollen fest, die von den Mitgliedstaaten über die gesamte Futtermittelkette hinweg anzuwenden sind, damit eine Kreuzkontamination von Fischfutter mit Wiederkäuerproteinen, durch die BSE übertragen werden kann, vermieden werden kann. Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass mit der ordnungsgemäßen Umsetzung und Durchsetzung dieser Anforderungen gewährleistet wird, dass Fische nicht dem BSE-Erreger ausgesetzt werden.

2. Lebensmittelunternehmer haben das Recht, ihren Kunden auf freiwilliger Basis Informationen zur Verfügung zu stellen, solange diese mit den EU-Vorschriften über die Kennzeichnung von Lebensmitteln übereinstimmen ([2]). Die Kommission plant gegenwärtig keine Vorschläge für Rechtsvorschriften mit Anforderungen für eine Kennzeichnung, ob Fische mit verarbeiteten tierischen Proteinen gefüttert wurden oder nicht.

([1]) ABl. L 21 vom 24.1.2013, S. 3.
([2]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 25. Oktober 2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel (ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003033/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Animal meal in fish feed

From 1 June 2013 it will again be permitted in the European Union to feed fish with animal meal derived from pigs and chickens. A ban imposed twelve years ago in response to BSE ('mad cow disease') expires on 1 June, as the Commission has announced. After that date, fish and other aquaculture-bred animals may once more be fed with animal meal from non-ruminants such as pigs and chickens.

Experts in several European Union countries have warned about this development. The French Environment Minister Delphine Batho has called for warnings to consumers and has drawn parallels between the horse meat scandal and the use of animal meal in aquaculture. In order to protect consumers, she has called for labelling for fish stating 'produced without the use of animal meal' so as indirectly to identify fish that has been fed with animal meal.

1. How does the Commission estimate the risk of BSE being transmitted to fish fed with animal meal?

2. Are any plans afoot to label meat products to indicate that the animals in question were fed with animal meal?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2013)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013 ([1]) aims to reauthorise the use of processed animal proteins (PAPs) derived from non-ruminant farmed animals (i.e. mainly from pigs and poultry) in feed for farmed fish and other aquaculture animals. It is applicable from 1 June 2013 and is in line with latest scientific opinions which indicate that the risk of transmission of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) between non-ruminant animals is negligible provided that intra-species recycling (cannibalism) is prevented.

1. Regulation (EU) No 56/2013 provides for very strict traceability requirements and analytical controls to be applied by the Member States all along the feed chain in order to prevent cross-contamination of fish feed with ruminant proteins susceptible to transmit BSE. The Commission believes that the correct implementation and enforcement of these requirements should ensure that fish are not exposed to the BSE agent.

2. Food business operators are entitled to provide consumers with information on a voluntary basis, as long as it complies with the EU food labelling rules ([2]). The Commission does not intend to propose any legislation to require labelling indicating that fish has been fed or not with PAPs.

([1]) OJ L 21, 24.1.2013, p. 3.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003034/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: Identitätskennzeichen auf Lebensmitteln

Die Identitätskennzeichnung auf Lebensmitteln, die EU-weit in Supermärkten erhältlich sind, gibt EU-weit an, in welchem Land und Betrieb das Produkt zuletzt bearbeitet oder verpackt wurde. Innerhalb von ovalen Zeichen muss diese Herkunftsbezeichnung auf Lebensmitteln vorhanden sein. Immer häufiger kommt es in letzter Zeit aber vor, dass auf ein und demselben Produkt mehrere Herkunftsbezeichnungen aufgedruckt sind, was bei den Konsumenten zu Verwirrung führt.

1. Welche Rechtsgrundlage regelt grundsätzlich diese Identitätskennzeichen auf Lebensmitteln EU-weit?

2. Gibt es Pläne für zusätzliche Regelungen, da — siehe die neuesten Fleischskandale — vorhandene nicht ausreichend sind?

3. Wenn ja, welche?

4. Wenn nein, warum wird die bestehende Rechtsgrundlage trotz offensichtlicher Lücken als ausreichend erachtet?

5. Welche Schritte werden in Zukunft ergriffen, um eine doppelte oder mehrfache Herkunftskennzeichnung auf Lebensmitteln zu vermeiden?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(13. Mai 2013)

Die Identitätskennzeichnung ist in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 853/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 mit spezifischen Hygienevorschriften für Lebensmittel tierischen Ursprungs ([1]) geregelt. Ein Identitätskennzeichen dient in erster Linie der Rückverfolgbarkeit des betreffenden Erzeugnisses durch die Behörden und ist nicht zur Information der Verbraucher gedacht.

Nach Dafürhalten der Kommission sind die EU-Rechtsvorschriften über die Identitätskennzeichnung folglich völlig ausreichend. Wie bei jedem Lebensmittelskandal müssen jedoch natürlich auch in diesem Fall die entsprechenden Konsequenzen gezogen und erforderlichenfalls geeignete Abhilfemaßnahmen ergriffen werden.

([1]) ABl. L 139 vom 30.4.2004, S. 55. Vgl. insbesondere Artikel 5 und Anhang II Abschnitt I der Verordnung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003034/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Identification marking on foods

Identification marking on foods which are available in supermarkets across the EU indicates, across the EU, in which country and plant the product was last processed or packaged. This marking of the origin of foods must be printed within an oval sign. However, it has recently become increasingly common practice to print several marks of origin on one and the same product, which leads to confusion among consumers.

1. What legal basis generally governs such food identification marks at EU level?

2. Are there plans for additional regulations, because — as can be seen from the latest meat scandal — the existing regulations are not sufficient?

3. If so, what are they?

4. If not, why is the existing legal basis being deemed sufficient despite obvious gaps?

5. What steps are being taken to avoid duplicate or multiple labelling of the designation of foods in the future?

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

The use of identification marks is covered by the provisions laid down in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin ([1]). The identification mark is primarily a traceability tool for the authorities and is not intended as consumer information tools.

The Commission therefore considers that EU legislation on identification marking is sound. However as with any food-related incident, lessons must be learnt and, if necessary, appropriate changes made in the light of experience gained.

([1]) OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 55. See, in particular, Article 5 and Section I of Annex II to the regulation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003035/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)

(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: Neue Technologien — Unerwünschte Werbung

Über Post, Internet (E-Mail usw.), Telefon und Fax wird immer wieder unerwünscht Werbung verbreitet. Mittlerweile gibt es eine Vielzahl von Regelungen, mit denen der Flut an unerwünschter Werbung Einhalt geboten wird bzw. Mindestvorschriften vorgegeben werden. Rechtlich noch kaum erfasst sind hingegen Technologien, mit denen den Nutzenden die Verfügungsgewalt über ihre Endgeräte (Netbooks, Smartphones, Tablet-Computer) genommen wird, meist mithilfevon sogenannten Apps oder entsprechenden Programmeinstellungen der Betriebssysteme.

So wird nach Installation einer „Gratis-Spiele-App" zum Beispiel Werbung in der Statuszeile angezeigt. Die so angezeigte Werbung muss über längere Zeit konsumiert werden, ohne dass sie sich einfach abschalten lässt. Diese sogenannte AirPush-Werbung ist in vielen kostenlosen Apps enthalten, und das wird wohl auch weiter um sich greifen. Adware, also Apps, bei denen unerwünschte Anzeigen eingeblendet werden, ist nicht nur lästig, sondern unter Umständen sogar schädlich, falls die Urheber auch noch persönliche Daten ausspionieren und weitergeben. Google hat die sogenannten Werbemitteilungen mittlerweile verboten und entfernt konsequent alle dazu im Widerspruch stehenden Apps aus dem Play Store.

Welche Regelungen gibt es diesbezüglich auf EU-Ebene, und sind in diesem Zusammenhang Anpassungen der Vorgaben für unerwünschte Werbung geplant?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission

(14. Juni 2013)

Soweit es um die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten geht, bildet die Datenschutzrichtlinie 95/46/EG ([1]) den EU-Rechtsrahmen, dem auf intelligenten Mobilgeräten installierte Anwendungen entsprechen müssen. Zur Anwendung gelangt auch die überarbeitete Datenschutzrichtlinie 2002/58/EG ([2]) für elektronische Kommunikation.

Gemäß Artikel 10 und 11 der Richtlinie 95/46/EG müssen die für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen die Nutzer intelligenter Mobilgeräte hinreichend über den Verarbeitungsvorgang informieren, z. B. über die Identität des für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen, den Zweck der Verarbeitung, die Datenkategorien, die verarbeitet werden, sowie die Auskunfts- und Berichtigungsrechte bezüglich sie betreffender Daten. Eine genaue Beschreibung der Datenschutzanforderungen enthält die Stellungnahme 2/2002 der Artikel-29-Datenschutzgruppe ([3]).

In Artikel 14 der Datenschutzrichtlinie 95/46/EG wird jeder betroffenen Person das Recht zuerkannt, kostenfrei gegen die Verarbeitung sie betreffender Daten für Zwecke der Direktwerbung Widerspruch einzulegen. Artikel 19 Absatz 2 der vorgeschlagenen Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ([4]) sieht eine weitere Klarstellung und Stärkung dieses Rechts vor.

Gemäß Artikel 13 der überarbeiteten Datenschutzrichtlinie 2002/58/EG für die elektronische Kommunikation darf unerbetene Werbung über die elektronische Post nur bei vorheriger Einwilligung der Teilnehmer gestattet werden; dies gilt auch für SMS- und MMS-Nachrichten sowie für ähnliche Anwendungen, die auf einem mobilen oder festen Endgerät eingehen. So genannte Cookies, die an das Endgerät eines Nutzers verschickt werden, können zum Versenden gezielter Werbung, einschließlich unerbetener Werbenachrichten, verwendet werden. Gemäß Artikel 5 Absatz 3 der vorgenannten Richtlinie ist jedoch die vorherige Zustimmung des Nutzers erforderlich.

In Zusammenhang mit unerbetener Werbung ist die Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken ([5]) darauf ausgerichtet, irreführende und aggressive Verhaltensweisen seitens Gewerbetreibender zu unterbinden; so ist hartnäckiges und unerwünschtes Ansprechen untersagt ([6]).

([1]) Richtlinie 95/46/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. Oktober 1995 zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr, ABl. L 281 vom 23.11.1995, S. 31-50.

([2]) Richtlinie 2002/58/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. Juli 2002 über die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und den Schutz der Privatsphäre in der elektronischen Kommunikation (Datenschutzrichtlinie für elektronische Kommunikation), ABl. L 201 vom 31.7.2002, S. 37-47. Geändert durch die Richtlinie 2009/136/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 25. November 2009, ABl. L 337 vom 18.12.2009, S. 11-36.

([3]) Stellungnahme 02/2013 zu Apps und intelligenten Geräten, WP202, der Artikel-29-Datenschutzgruppe vom 27. Februar 2013.

([4]) KOM(2012)11 endg. — Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr.

([5]) Richtlinie 2005/29/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 11. Mai 2005 über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken im binnenmarktinternen Geschäftsverkehr zwischen Unternehmen und Verbrauchern und zur Änderung der Richtlinie 84/450/EWG des Rates, der Richtlinien 97/7/EG und 2002/65/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates sowie der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2006/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates (Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken).

([6]) Richtlinie 2005/29/EG, Anhang I, Nummer 26.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003035/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: New technologies — unsolicited advertising

Unsolicited advertising continues to be distributed by post, the Internet (email etc.), telephone and fax. Meanwhile, we have a number of regulations that are intended to stem the tide of unsolicited advertising, or to lay down minimum standards. Legally, however, technologies which take away users' freedom of use of their terminal devices (netbooks, smartphones, tablet computers), usually with the help of 'apps' or equivalent program settings of operating systems, have barely been covered.

After installing a 'free games app', for example, users see advertising displayed in the status bar. Advertising displayed in such a way is 'consumed' over a long period, without users being able to turn it off. This AirPush advertising, as it is called, is included in many free apps and it will undoubtedly continue to spread. Adware, namely apps, which displays unsolicited ads is not just annoying, in certain circumstances, it can even be harmful if the author is also spying on and passing on the user's personal data. Google has now banned what are known as promotional messages and removed from its Play Store all apps that are inconsistent with the ban.

What rules are there at EU level in this respect and are there any plans to adjust the requirements for unsolicited advertising?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

Insofar as the processing of personal data is involved, the EU legal framework to be complied with by applications installed on smart mobile devices is the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC ([1]). The revised e-privacy Directive 2002/58/EC ([2]) also applies.

In accordance with Articles 10 and 11 of Directive 95/46/EC, controllers must adequately inform the user of the smart mobile device about the processing operation, such as on the identity of the controller, the purposes of the processing, the type of data, the data subjects' rights to access, or rectification of their data. A detailed description of the data protection requirements can be found in Opinion 2/2002 of the article 29 Working Party ([3]).

Article 14 of the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC provides that any individual has a right to object free of charge to the processing of their personal data for direct marketing purposes. Article 19(2) of the proposed General Data Protection Regulation ([4]) further clarifies and strengthens this right.

Article 13 of the revised e-privacy Directive 2002/58/EC requires prior opt-in consent before unsolicited commercial communications by email, including SMS, MMS and other kinds of similar applications can be sent on any fixed or mobile terminal. So called 'cookies' sent to user's terminal equipment may be used to serve targeted ads, including unsolicited commercial communications. Article 5(3) of the same Directive requires users' informed consent to engage in this action.

As regards unsolicited advertising, Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([5]) prevents traders from engaging in misleading and aggressive behaviours and, for instance, prohibits the practice of making persistent and unwanted marketing solicitations ([6]).

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

([2]) Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 July 2002 concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector (Directive on privacy and electronic communications), OJ L 201, 31.7.2002, p. 37-47, amended by Directive 2009/136/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009, OJ L 337, 18.12.2009, p. 11-36.

([3]) Opinion 02/2013 on apps on smart devices, WP202, of the article 29 Working Party, adopted on 27 February 2013.

([4]) COM(2012) 11 final, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

([5]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC and 2002/65 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Unfair Commercial Practices Directive).

([6]) Directive 2005/29/EC, Annex I, n 26.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003036/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)

(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: Online-Werbung — Schließen von Werbebannern

Aus den technischen Möglichkeiten, die das Internet bietet, ergeben sich besondere Werbemittel der Online-Werbung. Das wichtigste und bekannteste Werbemittel ist das sog. Werbebanner, also grafisch gestaltete Werbeflächen auf einer Internetseite. Diese Werbebanner werden häufig durch Hyperlinks mit der Website des werbenden Dritten oder mit einer hinter dem Banner liegenden Website verknüpft. Ein neues Werbemittel sind auch die sogenannten Pop-ups, die sich in einem eigenen Fenster auf dem Bildschirm des Benutzers öffnen, wobei die von ihm aufgesuchte Website lediglich teilweise verdeckt wird. Eine weitere Möglichkeit sind sogenannte Ad-Breaks, welche (vergleichbar mit Werbepausen in einer Fernsehsendung) nach einer bestimmten Anzahl von angeklickten Seiten im Internet vor die aktuelle Webpage geschaltet werden.

Die Vielzahl an Werbeformen auf Webseiten nimmt immer mehr zu. Mittlerweile laufen oft kurze Werbefilme mit Ton automatisch an, bei denen keinerlei Möglichkeit zur Schließung der entsprechenden Werbung angeboten wird. Als besonders lästig wird jene Banner-Werbung mit Film und Ton empfunden, die während der Besuchsdauer einer Internetseite stetig von vorne zu laufen beginnt.

1. Die EU gibt ja Rahmenbedingungen für die Online-Werbung vor. Steht es im Einklang mit EU-Recht, wenn dem Benutzer keine Möglichkeit geboten wird, automatisch startende Werbung mit Film (und ggf. Ton) abzuschalten bzw. wegzuklicken, vor allem wenn diese während des Besuchs einer Internetseite immer wieder von vorne startet?

2. Muss zumindest die Möglichkeit gegeben sein, den Ton auszuschalten?

3. Muss bei einem Werbebanner, das die besuchte Seite verdeckt, die Möglichkeit gegeben sein, dieses wegzuklicken?

4. Gibt es spezielle Regelungen hinsichtlich Online-Werbung auf Internetseiten, die für Kinder ausgerichtet sind?

5. Wer sorgt für die Einhaltung der entsprechenden Regelungen für Online-Werbung, und an wen können sich Konsumenten ggf. wenden?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission

(13. Mai 2013)

Mit Ausnahme der audiovisuellen kommerziellen Kommunikation ist die Werbung im Internet nicht durch besondere Rechtsvorschriften auf EU-Ebene geregelt. Es gelten aber die allgemeinen Werbevorschriften der Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken sowie die Vorschriften der Richtlinie 2000/31/EG über den elektronischen Geschäftsverkehr, insbesondere Artikel 6. Dieser schreibt vor, dass die kommerzielle Kommunikation als solche klar erkennbar und die natürliche oder juristische Person, in deren Auftrag diese erfolgt, klar identifizierbar sein muss.

Die Richtlinie 2005/29/EG sieht besondere Schutzvorkehrungen für schützbedürftige Verbrauchergruppen wie Kinder vor. Demnach ist die Lauterkeit von Geschäftspraktiken aus der Perspektive eines schützbedürftigen Verbrauchers zu beurteilen (Artikel 5 Absatz 3 der Richtlinie).

Die audiovisuelle kommerzielle Kommunikation fällt in den Anwendungsbereich der Richtlinie 2010/13/EU (Richtlinie über audiovisuelle Mediendienste, AVMD-RL). Laut AVMD-RL muss audiovisuelle kommerzielle Kommunikation als solche leicht erkennbar sein, und Werbung muss deutlich vom redaktionellen Inhalt unterscheidbar sein. Die AVMD-RL enthält auch Vorschriften zum Schutz Minderjähriger vor unangemessener kommerzieller Kommunikation.

Für die Umsetzung und Anwendung dieser Richtlinien sind die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig. Verbraucher, die sich durch die vom Herrn Abgeordneten beschriebenen Praktiken geschädigt fühlen, sollten sich mit ihrem Fall an die zuständigen nationalen Behörden wenden. Allerdings sind der Kommission durchaus neue Werbepraktiken bekannt, bei denen die Grenze zwischen Werbung und Inhalten verschwimmen. Sie möchte den Herrn Abgeordneten darauf aufmerksam machen, dass sie ein Grünbuch über die Konvergenz der audiovisuellen Welt ([1]) vorgelegt hat. Darin bittet sie um Meinungsäußerungen in Bezug auf mögliche Herausforderungen, die sich aus dem Einsatz neuer Werbetechniken ergeben.

([1]) KOM(2013)231 endg. vom 24.4.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003036/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Online advertising — closing banner ads

The technical possibilities presented by the Internet give rise to particular means of online advertising. The most important and well-known means of advertising is the banner ad, in other words graphically designed advertising space on a website. These banner ads often link to the website of the third-party advertiser or to a website behind the banner by means of hyperlinks. Another new form of advertising is the pop-ups that open in a separate window on the user's screen, partially obscuring the website that the user has called up. Another option is what are known as ad breaks, which (in a similar way to commercial breaks in a television programme) are activated after clicking on a certain number of pages on the Internet prior to the current web page.

The myriad of ways to advertise on websites is continually increasing. It is now often the case that short advertising videos play with the sound automatically switched on but with no means of closing the advertisement in question. The banner ads with video and sound that constantly repeat from the beginning again while the user views a particular web page are particularly annoying.

1. The EU, naturally, lays down framework conditions for online advertising. Is it compatible with EC law for the user to be given no means of switching off or closing advertising videos (with audio, where relevant) that start automatically, particularly if these keep starting again from the beginning while the user is viewing the web page?

2. Should there at least be a means to switch off the sound?

3. In the case of a banner ad that covers the web page being viewed, should a means be provided to remove the ad by clicking to close it?

4. Are there any specific rules relating to online advertising on websites that are aimed at children?

5. Who is responsible for compliance with the relevant rules for online advertising and to whom can consumers turn if they need to?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

With the exception of audiovisual commercial communications (AVCC), advertising on the Internet is not regulated by specific legislation at EU level. However, it is covered by the general advertising rules governed by the directive 2005/29/EC (Unfair Commercial Practices Directive) and by Directive 2000/31/EC (E-commerce Directive), notably by its Article 6. The latter provision requires that both the commercial communication itself and natural or legal person on whose behalf it is made shall be clearly identifiable.

Directive 2005/29/EC provides specific protection for vulnerable consumers such as children. It requires that the fairness of a business practice be assessed from the perspective of the vulnerable consumers (Article 5 (3) of the directive).

AVCC are governed by the 2010/13/EU Directive (Audiovisual Media Services Directive — AVMSD). According to the AVMSD, AVCC should be easily recognisable and advertising should be clearly distinguishable from editorial content. The AVMSD also has rules which protect minors from some inappropriate commercial communications.

Member States are responsible for the implementation of these Directives. Consumers who feel harmed by the practices described by the Honourable Member should bring their case to the attention of the competent national authorities. The Commission is aware though of recent advertising practices where boundaries between advertising and content are blurred. We would like to inform the Honourable Member that the Commission has adopted a Green Paper on convergence in the audiovisual world ([1]), seeking feedback on possible challenges raised by the use of new advertising techniques.

([1]) COM(2013) 231 final, 24.4.2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003037/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18. März 2013)

Betrifft: Werbung und Marketing in sozialen Netzwerken

Immer mehr Unternehmen platzieren ihre Marketingkampagnen in sozialen Netzwerken (vor allem Facebook). Neben der klassischen Online-Werbung in Form von Werbebannern setzen Unternehmen auf den Multiplikator-Effekt der Weiterempfehlung ihrer Produkte und Dienstleistungen, also eine Art Empfehlungswerbung, vergleichbar mit Mundpropaganda. In den Nutzungsbedingungen von Facebook ist festgehalten, dass ohne schriftliche Einwilligung keine Wettbewerbe, Werbegeschenke oder Preisausschreiben angeboten werden dürfen. Dies ist indes nicht in allen sozialen Netzwerken der Fall.

Im Einzelfall stellt sich die Frage, ob und unter welchen Bedingungen eine „Facebook-Freundschaft" auch die Zustimmung zum unmittelbaren Empfang von Werbung impliziert. Problematisch ist auch Empfehlungswerbung in Verbindung mit einer Prämie. Hier wird nur allzu leicht die Grenze zu aggressiver Werbung überschritten, wenn beispielsweise die Nutzer entsprechend der Anzahl der geposteten Weiterempfehlungen eine umso höhere Prämie erhalten (höherer Warengutschein, größere Chance bei Gewinnspielen).

1. Ist auf EU-Ebene geregelt, ob und unter welchen Bedingungen die Verbindung in einem sozialen Netz (z. B. eine „Facebook-Freundschaft") auch die Zustimmung zum unmittelbaren Empfang von Werbung impliziert?

2. Gibt es Regelungen, um zu verhindern, dass etwa mittels Prämienversprechungen die Grenze zu aggressiver Werbung überschritten wird?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(7. Juni 2013)

Der Herr Abgeordnete wird darauf hingewiesen, dass es auf EU-Ebene zwar keine speziellen Vorschriften hinsichtlich der Zustimmung zu Direktwerbung in sozialen Netzwerken gibt, dass jedoch EU-Rechtsvorschriften existieren, die die Verbraucher davor schützen, unerwünschte und aggressive Marketing-Mitteilungen zu erhalten, und die die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten in solchen Kontexten regeln.

Die Richtlinie 2005/29/EG über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken ([1]) hält Gewerbetreibende von irreführenden und aggressiven Verhaltensweisen ab und verbietet beispielsweise das hartnäckige und unerwünschte Ansprechen von Kunden in der Vermarktung oder falsche Versprechungen in Bezug auf Preise ([2]).

Nach Artikel 13 Absatz 1 der Richtlinie 2002/58/EG über die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und den Schutz der Privatsphäre in der elektronischen Kommunikation ist die Verwendung von elektronischer Post, Faxgeräten und automatischen Anrufsystemen für Werbezwecke nur bei vorheriger Einwilligung der Teilnehmer gestatten. Es bleibt den Mitgliedstaaten überlassen, ob sie eine vorherige Einwilligung oder Ablehnung für mit anderen Mitteln versendete kommerzielle Mitteilungen fordern. Somit können kommerzielle Mitteilungen in sozialen Medien einer vorherigen Einwilligung unterliegen, wenn sie per elektronische Post übermittelt werden. Darüber hinaus räumt die Richtlinie 95/46/EG ([3]) im Zusammenhang mit Direktwerbung Personen, deren personenbezogene Daten verarbeitet werden, ein Widerspruchsrecht gegen die Verarbeitung ein.

Unbeschadet der Befugnisse der Kommission als Hüterin der Verträge sind die nationalen Behörden dafür zuständig, die Anwendung der nationalen Maßnahmen zur Umsetzung der genannten Richtlinien zu überwachen.

Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission mit ihrem Grünbuch „Vorbereitung auf die vollständige Konvergenz der audiovisuellen Welt: Wachstum, Schöpfung und Werte" Überlegungen zu den Herausforderungen der Konvergenz zwischen traditionellen und audiovisuellen Online-Medien angestoßen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2005/29/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 11. Mai 2005 über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken von Unternehmen gegenüber Verbrauchern im Binnenmarkt und zur Änderung der Richtlinie 84/450/EWG des Rates, der Richtlinien 97/7/EG und 2002/65/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates sowie der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2006/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates (Richtlinie über unlautere Geschäftspraktiken).

([2]) Richtlinie 2005/29/EG, Anhang I, Nr. 26 und Nr. 31.

([3]) Richtlinie 95/46/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. Oktober 1995 zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr („Datenschutzrichtlinie") (ABl. L 281 vom 23.11.1995).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003037/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Advertising and marketing on social networks

More and more companies are using social networks (in particular Facebook) for their marketing campaigns. In addition to conventional online advertising in the form of banner ads, companies are relying on the multiplier effect of onward recommendations of their products and services, resulting in a kind of recommendation advertising comparable to buzz marketing. Facebook's terms and conditions state that no competitions, promotional gifts or prize draws may be offered without written consent. However, this is not the case on all social networks.

In individual cases, the question arises as to whether and under what conditions a 'Facebook friendship' implies someone's consent to receiving direct advertising. Another problem is recommendation advertising connected with prize competitions. In this respect, the line to aggressive advertising is crossed all too easily where, for example, users receive a higher prize (shopping vouchers of a greater value, a greater chance at winning games) if they post more onward recommendations.

1. Has the question of whether and under what conditions a connection on a social network (e.g. a 'Facebook friendship') implies consent to directly receiving advertising been regulated at EU level?

2. Are there any rules to prevent the line to aggressive advertising being crossed as a result of prize promises, for example?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Honourable Member should be aware that, while there are no specific EU rules regarding consent to direct advertising in social networks, there is EU legislation protecting consumers from receiving unsolicited and aggressive marketing communications, and concerning the processing of personal data in such contexts.

Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([1]) prevents traders from engaging in misleading and aggressive behaviours and, for instance, prohibits the practice of making persistent and unwanted marketing solicitations or of making fake promises regarding prizes ([2]).

Directive 2002/58/EC on privacy and electronic communications, in Article 13(1) requires prior opt in consent to send commercial communications using electronic mail, fax and automatic calling machines. It leaves it up to Member States whether to require opt in or opt out consent for commercial communications sent by other means. Thus, commercial communications in social media may be subject to opt-in consent if they are sent by electronic mail. Furthermore, under Directive 95/46/EC ([3]), within the context of direct marketing, the individual whose personal data is undergoing processing, is given a right to object to this processing.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, national authorities are the competent bodies to monitor the application of the national measures implementing the above Directives.

In addition, the Commission with its Green Paper 'Preparing for a fully Converged Audiovisual World: Growth, Creation and Values' launched a reflection on the challenges of convergence between traditional and online audiovisual media.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC and 2002/65 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Unfair Commercial Practices Directive).

([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC, Annex I, n. 26 and n. 31.

([3]) Directive 95/46/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data ('Data Protection Directive') — OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003038/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Semilla de la destrucción de la desamortización tributaria

La empresa Nestlé acaba de anunciar que traslada la tesorería de todas sus empresas, que actualmente mantiene en Barcelona, a NTC Europe con sede en Luxemburgo. La razón, como es fácil imaginar, es el gran ahorro en la factura fiscal ante la ventajosa política tributaria de ese Estado miembro de la Unión Europea.

En muchas ocasiones he trasladado a la Comisión mi preocupación ante los graves efectos nocivos de la falta de armonización tributaria en la Unión Europea. Debería resultar innecesario insistir en las perniciosas consecuencias para el proyecto institucional de la Unión Europea, además de —lo que no debería olvidarse en la sede del edificio de la Comisión— para el equilibrio social, económico y territorial en Europa.

Por ello, y porque esa práctica se está generalizando entre las multinacionales a gran velocidad, insisto en preguntar:

¿No es consciente la Comisión de la semilla de destrucción que supone la falta de armonización fiscal?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de mayo de 2013)

Una de las múltiples ventajas del mercado interior es que los ciudadanos y las empresas pueden operar libremente en el interior del mismo y son libres de situar sus actividades económicas allí donde mejor se adapten a sus objetivos comerciales y económicos. La Comisión ha expresado reiteradamente su postura en lo que respecta a la armonización de los regímenes fiscales, como lo hizo recientemente en su respuesta a la pregunta escrita P-001037/2013 de D. Thijs Berman. Se ruega a Su Señoría se remita a la respuesta a esa pregunta y a las anteriores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003038/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Destruction caused by lack of tax harmonisation in the EU

Nestlé has just announced that it will move the liquid assets of all its businesses, currently held in Barcelona, to NTC Europe in Luxembourg. The reason, which is quite understandable, is that this EU Member State's favourable tax policy offers substantial tax savings.

I have raised my concerns about the serious damaging effects of the lack of tax harmonisation in the EU with the Commission many times. I should not need to repeat the harmful impact it has on the EU institutional project as well as on social, economic and territorial balance in Europe — something we should not forget here in the heart of the Commission building.

For these reasons, and because this practice is fast becoming more widespread among multinationals, I repeat my question:

Is the Commission not aware of the destruction being caused by this lack of tax harmonisation?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

One of the many benefits of the internal market is that citizens and businesses can operate freely within it, choosing to locate economic activities where it best suits their commercial and economic objectives. Concerning the harmonisation of tax systems, the Commission has repeatedly set out its position, most recently in its answer to Written Question P-001037/2013 by Mr Thijs Berman. The Honourable Member is kindly referred to that and previous replies.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003039/13
a la Comisión
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) y Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(18 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Consolidación fiscal y objetivo de déficit

El Gobierno español anunció para 2013 un objetivo de déficit para Cataluña del 0,7 %. Esto implicaría un recorte de 4 500 millones de euros en relación con las cuentas de 2012. Cataluña tiene competencias en sanidad, educación y bienestar social, y por lo tanto el gasto social representa un alto porcentaje del total de los presupuestos. Este recorte presupuestario que propone el Ministerio de Hacienda representaría un descenso del 14,5 % en relación con las cuentas de 2012. Grecia, para el ejercicio 2013, realizará el recorte más grande desde el comienzo de la crisis: un 11,5 % en relación con las cuentas de 2012.

El Parlamento Europeo aprobó el pasado mes de diciembre por amplia mayoría el informe Pallone sobre las finanzas públicas en la Unión Económica y Monetaria — 2011 y 2012, en cuyo apartado 28 se insta a que los esfuerzos de consolidación fiscal se repartan de forma justa entre las distintas administraciones teniendo en cuenta los servicios que prestan. De igual modo, en el apartado 30 del mismo informe se pide a los Estados miembros que den prioridad a las medidas de consolidación presupuestaria dirigidas a la reducción del gasto militar.

¿Ampliará la Comisión el objetivo de déficit previsto para 2013 para el Estado español?

En el marco del semestre europeo ¿considera la Comisión que los Estados miembros con problemas presupuestarios deben dar prioridad a medidas de consolidación presupuestaria dirigidas a reducir gastos de defensa, tal y como aprobó el Parlamento Europeo en el informe sobre las finanzas públicas en la Unión Económica y Monetaria — 2011 y 2012?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de mayo de 2013)

Tal como se ha indicado en respuestas anteriores sobre la cuestión del reparto del ajuste presupuestario entre los distintos niveles de la administración en España, la Comisión no tiene nada que añadir a la respuesta enviada por el Comisario de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios al Consejero catalán de Economía y Conocimiento.

La Comisión anunció el 10 de abril de 2013, en su Comunicación sobre los resultados de los exámenes exhaustivos con arreglo al Reglamento (UE) n° 1176/2011, relativo a la prevención y corrección de los desequilibrios macroeconómicos, que el 29 de mayo, «a partir de los datos reales relativos a 2012 validados por Eurostat y de las previsiones de la primavera de 2013 elaboradas por los servicios de la Comisión, la Comisión volverá a evaluar la situación en el marco de los procedimientos de déficit excesivo actualmente en curso y, en caso necesario, formulará las oportunas recomendaciones al Consejo.».

La Comisión ha instado en numerosas ocasiones a los Estados miembros a adoptar un saneamiento presupuestario que favorezca el crecimiento. Ahora bien, no le corresponde evaluar las necesidades de defensa de los Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003039/13
to the Commission
Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) and Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Fiscal consolidation and deficit target

The Spanish Government has announced that Catalonia's deficit target for 2013 is 0.7%. This would involve cuts of EUR 4.5 billion compared with figures for 2012. Catalonia has competence in health, education and social welfare and therefore social spending represents a high percentage of the overall budget. This budget cut proposed by the Ministry of Finance would represent a reduction of 14.5% compared with figures for 2012. Greece, in the financial year 2013, will make the biggest cuts since the start of the crisis: 11.5% compared with figures for 2012.

Last December, Parliament approved with a large majority the Pallone report on public finances in the Economic and Monetary Union 2011 and 2012, in which paragraph 28 urged for fiscal consolidation efforts to be shared fairly between the various administrations, taking account of the services they provide. Similarly, in paragraph 30 of the same report, Member States are asked to prioritise fiscal consolidation measures aimed at reducing military spending.

Will it increase Spain's deficit target for 2013?

Within the framework of the European semester, does it believe that Member States with budgetary issues should prioritise fiscal consolidation measures aimed at reducing defence spending, as approved by Parliament in the report on public finances in the Economic and Monetary Union 2011 and 2012?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

As noted in previous replies, on the matter of the distribution of the fiscal adjustment amongst government levels in Spain, the Commission does not have anything to add to the reply sent by the Member of the Commission responsible for Economic and Monetary Affairs to Catalonia's Minister of Economy and Knowledge.

The Commission announced on 10 April 2013 in its communication on the results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances that 'On 29 May, on the basis of actual data for 2012 validated by Eurostat and the Commission services' Spring 2013 Forecast, the Commission will also reassess the situation under the ongoing excessive deficit procedures and, where necessary, adopt the appropriate recommendations to the Council.'

The Commission has repeatedly called on Member States to enact growth-friendly fiscal consolidation. However, it is not up to the Commission to assess Member States' defence needs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003040/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Funding for Inertial Fusion Energy

Inertial Fusion Energy (IFE) research has previously been supported through the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures under the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (Unit B). Can the Commission confirm what long-term support will be in place to develop such research from 2014 onwards?

Can the Commission explain under which funding streams IFE research bodies will be eligible to bid for support, and whether IFE research may be funded under Horizon 2020? What are likely to be the selection and award criteria enabling IFE researchers to qualify for this funding?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

With the start of a new Horizon 2020/Euratom Framework Programme on 1 January 2014, the Euratom fusion research programme needs to be made fit for purpose for the challenges Europe faces in this field. This is in line with the recommendation by the panel of independent experts chaired by Professor Wagner in 2011 to streamline the programme towards a goal-oriented roadmap. For this reason, the Commission has foreseen a reorganisation of the fusion programme by moving towards joint programming between the national fusion labs and stepping away from bilateral agreements. The roadmap does not mention inertial confinement fusion, though some of roadmap's activities (e.g. modelling, materials) may be of relevance to both magnetic and inertial lines of research.

The research infrastructure programme funds projects in all areas of science and technology. Project HiPER (European High Power laser Energy Research facility) ([1]) is currently funded as FP7 ([2])'s Preparatory Phase for ESFRI ([3]) (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) projects. Specific funding to inertial fusion is not foreseen either in FP7 or in Horizon 2020.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=10270048
([2]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/index_en.cfm?pg=esfri

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003041/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Adoption of the Falsified Medicines Directive

Article 46(b) of Directive 2011/62/EU on falsified medicines outlines the conditions under which active substances can be imported from third countries. These provisions will apply from 2 July 2013.

I have been informed of concerns that the national manufacturers of active pharmaceutical ingredients in many countries may not be approved by the Commission or may not have the necessary written confirmation from the competent authority of compliance with EU standards.

If this is the case, it will place significant restrictions on the ability to import pharmaceutical ingredients, which could lead to shortages of medicinal products in the supply chain, which in turn could have serious consequences for public health.

What is the Commission doing to ensure that third countries are aware of the provisions of this directive and that they will be able to comply with them?

What is the Commission doing to help national third-country manufacturers comply with the EU rules on medicinal products?

Does the Commission have a procedure in place to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of medicinal products in the event that the provisions of the directive do in fact lead to restrictions on imported ingredients?

Can the Commission provide an estimate of the costs incurred by industry in seeking to comply with this imposed deadline?

Can the Commission comment on the impact on jobs and on maintaining final product pharmaceutical manufacturing in the EU?

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

1. The Commission has pro-actively contacted the regulatory authorities of all countries that are important exporters of active substances (active pharmaceutical ingredients — API) to the EU in order to raise awareness of the upcoming rules.

2. The Commission provides all necessary information in a timely manner in order to facilitate third-country manufacturers' compliance with the new rules.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011583/2011 ([1]).

4. If the exporting API manufacturing site is compliant with 'good manufacturing practices' (GMP), the costs for compliance with the new EU rules are practically zero. Where the API manufacturing site is non-compliant, the costs depend on the necessary measures to render the manufacturing site compliant with GMP.

5. The Commission does not expect an impact on jobs and finished dosage form manufacturing in the EU.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003042/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(18 mars 2013)

Objet: Politique de prélèvement sur les dépôts bancaires à Chypre

Le samedi 16 mars, Chypre a annoncé la mise en place d'une nouvelle taxation sur les dépôts bancaires chypriotes, condition d'octroi d'une aide de 10 000 000 000 euros dans le cadre du plan de sauvetage financé par l'Union européenne et le Fonds monétaire international. Le plan prévoit de ponctionner d'autorité 6,75 % des dépôts jusqu'à 100 000 euros, puis 9,9 % au-delà. Cette mesure permet de faire participer au plan de sauvetage du pays, non seulement les Chypriotes mais aussi les Russes, qui détiennent plus de 20 000 000 000 euros sur les 70 000 000 000 de dépôts.

La population chypriote étant déjà fortement ébranlée par les cures d'austérité successives, cette mesure pourrait-elle s'appliquer uniquement aux comptes étrangers?

Contrairement à l'approche du plafonnement adoptée par la Commission, serait-il possible d'envisager l'instauration d'un montant minimum (par exemple 25 000 euros, comme proposé par Martin Schulz) en deçà duquel la mesure ne s'appliquerait pas, afin de protéger les foyers les plus modestes?

Si un seuil minimum pour protéger la classe moyenne chypriote est instauré, le manque à gagner pourrait-il être compensé par une augmentation du taux de prélèvement des dépôts au-dessus de 25 000 euros et surtout aussi de 100 000 euros?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(7 mai 2013)

L'accord politique sur l'aide financière qu'a trouvé l'Eurogroupe le 25 mars 2013 se fonde sur une protection totale de tous les déposants assurés (soit jusqu'à 100 000 euros) dans toutes les banques conformément à la législation de l'UE en vigueur. Les mesures auxquelles se sont engagées les autorités chypriotes serviront de base au rétablissement de la viabilité du secteur financier.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003042/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Levy on bank deposits in Cyprus

On Saturday 16 March 2013, Cyprus announced that it would impose a new tax on Cypriot bank deposits as a precondition for the granting of EUR 10 billion of aid as part of the bailout financed by the European Union and the International Monetary Fund. The bailout calls for a levy of 6.75% to be imposed, without consultation, on deposits of up to EUR 100 000, and 9.9% on amounts above that threshold. This measure means that not only Cypriots but also Russians, who hold more than EUR 20 billion of the EUR 70 billion in deposits, can participate in the country's bailout.

Given that the Cypriot people have already been severely shaken by successive austerity measures, could this measure be applied to foreign accounts only?

In contrast to the ceiling approach adopted by the Commission, would it be possible to establish a minimum amount (for example EUR 25 000, as proposed by Martin Schulz), below which the measure would not be applied, in order to protect the poorest households?

If a minimum threshold to protect the Cypriot middle class were established, could the loss of revenue be compensated for by increasing the levy rate on deposits above EUR 25 000 and particularly those above EUR 100 000?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The political agreement on financial assistance by the Eurogroup on 25 March 2013 was reached on the basis of full protection of all insured depositors (i.e. up to EUR 100 000) in all banks in accordance with the relevant EU legislation. The measures committed by the Cypriot authorities will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003043/13
à la Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(18 mars 2013)

Objet: Étiquetage de la viande, mention de l'origine nationale et méthode d'abattage

Le scandale de la viande chevaline trouvée dans des produits estampillés «100 % pur bœuf» a ébranlé la confiance des consommateurs et constitue un nouveau séisme pour les producteurs de viande.

De telles fraudes sont le résultat de tromperies inacceptables mais également le résultat d'un dictat de prix toujours plus bas imposé par la grande distribution.

Pour éviter de telles dérives, le renforcement des autocontrôles au sein des entreprises agroalimentaires n'est qu'une partie de la réponse. Actuellement, le système en vigueur instaure seulement une différence entre un produit étiqueté «UE» et un produit étiqueté «non UE». Ce système n'est pas suffisant pour renforcer la confiance des consommateurs européens.

De plus, la filière de la charcuterie-salaison comprend de nombreuses petites et moyennes entreprises, dont le marché est uniquement national et pour qui la mention de l'origine nationale constituerait une récompense pour les efforts consentis pour proposer un produit de qualité.

Pour ces raisons, il est important que la mention de l'origine nationale de la viande fraîche ou utilisée comme ingrédient dans les produits transformés soit garantie grâce à un étiquetage clair.

De plus, les normes d'hygiène et la qualité de la viande dépendent de la manière dont les animaux sont abattus. Il est légitime d'informer également les consommateurs européens de la manière dont les animaux sont abattus.

1. La Commission envisage-t-elle de rendre obligatoire la mention de l'origine nationale de la viande sur l'ensemble des produits?

2. De plus, la Commission considère-t-elle que la méthode utilisée pour abattre les animaux doit être indiquée de manière claire sur le produit destiné à la vente?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(24 avril 2013)

1. Pour ce qui est de l'indication de l'origine de la viande sur l'étiquette, la Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question à la question écrite E-001580/2013 ([1]). Par ailleurs, conformément au règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires ([2]), elle est tenue de soumettre d'ici au 13 décembre 2014 des rapports similaires sur la possibilité d'étendre l'indication obligatoire de l'origine à la viande non transformée (autre que la viande porcine, ovine, caprine ou la viande de volaille), au lait, au lait utilisé comme ingrédient dans les produits laitiers, aux denrées alimentaires non transformées, aux produits comprenant un seul ingrédient et aux ingrédients constituant plus de 50 % d'une denrée alimentaire.

2. Le considérant 50 du règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires dispose ce qui suit:

«(50) Les consommateurs européens montrent un intérêt croissant pour la mise en œuvre dans l'Union de dispositions concernant le bien-être des animaux au moment de leur abattage, y compris pour le fait de savoir si l'animal a été étourdi avant d'être tué. Il convient à cet égard d'envisager, dans le cadre de la future stratégie de l'Union pour la protection et le bien-être des animaux, une étude sur l'opportunité de donner aux consommateurs l'information pertinente au sujet de l'étourdissement des animaux» ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 1924/2006 et (CE) n° 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Commission, JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([3]) Soulignement ajouté.

En janvier 2012, la Commission a adopté une communication au Parlement européen, au Conseil et au Comité économique et social européen sur la stratégie de l'Union européenne pour la protection et le bien-être des animaux au cours de la période 2012-2015 ([4]) ; l'étude en question y est programmée. Elle a été confiée à un consultant externe et devrait être prête à partir d'avril 2014. En fonction des résultats, elle avisera de l'opportunité de nouvelles actions.

([4]) COM(2012)6 final, daté du 19.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003043/13
to the Commission
Michèle Striffler (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Meat labelling, indication of national origin and slaughter method

The scandal over horsemeat found in products marked '100% pure beef' has shaken consumers' confidence and represents further upheaval for meat producers.

Such fraud is the result of unacceptable deception, but it is also the result of the ever-decreasing prices imposed by supermarkets.

Strengthening self-checks within agri-food companies is only part of the solution to prevent such breaches. At present, the system in force only draws a distinction between products labelled 'EU' and products labelled 'non-EU'. This system is not enough to boost European consumers' confidence.

Furthermore, the meat and cured meat products sector includes many small and medium-sized enterprises, which only trade within their national markets and for which an indication of national origin would be a reward for their efforts to supply quality products.

For these reasons, it is important that the national origin of fresh meat or meat used as an ingredient in processed products is indicated through clear labelling.

In addition, hygiene standards and meat quality depend on how the animals are slaughtered. It is legitimate also to inform European consumers about how the animals are slaughtered.

1. Does the Commission intend to make indication of the national origin of meat compulsory on all products?

2. Furthermore, does the Commission believe that the method used to slaughter the animals should be clearly indicated on the product to be sold?

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

1. As regards origin labelling, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-001580/2013 ([1]). In addition, the Commission is also required to submit similar reports on the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling to unprocessed meat (other than beef, pig, poultry, sheep and goat), milk, milk used as an ingredient in dairy products, unprocessed foods, single ingredient products, and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food, by 13 December 2014, pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]).

2. Recital 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers provides the following:

'(50) Union consumers show an increasing interest in the implementation of the Union animal welfare rules at the time of slaughter, including whether the animal was stunned before slaughter. In this respect, a study on the opportunity to provide consumers with the relevant information on the stunning of animals should be considered in the context of a future Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals' ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([3]) Emphasis added.

In January 2012, the Commission adopted a communication to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on the European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015 ([4]), where this study is planned. The Commission has mandated an external consultant to perform the study which is expected to be available from April 2014. Depending on the outcome of the study, the Commission will consider whether further actions are necessary.

([4]) COM(2012) 6 final, dated 19.1.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003044/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(18 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Problema della giustizia in Italia

— Considerato che la giustizia è un servizio fondamentale che lo Stato rende al cittadino e che una giustizia inefficiente costituisce un fattore di disgregazione per la società limitandone la crescita economica, determinando una riduzione degli investimenti e una contrazione del mercato del credito e della finanza;

— considerato che il problema fondamentale della giustizia in Italia consiste nell'eccessiva durata dei procedimenti, come evidenziato da un recente studio della Banca Mondiale, che colloca l'Italia al 156° posto, sui 181 paesi analizzati, per la durata di una normale controversia;

— considerato che secondo un'ulteriore indagine effettuata dall'Istituto di Ricerca sui Sistemi Giudiziari del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (Irsig-Cnr) e dal rapporto 2012 della Cepej-CoE (Commissione europea per l'efficacia della giustizia del Consiglio d'Europa), è emerso che l'eccessiva durata dei procedimenti giudiziari, il trattamento in alcuni casi inadeguato subito dai cittadini, la scarsa fiducia di cui gode l'amministrazione della giustizia, sono solo alcuni dei problemi di cui soffre il «Sistema Italia» e che tali elementi sono le ragioni principali della marcata sfiducia che larga parte della cittadinanza italiana nutre nei confronti del sistema giudiziario (fonte Eurobarometro 2013);

— considerato che molti paesi europei hanno adottato nel corso degli anni importanti riforme tese a migliorare la qualità dei servizi erogati basandosi sui valori di indipendenza e imparzialità, responsabilità e trasparenza, efficienza e «giusto processo», orientamento al pubblico e accesso ai servizi e che tali misure hanno garantito una maggiore fiducia nell'istituzione giudiziaria;

— considerato che tra le ragioni principali di tale annoso problema vi sono il lento funzionamento dei Tribunali dovuto a carenza di personale, alla frammentazione normativa, così come all'insufficiente utilizzo delle Procedure «Alternative» ai Tribunali;

— considerato che la Commissione europea ha presentato il 27 marzo scorso un nuovo strumento comparativo destinato a promuovere l'efficacia dei sistemi giudiziari nell'Unione europea e quindi a rafforzare la crescita economica e la creazione di nuovi posti di lavoro, e che tale «quadro di valutazione europeo della giustizia», fornendo dati oggettivi, affidabili e comparabili sul funzionamento dei sistemi giudiziari nei 27 Stati membri dell'UE, dovrebbe favorire il miglioramento della qualità, dell'indipendenza e dell'efficienza dei sistemi giudiziari.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione comunicare:

1. quali raccomandazioni intende la Commissione esprimere nei confronti dell'Italia affinché tutti gli operatori del comparto giustizia possano svolgere le proprie attività in un'ottica di efficienza, di indipendenza e di attrattività, prerequisito fondamentale per creare un contesto imprenditoriale favorevole alla crescita, agli investimenti e all'occupazione?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2013)

Sistemi giudiziari efficienti sono componenti strutturali importanti di un contesto favorevole alle imprese, motivo per cui il miglioramento della qualità, dell'indipendenza e dell'efficienza degli ordinamenti giudiziari nazionali costituisce una priorità fondamentale del semestre europeo, il ciclo annuale di coordinamento delle politiche economiche dell'Unione europea.

Nel 2012 le raccomandazioni specifiche per l'Italia formulate dal Consiglio su proposta della Commissione ([1]) includevano l'attuazione della prevista riorganizzazione del sistema della giustizia civile e la promozione del ricorso a meccanismi alternativi di risoluzione delle controversie.

Al fine di assistere gli Stati membri nel garantire una giustizia più efficiente, il quadro di valutazione UE della giustizia mira a fornire dati oggettivi, affidabili e comparabili sul funzionamento dei sistemi giudiziari nei 27 Stati membri dell'UE. Le scarse prestazioni poste in evidenza dagli indicatori richiedono un'analisi più approfondita dei motivi di tale risultato, se necessario sulla base di un dialogo aperto con gli Stati che avviano riforme adeguate.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/it/12/st11/st11259.it12.pdf

Nell'ambito del semestre europeo 2013, la Commissione sta attualmente svolgendo un'analisi specifica per ciascun paese. In questo contesto sono prese in considerazione le informazioni fornite dal quadro di valutazione UE della giustizia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003044/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Problem of the justice system in Italy

Justice is an essential service that the State provides to the citizen, while inefficient justice results in the unravelling of society, limiting economic growth and leading to a reduction in investment and a contraction in the credit and financial markets.

The fundamental problem affecting the judicial system in Italy is the excessive length of proceedings, as highlighted by a recent World Bank study, which puts Italy in 156th place out of 181 countries surveyed, in terms of the duration of a normal court case.

According to another survey conducted by the Italian National Research Council's Research Institute on Judicial Systems (CNR-IRSIG) and the 2012 report by the CEPEJ (European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice of the Council of Europe), it emerged that the excessive length of judicial proceedings, the inadequate treatment meted out to citizens in some cases and the lack of trust in the administration of justice are just some of the problems facing the Italian system and that these factors are the main reasons behind the marked lack of confidence that a good number of Italian citizens have in the judicial system (source: Eurobarometer 2013).

Many European countries have over the years brought in significant reforms to improve the quality of the services they provide, based on values such as independence and impartiality, accountability and transparency, efficiency and 'due process', guidance to the public and access to services with the result that such measures have led to greater confidence in the judiciary.

The main reasons for this age-old problem include the slow pace of the courts due to understaffing and regulatory fragmentation, as well as the inadequate use of 'alternative' procedures to the courts.

On 27 March 2013 the Commission presented a new comparative tool designed to promote the effectiveness of judicial systems in the European Union and thus to enhance economic growth and the creation of new jobs. This 'EU Justice Scoreboard', in providing reliable and objective data on the justice systems in all 27 Member States, is supposed to help improve the quality, independence and efficiency of judicial systems.

1. What recommendations does the Commission therefore intend to make to Italy with a view to ensuring that all those working in the justice system are able to carry out their work efficiently and independently, and that their jobs remain attractive, since these are vital prerequisites for creating a business environment that is conducive to growth, investment and employment?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Effective justice systems are important structural components of an attractive business environment. This is why improving the quality, independence and efficiency of national judicial systems is a key priority in the European Semester — the EU's annual cycle of economic policy coordination.

In 2012, the Country Specific Recommendations addressed by the Council, on the proposal of the Commission, to Italy ([1]) included the implementation of the planned reorganisation of the civil justice system and the promotion of the use of alternative dispute settlement mechanisms.

In order to assist Member States to achieve more effective justice, the EU Justice Scoreboard aims to provide objective, reliable and comparable data on the functioning of the justice systems in the EU's 27 Member States. Poor performance revealed by indicators requires a deeper analysis of the reasons behind the result and, where necessary, on the basis of an open dialogue with the Member States engaging in appropriate reforms.

In the 2013 European Semester process, the Commission is currently carrying out its country-specific analysis. In this context, the information provided by the EU Justice Scoreboard is taken into account.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st11/st11259.en12.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003046/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(18 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Libero accesso al sistema mutualistico nell'UE

Germania, Austria, Olanda, e Gran Bretagna hanno concordato di inviare una lettera alla Commissione europea auspicando la creazione di una barriera legislativa che permetta a ogni Stato membro dell'UE di poter rifiutare l'assistenza sociale agli immigrati UE che non abbiano mai lavorato prima entro i suoi confini o avere il diritto di espellerli, se vi sia qualche irregolarità nei documenti.

Poiché l'Unione europea ha tra i propri principi fondanti la libera circolazione delle persone, va notato come il bersaglio di questa barriera legislativa siano proprio quei cittadini romeni e bulgari che dal 2014, finita la moratoria sui loro trasferimenti, potranno cercar lavoro liberamente all'interno dei paesi dell'UE.

Secondo la legislazione attuale, con più o meno difficoltà a seconda dei paesi, a qualsiasi immigrato europeo in uno Stato membro dell'UE è sempre stato garantito l'accesso al sistema sanitario e ai suoi rimborsi, mentre la minaccia di espulsione invocata dalla lettera esiste già ora, qualora, ad esempio, l'immigrato non abbia i mezzi per mantenersi.

Considerato anche che ormai in troppi abusano di servizi migliori in Paesi più benestanti del loro, troppi fanno i «turisti del welfare» solo per ottenere ciò che non è garantito nei loro paesi d'origine e alla luce dell'evolversi della crisi economica è necessario porre un freno a tale pratica, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se reputa che la barriera dovrebbe riguardare anche studenti, ricercatori, artisti, di tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE;

— come ritiene attuabile tale discriminazione tra i passaporti dei cittadini degli Stati membri dell'UE?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2013)

Il diritto fondamentale alla libera circolazione garantito dal diritto dell'Unione ai cittadini dell'Unione e ai loro familiari è il diritto più apprezzato nell'Unione europea.

Indipendentemente dalla loro nazionalità, i cittadini dell'Unione possono stabilirsi in un altro paese dell'UE a condizione di essere lavoratori subordinati o autonomi in tale paese o di disporre di un'assicurazione malattia che copre tutti i rischi e di risorse sufficienti, affinché non divengano un onere a carico dell'assistenza sociale nazionale.

Il diritto dell'Unione in materia di libera circolazione dei cittadini dell'Unione offre solide garanzie agli Stati membri, permettendo loro di assicurare che i fondi pubblici siano destinati principalmente a coloro che, tramite le imposte, contribuiscono ai fondi pubblici con cui è finanziata l'assistenza statale.

Non dovrebbero esserci ulteriori ostacoli alla libera circolazione. L'Europa ha bisogno di maggiore e più facile mobilità al suo interno, non di nuove barriere.

Dai dati aggregati disponibili risulta che i cittadini dell'Unione che esercitano il diritto alla libera circolazione sono più propensi a lavorare della popolazione nazionale e meno propensi a chiedere prestazioni sociali. Tali dati evidenziano inoltre che i sistemi di assistenza nazionale non sono un elemento determinante della mobilità all'interno dell'UE e possono anche non avere alcuna rilevanza a tal fine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003046/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Free access to the welfare system in the EU

Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have agreed to send a letter to the Commission calling for the creation of a legislative barrier allowing any EU Member State to refuse welfare assistance to EU immigrants who have never previously worked within its borders or to deport them, if there is any irregularity in their papers.

Since one of the European Union's founding principles is the free movement of persons, it should be noted that the target of this legislative barrier is in fact those Romanian and Bulgarian citizens who, once the moratorium on their movement expires in 2014, will be able to seek work freely within EU countries.

Under the current law, any European immigrant in an EU Member State has always, with varying degrees of difficulty depending on the country involved, been granted access to the health system, including reimbursement of health costs, while the threat of deportation invoked by the letter already exists where, for example, an immigrant does not have the means to live on.

In addition, there are now too many people abusing better services in countries which are wealthier than theirs, and there are too many 'welfare tourists' seeking solely to obtain what is not provided by their countries of origin. In the light of this and the developing economic crisis, this practice needs to be halted. Can the Commission therefore say:

— Whether it believes that the barrier should also apply to students, researchers and artists from all EU Member States?

— How it believes that distinctions of this kind between the passports of nationals of EU Member States may be made?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The fundamental right of free movement guaranteed by EC law to EU citizens and their family members is the most cherished right in the European Union.

Regardless of their nationality, EU citizens can settle in another EU country provided they will be in (self-)employment there or have comprehensive sickness insurance and sufficient resources not to become a burden on the national social assistance system.

EC law on free movement of EU citizens offers robust guarantees to Member States that allow them to ensure that their public funds go primarily towards those who contribute via their taxes towards the public funds from which welfare is financed.

There should be no extra barriers to free movement. What Europe needs is more and easier intra-EU mobility, not new hurdles.

Available aggregate evidence shows that mobile EU citizens are more likely to work than the domestic population and less likely to claim social benefits. Evidence also shows that national welfare schemes are not an important driver of intra-EU mobility and may not even play a role at all.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003047/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(18 martie 2013)

Subiect: Agricultura de graniță

Având în vedere preponderența activităților agricole în România, Ucraina și Republica Moldova, intenționează Comisia Europeană să introducă o nouă prioritate de finanțare destinată agriculturii în cadrul Programului trilateral România - Ucraina - Republica Moldova pentru a obține o economie de graniță competitivă?

Rațiunea introducerii unei noi priorități ar putea fi determinată de bugetarea separată a activităților legate de agricultură și nu de confundarea bugetelor cu alte tipuri de activități de sprijinire a economiei din zonele de frontieră.

Agricultura ar putea fi principalul motor al economiei în cadrul acestor zone de frontieră.

Răspuns dat de dl Füle în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2013)

Prioritățile generale pentru viitoarele programe de cooperare transfrontalieră (CTF) sunt dezbătute cu statele membre care participă la cooperarea transfrontalieră și este probabil ca acestea să includă aspectele privind agricultura. Cu toate acestea, Comisia și Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă (SEAE) nu vor defini prioritățile pentru programele punctuale de cooperare transfrontalieră, urmând ca acestea să fie definite de către reprezentanții țărilor participante în cadrul Comitetului comun de programare; în cazul de față, România, Ucraina și Republica Moldova.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003047/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Agriculture in border areas

Given the predominance of farming in Romania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, does the Commission intend to introduce a new priority in terms of financing for agriculture as part of the Romania — Ukraine — Republic of Moldova trilateral programme, with the aim of achieving a competitive border economy?

The rationale for introducing a new order of priority could be to have separate budgeting for agriculture-related activities and not mix up the budgets with other types of activities aimed at supporting the economy in border areas.

Agriculture could be the main driving force for the economy in these border areas.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

General priorities for future Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) programmes are under discussion with Member States participating in CBC and these are likely to include agriculture. However, the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) will not develop priorities for individual CBC programmes. These will be defined by the representatives of the participating countries within the Joint Programming Committee; in this case Romania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003048/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 martie 2013)

Subiect: Desemnarea Capitalei Europene a Culturii

Conform propunerii de decizie a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului de stabilire a unei acțiuni a Uniunii în favoarea evenimentului „Capitale europene ale culturii" pentru anii 2020-2033, document care face în prezent obiectul procedurii de examinare parlamentară, Comisia desemnează în mod oficial capitalele europene ale culturii în urma unei proceduri de selecție în două etape, efectuată de către un juriu european de experți independenți.

Având în vedere că anunțul ministrului român al culturii de a sprijini candidatura Timișoarei pentru titlul de Capitală Europeană a Culturii în anul 2021 încalcă legislația europeană care reglementează acest domeniu, Comisia este rugată să prezinte un punct de vedere oficial cu privire la această situație.

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(7 mai 2013)

Competiția pentru titlul de „Capitală europeană a culturii" în 2012 din România va fi reglementată de viitoarea decizie de stabilire a unei acțiuni a Uniunii în favoarea evenimentului „Capitale europene ale culturii" pentru anii 2020-2033, care este negociată în prezent de Parlamentul European și de Consiliu ([1]).

Conform practicii standard, competiția din România pentru titlul din 2012 va fi deschisă, corectă și transparentă și se va baza pe publicarea unui apel deschis la depunerea de candidaturi. Selecția se va face apoi pe baza unui nou set de criterii, stabilite în viitoarea decizie (a se vedea articolul 5 din propunerea Comisiei). Candidaturile vor fi evaluate în raport cu aceste criterii de către experți independenți în domeniul culturii. Comparativ cu sistemul actual, reglementat prin Decizia 1622/2006/CE, noile criterii vor fi mai explicite, oferind orașelor mai multe orientări cu privire la elaborarea dosarelor de candidatură și la integrarea proiectelor lor într-o strategie pe termen lung, și de asemenea mai măsurabile, facilitând selecționarea și apoi monitorizarea orașelor de către juriul de experți în domeniul culturii.

([1]) A se vedea propunerea Comisiei din 20 iulie 2012, COM(2012) 407 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003048/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Designating the European Capital of Culture

According to the proposal for a decision of Parliament and the Council establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033, which is currently undergoing parliamentary scrutiny, the Commission will officially designate the European Capitals of Culture based on a two-stage selection process carried out by a European panel of independent experts.

Given that the announcement made by Romania's minister of culture in support of Timişoara's application to become the European Capital of Culture in 2021 is in breach of the European legislation governing this area, can the Commission present an official view on this situation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The competition for the 2021 title of European Capital of Cullture in Romania will be governed by the future Decision establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033, which is currently being negotiated by Parliament and Council ([1]).

According to standard practice, the competition for the 2021 title in Romania will be open, fair and transparent. It will be based on the publication of an open call for submission of applications. The selection will be further based on a new set of criteria laid down in the future Decision (see Article 5 of the Commission proposal). Applications will be assessed against these criteria by independent cultural experts. Compared to the current scheme governed by Decision 1622/2006/EC, the new criteria will be more explicit, giving increased guidance to cities in developing their applications and embedding their projects in a long-term strategy and also more measurable, helping the panel of independent cultural experts to select and then monitor the cities.

([1]) See the Commission proposal of 20 July 2012, COM(2012) 407 final.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003049/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(18. maaliskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Urheilun ja liikunnan roolin vahvistaminen kasvun lähteenä

Komission Luova Eurooppa -ohjelmalla haetaan uutta piristysruisketta kulttuurin ja luovan toiminnan aloille, koska ne ovat merkittävä työllistäjä ja kasvun lähde Euroopassa. ”Luovat teollisuudenalat” ja ”luova teollisuus” ovat käsitteitä, jotka komission myötävaikutuksesta on nykyään omaksuttu yleiseen käyttöön ja jotka ymmärretään hyvin.

Myös liikunta- ja vapaa-ajansektori on ollut viime vuosina kasvussa monissa EU-maissa. Tältä saralta EU voi tulevaisuudessa hakea kansainvälisesti merkittävää uutta kasvua. EU:n maine mm. liikuntaan, ravitsemukseen, koulutukseen ja tutkimukseen sekä esimerkiksi urheiluturismiin liittyvissä kysymyksissä on erittäin hyvä.

Kysynkin nyt, onko komissio harkinnut kampanjaa tai tiedonantoa, jossa urheilu ja liikunta nostettaisiin systemaattisesti ”teollisuudenalana” esille? Esimerkiksi USA:ssa urheilusta on jo pitkään puhuttu teollisuudenalana. Uskonkin, että EU:lle olisi hyötyä vastaavasta ajattelutavasta.

Androulla Vassilioun komission puolesta antama vastaus
(7. toukokuuta 2013)

Komissio on tunnustanut urheilun ja liikunnan merkityksen tärkeänä kasvun ja työpaikkojen luomisen lähteenä vuonna 2007 esittämässään urheilun valkoisessa kirjassa ([1]) ja vuonna 2011 antamassaan urheilua koskevassa tiedonannossa ([2]), joissa kummassakin korostetaan tämän sektorin makrotaloudellisia mahdollisuuksia. Taloudellisesti vaikeana aikana urheilu on hyvin kestävä sektori, ja äskettäin tehdyn EU-tutkimuksen ([3]) tulosten mukaan urheilun osuus EU:n BKT:stä on 174 miljardia euroa (1,76 %), ja se työllistää 4,46 miljoonaa ihmistä (2,12 %). Urheilun ja liikunnan harrastamisen yhteiskunnallisia hyötyjä erityisesti paikallistasolla ovat muun muassa parempi terveys ja työllistettävyys (eli terveempi ja taitavampi työvoima), sosiaalinen osallisuus ja elinajanodotteen kasvu.

Komissio hyödyntää näitä havaintoja jatkossa, kun kehitetään edelleen urheilun eurooppalaista ulottuvuutta ja edistetään tämän kasvavan sektorin merkitystä – niin toiminta-aloitteiden kuin tulevan rahoituksen suhteen – erityisesti tulevaa Yhteinen Erasmus -ohjelmaa koskevan komission ehdotuksen avulla.

([1]) KOM(2007) 391 lopullinen, 11.7.2007.
([2]) KOM (2011) 12 lopullinen, 18.1.2011.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/news/20121119-study-contrib-sport-economic-growth_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003049/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(18 March 2013)

Subject: Enhancing the role of sport and physical activity to generate growth

The Commission's Creative Europe programme is designed to generate new impetus for cultural and creative sectors, bearing in mind that these are a major employer and a source of growth within Europe. 'Creative sectors' and 'creative industry' are concepts which, with the Commission's help, have been adopted into general usage and are now well understood.

Sport and leisure have also been expanding in many Member States in recent years. This sector is one in which the EU could achieve internationally significant new growth in the future. When it comes to physical activity, nutrition, training, research, and — to name one specific example — sports tourism, the EU's reputation, indeed, is already very good.

Has the Commission considered a campaign or communication whereby sport and physical activity would be systematically elevated to the status of an 'industry'? In the US, for example, sport has long been spoken of as an industry. The EU would, to my mind, benefit from a philosophy along similar lines.

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission has recognised the role of sport and physical activity as an important source of growth and job creation in its 2007 White Paper on Sport ([1]) and in the 2011 Communication on sport ([2]), both of which underline the sector's macroeconomic potential. At a time of economic difficulty sport is a very resilient sector and according to the results of a recent EU study ([3]), it contributes EUR 174bn to the EU GDP (1.76%) and employs 4.46 million people (2.12%). Among the societal benefits from the practice of sport and physical activity, in particular at local level, are improved health and employability (i.e. healthier and more skilful workforce), social inclusion and increased life expectancy.

The Commission will increasingly use these findings when further developing the European dimension of sport and when promoting the role of this growing sector, both with regard to policy initiatives and future funding, in particular through the Commission proposal Erasmus for All for a future programme.

([1]) COM(2007) 391 final, 11.7.2007.
([2]) COM(2011) 12 final, 18.1.2011.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/news/20121119-study-contrib-sport-economic-growth_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-003050/13
till kommissionen (Vice-ordföranden / Höga representanten)
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)
(19 mars 2013)

Angående: VP/HR – Eritreanska statliga myndigheters utpressning mot EU-medborgare

I många av EU:s medlemsstater förföljer den eritreanska regimen systematiskt eritreaner i exil. Genom hotelser och utpressning försöker eritreanska konsulat och ambassader att avtvinga eritreaner som bor i Europa en inkomstskatt på två procent, liksom obligatoriska ”donationer” till landets militär. FN har rapporterat om att de som vägrar att betala utsätts för hot, skrämselförsök och trakasserier.

Eritrea är en enpartistat med en befolkning på sex miljoner och ett av världens mest auktoritära och minst utvecklade länder. Inte desto mindre har landet lyckats beväpna, utbilda och finansiera väpnade grupper i hela regionen, däribland al-Shabab, en grupp med koppling till al-Qaida. Landet saknar en nämnvärd inhemsk ekonomi och är till stor del beroende av eritreaner som är bosatta utomlands.

Accepterar Vice-ordföranden/Höga representanten att EU-medborgare utsätts för utpressning av personer som fått diplomatisk status i medlemsstaterna? Om inte, kommer Vice-ordföranden/Höga representanten att vidta åtgärder mot de eritreanska statliga myndigheterna och deras diplomatiska representationer i Europa?

Efter att FN:s säkerhetsråd den 5 december 2011 antog resolution 2023 (2011) har de eritreanska myndigheterna satts under ytterligare press att rätta sig efter internationella normer, och uppbörden av extraterritoriella skatter och utnyttjandet av intäkter från gruvindustrin har underställts granskning. Detta beslut förstärktes genom åtgärder från regeringarna i Storbritannien och Tyskland vilka syftade till att hindra eritreanska myndigheter från att uppbära skatter på deras territorier.

Vad kan Vice-ordföranden/Höga representanten göra för att förbättra samarbetet i syfte att stärka ett förbud mot uppbörd av extraterritoriella skatter i medlemsstaterna?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(2 maj 2013)

Staters beskattning av egna medborgare som bor i tredjeländer är staternas egen angelägenhet. Det finns dock inga avtal mellan Eritrea och EU-länderna om dessa frågor. EU-länderna borde därför ha rätt att hindra Eritrea från att vidta uppbörds- eller verkställighetsåtgärder mot eritreanska medborgare på sina territorier, särskilt om de anser att ambassadernas medverkan i att uppbära skatt strider mot Wienkonventionen om diplomatiska förbindelser.

Den höga representanten/vice ordföranden anser att det är principiellt oacceptabelt att ett tredjeland utsätter sina egna medborgare som bor i EU för hot och olaga tvång, t.ex. i skatteärenden. De är dock bara de berörda EU-länderna som har behörighet att vidta åtgärder, inklusive rättsliga åtgärder, mot tredjeländer och diplomatiska representationer som använder sådana metoder.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003050/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Extortion of EU citizens by Eritrean authorities

The Eritrean regime systematically oppresses Eritreans living in exile in many EU Member States. Through intimidation and blackmail, Eritrean consulates and embassies seek to oblige Eritreans living in Europe to pay a 2% income tax and mandatory 'donations' for its military. The United Nations have reported that those who refuse to pay are subjected to threats, intimidation and coercion.

A one-party state with a population of six million, Eritrea is one of the world's most authoritarian and least developed countries. Nonetheless, it has managed to arm, train and finance armed groups throughout the region, including Al-Shabab, a group affiliated to Al-Qaeda. With no measurable domestic economy, the country is largely dependent on Eritreans living abroad.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative accept that European citizens are blackmailed by persons granted diplomatic status in the Member States? If not, will the Vice-President/High Representative take action against the Eritrean authorities and its diplomatic representations in Europe?

With the adoption by the UN Security Council of its resolution 2023 (2011) on 5 December 2011, the Eritrean authorities have been under additional pressure to conform to international norms, and the collection of extraterritorial taxes and use of mining revenues has been placed under scrutiny. This decision was reinforced by measures imposed by the governments of the United Kingdom and Germany to prevent Eritrean authorities from collecting taxes in their territories.

What can the Vice-President/High Representative do to enhance cooperation to reinforce a ban on the collection of extraterritorial taxes in the Member States?

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

The imposition by States of taxes on their nationals residing in third countries is a matter for those States. However, in the absence of relevant agreements between Eritrea and EU Member States, the Member States would be entitled to prevent Eritrea from taking collection or enforcement measures against its nationals on their territorys, in particular if they believe that the use of embassies to enforce such a tax contravenes the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

As a matter of principle, the HR/VP considers it unacceptable that any third State would subject any of its nationals residing within the EU to threats, intimidation and unlawful coercion, including for reasons alleged to be tax-related. However, the competence to take action, including legal action, against third States or their diplomatic representations using such methods rests with the EU Member States concerned.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-003051/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Resgate de Chipre e «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» sobre depósitos

Foi este fim de semana adotado um plano de resgate no valor de 10 mil milhões de euros, o que representa cerca de 50 % do PIB deste país. Uma das medidas imediatamente aplicáveis foi a introdução de um «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» aplicável aos depositantes residentes e não-residentes. Segundo a imprensa internacional, prevê-se que com a aplicação desta «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» sejam arrecadados cerca de 6 mil milhões de euros.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como é que a Comissão avalia o impacto da introdução de uma taxa de aplicação imediata sobre todos os depósitos de residentes ou não-residentes, para o Chipre, do ponto de vista do princípio da confiança?

2. Como afere a compatibilidade desta medida com os princípios fundadores da União Europeia, nomeadamente os que se encontram no artigo 3.° do Tratado da União Europeia e, mais especificamente, o princípio de uma economia de mercado aberta, de livre concorrência e de respeito pela propriedade privada?

3. Como se pode conciliar a decisão das autoridades de Chipre de impedir todos os movimentos de capitais a partir de sábado dia 16 de março (de modo a tornar, efetivamente, aplicável a «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» sobre os depósitos) com os artigos 63.° e seguintes do TFUE que garantem a liberdade de movimentos de capitais entre Estados-Membros? Foi introduzida uma derrogação especial para as medidas aplicadas em Chipre?

4. Atendendo a que a referida «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» se aplica a todos os depósitos, incluindo aqueles abrangidos pela garantia dos depósitos, tal medida não vem por em causa a garantia dos depósitos até aos 100 mil euros? Tal significa que a zona euro quebrou o compromisso de assegurar a proteção dos depósitos até 100 mil euros?

5. Na medida em que a estabilidade da zona euro depende, em grande medida, da confiança dos investidores e dos mercados, que consequências acredita que as medidas aplicadas em Chipre podem ter na eventual deterioração das condições económicas e financeiras na zona euro e que medidas irá aplicar para as contrariar?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

Relativamente às perguntas apresentadas pelo Senhor Deputado, deve ser salientado que a taxa extraordinária de estabilidade não foi retida. Posteriormente, as autoridades cipriotas apresentaram um plano de reestruturação do setor financeiro que incluía um plano de saneamento do Banco Laiki e a restruturação do Banco de Chipre. A fim de evitar a fuga de depósitos, as autoridades cipriotas introduziram controlos dos movimentos de capitais.

Chipre é um caso único devido à dimensão do seu setor bancário (7 vezes o PIB), juntamente com a sua estrutura, o nível de assunção de risco e uma supervisão que não é ótima. Por conseguinte, as medidas são adaptadas à situação bastante extraordinária de Chipre no sentido de restabelecer a viabilidade de um setor bancário pequeno e, simultaneamente, proteger todos os depósitos inferiores a 100 000 euros, em conformidade com as regras da UE.

Os Estados-Membros podem introduzir restrições aos movimentos de capitais, incluindo controlos de capitais, mediante condições estritas, por razões de ordem pública ou de segurança pública. De acordo com a jurisprudência do Tribunal de Justiça Europeu, podem igualmente ser introduzidas medidas por razões imperativas de interesse público geral.

Uma tal exceção ao princípio de livre circulação de capitais deve ser estritamente interpretada e ser não discriminatória, adequada, proporcional e aplicada durante o mais curto período possível.

Nas atuais circunstâncias, a estabilidade dos mercados financeiros e do sistema bancário de Chipre constitui um caso imperativo de interesse público e de ordem pública que justifica a imposição de restrições temporárias aos movimentos de capitais.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003051/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Cyprus bailout and the 'one-off stability levy' on bank deposits

A rescue plan for Cyprus was adopted this weekend worth EUR 10 billion, which amounts to around 50% of the country's GDP. One of the measures to be introduced immediately was the imposition of a 'one-off stability levy' applicable to resident and non-resident depositors. The international press reports that the application of this 'one-off stability levy' is expected to bring in around EUR 6 billion.

1. How does the Commission assess the impact that the introduction of an immediate levy on all deposits held by residents and non-residents will have in Cyprus, from the point of view of the confidence principle?

2. Does it consider this measure compatible with the European Union's founding principles, in particular those enshrined in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, and specifically the principle of an open market economy, free competition and respect for private property?

3. How can the decision taken by the Cyprus authorities to stop all movements of capital as from Saturday, 16 March 2013 (in order to apply the 'one-off stability levy' on deposits) be reconciled with Articles 63 et seq TFEU, which guarantee the free movement of capital between Member States? Was a special derogation put in place for the measures implemented in Cyprus?

4. Bearing in mind that the 'one-off stability levy' applies to all deposits, including those covered by the deposit guarantee, does this measure not place a question mark over the guarantee on deposits up to EUR 100 000? Does this mean that the eurozone has broken its commitment to guarantee that deposits up to EUR 100 000 are protected?

5. Given that the stability of the eurozone largely depends on the confidence of investors and markets, what consequences might the measures being implemented in Cyprus have in terms of a possible worsening in the economic and financial situation in the eurozone? What action will the Commission take to mitigate the impact?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

With respect to the questions raised by the Honorary Member, it has to be noted that the one-off stability levy was not withheld. Subsequently, the Cypriot authorities put forward a plan for restructuring the financial sector that included resolution of the Laiki bank and restructuring of the Bank of Cyprus. To avoid the flight of deposits, the Cypriot authorities introduced capital controls.

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector (7 times GDP), combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. So measures are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of a smaller banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU rules.

Member States may introduce restrictions on capital movement, including capital controls, under strict conditions on the grounds of public policy or public security. In accordance with the case law of the European Court of Justice, measures may also be introduced for overriding reasons of general public interest.

Such exception to the principle of the free movement of capital must be interpreted very strictly and be non-discriminatory, suitable, proportionate and applied for the shortest possible period.

In current circumstances, the stability of financial markets and the banking system in Cyprus constitutes a matter of overriding public interest and public policy justifying the imposition of temporary restrictions on capital movements.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003052/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Incremento del IVA sobre la prestación de servicios extraescolares

La Dirección General de Tributos del Ministerio de Hacienda, en respuesta a una consulta vinculante de la patronal mercantil FOESC (Federación Estatal de Organizaciones Empresariales de Ocio Educativo y Sociocultural), ha anunciado que se deberá repercutir un IVA del 21 % a la prestación de servicios de atención a la infancia y comedores escolares y demás actividades educativas extraescolares complementarias, hasta ahora exentos, en clara contradicción con las directivas europeas y con la Ley 37/1992, de 28 de diciembre, del Impuesto sobre el Valor Añadido.

El artículo 132 de la Directiva 2006/112/CE del Consejo, de 28 de noviembre de 2006, relativa al sistema común del impuesto sobre el valor añadido insta a los Estados miembros a eximir del IVA «la educación de la infancia o de la juventud, la enseñanza escolar o universitaria, la formación o el reciclaje profesional, así como las prestaciones de servicios y las entregas de bienes directamente relacionadas con estas actividades».

Se trata de una medida que repercute en aquellas actividades que a menudo resultan imprescindibles para facilitar la conciliación familiar y laboral. Además, su encarecimiento también repercute en las administraciones educativas dependientes de las comunidades autónomas, hoy en día muy presionadas por el control de gasto que deben afrontar.

¿Cuál es la valoración de la Comisión con respecto a la decisión de la Dirección General de Tributos de interpretar la normativa del IVA en el sentido de gravar con el 21 % las actividades educativas complementarias a la enseñanza obligatoria en vez de dejarlas exentas, tal y como se desprende de la Directiva?

En virtud del artículo 132 de la Directiva mencionada, ¿se entiende que, de acuerdo con la normativa comunitaria, la prestación de servicios destinados a las actividades educativas complementarias a la enseñanza obligatoria debe estar exenta del IVA?

¿Tiene presente la Comisión el impacto que tendrá dicha decisión sobre las economías de las familias con niños en edad escolar y sobre las administraciones autonómicas, que son titulares de las competencias exclusivas sobre estas actividades?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003097/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: IVA en los servicios de educación infantil y juvenil

La Dirección General de Tributos del Ministerio de Hacienda envió el 28 de noviembre una comunicación a la FOESC (Federación Estatal de Organizaciones Empresariales de Ocio Educativo y Sociocultural) en la que se establece que los servicios destinados a la educación de infantes y jóvenes durante el tiempo de mediodía (comedor escolar), en las aulas de acogida matinales y de tarde y en las actividades extraescolares se facturarán con el 21 % de IVA para el alumnado mayor de seis años y con el 10 % para los menores de esa edad.

La Ley del IVA (37/1992) transpone la Directiva europea 2006/112/CE, y establece en el artículo 20, apartado 1, puntos 9 y 10, que los servicios destinados a la educación de la infancia y la juventud están exentos del IVA.

Hace más de dos años y medio, la FOESC realizó una consulta a fin de eliminar la grave situación de inseguridad jurídica de las empresas de ocio y servicios educativos, debida a las múltiples y contradictorias interpretaciones que se han realizado de estas disposiciones, y asegurar la exención del IVA educativo.

La respuesta de la Dirección General de Tributos obliga a aplicar el IVA educativo del 21 % y 10 % desde el mismo momento en que ha sido emitida. Esta situación aboca, lógicamente, a un encarecimiento sustancial de los servicios, lo que supondrá un perjuicio grave para las familias y una disminución de la calidad de los servicios.

¿Considera la Comisión restrictiva la interpretación de la Ley del IVA española que hace la Dirección General de Tributos?

¿Considera la Comisión que de esta manera España estaría violando la Directiva sobre el IVA?

¿Recomendaría la Comisión una modificación de la Ley del IVA para adaptarla a lo establecido en la Directiva europea 2006/112/CE?

Considerando que la educación es un derecho fundamental, que la protección del niño forma parte de los derechos humanos y que las actividades extraescolares no solo complementan la educación sino que garantizan la cohesión social y la igualdad, ¿cree que la medida de la Dirección General de Tributos atenta contra estos derechos y discrimina a infantes y jóvenes por motivos económicos y sociales?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003528/13
a la Comisión
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D)
(27 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Exención del IVA en los servicios escolares y en las actividades realizadas por entidades de carácter social

La respuesta de la Dirección General de Tributos (DGT) del Ministerio de Economía y Hacienda del Gobierno de España a una consulta de la patronal española de empresas mercantiles de ocio educativo y animación sociocultural (FOESC) generó dudas sobre el criterio administrativo aplicable de la legislación sobre el IVA, en particular sobre la exención aplicada a las entidades no lucrativas y a los servicios de comedor y actividades extraescolares.

Pese a que la respuesta de la DGT no supone una modificación de la legislación española en materia de IVA, se ofrece una reinterpretación restrictiva de la norma que confunde los conceptos de educación y formación con el de custodia, en el ámbito de las actividades de protección de la infancia y la juventud. Como resultado, se menoscaba la labor de las entidades del sector social dedicadas a las prestaciones de servicios directamente relacionadas con la educación de niños y jóvenes y se traslada una dura carga impositiva a las familias mediante la aplicación del IVA del 21 % a actividades que deberían estar exentas.

Esta circunstancia contradice la Directiva europea 2006/112/CE en lo que atañe a la protección de la infancia y la juventud. Además, la jurisprudencia del Tribunal de Justicia Europeo también ha apoyado la interpretación de la excepción del IVA en la prestación de servicios relacionados con la protección de la infancia y la formación de los jóvenes.

En vista de esta situación, ¿cree la Comisión que la DGT introduce una interpretación adecuada de la legislación comunitaria?

En caso contrario, ¿puede la Comisión evaluar esta vulneración de la normativa europea y actuar consecuentemente para corregir las infracciones?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003640/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: La exención del IVA en la protección de la infancia y la juventud

La Patronal del Tercer Sector Social de Cataluña, «La Confederació» ([1]), representa a las entidades no lucrativas que prestan servicios de atención a las personas y que se ven perjudicadas por una interpretación restrictiva que en España hace la Dirección General de Tributos del Ministerio de Hacienda, y que asume la Agencia Tributaria, en la aplicación de la exención del IVA que estas entidades tienen reconocida ([2]). Nos referimos concretamente a los programas dirigidos a la protección de la infancia y la juventud en el tiempo libre, en actividades paraescolares, más allá del horario lectivo ([3]) ([4]) con el objetivo de formar a los niños y los jóvenes en valores éticos y sociales, tal como recomienda la Comisión Europea en su Recomendación de 20.2.2013 «Invertir en la infancia: romper el ciclo de las desventajas» ([5]). La aplicación de la interpretación de las autoridades fiscales españolas comportaría gravar a las familias con un impuesto que actualmente no se repercute ni en España ni en el resto de Europa, lo que es de enorme gravedad, teniendo en cuenta la profunda crisis económica que vivimos, así como que muchas de estas entidades sociales dejarían de prestar esta función. Esta situación genera alarma social tal como recogen los medios de comunicación ([6]).

([1]) www.laconfederacio.org
([2]) Consulta vinculante de la DGT, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=177
([3]) Descripción actividades, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=178
([4]) http://www.esplai.org/arxius/PDFs/IVA/4-Eduquemos-mas-alla-del-horario-lectivo.pdf
([5]) Recomendación Comisión Europea 20.22.013, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=190
([6]) Artículo sobre el tercer sector y el IVA, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=179

¿Cree la Comisión que las actividades de protección a la infancia y la juventud deben ser amparadas por la exención prevista en la directiva comunitaria en el marco escolar en el tiempo interlectivo de mediodía y en aulas matinales y de tarde, fuera del horario escolar, que prestan las entidades no lucrativas?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión

(3 de mayo de 2013)

Según la Directiva del IVA adoptada por unanimidad por los Estados miembros de la UE, las exenciones del IVA para la asistencia social y la seguridad social, para la educación y la protección de la infancia y de la juventud ([7]):

— solo se aplican cuando el proveedor es una entidad de Derecho público o está reconocido por el Estado miembro de que se trate; los Estados miembros podrán subordinar la concesión de estas exenciones a entidades que no sean de Derecho público al cumplimiento de determinadas condiciones ([8]), lo que significa que el ámbito de aplicación de dichas exenciones puede variar de un Estado miembro de la UE a otro;

— no se aplican cuando los suministros no son indispensables para la labor de la asistencia social y la seguridad social, la educación o la protección de la infancia y de la juventud.

El Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea (TJE) ha establecido que las exenciones deben interpretarse de manera estricta, aunque no tan estricta como para que se anule el efecto deseado de las mismas. Por otra parte, el Tribunal también parece aceptar que los servicios de cuidado infantil (que incluyen el cuidado de los niños en edad preescolar y de los niños en edad escolar fuera del horario lectivo) pueden considerarse la prestación de un servicio que entra en el ámbito de la asistencia social y de la seguridad social, así como de la protección de la infancia y de los jóvenes, en el sentido de la Directiva del IVA ([9]).

La Comisión tiene la intención de ponerse en contacto con las autoridades españolas para solicitar información sobre la aplicación de estas exenciones en relación con los servicios mencionados en la pregunta en dicho Estado miembro.

([7]) Artículos 132, apartado 1, letras g), h) e i), 133 y 134 de la Directiva del IVA.
([8]) Como se establece en el artículo 133 de la Directiva del IVA.
([9]) Sentencia de 9 de febrero de 2006 en el Asunto C-415/04, apartados 7 y 17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003052/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Increase in VAT on extra-curricular services

In response to a binding consultation from the commercial association FOESC (state federation of educational and socio-cultural leisure sector business associations), Spain's directorate-general for taxation announced that 21% VAT is due on childcare services, school canteens and other after-school and extracurricular activities hitherto exempted from VAT. This clearly contradicts EU directives and the Spanish Law 37/199 of 28 December on value added tax.

Article 132 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006, on the common system of value added tax, calls on Member States to exempt from VAT 'children's or young people's education, school or university education, vocational training or retraining, including the supply of services and of goods closely related thereto'.

This measure affects activities which are often essential for the achievement of work-life balance. The increase in their cost also has an impact on educational authorities whose funding depends on the autonomous communities, which are currently under great pressure because of the spending cuts they are forced to apply.

What is the Commission's assessment of the decision by the Spanish directorate-general for taxation to interpret the VAT law by applying 21% VAT on extracurricular educational activities instead of leaving them exempt, as provided for under the EU directive?

Does it understand that, in light of Article 132 of the abovementioned directive, the delivery of services related to extracurricular education activities should be VAT exempt under Community law?

Is the Commission aware of the impact of this decision on the economies of families with school-age children and on the autonomous communities, which are exclusively responsible for such activities?

Question for written answer E-003097/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VAT on child and youth education services

On 28 November 2012 the Spanish Ministry of Finance's tax department wrote to the FOESC (State Federation of Business Organisations of Socio-Cultural and Educational Leisure) to set VAT rates for child and youth education services provided during school lunch breaks, in morning and afternoon reception rooms as well as extra-curricular activities. The rates were set at 21% for pupils aged six or over and 10% for pupils younger than six.

The Spanish VAT Act (37/1992) transposes European Directive 2006/112/EC and sets out in Article 20(1)(9) and (10) that child and youth education services are exempt from VAT.

Over two and half years ago, the FOESC conducted an enquiry which aimed to remove the serious legal uncertainty felt by leisure businesses and education services, owing to the many contradictory interpretations these regulations allow, and to ensure that they are exempt from education VAT.

The tax department's response indicates that education VAT of 21% or 10% must be applied from the date of issue. Logically, this decision means that the cost of services will increase substantially, causing a serious setback to families and a reduction in service quality.

Does the Commission consider the tax department's interpretation of the Spanish VAT Act to be restrictive?

Does the Commission consider that in this case Spain is violating the VAT Directive?

Does the Commission recommend modifying the Spanish Tax Act to bring it in line with Directive 2006/112/EC?

Given that education is a fundamental right, that the protection of children forms part of human rights and that extra-curricular activities do not only complement education, but also guarantee social cohesion and equality, does the Commission believe that the tax department's measure infringes on these rights and discriminates against children and young people for economic and social reasons?

Question for written answer E-003528/13
to the Commission
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D)
(27 March 2013)

Subject: VAT exemption for school services and activities carried out by social enterprises

The response from the Spanish Ministry of Finance's tax department to a query from the State Federation of Socio-Cultural and Educational Leisure Business Organisations (FOESC) raised doubts about the administrative criteria applicable under legislation on VAT, particularly with regard to the exemption applied to non-profit organisations, canteen services and extra-curricular activities.

Although the tax department's response does not represent a change in the Spanish legislation on VAT, it does offer a restrictive reinterpretation of the legislation which confuses the concepts of education and training with the concept of custody in the field of activities for the protection of children and young people. As a result, it jeopardises the work of social enterprises dedicated to providing services which are directly linked to the education of children and young people and places a heavy tax burden on families by applying 21% VAT on activities which should be exempt.

This situation is in contradiction with European Directive 2006/112/EC as regards the protection of children and young people. Moreover, the case law of the European Court of Justice has also supported the interpretation of VAT exemptions for the provision of services relating to the protection of children and the training of young people.

In view of this situation, does the Commission believe that the tax department is establishing an appropriate interpretation of Community legislation?

If not, can the Commission assess this breach of European legislation and act accordingly in order to correct the infringements?

Question for written answer E-003640/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: VAT exemptions for the protection of children and young people

The Catalan Third Social Sector Federation, 'La Confederació' ([1]), represents non-profit organisations which provide personal care services and which are being adversely affected by the restrictive interpretation of the Spanish Ministry of Finance's Department of Tax used by the Tax Office in the application of the VAT exemptions to which these organisations are entitled ([2]). We refer specifically to programmes aimed at protecting children and young people during their free time, namely extra-curricular activities conducted outside of school hours ([3]) ([4]) which aim to teach ethical and social values, as recommended by the Commission Recommendation of 20 February 2013 'Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage' ([5]). The application of the Spanish tax authorities' interpretation would involve levying a tax, which is not currently passed on in Spain or in the rest of Europe, on families. This is extremely serious given the deep economic crisis we are experiencing and the fact that many of these social organisations would cease to provide this service. This situation is causing social alarm, as reported by the media ([6]).

Does the Commission believe that activities aimed at protecting children and young people, provided by non-profit organisations during school lunch breaks and in morning and evening classes conducted outside of school hours, should be covered by the exemption laid down in the EU Directive?

([1]) www.laconfederacio.org
([2]) Binding tax department consultation, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=177
([3]) Description of activities, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=178
([4]) http://www.esplai.org/arxius/PDFs/IVA/4-Eduquemos-mas-alla-del-horario-lectivo.pdf
([5]) European Commission Recommendation 20 February 2013, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=190
([6]) Article on the third sector and VAT, http://www.laconfederacio.org/getdoc.php?id=179

Joint answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

According to the VAT Directive adopted unanimously by the EU Member States, the VAT exemptions for welfare and social security work, for education and for the protection of children and young persons ([7]):

— only apply where the supplier is a body governed by public law or recognised by the Member State concerned; Member States may make the granting of these exemptions to bodies not governed by public law subject to certain conditions ([8]), which means that the scope of the exemptions may be different across the EU;

— do not apply where the supplies are not essential for welfare or social security work, education or the protection of children and young persons.

The Court of Justice of the European Union ('CJEU') has ruled that exemptions must be strictly interpreted, but not so strictly as to deprive them of their intended effect. Further, it seems to accept that services consisting in childcare (encompassing care for children under school age and for children of school age outside school hours) can be regarded as the provision of a service falling within the scope of welfare and social security work and the protection of children and young persons within the meaning of the VAT Directive ([9]).

The Commission intends to contact the Spanish authorities to inquire about the application of these exemptions in relation to the services mentioned in the question in that Member State.

([7]) Articles 132(1)(g), (h) and (i), 133 and 134 of the VAT Directive.
([8]) As laid down in Article 133 of the VAT Directive.
([9]) Judgment of 9 February 2006 in Case C-415/04, points 7 and 17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003053/13
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Apple warranties

Various Member States including Italy and the Netherlands have taken national action against Apple for its failure to provide a sufficiently high level of consumer protection with regard to warranties on its products. In particular with regard to the requirements of the 1999 EU Product Warranty Directive, Apple has not been providing customers with a free two-year warranty on its products, and has been mis-selling customer protection plans to provide the cover a warranty should provide.

Does the Commission intend to investigate Apple for failure to abide by Article 5 of the 1999 EU Product Warranty Directive?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its responses to questions E-011896/2011, E-0123/2012 and E-003171/2012.

Following the decision of the Italian authorities to sanction Apple in 2011 and 2012, Vice-President Viviane Reding wrote to all Consumer Affairs Ministers in September 2012 and March 2013 to draw attention to a more stringent and consistent enforcement action at EU level.

So far some consumer associations and enforcement authorities have carried out further actions in the Member States. In particular, law suits against the company have been recently filed by consumer associations in Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg and Portugal, while a collective action against the company started last October in Italy.

At the European Consumer Summit of 19 March 2013, the Commission has addressed the problem of marketing of guarantees in a dedicated workshop with Member States authorities, consumer and business representatives.

The primary responsibility for effectively enforcing the EU consumer *acquis* lies with Member States. Nevertheless, the Commission is working with national enforcement authorities to ensure more effective cooperation in cases where consumers in several EU Member States are affected by unfair practices of a trader, with specific attention to the digital market and in line with the priorities identified in the European Consumer Agenda adopted in May 2012. The Commission will analyse this issue, amongst others, in the report on the functioning of the cooperation of national enforcement authorities through the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network ([1]), due by the end of 2014.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on consumer protection cooperation, OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003054/13
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Birds Directive

Can the Commission outline what steps must be taken as regards consultation with the public before an SPA is designated under the Birds Directive?

Does the Commission have a model of best practice in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Birds Directive ([1]) does not provide any specific requirements for public consultation prior to the designation of Special protection areas (SPAs).

Furthermore, the European Court of Justice has stated on several occasions that only ornithological criteria derived from Article 4(1) and (2) of that directive may be used for determining the location and boundaries of SPAs ([2]).

Whereas the Commission fully supports public consultations with regard to the designation of SPAs, given that this is a matter of subsidiarity, it has not issued any models of best practice.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

([2]) e.g. Case C-44/95, Regina v Secretary of State for the Environment, ex parte: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Lappel Bank).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003055/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD) e Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Presunti indebiti aiuti di Stato nella ricapitalizzazione di SEA Handling da parte di SEA e lavoratori a rischio licenziamento

Il 19 dicembre 2012, la Commissione europea ha deciso di considerare quale indebita concessione di aiuti di Stato le ricapitalizzazioni operate dalla *SEA*, società che si occupa della gestione degli aeroporti milanesi di Linate e Malpensa, e la cui quota di maggioranza appartiene al Comune di Milano, nei confronti della sua controllata *SEA Handling* S.p.A., tra il 2002 e il 2010.

La Commissione ha pertanto decretato che *SEA Handling* dovrà restituire, con i debiti interessi, il capitale ricevuto da *SEA*, pari, secondo la stima della Commissione stessa, a EUR 359.644.000.

L'8 marzo, il Comune di Milano ha annunciato un ricorso presso il Tribunale dell'Unione europea contro la decisione della Commissione.

In considerazione del fatto che la restituzione di quasi 360 milioni di euro risulterebbe insostenibile per il bilancio di *SEA Handling*, e che rischia quindi di lasciare senza lavoro quasi tremila dipendenti della società stessa, può la Commissione riconsiderare e modificare la decisione presa a dicembre? Come intende gestire le pesanti conseguenze sociali di un eventuale fallimento di *SEA Handling*?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(14 maggio 2013)

Come giustamente rilevato dagli onorevoli deputati, il 19 dicembre 2012 la Commissione ha concluso l'indagine sul trasferimento di capitali da parte di SEA alla sua controllata SEA Handling nel periodo 2002-2010, decidendo che l'operazione costituiva un aiuto di Stato indebito da recuperare dal beneficiario.

Le autorità italiane hanno presentato ricorso presso il Tribunale, che può confermare o annullare, parzialmente o integralmente, la decisione finale della Commissione.

La Commissione è pienamente conscia delle implicazioni dell'attuazione di detta decisione. I servizi competenti sono in contatto con le autorità italiane per trovare un modo tempestivo ed efficace per attuare la decisione della Commissione senza incidere sul funzionamento degli aeroporti. La cooperazione costruttiva fra la Commissione e le autorità italiane dovrebbe continuare, nonostante l'azione in giustizia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003055/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD) and Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Alleged unlawful state aid in the recapitalisation of SEA Handling by SEA and workers at risk of dismissal

On 19 December 2012, the European Commission decided that the recapitalisation carried out by SEA, the company that manages the Milan airports of Linate and Malpensa, in which the City of Milan has a majority stake, in respect of its subsidiary SEA Handling S.p.a. between 2002 and 2010 was to be regarded as improper granting of state aid.

The Commission therefore decreed that SEA Handling must return, with due interest, the capital received from SEA which, according to the Commission's estimate, amounts to EUR 359 644 000.

On 8 March, the City of Milan lodged an appeal with the General Court of the European Union to challenge the Commission's decision.

In view of the fact that the return of almost EUR 360 million would be unsustainable for SEA Handling's budget, and is therefore likely to put nearly 3 000 company employees out of work, will the Commission reconsider and modify its decision taken in December? How does it intend to handle the serious social consequences of any insolvency of SEA Handling?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

As rightly pointed out by the Honourable Member, by a decision of 19 December 2012, the Commission concluded its investigation into the capital transferred by SEA to its subsidiary SEA Handling from 2002 to 2010. It decided that this constituted incompatible state aid which must be recovered from the beneficiary.

The Italian authorities have appealed the decision before the General Court. The Court can uphold the Commission's final decision or strike it down, either partially or totally.

The Commission is fully aware of the implications of enforcing this decision. The relevant services of the Commission have been in regular contact with the Italian authorities to find a timely and effective way of enforcing the Commission's decision without jeopardising the airports' continued operation. Constructive cooperation between the Commission and the Italian authorities should continue, notwithstanding Court action.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003056/13
ao Conselho
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Resgate de Chipre e «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» sobre depósitos

Foi este fim de semana adotado um plano de resgate no valor de 10 mil milhões de euros, o que representa cerca de 50 % do PIB deste país. Uma das medidas imediatamente aplicáveis foi a introdução de um «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» aplicável aos depositantes residentes e não-residentes. Segundo a imprensa internacional, prevê-se que com a aplicação desta «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» sejam arrecadados cerca de 6 mil milhões de euros.

Pergunto ao Conselho:

1. Como é que a Conselho avalia o impacto da introdução de uma taxa de aplicação imediata sobre todos os depósitos de residentes ou não-residentes, para o Chipre, do ponto de vista do princípio da confiança?

2. Como afere a compatibilidade desta medida com os princípios fundadores da União Europeia, nomeadamente os que se encontram no artigo 3.° do Tratado da União Europeia e, mais especificamente, o princípio de uma economia de mercado aberta, de livre concorrência e de respeito pela propriedade privada?

3. Como se pode conciliar a decisão das autoridades de Chipre de impedir todos os movimentos de capitais a partir de sábado dia 16 de março (de modo a tornar, efetivamente, aplicável a «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» sobre os depósitos) com os artigos 63.° e seguintes do TFUE que garantem a liberdade de movimentos de capitais entre Estados-Membros? Foi introduzida uma derrogação especial para as medidas aplicadas em Chipre?

4. Atendendo a que a referida «taxa extraordinária de estabilidade» se aplica a todos os depósitos, incluindo aqueles abrangidos pela garantia dos depósitos, tal medida não vem por em causa a garantia dos depósitos até aos 100 mil euros? Tal significa que a zona euro quebrou o compromisso de assegurar a proteção dos depósitos até 100 mil euros?

5. Na medida em que a estabilidade da zona euro depende, em grande medida, da confiança dos investidores e dos mercados, que consequências acredita que as medidas aplicadas em Chipre podem ter na eventual deterioração das condições económicas e financeiras na zona euro e que medidas irá aplicar para as contrariar?

Resposta
(28 de maio de 2013)

O Conselho chama a atenção do Sr. Deputado para a declaração do Eurogrupo sobre Chipre, em 19 de março de 2013, na qual tomou nota da decisão do Parlamento de Chipre sobre a proposta do governo para uma taxa extraordinária de estabilidade.

Subsequentemente, em 25 de março de 2013, o Eurogrupo chegou a um acordo com as autoridades de Chipre sobre os principais elementos de um futuro programa de ajustamento macroeconómico, apoiado por todos os Estados-Membros da área do euro, assim como pelas três instituições. O Eurogrupo saudou os planos apresentados pelas autoridades de Chipre para a restruturação do setor financeiro, tal como especificados no anexo à declaração, que servirão de base para restaurar a viabilidade do setor financeiro e salvaguardar todos os depósitos inferiores a 100 000 euros, em conformidade com os princípios da UE. O Eurogrupo tomou ainda nota da decisão das autoridades de implementar medidas administrativas, que atendem à atual situação, única e excecional, do setor financeiro de Chipre, e de permitir uma pronta reabertura dos bancos. O Eurogrupo realçou que estas medidas administrativas serão temporárias, proporcionais e não discriminatórias, e sujeitas a uma monitorização rigorosa em termos de âmbito e período de vigência, em consonância com o Tratado. Reiterou também que, em princípio, a assistência financeira a Chipre, no montante máximo de 10 mil milhões de euros, se justifica para salvaguardar a estabilidade financeira do país, e da área do euro no seu conjunto.

Em 12 de abril, o Eurogrupo congratulou-se com o acordo a nível técnico alcançado entre Chipre e as instituições da Troica sobre as condicionalidades políticas subjacentes ao programa de ajustamento macroeconómico. Expressou ainda confiança em que ações determinadas, em consonância com as reformas estipuladas no memorando de entendimento, irão permitir à economia de Chipre regressar a um caminho de sustentabilidade com base em finanças públicas sólidas, um crescimento equilibrado e estabilidade financeira.

Num contexto mais geral, no que respeita aos movimentos de capitais, incluindo o seu controlo, ao abrigo do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da UE, os Estados-Membros podem, em certas circunstâncias e condições estritas, justificadas por razões de ordem pública ou de segurança pública, restringir e controlar a circulação de capitais. Em conformidade com a jurisprudência do Tribunal de Justiça, poderão ser introduzidas outras medidas por razões imperiosas de interesse público geral.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003056/13
to the Council
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Cyprus bailout and the 'one-off stability levy' on bank deposits

A rescue plan for Cyprus was adopted this weekend worth EUR 10 billion, which amounts to around 50% of the country's GDP. One of the measures to be introduced immediately was the imposition of a 'one-off stability levy' applicable to resident and non-resident depositors. The international press reports that the application of this 'one-off stability levy' is expected to bring in around EUR 6 billion.

1. How does the Council assess the impact that the introduction of an immediate levy on all deposits held by residents and non-residents will have in Cyprus, from the point of view of the confidence principle?

2. Does it consider this measure compatible with the European Union's founding principles, in particular those enshrined in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, and specifically the principle of an open market economy, free competition and respect for private property?

3. How can the decision taken by the Cyprus authorities to stop all movements of capital as from Saturday, 16 March 2013 (in order to apply the 'one-off stability levy' on deposits) be reconciled with Articles 63 et seq TFEU, which guarantee the free movement of capital between Member States? Was a special derogation put in place for the measures implemented in Cyprus?

4. Bearing in mind that the 'one-off stability levy' applies to all deposits, including those covered by the deposit guarantee, does this measure not place a question mark over the guarantee on deposits up to EUR 100 000? Does this mean that the eurozone has broken its commitment to guarantee that deposits up to EUR 100 000 are protected?

5. Given that the stability of the eurozone largely depends on the confidence of investors and markets, what consequences might the measures being implemented in Cyprus have in terms of a possible worsening in the economic and financial situation in the eurozone? What action will the Council take to mitigate the impact?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the Eurogroup's statement on Cyprus on 19 March 2013 in which it took note of the decision of the Cyprus parliament on the government's proposal for a one-off stability levy.

Subsequently, on 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cyprus authorities on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme supported by all euro area Member States as well as the three institutions. It welcomed the plans presented by the Cyprus authorities for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to the statement which will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector and safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles. The Eurogroup also took note of the authorities' decision to introduce administrative measures, appropriate in view of the present unique and exceptional situation of Cyprus' financial sector, and to allow for a swift reopening of the banks; it stressed that these administrative measures would be temporary, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and subject to strict monitoring in terms of scope and duration in line with the Treaty. It also reconfirmed that, in principle, financial assistance to Cyprus is warranted to safeguard financial stability in Cyprus and the euro area as a whole by providing financial assistance for an amount of up to EUR 10 billion.

On 12 April, the Eurogroup welcomed the staff-level agreement reached between Cyprus and the Troika institutions on the policy conditionality underlying the macroeconomic adjustment programme and expressed its confidence that determined action in line with the reform measures spelled out in the memorandum of understanding would allow the Cyprus economy to return to a sustainable path based on sound public finances, balanced growth and financial stability.

More generally, on capital movement, including capital controls, under the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, Member States may introduce restrictions on capital movement, including capital controls, in certain circumstances and under strict conditions on grounds of public policy or public security. In accordance with the case law of the European Court of Justice, measures may also be introduced for overriding reasons of general public interest.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003057/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόφαση του Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου

Η συμφωνία, που αναγκάστηκε εκβιαστικά η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση να δεχθεί στο έκτακτο Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου, συνάδει με το ευρωπαϊκό κεκτημένο, και πιο συγκεκριμένα με τον Ευρωπαϊκό Χάρτη των Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων;

Είναι επίσης νόμιμο το γεγονός πως μπλοκαρίστηκαν οι τραπεζικοί λογαριασμοί στην Κύπρο, με αποτέλεσμα να εμποδίζεται οιαδήποτε μεταφορά μεταξύ λογαριασμών στην Κύπρο και το εξωτερικό, πριν ακόμη η συγκεκριμένη απόφαση περάσει από ψηφοφορία στην Κυπριακή Βουλή;

Απάντηση
(28 Μαΐου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο εφιστά την προσοχή του αξιότιμου κ. βουλευτή στη δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας της 19ης Μαρτίου 2013 για την Κύπρο, με την οποία ενημέρωθηκε για την απόφαση που έλαβε το κυπριακό Κοινοβούλιο επί της πρότασης της κυβέρνησης σχετικά με την εφάπαξ εισφορά σταθερότητας.

Ακολούθως, στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα συμφώνησε με τις κυπριακές αρχές ως προς τα βασικά στοιχεία ενός μελλοντικού προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής το οποίο υποστηρίχθηκε από όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ευρωζώνης καθώς και τα τρία θεσμικά όργανα της Ένωσης.

Επιπλέον, όπως αναφέρθηκε αρχικά στη δήλωση της 16ης Μαρτίου 2013 και επιβεβαιώθηκε στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα θεωρεί ότι, κατ' αρχήν, η οικονομική βοήθεια στην Κύπρο δικαιολογείται προκειμένου να διασφαλισθεί, μέσω της παροχής οικονομικής βοήθειας ύψους 10 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα τόσο στην Κύπρο όσο και στη ζώνη του ευρώ στο σύνολό της. Η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση σχετικά με τα σχέδια αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα που υπέβαλαν οι κυπριακές αρχές, κατά τα οριζόμενα στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013, και τα οποία θα αποτελέσουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα και τη διασφάλιση όλων των καταθέσεων κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Επιπλέον, η Ευρωομάδα σημείωσε την απόφαση που έλαβαν οι αρχές στις 18 Μαρτίου 2013 να επιβάλουν προσωρινή τραπεζική αργία στις 19 και 20 Μαρτίου 2013 προκειμένου να διαφυλάξουν τη σταθερότητα του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα και την απόφαση της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013 για την επιβολή διοικητικών μέτρων, αναγκαίων δεδομένης της έκτακτης συγκυρίας που αντιμετωπίζει ο κυπριακός χρηματοπιστωτικός τομέας, με στόχο τη γρήγορη επαναλειτουργία των τραπεζών. Τόνισε ότι τα εν λόγω διοικητικά μέτρα είναι προσωρινά, αναλογικά, δεν θα επιβάλουν διακρίσεις ενώ το εύρος και η διάρκειά τους θα υπόκεινται σε αυστηρή παρακολούθηση σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη.

Γενικότερα, σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη για τη Λειτουργία της ΕΕ, τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν, σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις και υπό αυστηρές προϋποθέσεις, να εισάγουν περιορισμούς, συμπεριλαμβανομένων ελέγχων, στην κίνηση κεφαλαίων, για λόγους δημόσιας τάξης ή δημόσιας ασφάλειας. Σύμφωνα με τη νομολογία του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου, η επιβολή μέτρων επιτρέπεται και για επιτακτικούς λόγους γενικού δημοσίου συμφέροντος.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003057/13
to the Council
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Eurogroup decision of 15 March

Is the agreement which Cyprus was forced to accept at the special Eurogroup meeting of 15 March in line with the European *acquis* and specifically, the European Charter on Human Rights?

Moreover, is it legal that bank accounts in Cyprus were blocked, preventing any transfers between accounts in Cyprus and abroad, before this decision was even voted on in the Cypriot Parliament?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the Eurogroup's statement on Cyprus on 19 March 2013 in which it took note of the decision of the Cyprus parliament on the government's proposal for a one-off stability levy.

Subsequently, on 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cyprus authorities on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme supported by all euro area Member States as well as the three institutions.

Moreover, as initially indicated in its statement of 16 March 2013 and reconfirmed on 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup considered that, in principle, financial assistance to Cyprus was warranted to safeguard financial stability in Cyprus and the euro area as a whole by providing financial assistance for an amount of up to EUR 10 billion. It welcomed the plans presented by the Cyprus authorities for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to the statement of 25 March 2013 which will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector and safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

Furthermore, the Eurogroup took note of the authorities' decision on 18 March 2013 to declare a temporary bank holiday in Cyprus on 19 and 20 March 2013 to safeguard the stability of the financial sector, and on 25 March 2013 to introduce administrative measures, appropriate in view of the present unique and exceptional situation of Cyprus' financial sector, and to allow for a swift reopening of the banks; it stressed that these administrative measures would be temporary, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and subject to strict monitoring in terms of scope and duration in line with the Treaty.

More generally, under the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, Member States may introduce restrictions on capital movement, including capital controls, in certain circumstances and under strict conditions on grounds of public policy or public security. In accordance with the case law of the European Court of Justice, measures may also be introduced for overriding reasons of general public interest.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003058/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόφαση του Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου

Η συμφωνία, που αναγκάστηκε εκβιαστικά η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση να δεχθεί στο έκτακτο Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου, συνάδει με το ευρωπαϊκό κεκτημένο, και πιο συγκεκριμένα με τον Ευρωπαϊκό Χάρτη των Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων;

Είναι επίσης νόμιμο το γεγονός πως μπλοκαρίστηκαν οι τραπεζικοί λογαριασμοί στην Κύπρο, με αποτέλεσμα να εμποδίζεται οιαδήποτε μεταφορά μεταξύ λογαριασμών στην Κύπρο και το εξωτερικό, πριν ακόμη η συγκεκριμένη απόφαση περάσει από ψηφοφορία στην Κυπριακή Βουλή;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Ευρωομάδα (Eurogroup), κατά τη συνεδρίασή της στις 16 Μαρτίου 2013, εξέφρασε την ικανοποίησή της για τη δέσμευση των κυπριακών αρχών να επιβάλουν εφάπαξ εισφορά σταθερότητας. Η Κύπρος είχε προτείνει τη φορολόγηση των καταθέσεων, η οποία θα συμβιβαζόταν απόλυτα με τον Ευρωπαϊκό Χάρτη των Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων, εάν είχε εγκριθεί από το Κυπριακό Κοινοβούλιο.

Η τήρηση των αργιών στο διάστημα μεταξύ της συνεδρίασης της Ευρωομάδας και της εφαρμογής των μέτρων εξυγίανσης ήταν στη διακριτική ευχέρεια της κεντρικής τράπεζας της Κύπρου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003058/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Eurogroup decision of 15 March

Is the agreement which Cyprus was forced to accept at the special Eurogroup meeting of 15 March in line with the European *acquis* and specifically, the European Charter on Human Rights?

Moreover, is it legal that bank accounts in Cyprus were blocked, preventing any transfers between accounts in Cyprus and abroad, before this decision was even voted on in the Cypriot Parliament?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Eurogroup on 16 March 2013 welcomed the Cypriot authorities' commitment to introduce a one-off stability levy. The proposal by Cyprus was to introduce a tax upon deposits, which if it had passed the Cypriot Parliament, would have been fully compatible with the European Charter on Human Rights.

The implementation of bank holidays in Cyprus between the Eurogroup meeting and the reorganisation measures undertaken was at the discretion of the Cypriot Central Bank.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003059/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανησυχίες σχετικά με την απόφαση του Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου

Στο Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου, το Eurogroup, με το εκβιαστικό δίλλημα «ή δέχεστε την πρότασή μας ή μπαίνετε σε άτακτη χρεοκοπία», επιβλήθηκε στην κυβέρνηση της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας μια καταρχήν συμφωνία που εξόφθαλμα καταστρατηγεί τις πιο βασικές αρχές πάνω στις οποίες είναι θεμελιωμένη η ΕΕ, δεδομένου ότι:

— τίθεται υπό διαπραγμάτευση το μέλλον ενός κράτος μέλος, η παραμονή του δηλαδή στην ΕΕ, με το πιστόλι στον κρόταφο,

— καταπατάται το δικαίωμα της κατοχής περιουσίας με τον εξαναγκασμό απομείωσης των καταθέσεων πολιτών της ΕΕ,

— καταπατάται η αρχή της αλληλεγγύης.

Εξαιτίας αυτής της απαράδεκτης και εξωφρενικής στάσης της ΕΕ, το γραφείο μου έχει κατακλυστεί από μηνύματα πολιτών που με ρωτούν:

Πρώτον, γιατί να έχουν εμπιστοσύνη στους θεσμούς της ΕΕ;

Δεύτερον, γιατί να εξακολουθήσουν να πιστεύουν στις αρχές της ΕΕ;

Τρίτον, με ποιο δικαίωμα η ΕΕ να καταληστεύσει με τόση ευκολία τις οικονομίες μιας ζωής ανυπεράσπιστων πολιτών;

Επειδή, παρά την πίστη μου στην ΕΕ, αδυνατώ υπό τις περιστάσεις να απαντήσω στα πιο πάνω και σε άλλα αδυσώπητα ερωτήματα κυπρίων, άλλων πολιτών της ΕΕ και μη πολιτών της ΕΕ, παρακαλώ να έχω τις δικές σας απαντήσεις για να τους τις διαβιβάσω.

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003689/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απόφαση Eurogroup που αντιστρατεύεται τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα

Το Eurogroup, του οποίου ο ρόλος είναι συντονιστικός και δεν έχει οποιαδήποτε νομοθετική ή εκτελεστική αρμοδιότητα, αποφάσισε στις 15.3.2013 πως η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία θα πρέπει να προχωρήσει σε κούρεμα των καταθέσεων που βρίσκονται στην Κύπρο, ακόμη και για τα ποσά κάτω των 100 000.

Γνωρίζουμε όμως πως το Σύνταγμα της ΕΕ είναι οι συνθήκες της και κανένα όργανο δεν μπορεί να λειτουργεί εκτός του πλαισίου των Συνθηκών. Αναπόσπαστο μέρος της Συνθήκης της Λισαβόνας είναι και ο Χάρτης των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Σε σχέση με το δικαίωμα περιουσίας, το άρθρο 17 του Χάρτη αναφέρει ότι:

«1. Κάθε πρόσωπο δικαιούται να είναι κύριος των νομίμως κτηθέντων αγαθών του, να τα χρησιμοποιεί, να τα διαθέτει και να τα κληροδοτεί. Κανείς δεν μπορεί να στερείται την ιδιοκτησία του, παρά μόνον για λόγους δημόσιας ωφέλειας, στις περιπτώσεις και υπό τις προϋποθέσεις που προβλέπονται στο νόμο και έναντι δίκαιης και έγκαιρης αποζημίωσης για την απώλειά της. Η χρήση των αγαθών μπορεί να υπόκειται σε περιορισμούς από το νόμο, εφόσον αυτό είναι αναγκαίο προς το γενικό συμφέρον.»

Άλλη βασική ευρωπαϊκή αρχή δικαίου είναι αυτή της αναλογικότητας, δηλαδή η επέμβαση σε ένα δικαίωμα πρέπει να είναι ανάλογη με τον επιδιωκόμενο σκοπό και να μην καταργεί το περιουσιακό δικαίωμα.

Αυτών δεδομένων, δεν θεωρεί το Συμβούλιο πως το Eurogroup έλαβε μια παράνομη απόφαση, η οποία καταστρατηγεί τις Συνθήκες της ΕΕ, τόσο διαδικαστικά όσο και ουσιαστικά, και αντιστρατεύεται τα θεμελιώδη ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα που προστατεύονται από τις Συνθήκες;

Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί προκειμένου να επαναφέρει τη νομιμότητα;

Κοινή απάντηση
(28 Μαΐου 2013)

Το Συμβούλιο εφιστά την προσοχή των Αξιότιμων μελών στη δήλωση που εξέδωσε η Ευρωομάδα σχετικά με την Κύπρο στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013 και στην οποία εκφράζει αφενός την αμέριστη στήριξή της στον κυπριακό λαό σε αυτή τη δύσκολη συγκυρία και αφετέρου την πεποίθησή της ότι, κατ' αρχήν, η οικονομική βοήθεια στην Κύπρο δικαιολογείται προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί μέσω της παροχής οικονομικής βοήθειας, ύψους έως 10 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα τόσο στην Κύπρο όσο και στη ζώνη του ευρώ στο σύνολό της.

Επιπλέον, η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε ικανοποίηση σχετικά με τα σχέδια αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα που υπέβαλαν οι κυπριακές αρχές, σύμφωνα με το παράρτημα της δήλωσης της 25ης Μαρτίου 2013. Τα μέτρα αυτά θέτουν τη βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, διασφαλίζουν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ, σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ.

Επιπλέον, η Ευρωομάδα, στη δήλωσή της τής 12ης Απριλίου 2013, διαπιστώνει με ικανοποίηση ότι οι κυπριακές αρχές εφάρμοσαν αποφασιστικά μέτρα για την εξυγίανση, την αναδιάρθρωση και την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν την εύθραυστη και ιδιάζουσα κατάσταση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα στην Κύπρο. Στη δήλωσή της, η Ευρωομάδα επαινεί τις κυπριακές αρχές για την αποφασιστικότητα με την οποία εφάρμοσαν τα ανωτέρω σημαντικά μέτρα εντός ενός πιεστικού χρονοδιαγράμματος και επαναλαμβάνει ότι αναγνωρίζει τις προσπάθειες των κυπρίων πολιτών.

Γενικότερα, η Ευρωομάδα είναι πεπεισμένη ότι η αποφασιστική δράση, κατ' εφαρμογή των μεταρρυθμιστικών μέτρων που προβλέπονται στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας, θα επιτρέψει στην Κύπρο να επιστρέψει σε μια βιώσιμη πορεία που θα βασίζεται σε υγιή δημόσια οικονομικά, ισόρροπη ανάπτυξη και χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003059/13
to the Council
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Concerns over the Eurogroup decision of 15 March

At its meeting of 15 March, the Eurogroup threatened that 'failure to accept our proposal will lead to a disorderly default', imposing an initial agreement on the Cypriot Government which clearly contravenes the fundamental principles on which the EU is built, for example:

— Negotiating the future of a Member State, i.e. its membership of the EU, by holding a gun to its head;

— Infringing on the right to the possession of property by imposing losses on EU citizens' bank deposits;

— Infringing on the principle of solidarity.

Due to the unacceptable and illogical stance taken by the EU, my office has been inundated with messages from citizens asking:

Firstly, why should they trust the EU institutions?

Secondly, why should they continue to believe in EU principles?

Thirdly, what right does the EU have to take money with such ease from the life savings of defenceless citizens?

As, despite my faith in the EU, I am unable, in these circumstances, to answer the above and other relentless questions from Cypriots, other EU and non-EU citizens, could the Council provide its answers to the aforementioned questions so that I can pass them on?

Question for written answer E-003689/13
to the Council
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(28 March 2013)

Subject: Eurogroup decision in breach of human rights

Eurogroup, which essentially plays a coordinating role and does not have any legislative or executive powers, decided on 15 March 2013 that the Republic of Cyprus should apply a haircut to deposits in Cyprus, including deposits of less than EUR 100 000.

However, as we know, its Treaties form the Constitution of the EU and its bodies cannot operate outside the framework of the Treaties. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights forms an integral part of the Treaty of Lisbon. On the right to property, Article 17 of the Charter states:

'1. Everyone has the right to own, use, dispose of and bequeath his or her lawfully acquired possessions. No one may be deprived of his or her possessions, except in the public interest and in the cases and under the conditions provided for by law, subject to fair compensation being paid in good time for their loss. The use of property may be regulated by law in so far as is necessary for the general interest.'

Another basic European principle of law is that of proportionality, which requires that interference in a right must be proportionate to the objective being pursued and must not annul the property right.

In light of the above, does the Council not consider that Eurogroup has passed an illegal decision, which infringes the EU Treaties, both formally and materially, and the fundamental human rights protected by the Treaties?

What action does it intend to take in order to remedy this?

Joint reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council draws the attention of the Honourable Members to the Eurogroup statement on Cyprus of 25 March 2013 in which it expressed its full support for the Cypriot people in the current difficult circumstances and considered that in principle financial assistance to Cyprus was warranted to safeguard financial stability in Cyprus and the euro area as a whole by providing financial assistance for an amount of up to EUR 10 billion.

Furthermore, the Eurogroup welcomed the plans presented by the Cyprus authorities for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to the statement of 25 March 2013. These measures will form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector. In particular, they safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

Furthermore, the Eurogroup noted with satisfaction, in its statement of 12 April 2013, that the Cypriot authorities had implemented decisive bank resolution, restructuring and recapitalization measures to address the fragile and unique situation of Cyprus' financial sector. It commended the authorities for the resolve demonstrated in implementing those important measures in a tight timeframe and reiterated its appreciation for the efforts made by the Cypriot citizens.

More generally, the Eurogroup is confident that determined action in line with the reform measures spelled out in the memorandum of understanding will allow the economy of Cyprus to return to a sustainable path based on sound public finances, balanced growth and financial stability.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003060/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανησυχίες σχετικά με την απόφαση του Eurogroup της 15ης Μαρτίου

Κατά τη συνεδρίασή του της 15ης Μαρτίου, το Eurogroup, εκβιαστικά με το δίλλημα «ή δέχεστε την πρότασή μας ή μπαίνετε σε άτακτη χρεοκοπία», επέβαλε στην κυβέρνηση της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας μια καταρχήν συμφωνία που εξόφθαλμα καταπατά τις πιο βασικές αρχές πάνω στις οποίες είναι θεμελιωμένη η ΕΕ, όπως:

1. τη διαπραγμάτευση του μέλλοντος ενός κράτους μέλος, της παραμονής του δηλαδή στην ΕΕ, με το πιστόλι στον κρόταφο,

2. την καταπάτηση του δικαιώματος της κατοχής περιουσίας με τον εξαναγκασμό απομείωσης των καταθέσεων πολιτών της ΕΕ,

3. την καταπάτηση της αρχής της αλληλεγγύης.

Εξαιτίας αυτής της απαράδεκτα εξωφρενικής στάσης της ΕΕ, το γραφείο μου έχει κατακλυστεί με μηνύματα από πολίτες που με ρωτούν:

Πρώτον, γιατί να έχουν εμπιστοσύνη στους θεσμούς της ΕΕ;

Δεύτερον, γιατί να εξακολουθήσουν να πιστεύουν στις αρχές της ΕΕ;

Τρίτον, με ποιο δικαίωμα η ΕΕ καταληστεύει με τόση ευκολία τις οικονομίες μιας ζωής ανυπεράσπιστων πολιτών;

Επειδή, παρά την πίστη μου στην ΕΕ αδυνατώ υπό τις περιστάσεις να απαντήσω στα πιο πάνω και άλλα αδυσώπητα ερωτήματα Κυπρίων, άλλων πολιτών της ΕΕ και μη πολιτών της ΕΕ, παρακαλώ όπως έχω τις δικές σας απαντήσεις για να τους τις διαβιβάσω.

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Μαΐου 2013)

Στις 16 και 25 Μαρτίου, η Ευρωομάδα κατέληξε σε συμφωνία με τις κυπριακές αρχές. Στις 2 Απριλίου 2013, επιτεύχθηκε συμφωνία τεχνικού επιπέδου για μια εκτενή δέσμη μέτρων πολιτικής που πρέπει να εφαρμοστούν κατά τη διάρκεια ενός τριετούς προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής: οι βασικοί στόχοι, τα μέτρα και τα αποτελέσματα καθορίστηκαν σε σχέδιο (ΜΣ) μεταξύ της Επιτροπής, η οποία ενεργεί εξ ονόματος του ΕΜΣ, και της Δημοκρατίας της Κύπρου.

Τα μέτρα που αφορούν τους καταθέτες των τραπεζών δεν έχουν αποφασιστεί από την Ευρωομάδα. Τα μέτρα αυτά συνιστούν μονομερείς δεσμεύσεις των κυπριακών αρχών, οι οποίες αποτέλεσαν τη βάση για το πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής και τη συνοδευτική χρηματοπιστωτική συνδρομή, που καλείται να παράσχει ο ΕΜΣ ([1]).

Η θέσπιση διοικητικών μέτρων που οδήγησε σε απώλειες στις τραπεζικές καταθέσεις των πολιτών της ΕΕ ήταν αναπόφευκτη, δεδομένης της τρέχουσας ειδικής κατάστασης του κυπριακού τραπεζικού τομέα, και πάνω από όλα απαραίτητη, ώστε να καταστεί δυνατή η άμεση επαναλειτουργία των τραπεζών. Η Συνθήκη για την ΕΕ προβλέπει τη δυνατότητα για ένα κράτος μέλος να θεσπίσει ελέγχους κεφαλαίων σε εξαιρετικές περιστάσεις.

Η Επιτροπή κατανοεί τα τεράστια προβλήματα που αντιμετωπίζει ο κυπριακός λαός, όσον αφορά την αποκατάσταση της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και την αντιμετώπιση των κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων της τρέχουσας κατάστασης. Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει απόλυτα τον κυπριακό λαό στην αντιμετώπιση των εν λόγω προβλημάτων και αποφάσισε να δημιουργήσει ομάδα στήριξης για την παροχή τεχνικής βοήθειας στις κυπριακές αρχές. Η σύσταση ομάδας στήριξης για την Κύπρο στοχεύει στην ταχεία κινητοποίηση όλων των μέσων που διαθέτει για να συνδράμει στην αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας της κυπριακής οικονομίας.

Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με το αξιότιμο μέλος ότι η εμπιστοσύνη και η πίστη στα όργανα της ΕΕ αποτελούν σημαντικά στοιχεία ([2]).

([1]) Ευρωπαϊκός Μηχανισμός Σταθερότητας.

([2]) Στις 28 και νομισματική ένωση, που προσφέρει ένα όραμα για μια εύρωστη και σταθερή αρχιτεκτονική στον Νοεμβρίου 2012, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή εξέδωσε σχέδιο στρατηγικής για μια βαθιά και ουσιαστική οικονομική χρηματοπιστωτικό, τον δημοσιονομικό, τον οικονομικό και τον πολιτικό τομέα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003060/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Concerns over the Eurogroup decision of 15 March

At its meeting on 15 March, the Eurogroup threatened that 'failure to accept our proposal will lead to a disorderly default', imposing an initial agreement on the Cypriot Government which clearly contravenes the fundamental principles on which the EU is built, for example:

1. Negotiating the future of a Member State, i.e. its membership of the EU, by holding a gun to its head;

2. Infringing on the right to the possession of property by imposing losses on EU citizens' bank deposits;

3. Infringing on the principle of solidarity;

Due to the unacceptable and illogical stance taken by the EU, my office has been inundated with messages from citizens asking:

Firstly, why should they trust the EU institutions?

Secondly, why should they continue to believe in EU principles?

Thirdly, what right does the EU have to take money with such ease from the life savings of defenceless citizens?

As, despite my faith in the EU, I am unable, in these circumstances, to answer the above and other relentless questions from Cypriots, other EU and non-EU citizens, could the Commission provide its answers to the aforementioned questions so that I can pass them on?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

On 16 and 25 March, the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cypriot authorities. On 2 April 2013, an agreement at technical level was reached in respect of a comprehensive policy package to be implemented in a 3-year macroeconomic adjustment programme; the key objectives, measures and outcomes were laid down in a draft (MoU) between the Commission, acting on behalf of the ESM, and the Republic of Cyprus.

The measures concerning bank depositors have not been decided by the Eurogroup. These measures constitute unilateral commitments of the Cypriot authorities that provided the basis for the macroeconomic adjustment programme and the accompanying financial assistance that is to be provided by the ESM ([1]).

The introduction of administrative measures which lead to losses on EU citizens' bank deposits was unavoidable given the present exceptional situation of the Cypriot banking sector and above all essential to allow for a swift reopening of the banks. The EU Treaty foresees for the possibility for a MS to introduce capital controls in exceptional circumstances.

The Commission understands the enormous challenges facing the Cypriot people, in terms of re-establishing financial stability and responding to the social consequences of the current situation. The Commission stands fully behind the Cypriot people in rising to these challenges and has decided to set up a Support group to provide technical assistance to the Cypriot authorities. The creation of a support group for Cyprus aims to rapidly mobilise all the means at its disposal to help restore the viability of the Cypriot economy.

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the trust and the faith in the EU institutions are important ([2]).

([1]) European Stability Mechanism.
([2]) On 28 November 2012, the Commission adopted a Blueprint for a Deep and Genuine Economic and Monetary Union, which set out a vision for a strong and stable architecture in the financial, fiscal, economic and political domains.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003061/13
an die Kommission
Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(19. März 2013)

Betrifft: GSVP-Mission in Libyen und Rechte der Migranten

Am 31. Januar 2013 billigte der Rat das Konzept für eine neue Mission der Gemeinsamen Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik (GSVP) in Libyen, um die libyschen Behörden beim Aufbau von Kapazitäten zur Verbesserung der Sicherheit an den Grenzen zu unterstützen. Die Mission soll bis zum Juni 2013 eingeleitet werden. In diesem Zusammenhang haben leitende Beamte der EU und von Interpol am 6. März 2013 am internationalen Flughafen von Tripolis eine Kontrollstelle für Passkontrollen in Echtzeit eingeweiht.

Andererseits ist die Lage der Flüchtlinge und der Migranten in Libyen nach wie vor äußerst prekär. Es gibt immer noch keine wirksame Asyl- oder Schutzregelung für schutzbedürftige Personen. Nach Meldungen von Organisationen wie Amnesty International laufen vor allem Migranten ohne Papiere nach wie vor Gefahr, ausgebeutet, willkürlich in Haft genommen, geschlagen und gefoltert zu werden.

In Anbetracht dessen wird die Kommission gebeten, folgende Fragen zu beantworten:

Was unternimmt die Kommission bzw. was beabsichtigt sie zu unternehmen, damit im Zusammenhang mit den Kontrollen an den libyschens Grenzen gewährleistet ist, dass Personen, die Schutz benötigen, ihre Rechte als Flüchtlinge oder andere Formen des wirksamen Schutzes in Anspruch nehmen können?

Was unternimmt die Kommission bzw. was beabsichtigt sie zu unternehmen, damit gewährleistet ist, dass eine obligatorische Rückkehr über Libyen oder von den libyschen Grenzen in andere Länder nicht gegen den Grundsatz der Nicht-Zurückweisung verstößt?

Was unternimmt die Kommission bzw. was beabsichtigt sie zu unternehmen, um die Lage von Drittstaatsangehörigen in Libyen zu verbessern, und vor allem, um die schwerwiegenden Menschenrechtsverletzungen gegen Migranten ohne Papiere zu unterbinden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(24. Juli 2013)

Die Europäische Kommission verfolgt die Situation der Migranten und Flüchtlinge in Libyen mit Sorge und überwacht sie weiter, während sie mit anderen internationalen Akteuren wie der IOM und dem UNHCR zusammenarbeitet.

Die Verbesserung der Lage der Migranten und Flüchtlinge hängt in großem Maße von der Bereitschaft und Fähigkeit der libyschen Behörden ab, eine rechtstaatliche Verwaltung aufzubauen und einen gesetzlichen und institutionellen Rahmen zu schaffen, der Menschenrechte schützt.

Die Europäische Union hat sich verpflichtet, Libyen bei diesem umfassenden, ehrgeizigen Ziel zu unterstützen. Die Kommission finanziert Initiativen, die darauf abzielen, die Behandlung von Migranten und Flüchtlingen über das „regionale Schutzprogramm“ des UNHCR, das Projekt „START“ der IOM und das Projekt „Sahara-Mittelmeerraum“ des italienischen Innenministeriums zu verbessern.

Weitere Initiativen werden erwogen, um Libyen zu ermöglichen, die unmittelbaren Menschenrechtsbedürfnisse von Migranten besser zu bewältigen und den Zugang schutzbedürftiger Personen zu internationalem Schutz, u. a. durch Schulung des Personals der einschlägigen libyschen Behörden und Beratung für die erforderlichen gesetzlichen und administrativen Reformen zu erleichtern. Dies soll insbesondere über ein Programm für den Schutz gefährdeter Menschen in Libyen verwirklicht werden, das derzeit im Rahmen des Jahresaktionsprogramms 2013 des Europäischen Nachbarschafts- und Partnerschaftsinstruments erstellt wird.

Außerdem hat der Rat der EU am 22. Mai 2013 im Rahmen der Gemeinsamen Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik der Union eine Mission zur Unterstützung des integrierten Grenzmanagements in Libyen (EUBAM Libyen) eingesetzt, die auch eine Komponente Schulung und Reformen umfasst.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003061/13
to the Commission
Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: CSDP mission to Libya and migrants' rights

On 31 January 2013 the Council approved the concept for a new Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission to Libya in order to support Libyan authorities in developing capacity for enhancing border security. The mission is planned to be launched by June 2013. In this context, senior EU and Interpol officials have inaugurated the establishment of a real-time passport control capacity at Tripoli International Airport on 6 March 2013.

On the other hand, the situation of refugees and migrants in Libya remains extremely precarious. There is still no effective asylum system or protection scheme for vulnerable persons in place. Reports from organisations like Amnesty International show that undocumented migrants in particular continue to be at risk of exploitation, arbitrary detention, beatings and torture.

In view of the above:

What is the Commission doing or planning to do in order to ensure that, in the context of controls at the Libyan borders, persons in need of protection have access to their rights as refugees or to other forms of effective protection?

What is the Commission doing or planning to do in order to ensure that forced return via Libya, or away from the Libyan borders to other countries, does not violate the 'non-refoulement' principle?

What is the Commission doing or planning to do in order to improve the situation of third-country nationals in Libya, most notably to stop the ongoing severe human rights violations committed against undocumented migrants?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2013)

The European Commission views the situation of migrants and refugees in Libya with concern and continues to monitor it while cooperating with other international actors such as the IOM and UNHCR.

The improvement of the situation of migrants and refugees in Libya will largely depend on Libyan authorities' willingness and capacity to build an administration based on the rule of law and to establish a legal and institutional framework that protects human rights.

The European Union is committed to assist Libya in this broad and challenging objective. The Commission finances initiatives aimed at enhancing the treatment of migrants and refugees through the 'Regional Protection Programme', implemented by UNHCR, through the project 'START', implemented by the IOM, and through the 'Sahara-Mediterranean' project, implemented by the Italian Ministry of Interior.

Further initiatives are being considered to allow Libya to better tackle the immediate human right concerns of migrants and to facilitate access to international protection to people in need,, including through training of the staff of the relevant Libyan authorities, and by providing advice for the necessary legal and administrative reforms. This is planned to be done in particular through a programme for 'Protection of vulnerable people in Libya', which is currently under preparation in the framework of the Annual Action Programme 2013 of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

Furthermore, the EU Council established on 22 May 2013, in the framework of the Union's Common Security and Defence Policy, an integrated Border management Assistance Mission in Libya (EUBAM Libya) which will also have a component on training and reforms.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003062/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Censo Europeo de Personas con Sordoceguera

La mayoría de los países pertenecientes a la Comunidad Europea no tienen un censo oficial de personas con sordoceguera. A pesar de que cuarenta de cada cien mil europeos son sordociegos, únicamente Dinamarca cuenta con un censo oficial completo. La falta de un censo condena a este grupo a la invisibilidad y, por consiguiente, a la discriminación. En los EE.UU. las escuelas deben facilitar cada dos años información sobre sus alumnos sordociegos para actualizar el censo federal. En la Red Europea de Sordoceguera (EDbN), miembro del Foro Europeo de la Discapacidad, se concentra la experiencia de las ONG europeas en el ámbito de la sordoceguera.

1. ¿Proyecta la Comisión constituir un comité que obligue a los Estados miembros a elaborar un censo sobre los casos de sordoceguera para determinar las necesidades reales de este grupo con arreglo a los derechos reivindicados en la Declaración por escrito 1/2004 del Parlamento Europeo?

2. A la luz de la experiencia de la EDbN, ¿consideraría la Comisión la posibilidad de recabar el apoyo y la cooperación de la EDbN como parte interesada experta en este asunto?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión actúa dentro de los límites de las competencias que le confiere el Tratado (TFUE). Con arreglo al artículo 160 del Tratado, el Consejo, por mayoría simple y previa consulta al Parlamento Europeo, ha creado un Comité de Protección Social, de carácter consultivo, para fomentar la cooperación en materia de protección social entre los Estados miembros y con la Comisión. El Tratado y la legislación en vigor no confieren a la Comisión competencias para crear un Comité con poderes coercitivos como propone Su Señoría.

A escala de la UE, los datos estadísticos sobre discapacidad los elabora Eurostat con ayuda del Sistema Estadístico Europeo.

El Reglamento (CE) n° 763/2008 y su legislación de desarrollo definen las características y el contenido de los censos generales de población y vivienda, de carácter decenal, que los Estados miembros deben facilitar a Eurostat. Tal y como especifica el Reglamento, se trata de un censo que engloba a todas las personas de un territorio, y no se trata de un recuento de un grupo específico de población, como puede ser el de personas con discapacidades concretas. Las discapacidades y el tipo de discapacidad no figuran en la lista de temas obligatorios que recoge el citado Reglamento ([1]).

El Reglamento (CE) n° 763/2008 no contempla los censos o recuentos de personas sordociegas a que se refiere Su Señoría. Eurostat no participa en este tipo de actividades de elaboración de estadísticas nacionales sobre las personas sordociegas.

Los servicios de la Comisión mantienen periódicamente contactos con ONG de ámbito europeo que se ocupan de discapacidades, como el Foro Europeo de Discapacidad (FED), en el que se integra la Red Europea de Sordoceguera (EDbN).

([1]) Por su propia naturaleza, un censo general de población es improbable que sirva para obtener información detallada sobre las personas que tienen un tipo específico de discapacidad. Por la escala del censo, el número de preguntas que pueden dedicarse a un solo tema es estrictamente limitado y las preguntas deben ser fáciles, de modo que los encuestados puedan responder sin explicaciones o ayuda adicionales. Debido a ello, los Estados miembros, por lo general, basan las estadísticas en materia de discapacidad en otras fuentes de datos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003062/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: European census for people with deafblindness

Most of the Member States of the European Union do not have an official census of deafblind people. In spite of the fact that 40 out of every 100 000 Europeans are deafblind, only Denmark has a complete official census. The lack of a census condemns this group to invisibility and therefore to discrimination. Every two years schools in the USA must provide information regarding their deafblind students for a federal census. The European Deafblind Network (EDbN), a member of the European Disability Forum, encompasses the experience of European NGOs on deafblindness.

1. Does the Commission plan to create a committee that forces the Member States to take a census of cases of deafblindness in order to determine the real needs of this group, in accordance with their rights set out in Parliament's Written Declaration 1/2004?

2. Given the expertise of EDbN, would the Commission consider asking for EDbN's support and cooperation as an expert stakeholder on this issue?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Commission is acting within the limits of competences conferred to it by the Treaty (TFEU). Under Article 160 of the Treaty, the Council, acting by a simple majority after consulting the European Parliament, has established a Social Protection Committee with advisory status to promote cooperation on social protection policies between Member States and with the Commission. The Treaty and the legislation in force do not confer to the Commission competences to create a committee with coercive powers such as proposed by the Honourable Member.

On the EU level, statistical data on disability are produced by Eurostat, with the assistance of the European Statistical System.

Regulation (EC) 763/2008 and its implementing legislation define the characteristics and content of comprehensive decennial census data on population and housing that Member States must supply to Eurostat. As defined by the regulation, this is a general census covering all persons in a territory, rather than being a count of a specific population group such as people with particular disabilities. Disability status, and the nature of any disability, are not included in the list of obligatory topics defined by this regulation ([1]).

Regulation (EC) 763/2008 does not cover the targeted censuses or counts of deafblind people referred to by the Honourable Member. Eurostat is not involved in these types of national statistical activities focused on deafblind people.

There is a regular contact between the services of the Commission and EU level disability NGOs like the EDF, of which EDbN is a member

([1]) By its nature, a general population census is unlikely to be appropriate to provide detailed information on people with a specific type of disability. Due to the scale of the census, the number of questions that can be devoted to a single topic is strictly limited and questions must be easy for respondents to answer without further explanation or assistance. For this reason, Member States generally base statistics on disability on other data sources.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003063/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Ausencia de estadísticas específicas de Eurostat

Eurostat no incluye estadísticas específicas sobre discapacidades o sobre sordoceguera en sus estudios públicos, lo que no ayuda a la elaboración de políticas sociales en estos ámbitos. La discapacidad no ocupa un lugar principal en ningún estudio de Eurostat, y en los pocos que incluyen alguna referencia indirecta a esta cuestión, no se hace ninguna mención a contactos con organizaciones no gubernamentales con experiencia. Por ejemplo, algunas estimaciones indican que ochenta millones de europeos tienen problemas de audición, pero Eurostat no dispone de esta información. La Red Europea de Sordociegos (EDbN), miembro del Foro Europeo de la Discapacidad, reúne la experiencia de las ONG europeas en el ámbito de la sordoceguera.

1. ¿Cuál es la opinión de la Comisión en este asunto?

2. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión poner fin a esta situación y sacar el máximo partido de los instrumentos que ofrece Eurostat a fin de obtener datos reales en relación con las discapacidades, y concretamente, la sordera y la sordoceguera en Europa, con miras a abordar estas cuestiones mediante políticas sociales adecuadas?

3. Habida cuenta de la experiencia de la EDbN, ¿valorará la Comisión tomar en consideración el apoyo y la cooperación de esta red en cuanto parte interesada pertinente?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de mayo de 2013)

Con la ayuda del Sistema Estadístico Europeo, Eurostat elabora estadísticas en materia de discapacidades, bien mediante encuestas específicas como:

— la Encuesta Europea de Integración Social y Salud, que se está llevando a cabo en este momento y cuyos primeros resultados deberían difundirse a mediados de 2014 y

— la Encuesta por entrevistas sobre la salud en Europa, que aborda cada cinco años gran número de variables relativas al estado de salud, el recurso a la asistencia sanitaria y los factores determinantes de la salud, e incluye preguntas más detalladas sobre la vista y la audición de acuerdo con los estándares internacionales

o incluyendo preguntas relacionadas a las discapacidades en las encuestas generales para hogares como:

— los módulos de la encuesta de población activa. Los resultados sobre la situación de las personas con discapacidad en el mercado laboral en 2011 deberían difundirse en el tercer trimestre de 2013 y

— las estadísticas anuales sobre la renta y las condiciones de vida, que incluyen una variable sobre las limitaciones causadas por un problema de salud, que supuestamente refleja fielmente la discapacidad de estas personas y se usa para obtener información sobre su situación social.

Estas encuestas ofrecen información útil sobre la situación de las personas con discapacidad en la EU. Por razones técnicas, actualmente no es posible recoger más información específica sobre la sordera y la sordoceguera debido a problemas de muestreo, exactitud y coste de la encuesta.

Las organizaciones de personas discapacitadas utilizan con regularidad la información de Eurostat en el ámbito de las estadísticas sobre discapacidad. Eurostat celebra la oferta para cooperar con estas organizaciones y puede de hecho invitar a las partes interesadas a participar en las reuniones técnicas pertinentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003063/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Lack of specific Eurostat statistics on disability, particularly deafness and deafblindness

The Eurostat office does not include specific statistics regarding disability or deafblindness in its public studies, and this is unhelpful for the formulation of social policies in these areas. Disability does not figure prominently in any Eurostat studies, and in the few that refer indirectly to disability, there is no mention of contact with expert non-governmental organisations. For example, estimates indicate that eighty million Europeans have hearing problems; Eurostat lacks this information. The European Deafblind Network EDbN, a member of the European Disability Forum, encompasses the experience of European NGOs on deafblindness.

1. What is the Commission's opinion regarding this matter?

2. Does the Commission plan to end this situation and start making the most of the tools that Eurostat offers to obtain real data regarding disability and, specifically, deafness and deafblindness in Europe, in order to address these issues with adequate social policies?

3. Given the expertise of EDbN, would the Commission consider taking into account EDbN's support and cooperation as a relevant stakeholder?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

With the assistance of the European Statistical System, Eurostat produces disability-related statistics either through focused surveys such as:

— the European Health and Social Integration Survey which is currently conducted. First results should be disseminated by mid 2014;

— the European Health Interview Survey which addresses a large set of variables concerning health status, healthcare use and health determinants every five years and includes a more detailed questioning on seeing and hearing according to international standards;

or through the inclusion of related questions in general household surveys such as:

— modules of the Labour Force Survey. Results on the situation of disabled people in the labour market in 2011 should be disseminated during the 3rd quarter of 2013;

— and the annual Statistics on Income and Living Conditions which include a variable on limitations due to a health problem that is considered to reflect poor functioning adequately and is used to derive information about the social situation of disabled people.

These surveys offer useful information about the situation of disabled people in the EU. Collecting more specific information on deafness and deafblindness is presently not possible for technical reasons because of problems of sampling, accuracy and cost of the survey.

Disabled Person's Organisations (DPOs) regularly use Eurostat outputs in the area of disability statistics. Eurostat welcomes the offer for cooperation with the DPOs and can indeed invite such stakeholders to participate in the relevant technical meetings.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003064/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Emulación del Programa Nacional de Distribución de Material para Sordociegos de los Estados Unidos

La Comisión Federal de Comunicaciones de los Estados Unidos (FCC) recibe cada año del Gobierno federal más de 10 millones de dólares destinados a financiar material de accesibilidad para personas que sufren de sordoceguera y carecen de recursos económicos. Crear una línea análoga en el presupuesto comunitario no solo significaría una gran ayuda para las muchas personas que sufren de esta doble discapacidad en la Unión, sino que también daría un impulso a la industria europea de material de accesibilidad. La Red Europea de Sordociegos, miembro del Foro Europeo de la Discapacidad, atesora la experiencia de las ONG europeas en relación con la sordoceguera.

1. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión crear un recurso presupuestario que acabe con la desigualdad existente entre los Estados Unidos y Europa en lo concerniente a las personas sordociegas y a la industria del material de accesibilidad?

2. Habida cuenta del caudal de conocimientos expertos que posee la Red Europea de Sordociegos, ¿contempla la Comisión la posibilidad de solicitar su ayuda y su cooperación?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de mayo de 2013)

A la hora de establecer comparaciones con los Estados Unidos es necesario tener en cuenta las diferencias institucionales y el hecho de que la Comisión actúa dentro de los límites de las competencias que le confiere el Tratado (TFUE).

Los asuntos referentes a la cultura, incluido el acceso a los materiales culturales, son fundamentalmente competencia de los Estados miembros. No obstante, la Comisión lleva a cabo políticas y acciones en toda la UE en apoyo de los esfuerzos nacionales para promover la inclusión y la plena participación de las personas con discapacidad en todos los aspectos de la vida, como establece la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-20020 ([1]). Se está trabajando en una de las principales iniciativas en este sentido, el «acta de accesibilidad europea», y está previsto presentar la propuesta en el verano de 2013.

Asimismo, la Comisión apoya la investigación en nuevas tecnologías y en innovaciones en material de accesibilidad para la plena participación de las personas con discapacidad en la sociedad. Varios programas de la UE ofrecen importantes posibilidades de financiación, como el actual programa marco de investigación, así como los anteriores, y, evidentemente, también Horizonte 2020, el nuevo Programa Marco de Investigación e Innovación de la UE para el periodo 2014-2020. Las ONG que trabajan en temas de discapacidad, como la Red Europea de Sordociegos, pueden obtener financiación para proyectos en virtud de estos programas. La Comisión y las ONG dedicadas a la discapacidad a escala de la UE, como el Foro Europeo de la Discapacidad, del que es miembro la Red Europea de Sordociegos, mantienen contactos regulares.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003064/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Emulation of the US 'National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program'

The United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) receives more than USD 10 million annually from the federal government in order to fund accessibility material for deafblind people who lack economic resources. Creating an equivalent line in the EU budget would not only greatly assist the many deafblind people in the EU but also boost the accessibility material industry in the European Union. The European Deafblind Network (EDbN), a member of the European Disability Forum, encompasses the experience of European NGOs on deafblindness.

1. Does the Commission plan to provide a budget that ends the inequality between the USA and Europe as regards deafblind people and the accessibility material industry?

2. Given the expertise of EDbN, would the Commission consider asking for EDbN's support and cooperation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

When comparing to the US, the institutional differences and the fact that the Commission is acting within the limits of competences conferred to it by the Treaty (TFEU), have to be taken into account.

Issues concerning culture, including access to cultural materials, are primarily the competence of EU Member States. However, the Commission carries out policies and actions at EU level to support national efforts to promote the inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life as laid out in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]). The work on one of the main initiatives in the area, the European Accessibility Act, is progressing. The proposal is foreseen to be presented in the summer of 2013.

The Commission also supports research on new technologies for mainstream and assistive accessibility innovations. Important funding opportunities are provided under various EU programmes, like in the past and current Research framework programmes and certainly also in Horizon 2020, the EU's new framework programme for research and innovation for 2014-2020. Disability NGO's, like EDbN can benefit from project funding under these programmes. There is also a regular contact between the Commission and EU level disability NGO's like the EDF, of which EDbN is a member.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003066/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Horizon 2020: recherche et principe de précaution

Le programme «Horizon 2020», programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation présenté par la Commission européenne le 30 novembre 2011 et actuellement en phase de négociation, place une fois de plus l'innovation à finalité industrielle au centre de ses priorités. Facteurs de développement et de mieux-être, les nouvelles technologies ont aussi eu des effets extrêmement nocifs: empoisonnements au mercure, problèmes de fertilité causés par les pesticides et les perturbateurs endocriniens… Malgré les leçons du passé, le financement de la recherche publique dans l'Union européenne est axé à 99 % sur le développement de l'innovation à finalité industrielle, tandis que 1 % seulement est consacré à l'étude de ses risques potentiels.

1. La Commission est-elle prête à tirer toutes les conséquences du principe de précaution dans son programme «Horizon 2020», en opérant une répartition plus équitable des financements entre la recherche pour le développement des produits et la recherche pour identifier les risques qu'ils présentent?

2. La Commission entend-t-elle introduire une obligation d'études publiques préalables établissant, de manière certaine et avant leur utilisation à échelle industrielle, l'innocuité des nouvelles technologies pour la santé et l'environnement?

Réponse donnée par Mme Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(6 mai 2013)

1. La proposition de budget concernant Horizon 2020, le prochain programme-cadre de l'UE pour la recherche et l'innovation, montre que ce programme place les défis de société au centre de ses priorités. Les chiffres cités par l'Honorable Parlementaire ne correspondent dès lors pas aux projets de financements exposés dans Horizon 2020.

Le programme «Horizon 2020» suivra une approche cohérente et fondée sur des éléments probants, en respectant pleinement les principes de durabilité et de prudence, lors de la mise en œuvre des différentes activités. Quelque 60 % du financement d'Horizon 2020 seront consacrés au soutien du développement durable. Par ailleurs, des actions transversales sur la recherche et l'innovation responsables sont prévues dans le cadre du pilier «défis de société». Ces actions visent à promouvoir un comportement responsable en matière de recherche et d'innovation, garantissant que l'ensemble des activités financées respectent les normes en matière de durabilité, de gouvernance, d'éthique et d'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et impliquent toutes les parties concernées par le processus de recherche et d'innovation. À cet égard, il est prévu de faire appel à des experts issus d'organisations de la société civile pour participer à des comités consultatifs externes ainsi qu'au suivi et à l'évaluation des activités d'Horizon 2020. De même, des processus participatifs faisant intervenir les citoyens (groupes de réflexion, conférences de consensus, etc.) seront mis sur pied afin de contribuer aux programmes de travail d'Horizon 2020.

2. L'ensemble des technologies nouvelles, tout comme celles déjà utilisées, doivent être conformes à la législation en matière de sécurité, de santé et d'environnement qui est applicable dans l'Union. Il n'est pas prévu d'introduire dans l'UE une obligation d'études publiques préalables supplémentaires concernant les incidences potentielles sur la santé et l'environnement des nouvelles technologies.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003066/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Horizon 2020: research and the precautionary principle

The 'Horizon 2020' Framework Programme for Research and Innovation presented by the Commission on 30 November 2011, which is currently under negotiation, once again prioritises innovation for industrial purposes. Although they promote development and well-being, new technologies have also had extremely harmful effects: mercury poisoning, fertility problems caused by pesticides, endocrine disruptors — and the list goes on. Despite the lessons of the past, 99% of funding for public research in the European Union is focused on the development of innovation for industrial purposes, and only 1% is allocated to examining its potential risks.

1. Is the Commission prepared to accept all the consequences of the precautionary principle in its 'Horizon 2020' programme, by distributing funding more fairly between research into product development and research aimed at identifying the risks presented by these products?

2. Does the Commission intend to make preliminary public studies obligatory, in order to make quite sure that new technologies are not harmful to health or the environment before they are used on an industrial scale?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1. The budget proposal for Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, shows that Horizon 2020 prioritises societal challenges. The figures quoted by the Honourable Member therefore do not correspond with the intentions for funding spelled out in Horizon 2020.

Horizon 2020 will follow a coherent and evidence-based approach, in a fully sustainable and prudent manner, when implementing the various activities. Some 60% of Horizon 2020 funding will be oriented towards supporting sustainability. Furthermore, as part of the societal challenges pillar, cross cutting actions on Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) are foreseen. These actions intend to promote responsible conduct in research and innovation, ensuring that all funded activities respect sustainability, governance, ethics and gender standards and engage all stakeholders in the research and innovation process. With regard to the latter, it is foreseen to involve experts from civil society organisations in External Advisory Boards and in the monitoring and evaluation of Horizon 2020 activities. Also, participatory processes with citizens (e.g. focus groups, consensus conferences) will be set up, with a view to feed Horizon 2020 Work Programmes.

2. All new technologies, as well as those already in use, have to comply with relevant safety, health and environmental legislation in the EU. There are no plans to make additional preliminary public studies into the potential health and environmental impacts of new technologies obligatory in the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003067/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Pistes pour sortir de la fraude à l'étiquetage

1. Compte tenu du fait qu'un test permettant de déterminer la composition de la viande coûte 40 euros, et comparativement aux bénéfices colossaux de la plupart des marques incriminées dans le dossier de la viande de cheval, quand allons-nous enfin imposer ces tests (ou d'autres similaires) aux fabricants?

2. La Commission ne devrait-elle pas imposer aux firmes un nombre de tests sur chaque produit annuellement?

3. Pourquoi la plupart des contrôles sont-ils effectués sans le moindre effet de surprise, rendant très confortables les fraudes des criminels à tous les niveaux de la chaîne de production?

4. La Commission ne devrait-elle pas imposer la publication des résultats pour plus de transparence pour le consommateur et le distributeur?

5. Ne pensez-vous pas qu'il serait utile d'imposer une clause dans le cahier des charges liant supermarchés et industries agroalimentaires qui stipulerait un nombre minimum de tests de qualité afin de protéger le consommateur et le distributeur?

6. Avez-vous revu votre position sur la proposition de mention du pays de provenance? J'avais proposé que soit indiqué sur les emballages le lieu où les fruits et légumes ont été récoltés, le lieu où les poissons ont été pêchés, celui où les animaux sont nés et ont été élevés, etc., et non pas les pays où ils ont été cuits ou fumés.

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(3 mai 2013)

Pour le moment, la Commission n'a pas l'intention d'imposer des tests aux fabricants pour déterminer la composition des viandes. Ces derniers restent libres d'introduire de tels tests dans leur programme d'analyse des risques et de maîtrise des points critiques (HACCP).

En matière de contrôles officiels, la règle générale, consacrée par l'article 3, paragraphe 2, du règlement (CE) nº 882/2004 ([1]), est que les contrôles sont effectués sans préavis. Des dérogations sont toutefois possibles lorsqu'une notification préalable aux exploitants est nécessaire afin que les contrôles puissent être réalisés correctement. Le cas se présente notamment lors des audits ou quand les firmes font l'objet de contrôles systématiques sur la base de la législation de l'Union.

Les États membres communiquent actuellement à la Commission les résultats des contrôles effectués, en vertu de la recommandation 2013/99/UE ([2]). La date limite pour communiquer ces résultats est le 15 avril 2013. Aussitôt après, la Commission les rendra publics.

La Commission n'est pas compétente pour imposer des clauses du type de celles décrites par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

([1]) JO L 191 du 28.5.2004.
([2]) JO L 48 du 21.2.2013, p. 28.

En ce qui concerne les denrées alimentaires transformées, le règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 ([3]) prévoit, s'agissant du «pays d'origine» — à savoir celui où a eu lieu la dernière transformation substantielle, économiquement justifiée de la denrée alimentaire ([4]) –, que, lorsque l'origine de la denrée est indiquée et qu'elle n'est pas celle de son ingrédient primaire, l'origine de l'ingrédient primaire doit être indiquée. Les modalités d'indication de l'origine de l'ingrédient primaire doivent être spécifiées dans des actes d'exécution pour le 13 décembre 2013 au plus tard.

([3]) Règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 1924/2006 et (CE) n° 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Commission (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18). Il sera applicable à partir du 13 décembre 2014.

([4]) Le «pays d'origine» est défini par référence aux règles de l'Union sur l'origine non préférentielle des marchandises, c'est-à-dire au règlement (CEE) n° 2913/92 du Conseil établissant le code des douanes communautaire (JO L 302 du 19.10.1992, p. 1) et au règlement (CEE) n° 2454/93 de la Commission fixant certaines dispositions d'application du règlement (CEE) n° 2913/92 du Conseil (JO L 253 du 11.10.1993, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003067/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Ways of avoiding labelling fraud

1. Given that it costs only EUR 40 to carry out a test to determine the composition of meat, and given that the profits made by the majority of brands incriminated during the horse meat scandal are huge in comparison, when will these tests, or other similar tests, finally become compulsory for producers?

2. Should the Commission not make it obligatory for companies to carry out a certain number of these tests each year on each product?

3. Why are most checks carried out without any element of surprise, making it very easy for criminals to commit fraud at all levels of the production chain?

4. Should the Commission not make it obligatory to publish the results of these tests, in order to ensure greater transparency for consumers and distributors?

5. Does the Commission not believe that it would be useful to add a clause stipulating a minimum number of quality tests to the terms of contract agreed between supermarkets and agri-food industries, in order to protect consumers and distributors?

6. Has the Commission revised its position on the proposal concerning statements of the country of origin? I proposed that a statement should be included on packaging indicating where fruit and vegetables had been harvested, where fish had been caught, where animals had been born and reared etc., instead of the country where they had been cooked or smoked.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

For the moment the Commission is not planning to establish compulsory tests for producers for the determination of the composition of meat. The producers remain at liberty to introduce such tests in their Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan.

The general rule for official controls, as enshrined in Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([1]), is that such controls be carried out without prior warning. However, derogations to this rule do exist where prior notification of the business operator is necessary in order to be able to properly perform controls. This is the case, for example, in the case of audits or where businesses are subject to systematic checks on the basis of Union legislation.

Member States are currently reporting the results of the tests carried out by virtue of Recommendation 2013/99/EU ([2]) to the Commission. The deadline for Member States to communicate such results is 15 April 2013. The Commission will make the results publicly available immediately thereafter.

The Commission is not competent to establish clauses like those mentioned by the Honourable Member.

([1]) OJ L 191, 28.5.2004.
([2]) OJ L 48, 21.2.2013, p. 28.

As to processed foods, Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([3]) provides that the 'country of origin' is the country where the food underwent its last, substantial, economically justified processing ([4]). Where the origin of a food is given and it is not the same as that of its primary ingredient, the regulation requires the origin indication of the main ingredient. The modalities of expressing the origin of the primary ingredient shall be laid down in implementing acts by 13 December 2013.

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18. It will enter into application on 13 December 2014.

([4]) The 'country of origin' is defined by reference to the Union's non-preferential rules of origin, i.e. Council Regulation (EEC) No 2913/92 establishing the Community Customs Code, OJ L302, 19.10.1992, p. 1; Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2454/93 laying down provisions for the implementation of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2913/92, OJ L 253, 11.10.1993, p. 1.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003068/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Utilisation des Fonds européens pour l'intégration des Roms

Un quotidien néerlandais rapportait à l'époque que la plus grande partie des Fonds européens destinés à aider la Roumanie pour l'intégration des Roms ne seraient soumis à aucun contrôle et seraient partiellement détournés. Tout aussi inquiétant, le journaliste expliquait que sur les 300 ONG qui prétendent s'occuper des Roms et reçoivent de l'argent de Bruxelles, seulement 20 sont actives.

«Comme c'est toujours le cas avec les Fonds européens, c'est aux pays membres de définir les projets viables. Ce n'est pas le rôle de la Commission européenne de proposer des projets», expliquait récemment la Commission. Il n'en reste pas moins qu'il convient d'avoir une vision claire et précise de l'utilisation de cet argent et qu'un contrôle est indispensable.

Ces cinq dernières années, l'Union européenne aurait dépensé 17 milliards d'euros pour l'intégration de cette minorité ethnique, sans résultat probant.

1. L'Union européenne reconnaît qu'il est difficile de calculer les sommes précises allouées aux «Roms et autres groupes vulnérables», mais estime que dans douze pays particulièrement concernés, ces montants s'élèvent entre 2007 et 2013 à 17,5 milliards d'euros, dont 13,3 milliards proviennent du Fonds social européen, une composante des Fonds structurels. La Commission peut-elle confirmer cette affirmation? À combien se monte officiellement et exactement cette aide au niveau européen?

2. Concrètement, et ce pays par pays, quelles sont les sommes allouées à chaque État membre, les projets entrepris par ceux-ci et, *in fine*, à quoi sont utilisés les Fonds européens?

3. Qu'en est-il des sommes allouées à la Roumanie, des projets menés dans le pays et des résultats concrets?

4. Pourquoi, malgré les investissements considérables, les résultats semblent-ils être tellement décevants?

5. Pourquoi l'Union européenne ne se décide-t-elle pas à reconnaître pleinement les Roms comme une minorité ethnique et persiste-t-elle à les voir surtout comme un groupe social particulièrement nécessiteux et discriminé?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(21 mai 2013)

1, 2 Les règles actuellement en vigueur n'obligent pas les États membres à rendre compte expressément de l'utilisation des Fonds européens pour l'intégration des Roms. La Commission ne peut donc pas confirmer les chiffres indiqués dans la question, que ce soit au niveau européen ou au niveau national. Des informations au sujet des dépenses en matière d'inclusion sociale et d'infrastructure sociale sont disponibles dans le «Rapport stratégique» ([1]) du 18 avril 2013.

3 Comme l'ont rapporté les autorités roumaines, 102 projets ciblant 33 000 Roms ont bénéficié de subventions cofinancées par le FSE en Roumanie, pour un montant de 175 millions d'euros. Le programme régional du FEDER encourage une démarche territoriale, tout particulièrement en ce qui concerne les communautés marginalisées telles que les Roms. Des projets pilotes pour le logement, les centres sociaux et les infrastructures d'éducation et de santé seront mis en œuvre dans plusieurs villes.

4 La Commission a identifié les obstacles suivants à l'utilisation efficace des fonds de l'UE destinés à l'inclusion des Roms: manque de savoir-faire et de capacités administratives pour absorber les fonds européens, manque de cofinancement national, manque d'implication de la société civile et des communautés roms elles-mêmes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/how/policy/doc/strategic_report/2013/strat_report_2013_fr.pdf

5 L'article 2 du traité sur l'Union européenne précise que l'Union est fondée sur un certain nombre de valeurs communes, notamment le respect des droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités. En outre, l'article 21 de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne interdit la discrimination fondée sur l'appartenance à une minorité nationale. Enfin, les Roms sont protégés par la directive 2000/43/CE relative à l'égalité entre les races.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003068/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Use of European funds for the integration of Roma

It was reported by a Dutch daily newspaper that most of the money allocated under the EU funds to help Romania in its efforts to integrate the Roma people would not be subject to any checks, and that some of it would be misappropriated. The journalist explained that only 20 of the 300 NGOs which claim to work with Roma and which receive money from Brussels are active, which is equally worrying.

The Commission explained recently that, 'As is always the case with European funds, it is up to the Member States to define viable projects. It is not the Commission's job to propose projects.' Nevertheless, there should be a clear and precise vision of how this money is to be used, and checks are indispensable.

Over the past five years, the European Union has allegedly spent EUR 17 billion on integrating this ethnic minority, without any convincing results.

1. The European Union recognises that it is difficult to calculate the exact sums allocated to 'Roma and other vulnerable groups', but estimates that the total is close to EUR 17.5 billion between 2007 and 2013 in the twelve countries most affected. EUR 13.3 billion of this sum has come from the European Social Fund, which is part of the Structural Funds. Can the Commission confirm this statement? What is the exact official figure for this aid at European level?

2. In concrete terms, and on a country by country basis, how much has been allocated to each Member State and to the projects implemented by each Member State, and to what use are the European funds ultimately put?

3. What has happened to the money allocated to Romania and the projects implemented in the country, and what have been the concrete outcomes?

4. Why do the results appear to be so disappointing, in spite of the significant investments made?

5. Why has the European Union not decided to grant the Roma people full recognition as an ethnic minority, and why does it persist in regarding them primarily as a social group suffering particular hardship and discrimination?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

1, 2. Under current rules, Member States do not have to report specifically on the use of EU funds for Roma inclusion, so the Commission cannot confirm the figures indicated in the question, either at EU or national level. Information on spending on 'social inclusion and social infrastructure' can be found in the 'Strategic Report' ([1]) of 18 April 2013.

3. As reported by the Romanian authorities 102 projects targeting 33 000 Roma people have benefitted from ESF co-funded grants in Romania for an amount of EUR 175 million. The ERDF Regional Programme favours a territorial approach, with special regard to marginalised communities such as Roma. Pilot projects for housing, social centres and educational and health infrastructure will be implemented in several cities.

4. The Commission has identified the following bottlenecks to the effective use of EU funds for Roma inclusion: lack of know-how and administrative capacity to absorb EU funds, lack of national co-financing as well as lack of involvement by civil society and Roma communities themselves.

5. Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union states that the Union is founded on a number of common values, including respect for rights of persons belonging to minorities. Moreover, Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits discrimination based on membership of a national minority. Furthermore Roma are protected by Directive 2000/43/EC on Racial Equality.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/how/policy/strategic_report_en.cfm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003069/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Discrimination à Anvers: les Européens non belges ne sont pas les bienvenus

La commune d'Anvers a décidé au début du mois de février dernier d'imposer le paiement d'une somme de 250 euros pour tout ressortissant étranger, européen ou non, désireux de s'inscrire auprès de l'administration communale. Jusqu'alors, ce droit d'inscription était fixé à 17 euros, l'équivalent du prix demandé pour une carte d'identité.

Les règles européennes prescrivent que les citoyens européens qui veulent s'inscrire dans une commune belge ne peuvent se voir réserver un autre traitement que celui appliqué aux Belges. Tout citoyen européen bénéficie en outre du droit de se déplacer et de résider sur le territoire des États membres.

Les États membres ont toutefois le droit d'imposer aux citoyens européens une inscription, pour laquelle les autorités doivent délivrer une déclaration, ce à titre gratuit ou pour un montant à concurrence de ce qui est demandé pour la remise de documents comparables pour les citoyens locaux.

1. La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que ce nouveau règlement semble ni plus ni moins contraire au droit européen?

2. Ne s'agit-il pas là d'un traitement inégal des citoyens européens de nationalité belge par rapport aux autres citoyens européens, en ce que les premiers ne sont pas concernés par ce paiement?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2013)

Comme mentionné dans sa réponse à la question écrite P-1746/2013, la Commission a pris contact avec les autorités belges concernant la décision de la commune d'Anvers et, notamment, la compatibilité de cette décision avec les directives 2004/38/CE sur la libre circulation, 2003/109/CE sur les résidents de longue durée et 2003/86/CE sur le regroupement familial.

Dans l'intervalle, la presse belge a annoncé que le gouverneur de la province d'Anvers avait annulé la décision concernée le 29 mars 2013, puisqu'elle était incompatible avec le droit de l'UE.

La Commission attend maintenant que les autorités belges lui fassent parvenir une réponse formelle.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003069/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Discrimination in Antwerp: non-Belgian Europeans are not welcome

At the start of February, the commune of Antwerp decided to impose a payment of EUR 250 on every foreign national, whether European or not, wishing to register with the local authority. Until now the registration fee has been set at EUR 17, which is the same as the cost of an identity card.

European rules stipulate that European citizens who wish to register with a Belgian commune should not be treated differently to Belgians. Furthermore, all European citizens have the right to travel within the EU and to take up residence in any of the Member States.

Member States are however entitled to impose a duty of registration on European citizens, which must be laid down by the authorities in an official declaration, and which may either be free of charge or subject to a fee which is equivalent to that paid by local citizens for the submission of comparable documents.

1. Does the Commission agree that this new rule is no more, nor less, than an infringement of European legislation?

2. Does this not mean that European citizens of Belgian nationality are being treated differently to other European citizens, since the former do not have to pay this fee?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

As mentioned in the answer to Written Question P-1746/2013, the Commission contacted the Belgian authorities regarding the decision of the commune of Antwerp, and notably its compatibility with Directive 2004/38/EC on Free Movement, Directive 2003/109/EC on Long-Term Residents and Directive 2003/86/EC on Family Reunification.

In the meantime, the Belgian press has announced that the governor of the Province of Antwerp cancelled the decision of the commune on 29 March 2013 since it was incompatible with EC law.

The Commission is now expecting a formal answer from the Belgian authorities.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003070/13
ao Conselho
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(19 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Assistência financeira a Chipre

Na última reunião do Eurogrupo aprovou-se o programa de assistência financeira a Chipre, que inclui um acordo sobre aumento dos impostos sobre as empresas, que podem chegar aos 12,5 %, e um imposto extraordinário de 9,9 % sobre os depósitos acima dos 100 000 euros e de 6,7 % para os valores abaixo.

Este acordo, que impôs o congelamento dos fundos sujeitos a imposto, sem decisão do Parlamento cipriota e conhecimento dos titulares das contas bancárias, penaliza os depositantes cipriotas e põe em causa a garantia europeia de proteção de depósitos bancários até 100 000 euros — garantia à conta da qual os Estados-Membros têm justificado o investimento de milhares de milhões de euros dos contribuintes para «salvar» bancos, habilitando-os a ter provisões de capital mínimas para poder honrar os depósitos.

É de conhecimento generalizado, há bastante tempo, que grande parte dos depósitos em bancos cipriotas pertencem a oligarcas russos e evasores fiscais gregos e de outras nacionalidades, que aproveitaram o regime legal e baixas taxas tributárias para aí branquearem os capitais. As autoridades europeias, que nunca tomaram nenhuma medida para pôr fim a esta situação, vêm agora obrigar os depositantes cipriotas a pagar o descalabro do setor financeiro inflacionado em Chipre, em grande parte causado pela reestruturação da dívida grega, que custou 4,5 mil milhões de euros à banca cipriota.

Tendo atenção a estes factos,

1. Porque optou o Conselho por não intervir para pressionar Chipre a pôr fim ao regime legal que lhe permite continuar a ser um centro de branqueamento de capitais e evasão fiscal?

2. Porque optou o Conselho por impor a taxação de todos os depositantes nos bancos cipriotas e não, por exemplo, apenas os estrangeiros, aplicando uma taxa mais elevada, e penalizando mais substancialmente assim aqueles que se aproveitaram do regime cipriota para branquear capitais e fugir ao Fisco?

3. Porque não intervém agora o Conselho para pôr cobro a branqueamento de capitais em outras praças financeiras europeias?

Resposta
(28 de maio de 2013)

O Conselho chama a atenção da Sra. Deputada para a declaração do Eurogrupo de 25 de março de 2013 sobre Chipre. Essa declaração refere-se ao acordo alcançado com o Governo de Chipre sobre um programa que vai enfrentar os desafios excecionais com que Chipre se depara e restaurar a viabilidade do setor financeiro, através dos planos especificados no anexo à declaração, tendo em vista o restabelecimento de um crescimento sustentável e de finanças públicas sólidas nos próximos anos. Essas medidas salvaguardam nomeadamente todos os depósitos inferiores a 100 000 euros, em conformidade com os princípios da UE.

Na sua declaração de 4 de março de 2013, o Eurogrupo comunicou que fora informado de que o Governo de Chipre concordara com a realização de uma avaliação independente sobre a implementação do quadro de luta contra o branqueamento de capitais nas instituições financeiras cipriotas. Em 16 de março de 2013, o Eurogrupo congratulou-se com o mandato relativo a uma avaliação independente da implementação do quadro de luta contra o branqueamento de capitais, que envolvia o Comité Moneyval, juntamente com uma empresa internacional privada de auditoria, tendo saudado ulteriormente, em 12 de abril, a evolução realizada em relação à auditoria da luta contra o branqueamento de capitais, juntamente com o compromisso assumido no memorando de entendimento no sentido de se continuar a reforçar as medidas em matéria de luta contra o branqueamento de capitais na sequência das recomendações constantes do relatório de auditoria.

De uma forma mais geral, o Conselho Europeu declarou, nas suas conclusões de 14-15 de março de 2013, que é necessário empreender mais esforços no sentido de melhorar a eficiência da cobrança de impostos e combater a evasão fiscal, nomeadamente através de acordos com países terceiros sobre tributação da poupança. Declarou ainda que é necessário proceder a uma cooperação estreita com a OCDE e o G20 a fim de desenvolver normas acordadas internacionalmente para a prevenção da erosão da base tributável e da transferência de lucros, e que a UE vai coordenar as suas posições nessa perspetiva.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003070/13
to the Council
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Financial aid to Cyprus

The latest meeting of the Eurogroup approved a programme of financial aid to Cyprus which includes an agreement to increase company tax, which could reach 12.5%, and an extraordinary tax of 9.9% on bank deposits over EUR 100 000 and 6.7% for smaller amounts.

This agreement, which freezes all deposits subject to the tax, without a decision by the Cypriot Government or notification of account holders, penalises Cypriot depositors and calls into question the European guarantee to protect bank deposits up to EUR 100 000, which Member States have used as the basis for justifying the use of billions of euros of taxpayers money to 'save' banks and ensure them access to minimum capital provisions with which to honour deposits.

It has been well known for some time that a large proportion of Cypriot bank deposits belong to Russian oligarchs and tax evaders from Greece and other countries who have taken advantage of Cyprus' low taxes and legal system to use it as a base for money laundering. The European authorities, who hitherto turned a blind eye to this situation, are now forcing Cypriot depositors to pay for the shortfall in their country's inflated financial system, largely caused by the restructuring of the Greek debt, which has cost Cypriot banks EUR 4.5 million.

In light of the above:

1. Why did the Council decide not to apply pressure on Cyprus to end the legal system which enables it to continue acting as a centre for tax evasion and money laundering?

2. Why did the Council decide to impose a tax on all depositors in Cypriot banks rather than, for example, charging foreign depositors a higher tax rate to more severely penalise those taking advantage of the Cypriot system in order to launder money and evade tax?

3. Why does the Council not intervene immediately to put an end to money laundering in other European financial markets?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The Council draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the Eurogroup statement on Cyprus of 25 March 2013. This statement refers to the agreement reached with the Cyprus government on a programme that will address the exceptional challenges that Cyprus is facing and restore the viability of the financial sector, through the plans specified in the annex to the statement, with a view to restoring sustainable growth and sound public finances in the years to come. In particular, these measures safeguard all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles.

In its statement of 4 March 2013, the Eurogroup said that it had been informed that the Cyprus government had agreed on an independent evaluation of the implementation of the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) framework in Cypriot financial institutions. On 16 March 2013 it welcomed the Terms of Reference for an independent evaluation of the implementation of the AML framework, involving Moneyval alongside a private international audit firm, and it subsequently welcomed, on 12 April, the progress made on the AML audit, together with the commitment in the memorandum of understanding (MoU) to further enhance AML measures following the audit report recommendations.

More generally, the European Council stated in its Conclusions of 14-15 March 2013 that renewed efforts were needed to improve the efficiency of tax collection and to tackle tax evasion, including through savings taxation agreements with third countries; that close cooperation with the OECD and the G20 was needed to develop internationally agreed standards for the prevention of base erosion and profit shifting and that the EU would coordinate its positions to that end.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003071/13
à Comissão
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(19 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Assistência financeira a Chipre

Na última reunião do Eurogrupo aprovou-se o programa de assistência financeira a Chipre, que inclui um acordo sobre aumento dos impostos sobre as empresas, que podem chegar aos 12,5 %, e um imposto extraordinário de 9,9 % sobre os depósitos acima dos 100 000 euros e de 6,7 % para os valores abaixo.

Este acordo, que impôs o congelamento dos fundos sujeitos a imposto, sem decisão do Parlamento cipriota e conhecimento dos titulares das contas bancárias, penaliza os depositantes cipriotas e põe em causa a garantia europeia de proteção de depósitos bancários até 100 000 euros — garantia à conta da qual os Estados-Membros têm justificado o investimento de milhares de milhões de euros dos contribuintes para «salvar» bancos, habilitando-os a ter provisões de capital mínimas para poder honrar os depósitos.

É de conhecimento generalizado, há bastante tempo, que grande parte dos depósitos em bancos cipriotas pertencem a oligarcas russos e evasores fiscais gregos e de outras nacionalidades, que aproveitaram o regime legal e baixas taxas tributárias para aí branquearem os capitais. As autoridades europeias, que nunca tomaram nenhuma medida para pôr fim a esta situação, vêm agora obrigar os depositantes cipriotas a pagar o descalabro do setor financeiro inflacionado em Chipre, em grande parte causado pela reestruturação da dívida grega, que custou 4,5 mil milhões de euros à banca cipriota.

Tendo atenção a estes factos,

1. Porque optou a Comissão por não intervir para pressionar Chipre a pôr fim ao regime legal que lhe permite continuar a ser um centro de branqueamento de capitais e evasão fiscal?

2. Porque optou a Comissão por impor a taxação de todos os depositantes nos bancos cipriotas e não, por exemplo, apenas os estrangeiros, aplicando uma taxa mais elevada, e penalizando mais substancialmente assim aqueles que se aproveitaram do regime cipriota para branquear capitais e fugir ao Fisco?

3. Porque não intervém agora a Comissão para pôr cobro a branqueamento de capitais em outras praças financeiras europeias?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(27 de maio de 2013)

Em relação a Chipre, houve uma avaliação independente da execução do quadro luta contra o branqueamento de capitais nas instituições financeiras do país, envolvendo Moneyval e uma empresa de auditoria internacional privada. Na sua declaração de 13 de maio, o Eurogrupo acolheu favoravelmente a conclusão desta avaliação. As instituições da Troica comunicaram as principais conclusões ao Eurogrupo, e serão integradas recomendações no plano de ação da luta contra o branqueamento de capitais, com vista à correção das deficiências, a acordar entre as instituições da Troica e as autoridades cipriotas, aquando da primeira avaliação do programa. O plano de ação deverá visar domínios que abranjam a implementação de diligências pelos bancos junto dos seus clientes, graças nomeadamente a uma supervisão adequada, e o funcionamento do registo das empresas, entre outros.

A Comissão publicou recentemente uma proposta de quarta Diretiva relativa à prevenção da utilização do sistema financeiro para efeitos de branqueamento de capitais ([1]) que reforçará a legislação da UE, em conformidade com as normas internacionais (GAFI) ([2]). Este enquadramento reforçará consideravelmente as defesas da UE contra o branqueamento de capitais, permitindo simultaneamente uma utilização legítima do sistema financeiro.

A Comissão não possui estatísticas demográficas sobre os responsáveis pela evasão fiscal e branqueamento de capitais. Tributar os cidadãos estrangeiros com taxas mais elevadas do que os nacionais é contrário ao direito e aos princípios da UE ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0045:FIN:PT:PDF

([2]) Tal inclui requisitos para melhorar da rastreabilidade de informações sobre os beneficiários efetivos e uma maior ênfase na identificação e minimização dos riscos reais de branqueamento de capitais, com base nos trabalhos à escala da União Europeia e a nível nacional.

([3]) Artigo 18.° do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003071/13
to the Commission
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Financial aid to Cyprus

The latest meeting of the Eurogroup approved a programme of financial aid to Cyprus which includes an agreement to increase company tax, which could reach 12.5%, and an extraordinary tax of 9.9% on bank deposits over EUR 100 000 and 6.7% for smaller amounts.

This agreement, which freezes all deposits subject to the tax, without a decision by the Cypriot Government or notification of account holders, penalises Cypriot depositors and calls into question the European guarantee to protect bank deposits up to EUR 100 000, which Member States have used as the basis for justifying the use of billions of euros of taxpayers money to 'save' banks and ensure them access to minimum capital provisions with which to honour deposits.

It has been well known for some time that a large proportion of Cypriot bank deposits belong to Russian oligarchs and tax evaders from Greece and other countries who have taken advantage of Cyprus' low taxes and legal system to use it as a base for money laundering. The European authorities, who hitherto turned a blind eye to this situation, are now forcing Cypriot depositors to pay for the shortfall in their country's inflated financial system, largely caused by the restructuring of the Greek debt, which has cost Cypriot banks EUR 4.5 million.

In light of the above:

1. Why did the Council decide not to apply pressure on Cyprus to end the legal system which enables it to continue acting as a centre for tax evasion and money laundering?

2. Why did the Council decide to impose a tax on all depositors in Cypriot banks rather than, for example, charging foreign depositors a higher tax rate to more severely penalise those taking advantage of the Cypriot system in order to launder money and evade tax?

3. Why does the Council not intervene immediately to put an end to money laundering in other European financial markets?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

Regarding Cyprus, there has been an independent assessment of implementation of the anti-money laundering (AML) framework in Cypriot financial institutions, involving Moneyval alongside a private international audit firm. In its statement of 13 May, the Eurogroup welcomed the completion of this assessment. The Troika institutions have reported the key findings to the Eurogroup, and recommendations to rectify deficiencies will be integrated in the AML action plan to be agreed between the Troika institutions and the Cypriot authorities at the time of the first programme review. The action plan will need to target areas covering implementation of customer due diligence by banks, including through adequate supervision, and the functioning of the company registry, among others.

The Commission has recently published a proposal ([1]) for a 4th AML Directive which will tighten the EU's legislation in line with the international (FATF) standards ([2]). This framework will significatly strengthen the EU's defences against money laundering, whilst still allowing legitimate use of the financial system.

The Commission does not acquire demographic statistics on those who evade taxes and engage in money laundering. Taxing foreigners at higher rates than nationals is fundamentally against EC law and principles ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0045:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) This includes requirements for enhancing the traceability of beneficial ownership information and an increased focus on identifying and mitigating the actual risks of money laundering, based on work at an EU and at national level.
([3]) e.g. Article 18 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003072/13
a la Comisión
Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Relaciones UE-Marruecos

A comienzos de mes, el Presidente de la Comisión Europea, José Manuel Durão Barroso, realizó una misión a Marruecos en la que se anunció oficialmente el inicio de negociaciones entre la UE y Marruecos para un nuevo acuerdo comercial completo, un acuerdo sobre la movilidad y una cooperación financiera y técnica en favor del desarrollo humano.

Marruecos ha sido el primer país de la región del Mediterráneo en beneficiarse de un acuerdo de «status avanzado» con vistas a reforzar el proceso de integración económica y comercial del país, sin olvidar el diálogo político y el respeto de la cláusula sobre derechos humanos. Este es el marco en el que la UE debe negociar un nuevo plan de acción de su política de vecindad con Marruecos después de que caducara a finales de 2012 el acuerdo vigente.

En este contexto, ¿puede la Comisión informar sobre las previsiones de calendario en relación con estos nuevos acuerdos?

Respuesta del Sr. Fule en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2013)

Durante su visita a Marruecos, los días 1 y 2 de marzo de 2013, el Presidente Barroso anunció la puesta en marcha de negociaciones con vistas a alcanzar un acuerdo para el establecimiento de una zona de libre comercio de alcance amplio y profundo (ZLCAP), el acuerdo político alcanzado con las autoridades marroquíes sobre un nuevo Plan de Acción UE-Marruecos de aplicación del «Estatus avanzado» para el período 2013-2017, y el acuerdo político sobre la Declaración Política de la Asociación de Movilidad entre la UE y Marruecos.

El 17 de abril de 2013 la Comisión adoptó la propuesta formal para la celebración del nuevo Plan de Acción UE-Marruecos 2013-2017 mediante una Decisión del Consejo. La adopción de este Plan de Acción está prevista para el próximo Consejo de Asociación UE-Marruecos, que tendrá lugar en noviembre de 2013. La primera ronda de negociaciones técnica para una ZLCAP tuvo lugar durante la semana del 22 de abril de 2013 en Rabat. La firma de la declaración conjunta sobre la Asociación de Movilidad está prevista para junio de 2013. A todo esto sucederán las futuras negociaciones sobre la readmisión y la facilitación de visados. Por lo que respecta a estas negociaciones, no es posible, al menos en la fase actual, establecer previsiones de calendario.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003072/13
to the Commission
Raimon Obiols (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: EU-Morocco relations

At the beginning of March 2013 the President of the Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, made a visit to Morocco during which he officially announced the launch of negotiations between the EU and Morocco towards a new comprehensive trade agreement, a mobility partnership and financial and technical cooperation for human development.

Morocco has been the first country in the Mediterranean region to benefit from an 'advanced status' agreement which seeks to strengthen the country's economic and commercial integration, while including political dialogue and respect for the human rights clause. It is within this framework that the UE will negotiate a new action plan for its neighbourhood policy with Morocco, following expiry of the present one at the end of 2012.

In light of the above, can the Commission provide information about the proposed calendar for these new agreements?

Answer given by Mr Fule on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

During his visit to Morocco on 1-2 March 2013 President Barroso indeed announced the launch of negotiations for an agreement for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), the political agreement reached with the Moroccon authorities regarding a new EU-Morocco Action Plan on the implementation of the advanced status for the period 2013-2017 as well as the political agreement on the Political declaration of the Mobility Partnership between the EU and Morocco.

The formal proposal regarding the conclusion of the new EU-Morocco Action Plan 2013-2017 by means of a Council Decision has been adopted by the Commission on 17 April 2013. The endorsement of this Action Plan is envisaged by the next EU-Morocco Association Council, which is expected to take place in November 2013. The first round of technical negotiations for a DCFTA took place during the week of 22 April 2013 in Rabat. The signature of the joint declaration on the Mobility Partnership is expected in June 2013. This will be followed by future negotiations both on the issue of readmission and visa facilitation. Regarding these negotiations, it is not possible, at least at the current stage, to predict any calendar or timeline.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003073/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Designazione dei profughi palestinesi

Le Nazioni Unite designano come «profugo» chiunque fugga il proprio paese, ma non i suoi discendenti. Questo principio non si applica però ai discendenti degli arabi fuggiti durante la guerra arabo-israeliana del 1948 in Palestina. L' Agenzia delle Nazioni Unite per il soccorso e l'occupazione (UNRWA) definisce «profugo palestinese» «chiunque sia stato residente nei territori palestinesi governati sotto mandato britannico tra il 1946 e il 1948 e abbia perso il domicilio o i mezzi di sostentamento»; questa definizione è stata però modificata negli anni Sessanta per includervi i discendenti di tali profughi. Secondo le cifre fornite dalla stessa UNRWA, nel 1950 vi erano circa 914.000 profughi registrati; nel 2008, tale cifra è passata a 4,6 milioni di persone.

Il rappresentante permanente (ambasciatore) di Israele presso le Nazioni Unite, Ron Prosor, ha dichiarato che la questione dei profughi è «l'ostacolo principale» a un accordo di pace. In una recente conferenza a New York, Prosor ha detto: «Nessuno vuole ammetterlo, ma il vero ostacolo è [la richiesta del] il diritto di rientro per milioni di profughi palestinesi. Il numero di profughi originariamente fuggiti dal paese era di solo circa 50.000 persone.

Oggi non sarebbe politicamente o economicamente possibile assorbire l'attuale numero di profughi in Israele, Cisgiordania e Gaza a titolo del "diritto al rientro"». Ciò nondimeno, la definizione di profugo dell'UNRWA non si è evoluta per rispondere ai moderni criteri di definizione dello status di profugo nel resto del mondo. Per i palestinesi, tale status è irrevocabile e garantito in perpetuità per discendenza.

1. Qual è la posizione della Commissione riguardo alla definizione di «profugo palestinese» come delineata dall'UNRWA?

2. La Commissione ritiene che la struttura dell'UNRWA debba essere modificata per adeguarla alla definizione dello status di profugo attualmente impiegata dalle Nazioni Unite? In tal caso, quali iniziative intende prendere per conseguire tale obiettivo?

3. Può la Commissione illustrare alcuni degli obiettivi a lungo termine che l'Unione europea si prefigge, per risolvere la questione dei profughi palestinesi, concedendo aiuti all'UNRWA? L'Unione europea ritiene che gli aiuti siano impiegati in modo efficace per quanto riguarda il trattamento della questione dei profughi?

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

Per tutti gli aspetti legati all'Agenzia delle Nazioni Unite per il soccorso e l'occupazione (UNRWA), la Commissione rimanda al mandato conferito all'UNRWA dall'Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite.

L'Assemblea Generale ha tacitamente approvato la definizione operativa di «rifugiato palestinese» usata nelle relazioni annuali del Commissario generale che ne danno una definizione. Il fatto è stato notato dall'allora Segretario generale dell'ONU Hammerskjold, che in una relazione del 1959 ha ribadito che la definizione operativa data dall'UNWRA a una persona che può beneficiare dei suoi servizi (…) non è contenuta in alcuna risoluzione dell'Assemblea generale, ma figura nelle relazioni annuali del Direttore ed è tacitamente approvata dall'Assemblea ([1]).

Va inoltre precisato che in base al principio dell'unità familiare, l'Alto commissariato delle Nazioni Unite per i rifugiati (UNHCR) registra i discendenti dei profughi «originari» fino a quando non ottengono protezioni alternative. L'UE si impegna a continuare a sostenere i rifugiati palestinesi tramite l'UNRWA finché non si troverà una soluzione una soluzione condivisa, equa, corretta e realistica per la problematica dei rifugiati, che rappresenta una delle questioni relative allo status definitivo. Questo sostegno consente all'UNRWA di continuare a fornire un'educazione di base e servizi sociali e sanitari alla popolazione dei rifugiati, assumendo un importante ruolo di stabilizzatore nella regione. Negli ultimi anni l'UNRWA, anche con il sostegno dell'UE, ha migliorato considerevolmente la gestione dei suoi programmi. L'UNRWA è in costante contatto con la comunità dei donatori in merito a questa problematica e ad altri aspetti correlati.

([1]) Doc. ONU. A/4121, 15 giugno 1959, paragrafi 4-8.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003073/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Designation of Palestinian refugees

According to the United Nations, a refugee is designated as anyone who flees their country, but not their descendants. However, this principle is not applied to the descendants of Arabs who fled during the Israeli War of Independence of 1948 in Palestine. UNRWA defines a Palestinian refugee thus: 'anyone who was a resident of the British mandate of Palestine between 1946 and 1948 and lost home or livelihood qualifies as a refugee', but this definition was modified during the 1960s to include those refugees' descendants. According to UNRWA's own figures, in 1950 there were approximately 914 000 registered refugees, but by 2008 the number had leapt to 4.6 million.

Israel's Permanent Representative (Ambassador) to the United Nations, Ron Prosor, has said that the refugee issue is the 'principal stumbling block' to a peace agreement. At a recent conference in New York, Prosor said: 'No one will admit it, the real obstacle is the [demand for the] right of return for millions of Palestinian refugees'. In reality, the real number of refugees who originally fled would only be around 50 000.

At present, it would not be politically or economically feasible to absorb the current numbers of refugees into Israel, the West Bank and Gaza under the 'right of return'. Nevertheless, UNRWA's definition of a refugee has not evolved to meet the modern criteria of what is considered refugee status in the rest of the world. For the Palestinians, the status cannot be revoked and is granted in perpetuity by descent.

1. What is the position of the Commission regarding the definition of a Palestinian refugee as outlined by UNRWA?

2. Does the Commission believe that the structure of UNRWA needs to be amended in order to comply with the UN's own current definition of refugee status? If so, what steps is it prepared to take to achieve this?

3. Can the Commission outline some of the EU's own long-term objectives, in terms of resolving the Palestinian refugee issue, in granting aid to UNRWA? Does the EU believe aid is being effectively used in addressing the refugee question?

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

On all matters relating to the United Nation Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the Commission draws its reference from the mandate given to UNRWA by the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

The General Assembly has tacitly approved the operational definition of 'Palestine refugee' used in the annual reports of the Commissioner-General setting out the definition. This was noted by the then UN Secretary General Hammerskjold who recalled in a report in 1959 that 'UNWRA's working definition of a person eligible for its services…is not contained in any resolution to the General Assembly but has been stated in Annual Reports of the Director and tacitly approved by the Assembly' ([1]).

It is also to be noted that based on the principle of family unity, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) registers the descendants of 'original' refugees until they obtain alternative protection.

The EU is committed to continuing its support to Palestine refugees through UNRWA until an agreed, just, fair and realistic solution is found to the refugee question, which is one of the final status issues. This support allows UNRWA to continue to provide vital education, health and social services to the refugee population, thereby acting as an important stabilising factor in the region. UNRWA has made a number of significant improvements in the management of its programmes over the past years, supported by the EU. Regular dialogue takes place between UNRWA and the donor community on these and other related matters.

([1]) UN Doc. A/4121, 15 June. 1959, paras. 4-8.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003074/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Fuga forzata dei cristiani dalla Libia ad opera di fondamentalisti religiosi

Agli inizi di febbraio 2013, il quotidiano libanese *Daily Star* ha riportato la notizia della cacciata in corso delle comunità cristiane insediate nella parte orientale della Libia. Il Vicario apostolico di Tripoli ha dichiarato che la situazione sta diventando «critica» e che l'atmosfera è «molto tesa». A est di Bengasi, la congregazione della Sacra famiglia di Spoleto è stata costretta ad abbandonare la città di Derna, dove era insediata da quasi cento anni. Anche nella città di Barce, situata tra Bengasi e Derna, un ordine di suore è fuggito a causa delle pressioni dei fondamentalisti religiosi.

Prima che iniziasse la rivoluzione libica, i cristiani rappresentavano circa il 3 % della popolazione del paese, di cui adesso non restano che poche migliaia. Nel dicembre 2012, a Dafniya, è stata attaccata una chiesa copta, in cui due egiziani hanno perso la vita e altri sono rimasti feriti. Recentemente un gruppo di egiziani copti è stato aggredito da membri della milizia islamica Ansar al-Sharia a Bengasi e anche il prete della comunità è stato sottoposto a percosse e a rasatura forzata dei baffi.

Il 13 marzo 2013 la delegazione dell'UE in Libia ha rilasciato una dichiarazione sulla libertà di religione e i diritti fondamentali, in cui si dice «incoraggiata dall'impegno espresso dalle autorità libiche a compiere ulteriori sforzi di riforma per un'agenda sui diritti umani più ampia verso una Libia pienamente inclusiva e tollerante. La delegazione accoglie con favore l'impegno del governo a rispettare pienamente tutti i diritti umani, a istituire una commissione per i diritti umani e ad abrogare le leggi del passato regime che limitano tali diritti».

1. Per quanto concerne le pressioni esercitate sulle comunità cristiane nella Libia orientale, quali provvedimenti è disposto ad adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per chiedere alle pertinenti autorità di garantire la sicurezza e la protezione della minoranza cristiana, vulnerabile alle minacce derivanti dai gruppi islamici?

2. In quale modo la delegazione dell'UE a Tripoli valuta la reazione del governo libico alla dichiarazione del 13 marzo 2013?

3. Secondo il VP/HR e i funzionari dell'UE in Libia, quali eventuali sforzi sono attualmente profusi nell'ambito del sistema di istruzione del paese per incoraggiare la tolleranza e il rispetto di tutti i gruppi religiosi?

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

1. L'UE esprime preoccupazione circa le recenti notizie di attacchi contro la piccola minoranza cristiana in Libia: la libertà di religione e di credo sono infatti un diritto umano universale da proteggere.

A seguito della dichiarazione rilasciata il 13 marzo, per discutere della questione la delegazione dell'UE ha incontrato funzionari del governo di alto livello, i quali hanno riferito che il governo è altrettanto preoccupato per il destino dei cristiani e che farà il possibile per proteggere i diritti umani. Tuttavia, viste le condizioni della polizia e dell'esercito nazionale della Libia, le autorità centrali non sono sempre in grado di garantire il rispetto dello stato di diritto.

La delegazione sta allestendo un gruppo di coordinamento per i diritti umanitari in collaborazione con gli Stati membri dell'UE presenti a Tripoli e altri partner, quali l'ONU, gli USA e il Canada, che difendono la stessa posizione.

2. La delegazione dell'UE seguirà attentamente la situazione e instaurerà un dialogo con le autorità libiche, se la situazione non dovesse migliorare.

3. Il progetto «Istruzione di qualità e maggiore integrazione per tutti i bambini libici», finanziato dall'UE con un bilancio di 2,4 milioni di euro e attuato dall'UNICEF, fornisce assistenza tecnica per una profonda revisione dei programmi dell'istruzione di base con l'obiettivo di porre in primo piano i diritti dei bambini, favorendo l'integrazione e rivolgendo particolare attenzione alle questioni di genere, culturali ed etniche. È in corso un dialogo con il governo libico, soggetti non governativi ed esperti internazionali per valutare come tradurre questi principi nella pratica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003074/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Religious fundamentalists pushing Christians out of Libya

In early February 2013, Lebanon's *Daily Star* reported that Christian communities located in eastern Libya are being pushed out. The Apostolic Vicar of Tripoli said that the situation is becoming 'critical', and the 'atmosphere very tense'. East of Benghazi, in the city of Derna, the Congregation of the Holy Family of Spoleto, which has been there for nearly 100 years, was forced to abandon the town. An order of nuns in the town of Barce, between Benghazi and Derna, has also left because of pressure from religious fundamentalists.

Before the start of Libya's own uprising, Christians represented approximately 3% of the population, but now just a few thousand remain. In December 2012, a Coptic church was attacked in the Libyan town of Dafniya: two Egyptians were killed and a number of others wounded. Recently, a group of Coptic Egyptians were rounded up by the Islamist militia group Ansar al-Sharia in Benghazi; their community priest was also beaten and had his moustache forcibly shaven off.

On 13 March 2013, the EU Delegation to Libya released a statement on religious freedom and fundamental rights, saying that it is 'encouraged by the Libyan government's efforts to commit to further reform efforts on the wider human rights agenda towards an all inclusive tolerant Libya. It welcomes the commitment of the government to fully respect all human rights, the creation of the Human Rights Commission and the repeal of laws of the previous regime that restrict the enjoyment of human rights.'

1. In reference to the pressure exerted on Christian communities in eastern Libya, what steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to ask the relevant authorities to provide security and protection for the minority Christian community, which is vulnerable to threats emanating from Islamist groups?

2. What is the assessment of the EU Delegation in Tripoli regarding the reaction of the Libyan Government to the Delegation's statement of 13 March 2013?

3. According to the VP/HR and EU officials inside Libya, what efforts, if any, are being taken within the Libyan education system to encourage tolerance and respect for all religious groups?

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

1. The EU is worried about recent reports of attacks against the small Christian minority in Libya as freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right which needs to be protected.

As a follow up to statement issued on March 13, the EU Delegation met with high level government officials to discuss this matter. These officials indicated that the government is equally concerned about the fate of the Christians and that they will do their utmost to ensure that human rights are protected. Given the state of the Libyan police and national army, the central authorities are, however, not always able to enforce the rule of law.

The Delegation is currently setting up a Human Rights coordination group together with EU Member States present in Tripoli and like minded actors (such as UN, USA and Canada).

2. The EU Delegation will monitor the situation closely and seek an audience with the Libyan authorities should the situation not improve.

3. In the ongoing EU-funded project 'Quality Education and Increased Inclusiveness for all Libyan children' (EUR 2.4 million), implemented by Unicef, technical support is provided to a fundamental review of the basic education curriculum to make it child-rights based, meaning inclusive, gender and culturally and ethnically sensitive. A dialogue is taking place with the Libyan Government, non-government stakeholders and international specialists on how to translate these principles in practice.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003075/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Popolazione cristiana dell'Iraq in calo

Secondo una recente relazione pubblicata dal giornale britannico *The Sunday Times*, la popolazione cristiana dell'Iraq è scesa a un terzo rispetto a quella presente durante il governo dell'ex presidente Saddam Hussein. Le autorità ecclesiastiche dell'intera regione temono che ciò possa rappresentare la fine per questa minoranza religiosa. In passato si contavano fino a 1,4 milioni di cristiani ma ora il numero si è ridotto a circa 400 000 unità. Attualmente la Svezia, la Germania e gli Stati Uniti assieme ospitano una popolazione di profughi iracheni pari ad almeno tre volte quella rimasta nel paese.

Priva di una propria milizia, la comunità cristiana è stata regolarmente presa di mira dagli islamisti radicali e dai gruppi criminali organizzati che accusano i cristiani di privarli illegittimamente di abitazioni e altri servizi.

Il 6 marzo 2013 nella cattedrale caldea di San Giuseppe a Baghdad è stato nominato un nuovo patriarca dei Caldei. Il patriarca, Louis Sako, ha invitato al dialogo sia con i sunniti che con gli sciiti allo scopo di garantire una coesistenza pacifica. Il primo ministro iracheno Nuri al-Maliki ha chiesto che i cristiani non lascino il paese.

Nel gennaio 2011 l'Alto Rappresentante, in un discorso tenuto a Strasburgo a proposito degli attacchi contro i cristiani, ha affermato: «l'Unione europea non chiuderà gli occhi di fronte alla drammatica situazione in cui si trovano [i cristiani]. Riteniamo che la loro richiesta di veder rispettati i propri diritti in quanto cittadini del loro stesso paese sia del tutto legittima. La libertà di coscienza, di religione o di credo sono proprie di ciascun individuo e ogni Stato ha il dovere di garantirne il rispetto. L'Unione è pronta a rafforzare la propria cooperazione con i governi al fine di combattere l'intolleranza e proteggere i diritti umani».

1. Quali iniziative sta portando avanti il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante con i governi dei paesi del Medio Oriente, compreso l'Iraq, per garantire l'adozione di misure adeguate volte ad affrontare il problema dell'emigrazione dei cristiani, che è destinata ad aumentare alla luce dell'attuale instabilità in Siria?

2. In virtù del discorso tenuto dal VP/HR il 19 gennaio 2011 a Strasburgo, quali misure sono state adottate per «rafforzare la propria cooperazione [dell'UE] con i governi al fine di combattere l'intolleranza religiosa ed etnica e proteggere i diritti umani?»

3. Quali azioni vengono messe in atto in Iraq dai funzionari della delegazione dell'Unione allo scopo di controllare le violenze e le discriminazioni nei confronti dei gruppi minoritari cristiani? Quali sono le azioni concrete in corso di esame che l'Unione europea o l'intera comunità internazionale potrebbero adottare per garantire maggiore protezione ai cristiani iracheni?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue molto da vicino la situazione delle minoranze cristiane in Medio Oriente, in particolare in Iraq, e ha pubblicamente espresso a più riprese la propria preoccupazione per il perdurare di una situazione di violenza inaccettabile in tutto il paese. Ha inoltre regolarmente comunicato la propria apprensione, sia pubblicamente sia direttamente alle autorità irachene attraverso i canali diplomatici, per una situazione che mette a rischio i diritti umani, in particolare per quanto concerne i diritti delle minoranze religiose in Iraq.

La delegazione dell'UE misura costantemente il polso della situazione, attraverso riunioni con i gruppi della società civile, compresi i gruppi religiosi. L'UE invita regolarmente il governo iracheno a proteggere i diritti umani di tutti i cittadini del paese, senza distinzioni etniche o religiose, e a impegnarsi per creare un contesto sociale caratterizzato da una partecipazione inclusiva, essenziale per la riconciliazione nazionale.

Proprio nel contesto della difficile situazione dei diritti umani in Iraq, l'UE ha insistito sulla necessità che diventassero una componente essenziale dell'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione. Grazie all'attuazione dell'accordo, l'UE sarà in grado di rafforzare il dialogo con le autorità irachene e si impegna a non risparmiare gli sforzi nell'esprimere la propria preoccupazione e nel ricordare alle autorità gli obblighi internazionali ai quali devono rispondere così come gli ulteriori impegni assunti nel corso dell'esame periodico universale.

In termini pratici, l'Unione fornisce assistenza tecnica in materia di Stato di diritto e diritti umani — due elementi chiave per affrontare le sfide che coinvolgono le minoranze religiose — continuando altresì a elargire il proprio aiuto attraverso la missione EUJUSTLEX sullo Stato di diritto e a promuovere la società civile e lo sviluppo istituzionale, ad esempio sostenendo l'Alta commissione indipendente per i diritti umani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003075/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Iraq's declining Christian population

According to a recent report by the UK *Sunday Times* newspaper, Iraq's Christian population has shrunk to a third of the number which existed during the time of former President Saddam Hussein. Church leaders across the region are worried that this could be the death knell for this religious minority. Previously there used to be 1.4 million Christians, but now the number has dwindled to some 400 000. At present, Sweden, Germany and the United States have a combined Iraqi refugee population of almost three times that remaining in the country.

Without its own militia, the Christian community has been regularly targeted by radical Islamists and organised criminal groups which accuse Christians of unlawfully depriving them of housing and other services.

On 6 March 2013 a new Chaldean patriarch was appointed at St. Joseph's Chaldean Church in Baghdad. The patriarch, Louis Sako, called for dialogue with both Sunnis and Shiites to ensure peaceful co-existence. Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has called for the Christians not to leave the country.

In January 2011, the High Representative announced in a speech given in Strasbourg regarding attacks against Christians that: 'the EU will not turn a blind eye to their [the Christians'] plight. We consider their demand to have their rights respected as citizens of their own country as entirely legitimate. Freedom of conscience, religion or belief belongs to everyone, and every state has the duty to ensure that it is respected. The EU stands ready to enhance its cooperation with governments to combat intolerance and protect human rights.'

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking with governments throughout the Middle East, including Iraq's, to ensure that adequate measures are being taken to address the problem of Christian emigration, which is likely to increase given the current instability inside Syria?

2. In the light of the VP/HR's speech in Strasbourg on 19 January 2011, what steps have been taken in order to 'enhance its [the EU's] cooperation with governments to combat religious and ethnic intolerance and protect human rights'?

3. In Iraq, what steps are EU delegation officials taking in order to monitor violence and discrimination against Christian minority groups? What practical steps are being considered that could be adopted by the EU or the wider international community to grant Iraqi Christians greater protection?

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

The HR/VP follows very closely the situation of Christian minorities in the Middle East and in particular in Iraq. The HR/VP has publicly raised her concern over the continuing unacceptable violence across the country several times. She also regularly addresses, both publicly and through diplomatic channels with the Iraqi authorities, her concern on the human rights situation, in particular with regard to the rights of religious minorities in Iraq.

The EU Delegation, through meetings with civil society groups including religious groups, regularly monitors the situation. The EU is regurlarly calling on the Iraqi Government to protect human rights of all Iraqis regardless of ethnicity or creed and to make intensive efforts to create an environment of inclusive participation, which is essential in the pursuit of national reconciliation.

It was against the background of the challenging human rights situation in Iraq that that the EU insisted on including human rights as a prominent element of the partnership and cooperation agreement. With the implementation of the Agreement, the EU will be able to enhance its dialogue with the Iraqi authorities and will spare no efforts to raise its concerns, and to remind them of their international obligations and further commitments made during the Universal Periodic Review.

In practical terms, the EU provides technical assistance in the area of rule of law and human rights which are key elements for addressing the challenges of religious minorities and continues to assist with the Rule of Law EUJUSTLEX mission and support to civil society and institutional building such as to the Independent High Commission for Human Rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003076/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Formazione di un partito politico da parte di un gruppo miliziano iracheno

Nei primi di marzo del 2013, il quotidiano del Regno Unito «The Times» ha riferito che un gruppo miliziano iracheno appoggiato dall'Iran ha costituito un partito politico in Iraq, con sedi in tutto il paese, e sta elaborando un proprio programma, mantenendo tuttavia un braccio armato. Il gruppo Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, o «Lega dei giusti», ha collegamenti con Hezbollah e con il corpo delle guardie della rivoluzione islamica iraniano ed è stato responsabile di numerosi attacchi nei confronti di forze statunitensi e britanniche durante l'invasione.

Funzionari dell'Ufficio per la riconciliazione del primo ministro iracheno incaricati di cercare di reintegrare i gruppi di miliziani hanno dichiarato che, anche se Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq è tecnicamente disciolto, alcuni requisiti fondamentali per la riconciliazione non sono mai stati soddisfatti. Un membro di alto rilievo del Consiglio esecutivo di Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq ha dichiarato: «Ci stiamo posizionando per ottenere abbastanza voti alle elezioni e diventare la principale forza dell'opposizione parlamentare».

Il gruppo riceve consulenze da agenti di Hezbollah collegati con il corpo delle guardie della rivoluzione islamica iraniano. «The Times» sostiene che voli iraniani sorvolano regolarmente lo spazio aereo iracheno, apparentemente trasportando approvvigionamenti e personale militari. Il vice primo ministro iracheno ha dichiarato, a proposito di Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq: «È un gruppo che costituisce una reale minaccia, e che fa temere alla popolazione per la stabilità. Sino a quando queste persone avranno armi in mano e dimostreranno per le strade, non si potrà fare affidamento sulla stabilità nel paese. Vederli implicati nel processo politico […] è una vera vergogna per il paese e per il processo politico stesso».

1. Qual è la posizione dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente riguardo alla partecipazione del gruppo Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq alla politica irachena?

2. L'HR/VP e i funzionari dell'Unione europea presso la delegazione di Bagdad sospettano che questo gruppo seguirà lo stesso modus operandi di Hezbollah in Libano?

3. Quali passi sta prendendo al momento l'Unione europea riguardo al sostegno degli sforzi di riconciliazione in Iraq?

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

L'UE segue da vicino la situazione in Irak e sostiene la transizione del paese a una vera democrazia sostenibile, obiettivo realizzabile solo con una politica nazionale fondata sulla riconciliazione e con un sistema politico che promuova l'inclusione. Per questo motivo l'Alta Rappresentante ha ripetutamente invitato tutte le parte in Irak ad affrontare le questioni rimaste in sospeso nel contesto di un dialogo costruttivo e aperto.

La democrazia è l'unico strumento legittimo per realizzare obiettivi politici. L'UE incoraggia pertanto tutti i gruppi armati a rinunciare alla violenza. L'Unione europea ha preso atto dell'annuncio con cui, nel mese di gennaio 2012, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq ha comunicato l'intenzione di cessare le attività armate. Spetta all'Irak stabilire se un gruppo armato specifico ha rinunciato completamente alla violenza in via permanente e se può quindi partecipare alla vita politica.

L'UE continuerà a seguire con attenzione gli sviluppi del processo politico in Irak e conferma l'impegno a fornire assistenza, anche in campo elettorale, come avvenuto in passato. A questo proposito, occorre notare che una missione di esperti in campo elettorale è stata inviata in Irak in occasione delle elezioni provinciali del 20 aprile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003076/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Iraqi militia group forms political party

In early March 2013, the UK's *Times* newspaper reported that an Iranian-backed militia group has now formed a political party in Iraq, with offices across the country, and is developing its own programme. However, the group is still maintaining an armed wing. The group is called Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, or 'The League of the Righteous', and is linked to both Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. The group was responsible for numerous attacks against both US and British forces during the invasion.

Officials from the Iraqi Prime Minister's reconciliation office, who are tasked with trying to reintegrate militia groups, say that although Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq has technically disbanded, some of the key reconciliation preconditions were never met. A senior member of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq's executive council said: 'Now we are positioning ourselves to gain enough votes in elections to become the leading parliamentary opposition'.

The group receives guidance from the Hezbollah operatives who are connected with Iran's Revolutionary Guards. According to the *Times*, Iranian flights regularly fly over Iraqi airspace, and allegedly carry military supplies and personnel. Iraq's deputy prime minister said of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq : 'It is a real threat and it creates fears among people for stability. As long as these people are holding their arms and they demonstrate in the streets then you cannot trust stability in this country. Seeing them in the political process […] is a real shame for the country and is a shame on the political process'.

1. What is the position of the High Representative/Vice-President regarding the involvement of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq in Iraqi politics?

2. Do the HR/VP and EU officials in the Baghdad delegation suspect that this group will pursue the same modus operandi as Hezbollah in Lebanon?

3. What steps is the EU currently taking with regard to supporting reconciliation efforts in Iraq?

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

The EU has been following the situation in Iraq very closely and has consistently supported Iraq's democratic transition. It is through a genuine national reconciliation and an inclusive political system that deep and sustainable democracy can be achieved. This is why the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission Catherine Ashton has repeatedly called on all parties in Iraq to address all pending issues through a genuine and inclusive dialogue.

Democratic politics is the only legitimate way to pursue political goals. The EU would therefore encourage all armed groups to renounce violence. The EU took note of the announcement in January 2012 that Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq would cease all armed activities. It is for Iraq to decide if any particular armed group has fully and permanently renounced violence, and can therefore participate in politics.

The EU will continue to follow closely the developments of the political process in Iraq and remains committed to providing support, including electoral, in keeping with past and current experience. In this respect, it is noteworthy that an Election Expert Mission has been deployed to Iraq for the provincial elections taking place on 20 April.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003077/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Trasparenza dei finanziamenti a favore delle ONG arabe e israeliane

Nell'ambito dello strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani nonché di altre iniziative quali il partenariato per la pace, l'UE fornisce cospicui finanziamenti volti a sostenere le organizzazioni non governative sia in Israele sia nei territori palestinesi. Secondo quanto riportato in diverse occasioni dai mezzi di comunicazione, tuttavia, mentre i finanziamenti unionali destinati a regioni e paesi teatro di conflitti quali l'Iran, la Somalia e lo Sri Lanka sono oggetto di un aperto dibattito, si registra una mancanza di informazione o trasparenza in relazione alla logica e ai processi decisionali alla base della concessione di sovvenzioni alle organizzazioni che operano nel contesto del conflitto israelo-palestinese.

1. Quali provvedimenti sta prendendo la Commissione per assicurare la trasparenza nella concessione di sovvenzioni alle ONG che operano nel quadro del conflitto arabo-israeliano come pure nell'utilizzo dei finanziamenti da parte di tali ONG?

2. Quali misure garantiscono attualmente che i cittadini europei o i rappresentanti eletti come i deputati al Parlamento europeo possano valutare in modo indipendente il processo decisionale della Commissione alla luce dello strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani e del programma Partenariato per la pace?

3. Può la Commissione attestare che la Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ha recentemente confermato il diritto della Commissione di non rendere note le informazioni relative alla destinazione dei finanziamenti dell'UE a favore delle ONG palestinesi? Può la Commissione spiegare perché tali questioni sono coperte dalla segretezza, se si considerano le preoccupazioni molto concrete sollevate dagli esperti in relazione alla possibilità che alcuni di questi finanziamenti siano utilizzati per sostenere organizzazioni che promuovono un'ideologia estremista estranea ai valori unionali della democrazia e dei diritti umani o abbiano legami con siffatte organizzazioni?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(7 maggio 2013)

La Commissione non è al corrente di segnalazioni dei media di differenze di trattamento nelle procedure tra i paesi citati nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputato.

1. Le sovvenzioni per progetti concesse alle organizzazioni non governative nell'ambito dell'EIDHR ([1]) e dell'iniziativa Partenariato per la pace vengono assegnate a seguito di inviti a presentare proposte, pubblicate sui siti web della direzione generale Sviluppo e cooperazione e delle delegazioni UE interessate. Nel paese vengono inoltre organizzate giornate d'informazione. Il progetti selezionati e i nomi dei beneficiari vengono pubblicati sugli stessi siti. I finanziamenti assegnati ai progetti possono essere utilizzati solo in conformità con la dotazione dell'azione che forma parte integrante del contratto. Tutti i contraenti devono presentare relazioni finanziarie periodiche, sottoposte a una verifica finanziaria e a controlli esterni e interni. Si rinvia l'onorevole deputato anche alla risposta data alla precedente interrogazione scritta P-003198/2013 ([2])

2. Vengono organizzate valutazioni in conformità con le disposizioni del trattato sull'Unione europea, del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, del regolamento EIDHR, delle direttive sull'informazione pubblica e dei pertinenti accordi interistituzionali tra la Commissione, il Consiglio dei ministri e il Parlamento. Si tengono inoltre scambi periodici di informazioni con i membri del Parlamento in seno alle commissioni AFET e DROI.

3. Con sentenza del 27 novembre 2012 (Causa T-17/10 Steinberg/Commissione), il Tribunale dell'UE ha respinto la domanda considerandola, in parte, manifestamente irricevibile e, in parte, priva di qualunque fondamento giuridico. La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla sentenza in questione per ulteriori dettagli riguardo alle argomentazioni presentate e alle conclusioni del Tribunale ([3]).

([1]) Strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani .
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?language=it&jur=C,T,F&num=T-17/10&td=ALL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003077/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Transparency in funding for Arab and Israeli NGOs

Under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, as well as other initiatives such as the Partnership for Peace, the EU provides substantial amounts of funding to support non-governmental organisations in both Israel and the Palestinian territories, yet there have been a number of media reports which suggest that, while discussions on EU funding for troubled regions and countries such as Iran, Somalia and Sri Lanka are openly discussed, there is little available information or transparency on the rationale and decision-making processes underlying the award of grants to organisations involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1. What steps is the Commission taking to guarantee transparency in the award of grants to and the use of funds by NGOs dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict?

2. What measures are currently in place to ensure that European citizens or elected representatives such as MEPs can independently evaluate the Commission's decision-making process in the light of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and the Partnership for Peace Programme?

3. Can the Commission confirm that the European Court of Justice recently upheld the Commission's right to withhold information on the destination of EU funds to Palestinian NGOs, and can it state why these matters are shrouded in secrecy when there are very real concerns among experts on these matters that some of these funds may be supporting, or have links to, organisations supportive of extremist ideology which do not share the EU's values of democracy and human rights?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any media report concerning differentiation of treatment regarding procedures between the countries mentioned in the Honourable Members' question.

1. Grants for projects awarded to Non-Governmental Organisations under the EIDHR ([1]) and Partnership for Peace initiative are attributed following calls for proposals, published on the websites of the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation and EU Delegations concerned and information days are carried out in the country. The projects selected and the beneficiaries are published on the same sites. Funds awarded for projects can only be used in accordance with the budget which forms part of the contract. All contractors submit regular financial reports which are subject to internal and external financial verification and monitoring. The Honourable Members are also referred to the answer to previous Written Question P-003198/2013 ([2])

2. Evaluations are organised in accordance with the Treaty on the EU and the Treaty on the functioning of the EU, the EIDHR Regulation, public information directives and the relevant interinstitutional agreements between the Commission, the Council of Ministers and Parliament. Regular exchanges of information with Members of Parliament take place in the AFET and DROI Committees.

3. By its judgment of 27 November 2012 (Case T-17/10 Steinberg v EC), the General Court of the EU dismissed the application as, in part, manifestly inadmissible and, in part, lacking any foundation in law. The Commission refers the Honourable Members to the judgment in question for details of the arguments presented and the conclusions of the court ([3]).

([1]) European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?language=en&jur=C,T,F&num=T-17/10&td=ALL.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-003078/13
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(19 март 2013 г.)

Относно: Трафик на хора

Трафикът на хора е тежка форма на организирана престъпност. Жертвите често са набирани и транспортирани насила, чрез принуда или измама, при експлоататорски условия, включително сексуална експлоатация, принудителен труд или предоставяне на услуги, просия, престъпни дейности или отстраняване на органи. Трафикът на хора има различни проявления, като негови жертви са жени, мъже, момичета и момчета.

Конвенцията на Съвета на Европа за борба с трафика на хора е най-значимият правен инструмент на международно равнище.

На европейско равнище важна стъпка напред беше приемането на Директива 2011/36/ЕС относно предотвратяването и борбата с трафика на хора и защитата на жертвите от него, която следва да бъде изцяло транспонирана от държавите членки в срок до 6 април 2013 г. Освен това стратегията на ЕС за премахване на трафика на хора за периода 2012—2016 г. е съсредоточена върху конкретни мерки, които ще подкрепят транспонирането и прилагането на горепосочената директива, с цел да се осигури съгласувана рамка за вече предприетите и планираните инициативи, да се определят цели и да се запълнят съществуващите пропуски.

Комисията подчертава необходимостта от по-добро сътрудничество по отношение на установяването, защитата и оказването на помощ на жертвите на трафик на хора. Освен това понастоящем Комисията финансира проект за разработване на насоки за по-точно установяване на жертвите на трафик на хора.

С оглед на това бих искала да знам какви са използваните методи и мерки.

1. Може ли Комисията да изясни как възнамерява да изпълни тези насоки?

2. Възнамерява ли Комисията да въведе механизми за наблюдение на равнище ЕС?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Малмстрьом от името на Комисията
(30 април 2013 г.)

В Стратегията на ЕС за премахване на трафика на хора за периода 2012—2016 г. се предвиждат две основни действия в рамките на приоритет А (Идентифициране, защита и оказване на помощ на жертвите на трафик), имащи за цел постигането на по-добра идентификация на жертвите на трафик: създаване на национални и транснационални механизми за насочване и разработване на подходящи насоки.

Във връзка с разработването на подходящи насоки Комисията понастоящем финансира проект по линия на програма „Предотвратяване и борба с престъпността“ (ISEC), насочен към подобряване и хармонизиране на методите и процедурите за идентифициране на жертвите на трафик в ЕС. Понастоящем насоките се тестват на национално равнище от служители, работещи в тази област, в няколко държави членки, участващи в проекта ([1]).

Освен това Комисията, след като се консултира с експертната група за трафика на хора и с Frontex, е в процес на финализиране на специални насоки за консулските служби и граничните служители относно идентифицирането на жертвите на трафика на хора, които ще допълнят общите насоки, разработени по линия на финансирания проект по програма ISEC.

Накрая в стратегията на ЕС се посочва, че до 2015 г. Комисията ще разработи модел за европейски транснационален механизъм за насочване, който свързва националните механизми за насочване, за да се постигне по-добра идентификация, насочване, защита и помощ на жертвите.

([1]) Референтният номер на този проект е HOME-2010-ISEC-AG-016, „Разработване на общи насоки и процедури за идентифициране на жертвите на трафик (CoGuideID-THB)“, като повече информация можете да намерите на уебсайта на ЕС за борба с трафика.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003078/13
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Trafficking in human beings

Trafficking in human beings is a serious form of organised crime. Victims are often recruited and transported by force, coercion or fraud under exploitative conditions, including sexual exploitation, forced labour or service, begging, criminal activities or the removal of organs. Trafficking in human beings takes different forms and targets women, men, girls and boys.

At international level, the Council of Europe Convention on Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings is the most prominent legal instrument.

At European level, a major step forward was the adoption of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human begins and protecting its victims, which should be fully transposed by Member States by 6 April 2013. Furthermore, the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 focuses on concrete measures that will support the transposition and implementation of the abovementioned directive in order to provide a coherent framework for existing and planed initiatives, to set targets and to fill existing gaps.

The Commission stresses the need for better cooperation regarding the identification and protection of and assistance to victims of trafficking. Moreover, the Commission is currently funding a project that will develop guidelines to better identify victims of trafficking in human beings.

In view of this, I would like to know what methodology and what measures are used.

1. Could the Commission clarify how it intends to implement these guidelines?

2. Does the Commission intend to establish EU-wide monitoring mechanisms?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 envisages two main actions under its Priority A (Identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking) aimed at achieving better identification of victims of trafficking: the establishment of national and transnational referral mechanisms and the development of appropriate guidelines.

Regarding this last action, the Commission is currently funding a project, under the ISECProgramme, aimed at enhancing and harmonising the methods and procedures for the identification of victims of trafficking within the UE. The guidelines are being currently tested at national level among the front line officials in some Member States covered by the project ([1]).

Furthermore, the Commission, having consulted the Expert Group on Trafficking in Human Beings and Frontex, is currently finalising specific guidelines for consular services and border guards on the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings, which will complement the general guidelines developed under the ISECfunded Project.

Finally, the EU Strategy states that the Commission will develop by 2015 a model for an EU Transnational Referral Mechanism which links national referral mechanisms to better identify, refer, protect and assist victims.

([1]) The reference of this project is HOME-2010-ISEC-AG-016, 'Development of common guidelines and procedures on identification of victims of trafficking (CoGuideID-THB)' and more information can be found on the EU anti-trafficking website.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003079/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Possible contournement de la directive 81/2009/CE relative aux marchés publics à caractère sensible dans les domaines de la défense et de la sécurité

La politique de la Commission concernant les marchés publics de la défense vise à ouvrir les marchés de la défense des États membres à la concurrence européenne. En 2009 a été adoptée la directive 81/2009/CE relative aux marchés publics à caractère sensible dans les domaines de la défense et de la sécurité. Elle définit les règles européennes régissant les achats d'armes, de munitions et de matériel de guerre à des fins de défense nationale, et également les achats d'équipement, de travaux et de services à des fins de maintien de la sécurité. En vue de l'établissement d'un marché européen des équipements de défense, les acquisitions doivent faire l'objet d'un appel d'offres publié au Journal officiel de l'Union européenne.

Aux États-Unis, le Foreign Military Sales (FMS) est un programme du gouvernement américain chargé de coordonner l'ensemble des ventes de l'industrie américaine aux pays étrangers. Ce programme utilise la procédure dite de *government-to-government*, le gouvernement américain vendant alors directement aux gouvernements des pays acheteurs.

Actuellement, un État membre de l'Union européenne peut tout à fait aisément passer par le système du FMS américain pour l'achat d'armes nouvelles ou de services de défense. Il évite ainsi tout appel d'offres, pourtant obligatoire au sein de l'Union européenne.

Il semblerait que la législation européenne fasse ici face à un certain vide juridique puisqu'à partir du moment où l'État membre choisit la procédure *government-to-government*, l'Union européenne n'a plus aucun droit de regard.

1. Alors que la crise économique affecte l'industrie européenne de la défense, du fait en partie de la réduction générale au niveau européen des budgets de défense des États membres, la Commission prévoit-elle une solution juridique à ce qui pourrait être un contournement de la législation européenne?

2. L'Union européenne pourrait-elle envisager de mettre en place un système semblable au système américain de promotion de son industrie de défense en dehors de ses frontières? Cette mission ne pourrait-elle d'ailleurs pas être attribuée à l'Agence européenne de défense?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(8 mai 2013)

L'Honorable Parlementaire souligne que, lorsqu'ils achètent des équipements ou des services de défense via le système du FMS des États-Unis, les États membres n'organisent pas d'appels d'offres au niveau de l'UE.

Il est vrai que l'article 13, point f), de la directive 2009/81/CE relative aux marchés publics en matière de défense et d'équipements sensibles prévoit une exclusion spécifique pour les marchés passés par un gouvernement à un autre gouvernement. En principe, cette exclusion couvre également les achats effectués par l'intermédiaire du programme FMS.

Cependant, toutes les exclusions doivent être interprétées de manière restrictive et ne doivent notamment pas être utilisées aux fins de se soustraire aux dispositions de la directive. Cette obligation est explicitement énoncée à l'article 11 de la directive, qui fixe des limites à l'utilisation des exclusions.

L'article 11 de la directive revêt une importance particulière dans les cas où un gouvernement décide d'attribuer directement un marché à un autre gouvernement alors qu'il serait possible de lancer des appels d'offres concurrentiels permettant aux fournisseurs de l'UE de participer. Pour renforcer la sécurité juridique, il est prévu que la Commission fournisse des précisions supplémentaires sur cette disposition et sur certaines autres exclusions prévues par la directive.

La Commission prépare également une communication sur la défense, qui traitera notamment des moyens de promouvoir les industries européennes de la défense sur les marchés des pays tiers. Il n'est toutefois pas prévu, à l'heure actuelle, d'élaborer un programme européen de type FMS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003079/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Possible circumvention of Directive 2009/81/EC on defence and sensitive security procurement

The Commission's policy on defence procurement aims to open EU countries' defence markets to EU-wide competition. Directive 2009/81/EC on defence and sensitive security procurement was adopted in 2009. It sets EU rules for the procurement of arms, munitions and war material for defence purposes, but also for the procurement of sensitive supplies, works and services for security purposes. With a view to establishing a European market for defence equipment, acquisitions must be subject to a call for tender published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

In the United States, Foreign Military Sales (FMS) is a US Government programme used to coordinate all US industry sales to foreign countries. This programme uses what is referred to as the 'government-to-government' procedure, whereby the US Government sells directly to the governments of the purchasing countries.

Currently, a Member State of the European Union can easily use the US FMS system to procure new arms or defence services. It thereby avoids any calls for tender, which are, however, compulsory within the European Union.

It would seem that European legislation is faced with a legal void here, as, from the moment a Member State chooses the government-to-government procedure, the European Union no longer has any right of scrutiny.

1. As the economic crisis is affecting the European defence industry, partly due to the general reduction in Member States' defence budgets at European level, does the Commission have plans for a legal solution in which the European legislation could be circumvented?

2. Might the European Union consider putting in place a similar system to the one used in the US to promote its defence industry beyond its borders? Could this task be assigned to the European Defence Agency?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Honourable Member points out that, when procuring defence equipment or services through the US FMS system, Member States do not organise EU-wide calls for tenders.

It is true that Directive 2009/81/EC on defence and sensitive procurement provides in its Article 13(f) a specific exclusion for contracts awarded by a government to another government. In principle, this exclusion covers also purchases via the FMS programme.

However, all exclusions have to be interpreted in a restrictive way and must in particular not be used for the purpose of circumventing the provisions of the directive. This obligation is explicitly stated in Article 11 of the directive and sets limits to the use of the exclusion.

Article 11 of the directive is particularly relevant in cases where a government directly awards a contract to another government although competitive tendering with participation of EU suppliers would be possible. In order to enhance legal certainty, the Commission is currently envisaging to provide additional guidance on this provision and certain other exclusions contained in the directive.

The Commission is also preparing a communication on defence. The question how to promote European defence industries on third markets will be dealt with in this context. However, for the time being, there are no plans for a European FMS programme, as mentioned.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003080/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Accord de libre-échange entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis

Le 13 février 2013, l'Union européenne et les États-Unis décidaient d'approfondir leurs relations économiques par l'ouverture de négociations en vue de la conclusion d'un accord global sur le commerce et l'investissement, l'objectif étant de réduire les barrières tarifaires et les obstacles au commerce de nature réglementaire.

Le 12 mars 2013, la Commission a approuvé le projet de mandat pour la conclusion de l'accord avec les États-Unis intitulé «Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement». Ce projet doit être soumis au Conseil et approuvé par les États membres afin que la Commission ait mandat pour commencer les négociations.

Néanmoins, bien que cette proposition soit très précise concernant les objectifs de ce rapprochement économique et commercial (un accès plus facile au marché, un marché transatlantique plus intégré par la réduction des normes et des obstacles non tarifaires, une réponse commune aux opportunités du commerce mondial), il n'en reste pas moins que les domaines et les industries concernés par cette libéralisation du commerce n'ont pas été précisément cités.

1. Dans l'hypothèse où le projet de mandat pour la conclusion de cet accord serait approuvé par le Conseil, dans quels domaines et pour quelles industries la Commission prévoit-elle de renforcer le libre-échange entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis?

2. Par ailleurs, la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de négocier avec les États-Unis de la même manière dans le cas de domaines pouvant être considérés comme «sensibles», tels que le secteur de la défense, l'aéronautique, l'industrie aérospatiale, ou encore l'agriculture?

3. Enfin, face à la volonté de réduire au maximum les obstacles au commerce non tarifaires afin de favoriser le libre-échange, certaines normes européennes vont devoir être modifiées. Lors de ces négociations, la Commission aura-t-elle pour ligne rouge le refus d'assouplir les normes européennes, notamment en ce qui concerne l'utilisation d'organismes génétiquement modifiés, au sein de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2013)

L'UE et les États-Unis ambitionnent de conclure un accord global sur le commerce et l'investissement dans tous les domaines. Les négociations devraient se révéler bénéfiques dans trois grands domaines: l'amélioration de l'accès au marché en ce qui concerne les droits de douane, les services et l'investissement; la compatibilité des réglementations et la suppression des obstacles non tarifaires; et l'élaboration de règles conjointes pour s'emparer des enjeux et des opportunités commerciales pour le XXI^{e} siècle. La majeure partie des avantages devrait découler d'une compatibilité réglementaire accrue. La Commission a procédé à une analyse d'impact détaillée qui montre l'impact potentiel d'un accord sur divers secteurs de l'économie. Cette analyse est à la disposition du public ([1]). Par ailleurs, si ces négociations se veulent très ambitieuses, elles ne manqueront pas pour autant de prendre en considération la sensibilité particulière de certains secteurs. Rien ne sera négocié ou conclu qui serait contraire à la politique de l'UE dans ces secteurs. Les négociations sur la compatibilité réglementaire seront élargies aux normes techniques — telles que celles fixées par le Comité européen de normalisation (CEN) et le Comité européen de normalisation électrotechnique (Cenelec).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/united-states/#sia

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003080/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Free trade agreement between the European Union and the United States

On 13 February 2013, the European Union and the United States decided to strengthen their economic relations by entering into negotiations with a view to concluding a global agreement on trade and investment, the objective being to reduce tariff barriers and regulatory obstacles to trade.

On 12 March 2013, the Commission approved the draft mandate for the conclusion of the agreement with the United States entitled 'Transatlantic trade and investment partnership'. This project must be submitted to the Council and approved by the Member States in order for the Commission to be able to start the negotiations.

However, although this proposal is very precise with regard to the objectives of this economic and commercial partnership (easier access to the market, a more integrated transatlantic marketplace through the reduction of standards and non-tariff barriers, a joint response to global trade opportunities), the fact remains that the fields and industries that will be affected by this trade liberalisation have not been clearly identified.

1. In the event that the draft mandate for the conclusion of this agreement is approved by the Council, in which fields does the Commission intend to strengthen free trade between the European Union and the United States?

2. Furthermore, does the Commission intend to negotiate with the United States in the same way for fields which could be considered 'sensitive', such as the defence sector, aeronautics, the aerospace industry or agriculture?

3. Lastly, in view of the will to reduce non-tariff barriers to trade as much as possible in order to encourage free trade, some European standards will need to be amended. During these negotiations, will the Commission have the authority to refuse to relax European standards, particularly with regard to the use of genetically modified organisms, within the European Union?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The EU and the US are aiming for a comprehensive trade and investment agreement with a high level of ambition across the board. The negotiations are expected to deliver benefits in three broad areas: enhanced market access in terms of tariffs, services and investment; regulatory compatibility and removal of non-tariff barriers; and by addressing shared global trade challenges and opportunities in the 21st century. The biggest bulk of benefits are expected to derive from enhanced regulatory compatibility. The Commission undertook a detailed impact assessment which shows the potential impact of an agreement on various economic sectors. This analysis is publicly available ([1]). In addition, while aiming at a high level of ambition, negotiations will also take into account the very sensitive nature of some sectors. Nothing will be negotiated or concluded that would run against EU policy in these sectors. Technical standards — such as those set by the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC) — will form part of the negotiation agenda for regulatory compatibility.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/united-states/#sia

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003081/13
au Conseil
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Accord de libre-échange entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis

Le 13 février 2013, l'Union européenne et les États-Unis décidaient d'approfondir leurs relations économiques par l'ouverture de négociations en vue de la conclusion d'un accord global sur le commerce et l'investissement, l'objectif étant de réduire les barrières tarifaires et les obstacles au commerce de nature règlementaire.

Le 12 mars 2013, la Commission a approuvé le projet de mandat pour la conclusion de l'accord avec les États-Unis intitulé «Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement». Ce projet doit être soumis au Conseil et approuvé par les États membres afin que la Commission ait mandat pour commencer les négociations.

Néanmoins, bien que cette proposition soit très précise concernant les objectifs de ce rapprochement économique et commercial (un accès plus facile au marché, un marché transatlantique plus intégré par la réduction des normes et des obstacles non tarifaires, une réponse commune aux opportunités du commerce mondial), il n'en reste pas moins que les domaines et les industries concernés par cette libéralisation du commerce n'ont pas été précisément cités.

1. Dans l'hypothèse où le projet de mandat pour la conclusion de cet accord serait approuvé par le Conseil, ce dernier pourrait-il déjà préciser dans quels domaines et pour quelles industries la Commission aurait mandat de renforcer le libre-échange entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis?

2. Par ailleurs, le Conseil prévoit-il de donner un mandat distinct à la Commission en ce qui concerne les négociations de libre-échange relatives aux domaines pouvant être considérés comme «sensibles», tels que la défense, l'aéronautique, l'aérospatial, ou encore l'agriculture?

3. Enfin, face à la volonté de réduire au maximum les obstacles au commerce non tarifaires afin de favoriser le libre-échange, certaines normes européennes vont devoir être modifiées. Sur ce sujet, le Conseil envisage-t-il de donner mandat à la Commission pour assouplir les normes européennes au sein de l'Union européenne, notamment concernant l'utilisation d'organismes génétiquement modifiés?

Réponse
(28 mai 2013)

Le 13 mars 2013, la Commission a présenté au Conseil une recommandation de décision du Conseil autorisant l'ouverture de négociations concernant un accord global sur le commerce et l'investissement, appelé partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement, entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis d'Amérique. L'examen de la recommandation de la Commission, y compris le projet de directives de négociation, est en cours au sein des instances du Conseil. Dès qu'il aura adopté les directives de négociation, le Conseil en informera le Parlement européen, conformément aux obligations qui lui incombent en vertu du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003081/13
to the Council
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Free trade agreement between the European Union and the United States

On 13 February 2013, the European Union and the United States decided to strengthen their economic relations by entering into negotiations with a view to concluding a global agreement on trade and investment, the objective being to reduce tariff barriers and regulatory obstacles to trade.

On 12 March 2013, the Commission approved the draft mandate for the conclusion of the agreement with the United States entitled 'Transatlantic trade and investment partnership'. This project must be submitted to the Council and approved by the Member States in order for the Commission to be able to start the negotiations.

However, although this proposal is very precise with regard to the objectives of this economic and commercial partnership (easier access to the market, a more integrated transatlantic marketplace through the reduction of standards and non-tariff barriers, a joint response to global trade opportunities), the fact remains that the fields and industries that will be affected by this trade liberalisation have not been clearly identified.

1. In the event that the draft mandate for the conclusion of this agreement is approved by the Council, could the Council specify in which fields and for which industries the Commission would be able to strengthen free trade between the European Union and the United States?

2. Furthermore, does the Council intend to give the Commission a different mandate with regard to free trade negotiations on fields which could be considered 'sensitive', such as defence, aeronautics, aerospace or agriculture?

3. Lastly, in view of the will to reduce non-tariff barriers to trade as much as possible in order to encourage free trade, some European standards will need to be amended. On this matter, does the Council intend to give the Commission authorisation to relax European standards within the European Union, particularly with regard to the use of genetically modified organisms?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

On 13 March 2013 the Commission submitted to the Council its Recommendation for a Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations on a comprehensive trade and investment agreement, called the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, between the European Union and the United States of America. The examination of the Commission's Recommendation, including the draft negotiating directives, is underway in the Council bodies. As soon as the negotiating directives are adopted, the Council will inform the European Parliament in line with its obligations under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003082/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Autorisation des canifs à bord des avions aux États-Unis

Les Républicains et les Démocrates n'ayant trouvé aucun accord sur la réduction budgétaire américaine, le Président américain a validé en février dernier une coupe de 85 000 000 000 euros du budget américain à partir du 1er mars 2013. Voyant son budget réduit, l'Agence américaine de sécurité des transports a alors annoncé une réduction du nombre des agents de sécurité et de sûreté dans les aéroports américains. Cette décision a notamment pour conséquence des temps d'attente aux portiques de sécurité extrêmement longs.

Le 5 mars 2013, afin de ne pas prolonger inutilement le temps d'attente à la sécurité des aéroports américains, l'Agence américaine de sécurité des transports a annoncé qu'elle élargissait la liste des articles autorisés à bord des avions. À partir du 25 avril 2013, seront ainsi autorisés les canifs dont les lames font moins de 6 cm de long et 1 cm de large.

Cette décision relève certes des États-Unis, néanmoins les passagers européens seront aux aussi impactés par cette mesure, puisque tous les vols au départ des États-Unis seront concernés par cet assouplissement. Il s'agit là d'un véritable risque pour les passagers européens, et plus largement pour l'ensemble de la sécurité aérienne mondiale. En effet, l'interdiction des canifs à bord d'un avion fait partie intégrante de la sécurité aérienne. De plus, elle participe activement à la lutte contre le terrorisme.

1. Alors que l'Union européenne a mis en place une sécurité aérienne onéreuse mais justifiée, ne devrait-on pas attendre de nos partenaires qu'ils en fassent autant?

2. À partir du 25 avril 2013, la sécurité des passagers européens sur des vols en provenance des États-Unis est remise en question. La Commission prévoit-elle de mettre en place les mesures nécessaires afin d'assurer une sécurité égale pour tous les passagers européens?

3. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de suivre la décision américaine et de prendre le risque de mettre en danger cette fois l'ensemble des passagers européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2013)

La Commission et l'administration américaine chargée de la sécurité des transports (Transportation Security Administration — TSA) entretiennent d'étroites relations et partagent l'objectif de garantir un niveau élevé de sûreté aérienne.

En ce qui concerne sa décision de modifier la liste des articles prohibés, la TSA a fait savoir que la modification en question visait à aligner davantage cette liste sur les règles internationales, telles qu'établies par l'Organisation de l'aviation civile internationale (OACI), et sur la législation de l'UE. Cette harmonisation est donc vivement saluée.

La législation de l'UE se fonde sur les normes de l'OACI ainsi que sur une évaluation approfondie des risques. Conformément à cette évaluation et aux règles de l'OACI, les canifs ne sont pas considérés comme une menace pour l'aviation civile, ils figurent même déjà sur la liste de l'OACI des articles autorisés. L'harmonisation des règles en la matière permettra aux passagers de vols transatlantiques d'y voir plus clair en ce qui concerne les articles qui sont prohibés à bord d'un aéronef.

Dans un souci d'harmonisation, la Commission estime que les débats sur la modification des règles internationales dans ce domaine doivent avoir lieu au sein de l'OACI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003082/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Authorisation of knives onboard aeroplanes in the United States

In February, with the Republicans and Democrats failing to reach an agreement on reducing the US budget, the President of the United States endorsed a cut of EUR 85 000 000 000 to the US budget from 1 March 2013. Seeing their budget reduced, the US Transportation Security Administration then announced a reduction in the number of safety and security officers in US airports. This decision has led in particular to extremely long waiting times at security gates.

On 5 March 2013, so as not to unnecessarily prolong security waiting times in US airports, the US Transportation Security Administration announced that it was extending the list of items authorised onboard aeroplanes. From 25 April 2013, knives with blades of less than 6 cm in length and 1 cm in width will therefore be authorised.

While this decision clearly affects the United States, this measure will also have an impact on European passengers, as all flights departing from the United States will be affected by this relaxing of the rules. This represents a real risk for European passengers, and, more broadly, for global air safety as a whole. The ban on bringing knives onboard planes is an integral part of air safety. It also plays an active role in the fight against terrorism.

1. Since the European Union has put in place strict but justifiable air safety rules, should we not expect our partners to do the same?

2. From 25 April 2013, the safety of European passengers on flights coming from the United States will be compromised. Does the Commission intend to put in place the measures needed to ensure equal levels of safety for all European passengers?

3. Does the Commission intend to follow in the United States' footsteps and risk endangering all European passengers?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission and the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) maintain close relations and share the objective of delivering a high level of security to air transport.

With regard to the TSA announcement on changes to its prohibited items list, the TSA has also indicated that the changes serve to more closely harmonise that list with international rules, as laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), and with EU legislation. This alignment is therefore welcome.

EU legislation is based on the abovementioned ICAO Standards as well as on a thorough risk assessment. This assessment and ICAO rules do not consider small knives a threat to civil aviation and these are already on the ICAO list of permitted items. Harmonisation in this field assists trans-Atlantic passengers in understanding which items they may not carry onto an aircraft.

The Commission considers that in the interests of harmonisation, discussions on changing international rules in this field have to be held in ICAO.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003083/13
au Conseil
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Rôle de l'Agence européenne de défense dans la promotion de l'industrie européenne de la défense

La politique de la Commission concernant les marchés publics de la défense vise à ouvrir les marchés de la défense des États membres à la concurrence européenne. La directive 2009/81/CE sur les marchés publics à caractère sensible dans les domaines de la défense et de la sécurité a été adoptée en 2009. Elle définit les règles européennes régissant les achats d'armes, de munitions et de matériel de guerre à des fins de défense nationale, et également les achats d'équipement, de travaux et de services à des fins de maintien de la sécurité. En vue de l'établissement d'un marché européen des équipements de défense, les acquisitions doivent faire l'objet d'un appel d'offres publié au Journal officiel de l'Union européenne.

Aux États-Unis, le Foreign Military Sales (FMS) est un programme du gouvernement américain chargé de coordonner l'ensemble des ventes de l'industrie américaine aux pays étrangers. Ce programme utilise la procédure dite de «government-to-government», le gouvernement américain vendant alors directement aux gouvernements des pays acheteurs.

Cette structure de vente contribue significativement à protéger l'industrie américaine de la crise, puisque le gouvernement américain a l'avantage d'être un offreur unique face à des concurrents étrangers. Ce programme permet ainsi d'ouvrir de nouveaux marchés aux industriels américains du secteur de la défense.

1. Alors que la crise économique affecte l'industrie européenne de la défense, du fait en partie de la réduction générale au niveau européen des budgets de la défense des États membres, l'Union européenne pourrait-elle envisager de mettre en place un système semblable au système américain pour promouvoir son industrie de la défense en dehors de ses frontières?

2. Le Conseil ne pourrait-il pas envisager d'attribuer cette mission de promotion de l'industrie européenne de la défense à l'Agence européenne de défense?

Réponse
(9 juillet 2013)

L'Agence européenne de défense (AED)a été créée en vue «d'assister le Conseil et les États membres dans les efforts qu'ils déploient pour améliorer les capacités de défense de l'Union européenne dans le domaine de la gestion des crises et de soutenir la politique européenne de sécurité et de défense dans son état actuel et son développement futur». Son mandat ne prévoit pas la coordination ou la promotion des ventes de produits liés à la défense en dehors de l'UE.

Le Conseil n'a pas discuté du point qui fait l'objet de la suggestion précise formulée par l'Honorable Parlementaire et n'a pas pris position à ce sujet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003083/13
to the Council
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Role of the European Defence Agency in promoting the European defence industry

The Commission's policy on defence procurement aims to open EU countries' defence markets to EU-wide competition. Directive 2009/81/EC on defence and sensitive security procurement was adopted in 2009. It sets EU rules for the procurement of arms, munitions and war material for defence purposes, but also for the procurement of sensitive supplies, works and services for security purposes. With a view to establishing a European market for defence equipment, acquisitions must be subject to a call for tender published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

In the United States, Foreign Military Sales (FMS) is a US Government programme used to coordinate all US industry sales to foreign countries. This programme uses what is referred to as the 'government-to-government' procedure, whereby the US Government sells directly to the governments of the purchasing countries.

This sales structure makes a significant contribution to protecting US industry from crises, as the US Government has the advantage of being a unique supplier compared to foreign competitors. This programme therefore opens up new markets to US industrialists in the defence sector.

1. As the economic crisis is affecting the European defence industry, partly due to the general reduction in Member States' defence budgets at European level, might the European Union consider putting in place a similar system to the one used in the US to promote its defence industry beyond its borders?

2. Could the Council consider assigning this task of promoting the European defence industry to the European Defence Agency?

Reply
(9 July 2013)

The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established in order 'to support the Member States and the Council in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the European Security and Defence Policy as it stands now and develops in the future'. Its mandate does not include the coordination or promotion of defence sales outside the EU.

The Council has neither discussed nor taken a position on the specific suggestion raised by the Honourable Member.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003084/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti in merito all'esclusione di alcuni medici pubblici dai benefici della direttiva 2003/88/CE sull'orario di lavoro

La direttiva 93/104/CE nasce a tutela della salute dei lavoratori, nessuno escluso.

L'articolo 15 della direttiva 2003/88/CE fa riferimento ad eventuali «disposizioni più favorevoli». L'articolo 6 della medesima direttiva fa riferimento alla «durata massima settimanale del lavoro».

Detta direttiva è stata recepita in Italia come «Orario normale di lavoro» (articolo 3 del decreto legislativo 66/2003): «L'orario normale di lavoro è fissato in 40 ore settimanali».

L'articolo 17 della direttiva 2003/88/CE prevede delle deroghe «*[n]el rispetto dei principi generali della protezione e della sicurezza […]e in particolare quando si tratta di dirigenti o di altre persone aventi potere di decisione autonomo*».

In Italia le deroghe per «dirigenza» (articolo 17, comma 5, del decreto legislativo 66/2003) fanno riferimento all'orario normale di lavoro (articolo 3), alla durata massima dell'orario settimanale (articolo 4), al lavoro straordinario (articolo 5) e al riposo giornaliero, solo per situazioni particolari (articolo 7).

La circolare n. 8/2005 del Ministero del Lavoro italiano, interpretativa del decreto legislativo 66/2003, tuttavia riporta: «*Le ipotesi di deroga di cui al comma 5 [dell'articolo 17 n.d.a.] essendo delle esemplificazioni, come lascia intendere l'espressione "in particolare" non sono ipotesi tassative*» (articolo 20, comma f). Quindi quelle descritte non sono obbligatorie, sono solo «ipotesi».

Disapplicata per legge in Italia la direttiva di tutela negli articoli sopra ricordati, i medici si vedono costretti a effettuare, nel caso di turni mattino-notte, attività lavorative anche per 18-20 ore nell'arco delle 24 ore di riferimento (le 24 ore successive dall'ora di inizio turno), contrariamente a quanto espresso non solo dall'articolo 3 ma anche dall'articolo 2, comma 9, della direttiva 2003/88/CE, senza che siano previsti né i riposi compensativi immediati né quelle tutele di cui all'articolo 17, comma 2, della direttiva 2003/88/CE. Oltre a subire danno personale, essi espongono a rischi inaccettabili anche i cosiddetti terzi, che, nel caso specifico dei medici, sono i pazienti.

Intende la Commissione fornire una precisa ed inequivocabile definizione del termine di dirigente con la descrizione analitica propria del ruolo e intervenire con richiami e/o sanzioni nei confronti dello Stato italiano vista la palese inadempienza nei confronti della direttiva 2003/88/CE?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003133/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(20 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Definizione univoca del ruolo dirigenziale ai sensi della direttiva 2003/88/CE sull'orario di lavoro in rapporto ai medici pubblici dipendenti italiani

La direttiva 93/104/CE nasce a tutela della salute di tutti i lavoratori e per dettare misure minime di convergenza atte a ridurre la difformità delle leggi degli Stati membri in materia. La direttiva è stata recepita in Italia dall'art. 3 D.Lgs. 66/2003 con il titolo «L'orario normale di lavoro è fissato in 40 ore settimanali».

L'art. 17 della direttiva 2003/88/CE prevede «deroghe» nel rispetto dei principi generali della protezione e della sicurezza […] e in particolare quando si tratta di dirigenti o di altre persone aventi potere di decisione autonomo.

In Italia, pur in presenza di diverse sentenze della Corte di Cassazione che negano l'appartenenza dei medici pubblici ospedalieri italiani alla categoria dei dirigenti, assistiamo all'applicazione della categoria dirigenziale a molti soggetti, tra cui i medici pubblici dipendenti, al fine di escluderli dal godimento dei diritti previsti dalla direttiva 2003/88/CE. In realtà, nell'ambito della dirigenza medica dipendente dal Sistema sanitario nazionale, solo ai direttori di struttura complessa, che rappresentano circa il 10 % della categoria, sono veramente attribuite prerogative dirigenziali.

I medici, in Italia, si vedono costretti ad effettuare, nel caso di turni mattino-notte, attività lavorativa anche per 18-20 ore nell'arco delle 24 ore di riferimento (le 24 ore successive dall'ora di inizio turno) contrariamente a quanto contemplato dalla direttiva 2003/88/CE, senza che siano previsti né i riposi compensativi immediati né quelle tutele di cui al comma 2 dell'art.17 della direttiva 2003/88/CE. Ciò espone oltretutto i pazienti da loro assistiti al rischio di errori medici dovuti a stress e stanchezza.

Intende la Commissione fornire una precisa e inequivocabile definizione del termine di dirigente con la descrizione analitica propria del ruolo? Intende intervenire con richiami e/o sanzioni nei confronti dello Stato italiano vista la palese inadempienza nei confronti della direttiva 2003/88/CE?

Risposta congiunta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(17 maggio 2013)

La Commissione ha ricevuto una serie di denunce in base alle quali i medici impiegati presso ospedali pubblici in Italia sono equiparati ai dirigenti nell'ambito della legislazione nazionale. Tali medici sono pertanto esclusi dall'ambito di applicazione della legislazione nazionale che recepisce la direttiva sull'orario di lavoro ([1]), la quale fissa una durata media massima dell'orario di lavoro settimanale nonché periodi minimi di riposo giornaliero e settimanale, a tutela della salute e della sicurezza.

Il 26 aprile 2012 la Commissione ha notificato all'Italia una lettera di costituzione in mora, alla quale l'Italia ha dato risposta.

In questa fase la Commissione si riserva il diritto di prendere qualsiasi altro provvedimento che ritenga necessario per garantire il rispetto della citata direttiva.

([1]) Direttiva 2003/88/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 4 novembre 2003, concernente taluni aspetti dell'organizzazione dell'orario di lavoro, GU L 299 del 18.11.2003, pag. 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003084/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Clarification regarding the exclusion of some state doctors from the benefits of Directive 2003/88/EC on working time

Directive 93/104/EC was adopted to protect the health of all workers, without exception.

Article 15 of Directive 2003/88/EC refers to potentially 'more favourable provisions'. Article 6 of the directive refers to 'maximum weekly working time'.

This directive was implemented in Italy as 'normal working hours' (Article 3 of Italian Legislative Decree 66/2003): 'Normal hours of work are set at 40 hours per week.'

Article 17 of Directive 2003/88/EC provides for exceptions '[w]ith due regard for the general principles of the protection of the safety […] and particularly in the case of managing executives or other persons with autonomous decision-taking powers.'

In Italy, the exemptions for 'executives' (Article 17(5) of Italian Legislative Decree 66/2003) refer to normal working time (Article 3), maximum weekly time (Article 4), overtime (Article 5) and daily rest periods, only for special situations (Article 7).

However, Italian Ministry of Labour circular No 8/2005, in an interpretation of Legislative Decree 66/2003, states: 'The cases of exemption referred to in Section 5 [of Article 17, author's note] being examples, as suggested by the phrase "in particular", are not mandatory assumptions' (Article 20(f)). So the exemptions described are not mandatory, but only 'assumptions'.

Italy having precluded by law the protection provided by the directive in the articles mentioned above, doctors are forced to work, in the case of morning-night shifts, for 18-20 hours within the 24-hour reference period (24 hours after the start of the shift), contrary to the expectation expressed not only in Article 3 but also in Article 2(9) of Directive 2003/88/EC, without the provision of immediate compensatory rest nor the protection envisaged under Article 17(2) of Directive 2003/88/EC. In addition to suffering personal harm, doctors expose third parties, in this particular case their patients, to unacceptable risks.

Will the Commission provide a precise and unambiguous definition of the term 'executive' with a detailed description of their role, and intervene with reminders and/or penalties against the Italian State, given its clear failure to comply with Directive 2003/88/EC?

Question for written answer E-003133/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Clear definition of the role of 'managing executive' pursuant to Directive 2003/88/EC on working time in relation to Italian health service doctors

Directive 93/104/EC was designed to protect the safety and health of all workers and to establish minimum standards of convergence for reducing differences between the laws of the Member States on this subject. The directive was transposed into Italian law by Article 3 of Legislative Decree No 66/2003, entitled 'The normal weekly working time is fixed at 40 hours.'

Article 17 of Directive 2003/88/EC provides for 'derogations' from the general principles of the protection of the safety and health of workers … particularly in the case of managing executives or other persons with autonomous decision-taking powers.

In Italy, despite various judgments of the Court of Cassation to the effect that hospital doctors in the Italian health service do not belong to the category of managing executives, we are seeing this category applied to many individuals, including health service doctors, in order to deprive them of the rights provided by Directive 2003/88/EC. In reality, within the medical management structure of the national health service, true executive powers are held only by overall directors, who represent around 10% of the category.

In Italy, doctors are finding themselves forced, in the case of split shifts, to work as many as 18-20 hours in the reference 24-hour period (the 24 hours following the start of the shift), in breach of Directive 2003/88/EC, without any of the immediate compensatory rest periods or protections envisaged by Article 17.2 of Directive 2003/88/EC. Apart from anything else, this exposes their patients to the risk of medical errors caused by stress and tiredness.

Does the Commission intend to provide a precise and unequivocal definition of the term 'managing executive', with an analytical description of the role? Does it intend to intervene with warnings and/or sanctions against the Italian State, in view of the manifest violation of Directive 2003/88/EC?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission has received a number of complaints that doctors employed in public hospitals in Italy are considered equivalent under national law to managing executives. They are therefore excluded from the scope of the national legislation transposing the Working Time Directive ([1]), which sets limits to average weekly working time, and requires minimum daily and weekly rest periods, in the interest of health and safety.

On 26 April 2012 the Commission sent Italy a letter of formal notice, to which the Member State has replied.

At this stage, the Commission reserves the right to take any other measure which may be necessary to ensure compliance with the directive.

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003085/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo cellule staminali

Nelle ultime settimane in Italia si è acceso un dibattito in merito all'utilizzo di cellule staminali mesenchimali come terapia per alcune malattie rare per cui al momento non esistono cure efficaci: per diversi pazienti si sono infatti susseguite autorizzazioni a questo trattamento e revoche, creando apprensione e confusione all'interno dell'opinione pubblica, dei pazienti stessi e delle loro famiglie.

La comunità scientifica è spaccata al suo interno, in quanto diversi studiosi ritengono non attendibili le soluzioni proposte da queste cure compassionevoli a base di staminali, che per altri sono invece l'unica possibile soluzione terapeutica.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza di queste vicende che hanno coinvolto fondazioni, ospedali, magistrati, ma soprattutto pazienti malati?

2. Come giudica l'utilizzo delle staminali in questo ambito? Esiste un programma europeo che si occupi di ricerca sulle cellule staminali? Sono stati prodotti risultati su questo fronte?

3. Come è regolamentato l'utilizzo delle cellule staminali a livello europeo e nei differenti paesi dell'Unione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 maggio 2013)

La donazione, l'acquisizione, il controllo, la lavorazione, la conservazione, lo stoccaggio e la distribuzione di cellule umane destinate al trapianto (ad eccezione dei trapianti autologi) sono disciplinati dalla direttiva 2004/23 («direttiva relativa ai tessuti e alle cellule»).

L'impiego di cellule staminali nei medicinali è regolato anche dalla legislazione UE sui medicinali. Classificare le terapie basate sull'impiego di cellule staminali, soprattutto nel caso in cui esse abbiano una funzione di medicinale, può talvolta comportare alcune difficoltà.

Gli Stati membri possono autorizzare l'impiego di medicinali a base di cellule staminali anche in assenza di un'autorizzazione a porle in commercio a condizione che tale impiego avvenga in una struttura ospedaliera e su base non ripetitiva ([1]).

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che le decisioni degli Stati membri riguardo a eventuali autorizzazioni ad attuare terapie avanzate in assenza di un'autorizzazione a porle in commercio non sono armonizzate.

Questo aspetto viene trattato nella relazione sul funzionamento del regolamento relativo alle terapie avanzate, in corso di elaborazione presso la Commissione.

Il settimo programma quadro dell'Unione europea per la ricerca e lo sviluppo tecnologico sostiene le attività di ricerca nell'ambito delle cellule staminali. Il progetto REBORNE ([2]) per esempio ha ricevuto un finanziamento UE di circa 12 milioni di euro e sta sviluppando alcuni test clinici riguardanti l'impiego di cellule staminali mesenchimali per curare le fratture ossee che non guariscono autonomamente.

([1]) Direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, articolo 3, paragrafo 7.
([2]) www.reborne.org.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003085/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Use of stem cells

In recent weeks, a debate has flared up in Italy over the use of mesenchymal stem cells to treat certain rare diseases for which there is currently no effective cure. For some patients, authorisation for this treatment has been granted and withdrawn by turns, creating anxiety and confusion for the general public, the patients themselves and their families.

The scientific community is split on this issue. Some academics consider that the solutions offered by these compassionate stem-cell treatments are not to be trusted, while others regard them as the only possible therapeutic solution.

1. Is the Commission aware of these issues, which have affected foundations, hospitals and magistrates, but especially sick patients?

2. How does it view the use of stem cells in these cases? Is there a European programme covering stem-cell research? Have there been any results in this regard?

3. How is the use of stem cells regulated at EU level and in the various Member States of the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of cells intended for transplantation (with the exclusion of autologous transplantations) is governed by Directive 2004/23 ('Tissues and Cells Directive').

In addition, the use of stems cells in a medicinal product is regulated under the EU legislation on medicinal products. The classification of stem-cell therapies, and specifically whether the therapy is to be considered as a medicine, may require complex judgments in some cases.

Member States may authorise the use of stem-cell based medicinal products in the absence of a marketing authorisation provided that the use takes place within a hospital on a non-routine basis. ([1])

The Commission is aware that the implementation by the Member States of the above-referred possibility to authorise the use of an advanced therapy in the absence of a marketing authorisation is not harmonised. This aspect will be considered in the report on the functioning of the Advanced Therapy Regulation, which is being prepared by the Commission.

The EU's Seventh Framework Programme for research and technological development supports stem cell research. The project REBORNE ([2]) e.g. received an EU financial contribution of around EUR 12 million and is carrying out clinical trials on the use of mesenchyme stem cells to repair patients' bone fractures which do not heal alone.

([1]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, Article 3(7).
([2]) www.reborne.org

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003086/13
to the Commission
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: 'Sandblasting' of jeans and other textiles

Concerning the practice of 'sandblasting' jeans and other textiles — an extremely dangerous practice, posing severe threats to the health and life of workers involved in the process as a result of silica entering the body and causing silicosis or other illnesses — does the Commission have a position as to whether this practice violates ILO Convention 155?

1. Is the Commission aware that millions of these sandblasted products are imported into Europe each year from countries such as Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan and Argentina?

2. What are the Commission's powers to propose or implement an import ban on a particular type of product?

3. Is the Commission considering an import ban on sandblasted textiles?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-362/13, E-11345/12, E-9447/11 and E-8710/11 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003087/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — «Caso marò»: violazione del diritto internazionale e revoca arbitraria dell'immunità diplomatica da parte dell'India

Tra Italia e India è in corso una disputa nata dall'arresto da parte delle autorità indiane di due fucilieri della Marina italiana impegnati in un'azione antipirateria in acque internazionali. Anche relativamente a tale caso, il Parlamento europeo lo scorso maggio 2012 ha adottato una risoluzione sulla «pirateria marittima» in cui ribadiva che «in base al diritto internazionale, in alto mare si applica sempre alle navi e al personale militare a bordo la giurisdizione nazionale dello Stato di bandiera». Le autorità italiane hanno sempre ritenuto che l'India violasse gli obblighi di diritto internazionale consuetudinario e pattizio, in particolare il principio dell'immunità dalla giurisdizione degli organi dello Stato straniero e le regole della Convenzione ONU sul diritto del mare (UNCLOS) del 1982. Dopo la sentenza del 18 gennaio 2013 della Corte suprema indiana, l'Italia ha proposto formalmente l'avvio di un dialogo bilaterale per la ricerca di una soluzione diplomatica del caso.

L'Italia con la nota verbale consegnata l'11 marzo 2013 ribadiva la propria disponibilità di giungere ad un accordo per una soluzione della controversia, anche attraverso un arbitrato internazionale o una risoluzione giudiziaria, chiedendo all'India di attivare le consultazioni previste dalla Convenzione UNCLOS, e disponeva il non rientro in India dei due fucilieri alla scadenza del permesso loro concesso. Come ritorsione, il governo indiano decideva il divieto di espatrio per l'ambasciatore italiano in India, violando la Convenzione di Vienna sulle relazioni diplomatiche in cui si afferma che «la persona dell'agente diplomatico è inviolabile (…), lo Stato lo tratta con il rispetto dovutogli e provvede adeguatamente a impedire ogni offesa alla persona, libertà e dignità dello stesso». In data 18 aprile la Corte suprema di New Dehli ha disposto l'estensione del divieto di espatrio per il diplomatico italiano.

Considerato che la controversia non può essere ridotta ad una questione bilatere, si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza:

— quali azioni e provvedimenti urgenti intende intraprendere verso l'India per garantire il rispetto del diritto internazionale, violato due volte, relativamente al mancato rispetto del principio dello Stato di bandiera della nave e del mancato rispetto del principio dell'immunità del diplomatico italiano;

— oltre alle ripetute richieste di rispettare la Convenzione di Vienna e di giungere ad una soluzione amichevole, quali azioni intende promuovere verso l'India per porre fine all'ennesima violazione del diritto internazionale nei confronti di un paese fondatore dell'Unione europea.

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003091/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: «Caso marò»: violazione del diritto internazionale e revoca arbitraria dell'immunità diplomatica da parte dell'India

Tra Italia e India è in corso una disputa nata dall'arresto da parte delle autorità indiane di due fucilieri della Marina italiana impegnati in un'azione antipirateria in acque internazionali. Anche relativamente a tale caso, il Parlamento europeo lo scorso maggio 2012 ha adottato una risoluzione sulla «pirateria marittima» in cui ribadiva che «in base al diritto internazionale, in alto mare si applica sempre alle navi e al personale militare a bordo la giurisdizione nazionale dello Stato di bandiera». Le autorità italiane hanno sempre ritenuto che l'India violasse gli obblighi di diritto internazionale consuetudinario e pattizio, in particolare il principio dell'immunità dalla giurisdizione degli organi dello Stato straniero e le regole della Convenzione ONU sul diritto del mare (UNCLOS) del 1982. Dopo la sentenza del 18 gennaio 2013 della Corte suprema indiana, l'Italia ha proposto formalmente l'avvio di un dialogo bilaterale per la ricerca di una soluzione diplomatica del caso.

L'Italia con la nota verbale consegnata l'11 marzo 2013 ribadiva la propria disponibilità di giungere ad un accordo per una soluzione della controversia, anche attraverso un arbitrato internazionale o una risoluzione giudiziaria, chiedendo all'India di attivare le consultazioni previste dalla Convenzione UNCLOS, e disponeva il non rientro in India dei due fucilieri alla scadenza del permesso loro concesso. Come ritorsione, il governo indiano decideva il divieto di espatrio per l'ambasciatore italiano in India, violando la Convenzione di Vienna sulle relazioni diplomatiche in cui si afferma che «la persona dell'agente diplomatico è inviolabile (…), lo Stato lo tratta con il rispetto dovutogli e provvede adeguatamente a impedire ogni offesa alla persona, libertà e dignità dello stesso». In data 18 aprile la Corte suprema di New Dehli ha disposto l'estensione del divieto di espatrio per il diplomatico italiano.

Considerato che la controversia non può essere ridotta ad una questione bilatere, si chiede alla Commissione:

— quali azioni e provvedimenti urgenti intende intraprendere verso l'India per garantire il rispetto del diritto internazionale, violato due volte, relativamente al mancato rispetto del principio dello Stato di bandiera della nave e al mancato rispetto del principio dell'immunità del diplomatico italiano;

— oltre alle ripetute richieste di rispettare la Convenzione di Vienna e di giungere ad una soluzione amichevole, quali azioni intende promuovere verso l'India per porre fine all'ennesima violazione del diritto internazionale nei confronti di un paese fondatore dell'Unione europea.

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2013)

L'Alta Rappresentante segue da vicino questo caso delicato mediante contatti di alto livello con le autorità italiane e indiane e ha puntualmente invitato i due paesi a trovare quanto prima una soluzione soddisfacente per entrambe le parti, basata sulla convenzione dell'ONU sul diritto del mare e sul diritto internazionale.

Subito dopo la sentenza pronunciata dalla Corte suprema indiana nel mese di marzo 2013, il portavoce dell'Alta Rappresentante ha espresso preoccupazione circa il fatto che le restrizioni alla libertà di movimento dell'ambasciatore italiano in India sarebbero contrarie agli obblighi internazionali stabiliti dalla Convenzione di Vienna. A seguito della decisione del governo italiano di far rientrare i due fucilieri della Marina in India, la Corte suprema ha revocato il divieto di espatrio per l'ambasciatore italiano.

L'Alta Rappresentante auspica una soluzione amichevole basata sul diritto internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003087/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Diplomatic row between Italy and India: India's violation of international law and arbitrary waiver of diplomatic immunity

Italy and India are currently embroiled in a dispute which arose after the Indian authorities arrested two Italian marines involved in a counter-piracy operation in international waters. Regarding this last point, the European Parliament adopted a resolution in May 2012 on maritime piracy, in which in noted that 'on the high seas, according to international law, in all cases … the national jurisdiction of the flag state applies on the ships concerned, as well as to the military staff deployed on board'. The Italian authorities have taken the view all along that India has been breaching its obligations under customary international law and international treaty law, in particular the principle of immunity from jurisdiction in a foreign country and the rules of the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos). After the Indian Supreme Court had handed down its ruling of 18 January 2013, Italy formally proposed that a bilateral dialogue be opened in order to seek a diplomatic solution.

In a *note verbale* delivered on 11 March 2013 Italy again expressed its willingness to resolve the dispute by agreement, if necessary through international arbitration or through the courts; in addition, it ordered that the two marines should not return to India after the end of their leave. The Indian Government retaliated by barring the Italian Ambassador in India from leaving the country, thus violating the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which states that 'The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. … The receiving State shall treat him with due respect and shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his person, freedom or dignity'. On 18 March 2013 the Supreme Court in New Delhi extended the travel ban imposed on the Ambassador.

Given that the dispute cannot be considered a purely bilateral matter:

— what immediate measures and steps will the High Representative take in relation to India so as to ensure compliance with international law, which has been infringed twice over, by the failure to observe the flag state principle and the failure to respect the Italian diplomat's immunity;

— besides the repeated calls to comply with the Vienna Convention and reach an amicable settlement, what steps will she take to make India cease this umpteenth breach of international law in relation to one of the founding members of the EU?

Question for written answer E-003091/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: The case of the Italian marines: violation of international law and arbitrary withdrawal of diplomatic immunity by India

Italy and India are involved in a dispute due to the arrest, by Indian authorities, of two Italian riflemen deployed in an anti-piracy operation in international waters. With regard to this case, in May 2012 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 'maritime piracy' in which it stated that 'on the high seas, according to international law, in all cases … the national jurisdiction of the flag state applies on the ships concerned, as well as to the military staff deployed on board'. The Italian authorities have always believed that India is violating the obligations of customary international law and international treaty law, in particular the principle of immunity from the jurisdiction of the bodies of the foreign State and the rules of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) of 1982. Following the judgment of 18 January 2013 of the Supreme Indian Court, Italy formally proposed initiating bilateral talks to seek a diplomatic solution to the case.

In a note verbale delivered on 11 March 2013, Italy reiterated its willingness to reach an agreement to resolve the dispute, including through international arbitration or a judicial decision. It asked India to launch the consultation provided for in Unclos and stated that the two riflemen would not return to India upon expiry of the permission granted to them. In retaliation, the Indian Government decided that it would prohibit the Italian Ambassador to India from leaving the country, thereby violating the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations which states that 'the person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable …, the receiving State shall treat him with due respect and shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his person, freedom or dignity'. On 18 April, the Supreme Court of New Delhi decided to extend the ban on the Italian diplomat leaving the country.

Given that the dispute cannot be reduced to a bilateral question, could the Commission state:

— what urgent action and measures it intends to take against India in order to ensure respect for international law, which it has violated twice with its failure to comply with the principle of the flag state of the ship and the principle of immunity of the Italian diplomat;

— in addition to the repeated requests to comply with the Vienna Convention and to reach an amicable agreement, what action does it intend to take against India to put an end to the latest in a long series of violations of international law suffered by a founding member of the European Union?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The HR/VP has been closely following this sensitive case through high level contacts with Italian and Indian counterparts. The HR/VP has consistently encouraged Italy and India to find a mutually satisfactory outcome as soon as possible, based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and international law.

Immediately after the Supreme Court Orders of March 2013, the HR/VP, through her spokesperson, expressed concern that any limitations to the freedom of movement of the Ambassador of Italy to India would be contrary to the international obligations established under the Vienna Convention. Following the decision of the Italian Government to send the marines back to India, the Supreme Court has lifted the order restraining the Italian Ambassador from leaving India.

The HR/VP hopes that an amicable solution based on international law can be found.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003088/13
to the Commission
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Amending Regulation (EC) No 1/2005: provisions regarding the protection of poultry and rabbits during transport (follow-up to Written Question E-005282/2012)

In 2010, at the request of the Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) provided a scientific opinion on the welfare of animals during transport. This opinion contains several recommendations regarding the transport of poultry and rabbits that are stricter than the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and which EFSA considers essential in order to safeguard the welfare of the animals. Consequently the present rules permit those animals to suffer.

Nevertheless the Commission stated in its answer to Written Question E-005282/2012 that it is not considering proposing any changes to Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport to bring it into line with the EFSA recommendations.

1. Given the fact that the Commission does not intend to amend Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, what steps does the Commission then plan to take to make sure that EFSA's recommendations become legally binding and thus are put into practice?

2. If the Commission does not plan to take any such steps, what was the sense of its requesting a scientific opinion from EFSA?

3. If the Commission does not plan to take any such steps, this is a violation of Article 30 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, which requires that 'the annexes to the regulation shall be amended by the Council […] on a proposal from the Commission, with a view in particular to their adaptation to technological and scientific progress […]'. How can the Commission justify this violation of EC law?

4. Any further delays in changing provisions which, according to EFSA (the Commission's own scientific body) are not adequate to safeguard the protection of animals during transport, would be inconsistent with the provisions of Article 13 TFEU. How does the Commission justify these delays? (This question was already put in Written Question E-005282/2012, but not answered by the Commission).

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

There appears to be a misunderstanding as concerns the role of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in the decision making process in the EU. EFSA's role is to assess and communicate on all risks associated with the food chain, including issues related to animal welfare. Scientific opinions from EFSA are not to be automatically converted into law.

The Commission analyses and considers scientific opinions from EFSA in its overall role as risk manager. The Commission would not propose new legislation or implementing measures in the area of animal welfare during transport, based solely on a scientific opinion. Before any new legislation is introduced, an in-depth impact assessment is necessary to obtain a full picture of the impact of possible changes.

The Commission may request a scientific opinion from EFSA for a number of reasons, not related to the preparation of a proposal to amend EU legislation. The reason it requested EFSA to submit a scientific opinion on the welfare of animals during transport ([1]) was that the opinion would provide one basis for the Commission in its preparation of the report ([2]) referred to in Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([3]).

([1]) 'Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport'; EFSA Journal 2011;9(1):1966.
([2]) Report from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, COM(2011) 700 final.
([3]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations; OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003089/13
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(19 mars 2013)

Angående: Import av hästkött från Kanada och Mexiko till EU

Enligt EU:s krav på import av livsmedel av animaliskt ursprung från tredjeländer är slakt för export till EU tillåten enbart när det gäller hästar som har en känd medicinsk behandlinghistorik och som enligt journaler bevisligen har genomgått lämpliga veterinärmedicinska karenstider.

Mellan 2010 och 2012 genomförde EU:s kontor för livsmedels- och veterinärfrågor ett flertal kontroller i Kanada ([1]) och Mexiko ([2]). I samband med dessa kontroller kom man omigen fram till att systemen för identifikation av hästar, uppgifterna om livsmedelskedjan samt tillförlitligheten och äktheten hos intygen över hästars (särskilt amerikanska hästars) veterinärmedicinska behandling, inte räcker för att garantera tillämpning av motsvarande normer som de i EU:s lagstiftning.

Den främsta orsaken till detta är att hästar av amerikanskt ursprung i allmänhet inte föds upp för slakt. Därför finns det inte heller någon skyldighet att föra journal över veterinärmedicinska behandlingar, och ämnen som fenylbutazon, som förbjudits för användning på livsmedelsproducerande djur, har en utbredd terapeutisk användning.

Kan kommissionen med beaktande av resultaten av de kontroller som kontoret för livsmedels- och veterinärfrågor har genomfört förklara varför den uppenbarligen ännu inte har vidtagit lämpliga åtgärder för att se till att hästkött av amerikanskt ursprung inte längre släpps ut på EU-marknaden?

Samlat svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(8 maj 2013)

De mexikanska och kanadensiska myndigheterna tillhandahåller varje år en plan för kontroll av restsubstanser tillsammans med resultaten av föregående års program. Planen inbegriper kontroll av hur ämnen som är förbjudna enligt unionslagstiftningen används och åtgärder som vidtas för att se till att kött som exporteras till EU inte innehåller resthalter av dessa ämnen, i enlighet med gällande bestämmelser. Hästkött från Mexiko omfattas dessutom redan sedan 2006 av en skyddsåtgärd som innebär att varje exporterad sändning testas för att hitta eventuella resthalter av veterinärmedicinska ämnen vid gränskontrollstationerna innan de förs in till EU. För samma ändamål kontrolleras också stickprov av sändningar av hästkött från Kanada vid gränskontrollstationerna.

Efter de senaste kontrollbesöken angående export av hästkött till EU som kommissionens kontor för livsmedels- och veterinärfrågor genomfört i Mexiko och Kanada uppmanade kommissionen de behöriga myndigheterna att lämna in en handlingsplan som svar på rekommendationerna i rapporterna från kontrollbesöken. Myndigheterna i båda länderna har lämnat in en handlingsplan.

Kommissionen arbetar för närvarande med att utvärdera alla tänkbara åtgärder för att garantera ett fortsatt tillfredsställande konsumentskydd. Detta arbete utförs i ljuset av resultaten av de ovannämnda kontrollbesöken, handlingsplanerna som Kanada och Mexiko lämnat in, utvärderingen av dessa länders planer för kontroll av restsubstanser och resultaten av de ytterligare tester som medlemsstaterna utfört på importerat kött från bland annat Kanada och Mexiko för att hitta eventuella resthalter av fenylbutazon efter bedrägerierna med märkning av hästkött som uppdagades i EU tidigare i år.

([1]) Den slutliga rapporten från en kontroll som genomfördes i Kanada den 23 november–6 december 2010 i syfte att utvärdera kontrollerna av produktionen av färskt kött, köttprodukter, köttfärs, köttberedningar och djurtarmar avsedda för mänsklig konsumtion samt import till Europeiska unionen, i enlighet med avtalet mellan EG och Kanada om sanitära åtgärder för att skydda människors och djurs hälsa vad avser handeln med levande djur och animaliska produkter. GD Hälsa och konsumentskydd 2010-8522-MR FINAL.
Den slutliga rapporten från en kontroll som genomfördes i Kanada den 13–23 september 2011 i syfte att utvärdera kontrollerna av restsubstanser och främmande ämnen i levande djur och animaliska produkter, medräknat kontroller av veterinärmedicinska produkter. GD Hälsa och konsumentskydd 2011-8913-MR FINAL.

([2]) Den slutliga rapporten från ett uppdrag som genomfördes i Mexiko den 22 november–3 december 2010 i syfte att utvärdera kontrollerna av produktionen av färskt hästkött och köttprodukter avsedda för export till Europeiska unionen, samt certifieringsförfarandena. GD Hälsa och konsumentskydd 2010-8524-MR FINAL.
Den slutliga rapporten från en kontroll som genomfördes i Mexiko den 29 maj–8 juni 2012 i syfte att utvärdera kontrollerna av produktionen av färskt hästkött och köttprodukter avsedda för export till Europeiska unionen, samt certifieringsförfarandena. GD Hälsa och konsumentskydd 2012-6340-MR FINAL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003089/13
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Horsemeat imports from Canada and Mexico to the EU

According to EU import requirements for food of animal origin from non-EU countries, only horses with a known medicinal treatment history, and which on the basis of medicinal treatment records can be shown to have satisfied the appropriate veterinary medicine withdrawal periods, may be slaughtered for export to the EU.

Between 2010 and 2012, the EU's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out several audits in Canada ([1]) and Mexico ([2]). These audits consistently found that the systems implemented for the identification of horses, the food chain information and the reliability and authenticity of affidavits concerning the veterinary treatment of horses, particularly those of US origin, are insufficient to guarantee the application of standards equivalent to those provided for by EU legislation.

The primary reason for this is that US horses are typically not raised for slaughter. Consequently there is no mandatory record-keeping on veterinary medical treatment, and substances such as Phenylbutazone, banned for use in food-producing animals, are in widespread therapeutic use

Given the findings of the FVO audits, could the Commission explain why it has apparently not yet taken appropriate action to ensure that meat from horses of US origin is no longer placed on the EU market?

Question for written answer E-003327/13
to the Commission
Alyn Smith (Verts/ALE)
(25 March 2013)

Subject: Food safety import controls

The Commission may be aware of the report by the Humane Society International (HSI) highlighting the fact that the EU — which restricts imports of American pork because pigs are treated with ractopamine and of American poultry because chickens are treated with chlorine — is permitting adulterated horse meat to enter the European market.

According to a Commission document, as verified through the EU Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES), the total EU market for horse meat reached 108 000 tonnes in 2012 and the level of imports of horse meat to the EU for 2012 was 36 000 tonnes. The North American share of this was 23 000 tonnes (Canada and Mexico combined) which accounts for approximately 20% of the whole EU market.

As there are no operating slaughter plants for horses in the USA, growing numbers of American horses are being live-shipped to Canada and Mexico, where they are slaughtered and then sent to Europe. Unlike in the EU, however, where a horse must have a passport identifying its origin and listing medication it has received, there is no such US system. Instead, any American selling a horse to Mexico or Canada must simply declare it has received no substances making it unfit for use as food. This system has the potential to be abused.

Can the Commission state, without any doubt, that horse meat entering the European market from North America has not been tainted with banned veterinary drugs? If not, will the Commission consider random testing for banned chemicals?

([1]) Final report of an audit carried out in Canada from 23 November to 06 December 2010 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh meat, meat products, minced meat, meat preparations and casings for human consumption destined for import to the European Union under the auspices of the agreement between the European Community and Canada on sanitary measures to protect public health and animal health in respect of trade in live animals and animal products. DG (SANCO) 2010-8522- MR FINAL.
Final report of an audit carried out in Canada from 13 to 23 September 2011 in order to evaluate the monitoring of residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products, including controls on veterinary medicinal products. DG (SANCO) 2011-8913-MR FINAL.

([2]) Final report of a mission carried out in Mexico from 22 November to 03 December 2010 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh horse meat and meat products intended for export to the European Union as well as certification procedures. DG(SANCO) 2010-8524 — MR FINAL.
Final report of an audit carried out in Mexico from 29 May to 08 June 2012 in order to evaluate the operation of controls over the production of fresh horse meat and meat products intended for export to the European Union as well as certification procedures. DG (SANCO) 2012-6340-MR FINAL.

Further, can the Commission outline what mechanisms are currently in place to ensure that horse meat imported into the EU adheres to its rigid food safety standards?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

Mexican and Canadian authorities provide every year a residue monitoring plan together with the results of the implementation of the previous year programme. This plan includes the verification of the use of substances banned by the Union legislation and the measures in place to assure that the meat exported to the EU does not contain any residues thereof, in accordance to the relevant provisions. Furthermore, horse meat coming from Mexico is already subject to a safeguard measure since 2006 whereby every exported consignment is tested for residues of veterinary substances at the Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) before entering EU territory, while consignments of horse meat from Canada are also randomly sampled at BIPs for the same substances.

Following the latest audits of the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) in Mexico and Canada on horse meat exports to the EU, the Commission services asked the respective competent authorities to submit an action plan in response to the recommendations made in the audit reports. The authorities of both countries have provided their respective action plan.

In the light of the outcome of those audits, the relevant action plan respectively provided by Mexico and Canada, the evaluation of their residues monitoring plan together with the results of the additional checks carried out by the Member States on the imported meat, including from Canada and Mexico, to detect possible residues of phenylbutazone (decided as a consequence of the recent horse meat related labelling fraud in the EU) the Commission is in the process of evaluating all possible actions to continue ensuring a satisfactory level of protection of consumers.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003090/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Encefalomielitis miálgica

En la Unión Europea es cada vez mayor el número de personas afectadas por la encefalomielitis miálgica (EM), a menudo descrita erróneamente como síndrome de fatiga crónica (SFC). Esta enfermedad no tiene cura. La comunidad científica internacional la considera un grave trastorno neurológico, mientras que la SFC es un término cruzado que crea confusión y ocasiona problemas a los pacientes, como admitió en 2009 la ex Comisaria responsable de Salud Androulla Vassiliou.

En esta situación las personas que padecen EM se sienten totalmente desamparadas, porque no solo sufren las penosas consecuencias de su enfermedad, sino que además los sistemas públicos de salud las tratan equivocadamente como enfermos psíquicos o se les niega el acceso a los servicios médicos. Varios niños han sido ingresados por la fuerza en hospitales psiquiátricos en los que no reciben el tratamiento biomédico personalizado que necesitan. Sophia, del RU, falleció. Karina, de Dinamarca, fue internada en un hospital psiquiátrico. Y hay varios casos más. Miles de ciudadanos europeos son abandonados debido a la ignorancia sobre esta enfermedad y a la falta de alternativas terapéuticas. Algunos pacientes han recurrido incluso al suicidio como una manera de escapar al dolor y el sufrimiento. Esta situación se repite en toda Europa. Esta es la razón por la que es necesario adaptar la legislación para proteger a los pacientes europeos y para que los Estados miembros no puedan eludir su responsabilidad negando la existencia de esta enfermedad. La comunidad científica internacional, que ha hecho importantes progresos en el diagnóstico y la evaluación de la EM, todavía no ha encontrado un tratamiento curativo. Algunos pacientes sufren en tal grado la enfermedad que acaban postrados en cama, intubados, sufriendo permanentemente y extenuados, con infecciones, alergias, intolerancia a la luz y al ruido, inflamaciones y alteraciones neuroendocrinas. Son los más enfermos de los más enfermos.

Los sistemas nacionales de salud de los Estados miembros deben respetar la categoría G 93.3 atribuida a la EM o encefalomielitis miálgica en la clasificación ICD-10 de la Organización Mundial de la Salud y sus respectivas listas de enfermedades basadas en la de la OIT y de conformidad con la clasificación. La aprobación es imperativa, solo para proteger los derechos de estos pacientes. Un estudio ha demostrado que esperanza de vida de los pacientes de EM es 25 años inferior a la media.

¿Acepta la Comisión que la encefalomielitis miálgica sea reconocida como una (doble) enfermedad neurológica en cada uno de los Estados miembros a fin de evitar confusiones?

¿Apoya la Comisión la aplicación en los Estados miembros de los Criterios de Consenso Internacional 2003/ICC 2013 de Canadá para diagnosticar la EM?

¿Apoya la Comisión con financiación la investigación biomédica sobre la EM y respeta los derechos de estos enfermos?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de mayo de 2013)

No es competencia de la Comisión reconocer la encefalomielitis miálgica como una enfermedad. La Organización Mundial de la Salud, responsable de la Clasificación Internacional de Enfermedades, ya ha incluido la encefalomielitis miálgica en dicha clasificación.

La aplicación de los Criterios de Consenso Internacional 2003/ICC 2013 de Canadá para el diagnóstico de la encefalomielitis miálgica constituye una cuestión de asistencia sanitaria que es responsabilidad exclusiva de los Estados miembros.

El Séptimo Programa Marco de investigación y desarrollo tecnológico (7PM, 2007-2013) no está apoyando actualmente ningún proyecto de investigación centrado específicamente en la encefalomielitis miálgica. No obstante, el Programa apoya varios proyectos de investigación sobre la neuroinflamación y los procesos autoinmunes cerebrales ([1]), algunos de los cuales pueden proporcionar información pertinente que contribuya a la investigación sobre la encefalomielitis miálgica. Con respecto al tratamiento de algunos de los síntomas de la misma, el Programa Marco apoya asimismo varios proyectos sobre el tratamiento del dolor.

([1]) Para más información sobre los proyectos del 7PM, consulte el sitio web «http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/home_es.html».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003090/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Myalgic encephalomyelitis

In the European Union, more and more people are affected by myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), often wrongfully described as chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS). This disease has no curative treatment. In the international scientific community, the disease is classified as a severe neurological illness, while CFS is an interweaving term that creates confusion and problems for patients, as was admitted, in 2009, by former Commissioner for Health Androulla Vassiliou.

People suffering from ME find themselves completely helpless in this situation, because they not only suffer the painful consequences, but are also wrongly treated as mentally ill by the public health systems or denied access to medical services. Several children have been taken by force and put in a psychiatric hospital where they do not receive tailor-made biomedical treatment. Sophia, from the UK, died. Karina, from Denmark, has been sectioned. And there are several more. There are thousands of European citizens who are abandoned due to ignorance of this disease and lack of treatment options. Some patients have even resorted to suicide as a means to escape the pain and suffering. This situation exists in all of Europe. This is why it is necessary to adapt legislation so that all European patients are protected and the Member States cannot evade their responsibility by denying the existence of this disease. The international scientific community, which has made significant progress in the diagnosis and evaluation of ME, has not yet found a curative treatment. Some of the patients become so sick that they are bedridden, tube-fed, in constant pain and exhaustion, with infections, allergies, intolerance to light and noise, inflammation and neuro-endocrine anomalies. They are the sickest of the sickest.

The national health systems of the Member States have to respect the World Health Organisation's ICD-10 classification G 93.3 for ME or myalgic encephalomyelitis and their respective lists of diseases on the basis of the ILO list, and in accordance with the classification. Endorsement is imperative, solely to protect the rights of people with this disease. A study showed that ME patients die 25 years too soon.

Does the Commission endorse that myalgic encephalomyelitis must be acknowledged as a (double) neurological illness in the respective Member States in order to avoid confusion?

Does the Commission support the implementation of the Canadian Consensus Criteria 2003/ICC 2013 in the Member States for diagnosis of ME?

Does the Commission support biomedical research into ME financially and respect these patients' rights?

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

The Commission does not have the competence to acknowledge myalgic encephalomyelitis as an illness. The World Health Organisation, who is responsible for the classification of diseases, has already included myalgic encephalomyelitis in the International Classification of Diseases.

The implementation of the Canadian Consensus Criteria 2003/ICC 2013 for diagnosis of myalgic encephalomyelitis is a healthcare issue which falls under the exclusive responsibility of the Member States.

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) is not currently supporting any research project specifically focusing on myalgic encephalomyelitis. However, the programme supports several research projects on neuroinflammation and autoimmune processes in the brain ([1]), among which some may generate knowledge relevant for research on myalgic encephalomyelitis. In terms of treating some of the symptoms of myalgic encephalomyelitis, the framework Programme also supports several projects on pain treatment.

([1]) For FP7 project search, consult the website 'http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/home_en.html'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003092/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la ricostruzione della Città della Scienza di Napoli

Il 3 marzo scorso un vasto incendio di origine dolosa ha distrutto quattro capannoni e parzialmente un quinto dei sei che componevano l'intero sito della Città della Scienza, polo tecnologico multifunzionale della città di Napoli, considerato a livello internazionale un centro d'eccellenza.

Il complesso comprendeva, tra l'altro, lo Science Centre, primo museo scientifico interattivo italiano che attraeva nelle sue aree espositive circa 350.000 visitatori l'anno; un incubatore di imprese, che comprendeva 34 imprese operanti soprattutto nei settori ICT, ambientale e dell'industria creativa; un centro di alta formazione e un centro congressi.

Ad oggi, inoltre, erano impiegati più di 500 lavoratori nell'intero complesso, di cui 70 erano dipendenti della Fondazione Città della Scienza.

Gli stessi vertici di ECSITE, la rete europea che coordina le attività di oltre 400 centri e musei scientifici in 50 paesi, hanno subito sottolineato la grave perdita per tutta la città e per l'intera Europa.

Per queste ragioni, la Commissione nei giorni scorsi ha espresso la volontà di partecipare economicamente alla ricostruzione insieme al Governo italiano e alla Regione Campania.

Premesso ciò, può la Commissione far sapere:

— con quali modalità intende intervenire, considerata anche l'emergenza occupazionale che ne è derivata a causa dell'evento doloso?

— Quali sono le azioni finanziabili e i tempi per ottenere tali finanziamenti?

— Se è vero che, nell'ipotesi di dislocamento della nuova Città della Scienza nell'area dismessa di Bagnoli, per la stessa sarebbe possibile utilizzare le risorse previste per il rilancio dell'ex acciaieria?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(30 aprile 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputata alla propria risposta all'interrogazione P-2962/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003092/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Possible funding to rebuild the City of Science in Naples

On 3 March this year, a massive fire, started intentionally, completely destroyed four pavilions and partially destroyed one out of the six that comprised the City of Science site, a multifunctional technological complex in the city of Naples, which was internationally regarded as a centre of excellence.

The complex comprised, among other things, the Science Centre, the first interactive science museum in Italy, whose exhibition areas drew some 350 000 visitors per year; a business incubator housing 34 businesses, mainly operating in the ICT, environmental and creative industries; an advanced education centre; and a conference centre.

Furthermore, over 500 workers were employed at the complex as a whole, including 70 employed by the City of Science Foundation.

The directors of ECSITE, the European network which coordinates the activities of over 400 scientific centres and museums in 50 countries, have stressed that this is a grave loss for the entire city and for the whole of Europe.

For these reasons, in the last few days the Commission has expressed its desire to make a financial contribution to the cost of reconstruction, together with the Italian Government and the regional government of Campania.

In view of this, can the Commission state:

— how it intends to become involved, bearing in mind, *inter alia*, the job crisis caused by this criminal event;

— what measures could be financed, and within what time frame;

— whether it is true that, if the City of Science were to be relocated to the Bagnoli area, it would be possible to allocate to it the resources earmarked for the development of the former steelworks?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question P-2962/2013 ([1]).

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003094/13
aan de Commissie
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(19 maart 2013)

Betreft: Paardenvlees geïmporteerd uit de Verenigde Staten beneden de EU-standaarden

In de European Voice van 14 maart jl. stond een artikel inzake paardenvlees dat werd geïmporteerd vanuit de Verenigde Staten en op de Europese markt werd verkocht, maar dat beneden alle EU-standaarden voor gezondheid en voedselveiligheid is. Het voldoet simpelweg niet aan onze standaarden voor gezondheid en voedselveiligheid, maar toch maakt het ongeveer 20 % uit van het paardenvlees op de EU-markt. Paarden uit de Verenigde Staten krijgen een veelheid aan medicijnen toegediend, waaronder phenylbutazone, die leiden tot verregaande gezondheidsrisico's voor de consument en die in de EU nooit in de voedselketen zouden terechtkomen vanwege de wetgeving op consumentenbescherming hier die de voedselveiligheid garanderen.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze praktijken?

2. In hoeverre gaat de Commissie maatregelen nemen om de volksgezondheid en voedselveiligheid van de Europese burgers te garanderen?

3. Diverse ngo's hebben de Commissie al opgeroepen om een moratorium in te stellen in de EU op de verkoop van paardenvlees afkomstig uit de Verenigde Staten, Canada en Mexico. In hoeverre overweegt de Commissie om een moratorium in te stellen om de voedselveiligheid en de veiligheid van de consument te garanderen? Indien de Commissie geen moratorium overweegt, blijkt hieruit dan niet dat „land van herkomst"-etikettering noodzakelijk is, zowel voor import en export als voor vers en verwerkt vlees?

4. Kan de Commissie beamen dat zij hierover al in februari en maart 2012 informatie heeft ontvangen van de ngo's „the Humane Society of the United States" en „Humane Society International"?

5. Waarom heeft de Commissie tot nu toe geen actie ondernomen terwijl dit volkomen gerechtvaardigd is op grond van de internationale verdragen en afspraken (WTO, GATT, SPSS enz.)?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(24 april 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van toepassingen van stoffen bij paarden die in de EU mogelijk verboden zijn. De VS heeft echter geen toestemming om paardenvlees naar de EU uit te voeren, aangezien er in de VS geen officieel programma bestaat voor de controle van residuen van diergeneesmiddelen dat door de EU is goedgekeurd.

Ook producten die uit derde landen in de EU worden ingevoerd moeten voldoen aan EU-voorschriften. Naleving hiervan wordt gecontroleerd door het Voedsel- en Veterinair Bureau (VVB) van het directoraat-generaal Gezondheid en Consumenten van de Commissie. De uitvoering van het hierboven genoemde programma wordt ook door het VVB geverifieerd. Bovendien is de invoer van paardenvlees alleen toegestaan uit derde landen die voldoen aan de EU-voorschriften inzake volks- en diergezondheid en worden de voor invoer bestemde zendingen bij de grensinspectieposten steekproefsgewijs gecontroleerd op residuen van diergeneesmiddelen voordat zij de EU binnenkomen.

De Commissie evalueert alle mogelijke maatregelen om ervoor te zorgen dat het niveau consumentenbescherming voortdurend op peil blijft.

De Commissie bevestigt de ontvangst van de brieven van de „The Humane Society" van de Verenigde Staten en „Humane Society International" en heeft gezorgd voor een antwoord daarop.

Het VVB heeft controlebezoeken verricht in Canada en Mexico, die paardenvlees naar de EU mogen uitvoeren. Als follow-up heeft de Commissie de betrokken bevoegde autoriteiten verzocht een actieplan in te dienen als respons op de aanbevelingen uit de controlerapporten. De autoriteiten van beide landen hebben hun respectieve actieplannen ingediend; het VVB is belast met de follow-up daarvan. De Commissie zal wat betreft de consumptie van paardenvlees de meest geschikte maatregelen treffen om de bescherming van de gezondheid van de consumenten te kunnen blijven waarborgen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003094/13
to the Commission
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Horse meat imported from the United States below EU standards

There was an article in the European Voice of 14 March 2013 on horse meat imported from the United States and sold on the European market which falls below all EU standards for health and food safety. Although it simply does not meet our health and food safety standards, it accounts for about 20% of the horse meat on the EU market. Horses in the United States are administered a multitude of drugs, including phenylbutazone, which pose extensive health risks for consumers and which would never enter the food chain in the EU because of the legislation on consumer protection here that guarantees food safety.

1. Is the Commission aware of these practices?

2. To what extent is the Commission going to take action in order to guarantee public health and food safety for European citizens?

3. Several NGOs have already called on the Commission to introduce a moratorium in the EU on the sale of horse meat from the United States, Canada and Mexico. To what extent is the Commission considering a moratorium in order to guarantee food and consumer safety? If the Commission is not considering a moratorium, does that not mean that country-of-origin labelling is necessary for both imports and exports and for fresh and processed meat?

4. Can the Commission confirm that it received information on this as early as February and March 2012 from the NGOs The Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International?

5. Why has the Commission not yet taken any action, considering that it would have been perfectly justified to do so under international treaties and agreements (WTO, GATT, SPSS, etc.)?

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

The Commission is aware of the possible uses of substances in horses which are prohibited in the EU. However, the USA is not authorised to export horse meat to the EU as there is no US official control programme for residues of veterinary drugs approved by the EU.

The EU requires that products imported from third countries should also meet its requirements. The compliance is verified by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO). The implementation of the programme referred to above is also verified by the FVO. In addition, the import of horse meat is allowed only from third countries which satisfy EU public and animal health requirements and the consignments intended for import are subject to sampling plans for residues of veterinary drugs at the Border Inspection Post (BIPs) before entering the EU territory.

The Commission is actually evaluating all possible actions to ensure that a satisfactory level of consumer protection is consistently met.

The Commission confirms the receipt of letters from 'The Humane Society' of the United States and 'Humane Society International' to which a reply has been ensured.

The FVO has carried out audit missions in Canada and Mexico who are authorised to export horse meat to the EU. As follow up the Commission asked the relevant competent authorities to submit an action plan in response to the recommendations made in the audit reports. The authorities of both countries provided their respective action plans the follow-up of which is ensured by the FVO. The Commission will continue to take the most appropriate measures to ensure the continued protection of the health of consumers in relation to horse meat consumption.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003095/13
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wstrzymanie unijnych dotacji dla województwa podkarpackiego

W związku z wstrzymaniem unijnych dotacji dla województwa podkarpackiego, co prawdopodobnie związane jest z doniesieniami medialnymi i prowadzonym przez Prokuraturę Apelacyjną w Lublinie postępowaniem dotyczącym prawdopodobnych nieprawidłowości podczas wypłacania dotacji z lat 2011-2012, zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Co było podstawą do wstrzymania płatności i odesłania faktur za grudzień 2012 r. do Urzędu Marszałkowskiego Województwa Podkarpackiego?

2. Na jak długi okres Komisja ma zamiar wstrzymać dotacje?

3. Czy Komisja zwróciła się do Prokuratury Apelacyjnej w Lublinie o przekazanie informacji, jakie dotacje są przedmiotem śledztwa, gdyż z doniesień medialnych wynika, że Urząd Marszałkowski takich informacji nie posiada?

4. Na jakiej podstawie Komisja postanowiła ukarać wszystkich beneficjentów i wstrzymać certyfikację dotacji dla całego regionu (tym samym stosując zbiorową odpowiedzialność, która może mieć negatywny skutek ekonomiczny i gospodarczy dla regionu)?

5. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja, tak żeby nie wstrzymywać wypłacania funduszy na projekty, których śledztwo prokuratury nie dotyczy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(23 kwietnia 2013 r.)

1. W związku z dostępnymi aktualnie informacjami zwracającymi uwagę Komisji na ryzyko poważnych nieprawidłowości w programie regionalnym dla województwa podkarpackiego Komisja zobowiązana jest przeprowadzić dodatkowe weryfikacje. O wycofaniu aktualnego wniosku o płatność zdecydowała instytucja certyfikująca.

2. Czas konieczny do przeprowadzenia dodatkowych weryfikacji zależeć będzie od tego, kiedy właściwe dla tego programu organy udostępnią wymagane przez Komisję informacje.

3. W Polsce oficjalnym odpowiednikiem Komisji w zakresie realizacji przedmiotowego programu jest Zarząd Województwa Podkarpackiego. Jednakże biorąc pod uwagę okoliczności sprawy, Komisja zwróci się także o dodatkowe informacje do Prokuratury Apelacyjnej w Lublinie.

4. Dodatkowe weryfikacje, które Komisja musi przeprowadzić, mają charakter prewencyjny i ich celem jest ochrona interesów finansowych UE. Do czasu uzyskania od władz polskich informacji dotyczących zakresu i charakteru nieprawidłowości Komisja nie będzie rozpatrywać żadnych wniosków o płatność w ramach tego programu regionalnego.

5. Komisja zwróci się o dalsze informacje do Prokuratury Apelacyjnej, niemniej jednak organy państwa członkowskiego powinny równocześnie podjąć odpowiednie działania w celu jak najszybszego wyjaśnienia charakteru potencjalnych nadużyć.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003095/13
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Withholding of EU funding for Podkarpackie province

With regard to the withholding of EU funds for the Podkarpackie province, which is most likely connected with media reports and a case being pursued by the Lublin Appellate Prosecutor concerning possible irregularities in the payment of funds in 2011 and 2012, I should like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. On what grounds are payments being withheld and bills for December 2012 being sent to the office of the leader of the Podkarpackie Provincial Executive?

2. For what length of time does the Commission intend to withhold funds?

3. Has the Commission asked the Lublin Appellate Prosecutor to forward information on what funds are under investigation? According to media reports, the office of the leader of the Podkarpackie Provincial Executive is not in possession of this information.

4. On what grounds did the Commission decide to punish all funding recipients by withholding certification for funds for the entire region, thereby applying collective responsibility which could have a negative economic impact on the region?

5. What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent funding from being withheld for projects that are not the subject of the prosecutor's investigation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

1. On the basis of the currently available information alerting the Commission to the risk of serious irregularities in the Podkarpackie regional programme, the Commission has to carry out additional verifications. It was the certifying authority which decided to withdraw the current payment claim.

2. The length of time necessary to carry out the additional verifications will depend on when the information requested by the Commission is made available by the relevant programme authorities.

3. The official counterpart in Poland of the Commission regarding the implementation of the programme concerned is the Voivodeship Board of the Podkarpackie region. However, given the circumstances of the case, the Commission will also seek additional information from the Appellate Prosecutor in Lublin.

4. The additional verifications which the Commission has to carry out are preventive in nature and aim to protect the financial interests of the EU. Pending the information from the Polish authorities about the scope and nature of irregularities, the Commission will not process any payment claim from this regional programme.

5. The Commission will seek further information from the Appellate Prosecutor, but at the same time Member State authorities should take appropriate action to clarify the nature of the potential irregularities as rapidly as possible.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003098/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(19 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εξέταση από το Υπουργείο Ανάπτυξης συγκεκριμένων περιβαλλοντικών πληροφοριών για την επένδυση «ΙΤΑΝΟΣ ΓΑΙΑ»

Σε συνέχεια της ερώτησής μου αναφορικά με την προσφυγή κατοίκων κατά της απόφασης της Διυπουργικής Επιτροπής Στρατηγικών Επενδύσεων (ΔΥΣΕ) για το επενδυτικό σχέδιο «ΙΤΑΝΟΣ ΓΑΙΑ», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σύμφωνα με την 17/20.9.2012 (ΦΕΚ 3294-10.12.2012) απόφαση της ΔΥΣΕ, οι περιβαλλοντικές πληροφορίες, που εξέτασε σχετικά με την επένδυση και στις οποίες βασίστηκε για να εγκρίνει την ένταξή της στο «fast track», είναι «οι δεσμεύσεις της εταιρείας "LOYALWARD LTD" ως προς το φυσικό καθώς και πολιτιστικό και το κοινωνικοοικονομικό περιβάλλον», «το γεγονός ότι το επενδυτικό σχέδιο "ΙΤΑΝΟΣ ΓΑΙΑ" έχει σχεδιαστεί με αειφορική θεώρηση ενώ η χρήση καινοτόμων τεχνολογιών εξασφαλίζει τη μηδενική επιβάρυνση των διαθέσιμων υδατικών πόρων» και «το γεγονός ότι η εταιρεία "LOYALWARD LTD" έχει δεσμευτεί εγγράφως για τη δημιουργία, πιστοποίηση, υλοποίηση, διαχείριση και συνεχή βελτίωση ενός Συστήματος Περιβαλλοντικής Διαχείρισης προκειμένου να εξασφαλίζεται η προστασία όλων των περιβαλλοντικών παραμέτρων του Έργου».

— Η άρνηση του Υπουργείου Ανάπτυξης να παράσχει στους κατοίκους σειρά συγκεκριμένων περιβαλλοντικών πληροφοριών, στις οποίες η ΔΥΣΕ βασίστηκε για να καταλήξει στην έγκριση και ένταξη της συγκεκριμένης επένδυσης στις διαδικασίες «fast track», παραβιάζει τις διατάξεις της οδηγίας 2003/4/ΕΚ για την πρόσβαση του κοινού σε περιβαλλοντικές πληροφορίες και τις αντίστοιχες της συνθήκης του Άαρχους;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Απριλίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντησή της P-002915/2013 όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση σε περιβαλλοντικές πληροφορίες με βάση την οδηγία 2003/4/ΕΚ ([1]). Σημειώνεται ότι οι δημόσιες αρχές πρέπει να διαθέτουν περιβαλλοντικές πληροφορίες σε όποιον τις ζητεί, χωρίς το πρόσωπο αυτό να υποχρεούται να δηλώσει τον λόγο του ενδιαφέροντός του. Οι πληροφορίες που αναφέρονται στην ερώτηση πρέπει επομένως να είναι προσβάσιμες εφόσον εμπίπτουν στον ορισμό της «περιβαλλοντικής πληροφορίας» (άρθρο 2) και εφόσον δεν καλύπτονται από τυχόν εξαιρέσεις του άρθρου 4 της οδηγίας.

([1]) ΕΕ L 41 της 14.2.2003, σ. 26-32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003098/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Assessment by the Ministry of Development of specific environmental information for the 'ITANOS GAIA' investment

Further to my question on the appeal lodged by residents against the decision of the Interministerial Committee for Strategic Investments regarding the 'ITANOS GAIA' investment project, will the Commission answer the following:

— According to the decision of the Interministerial Committee for Strategic Investments 17/20.9.2012 (Greek Official Gazette 3294-10.12.2012), the environmental information assessed in relation to the investment and on which the decision to include the investment project in the 'fast track' procedure was based, are the 'commitments by the company "LOYALWARD LTD" concerning the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment', 'the fact that the "ITANOS GAIA" investment project has been sustainably designed while the use of innovative technologies ensures that the available water resources will not be overburdened' and 'the fact that the company "LOYALWARD LTD" has committed, in writing, to create, certify, implement, manage and continuously improve an Environmental Management System that will guarantee the protection of all environmental aspects of the Project'.

— Does the Ministry of Development's refusal to provide residents with a range of specific environmental information on which the Interministerial Committee for Strategic Investments based its decision to include this investment project in the 'fast track' procedure, constitute a violation of the provisions of Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information and the corresponding provisions of the Aarhus Convention?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to P-002915/2013 as regards access to environmental information under Directive 2003/4/EC ([1]). It should be noted that public authorities are required to make available environmental information to any applicant at his/her request, without him/her having to state an interest. The information referred to in the question should therefore be accessible if it falls within the definition of 'environmental information' (Article 2) and if it is not covered by any of the exceptions listed in Article 4 of the directive.

([1]) OJ L 41, 14.2.2003, pp. 26-32.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003099/13
al Consejo
Antonio López-Istúriz White (PPE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Hizbulá

Según un reciente informe de las Naciones Unidas, el número de víctimas mortales en Siria a manos de Bashar Al-Assad supera en la actualidad los 60 000. En respuesta a esta situación, la Unión Europea ha adoptado una serie de medidas restrictivas entre las que figura la congelación de los activos de 54 entidades y de 180 personas y la prohibición de expedir visados a 180 personas responsables de la violenta represión de la población civil en Siria o relacionadas con ésta o que apoyan al régimen o se benefician de éste.

¿Podría indicar el Consejo si está al tanto de que, según el diario saudí *Al-Watan*, unos 5 000 combatientes de Hizbulá entraron en Siria en diciembre de 2012 para ayudar al régimen de Bashar Al-Assad? ¿Sabe el Consejo que la embajadora de los EE.UU., Susan Rice, señaló en octubre que Hizbulá es un elemento activo de la máquina de matar de Assad, un hecho corroborado repetidamente por residentes en el país y las fuerzas de la oposición? ¿Está al tanto el Consejo de la carta firmada por rebeldes y activistas sirios y dada a conocer por el grupo de reflexión *Henry Jackson Society*, con sede en Londres, en la que piden a la UE que apoye su lucha contra Bashar Al-Assad y que defina a Hizbulá como entidad terrorista? ¿Sabe el Consejo que Hasán Nasralá, jefe de Hizbulá, ha afirmado que, en caso de que Europa proscriba a Hizbulá como entidad terrorista, se secarán las fuentes de financiación del grupo y se destruirán sus fuentes de apoyo moral, político y material?

Dado que la UE ha adoptado medidas de carácter restrictivo con respecto a otras entidades que apoyan al régimen de Assad, así como que dispone de los medios para poner trabas importantes a la capacidad de funcionamiento de Hizbulá, ¿podría explicar el Consejo por qué no se ha adoptado ninguna medida de este tipo con respecto a Hizbulá?

Además, en respuesta a una pregunta de septiembre 2012 de Auke Zijlstra, diputado al Parlamento Europeo por los Países Bajos, el Consejo señaló que, para que la Unión Europea defina a Hizbulá como entidad terrorista, la Posición Común 2001/931/PESC requiere que la lista se confeccione «sobre la base de informaciones concretas o de elementos (…) que muestren que una autoridad competente», por ejemplo, una autoridad judicial o equivalente, «ha adoptado una decisión respecto de las personas, grupos y entidades mencionados».

¿Podría el Consejo explicar en qué se diferenciaría el procedimiento necesario para incluir en dicha lista a Hizbulá del que en 2003 se consideró suficiente para incluir en la lista negra a Hamás? ¿En qué medida pueden diferir las pruebas con respecto a estos dos casos, dada la responsabilidad reconocida de Hizbulá en relación con las acciones en curso, que claramente se ajustan a la definición que hace la UE de terrorismo? ¿Podría explicar el Consejo, asimismo, de qué modo la conclusión adoptada en febrero de 2013 en el sentido de que Hizbulá fue responsable del ataque terrorista registrado en julio 2012 en Bulgaria, Estado miembro de la UE, no es suficiente para cumplir los criterios mínimos enumerados anteriormente?

Respuesta
(17 de junio de 2013)

La UE apoya la política del Líbano consistente en disociarse del conflicto sirio, tal como decidieron los dirigentes del país en 2011 y acordaron todos los partidos políticos libaneses. Es esencial que dicha política sea respetada en la práctica por parte de todos los actores en Líbano. La UE sigue con preocupación las diversas noticias que apuntan a una participación de Hizbulá en el conflicto que se desarrolla en la parte del territorio sirio cercana a la frontera libanesa.

En relación con la opción de designar a Hizbulá como organización terrorista, toda modificación de la lista de la UE de organizaciones terroristas requiere una decisión unánime de los Estados miembros de la UE. La posible inclusión de Hizbulá en esa lista se ha debatido en diversas ocasiones en el pasado, pero sin que los Estados miembros hayan podido llegar nunca a un acuerdo al respecto.

Desde un punto de vista juridico, para conseguir la designación de una organización como terrorista con arreglo a la Posición Común 2001/931/CFSP (CP931) sobre la aplicación de medidas específicas de lucha contra el terrorismo ([1]), es necesario que se produzca una decisión por parte de una autoridad competente. El Consejo decide si una autoridad competente ha adoptado una decisión cuando el Grupo «Aplicación de medidas específicas de lucha contra el terrorismo» propone una inclusión en la lista de entidades terroristas con arreglo a su régimen de medidas restrictivas. Tal fue el procedimiento seguido en relación con la designación de Hamas como grupo terrorista. Por lo que respecta a Hizbulá, habida cuenta de que están en curso los trabajos consecutivos al atentado de Burgas y de que el Consejo únicamente se planteará si una autoridad competente ha adoptado una decisión de ese tipo cuando se haya propuesto una inclusión en la lista, sería inadecuado pronunciarse en esta fase sobre si se reúnen los criterios establecidos por el Grupo «Aplicación de medidas específicas de lucha contra el terrorismo».

En su declaración de febrero de 2013 sobre el atentado terrorista de Burgas, el Ministro del Interior búlgaro y Europol consideraron la relación con Hizbulá de quienes perpetraron el ataque como una presunción razonable. Las investigaciones sobre este atentado aún siguen abiertas. Las autoridades libanesas se han comprometido a cooperar estrechamente con la investigación. La UE y los Estados miembros tratarán a su debido tiempo sobre el modo adecuado de responder, basándose en todos los elementos determinados por los investigadores.

([1]) DOL 344 de 28.12.2001, pp. 93-96.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003099/13
to the Council
Antonio López-Istúriz White (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Hezbollah

According to a recent United Nations report, those killed in Syria at the hands of Bashar Assad now number over 60 000. In response, the European Union has implemented a series of restrictive measures that include an asset freeze on 54 entities and 180 persons and visa bans on 180 persons 'responsible for or associated with the violent repression against the civilian population in Syria or supporting or benefiting from the regime.'

Is the Council aware that some 5 000 Hezbollah combatants entered Syria in December 2012 to aid the regime of Bashar Assad, according to the Saudi daily Al-Watan? Is the Council aware that US Ambassador Susan Rice indicated in October that Hezbollah is an active component of Assad's 'killing machine', a fact repeatedly verified by Syrian residents and opposition forces? Is the Council aware of the letter signed by Syrian rebels and activists and released by the London-based Henry Jackson Society, calling on the EU to support their struggle against Bashar Assad by designating Hezbollah a terrorist entity? Is the Council aware that Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah has said that should Europe proscribe Hezbollah as a terrorist entity, the sources of the group's funding 'will dry up and the sources of moral, political and material support will be destroyed'?

Given that the EU has placed restrictive measures on other entities that support the Assad regime and has the means to significantly impair Hezbollah's ability to function, can the Council please explain why such action has not been taken against Hezbollah?

Further, in response to a September 2012 query from the Dutch MEP Auke Zijlstra, the Council indicated that in order for the EU to list Hezbollah as a terrorist entity, 'Common Position 2001/931/CFSP requires that the list be drawn up on the basis of precise information or material which indicates that a decision has been taken by a competent authority (i.e. judicial or equivalent authority) in respect of the person, group or entity concerned'.

Can the Council explain how the procedure required to thus designate Hezbollah would differ from that deemed sufficient in the 2003 blacklisting of Hamas, or how the degree of evidence might differ between the two cases, given Hezbollah's known responsibility for ongoing activity that clearly fits the EU definition of terrorism? Can the Council also explain how the February 2013 conclusion that Hezbollah was responsible for the July 2012 terrorist attack in Bulgaria, an EU Member State, does not in and of itself sufficiently fulfil the threshold criteria listed above?

Reply
(17 June 2013)

The EU supports Lebanon's policy of dissociation from the Syrian conflict, as established by the country's leaders in 2011 and agreed by Lebanese political parties. It is essential that this policy be respected in practice by all actors in Lebanon. The EU is following with concern the varying accounts of Hezbollah's involvement in the developments on Syrian territory close to the Lebanese border.

Regarding the option of designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation, all amendments to the EU list of terrorist organisations require a unanimous decision by EU Member States. The possible addition of Hezbollah has been discussed on several occasions in the past, but there has never been consensus among Member States.

From the legal point of view, for the designation of an organisation under Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP (CP931) on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism ([1]), there needs to be a decision of a competent authority. The Council decides whether a decision has been taken by a competent authority if a listing is proposed under the CP931 restrictive measures regime. This was the procedure that was followed in relation to the listing of Hamas. Regarding Hezbollah, given that follow-up work is being undertaken following the Burgas attack, and that the Council will only consider whether there has been a decision of a competent authority when a listing is proposed, it would be inappropriate to comment at this stage whether the criteria in CP931 have been met.

([1]) OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, pp. 93-96.

In their statements of February 2013 on the Burgas terrorist attack, the Bulgarian Interior Minister and Europol qualified the perpetrators' affiliation with Hezbollah as a reasonable assumption. The investigations into the attack continue. The Lebanese authorities have undertaken to cooperate closely with the investigation. The EU and Member States will discuss the appropriate way to respond in due course, based on all the elements identified by the investigators.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003100/13
aan de Commissie
Wim van de Camp (PPE)
(19 maart 2013)

Betreft: Schriftelijke vragen omtrent het verstrekken van verblijfsvergunningen door de regering van Cyprus

Uit mediaberichten ([1]), blijkt dat de Cypriotische regering in ruil voor het kopen van een woning, verblijfsvergunningen verstrekt aan Chinezen.

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van berichten dat de regering van Cyprus aan Chinese staatsburgers, in ruil voor het kopen van een woning, een verblijfvergunning verstrekt?

2. Heeft de Commissie een overzicht van het aantal verblijfsvergunningen dat door de regering van Cyprus is verstrekt?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven in hoeverre het verstrekken van verblijfsvergunningen zich verhoudt tot het Europees beleid om kennismigranten naar de Europese Unie te halen?

4. In hoeverre ondergraaft het beleid van individuele lidstaten het gemeenschappelijke asiel- en migratiebeleid?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(13 mei 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de bepalingen van Reglement 6.2 van de vreemdelingen- en immigratiereglementen van Cyprus waarin de voorwaarden voor het verkrijgen van een verblijfsvergunning zijn vastgesteld voor onderdanen van derde landen die in Cyprus willen investeren ([2]). De Commissie is echter niet op de hoogte van berichten over de uitvoering van dit nationale beleid door Cyprus, noch van het aantal verblijfsvergunningen dat is verstrekt. De Commissie is eveneens op de hoogte van soortgelijke beleidsmaatregelen in andere lidstaten, met name dankzij een recent ad-hoconderzoek over welvarende immigranten dat door het Europees migratienetwerk is uitgevoerd ([3]).

De EU-wetgeving bevat geen geharmoniseerde voorwaarden voor de toegang van investeerders uit derde landen tot de EU. De toegangs- en verblijfsvoorwaarden voor onderdanen van derde landen die in het land willen investeren en langer dan drie maanden willen blijven (met inbegrip van de voorwaarden om onroerend goed te kopen, te investeren in een bedrijf of geld op een bank te zetten) worden dus niet door de EU-wetgeving geregeld.

Cyprus heeft het recht om zelf te bepalen hoeveel nationale verblijfsvergunningen het uitreikt en welke voorwaarden daaraan zijn verbonden voor onderdanen uit derde landen. Deze nationale verblijfsvergunningen geven de onderdanen van derde landen niet het recht om zich buiten Cyprus te vestigen, maar uit hoofde van de Overeenkomst ter uitvoering van het akkoord van Schengen mogen houders van een geldige, door een van de Schengenlanden afgegeven verblijfsvergunning op basis van deze vergunning en een geldig paspoort in principe tot maximum drie maanden in een periode van zes maanden vrij bewegen binnen het Schengengebied.

([1]) Waaronder een artikel op de site http://www.europa-nu.nl/id/vj6zi8099oza/nieuws/verblijfsvergunningen_eu_voor_chinezen?ctx=vim2bqcr62p7.
([2]) http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/crmd/crmd.nsf/All/689810B07B2F3A91C2257A69001F7F33?OpenDocument.
([3]) http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/download.do;jsessionid=84597F3EA6FA39FA09C003122B440F24?fileID=3613.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003100/13
to the Commission
Wim van de Camp (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Written questions concerning the issuing of residence permits by the Government of Cyprus

It would seem from the media reports ([1]) that the Cypriot Government is issuing residence permits to Chinese citizens on the condition that they buy a property on the island.

1. Is the Commission aware of reports that the Government of Cyprus is issuing residence permits to Chinese citizens on the condition that they buy a property on the island?

2. Does the Commission have any information on the number of residence permits issued by the Government of Cyprus?

3. Can the Commission indicate to what extent the issuing of residence permits is in line with the European policy of attracting highly-skilled migrants to the European Union?

4. To what extent do the policies of individual Member States undermine the common asylum and migration policy?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the provisions of Regulation 6(2) of the Aliens and Immigration Regulations enacted by Cyprus, which sets out the criteria to obtain a residence permit for third-country nationals intending to invest in Cyprus ([2]). However, the Commission is not aware of any reports on the implementation of this national policy by Cyprus, not of the number of such residence permits issued. The Commission is also aware of similar policies in other Member States, in particular through a recent ad-hoc query on wealthy immigrants conducted through the European Migration Network ([3]).

Conditions for entry of third-country national investors into the EU are not harmonised under EC law. Determining the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals who wish to invest in the country and stay for longer than three months (including by purchasing real estate, investing in a company or investing money in a bank) is thus not regulated by EC law.

Cyprus is entitled to decide alone on the number of national residence permits and on the conditions that apply when granting national residence permits to third-country nationals. These national permits do not entitle the third-country nationals to reside outside Cyprus, but according to the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement, holders of valid residence permits issued by one of the Schengen Member States may, in principle, on the basis of that permit and a valid passport, move freely for up to 3 months in any 6-month period within the Schengen territory.

([1]) Including an article on the site http://www.europa-nu.nl/id/vj6zi8099oza/nieuws/verblijfsvergunningen_eu_voor_chinezen?ctx=vim2bqcr62p7
([2]) http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/crmd/crmd.nsf/All/689810B07B2F3A91C2257A69001F7F33?OpenDocument.
([3]) http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/download.do;jsessionid=84597F3EA6FA39FA09C003122B440F24?fileID=3613.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003101/13
an die Kommission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(19. März 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und Hongkong

Am 21. Juni 2011 hat Hongkong mit den EFTA-Staaten ein Freihandelsabkommen abgeschlossen. Dieses ist am 1. Oktober 2012 in Kraft getreten. Hongkong ist ein bedeutendes Wirtschaftszentrum in Ostasien und wird oft als freieste Volkswirtschaft der Welt bezeichnet. Die EU hat bis auf ein im Jahr 2011 in Kraft getretenes Freihandelsabkommen mit Südkorea in den Verhandlungen mit ostasiatischen Staaten noch keine Erfolge vorzuweisen.

1. Plant die Kommission, zusätzlich ein Freihandelsabkommen zwischen der EU und der chinesischen Sonderverwaltungsregion Hongkong abzuschließen und damit die Bindung zu Asien zu stärken?

2. Welche Schritte gedenkt die Kommission zu setzen, um den Wirtschaftsaustausch mit asiatischen Staaten und globalen Finanzzentren, insbesondere Hongkong und Singapur, zu fördern und dadurch das weltweite Wachstum zu stimulieren?

3. Welche Hindernisse stehen einem solchen Abkommen im Wege?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(7. Mai 2013)

Die EU treibt ihr handelspolitisches Programm mit ihren Partnern in Asien sehr aktiv voran. Mit Südkorea wurde bereits ein Freihandelsabkommen unterzeichnet; mit Singapur wurden die Verhandlungen im letzten Dezember abgeschlossen. Mit Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand und Japan wird derzeit über Freihandelsabkommen verhandelt.

Was die Sonderverwaltungsregion Hongkong angeht, ist es nicht gesichert, dass europäische Unternehmen von möglichen Verhandlungen über ein Freihandelsabkommen profitieren würden, da Hongkong in wirtschaftlichen Analysen regelmäßig als eine der freiesten Volkswirtschaften der Welt eingestuft wird. Es gibt kaum Berichte über handelspolitische Irritationen oder Forderungen europäischer Unternehmen nach weiterer Marktöffnung.

Die Tatsache, dass derzeit keine Verhandlungen über ein Freihandelskommen vorgesehen sind, bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass die Kommission ihre Beziehungen mit Hongkong vernachlässigt. Im Rahmen des Jährlichen Dialogs beispielsweise wird eine große Bandbreite von Themen abgedeckt (gesundheitspolizeiliche und pflanzenschutzrechtliche Maßnahmen, Finanzregulierung, Steuern und Zoll, Luftfahrt, Umwelt, Wettbewerb usw.), wobei ein besonderer Schwerpunkt auf Fragen der Finanzregulierung liegt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003101/13
to the Commission
Richard Seeber (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Free trade agreement between the EU and Hong Kong

On 21 June 2011, Hong Kong concluded a free trade agreement with the EFTA countries. This agreement entered into force on 1 October 2012. Hong Kong is an important economic centre in East Asia and is often described as the freest economy in the world. Apart from a free trade agreement with South Korea, which entered into force in 2011, the EU is yet to have any success in its negotiations with East Asian states.

1. Does the Commission also plan to conclude a free trade agreement between the EU and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China and in so doing strengthen ties with Asia?

2. What steps does it intend to take to promote economic exchange with Asian states and global financial centres, in particular Hong Kong and Singapore, thereby stimulating global growth?

3. What obstacles stand in the way of such an agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The EU is very active in advancing its trade policy agenda with partners in Asia. A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was already concluded with South Korea while negotiations with Singapore were completed last December. FTA negotiations are ongoing with Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Japan.

Regarding the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, gains for EU companies from a hypothetical FTA negotiation appear less certain as Hong Kong, indeed, routinely tops the charts of the world's freest economies. There are few trade irritants reported or specific requests for further market opening from EU businesses.

However, the absence of an immediate prospect for FTA negotiations does not mean that the Commission is not investing in its relationship with Hong Kong. For example, the Annual Dialogue covers a wide range of issues (Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, financial regulations, customs and taxation, aviation, environment, competition etc) with a special emphasis on financial regulatory matters.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003103/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Minimum harmonisation of trade in scrap metal

I would like to bring to the attention of the Commission the issue of the criminal trade in scrap metal. Not all trade in scrap metal is illegal; however, in the United Kingdom the illegal trade has grown in scale and damage as a result of the increase in its market value.

It has taken a great toll in my constituency of London. For instance, from the period 2008-2011, figures obtained by BBC London reveal that delays for rail commuters in the South-East of England and in London rose by 700% as metal was stripped from the tracks for illegal sale. This resulted in lost time for commuters and a staggering GBP 3.6 million bill in compensation for rail operators. The overall damage in the United Kingdom is estimated at around GBP 7 billion a year, and the British Transport Police placed this issue as secondary only to the threat of terrorism. There are suspicions also of a cross-border illegal trade across Member States in the EU.

We must therefore commend the passing of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act in the United Kingdom last week to re-regulate the scrap metal industry. The UK Home Office hopes this bill will 'remove the rewards that make metal theft such a low risk criminal enterprise for metal thieves and unscrupulous dealers'.

Under this new Act, scrap metal dealers will have to keep transaction records for every purchase, and this must be done by electronic payment or cheque. This should leave an effective audit trail to help regulate the industry. The Act also increases the fines for breach of the law, and steps up police powers to search areas associated with the trade, with the appropriate warrant. I note that similar action has been taken in France.

Therefore, given the criminal elements involved in this trade, the damage it can inflict, and the possible cross-border implications, has the Commission considered legislating for minimum harmonisation to prevent criminals taking advantage of different regulatory regimes in different Member States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission confirms that metal theft is a cross-border problem with a direct impact on industry, culture, the environment and the internal market.

The Commission has been financing the Pol-PRIMETT project ([1]). It aims to tackle metal theft via a transnational public — private sector partnership. It has developed EU Good Practice Guide comprising a range of metal theft toolkits as well as the United Kingdom's Crown Prosecution Service's legal guide on metal theft and the Railpol's Copper e-book which helps identify cable from across the EU and alerts law enforcement agencies and scrap metal dealers to cable which may be stolen.

In 2010, France became the first EU Member State to change legislation to tackle the increase of metal theft. A number of EU Member States have adopted a similar approach. Belgium, Bulgaria, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom are all at varying stages of legislative change.

Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA on the fight against organised crime covers metal theft if committed by a criminal organisation, for offences punishable by imprisonment of four years or more under national law. There are currently no other plans to introducing any new EU criminal legislation in this area.

The EU policy cycle on serious and organised crime 2011-2013, which is the first attempt at EU-level cooperation on intelligence-led policing to tackle cross-border crime, currently includes a focus on mobile organised criminal groups, with metal theft being one of the main topics under discussion.

([1]) See http://www.pol-primett.org/.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003104/13
a la Comisión
Michael Cashman (S&D), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D) y Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Seguimiento por la Comisión de la legislación nacional incompatible con la legislación de la UE en materia de igualdad de trato

Hace un año, un conjunto de honorables diputados atrajeron la atención de la Comisión sobre la probabilidad de que la ley húngara CCVI de 2011 relativa al derecho a la libertad de conciencia y religión y sobre la condición jurídica de las iglesias, confesiones religiosas y comunidades religiosas sea incompatible con la legislación de la UE, y en particular con la Directiva 2000/78/CE (pregunta escrita E-001428/2012).

En su respuesta escrita, la Comisión se mostró de acuerdo en que era preciso examinar la ley en mayor medida y resolvió ponerse «en contacto con las autoridades húngaras para solicitar más información y examinar si la legislación húngara se ajusta a la Directiva 2000/78/CE».

Al cabo de un año, los honorables diputados desean conocer las medidas adoptadas por la Comisión como seguimiento de su compromiso de examinar la compatibilidad de la ley con la legislación de la UE, y en particular con la Directiva 2000/78/CE.

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de mayo de 2013)

Como consecuencia de la carta de Su Señoría que puso en conocimiento de la Comisión la posibilidad de que la ley húngara CCVI de 2011 (relativa al derecho a la libertad de conciencia y de religión y a la condición jurídica de las iglesias, confesiones religiosas y comunidades religiosas en Hungría) fuera incompatible con el Derecho de la UE, la Comisión llevó a cabo una investigación preliminar y, a continuación, se puso efectivamente en contacto con las autoridades húngaras haciéndoles preguntas más precisas.

Tras la evaluación de la respuesta de las autoridades húngaras, que deberá presentarse a finales de mayo de 2013, la Comisión puede decidir incoar un procedimiento de infracción con arreglo al artículo 258 del TFUE contra Hungría mediante el envío de una carta de emplazamiento.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003104/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cashman (S&D), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D) und Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(19. März 2013)

Betrifft: Folgemaßnahmen der Kommission im Zusammenhang mit der Unvereinbarkeit von nationalstaatlichen Rechtsvorschriften mit Rechtsvorschriften der EU über die Gleichbehandlung

Vor einem Jahr machten Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments die Kommission darauf aufmerksam, dass das ungarische Gesetz CCVI aus dem Jahre 2011 zum Recht auf Gewissens- und Religionsfreiheit und zur Rechtsstellung von Kirchen, Religionsbekenntnissen und religiösen Gemeinschaften in Ungarn gegen EU-Recht und insbesondere gegen die Richtlinie 2000/78/EG verstoßen könnte (schriftliche Anfrage E-001428/2012).

In ihrer Antwort vertrat die Kommission ebenfalls die Auffassung, das Gesetz müsse näher geprüft werden und teilte mit, sie werde bei den ungarischen Behörden nähere Informationen einholen und prüfen, ob das ungarische Gesetz mit der Richtlinie 2000/78/EG vereinbar sei.

Seither ist ein Jahr vergangen. Kann die Kommission mitteilen, welche Schritte sie unternommen hat, um ihre Zusage einzulösen und zu prüfen, ob dieses Gesetz mit dem EU-Recht und insbesondere mit der Richtlinie 2000/78/EG vereinbar ist?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(17. Mai 2013)

Auf das Schreiben der Abgeordneten hin, in dem sie die Kommission darauf hinwiesen, dass das ungarische Gesetz CCVI von 2011 — über das Recht auf Gewissens- und Religionsfreiheit und über den Rechtsstand der Kirchen, Konfessionen und religiösen Gemeinschaften in Ungarn — mit dem EU-Recht unvereinbar sein könnte, hat die Kommission nach einer ersten Untersuchung die ungarischen Behörden kontaktiert, um genauere Einzelheiten zu erfragen.

Nach Prüfung der Antwort der ungarischen Behörden, die voraussichtlich Mai 2013 abgeschlossen sein wird, kann die Kommission beschließen, mit der Übermittlung eines Aufforderungsschreibens ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gemäß Artikel 258 AEUV gegen Ungarn einzuleiten.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-003104/13
a Bizottság számára
Michael Cashman (S&D), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Göncz Kinga (S&D), Gurmai Zita (S&D), Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D) és Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(2013. március 19.)

Tárgy: Az EU egyenlő bánásmódra vonatkozó jogszabályaival összeegyeztethetetlen nemzeti jogszabályok bizottsági nyomon követése

Egy évvel ezelőtt képviselők felhívták a Bizottság figyelmét arra, hogy a lelkiismereti és vallásszabadság jogáról, valamint a magyarországi egyházak, vallásfelekezetek és vallási közösségek jogállásáról szóló 2011. évi CCVI. magyar törvény valószínűleg összeegyeztethetetlen az uniós joggal, különösen a 2000/78/EK irányelvvel (Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-001428/2012).

Írásbeli válaszában a Bizottság egyetértett azzal, hogy a kérdés további vizsgálatra érdemes, és ígéretet tett arra, hogy „felveszi a kapcsolatot a magyar hatóságokkal további tájékoztatásért és annak vizsgálata céljából, hogy a magyar jogszabály összhangban van-e a 2000/78/EK irányelvvel".

Egy év elteltével a képviselők tudni szeretnék, milyen lépéseket tett a Bizottság arra vonatkozó ígéretével kapcsolatban, hogy megvizsgálja a törvény összeegyeztethetőségét az uniós jogszabályokkal, különösen a 2000/78/EK irányelvvel.

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. május 17.)

Miután a tisztelt képviselők levelükben felhívták a Bizottság figyelmét arra, hogy a lelkiismereti és vallásszabadság jogáról, valamint az egyházak, vallásfelekezetek és vallási közösségek jogállásáról szóló, 2011. évi CCVI. magyar törvény összeegyeztethetetlen lehet az uniós joggal, a Bizottság előzetes vizsgálatot indított, amelynek lefolytatását követően valóban megkereste a magyar hatóságokat, és részletesebb kérdéseket intézett hozzájuk.

Attól függően, hogy a magyar hatóságok mit közölnek 2013. május végére várható válaszukban, a Bizottság úgy dönthet, hogy felszólító levelet küld Magyarországnak, és ezzel elindíthatja az EUMSZ 258. cikke szerinti kötelezettségszegési eljárást.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003104/13
aan de Commissie
Michael Cashman (S&D), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D) en Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(19 maart 2013)

Betreft: Actie van de Commissie ten aanzien van nationale wetgeving die niet strookt met de EU-wetgeving inzake gelijke behandeling

Een jaar geleden hebben EP-leden de Europese Commissie opmerkzaam gemaakt (Schriftelijke vraag E-001428/2012) op de mogelijkheid dat de Hongaarse Wet CCVI van 2011 betreffende het recht op gewetens- en godsdienstvrijheid en betreffende de wettelijke status van kerken, religieuze denominaties en religieuze gemeenschappen wellicht niet verenigbaar is met het recht van de Unie en met name met Richtlijn 2000/78/EG.

In haar schriftelijk antwoord gaf de Europese Commissie toe dat de wet nader onderzoek verdiende, en besloot „de Hongaarse autoriteiten om aanvullende informatie [te] verzoeken en [te] onderzoeken of de Hongaarse wetgeving in overeenstemming is met Richtlijn 2000/78/EG".

Nu er een jaar is verstreken jaar willen de EP-leden graag weten welke stappen de Commissie heeft genomen om uitvoering te geven aan haar toezegging dat zij zou onderzoeken of de wet verenigbaar is met het EU-recht en in het bijzonder met Richtlijn 2000/78/EG.

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(17 mei 2013)

Naar aanleiding van de brief van het geachte Parlementslid waarin onder de aandacht van de Commissie wordt gebracht dat de Hongaarse Wet CCVI uit 2011 — over het recht op vrijheid van geweten en godsdienst, en over de wettelijke status van kerken, religieuze denominaties en religieuze gemeenschappen in Hongarije — mogelijk onverenigbaar is met het EU-recht, heeft de Commissie voorbereidend onderzoek verricht en vervolgens inderdaad contact opgenomen met de Hongaarse autoriteiten om een antwoord te krijgen op meer concrete vragen.

Na de beoordeling van het antwoord van de Hongaarse autoriteiten, dat uiterlijk eind mei 2013 wordt verwacht, kan de Commissie besluiten om krachtens artikel 258 VWEU een inbreukprocedure in te leiden tegen Hongarije door een ingebrekestelling te versturen.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003104/13
komissiolle
Michael Cashman (S&D), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D) ja Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(19. maaliskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Yhtäläistä kohtelua koskevan EU:n lainsäädännön vastaisista kansallisista laeista johtuvat komission jatkotoimet

Vuosi sitten parlamentin jäsenet saattoivat komission tietoisuuteen, että vuoden 2011 laki CCVI oikeudesta uskonnonvapauteen ja omantunnonvapauteen sekä kirkkojen, uskontokuntien ja uskonnollisten yhteisöjen oikeudellisesta asemasta Unkarissa on mahdollisesti EU:n lainsäädännön ja erityisesti direktiivin 2000/78/EY vastainen (kirjallinen kysymys E-001428/2012).

Kirjallisessa vastauksessaan komissio oli samaa mieltä siitä, että lakia on syytä tutkia tarkemmin ja totesi, että "komissio ottaa yhteyttä Unkarin viranomaisiin saadakseen lisätietoja ja tutkiakseen, onko Unkarin lainsäädäntö direktiivin 2000/78/EY mukainen".

Koska tästä on kulunut vuosi, parlamentin jäsenet haluaisivat tietää, mihin lupaamiinsa jatkotoimenpiteisiin komissio on ryhtynyt tutkiakseen, onko laki EU:n lainsäädännön ja erityisesti direktiivin 2000/78/EY mukainen.

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(17. toukokuuta 2013)

Saatuaan arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen kirjeen, jolla saatettiin komission tietoon mahdollisuus, että Unkarin vuoden 2011 laki CCVI oikeudesta omantunnonvapauteen ja uskonnonvapauteen sekä kirkkojen, uskontokuntien ja uskonnollisten yhteisöjen oikeudellisesta asemasta Unkarissa voisi olla EU:n lainsäädännön vastainen, komissio teki alustavan tutkimuksen ja otti sen jälkeen yhteyttä Unkarin viranomaisiin esittääkseen tarkempia kysymyksiä.

Unkarin viranomaisten on jätettävä vastauksensa toukokuun 2013 loppuun mennessä. Vastauksen arvioinnin jälkeen komissio voi päättää aloittaa rikkomusmenettelyn Unkaria vastaan SEUT-sopimuksen 258 artiklan mukaisesti lähettämällä Unkarille virallisen ilmoituksen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003104/13
to the Commission
Michael Cashman (S&D), Ulrike Lunacek (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Kinga Göncz (S&D), Zita Gurmai (S&D), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D) and Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Commission follow-up to national laws incompatible with EU equal treatment legislation

One year ago, honourable Members brought to the attention of the Commission the probability that the Hungarian Act CCVI of 2011 on the Right to Freedom of Conscience and Religion, and on the Legal Status of Churches, Religious Denominations and Religious Communities in Hungary, is incompatible with EC law, and in particular with Directive 2000/78/EC (Written Question E-001428/2012).

In its written answer, the Commission concurred that the Act was worthy of further examination, and resolved to 'contact the Hungarian authorities for further information and to examine whether Hungarian law is in conformity with Directive 2000/78/EC'.

As one year has passed, the honourable Members would like to know what action the Commission has taken to follow up on its promise to examine the compatibility of the Act with EC law, and in particular with Directive 2000/78/EC.

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Following the Honourable Member's letter which brought to the Commission's attention the possibility that the Hungarian Act CCVI of 2011 — on the Right to Freedom of Conscience and Religion and on the Legal Status of Churches, Religious Denominations and Religious Communities in Hungary — could be incompatible with EC law, the Commission has conducted a preliminary research and then indeed contacted the Hungarian authorities by proposing more precise questions.

Following the evaluation of the Hungarian authorities' response, which is due by the end of May 2013, the Commission may decide to open infringement proceedings under Article 258 TFEU against Hungary by sending a letter of formal notice.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003105/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Dysfonctionnement d'une enquête publique de la Commission européenne

Dans le cadre du réexamen de la législation et du plan d'action de l'Union européenne en matière d'agriculture biologique, la Commission européenne a lancé une consultation publique ouverte en ligne jusqu'au 10 avril 2013, tout citoyen pouvant soumettre anonymement ses réponses. Le résultat de cette consultation contribuera à l'élaboration des nouvelles normes en la matière.

Ayant été alertée sur de possibles dysfonctionnements de cette consultation publique, j'ai pu constater, après vérification, qu'il était, en effet, possible pour une même personne de répondre plusieurs fois à la consultation, ce qui laisse craindre de possibles manipulations qui orienteraient ses résultats dans un sens différent de celui de l'intérêt général.

1. La Commission considère-t-elle donc que toutes les garanties de sécurité ont été prises pour assurer la fiabilité et l'impartialité des résultats de cette consultation publique et informer au mieux le législateur?

2. Plus particulièrement, des mesures contre la validation automatique et massive de réponses *(flooding)* ont-elles été prises?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(15 mai 2013)

Le programme de travail de la Commission pour 2013 comprend notamment le réexamen du cadre politique et législatif actuel relatif à la production biologique, et, en particulier, du règlement (CE) nº 834/2007 du Conseil ([1]). Dans ce contexte, une consultation publique a été effectuée au moyen d'un questionnaire en ligne pendant une période de douze semaines; elle s'est achevée le 10 avril 2013. Tout un chacun pouvait également s'exprimer librement sur le sujet par l'intermédiaire d'une boîte aux lettres électronique dédiée.

1. Les services de la Commission avaient prévu que la consultation susciterait un vaste intérêt de la part du public. Tel a bien été le cas, et la Commission a reçu 44 846 réponses au total. C'est la raison pour laquelle il a été décidé de lancer un questionnaire composé de questions fermées, de façon à ce que les réponses puissent être dépouillées automatiquement par un logiciel statistique. Les résultats de ce questionnaire font actuellement l'objet d'une analyse attentive. Les premiers résultats font état de données homogènes. En particulier, les tendances observées vont dans le même sens que les commentaires libres envoyés par les citoyens et les entreprises.

La consultation publique ne constitue qu'une partie du processus consultatif. La Commission a déjà interrogé plus de quatre-vingt-dix parties prenantes et elle consulte régulièrement le groupe consultatif «Agriculture biologique».

2. La Commission est consciente des difficultés qu'entraîne l'anonymat des réponses à cette consultation. Des mesures visant à empêcher toute validation automatique et massive des réponses ont été prises, en particulier par l'introduction d'un outil de sécurité spécifique (le test «Captcha»). Un tel outil permet de garantir qu'aucun robot ou processus automatisé n'a pu valider les réponses.

Par ailleurs, les services de la Commission ont vérifié que le site web n'avait fait l'objet d'aucune attaque particulière. Le nombre limité de réponses identiques montre qu'il n'y a eu ni validations massives à l'identique ni manipulations des résultats.

([1]) Règlement (CE) no 834/2007 du Conseil du 28 juin 2007 relatif à la production biologique et à l'étiquetage des produits biologiques (JO L 189 du 20.7.2007).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003105/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Irregularities in a public survey held by the European Commission

In the context of the review of the EU policy on organic agriculture legislation and action plan, the European Commission launched an open public consultation online, to last until 10 April 2013, providing all EU citizens with the opportunity to submit their responses anonymously. The findings of this consultation will help to ensure the development of new standards in the field.

Having been alerted to possible irregularities in this public consultation, I looked into the matter and discovered that it was indeed possible for one person to answer the survey more than once. This raises concerns with regard to possible manipulation, potentially steering the findings of the consultation in a direction running counter to the general public interest.

1. Does the Commission therefore believe that all precautions have been taken to ensure that the findings of this public consultation are reliable and impartial and provide the legislator with the best possible information?

2. More specifically, have measures been taken to prevent automatic, mass validation of responses (*flooding*)?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission work programme for 2013 includes a review of the current political and legislative framework for organic production in particular Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 ([1]). In this context, a consultation to the public through an online questionnaire was open for 12 weeks ending 10 April 2013. Free contributions were also possible through a dedicated mail box.

1. The Commission services had anticipated the consultation to draw a large interest from the public. Indeed this was the case, as the Commission received a total of 44 846 replies. This is the reason why it was decided to propose a questionnaire with closed questions, whose the replies can be automatically analysed thanks to a statistical software. The results of the questionnaire are being analysed carefully. Preliminary results show consistent results. In particular, the observed trends are in line with the elements provided by free contributions submitted by citizens and companies.

The public consultation is only one part of the consultation process. The Commission has already interviewed more than 90 stakeholders and regularly consults the advisory group on organic farming.

2. The Commission is aware of difficulties inherent to the fact that the consultation was anonymous. Measures to prevent automatic, mass-validation of responses have been taken, in particular the introduction of a specific security tool ('Captcha'). The usage of such a tool guarantees that no robot or automatic process has answered.

Furthermore, the Commission services have checked that there was no specific attack on the website. The limited number of identical answers indicates that there were no mass identical interventions and no manipulation of the results.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007).

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés P-003106/13
a Bizottság számára
Hankiss Ágnes (PPE)
(2013. március 19.)

Tárgy: A szlovák állampolgársági törvény általi jogfosztásról

2012 szeptemberében az Európai Parlamenthez intézett petíciót (1298/2012) a magyar Legfelsőbb Bíróság volt elnöke, dr. Lomnici Zoltán, valamint Gubík László, szlovák állampolgár, aki a módosított szlovák állampolgársági törvény által vesztette el állampolgárságát.

A Szlovákia alkotmányának 5. paragrafusában rögzítettek szerint a szlovákiai magyar nemzetiségű állampolgárokat a magyar állampolgárság felvétele miatt nem érheti joghátrány, szlovák állampolgárságuktól akaratuk ellenére nem foszthatók meg.

A magyar állampolgárságot felvevők tehát jóhiszeműen, a szlovák alkotmány érvényességében bízva jártak el. A szlovák hatóságok azonban levélben értesítették az érintetteket szlovák állampolgárságuk elvesztéséről, jogorvoslati lehetőséget sem biztosítva.

A súlyosan jogfosztó és az emberi méltóságot is súlyosan sértő eljárás elszenvedői között van egy száz esztendős magyar nemzetiségű, szlovák állampolgárságú asszony, aki Szlovákiát hazájának tekinti, ugyanakkor sok évtizedes álma válhatott valóra azzal, hogy a szlovák mellé felvehette szülőhazájának állampolgárságát is. Az idős hölgyet állampolgárságával együtt megfosztották állampolgári jogaitól, többek között például személyi igazolványától.

Mint ismeretes az Európai Unió a nemzeti alkotmányokkal összefüggő kérdéseket tagállami hatáskörben hagyja. Mindazonáltal – ahogy Ön ezt a magyar alkotmány kritikájának élharcosaként oly sokszor hangoztatja –, ha alkotmányos kérdésekben alapvető emberi jogok sérülnek, az Unió illetékes szervei is állásfoglalásra kényszerülnek.

Tisztelettel kérdezem Önt: a szlovák eljárást összeegyeztethetőnek tartja-e az alapvető emberi jogokkal? Remélhetik-e a jogsértést szenvedett magyar nemzetiségű szlovák állampolgárok, hogy Ön mint az emberi jogok elszánt védelmezője, ugyanolyan elkötelezetten próbál meg nyomást gyakorolni Szlovákiára alkotmányos és emberi jogi kötelezettségeinek a teljesítése érdekében, ahogyan más esetekben ezt Öntől megszokhattuk?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. május 3.)

A tisztelt képviselő kérdésében említett helyzetet illetően a Bizottság a P-005994/2011, P-002730/12 és P-000647/2013 számú írásbeli kérdésekre adott válaszaiban ismerteti a Szlovák Köztársaság állampolgárságról szóló 250/2010-es törvényének hatásaira vonatkozó, uniós jog szerinti értékelését ([1]). Az a tény, hogy a szlovák alkotmány 5. cikke kimondja, hogy akarata ellenére senkit nem lehet megfosztani szlovák állampolgárságától, nem befolyásolja az említett értékelést.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003106/13
to the Commission
Ágnes Hankiss (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Deprivation of rights as a result of the Slovak Citizenship Act

In September 2012, a petition, number 1298/2012, was submitted to Parliament by Dr Zoltán Lomnici, former President of the Supreme Court, and László Gubík, a Slovak citizen, who had lost his citizenship as a result of the amended Slovak Citizenship Act.

According to paragraph 5 of the Slovak Constitution, ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia may not be put at a legal disadvantage as a result of taking Hungarian citizenship, neither may their Slovak citizenship be withdrawn against their will.

Those taking Hungarian citizenship thus acted in good faith, trusting in the validity of the Slovak Constitution. However, the Slovak authorities informed those concerned of the loss of their Slovak citizenship by letter and offered no opportunity for legal remedy.

Among the victims of this procedure, which has resulted in disenfranchisement and serious violation of human dignity, is a hundred-year-old woman who is Hungarian by nationality and Slovak by citizenship. She considers Slovakia to be her home but for decades had dreamed of taking the nationality of her birthplace, in addition to her Slovak nationality. Apart from her citizenship, the elderly lady has been deprived of her rights as a citizen and had her identity card taken away.

The European Union, as we know, considers matters connected with national constitutions to fall within the competence of the Member States. However — as you are fond of asserting in support of criticisms of the Hungarian Constitution — if matters in connection with a constitution result in a violation of fundamental human rights, the relevant EU bodies are compelled to deliver an opinion.

Does the Commission consider the Slovak procedure to be compatible with fundamental human rights? Can those Slovak citizens who are Hungarian by nationality whose rights have been violated hope that you, as resolute defenders of human rights, will show the same commitment to putting pressure on Slovakia to fulfil its constitutional and human rights obligations as they have come to expect?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

As regards the situations described by the Honourable Member in her question, the Commission has provided its assessment on the implications of the Law 250/2010 on citizenship of the Slovak Republic in the light of EC law in its replies to written questions P-005994/2011, P-002730/12 and P-000647/2013 ([1]). The fact that the Slovak Constitution enshrines, in its Article 5, the rule that no one must be deprived of the citizenship of the Slovak Republic against his will does not affect this assessment.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003107/13
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Sentencia del TJUE en el caso Mohamed Aziz contra CatalunyaCaixa

La Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea (TJUE), del pasado día 14 de marzo, en el caso Mohamed Aziz contra la Caixa d'Estalvis de Catalunya, Tarragona i Manresa (Catalunyacaixa), por la que se declara contraria al Derecho europeo la inoponibilidad de la existencia de cláusulas abusivas (de conformidad con la Directiva 93/13/CEE de cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con los consumidores) en un procedimiento de ejecución hipotecaria, tiene importantes consecuencias para los ciudadanos españoles incursos en procedimientos de ejecución hipotecaria que implican el alzamiento de su vivienda.

¿Qué medidas tiene pensado adoptar la Comisión para asegurar que el Gobierno español da cumplimiento a la sentencia, verificando la adecuación del régimen judicial de revisión y adopción de medidas cautelares sobre eventuales «cláusulas abusivas» que no resultan compatibles con el Derecho europeo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2013)

A raíz de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea de 14 de marzo de 2013 en el asunto C-415/11, España modificó su legislación nacional el 14 de mayo del mismo año para hacerla conforme a dicha sentencia. La Ley 1/2013, de 14 de mayo, de medidas para reforzar la protección a los deudores hipotecarios, reestructuración de deuda y alquiler social se publicó en el Boletín Oficial del Estado el 15 de mayo de 2013, entrando en vigor ese mismo día.

Entre otras cosas, esta Ley ofrece a los consumidores la oportunidad de oponerse a los procedimientos de ejecución hipotecaria basados en cláusulas contractuales abusivas en el plazo de 10 días, y, paralelamente, obliga a los jueces a considerar las cláusulas contractuales abusivas de oficio también en relación con los procedimientos de ejecución hipotecaria. Como medida transitoria, la Ley de 14 de mayo de 2013 da a los deudores un mes para plantear objeciones basadas en unas cláusulas contractuales abusivas en relación con procedimientos de ejecución hipotecaria que estuvieran pendientes en la fecha de entrada en vigor de las nuevas normas.

La Comisión estuvo regularmente en contacto con las autoridades españolas durante el proceso de modificación de la legislación y considera que ello ha propiciado mejoras significativas. La Comisión continuará siguiendo de cerca la situación y, en caso de ser informada de la existencia de problemas en la interpretación o aplicación de las nuevas normas, volverá a plantear la cuestión a las autoridades españolas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003107/13
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: ECJ judgment in the case of Mohamed Aziz against CatalunyaCaixa

The European Court of Justice (CJ) judgment of 14 March, in the case of *Mohamed Aziz* v the *Caixa d'Estalvis de Catalunya, Tarragona i Manresa* (CatalunyaCaixa), declaring the unenforceability of the existence of unfair terms in a foreclosure proceedings (in accordance with Directive 93/13/EC on unfair terms in consumer contracts) as being contrary to EC law, has significant consequences for Spanish nationals subject to foreclosure proceedings that involve the repossession of their homes.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the Spanish Government complies with the judgment, by verifying the appropriateness of the legal process for review and adoption of precautionary measures regarding any 'unfair terms' that are incompatible with European law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

Further to the ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 14 March 2013 in Case C-415/11, Spain amended its national legislation on 14 May 2013 to bring it in line with the CJEU's ruling. 'Ley 1/2013, de 14 de mayo, de medidas para reforzar la protección a los deudores hipotecarios, reestructuración de deuda y alquiler social' was published in the Spanish Official Journal on 15 May 2013 and entered into force the same day.

Amongst other things, it gives consumers the opportunity to object to mortgage enforcement proceedings on the basis of unfair contract terms within ten days and, in parallel, obliges judges to consider unfair contract terms ex officio also in connection with mortgage enforcement proceedings. As a transition measure, the Law of 14 May 2013 gives debtors one month to raise objections based on unfair contract terms in relation to enforcement proceedings which were pending at the date of entry into force of the new rules.

The Commission was regularly in contact with the Spanish authorities during the amendment process and considers that it has led to significant improvements. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation closely and, should it receive information that there are problems in the interpretation or application of the new rules, will raise the issue again with the Spanish authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003108/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Ayuda a la ciudad española de Lorca

La ciudad española de Lorca sufrió hace casi dos años terremotos que originaron, junto a tragedias personales, graves daños a las infraestructuras y viviendas. A las ayudas económicas aprobadas por las administraciones españolas se unió la solidaridad de la Unión Europea. El Banco Europeo de Inversiones concedió un crédito de 185 millones de euros y también, a propuesta de la Comisión, el Parlamento aprobó una ayuda de más de veinte millones de euros a través del Fondo de Solidaridad de la Unión Europea.

Se van a cumplir dos años de la catástrofe y la situación de los vecinos en esa localidad sigue siendo preocupante ante los retrasos en la reconstrucción de la urbanización y edificación. De ahí que pregunte a la Comisión:

1. ¿Se ha dispuesto ya de toda la ayuda aprobada del Fondo de Solidaridad de la Unión Europea?

2. ¿En qué logros concretos ha culminado esa ayuda?

3. ¿Dispone la Comisión de datos precisos sobre los planes de ejecución y supervisión de esa ayuda?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de mayo de 2013)

Tras el terremoto de Lorca, la Comisión concedió ayuda financiera a España para las operaciones de recuperación por un importe de 21 700 millones de euros del Fondo de Solidaridad de la UE. Las autoridades españolas a nivel local, regional y nacional, en sus respectivos ámbitos de competencia, ejecutan dicha ayuda.

El uso de la ayuda se estableció en un convenio de ejecución entre la Comisión y las autoridades españolas. En él se previeron los siguientes tipos de operaciones:

— restaurar inmediatamente el buen funcionamiento de las infraestructuras, como la reparación de carreteras y vías férreas, medidas de urgencia en relación con los servicios de salud pública y la educación, la reparación de los sistemas de suministro de agua y tratamiento de las aguas residuales y la reparación de la red pública de vías urbanas (Importe indicativo: 14 9 millones EUR);

— proveer alojamiento temporal y financiar servicios de socorro para cubrir las necesidades inmediatas de la población, como alojamiento provisional, proporcionar bienes y servicios de primera necesidad y proteger los bienes y las personas (importe indicativo: 6,2 millones EUR).

Con ocasión de una misión de seguimiento en Lorca en febrero de 2013, la Comisión ha verificado ella misma los progresos realizados en la aplicación de la ayuda. La fecha límite para gastar la ayuda es el 23 de julio de 2013. En enero de 2014 las autoridades españolas presentarán un informe detallado sobre la ejecución y una declaración de fiabilidad la legalidad y la regularidad del gasto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003108/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Aid for the Spanish city of Lorca

Almost two years ago the Spanish city of Lorca suffered earthquakes which, in addition to personal tragedies, caused great harm to the city's infrastructure and homes. Alongside the economic aid approved by the Spanish Government, the EU offered its support. The European Investment Bank granted a loan of EUR 185 million and also, on the basis of the Commission's proposal, the Parliament granted more than EUR 20 million in aid via the European Union Solidarity Fund.

It is almost two years since the catastrophe and residents are still concerned by delays in the reconstruction of the residential area and buildings. I therefore ask the Commission:

1. Have all the funds awarded by the European Union Solidarity Fund been used?

2. What specific aims has this aid achieved?

3. Can the Commission provide specific information about plans for spending this aid and the supervision thereof?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

Following the Lorca earthquake the Commission awarded financial aid for recovery operations amounting to EUR 21.7 million from the EU Solidarity Fund to Spain. The aid is being implemented by the Spanish authorities at national, regional and local level in their respective fields of competence.

The use of the aid was laid down in an implementation agreement between the Commission and the Spanish authorities. Accordingly the following types of operation were foreseen:

— Immediate restoration to working order of infrastructure such as repair of roads and railways, emergency measures concerning public health services and education, repair of water supply systems and waste water treatments, repair of the urban public road network (Indicative amount: EUR 14.9 million);

— Temporary accommodation and funding rescue services to meet the immediate needs of the population such as temporary accommodation, providing immediate goods and services, protection of people and goods (Indicative amount EUR 6.2 million).

On the occasion of a monitoring mission to Lorca in February 2013 the Commission assured itself of the good progress made in the implementation of the aid. The end date for spending the aid is 23 July 2013. A detailed report on the implementation and a statement giving assurance of the legality and regularity of the spending by the Spanish authorities is due in January 2014.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003109/13
au Conseil
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Élargissement de la zone euro

Le lundi 4 mars 2013, le gouvernement letton a fait sa demande officielle d'adhésion à la monnaie unique européenne, voulant ainsi devenir, en 2014, le dix-huitième pays de la zone euro.

Néanmoins, depuis 2010, nous assistons à une crise de la zone euro. Cette crise de la dette a mis en évidence certaines lacunes du système actuel de gouvernance de l'union monétaire: un pacte de stabilité et de croissance insuffisamment respecté par les États membres conduisant à des dérapages budgétaires, une coordination des politiques économiques reposant sur des instruments trop peu contraignants, un manque de régulation de l'impact des marchés financiers sur les finances publiques.

Par ailleurs, pour être accepté dans la zone euro, tout pays doit respecter les critères du pacte de stabilité et de croissance. Cependant, la crise actuelle met en lumière l'insuffisance du respect de ces conditions à l'obtention d'une union monétaire saine, solvable et compétitive.

Ces problématiques de gouvernance de la zone euro sont encore d'actualité et de nombreux débats sont toujours ouverts à ce sujet au sein de l'Union européenne. Face à ce constat se pose la question de savoir si l'intégration de nouveaux pays européens n'est pas prématurée.

D'après l'article 140 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne et à la demande expresse de la Lettonie, la Commission rendra d'ici peu un rapport au Conseil sur les progrès réalisés par la Lettonie dans l'accomplissement de ses obligations pour la réalisation de l'union économique et monétaire.

1. Alors qu'en mai 2012, dans son rapport sur l'état de la convergence, la Commission soulignait l'incapacité de la Lettonie à remplir certains des critères du pacte de stabilité et de croissance (notamment la stabilité des prix, les finances publiques…), ne serait-il pas prématuré que le Conseil accepte cette adhésion dans l'hypothèse où ce pays candidat remplirait pour la première fois l'ensemble des critères d'adhésion?

2. En août dernier, un sondage commandé par la Banque nationale de Lettonie mettait en évidence que 59 % des Lettons ne soutenaient pas l'abandon de leur monnaie en faveur de l'euro. Le Conseil ne devrait-il pas prendre en compte l'aspiration des peuples européens?

Réponse
(28 mai 2013)

Conformément à l'article 3 du traité sur l'Union européenne (traité UE), la monnaie unique figure au nombre des objectifs de l'Union européenne et les États membres ne faisant pas l'objet d'une dérogation ont l'obligation d'adopter l'euro dès qu'ils satisfont aux exigences juridiques.

Les autorités lettones — conformément aux dispositions de l'article 140, paragraphe 1, du TFUE — ont demandé que la Commission européenne et la Banque centrale européenne fournissent une évaluation des progrès réalisés par le pays pour répondre aux conditions imposées pour l'adoption de l'euro.

La Commission et la Banque centrale européenne vont à présent procéder en toute impartialité à une évaluation exhaustive de l'état de convergence durable de la Lettonie, notamment sur la base des critères de convergence.

Après consultation du Parlement européen et discussion au sein du Conseil européen, le Conseil, sur proposition de la Commission, décidera si la Lettonie remplit les conditions nécessaires pour qu'il soit mis fin à la dérogation. Le Conseil statuera après avoir reçu une recommandation émanant d'une majorité qualifiée de ses membres dont la monnaie est l'euro.

En ce qui concerne le soutien de la population, la Commission et la Lettonie ont signé, le 10 juillet 2012, un accord de partenariat afin de coordonner leurs actions d'information et de communication destinées à permettre à la population de mieux connaître l'Union économique et monétaire et l'euro et à contribuer à une transition en douceur vers l'adoption de l'euro par la Lettonie, sans préjudice des décisions que prendra le Conseil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003109/13
to the Council
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Enlargement of the eurozone

On Monday 4 March 2013, the Latvian Government submitted a formal application to join the European single currency, expressing their desire to become the eurozone's eighteenth country in 2014.

We have been witnessing a crisis in the eurozone, however, since 2010. The debt crisis has highlighted certain shortcomings in the current system of governance of monetary union: the Stability and Growth Pact is not respected sufficiently by the Member States, leading to budgetary slippages; the coordination of economic policies is based on instruments which are not binding enough; there is a lack of regulation of the impact of the financial markets on public finances.

Furthermore, every country has to meet the criteria of the Stability and Growth Pact to be admitted to the eurozone. However, the current crisis has highlighted insufficient compliance with the said requirements, set to ensure healthy, solvent and competitive monetary union.

These eurozone governance problems are still relevant and numerous debates on this issue are still in progress within the European Union. In light of the above, the question has to be asked: is the integration of new European countries not overhasty?

In accordance with Article 140 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, at Latvia's express request, the Commission is shortly to report to the Council on the progress made by Latvia in fulfilling its obligations regarding the achievement of economic and monetary union.

1. In view of the fact that, in May 2012, the Commission highlighted Latvia's inability to fulfil certain criteria of the Stability and Growth Pact in its report on the state of convergence, (including price stability, public finances, etc.), would it not be overhasty for the Council to accept Latvia's accession to the eurozone, should this candidate country meet all the criteria for accession for the first time?

2. Last August, a survey commissioned by the National Bank of Latvia revealed that 59% of Latvians were against abandoning their currency in favour of the euro. Should the Council not be taking into account the wishes of the peoples of Europe?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

Pursuant to Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the single currency is among the objectives of the European Union and Member States without a derogation have the obligation to adopt the euro once they have fulfilled the legal requirements.

The Latvian authorities — in accordance with Article 140(1) TFEU — requested that the European Commission and the European Central Bank provide an assessment of the country's progress in satisfying the conditions for adopting the euro.

The Commission and European Central Bank will now prepare a fair and thorough assessment of the state of Latvia's sustainable convergence, notably on the basis of the convergence criteria.

After consulting the European Parliament and after the discussion in the European Council, the Council shall, on a proposal from the Commission, decide whether Latvia fulfils the necessary conditions to abrogate the derogation. The Council shall act having received a recommendation from a qualified majority of Member States whose currency is the euro.

Regarding public support, the Commission and Latvia signed a Partnership Agreement on 10 July 2012 to coordinate their information and communication efforts in Latvia with a view to increasing public knowledge of Economic and Monetary Union and the euro, and contributing to a smooth transition to the euro in Latvia without prejudice to future Council decisions.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003110/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 mars 2013)

Objet: Élargissement de la zone euro

Le lundi 4 mars 2013, le gouvernement letton a fait sa demande officielle d'adhésion à la monnaie unique européenne, voulant ainsi devenir en 2014 le dix-huitième pays de la zone euro.

Néanmoins, depuis 2010, nous assistons à une crise de la zone euro. Cette crise de la dette a mis en évidence certaines lacunes du système actuel de gouvernance de l'Union économique et monétaire: un pacte de stabilité et de croissance insuffisamment respecté par les États membres, conduisant à des dérapages budgétaires; une coordination des politiques économiques reposant sur des instruments trop peu contraignants; un manque de régulation de l'impact des marchés financiers sur les finances publiques.

Par ailleurs, pour être accepté dans la zone euro, tout pays doit respecter les critères du pacte de stabilité et de croissance. Cependant la crise actuelle met en lumière l'insuffisance du respect de ces conditions à l'obtention d'une union monétaire saine, solvable et compétitive.

Ces problématiques de gouvernance de la zone euro sont encore d'actualité et de nombreux débats sont toujours ouverts à ce sujet au sein de l'Union européenne. Face à ce constat se pose la question de savoir si l'intégration de nouveaux pays européens n'est pas prématurée.

En application de l'article 140 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne et à la demande expresse de la Lettonie, la Commission rendra d'ici peu un rapport au Conseil sur les progrès réalisés par ce pays dans l'accomplissement de ses obligations pour la réalisation de l'Union économique et monétaire.

1. Alors qu'en mai 2012, dans son rapport sur l'état de la convergence, la Commission soulignait l'incapacité de la Lettonie à remplir certains des critères du pacte de stabilité et de croissance (notamment la stabilité des prix, les finances publiques…), ne serait-il pas prématuré d'accepter cette adhésion, dans l'hypothèse où ce pays candidat remplirait pour la première fois l'ensemble des critères d'adhésion?

2. En août dernier, un sondage commandé par la banque nationale de Lettonie mettait en évidence que 59 % des Lettons ne soutenaient pas l'abandon de leur monnaie en faveur de l'euro. L'Union européenne ne devrait-elle pas prendre en compte l'aspiration des peuples européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(7 mai 2013)

1. Suite à la demande du gouvernement letton, la Commission examine actuellement l'état de préparation de la Lettonie à l'adoption de la monnaie unique le 1er janvier 2014. La Commission (et la BCE) élaboreront une évaluation approfondie, qui couvrira à la fois les critères quantitatifs et la viabilité de la convergence, conformément au traité. En 2012, le rapport sur l'état de la convergence adopté par la Commission estimait que la Lettonie n'avait pas rempli les critères sur la stabilité des prix, les finances publiques et la compatibilité de son cadre juridique. Des progrès significatifs ont été réalisés depuis, bien qu'il soit évidemment trop tôt pour préjuger de l'issue de l'évaluation. Le cas échéant, la Commission fera une proposition au Conseil qui, après avoir consulté le Parlement européen, décidera si la Lettonie doit devenir le 18e membre de la zone euro.

2. Lors de son adhésion à l'Union européenne, la Lettonie s'était engagée à adopter l'euro dès qu'elle serait parvenue à un niveau élevé de convergence durable avec la zone euro. Le soutien du public à l'adoption de l'euro a récemment augmenté, de plus en plus de faiseurs d'opinion et d'acteurs publics s'étant clairement prononcés en faveur de l'adhésion à la zone euro. L'adoption d'une nouvelle devise a des répercussions sur de nombreux aspects du quotidien des citoyens. Tout État membre prévoyant d'adopter l'euro se doit donc de communiquer suffisamment tôt et de manière efficace. L'expérience nous apprend que c'est également indispensable pour que le changement soit une réussite.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003110/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Enlargement of the eurozone

On Monday 4 March 2013, the Latvian Government submitted a formal application to join the European single currency, expressing their desire to become the eurozone's eighteenth country in 2014.

We have been witnessing a crisis in the eurozone, however, since 2010. The debt crisis has highlighted certain shortcomings in the current system of governance of economic and monetary union: the Stability and Growth Pact is not respected sufficiently by the Member States, leading to budgetary slippages; the coordination of economic policies is based on instruments which are not binding enough; there is a lack of regulation of the impact of financial markets on public finances.

Furthermore, every country has to meet the criteria of the Stability and Growth Pact to be admitted to the eurozone. However, the current crisis has highlighted insufficient compliance with the said requirements, set to ensure healthy, solvent and competitive monetary union.

These eurozone governance problems are still relevant and numerous debates on this issue are still in progress within the European Union. In light of the above, the question has to be asked: is the integration of new European countries not overhasty?

Pursuant to Article 140 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, at Latvia's express request, the Commission is shortly to report to the Council on the progress made by Latvia in fulfilling its obligations regarding the achievement of economic and monetary union.

1. In view of the fact that, in May 2012, the Commission highlighted Latvia's inability to fulfil certain criteria of the Stability and Growth Pact in its report on the state of convergence, (including price stability, public finances, etc.), would it not be overhasty to accept Latvia's accession to the eurozone, should this candidate country meet all the criteria for accession for the first time?

2. Last August, a survey commissioned by the National Bank of Latvia revealed that 59% of Latvians were against abandoning their currency in favour of the euro. Should the European Union not be taking into account the wishes of the peoples of Europe?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

1. Following the request by the Latvian government, the Commission is currently assessing Latvia's preparedness to adopt the single currency from 1 January 2014. The Commission (and the ECB) will prepare a thorough assessment, which will cover both the quantitative criteria and the sustainability of convergence, in line with the Treaty. In 2012 the Convergence Report adopted by the Commission considered that Latvia had not fulfilled the criteria on price stability, public finances and on compatibility of its legal framework. Significant progress has been made since then, though it is of course too early to prejudge the outcome of the assessment. If justified, the Commission will make a proposal to the Council, which after consulting the European Parliament would then decide whether Latvia should become the 18th member of the euro area.

2. Upon its accession to the EU, Latvia committed to adopting the euro as soon as it achieves a high degree of sustainable convergence towards the euro area. Public support for euro adoption has been recently increasing, as more and more opinion-makers and public stakeholders have clearly expressed their support for euro membership. Changing over to a new currency affects many aspects of a citizens' daily life. Timely and effective communication is therefore an essential task for any Member State planning to introduce the euro, and experience shows that it is also crucial for a successful changeover.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-003111/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(19 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κούρεμα των καταθέσεων στην Κύπρο

Αποτελεί η επιδρομή της ΕΕ στις κυπριακές αποταμιεύσεις, η οποία περιγράφεται στα μέσα ενημέρωσης ως «κούρεμα των καταθέσεων», ένα ακόμη παράδειγμα έλλειψης επιχειρηματικής πείρας της ευρωπαϊκής πολιτικής ελίτ, η οποία είτε δεν καταλαβαίνει είτε δεν ενδιαφέρεται για τον αντίκτυπο των πράξεών της;

Η επιδρομή αυτή θα επιτείνει έτι περαιτέρω τη σχετική ύφεση της Ευρώπης, καθώς πολλά πλούσια άτομα και επιχειρήσεις θα λάβουν πλέον τη συνετή, αμυντική πρόνοια να μετακινήσουν ένα μέρος του κεφαλαίου τους εκτός της ΕΕ. Ταυτόχρονα, πιθανοί ξένοι επενδυτές θα το σκεφτούν διπλά προτού τοποθετήσουν τα χρήματά τους σε χώρες της ΕΕ.

Πρόκειται για χρήματα τα οποία, σε άλλη περίπτωση, θα μπορούσαν να έχουν παραμείνει ή επενδυθεί στην ΕΕ, ώστε να συμβάλουν στην τόνωση της δημιουργίας απασχόλησης και ανάπτυξης.

Συνεπώς, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιες είναι οι απόψεις της για όσα προαναφέρθηκαν;

2. Είναι το «κούρεμα των καταθέσεων» στην Κύπρο σύμφωνο με το κοινοτικό κεκτημένο;

3. Συμβάλλει το «κούρεμα των καταθέσεων» στην Κύπρο στη συνολική προσπάθεια για οικονομική ανάκαμψη; Αν όχι, ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει η Επιτροπή, προκειμένου να ανατρέψει την καταστροφική αυτή απόφαση;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2013)

1. Τα βασικά στοιχεία της δέσμης μέτρων αναδιάρθρωσης για τον κυπριακό χρηματοπιστωτικό τομέα, στα οποία κατέληξε η ευρωομάδα στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013 αποτελούν μέρος του ευρύτερου προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής της ΕΕ και του ΔΝΤ. Η οριστικοποίηση του λεπτομερειών του προγράμματος βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη. Κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, η πλήρης εφαρμογή του προγράμματος διαδραματίζει καθοριστικό ρόλο στην αποκατάσταση της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης και των υγιών δημόσιων οικονομικών στην Κύπρο κατά τα επόμενα έτη.

2. Η προαναφερθείσα συμφωνία προστατεύει καταθέσεις χαμηλότερες των 100 000 ευρώ από τον αντίκτυπο της αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα της Κύπρου. Το ποσό αυτό αντιστοιχεί στο μέγιστο ποσό, για το οποίο παρέχεται εγγύηση σύμφωνα με την οδηγία της ΕΕ σχετικά με τα συστήματα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων. Στις καταθέσεις άνω των 100 000 ευρώ δεν παρέχεται εγγύηση και μπορεί να επηρεαστούν υπό δύσκολες περιστάσεις, όπως αυτές.

3. Θα χρειαστεί χρόνος για να γίνουν αισθητά τα πλήρη αποτελέσματα της αναδιάρθρωσης του τραπεζικού τομέα. Όπως πάντα, οι αποφάσεις αυτές είναι δύσκολες τόσο από τεχνικής όσο και από πολιτικής απόψεως. Ωστόσο, είναι ιδιαίτερα σημαντικό ότι κατέστη δυνατή η αποφυγή πρόσθετων επιβαρύνσεων για τον φορολογούμενο και το Δημόσιο έχουν αποφευχθεί. Η κατάλληλη μείωση του μεγέθους του κυπριακού τραπεζικού τομέα με βάση τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ έως το 2018, θα του επιτρέψει να ανακτήσει τη βιωσιμότητά του και, μαζί με τα λοιπά στοιχεία του προγράμματος, να συμβάλει στη στήριξη της οικονομικής ανάκαμψης.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003111/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Cyprus 'deposits haircut'

Is the EU raid on Cypriot savings, described in the media as a 'deposits haircut', yet another example of lack of business experience among a European political elite which either does not understand or does not care about the impact of its actions?

This raid will further accentuate Europe's relative decline, as many wealthy individuals and businesses will now take the sensible, defensive precaution of moving a portion of their capital outside the clutches of the EU. At the same time, prospective foreign investors will think twice before putting their money in EU countries.

This is money that could otherwise have remained or been invested in the EU to help spur job creation and growth.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What are its views on the above?

2. Is the Cyprus 'deposits haircut' in accordance with the acquis?

3. Does the Cyprus 'deposits haircut' contribute to the overall attempt at economic recovery? If not, what measures does the Commission intend to take in order to reverse this catastrophic decision?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

1. The key elements of the restructuring package for the Cypriot financial sector concluded by the Eurogroup on 25 March 2013 are part of the broader EU/IMF macroeconomic adjustment programme. The finalisation of the details of the programme is currently underway. In the Commission's view its full implementation is instrumental in order to restore sustainable growth and sound public finances in Cyprus over the coming years.

2. The abovementioned agreement protects deposits below EUR 100 000 from being impacted by the restructuring of Cyprus' financial sector. This corresponds to the maximum amount guaranteed by the EU directive on deposit guarantee schemes. Deposits above EUR 100 000 are not guaranteed and they can be affected in difficult circumstances, such as these.

3. The full effects of the bank restructuring will take time to play out. As always, these decisions are difficult both from a technical and political point of view. Crucially however, extra costs for the taxpayer and the state have thereby been avoided. The appropriate downsizing of the Cypriot banking sector to the EU average by 2018 will enable it to regain viability and, together with the other elements of the programme, help underpin economic recovery.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003112/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Mercurio en la costa menorquina

La Autoridad Portuaria de Menorca está llevando a cabo un proyecto para dragar la parte industrial del puerto de Maó. Los 200 000 m^3 de lodo van a ser depositados a una milla náutica de la costa de Menorca. En el puerto de Maó se han venido arrojando metales contaminantes tales como mercurio, plomo o cobre, que permanecen apresados en el lodo. Según los parámetros del CEDEX (Centro de Estudios y Experimentos de Obras Públicas), en el puerto hay niveles de contaminación de nivel 3, lo que supone una amenaza real para el ecosistema y para quienes se alimenten de los peces u otros seres vivos que allí habitan.

Diversas ONG denuncian la falta de atención prestada a las soluciones ecológicas propuestas. Oceana lo ha denunciado ya frente a la Unesco en París, ya que las partículas de mercurio podrían extenderse por toda la costa de Menorca y posiblemente por la costa de otras islas como Mallorca e Ibiza, violando así la protección de Menorca como reserva de la biosfera. Además, hace unos años, el Gobierno central ocultó un estudio del Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO) que demostraba altos niveles de mercurio en los grandes peces de las aguas españolas.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de este proyecto?

¿Ha hecho llegar el Gobierno balear un informe de impacto ambiental a la Comisión?

¿Considera que los antecedentes del Gobierno de ocultar los estudios del IEO son indicios suficientes para exigir una evaluación externa y supervisada por la Comisión sobre los efectos del proyecto del puerto de Maó?

¿Está siguiendo el proceso dentro de la Unesco para ayudar a la protección de Menorca como reserva de la biosfera?

¿Exigirá a los Gobiernos español y balear que paralicen su actividad hasta que se realice la evaluación de impacto ambiental?

¿Exigirá que no se arroje el lodo en el agua, ya que es la única manera de garantizar el principio de precaución medioambiental y protección del medio ambiente?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de que Autoridad Portuaria de Baleares ha suspendido, por orden del Fiscal Superior de esta Comunidad Autónoma ([1]), el proyecto de dragado del puerto de Mahón y la operación de depósito de los lodos en la costa de Menorca a que se refiere Su Señoría.

Dado que el asunto se encuentra pendiente de resolución ante los tribunales españoles, la Comisión no considera necesario iniciar una investigación sobre el mismo y esperará a que los citados tribunales concluyan los procedimientos nacionales antes de estudiar si procede tomar medidas.

([1]) http://www.portsdebalears.com/311.php3?idioma=esp&idNoticia=197

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003112/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Mercury on the Menorca coastline

The Menorca Port Authority is implementing a project to dredge the industrial area of Port Maó. The resulting 200 000 m^3 of mud will be deposited one nautical mile off the Menorca coast. There has been dumping of polluting metals such as mercury, lead and copper in Port Maó, and these remain trapped in the mud. According to parameters drawn up by CEDEX (Civil Engineering Research Agency), pollution levels in the port have reached level 3. This poses a real threat to the ecosystem, anyone who eats fish, and other human beings who live there.

Various NGOs have complained about the lack of attention paid to the ecological solutions that have been put forward. Oceana has already made a complaint about this to Unesco in Paris, since the mercury particles could spread along the entire Menorca coast and possibly the coasts of other islands such as Mallorca and Ibiza, thus breaching Menorca's protection as a Biosphere Reserve. Furthermore, a few years ago the Spanish Government covered up a study by the Spanish Oceanographic Institute (IEO) showing high levels of mercury in large fish in Spanish waters.

Is the Commission aware of this project?

Has the Balearic government submitted an environmental impact report to the Commission?

Does it consider the government's past record in covering up the IEO's studies to be sufficient reason to demand an external assessment, supervised by the Commission, on the effects of the Port Maó project?

Is it following the procedure within Unesco to help protect Menorca as a Biosphere Reserve?

Will it demand that the Spanish and Balearic governments suspend their activities until the environmental impact assessment has been carried out?

Will it demand that the mud should not be dumped in the water, since this is the only way of ensuring compliance with the precautionary principle of environmental protection?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission is aware that this dredging project of the Mahón Port and the disposal operation on the Menorca coast referred to by the Honourable Member have been suspended by the Baleares Port Authority further to the order of the Chief Prosecutor in this Autonomous Community ([1]).

Considering that the case is currently pending before the Spanish Courts, the Commission does not deem necessary to initiate an enquiry on this matter. The Commission will instead let the Spanish Courts conclude their national proceedings before considering whether any further action is appropriate.

([1]) http://www.portsdebalears.com/311.php3?idioma=esp&idNoticia=197.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003113/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(19 maart 2013)

Betreft: Wanbetaling en schuldregeling in Saudi-Arabië

De Commissie is ongetwijfeld op de hoogte van het feit dat twee belangrijke Saudi-Arabische ondernemingen, de AHAB-groep en de Saad-groep, in gebreke zijn gebleven bij de terugbetaling van internationale leningen voor een bedrag van 15 miljard euro. Verschillende Europese banken zijn hierdoor getroffen, evenals talrijke bedrijven in Saudi-Arabië en elders in de wereld. Sinds de ingebrekestelling hebben talrijke bronnen gemeld dat crediteuren uit Saudi-Arabië hun schuld vergoed hebben gekregen, terwijl dat voor internationale schuldeisers niet het geval is.

Het beginsel van gelijke behandeling en non-discriminatie moet de kern vormen van goed financieel beheer, met name in geval van schuldregelingen en faillissementen. Het internationale financiële en leningstelsel is een uitgebreid, verstrengeld netwerk dat alleen doeltreffend kan functioneren wanneer zowel particuliere marktdeelnemers als regeringen verantwoord handelen in plaats van de blik naar binnen te richten. Alle staten die als verantwoorde en gewaardeerde leden van de internationale financiële gemeenschap wensen te worden beschouwd, moeten zich aan dit beginsel houden.

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat elke vorm van discriminatie vanwege Saudi-Arabië ten aanzien van internationale schuldeisers de positie van het koninkrijk als betrouwbaar en vertrouwenswaardig lid van de internationale financiële gemeenschap kan ondermijnen?

Heeft de Commissie tegenover de Saudische autoriteiten uiting gegeven aan haar bezorgdheid over deze situatie en gewezen op het belang van verantwoord optreden en non-discriminatie van Europese en internationale crediteuren?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(15 mei 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van deze zaak.

Regels die zijn overeengekomen in het kader van de G20, waarvan Saudi-Arabië lid is, verbinden rechtsgebieden ertoe nieuwe kaders op te zetten om systeemgebonden problemen waarmee banken worden geconfronteerd, op te lossen vóór ze failliet gaan, en een gelijke behandeling van binnen- en buitenlandse schuldeisers te garanderen. De Raad voor financiële stabiliteit (*Financial Stability Board* — FSB) houdt toezicht op de vorderingen in de uitvoering van de regels. De meest recente stand van zaken, met inbegrip van de informatie met betrekking tot Saudi-Arabië, is beschikbaar op de FSB-website ([1]).

Deze kwestie is in de eerste plaats een zaak voor het vennootschapsrecht. Uit de beschikbare informatie blijkt dat een aantal van de betrokken bedrijven reeds een akkoord hebben bereikt over een vereffening van hun schulden.

([1]) http://www.financialstabilityboard.org/publications/r_130411a.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003113/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Default and debt settlement in Saudi Arabia

The Commission will be aware that in 2009 two major Saudi Arabian businesses — the AHAB Group and the Saad Group — defaulted on international loans amounting to EUR 15 billion. Several European banks were affected, along with businesses from Saudi Arabia and around the world. Since that default, it has been widely reported that creditors from Saudi Arabia have had their debts settled and repaid, while international creditors have not been extended the same privilege.

The principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination is one that should lie at the heart of effective financial governance, and particularly the governance of default settlements and bankruptcies. The international financial and lending system is a vast, interconnected network, and can only work effectively when both private and governmental actors take a responsible course of action rather than turn inwards. All nations who wish to be considered responsible and valued members of the international financial community should look to uphold these principles.

Does the Commission agree that any discrimination shown by Saudi Arabia against international creditors could undermine that Kingdom's status as a reliable and trusted member of the international financial community?

Has the Commission made any representations to Saudi Arabian authorities to express concern about this issue, and to stress the importance of responsible actions and non-discrimination against European and international creditors?

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

The Commission is aware of the case.

Rules agreed in the framework of the G20, of which Saudi Arabia is a member, commit jurisdictions to set up new frameworks to resolve systemic problems encountered by banks before their failure and to ensure the equal treatment of domestic and foreign creditors in the process. The Financial Stability Board (FSB) monitors progress in the implementation of the rules. The latest update, including the information relevant to Saudi Arabia, is available on the FSB website ([1]).

This matter is first and foremost an issue of private business law. According to available information, some of the companies involved have apparently already agreed on a settlement concerning their debts.

([1]) http://www.financialstabilityboard.org/publications/r_130411a.pdf

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003114/13
till kommissionen
Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE)
(19 mars 2013)

Angående: Djurtransporter och kommissionens stöd till utarbetandet av riktlinjer för god praxis

I sitt meddelande till Europaparlamentet och rådet av den 11 november 2011 om effekterna av rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 om skydd av djur under transport fastställer kommissionen att ett korrekt genomförande av de befintliga reglerna bör fortsätta att vara en prioritet för att de konstaterade problemen ska kunna åtgärdas och att kommissionen i detta syfte inom den närmaste framtiden kommer att överväga att stödja utarbetandet av riktlinjer för god praxis i enlighet med artikel 29 i förordningen.

I samma meddelande anger kommissionen också att den, när det gäller skillnaden mellan kraven i lagstiftningen och de tillängliga vetenskapliga rönen, anser att detta för närvarande bäst hanteras genom antagandet av riktlinjer för god praxis.

1. Vilka specifika åtgärder planerar kommissionen att vidta för att stödja utarbetandet av dessa riktlinjer för god praxis?

2. Kommer kommissionen, såvitt angår ”skillnaden mellan kraven i lagstiftningen och de tillängliga vetenskapliga rönen” (t.ex. kortare transporttider för slakthästar, minsta invändiga höjd i båsen osv. i enlighet med det vetenskapliga yttrandet från Europeiska myndigheten för livsmedelssäkerhet, Efsa ([1])), själv att utveckla riktlinjer för god praxis, eller är det upp till medlemsstaterna själva att besluta huruvida de ska utveckla sådana riktlinjer på nationell nivå?

3. Kan kommissionen, om den anser att det är upp till medlemsstaterna att besluta huruvida de ska utarbeta sådana riktlinjer eller inte, redogöra för hur många medlemsstater som redan har utarbetat eller som planerar att utarbeta riktlinjer för att överbrygga klyftan mellan rådets förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 och de tillgängliga vetenskapliga rön som presenteras i Efsas vetenskapliga yttrande?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(6 maj 2013)

1. Kommissionen har översatt de praktiska riktlinjerna för att bedöma om vuxna nötkreatur är i skick att transporteras (Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Adult Bovines), vilka tagits fram av flera samverkande organisationer ([2]). Kommissionen deltar för närvarande med sakkunskap i arbetet med att ta fram liknande riktlinjer för grisar och hästar.

2. Enligt artikel 29 i förordning (EG) nr 1/2005 rörande skydd av djur under transport ([3]) får riktlinjer för god praxis utarbetas på nationell nivå, på unionsnivå och mellan flera medlemsstater. Kommissionen överväger att utarbeta riktlinjer på unionsnivå i syfte att garantera en enhetlig tillämpning av reglerna.

3. Medlemsstaterna är inte skyldiga att underrätta kommissionen om de riktlinjer som utarbetas på nationell nivå eller mellan flera medlemsstater. Kommissionen har därför inte tillgång till denna information.

([1]) Vetenskapligt yttrande om djurs välbefinnande under transport, som utarbetats på begäran av kommissionen och som antogs av Europeiska myndigheten för livsmedelssäkerhet (Efsa) i december 2010.

([2]) Eurogroup for animals, European Livestock and Meat Trading Union, Animals' Angels, European Livestock Transporters, Europeiska veterinärförbundet (FVE) och Internationella vägtransportunionen (IRU).

([3]) EUT L 3, 5.1.2005, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003114/13
to the Commission
Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Transport of animals: Commission's support of the development of guides to good practice

In the report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport, dated 10 November 2011, the Commission stated that 'to correct the identified problems, the appropriate enforcement of existing rules should remain the priority. For that purpose, the Commission will consider the following actions for the near future: […] support of the development of guides to good practice, as foreseen in Article 29 of the regulation'.

In the same report the Commission stated: 'As regards the gap between the requirements of the legislation and available scientific evidence, the Commission sees that, for the time being, this is best addressed by the adoption of guides to good practices'.

1. By what specific measures does the Commission intend to support the development of these guides to good practice?

2. As far as the 'gap between the requirements of the current legislation and available scientific evidence' is concerned (for example the reduction of transport times for horses for slaughter, minimum internal height of compartments, etc. as recommended by EFSA's scientific opinion ([1])), will the Commission itself develop guides to good practices at EU level, or is it up to the Member States to decide whether to develop such guides at national level?

3. If the Commission's response is that it is up to the Member States to decide whether or not to develop such guides, how many Member States have already developed or are planning to develop guides in order to close the gap between Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 and the available scientific evidence provided by EFSA's scientific opinion?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1. The Commission has translated the 'Practical Guidelines to Assess Fitness for Transport of Adult Bovines', developed by cooperating organisations ([2]). The Commission is currently participating, as appropriate, in the development of similar guidelines for pigs and horses.

2. According to Article 29 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([3]), guides to good practice may be drawn up at national or Union level, or among a number of Member States. To facilitate a uniform application of the rules, the Commission is considering developing guides at Union level.

3. Member States are not obliged to inform the Commission on the development of guides drawn up at national level, or among a number of Member States. The Commission therefore does not have the requested information.

([1]) 'Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport', requested by the Commission and adopted by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in December 2010.

([2]) Eurogroup for animals, European Livestock and Meat Trading Union, Animals' Angels, European Livestock Transporters, Federation of Veterinarians of Europe and International Road Transport Union.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003115/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Emisje CO_2 i nowe samochody

W ubiegłym roku Komisja przygotowała wniosek mający na celu zmniejszenie o co najmniej 30 % emisji CO_2 pochodzących z nowych samochodów. Rozporządzenie to ma szczególne znaczenie dla Polski jako państwa, w którym flota samochodowa rośnie w szybkim tempie.

Jaki jest obecnie stan wdrażania wyżej wymienionego wniosku?

Jakie skutki przewidywać można dla takich państw członkowskich jak Polska, gdzie nadal bardzo powszechne są używane samochody, które nie są tak niskoemisyjne, i gdzie wydatki na paliwo stanowią stosunkowo duży procent dochodów obywateli?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(30 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Wniosek Komisji ([1]) przewidujący docelowe obniżenie dla nowych samochodów średniego wskaźnika emisji CO_2 do poziomu 95 g CO_2/km do 2020 r. jest obecnie przedmiotem dyskusji w Parlamencie Europejskim i w Radzie. Mając na uwadze znaczne korzyści, które wniosek ten przyniósłby gospodarce i środowisku naturalnemu, Komisja liczy na osiągnięcie szybkiego porozumienia.

Z czasem, w miarę jak nowe samochody spełniające te wymogi w zakresie emisji trafiać będą do flot, korzyści, których źródłem będzie rozporządzenie stanowiące przedmiot wspomnianego wniosku, odczują wszyscy właściciele samochodów. Dzięki wprowadzeniu docelowego wskaźnika emisji wynoszącego 95 g CO_2/km średnie roczne oszczędności kosztów paliwa uzyskiwane przez użytkowników samochodów wyniosą około 350 EUR według obecnych cen paliw, w porównaniu z samochodami spełniającymi wskaźniki emisji na rok 2015. Ponieważ nabywcy nowych samochodów zwykle eksploatują je tylko przez kilka lat, korzyści związane z mniejszym zużyciem paliwa w największym stopniu odczują nabywcy samochodów używanych.

Komisja nie posiada bezpośrednich dowodów na to, w jaki sposób lepsza efektywność paliwowa wpływa na ceny samochodów używanych. Europejska Organizacja Konsumentów – Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC) przeprowadziła jednak analizę, która zawiera bardziej szczegółowe informacje na temat eksploatacji samochodów używanych ([2]). Z tego opracowania wynika, że nabywcy używanych samochodów o mniejszym spalaniu zapewne płacą za nie trochę więcej, jednak wyższy koszt zakupu zwraca im się w pierwszym roku eksploatacji w postaci oszczędności paliwa.

W rezultacie państwa członkowskie, w których względnie duży odsetek nabywanych samochodów stanowią samochody używane, w wyniku wdrożenia rozporządzenia będącego przedmiotem wniosku Komisji doświadczą znacznych korzyści gospodarczych dzięki większym oszczędnościom paliwa. Te korzyści gospodarcze mogą ulec ograniczeniu proporcjonalnie do skali wprowadzonych bezpośrednich lub pośrednich środków osłabiających pozytywny skutek proponowanego ograniczenia wskaźnika emisji, na przykład poprzez nadmierne wykorzystanie elastycznych rozwiązań takich jak „superjednostki".

([1]) COM (2012)393.
([2]) „Good for the environment and good for your pocket: Consumer benefits of CO_2 emissions targets for passenger vehicles"; BEUC; Ref.: X/2012/047 – 06/07/2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003115/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: CO_2 emissions and new cars

Last year the Commission prepared a proposal which aimed at reducing CO_2 emissions from new cars by almost 30%. This regulation is of particular importance to Poland, a country which has a rapidly growing car fleet.

What is the current implementation status of the abovementioned proposal?

What effect could this have on Member States such as Poland, where less efficient, second-hand cars are still very common and where fuel bills account for a relatively high percentage of people's income?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Commission proposal ([1]) to implement the 2020 new car CO_2 average emission target of 95gCO_2/km is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and Council. In view of the significant economic and environmental benefits that would flow from it, the Commission hopes that a rapid agreement can be reached.

Over time, as new cars meeting the target enter the fleet, the benefit of the proposed Regulation will be felt by all car owners. The 95gCO_2/km target will result in average annual fuel savings to car users of around EUR 350 per year at current fuel prices compared to a car meeting the 2015 target. Since purchasers of new cars tend to own them for only a few years, the majority of this fuel economy benefit will be experienced by second hand purchasers.

The Commission has no direct evidence on how improved fuel efficiency impacts the price of second hand cars. However, the Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC) has carried out analysis providing more detail on the use of second hand cars ([2]). This suggests that purchasers of these more efficient second hand cars may pay a small price premium but this would be compensated by the fuel savings in the first year of ownership.

As a result Member States where a relatively large share of cars are purchased second hand will see a significant economic benefit from the greater fuel economy resulting from the implementation of the Commission's proposed Regualtion. This economic benefit would be reduced in proportion to any direct or indirect weakening of the proposed target, for example through excessive use of flexibilities such as 'super credits'.

([1]) COM(2012)393.
([2]) 'Good for the environment and good for your pocket: Consumer benefits of CO_2 emissions targets for passenger vehicles'; BEUC; Ref: X/2012/047 — 06/07/2012.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003116/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Skutki dyrektywy dotyczącej wyrobów tytoniowych dla Polski

Nowy projekt unijnej dyrektywy dotyczącej wyrobów tytoniowych ma na celu zakazanie produkcji papierosów i cygaretek mentolowych. W Polsce dochód z produkcji wyrobów tytoniowych stanowi 36 % ogólnego dochodu z produkcji wyrobów rolniczych, a kraj jest największym w UE eksporterem wyrobów tytoniowych. Nowa dyrektywa może być szkodliwa nie tylko dla polskiego sektora rolniczego, lecz również dla gospodarki całego kraju i dobrobytu jego obywateli. Ponadto może ona ożywić czarny rynek w tym sektorze.

1. Jaki jest obecny stan prac nad dyrektywą dotyczącą wyrobów tytoniowych?

2. Jak Komisja ocenia wpływ ewentualnych zmian na rynki produktów tytoniowych w Europie, w tym na rynek polski?

3. Czy Komisja przewidziała jakiekolwiek rozwiązania mogące zaradzić ewentualnym negatywnym skutkom, jakie może mieć nowa dyrektywa dla polskich rolników, jeśli wejdzie ona w życie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(24 kwietnia 2013 r.)

W dniu 19 grudnia 2012 r. Komisja przyjęła wniosek dotyczący zrewidowanej dyrektywy o wyrobach tytoniowych. Wniosek ten omawiany jest obecnie na forum Rady i Parlamentu Europejskiego.

Jeżeli chodzi o jego wpływ na rynki wyrobów tytoniowych, Komisja uprzejmie prosi Szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z jej odpowiedzią na pytanie pisemne E-001533/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003116/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Effects of Tobacco Products Directive on Poland

The new draft of the EU Tobacco Products Directive would ban the production of menthol and slim cigarettes. Revenue from tobacco production in Poland accounts for 36% of all revenue from agricultural products, and the country is the largest exporter of tobacco products in the EU. The new directive may be detrimental not only to the Polish agriculture sector, but also to the country's entire economy and to the prosperity of its citizens. In addition, it may boost the black market in this sector.

1. What is the most up-to-date status of work on the Tobacco Products Directive?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the impact of the potential changes on tobacco markets in Europe, including the Polish market?

3. If the new directive comes into force, does the EU have any solutions to the possible negative effects it may have on Polish farmers?

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

The Commission adopted a proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive on 19 December 2012. The examination and discussion of the proposal in the Council and in the European Parliament are ongoing.

Concerning the assessment of the impact on tobacco markets, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-001533/2013 ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003117/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Negocjacje w sprawie transatlantyckiego partnerstwa w dziedzinie handlu i inwestycji

Unia Europejska i Stany Zjednoczone przygotowują się do negocjacji w sprawie nowej umowy handlowej. Mają nadzieję, że porozumienie zostanie osiągnięte do końca 2014 r. Komisarz ds. handlu Karel De Gucht poinformował, że rozpoczęcie negocjacji wyznaczono na czerwiec 2013 r. Prezydencja irlandzka oświadczyła jednak, że pragnie przyspieszyć ten proces z uwagi na koniec sprawowanie przez nią obecnej funkcji, przypadający w tym samym czasie. Komisarz Karel De Gucht oświadczył również, iż chciałby, aby przedmiotem negocjacji były także usługi finansowe. Podczas konferencji zorganizowanej przez Niemiecki Fundusz Marshalla w Stanach Zjednoczonych komisarz powiedział, że w kwestii usług finansowych należy brać pod uwagę dwa aspekty, mianowicie aspekt regulacyjny oraz dostęp do rynku.

Czy Komisja mogłaby się wypowiedzieć na temat usług finansowych w kontekście planowanych negocjacji w sprawie transatlantyckiego partnerstwa w dziedzinie handlu i inwestycji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(14 maja 2013 r.)

Usługi finansowe będą ważnym elementem negocjacji w sprawie transatlantyckiego partnerstwa w dziedzinie handlu i inwestycji (TTIP). Sam sektor usług finansowych jest źródłem blisko 7 milionów miejsc pracy w Stanach Zjednoczonych i UE, jego wartość wynosi około 2,8 bilionów EUR w inwestycjach bezpośrednich i papierach wartościowych, a wartość przepływów z tytułu obligacji wynosi 35 bilionów EUR, co odpowiada 70 % globalnego rynku usług finansowych.

Statystyki odzwierciedlają aktualną sytuację, w której – jeśli chodzi o klasyczne bariery w dostępie do rynku – Stany Zjednoczone, jak i UE wykazują bardzo otwarte podejście. W celu dalszej poprawy integracji rynku należy zapewnić większą synergię i spójność przepisów prawnych w zakresie usług finansowych po obydwu stronach Atlantyku.

Zważywszy, że obydwie strony uzgodniły główne zasady owych przepisów w kontekście prac grupy G20, kluczowym zadaniem jest zapewnienie, by wdrażanie standardów uzgodnionych na forum międzynarodowym przebiegało w sposób spójny oraz by organy odpowiedzialne za wdrażanie i nadzór tych standardów dysponowały niezbędnymi ramami współpracy.

Sprzyjające warunki polityczne stworzone dzięki TTIP stanowią doskonałą okazję do zapewnienia spójności przepisów prawnych i ram współpracy pomiędzy UE i Stanami Zjednoczonymi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003117/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations

The European Union and the United States are preparing for new trade agreement negotiations. They hope to reach an agreement by the end of 2014. According to Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht, negotiations are to start in June 2013; however, the Irish Presidency has stated that it would like to begin the process before leaving office at that time. Commissioner Karel De Gucht has also stated that he wants financial services to be included in the negotiations: 'On financial services, you have two aspects — you have on the one hand the regulatory (aspect) and then you have the market access', he told a conference organised by the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

Could the Commission elaborate on the issue of financial services in the context of the upcoming Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Financial services will be an important element of the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) . The financial services industry alone supports nearly 7 million US and EU jobs, nearly EUR 2.8 trillion in direct investment and stock and bond flows in excess of EUR 35 trillion; accounting for 70% of global financial services business.

These statistics reflect the current situation whereby, in terms of classical market access barriers in the financial sector, both the US and EU are very open. In order to further improve the market integration there is a need to ensure a greater synergy and coherence between the regulations for financial services on both sides of the Atlantic.

Given that both parties have agreed on the main principles of such regulations in the context of the G20, the key task is to ensure that implementation of the internationally agreed standards is coherent and that the authorities tasked to implement and supervise those standards dispose of the necessary frameworks for cooperation.

The political momentum created by the TTIP is an excellent opportunity to ensure coherence of regulations and frameworks for cooperation between the EU and the US.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003118/13
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ułatwienia wizowe dla obywateli Kuby

Nowe reformy dotyczące podróżowania, jakie wprowadzono na Kubie, zakładały większe możliwości wyjazdu za granicę i powrotu do kraju dla obywateli Kuby. Chociaż władze kubańskie zlikwidowały skomplikowany system wiz wyjazdowych, tzw. „białych kart", to swoboda podróżowania jest nadal bardzo ograniczona ze względu na klauzulę dotyczącą bezpieczeństwa narodowego, na mocy której oponenci polityczni nie mogą opuszczać kraju. Na podstawie tej klauzuli władze kubańskie mogą odebrać paszport osobom, wobec których toczą się postępowania sądowe, oraz z nieokreślonych powodów „bezpieczeństwa narodowego i interesu publicznego".

Czy Komisja może przedstawić statystyki dotyczące napływu obywateli kubańskich do strefy Schengen?

Ilu podróżnych z Kuby przybywa do Europy na krótki pobyt, a ile osób pozostaje na stałe?

Jest jasne, że Kuba nie spełnia wymogów politycznych, aby rozpocząć z UE negocjacje w sprawie ułatwień wizowych. Czy UE mogłaby jednak rozpatrzyć jakąkolwiek inną realną alternatywę, która przyniosłaby ludności kubańskiej korzyści umowy o ułatwieniach wizowych? Czy UE mogłaby na przykład znieść opłaty wizowe dla obywateli Kuby?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(17 maja 2013 r.)

Liczba jednolitych wiz krótkoterminowych wydanych przez konsulaty państw strefy Schengen na Kubie wyniosła w 2011 r. 21 932, a w 2012 r. – 20 546 ([1]). Liczba zezwoleń na pobyt na okresy dłuższe niż 3 miesiące wydanych przez 22 państwa członkowskie znajdujące się w strefie Schengen wyniosła w 2011 r. 11 273, przy czym około 70 % z nich wydała Hiszpania, a 20 % – Włochy ([2]). Dane dotyczące zezwoleń na pobyt za 2012 r. nie są jeszcze dostępne.

Jak zauważył Szanowny Pan Poseł, w obecnej sytuacji politycznej umowa o ułatwieniach wizowych między UE a Kubą nie jest możliwa.

W kodeksie wizowym UE (rozporządzenie 810/2009 ([3])) przewidziano jednak szereg opcji zapewniających elastyczność pod względem zwolnienia z opłat wizowych niektórych kategorii wnioskodawców oraz wydawania wiz wielokrotnego wjazdu dla osób odbywających częste podróże, które udowodnią swoją uczciwość i wiarygodność. Konsulaty państw członkowskich współpracują ze sobą w ramach lokalnej współpracy konsularnej w sprawach wiz w celu zharmonizowania swoich praktyk, np. poprzez sporządzenie zharmonizowanego wykazu dokumentów potwierdzających wymaganych od wnioskodawców.

([1]) Statystyki dotyczące wiz są dostępne na stronie: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/docs/synthese_2012_with_filters_en.xlsx

([2]) Statystyki dotyczące zezwoleń na pobyt są dostępne na stronie: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database w zakładce „Population and social conditions" – „Population" – „International migration and asylum".

([3]) Dz.U. L 243 z 15.9.2009, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003118/13
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Visa facilitation for Cuban nationals

The new travel reforms that have been introduced in Cuba were supposed to improve citizens' ability to travel abroad and return to their country. Although the authorities have eliminated the complicated 'white card' visa system, freedom to travel is still strongly constrained due to the national security clause, under which political opponents are not allowed to leave the country. Under this clause the authorities have the power to withhold passports from people with pending legal cases and for undefined reasons of 'national security and public interest'.

Could the Commission provide statistics regarding the flow of Cuban citizens to the Schengen Area?

How many of these Cuban travellers come to Europe for short-term visits and how many stay permanently?

It is clear that Cuba does not meet the political requirements to begin visa facilitation negotiations with the EU. However, could the EU consider any other viable alternative that would offer the people of Cuba some benefits of a visa facilitation agreement? For example, could the EU waive the visa fees for Cuban citizens?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The number of uniform short-stay visas issued by Schengen States' consulates in Cuba was 21 932 in 2011 and 20 546 in 2012 ([1]). The number of residence permits for periods of stay longer than 3 months issued by the 22 Member States which are also Schengen States was 11 273 in 2011, with about 70% of them issued by Spain and 20% by Italy ([2]). Residence permit data for 2012 are not yet available.

For the time being, as the Honourable Member acknowledges, a visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Cuba is not a politically feasible option.

However, the EU's Visa Code (Regulation 810/2009 ([3])) offers a number of options for flexibility in terms of visa fee waivers for certain categories of applicants and the issuing of multiple entry visas for frequent travellers who prove their integrity and reliability. Within Local Schengen Cooperation, Member States' consulates cooperate to harmonise practices, e.g. on drawing up a harmonised list of supporting documents to be submitted by applicants.

([1]) Visa statistics are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/docs/ synthese_2012_with_filters_en.xlsx.

([2]) Residence permits statistics are available at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database under 'Population and social conditions' — 'Population' — 'International migration and asylum'.

([3]) OJ L 243, 15.9.2009, p. 1.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003119/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Kuba: niezależne śledztwo w sprawie śmierci Oswalda Payá

Oswaldo Payá, czołowy kubański dysydent i laureat Nagrody im. Sacharowa przyznawanej przez Parlament, zginął w wypadku samochodowym dnia 22 lipca 2012 r. Istnieją jednak powody, dla których można podejrzewać, że nie był to wypadek. Hiszpański polityk Ángel Carromero, będący świadkiem zdarzenia, przyznał, że w wypadku brał udział inny pojazd, który staranował samochód O. Payá i zepchnął go z drogi (A. Carromero pominął ten fakt w nagraniu wideo z postępowania prowadzonego przez kubańskich śledczych). UN Watch wezwała instytucje ONZ (sekretarza generalnego i Wysokiego Komisarza ds. Praw Człowieka) oraz ambasadorów wszystkich państw będących członkami ONZ do przeprowadzenia niezależnego śledztwa.

1. Jakie nowe informacje na temat śmierci Oswalda Payá posiadają Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel i ESDZ?

2. Jakie stanowisko zajmuje UE wobec propozycji przeprowadzenia niezależnego śledztwa w sprawie śmierci Oswalda Payá?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca nie posiada żadnych nowych informacji dotyczących tej sprawy poza doniesieniami prasowymi. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wie o wniosku córki Oswalda Payá dotyczącym przeprowadzenia niezależnego dochodzenia w sprawie wypadku i będzie w dalszym ciągu uważnie śledzić tę sytuację.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003119/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Cuba: Independent investigation of the death of Oswaldo Payá

Oswaldo Payá, a prominent Cuban dissident and recipient of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize, died in a car crash on 22 July 2012. There is, however, reason to believe that this was not an accident. Ángel Carromero, a Spanish politician who witnessed the accident, admitted there was another vehicle involved, which had rammed the dissident's car and forced it off the road (a fact omitted by Carromero in a videotape from the prosecution by the Cuban investigators). UN Watch has urged institutions of the UN — the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights — and the Ambassadors of all member states of the UN to carry out an independent investigation.

1. What new information do the Vice-President/High Representative and the EEAS have concerning the case of the death of Oswaldo Payá?

2. What is the EU's position regarding proposals to set up an independent investigation concerning the death of Oswaldo Payá?

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

The HR/VP does not have any new information concerning this case apart from what was reported in the press. The HR/VP is aware of the request by the daughter of Mr Paya for an independent investigation concerning the accident and will continue to follow closely the situation.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003120/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – dążenie Iranu do posiadania broni jądrowej

W ciągu dwóch ostatnich lat Unia Europejska znacznie zaostrzyła sankcje wobec Iranu, aby nie dopuścić do realizacji przez ten kraj jego programu jądrowego. Ma to poważne skutki dla gospodarki Iranu, który nie może już czerpać dochodów z jej najintratniejszych sektorów, do których zalicza się eksport ropy naftowej oraz międzynarodowe transakcje finansowe. Z powodu sankcji Iran próbuje nawiązać niebezpiecznie bliskie stosunki z Rosją i niedawno zaoferował rosyjskim przedsiębiorstwom drugą szansę eksploatacji swoich złóż ropy naftowej i gazu ziemnego.

Jakie inne kroki UE mogłaby podjąć przy założeniu, że Iran nie wycofa się z realizacji swojego programu jądrowego bez względu na dotkliwość unijnych sankcji?

Zważywszy na fakt, że najbliższymi partnerami Iranu są teraz Rosja i Chiny, czy UE planuje współpracować z nimi, aby wywierać presję na Iran w celu przekreślenia jego ambicji dotyczących posiadania broni jądrowej? Jakie mogą być ewentualne niekorzystne aspekty takiej współpracy?

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

Wspólnie z krajami grupy E3+3 (Chiny, Francja, Niemcy, Rosja, Zjednoczone Królestwo, Stany Zjednoczone) Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca angażuje się w ostatnich latach w intensywne wysiłki dyplomatyczne mające na celu uzyskanie zaufania co do wyłącznie pokojowego charakteru programu jądrowego Iranu. Rosja i Chiny, jako członkowie grupy E3+3, są w pełni zaangażowane w ten proces.

Ma on na celu skłonienie Iranu do zaangażowania się w proces budowy zaufania. Pozwoli to na rozwiązanie wszystkich aktualnych obaw dotyczących jego programu nuklearnego za pomocą podejścia dwutorowego grupy E3/EU+3, obejmującego działania dyplomatyczne oraz sankcje. Wysiłki te wciąż trwają. Niezależne sankcje przyjęte przez UE nabierają obecnie pełnej mocy.

Wszystkie spośród sześciu państw uczestniczących w procesie negocjacji są w pełni zaangażowane w dyplomatyczne rozwiązanie irańskiej kwestii jądrowej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003120/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Iran's ambitions to possess nuclear weapons

In order to prevent Iran from carrying out its nuclear programme, the European Union has significantly strengthened its sanctions over the past two years. This has severely affected the country's economy, which can no longer rely on its most profitable sectors, namely oil exports and international financial transactions. Because of the sanctions, Iran is trying to move dangerously close to Russia, and has lately offered Russian companies a second opportunity to develop its oil and gas fields.

Assuming that Iran will not back down with its nuclear programme regardless of the restrictiveness of the EU sanctions, what other steps could the EU take?

Taking into account the fact that Iran's closest partners are now Russia and China, does the EU plan to cooperate with them to put pressure on Iran to end its ambitions to possess nuclear weapons? What potential drawbacks could there be to this cooperation?

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

Together with the countries of the E3+3 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States), High Representative/Vice-President has been engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts over the past years aimed at seeking confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. As members of the E3+3, Russia and China have been fully engaged in this process.

The aim is to convince Iran to engage in a confidence-building process to address all existing concerns regarding its nuclear programme on the basis of the E3/EU+3's dual track approach consisting of diplomacy as well as sanctions. These efforts are ongoing. The autonomous sanctions adopted by the EU are currently taking their full effect.

All six countries engaged in the negotiation process are fully committed to a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003121/13
a la Comisión
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) y Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Función de las autoridades locales y regionales en los acuerdos de asociación para la política de cohesión en el periodo 2014-2020

Los Estados miembros han de concluir acuerdos de asociación con la Comisión para el próximo periodo de programación de política de cohesión (2014-2020). Estos acuerdos, que van a contener programas nacionales de reforma y recomendaciones específicas para cada país, deben concluirse con la contribución de las autoridades locales y regionales.

Las garantías de este principio de asociación están incluidas en el Reglamento sobre disposiciones comunes (RDC) para los Fondos Estructurales, que el Parlamento está negociando actualmente con el Consejo y la Comisión. Sin embargo, los acuerdos se han de concluir antes de que se finalice el RDC. Por lo tanto, se carece de seguridad jurídica de que el Reglamento vaya a garantizar la inclusión de las opiniones de las autoridades locales y regionales.

1. ¿Comparte la Comisión el punto de vista de que existe el peligro de que las autoridadeslocales y regionales no participen suficientemente en la elaboración de los acuerdos deasociación antes de que se finalice el Reglamento?

2. ¿Está dispuesta la Comisión a iniciar un procedimiento de consulta abierta entre lasautoridades locales y regionales a fin de averiguar si han dispuesto de suficiente tiempopara realizar su contribución, asegurando así el cumplimiento del principio de asociaciónestablecido en el artículo 5 del RDC?

3. ¿Es consciente la Comisión del grado en que las autoridades locales y regionales en losEstados miembros están involucradas en la preparación de los acuerdos de asociación?

4. ¿Está dispuesta la Comisión a solicitar un informe del Comité de las Regiones sobre lafunción de las autoridades locales y regionales en la preparación de los acuerdos deasociación?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de abril de 2013)

En diciembre de 2012, el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo alcanzaron un acuerdo sobre el bloque de programación del Reglamento por el que se establecen disposiciones comunes relativas los fondos estructurales europeos y a los fondos de inversión, cuyo objetivo principal es ofrecer a los Estados miembros suficiente seguridad jurídica con vistas a la elaboración de los acuerdos de asociación y los programas operativos. En concreto, el artículo 5 del proyecto de Reglamento de disposiciones comunes establece la obligación de que cada Estado miembro organice, con respecto a cada acuerdo de asociación y cada programa, una asociación con las autoridades regionales y locales competentes.

Sobre la base de estas disposiciones, la Comisión ha iniciado un proceso de discusiones informales con los Estados miembros, que debe garantizar la oportuna elaboración tanto de los acuerdos de asociación como de los programas.

La participación adecuada de todos los socios constituye una parte esencial de este diálogo informal, sin excepción. Por esta razón, la Comisión aprovecha las discusiones para evaluar la forma en que cada Estado miembro se involucra con los diferentes socios y, en su caso, presentar observaciones, asesoramiento o asistencia.

Paralelamente, la Comisión ha puesto en marcha, en el marco del diálogo estructurado, una consulta de las asociaciones a nivel de la UE que representan las tres categorías de socios, animándolas a compartir sus experiencias en la elaboración de los acuerdos de asociación y de los programas en curso.

Aunque la Comisión no tiene previsto solicitar un informe al Comité de las Regiones sobre el papel de los entes locales y regionales en la elaboración de los acuerdos de asociación, a principios de 2014 elaborará un informe sobre este tema.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003121/13

an die Kommission

Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) und Iosif Matula (PPE)

(19. März 2013)

Betrifft: die Rolle lokaler und regionaler Gebietskörperschaften in Bezug auf Partnerschaftsabkommen im Bereich der Kohäsionspolitik für den Zeitraum 2014-2020

Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen mit der Kommission Partnerschaftsabkommen für den nächsten Programmplanungszeitraum der Kohäsionspolitik (2014-2020) abschließen. Diese Abkommen, die nationale Reformprogramme und länderspezifische Empfehlungen enthalten werden, müssen unter Beteiligung der lokalen und regionalen Gebietskörperschaften geschlossen werden.

Die Garantien dieses Partnerschaftsprinzips sind in der allgemeinen Verordnung für die Strukturfonds enthalten, über die das Parlament zurzeit mit dem Rat und der Kommission verhandelt. Die Abkommen müssen jedoch vor der Fertigstellung der allgemeinen Verordnung geschlossen werden. Daher gibt es keine Rechtssicherheit dafür, dass in der Verordnung die Einbeziehung der Stellungnahmen lokaler und regionaler Gebietskörperschaften garantiert wird.

1. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass die Gefahr besteht, dass lokale und regionale Gebietskörperschaften vor der Fertigstellung der Verordnung nicht in ausreichendem Maße in die Ausarbeitung der Partnerschaftsabkommen einbezogen werden?

2. Ist die Kommission zur Durchführung einer offenen Konsultation mit lokalen und regionalen Gebietskörperschaften bereit, um zu überprüfen, ob diese genügend Zeit hatten, um einen Beitrag zu leisten, und so dafür zu sorgen, dass das in Artikel 5 der allgemeinen Verordnung festgelegte Partnerschaftsprinzip eingehalten wird?

3. Ist der Kommission bekannt, wie stark die lokalen und regionalen Gebietskörperschaften der Mitgliedstaaten in die Ausarbeitung der Partnerschaftsabkommen einbezogen werden?

4. Ist die Kommission bereit, vom Ausschuss der Regionen einen Bericht über die Rolle lokaler und regionaler Gebietskörperschaften bei der Ausarbeitung von Partnerschaftsabkommen zu verlangen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission

(26. April 2013)

Das Europäische Parlament und der Rat erzielten im Dezember 2012 eine Einigung zum Programmplanungsblock der Verordnung mit gemeinsamen Bestimmungen zu den Europäischen Struktur- und Investitionsfonds. Das Hauptziel dieser Verordnung ist die Gewährleistung einer ausreichenden Rechtssicherheit für die Mitgliedstaaten im Hinblick auf die Vorbereitung der Partnerschaftsvereinbarungen und operationellen Programme. Insbesondere nach Artikel 5 des Entwurfs der Verordnung mit gemeinsamen Bestimmungen sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, für jede Partnerschaftsvereinbarung und die Programme eine Partnerschaft mit den zuständigen regionalen und lokalen Behörden zu organisieren.

Auf der Grundlage dieser Bestimmungen hat die Kommission informelle Gespräche mit den Mitgliedstaaten aufgenommen, die eine rechtzeitige Vorbereitung der Partnerschaftsvereinbarungen und der Programme gewährleisten sollen.

Die angemessene und ausnahmslose Beteiligung aller Partner ist ein wesentlicher Aspekt dieses informellen Dialogs. Die Kommission nutzt daher die Gespräche, um zu beurteilen, wie die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten die verschiedenen Partner einbeziehen, und um bei Bedarf mit Anmerkungen, Ratschlägen oder sonstiger Unterstützung behilflich zu sein.

Parallel dazu hat die Kommission im Rahmen eines strukturierten Dialogs eine Konsultation der EU-weiten Vereinigungen eingeleitet, die die drei Kategorien von Partnern vertreten, um diese aufzufordern, ihre Erfahrungen bei den laufenden Vorbereitungen zu den Partnerschaftsvereinbarungen und Programmen auszutauschen.

Die Kommission hat nicht die Absicht, den Ausschuss der Regionen um Ausarbeitung eines Berichts zur Rolle der lokalen und regionalen Gebietskörperschaften bei der Vorbereitung der Partnerschaftsvereinbarungen zu ersuchen, würde jedoch einen solchen Bericht selbst bis Anfang 2014 ausarbeiten.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003121/13
alla Commissione
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) e Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Il ruolo delle autorità locali e regionali negli accordi di partenariato sulla politica di coesione per il periodo 2014-2020

Nel prossimo periodo di programmazione della politica di coesione (2014-2020) gli Stati membri sono chiamati a concludere vari accordi di partenariato con la Commissione. Tali accordi, che comprendono i programmi di riforma nazionali e le raccomandazioni specifiche dei singoli paesi, dovranno essere conclusi con il contributo delle autorità locali e regionali.

Le garanzie di tale principio di partenariato sono indicate nel regolamento recante disposizioni comuni in materia di Fondi strutturali, che il Parlamento sta attualmente negoziando con il Consiglio e la Commissione. Tuttavia gli accordi dovranno essere conclusi prima che il regolamento recante disposizioni comuni venga ultimato. Per questa ragione dal punto di vista giuridico non è sicuro che il regolamento conterrà i pareri delle autorità locali e regionali.

1. Secondo la Commissione non vi è il rischio che le autorità locali e regionali non vengano sufficientemente coinvolte nell'elaborazione degli accordi di partenariato prima della conclusione del regolamento?

2. È disposta ad avviare una consultazione aperta tra le autorità locali e regionali per verificare se il tempo a loro disposizione sia stato sufficiente per fornire un contributo, garantendo in questo modo il rispetto del principio di partenariato di cui all'articolo 5 del regolamento recante disposizioni comuni?

3. È a conoscenza del livello di partecipazione delle autorità locali e regionali degli Stati membri nella preparazione degli accordi di partenariato?

4. È disposta a chiedere al Comitato delle regioni di elaborare una relazione sul ruolo chele autorità locali e regionali svolgono nella preparazione degli accordi di partenariato?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2013)

Il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno raggiunto un accordo nel dicembre 2012 sul blocco di programmazione del regolamento «Disposizioni comuni» dei fondi strutturali e dei fondi d'investimento europei con l'obiettivo principale di assicurare sufficiente certezza giuridica agli Stati membri in vista della preparazione degli accordi di partenariato e dei programmi operativi. In particolare, l'articolo 5 del progetto di regolamento «Disposizioni comuni» stabilisce l'obbligo per ciascuno Stato membro di organizzare, per ciascun accordo di partenariato e per i programmi operativi, un partenariato con le competenti autorità regionali e locali.

Sulla base di tali disposizioni la Commissione ha avviato un processo di discussioni informali con gli Stati membri che dovrebbe assicurare la preparazione tempestiva sia degli accordi di partenariato che dei programmi.

L'opportuno coinvolgimento di tutti i partner è, senza eccezione, un elemento essenziale di questo dialogo informale. Per tale motivo la Commissione si avvale delle discussioni per esaminare le modalità secondo cui ciascuno Stato membro coinvolge i diversi partner e, se del caso, per formulare osservazioni od offrire consigli o assistenza.

Parallelamente la Commissione ha avviato, nel quadro del dialogo strutturato, una consultazione con le associazioni a livello UE che rappresentano le tre categorie di partner, incoraggiandole a condividere le loro esperienze sui preparativi in corso degli accordi di partenariato e dei programmi.

Anche se la Commissione non prevede di chiedere al Comitato delle regioni una relazione sul ruolo delle autorità locali e regionali nella preparazione degli accordi di partenariato, essa elaborerà una relazione su questo tema entro l'inizio del 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003121/13
aan de Commissie
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) en Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19 maart 2013)

Betreft: Rol van de lokale en regionale overheden in de partnerschapsovereenkomsten 2014-2020

In de nieuwe programmeringsperiode 2014-2020 van het Europese cohesiebeleid moeten de lidstaten een partnerschapsovereenkomst sluiten met de Europese Commissie. Deze overeenkomsten omvatten de nationale hervormingsprogramma's en de landenspecifieke aanbevelingen. Bij deze overeenkomsten moeten de lokale en regionale overheden worden betrokken.

De waarborgen voor dit partnerschapsbeginsel zijn vastgelegd in de Gemeenschappelijke Verordening (GV) voor de Structuurfondsen, waarover het Europees Parlement momenteel onderhandelt met de Europese Raad en de Commissie. De overeenkomsten moeten echter gesloten worden nog voor de GV zal zijn afgerond. Daardoor zal er ook geen wettelijke waarborg bestaan voor het betrekken van de lokale en regionale overheden.

1. Is de Commissie het erover eens dat het risico niet denkbeeldig is dat de lokale en regionale overheden onvoldoende bij de opstelling van deze partnerschapsovereenkomsten zullen worden betrokken vooraleer de verordeningen worden afgerond?

2. Is de Commissie bereid een open raadpleging onder de lokale en regionale overheden te organiseren om na te gaan of zij voldoende tijd hebben gehad om hun rol te spelen, zodat het partnerschapsbeginsel (zie artikel 5 Gemeenschappelijke Verordening) wordt nageleefd?

3. Kan de Commissie inschatten in hoeverre de lokale en regionale overheden in de lidstaten bij de voorbereiding van de partnerschapsovereenkomsten worden betrokken?

4. Is de Commissie bereid het Comité van de Regio's om een verslag te verzoeken over de rol van de lokale en regionale overheden in de voorbereiding van de partnerschapsovereenkomsten?

Antwoord van de heer Hahn namens de Commissie
(26 april 2013)

Het Europees Parlement en de Raad hebben in december 2012 overeenstemming bereikt over het blok programmering van de verordening houdende gemeenschappelijke bepalingen van de Europese structuur- en investeringsfondsen. Het belangrijkste doel van de verordening is de lidstaten voldoende rechtszekerheid te bieden met het oog op de voorbereiding van de partnerschapsovereenkomsten en operationele programma's. Met name houdt artikel 5 van de ontwerpverordening houdende gemeenschappelijke bepalingen voor elke lidstaat de verplichting in om voor elke partnerschapsovereenkomst en de programma's een partnerschap tot stand te brengen met de bevoegde regionale en lokale autoriteiten.

Op grond van deze bepalingen is de Commissie een reeks informele gesprekken met de lidstaten gestart, die een tijdige voorbereiding van zowel de partnerschapsovereenkomsten als de programma's moeten waarborgen.

De actieve deelname van alle partners, zonder uitzonderingen, vormt een essentieel onderdeel van deze informele dialoog. Daarom maakt de Commissie gebruik van deze gesprekken om de wijze waarop elke lidstaat de verschillende partners bij het proces betrekt te evalueren en om, waar nodig, opmerkingen, advies of ondersteuning aan te bieden.

Tegelijkertijd raadpleegt de Commissie in het kader van de gestructureerde dialoog verenigingen uit de hele EU die de drie partnercategorieën vertegenwoordigen en spoort hen aan om hun ervaringen bij de lopende voorbereidingen van de partnerschapsovereenkomsten en programma's met elkaar te delen.

De Commissie is niet voornemens het Comité van de Regio's te verzoeken om een verslag over de rol van de lokale en regionale autoriteiten bij de voorbereiding van de partnerschapsovereenkomsten, maar stelt zelf begin 2014 een verslag op over dit onderwerp.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003121/13
à Comissão
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) e Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Papel das autoridades locais e regionais nos acordos de parceria em matéria de política de coesão para 2014-2020

Os Estados-Membros têm de concluir acordos de parceria com a Comissão Europeia para o próximo período de programação da política de coesão (2014-2020). Estes acordos, que contêm os programas nacionais de reforma e as recomendações específicas por país, devem ser celebrados com o contributo das autoridades locais e regionais.

As garantias deste princípio de parceria estão previstas no Regulamento relativo às Disposições Comuns (RDC) para os Fundos Estruturais, que o Parlamento Europeu está atualmente a negociar com o Conselho e a Comissão. No entanto, estes acordos deverão estar concluídos antes da finalização do RDC, pelo que não há certeza jurídica de que o regulamento garanta a inclusão dos pareceres das autoridades locais e regionais.

1. A Comissão não concorda que se corre o risco de que as autoridades locais e regionais não sejam suficientemente envolvidas na elaboração destes acordos de parceria antes da conclusão dos regulamentos?

2. A Comissão está disposta a realizar um processo de consulta aberto entre as autoridades locais e regionais, para verificar se estas tiveram tempo suficiente para dar o respetivo contributo, de molde a garantir o respeito do princípio de parceria previsto no artigo 5. ° do RDC?

3. A Comissão sabe até que ponto as autoridades locais e regionais dos Estados-Membros estão envolvidas na preparação dos acordos de parceria?

4. A Comissão está disposta a solicitar um relatório ao Comité das Regiões sobre o papel das autoridades locais e regionais na preparação dos acordos de parceria?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2013)

O Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho chegaram a acordo, em dezembro de 2012, no que diz respeito ao bloco de programação do regulamento que estabelece disposições comuns para os Fundos Estruturais e os Fundos de Investimento, o qual tem como principal objetivo proporcionar suficiente segurança jurídica aos Estados-Membros tendo em vista a preparação dos Acordos de Parceria e dos programas operacionais. Em particular, o artigo 5.° do projeto de Regulamento Disposições Comuns estabelece a obrigação de cada Estado-Membro organizar, para cada Acordo de Parceria e para os programas, uma parceria com as autoridades competentes a nível regional e local.

Com base nestas disposições, a Comissão lançou um processo de debates informais com os Estados-Membros, o qual deve assegurar a preparação atempada quer dos programas quer dos Acordos de Parceria.

A participação adequada de todos os parceiros constitui, sem exceção, uma parte essencial destes debates informais. Por esta razão, a Comissão aproveita os debates para avaliar a forma como cada Estado-Membro se envolve com os diferentes parceiros e, se for caso disso, apresentar observações, e dar aconselhamento ou assistência.

Em paralelo, a Comissão lançou, no âmbito do debate estruturado, uma consulta das associações que representam as três categorias de parceiros a nível da UE , incentivando-as a partilhar as suas experiências na preparação dos programas operacionais e dos Acordos de Parceria em curso.

Embora a Comissão não preveja solicitar um relatório ao Comité das Regiões no que diz respeito ao papel das autoridades locais e regionais na elaboração dos Acordos de Parceria, irá preparar um relatório sobre este tema no início de 2014.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003121/13
adresată Comisiei
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) şi Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19 martie 2013)

Subiect: Rolul autorităților locale și regionale în cadrul acordurilor de parteneriat privind politica de coeziune pentru perioada 2014-2020

Statele membre trebuie să încheie acorduri de parteneriat cu Comisia pentru următoarea perioadă de programare privind politica de coeziune (2014-2020). Aceste acorduri, care vor cuprinde programele de reformă naționale și recomandările de țară specifice, trebuie să fie încheiate cu participarea autorităților locale și regionale.

Garanțiile acestui principiu al parteneriatului sunt cuprinse în Regulamentul privind dispozițiile comune (RDC) pentru fondurile structurale, asupra căruia Parlamentul poartă în prezent negocieri cu Consiliul și Comisia. Cu toate acestea, acordurile vor trebui să fie încheiate înainte de finalizarea RDC. Prin urmare, nu există nicio securitate juridică a faptului că regulamentul va garanta includerea avizelor autorităților locale și regionale.

1. Este Comisia de acord că există pericolul ca autoritățile locale și regionale să nu fie suficient de implicate în elaborarea acordurilor de parteneriat înainte de finalizarea regulamentului?

2. Este Comisia pregătită să organizeze o procedură deschisă de consultare a autorităților locale și regionale pentru a verifica dacă acestea au avut timp suficient pentru a contribui cu informații, asigurându-se, astfel, că principiul parteneriatului prevăzut la articolul 5 din RDC este respectat?

3. Este Comisia informată de măsura în care autoritățile locale și regionale din statele membre sunt implicate în pregătirea acordurilor de parteneriat?

4. Este Comisia pregătită să solicite un raport din partea Comitetului Regiunilor privind rolul autorităților locale și regionale în elaborarea de acorduri de parteneriat?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(26 aprilie 2013)

Parlamentul European și Consiliul au ajuns în decembrie 2012 la un acord asupra blocului referitor la programare din Regulamentul privind dispozițiile comune pentru fondurile structurale și de investiții europene, al cărui scop principal este să ofere statelor membre suficientă securitate juridică pentru a elabora acordurile de parteneriat și programele operaționale. Concret, articolul 5 din proiectul de regulament privind dispozițiile comune prevede obligația fiecărui stat membru de a organiza, pentru fiecare acord de parteneriat și pentru programe, un parteneriat cu autoritățile regionale și locale competente.

Pe baza acestor dispoziții, Comisia a inițiat discuții informale cu statele membre, care ar trebui să asigure întocmirea la timp atât a acordurilor de parteneriat, cât și a programelor.

Implicarea corespunzătoare a tuturor partenerilor constituie, fără excepție, o parte esențială a acestui dialog informal. Din acest motiv, Comisia profită de discuții pentru a evalua modul în care fiecare stat membru implică diferiții parteneri și, după caz, pentru a formula observații sau a oferi consiliere ori asistență.

În paralel, Comisia a lansat, în cadrul dialogului structurat, o consultare cu asociațiile din întreaga UE care reprezintă cele trei categorii de parteneri, încurajându-le să își împărtășească experiența privind elaborarea în curs a acordurilor de parteneriat și a programelor.

Deși nu intenționează să solicite Comitetului Regiunilor un raport privind rolul autorităților locale și regionale în elaborarea acordurilor de parteneriat, Comisia va întocmi un raport pe această temă până la începutul anului 2014.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003121/13
Komisii
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) a Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19. marca 2013)

Vec: Úloha miestnych a regionálnych orgánov v dohodách o partnerstve v oblasti politiky súdržnosti na roky 2014 – 2020

Členské štáty musia s Komisiou uzavrieť dohody o partnerstve na ďalšie programovacie obdobie v oblasti politiky súdržnosti (2014 – 2020). Tieto dohody, ktoré budú obsahovať národné programy reforiem a odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny, je potrebné uzavrieť na základe príspevku miestnych a regionálnych orgánov.

Záruky tejto zásady partnerstva sú ustanovené v nariadení o spoločných ustanoveniach pre štrukturálne fondy, o ktorom momentálne Parlament rokuje s Radou a Komisiou. Dohody však budú musieť byť uzavreté ešte pred dokončením nariadenia o spoločných ustanoveniach. Preto nie je právna istota, že nariadenie bude zaručovať, že sa v dohodách zohľadnia stanoviská miestnych a regionálnych orgánov.

1. Súhlasí Komisia s tým, že existuje riziko, že miestne a regionálne orgány nebudú dostatočne zapojené do vypracúvania dohôd o partnerstve pred dokončením nariadenia?

2. Je Komisia pripravená viesť otvorený proces konzultácií s miestnymi a regionálnymi orgánmi s cieľom overiť, či mali dostatočný čas na to, aby prispeli svojím stanoviskom, čím sa zabezpečí dodržanie zásady partnerstva ustanovený v článku 5 nariadenia o spoločných ustanoveniach?

3. Má Komisia predstavu, do akej miery sú miestne a regionálne orgány v členských štátoch zapojené do prípravy dohôd o partnerstve?

4. Je Komisia pripravená požiadať Výbor regiónov o správu o úlohe miestnych a regionálnych orgánov v príprave dohôd o partnerstve?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(26. apríla 2013)

V decembri 2012 sa Európsky parlament a Rada dohodli na programovom bloku nariadenia o spoločných ustanoveniach európskych štrukturálnych a investičných fondov, ktorého najdôležitejším cieľom je poskytnutie dostatočnej právnej istoty členským štátom s ohľadom na prípravu dohôd o partnerstve a operačných programov. Najmä článok 5 návrhu nariadenia o spoločných ustanoveniach určuje povinnosť členských štátov vytvoriť partnerstvo s kompetentnými regionálnymi alebo miestnymi orgánmi v rámci každej dohody o partnerstve a všetkých programov.

Na základe týchto ustanovení Komisia začala proces neformálnych diskusií s členskými štátmi, ktorý by mal zaistiť včasnú prípravu dohôd o partnerstve a programov.

Riadna účasť všetkých partnerov predstavuje v každom prípade nevyhnutnú súčasť tohto neformálneho dialógu. Z tohto dôvodu Komisia využíva diskusie na to, aby zhodnotila spôsob zapojenia rôznych partnerov zo strany jednotlivých členských štátov a v prípade, že je to potrebné, aj na poskytnutie pripomienok, pomoci alebo poradenstva.

V rámci štruktúrovaného dialógu začala Komisia konzultácie s organizáciami s pôsobnosťou v celej EÚ, ktoré reprezentujú tri kategórie partnerov, a vedie ich k zdieľaniu skúseností ohľadom prebiehajúcej prípravy dohôd o partnerstve a programov.

Aj keď Komisia nemá v pláne žiadať od Výboru regiónov správu ohľadom úlohy miestnych alebo regionálnych orgánov v príprave dohôd o partnerstve, výbor by mohol správu na túto tému pripraviť do začiatku roka 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003121/13
to the Commission
Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Joachim Zeller (PPE) and Iosif Matula (PPE)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: Role of local and regional authorities in cohesion policy partnership agreements for 2014-2020

The Member States need to conclude partnership agreements with the Commission for the next cohesion policy programming period (2014-2020). These agreements, which will contain national reform programmes and country-specific recommendations, need to be concluded with the input of local and regional authorities.

The guarantees of this partnership principle are included in the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) for the Structural Funds, which Parliament is currently negotiating with the Council and the Commission. However, the agreements will have to be concluded before the CPR has been finalised. Therefore, there is no legal certainty that the regulation will guarantee the inclusion of the opinions of local and regional authorities.

1. Does the Commission agree that there is a danger that local and regional authorities will not be sufficiently involved in drafting the partnership agreements before the regulation is finalised?

2. Is the Commission prepared to hold an open consultation procedure among local and regional authorities to check whether they have had sufficient time to provide input, thereby ensuring that the partnership principle set out in Article 5 of the CPR is respected?

3. Is the Commission aware of the extent to which local and regional authorities in the Member States are involved in the preparation of the partnership agreements?

4. Is the Commission prepared to request a report from the Committee of the Regions on the role of local and regional authorities in the preparation of partnership agreements?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The European Parliament and the Council reached an agreement in December 2012 on the programming block of the Common Provisions Regulation of the European Structural and Investment Funds, the main aim of which is providing sufficient legal certainty to Member States in view of the preparation of the Partnership Agreements and operational programmes. In particular, Article 5 of the draft Common Provisions Regulation sets out the obligation for each Member State to organise, for each Partnership Agreement and the programmes, a partnership with the competent regional and local authorities.

On the basis of these provisions, the Commission has launched a process of informal discussions with Member States, which should ensure timely preparation of both Partnership Agreements and programmes.

The proper involvement of all partners constitutes an essential part of this informal dialogue, without exception. For this reason, the Commission is taking advantage of the discussions to assess the way each Member State is involving the different partners and, where appropriate, to provide remarks, advice or assistance.

In parallel, the Commission has launched, in the framework of the structured dialogue, a consultation of the EU-wide associations representing the three categories of partners, encouraging them to share their experience on the ongoing preparation of the Partnership agreements and programmes.

While the Commission has no plans to request a report from the Committee of the Regions on the role of local and regional authorities in the preparation of Partnership Agreements, it would prepare a report on this topic by the beginning of 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003122/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(19 maart 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Top vijftig van landen waar christenen worden vervolgd (vervolgvraag)

Op 19 maart 2013 heeft de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger mevrouw Ashton namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-000145/2013. Daarin schrijft zij: „EU-delegaties controleren de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging in hun respectieve gastlanden en brengen verslag uit aan het hoofdkwartier van de Europese Dienst voor extern optreden (EDEO). De EU gebruikt deze informatie om de situatie ter plaatse te beoordelen en in te grijpen waar nodig."

1. Hoe controleren de genoemde EU-delegaties de vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging? Hoe grijpt de EU in waar nodig? Wanneer acht de EU ingrijpen nodig? Welke werkwijze wordt daarbij gehanteerd en hoe succesvol is deze gebleken?

Voorts schrijft mevrouw Ashton: „De EU stelt geen landenlijsten op en maakt evenmin opmerkingen over zulke lijsten, maar benadrukt dat er in de dialogen, verklaringen en stappen van de EU met betrekking tot mensenrechtensituaties in veel landen op de lijst van Open Doors ook aandacht wordt besteed aan vrijheid van godsdienst en overtuiging."

2. Waarom stelt de EU geen landenlijsten op? Waarom maakt zij evenmin opmerkingen over zulke lijsten? Impliceert zij daarmee dat zij dergelijke lijsten te „confronterend" / „pijnlijk" vindt?

3. Deelt de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de mening dat dergelijke lijsten juist noodzakelijk zijn, willen de EU-delegaties deugdelijk verslag uitbrengen aan de EDEO?

Tevens schrijft mevrouw Ashton: „De EU is het er niet mee eens dat gevallen van vervolging van om het even welke groep gelovigen automatisch de stopzetting van ontwikkelingshulp tot gevolg moeten hebben. De EU tracht steeds praktische verbeteringen van de toepassing van mensenrechten in derde landen te bevorderen, zelfs in landen met de meest autoritaire regimes."

4. In welke situaties is de EU er wel toe bereid het verstrekken van ontwikkelingsgeld te beëindigen? Wat dient er te gebeuren voordat de EU daartoe besluit?

5. Hoe „succesvol" is de EU tot dusverre geweest in het verbeteren van de mensenrechtensituaties in derde landen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(6 mei 2013)

Meteen na de aanneming van de conclusies van de Raad in februari 2011 „over intolerantie, discriminatie en geweld op grond van religie of overtuiging" is de EU-delegaties verzocht de vrijheid van godsdienst en levensovertuiging te controleren en er verslag over uit te brengen aan de hand van een lijst van te controleren elementen of situaties. Op basis van meer dan 100 verslagen die zij heeft ontvangen, is de EU bilaterale gesprekken aangegaan via verschillende instrumenten (verklaringen, demarches, politieke en mensenrechtendialogen, enz.) en in multilaterale fora. De vrijheid van godsdienst en levensovertuiging is een integrerend deel van de landenstrategieën inzake mensenrechten die de delegaties voortaan dienen op te stellen.

Dat de EU geen landenlijsten of landenrankings publiceert, belet haar niet om krachtdadig en publiekelijk op te treden tegen schendingen in specifieke landen, met name middels publieke verklaringen. De EU is echter van mening dat een confronterende aanpak in veel gevallen contraproductief kan zijn. Dat verklaart het vertrouwelijke karakter van het in 2010 vastgestelde actieplan waarin ten aanzien van 37 prioritaire landen in verdere inzet voor de vrijheid van godsdienst en levensovertuiging wordt voorzien.

Met de aanstaande aanneming van de openbare EU-richtsnoeren voor vrijheid van godsdienst en levensovertuiging benadrukt de EU de prioriteit die zij aan de bevordering en verdediging van dit grondrecht geeft. In de nieuwe richtsnoeren wordt bepaald dat terdege rekening moet worden gehouden met de vrijheid van godsdienst en levensovertuiging wanneer wordt beoordeeld of een mensenrechtenclausule moet worden ingesteld.

Het „succes” in de verbetering van mensenrechtensituaties meten, is zeker geen exacte wetenschap en hangt af van verschillende factoren. Alle EU-delegaties is verzocht om verwezenlijkingen met betrekking tot het EU-optreden aan te geven bij het opstellen van hun respectieve landenstrategie voor mensenrechten om zo het „succes” beter te kunnen meten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003122/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(19 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Top fifty countries where Christians are persecuted (follow-up question)

On 19 March 2013 the Vice-President/High Representative, Baroness Ashton, replied on behalf of the Commission to written question E-000145/2013. In her reply, she wrote: 'EU delegations monitor the state of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in their respective host countries and report to European External Action Service (EEAS) headquarters. The EU uses this information to assess the situation on the ground and to engage whenever necessary'.

1. How are the abovementioned EU delegations monitoring freedom of religion or belief? How does the EU engage whenever necessary? When does the EU consider it necessary to engage? What methods does it use to do so and how successful have they proved?

Baroness Ashton went on to write: 'The EU does not compile lists of countries nor does it comment on any such list, but underlines that dialogues, statements and demarches carried out by the EU on the Human Rights situations of many of the countries mentioned in the Open Doors' list include a focus on freedom of religion or belief'.

2. Why does the EU not compile lists of countries? Why does it not comment on such lists? Is the EU implying in this way that it considers such lists too 'confrontational' or 'painful'?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative share the opinion that precisely such lists are necessary if EU delegations are to report back to the EEAS properly?

Baroness Ashton also wrote that 'The EU does not agree that instances of persecution of any group of religious believers should lead automatically to the termination of development aid. The EU always aims to promote practical improvements in the implementation of human rights in third countries, even in those with the most authoritarian systems.'

4. In what situations, then, is the EU actually prepared to terminate the provision of development aid? What needs to happen before the EU decides to take this course of action?

5. How 'successful' has the EU been so far in improving the human rights situation in third countries?

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

Immediately after the adoption in February 2011 of Council conclusions 'on intolerance, discrimination and violence on the basis of religion or belief', the EU Delegations were requested to monitor the state of freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) and to report on it, using a list of elements or situations to be checked. On the basis of over 100 received reports, the EU has been engaging bilaterally using a full range of tools (statements, demarches, political and human rights dialogues…), as well as in multilateral fora. FoRB is an integral part of the human rights country strategies that the Delegations are now requested to prepare.

The fact that the EU does not publish 'lists' or 'rankings' of countries does not prevent it from acting vigorously and publicly in order to address violations in specific countries, notably through public statements. However, the EU takes the view that in many cases a confrontational approach can be counterproductive. It is the reason why the action plan adopted in 2010, which provides for further engagement on FoRB with 37 priority countries, remains confidential.

With the forthcoming adoption of public EU guidelines on FoRB, the EU will highlight the priority given to the promotion and defence of this fundamental right. The new guidelines will state that FoRB should be duly taken into account when assessing whether to trigger a human rights clause.

The measuring of 'success' in improving human rights situations is far from being an exact science and depends on numerous factors. In the drafting of their respective human rights country strategy, all EU Delegations have been requested to point out achievements relative to EU action, in order to better measure such 'success'.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-003123/13
Komisi
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(20. března 2013)

Předmět: Dopad novely směrnice 2001/37/ES na živnostníky a podnikatele

Návrh novely směrnice Evropského parlamentu a Rady předpokládá citelné zásahy do fungování vnitřního trhu v tomto odvětví. Její dopad však nemíří pouze na samotné výrobce, ale i na početnou strukturu podnikatelů a živnostníků. A právě tento sektor je páteří ekonomik členských států, bohužel je však v posledních letech vinou ekonomického poklesu a neustále rostoucí regulace pod silným tlakem mnohdy až existenčního rázu.

1. Má Komise k dispozici věrohodné a nezávislé informace o tom, jaký by byl dopad na sektor živnostníků a maloobchodníků, u nichž je obchod s tabákovými produkty jedním ze zdrojů příjmů?

2. Počítá ve svých odhadech i s nepřímými náklady, například s úpadkem části těchto subjektů a následnými finančními náklady ze strany sociálních systémů členských států?

3. Jak obhájí Komise fakt, že uvedený negativní dopad novely je v přímé kolizi s jejími vlastními deklaracemi, plány a strategickými dokumenty usilujícími o ochranu podmínek pro rozvoj malých a středních podniků?

Odpověď Tonia Borga jménem Komise
(7. května 2013)

Přijetí návrhu revize směrnice o tabákových výrobcích předcházelo důkladné posouzení dopadů, včetně posouzení hospodářských dopadů na tabákový průmysl, jeho dodavatele (např. pěstitele, dodavatele složek, papírenský průmysl) a následné distributory (velkoobchod, maloobchod) ([1]).

Odhaduje se, že uvedený návrh povede ke snížení spotřeby tabákových výrobků o nejvýše 2 % během v období pěti let od provedení směrnice. Nepříznivý dopad na odvětví by tedy byl omezený. Ztráta pracovních míst ve výrobě cigaret by byla vykompenzována vytvořením pracovních příležitostí v jiných odvětvích v návaznosti na výdaje bývalých kuřáků v těchto odvětvích.

Kromě toho se očekává, že návrh bude pro odvětví výhodný díky snížení výrobních nákladů v důsledku harmonizace (jedna stejná výrobní linka místo různých výrobních linek potřebných pro dodržování různých vnitrostátních předpisů) a díky očekávanému omezení nezákonného obchodu (v důsledku navrhovaných opatření na sledování a dohledávání produktů). Dokonce ani u nejvíce specializovaných maloobchodníků s tabákovými výrobky nepředstavuje obchod s tabákovými výrobky více než 50 % jejich příjmů, a proto se neočekává, že by byl dopad nepřiměřený.

Aby se zabránilo zbytečné zátěži pro malé a střední podniky, jsou dýmkový tabák, doutníky a doutníčky, které většinou vyrábějí malé podniky, osvobozeny od přísnějších pravidel pro označování a složky, která návrh předpokládá u jiných tabákových výrobků. Návrh je také neutrální, pokud jde o různé druhy tabáku (Virginia, Burley, orientální). To znamená, že se nijak nedotkne menších zemědělských podniků, které se na produkci tabáku Burley a orientálního tabáku podílejí.

([1]) SWD (2012) 452 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003123/13
to the Commission
Ivo Strejček (ECR)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Impact of revised Directive 2001/37/EC on traders and entrepreneurs

The proposal for an amendment to Directive 2001/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council contains provisions that would seriously encroach on the functioning of the internal market in the tobacco sector. Its impact would be felt not only by manufacturers, but also by a large number of entrepreneurs and traders — the backbone of Member States' economies. It is regrettable that this sector has been put under unrelenting pressure in recent years — to the point where its very survival is at risk — by the economic downturn and the ever-increasing amount of regulation.

1. Does the Commission have credible and independent data on the directive's potential impact on traders and retailers for whom tobacco products are a major source of income?

2. Do the Commission's forecasts take indirect costs, such as those associated with the bankruptcy of some of those entities and the ensuing costs for Member States' social systems, into account?

3. How does the Commission justify the fact that the negative effects of this directivedirectly contradict its declarations, plans and strategic documents on securing conditionsfor the development of SMEs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The adoption of the proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive was preceded by a thorough impact assessment, including an assessment of the economic impacts on the tobacco industry, their upstream suppliers (e.g. growers, ingredients suppliers, paper industry) and downstream distributors (wholesale, retail). ([1])

It is estimated that the proposal will result in a reduction in the consumption of tobacco products of no more than 2% within a five year period following the transposition of the directive. The adverse impact on the industry would therefore remain limited. Jobs lost in the production of cigarettes would be offset by the creation of jobs in other sectors, reflecting ex-smokers expenditure on such sectors.

In addition, the proposal is expected to lead to some benefits for the industry through reduced production costs as a result of harmonisation (one same production line instead of different production lines to comply with different national rules) and through the expected reduction in illicit trade (as a result of the proposed measures on tracking and tracing of products). Even the most specialised tobacco retailers do not generate more than 50% of their revenues from tobacco products, thus the impact is not expected to be disproportionate.

To avoid unnecessary burden for SMEs, pipe tobacco, cigars and cigarillos, which are mostly produced by small companies, are exempted from the stricter labelling and ingredients rules which the proposal foresees for the other tobacco products. The proposal is also neutral as regards different types of tobacco (Virginia, Burley, Oriental). This means that smaller farms involved in Burley and Oriental tobacco will not be affected.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003125/13
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Equivalence of veterinary qualifications

Will the Commission confirm whether veterinary professionals are qualified to an equal and identical standard across all 27 Member States, or whether in practice there are variations in the relative expertise delivered by the training they receive?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) on the recognition of professional qualifications provides for harmonised minimum training requirements for veterinary surgeons. It requires at least five years of studies at a university or higher institute providing training on the objectives set out in the directive.

Such minimum harmonisation enables veterinary surgeons to benefit from the automatic recognition of diplomas acquired on that basis and ensures an appropriate standard for their training in the European Union. Member States cannot go below the minimum standard but may provide for additional requirements under their domestic systems. The directive therefore allows for some variations between Member States.

At present, a revision of Directive 2005/36/EC is under discussion in the European Parliament on the basis of a Commission proposal of December 2011.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003126/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(20 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Sospensione dei pignoramenti legati ai mutui bancari

Negli ultimi anni in Italia è drammaticamente cresciuto il numero di abitazioni sottoposte a pignoramento, creando di fatto una pericolosa emergenza abitativa e sociale.

Spesso i cittadini si servono di mutui bancari per l'acquisto di un'abitazione, e la situazione attuale di crisi sta rendendo estremamente difficile rispettare le scadenze pattuite, in violazione delle quali la banca che ha concesso il prestito procede al pignoramento del bene.

In Spagna è stata proposta nei mesi scorsi una sorta di moratoria da parte dell'associazione che riunisce le banche del Paese iberico, che prevede, in determinate condizioni, un blocco dei pignoramenti bancari per i prossimi due anni.

Considerando che si tratta di un problema che riguarda molti Paesi europei, non ritiene la Commissione auspicabile e possibile proporre una misura analoga a quella spagnola, prevedendo un accordo quadro globale con le banche europee da estendere a beneficio di tutta l'Unione?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 maggio 2013)

La crisi economica e bancaria ha indubbiamente fatto aumentare il numero dei pignoramenti in molti Stati membri. Spetta a ciascuno Stato membro far fronte in modo efficace a tale situazione e trovare il giusto equilibro tra la tutela dei soggetti vulnerabili della società e la salvaguardia della stabilità finanziaria degli istituti che hanno erogato i prestiti, dei loro depositanti e dei contribuenti in generale. Attualmente la legislazione sulle procedure di regolamento dei debiti e la congiuntura economica variano notevolmente da uno Stato membro all'altro.

Si rammenta all'onorevole parlamentare che il 22 aprile 2013 è stato raggiunto un accordo a livello politico tra il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio riguardante la proposta di direttiva in merito ai contratti di credito relativi ad immobili residenziali ([1]), che include disposizioni sul ragionevole grado di tolleranza di cui i creditori devono dar prova prima di avviare procedure di pignoramento. Una volta adottata la direttiva, gli Stati membri dovranno attuare questi principi nel rispettivo ordinamento.

([1]) COM(2011)142 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003126/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Suspension of mortgage-linked repossessions

Over the last few years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of house repossessions in Italy, creating a serious housing and social emergency.

Citizens often take out mortgages for a house purchase, and the current crisis is making it extremely difficult for them to keep up with the agreed repayment schedule. If the borrower defaults on the repayments, the lending bank repossesses the property.

The Spanish Banking Association recently announced a two-year moratorium on bank repossessions under certain conditions.

Since this is a problem that affects many European countries, does the Commission not consider it desirable and possible to propose a measure similar to the one adopted in Spain, drawing up a global framework agreement with the European banks to cover the whole of the EU?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Indeed the economic and banking crisis led to increase in house repossessions in many Member States. It is up to the respective Member State to effectively address this issue and to strike the right balance between protecting vulnerable parts of the society and safeguarding the financial stability of the lending institutions, their depositors and taxpayers at large. Currently, legal frameworks on debt settlement procedures and economic situations vary considerably across Member States.

The Honourable Member should note that an agreement between the European Parliament and the Council was reached on 22 April 2013 at political level on the proposal for a directive on credit agreements relating to residential property ([1]). This includes provisions on reasonable forbearance by creditors before foreclosure proceedings are initiated. Once the directive is adopted, Member States will have to implement these principles in their jurisdiction.

([1]) COM(2011)142 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003127/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(20 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Possibilità di sospensione dell'erogazione di servizi di assistenza sanitaria per cittadini comunitari

Secondo quanto riportato da alcuni organi di stampa, i governi di quattro Stati membri (Austria, Germania, Gran Bretagna e Paesi Bassi) sarebbero intenzionati ad inviare una comunicazione alla Commissione europea per richiedere la sospensione dell'erogazione dei servizi legati all'assistenza sanitaria, di cui beneficiano i cittadini di alcuni Stati membri dell'UE.

Alla luce di quanto affermato dal portavoce del Commissario all'occupazione, che lo scorso 11 marzo riferiva di non aver «ricevuto notizia dell'esistenza di un turismo del welfare» in Europa, può la Commissione riferire se vi siano stati degli sviluppi in seguito a quanto trapelato a mezzo stampa?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(6 maggio 2013)

La Commissione ha ricevuto la lettera in questione.

Per quanto concerne il diritto dei cittadini dell'UE all'assistenza sanitaria in un altro Stato membro, le norme dell'UE in tema di coordinamento della sicurezza sociale (regolamento (CE) n. 883/2004) sono chiare. I cittadini dell'UE che svolgono un'attività retribuita in qualità di lavoratori autonomi o subordinati hanno diritto alle stesse prestazioni dell'assistenza sanitaria cui hanno titolo i cittadini dello Stato membro in cui essi espletano le loro attività. Le persone non attive hanno diritto soltanto alle prestazioni basate sulla residenza, vale a dire le prestazioni sanitarie basate sulla residenza, se superano la rigorosa «Prova della residenza abituale». A tal fine, una persona deve spostare il centro dei propri interessi nello Stato membro ospitante. I criteri per superare tale prova (motivazione, durata del soggiorno, situazione familiare, alloggiamento e intenzione, il tutto debitamente comprovato) offrono allo Stato membro ospitante uno strumento efficace per tutelarsi contro gli abusi in tale ambito.

Dagli studi realizzati emerge che il principale incentivo che hanno le persone per trasferirsi in un altro Stato membro è il lavoro e non la possibilità di avvalersi delle prestazioni ivi offerte. A tutt'oggi nessuno Stato membro ha fornito alla Commissione le prove atte a corroborare il reale sussistere del fenomeno del cosiddetto «turismo sociale».

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003127/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Possible denial of healthcare services to EU citizens

According to a number of press reports, the governments of four Member States (Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom) intend to request the Commission's permission to bar citizens of some EU countries from entitlement to healthcare services.

Given that the Employment Commissioner's spokesperson, in comments made on 11 March 2013, claimed to have heard nothing about welfare tourism in Europe, can the Commission say whether there have been any developments since the press broke this story?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission has received this letter.

With regard to the entitlement of EU citizens to healthcare in another Member State, the EU rules on social security coordination (Regulation (EC) No 883/2004) are clear. EU citizens in gainful activity as an employed or self-employed person are entitled to the same healthcare benefits as nationals of the Member State where they pursue their activity. Non-active persons are only entitled to residence based benefits, such as residence based healthcare benefits, if they pass the strict 'Habitual Residence Test'. To this end, a person has to move his/her centre of interest to the host Member State. The criteria for passing this test (motivation, duration of stay, family situation, housing and intention based on facts) provide the host Member State with an effective tool to safeguard against any cases of abuse in this field.

Studies show that the main incentive for people moving to another Member State is to get a job and not to claim benefits. So far, no Member State has provided the Commission with facts to back up the perception related to so called 'benefit tourism'.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003128/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Problemas de financiación en los astilleros españoles

La pasada semana, varios periódicos del País Vasco recogían la impresión de los rectores del astillero La Naval de Sestao de que esta empresa ha perdido un contrato de 220 millones de euros como consecuencia del retraso, por parte de la Comisión Europea en decidir sobre el anterior régimen de «Tax lease». El pedido era de un armador noruego, cliente habitual del astillero vasco. El contrato ha recaído finalmente en un astillero coreano, privando a La Naval de una carga de trabajo hasta 2015, la generación de 1,7 millones de horas de trabajo y muchos pedidos para la industria auxiliar.

Los afectados consideran que mientras no haya un pronunciamiento definitivo sobre el anterior régimen español de «Tax lease» todos los astilleros de este Estado miembro se ven afectados por una incertidumbre que lastra su competitividad, cuestiona la solvencia del sector frente a sus clientes y dificulta el acceso a los avales y mecanismos de financiación que son indispensables para la construcción naval. Igualmente, esta incertidumbre convierte en papel mojado el nuevo sistema de financiación de activos aprobado en noviembre de 2012 mientras no se despeje definitivamente la incertidumbre sobre el anterior sistema de «Tax lease» aplicado en España.

En consecuencia:

¿Comparte la Comisión el análisis de los rectores del astillero La Naval de Sestao?

¿En qué plazo puede conocerse una decisión definitiva sobre el anterior sistema de «Tax lease» aplicado en el Estado español?

¿Cuál es el origen del retraso en el proceso de toma de decisiones?

¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para fomentar una colaboración de la construcción naval frente a la competencia externa a la vista de la constante pérdida de cuota del mercado de este sector europeo frente a los países asiáticos y la perniciosa dinámica de denuncias interestatales que no ayuda en nada a superar la actual situación?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de mayo de 2013)

Como consecuencia de las denuncias de competidores, la Comisión ha investigado el sistema español de arrendamiento fiscal («tax lease»). El sistema español de arrendamiento fiscal («tax lease») establecido por España en 2002 no fue notificado y, por tanto, no fue aprobado por la Comisión. El procedimiento de notificación previa, establecido en virtud del artículo 108 del Tratado, permite a los Estados miembros y a la industria obtener seguridad jurídica relativa a las medidas propuestas.

La Comisión recibió importantes contribuciones de más de 40 terceras partes interesadas, en las que se presentaban varios argumentos a favor o en contra de la evaluación preliminar de la Comisión sobre las medidas de arrendamiento fiscal («tax lease») español.

Las últimas contribuciones que fueron enviadas entre junio de 2012 y abril de 2013 llamaron la atención de la Comisión sobre nuevos datos. Estos argumentos están siendo analizados. La Comisión está trabajando para que se adopte una decisión final en los próximos meses.

En lo que respecta a la colaboración en la industria europea de la construcción naval, la Comisión ha adoptado recientemente una nueva Estrategia LeaderSHIP, elaborada en colaboración con las distintas partes interesadas de este sector. Esta estrategia formula recomendaciones concretas para mantener la competitividad y la cuota de mercado de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003128/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Financial problems in the Spanish shipyards

Last week, several newspapers in the Basque Country reported on the belief held by the directors of La Naval de Sestao shipyard that the company had lost a contract for EUR 220 million as a result of the European Commission's delay in deciding on the former 'tax lease' scheme. The order was from a Norwegian ship-owner who was a regular customer of the Basque shipyard. The contract finally went to a Korean shipyard, depriving La Naval of a workload until 2015, 1.7 million hours of work, and a large number of orders for auxiliary industry.

Those affected believe that until there is a definitive declaration on the former 'tax lease' scheme, all of Spain's shipyards will suffer from uncertainty and that this will harm their competitiveness, calling the industry's creditworthiness into question in the eyes of its customers and making it difficult to access the funding mechanisms and guarantees that are essential for shipbuilding. This uncertainty also means that the new asset-financing scheme approved in November 2012 is not worth the paper it is written on until the 'tax lease' system formerly applied in Spain is clarified once and for all.

Does the Commission share the view held by the directors of La Naval de Sestao shipyard?

When will a final decision be known on the former tax lease scheme applied in Spain?

What is the reason for the delay in the decision-making process?

What measures does the Commission intend to adopt to promote collaboration in the European shipbuilding industry against foreign competition, in the light of this sector's constant loss of market share to Asian countries and the damage caused by inter-state disputes, which does nothing to remedy the current situation?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission has investigated the Spanish tax lease system following complaints from competitors. The Spanish tax lease system put in place by Spain in 2002 had not been notified and consequently not approved by the Commission. The prior notification procedure established by Article 108 of the Treaty enables Member States and the industry to obtain the legal certainty regarding proposed measures.

The Commission received substantial submissions from more than 40 interested third-parties developing several arguments either supporting or contradicting the Commission's preliminary assessment of the Spanish Tax Lease measures.

Late contributions were submitted between June 2012 and April 2013 bringing new elements to the Commission's attention. These arguments are being analysed. The Commission endeavours to have a final decision adopted in the coming months.

Regarding the collaboration in the European shipbuilding industry, the Commission has recently adopted a new LeaderSHIP Strategy which was prepared in association with the different stakeholders of the industry. This strategy makes concrete recommendations in order to maintain the competiveness and the market share of the EU.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003129/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Irregularidades en el juicio sobre los hechos de Gdeim Izik

Tras la sentencia recaída en Marruecos contra las personas encausadas por los sucesos de Gdeim Izik, comienzan a acumularse los indicios que certifican que durante el proceso judicial se han producido graves irregularidades. Hoy mismo la Asociación Internacional para la Observación de los Derechos Humanos (AIODH) ha presentado en el Parlamento Vasco ([1]) un completo informe en el que analiza desde la competencia del tribunal que juzgó los hechos hasta la aplicación de derechos fundamentales para los acusados durante la vista que se celebró en Rabat.

Entre las irrregularidades constatadas se citan expresamente el carácter genérico de las condenas, que no atribuyen hechos concretos a muchos de los condenados, la no admisión de los certificados médicos que prueban que los detenidos sufrieron malos tratos y torturas y flagrantes errores como la condena recaída en una persona que había sido detenida y encarcelada el día anterior a los hechos juzgados y que, sin embargo, fue condenada por su participación en los mismos. Por todo ello el informe concluye que el juicio vulneró todas las garantías que debe reunir un proceso justo y que las condenas, además de desproporcionadas para castigar los hechos que han dado origen al caso, se han dictado sin prueba de cargo alguna digna de tal nombre.

A la vista de estos hechos y de la particular relación que la Unión Europea mantiene con el Reino de Marruecos:

¿Tiene conocimiento la Alta Representante del informe de la AIODH sobre el juicio de Gdeim Izik?

¿Considera la Comisión que las irregularidades certificadas en este proceso justifican una investigación en torno a lo sucedido por parte de la Unión Europea?

A la vista de las evidencias actualmente existentes, ¿qué medidas piensa adoptar la Alta Representante ante el Reino de Marruecos para tratar de corregir esta situación?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de mayo de 2013)

La UE está siguiendo de cerca la situación de los derechos humanos en el Sáhara Occidental y el asunto de los veinticuatro detenidos saharauis, en prisión desde el 8 de noviembre de 2010 tras el desmantelamiento del campamento de Gdeim Izik y condenados por un tribunal militar el 17 de febrero de 2013, así como la cuestión del saharaui condenado *in absentia*.

En el marco del diálogo político UE-Marruecos, los derechos humanos se tratan periódicamente en las reuniones de los organismos conjuntos establecidos en virtud del Acuerdo de Asociación. En ese foro, la UE se ha interesado en repetidas ocasiones por los procedimientos para juzgar a los veinticinco saharauis y ha expresado recientemente su preocupación por las condiciones de detención de los veinticuatro detenidos. La Delegación de la UE en Rabat también ha tenido la oportunidad de reunirse con organizaciones de la sociedad civil y con familiares de los detenidos antes y después del juicio.

La UE siguió de cerca el desarrollo y el resultado del juicio y se congratuló por el hecho de que se permitiera un fácil acceso a muchos observadores de todos los grupos pertinentes y, en particular, a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil, ya que esto ayudó a garantizar que se contara con un análisis objetivo de las condiciones, no solo del juicio sino también del proceso de investigación. La UE continuará haciendo un seguimiento atento del caso y basará su valoración en las versiones finales de los informes de evaluación nacionales e internacionales, entre los que se encuentran los elaborados por el Consejo Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH), la Delegación Interministerial de los Derechos Humanos (DIDH) y el «Collectif d'ONGs marocaines», aún no disponibles.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-denuncian-graves-irregularidades-juicio-contra-24-saharauis-marruecos-20130319122332.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003129/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Irregularities in the trial over the events at Gdeim Izik

After the judgment delivered in Morocco against the individuals indicted for the events at Gdeim Izik, there is growing evidence to suggest that there were serious irregularities in the court proceedings. Today the International Association for the Observation of Human Rights (IAOHR) submitted to the Basque Parliament ([1]) a full report analysing everything from the competence of the court that judged the events to the implementation of the fundamental rights of the accused during the hearing in Rabat.

The identified irregularities include specific reference to the generic nature of the sentences, which do not attribute any specific acts to those sentenced, the non-admission of medical certificates proving that the prisoners had suffered ill-treatment and torture, and blatant errors such as the sentence passed on a person who had been arrested and imprisoned the day before the events in question but was nevertheless sentenced for taking part in them. Given all of these factors, the report concludes that the proceedings violated all the requirements of a fair trial and that the sentences were not only disproportionate for punishing the acts that gave rise to the case, but were handed down without any supporting evidence worthy of the name.

In view of these events and the special relationship between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco:

Is the High Representative aware of the IAOHR report on the Gdeim Izik trial?

Does the Commission consider that the irregularities identified in this trial warrant an investigation of the affair by the European Union?

In view of the evidence currently available, what measures does the High Representative intend to adopt in relation to the Kingdom of Morocco with a view to remedying this situation?

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

The EU is following closely the human rights situation in Western Sahara and the issue of the 24 Sahrawi detainees, in prison since 8 November 2010 after the dismantling of the Gdeim Izik camp and sentenced by military court on 17 February 2013; as well as the issue of 1 Sahrawi sentenced in absentia.

In the framework of the EU-Morocco political dialogue, human rights are regularly discussed at meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. In this context, the EU repeatedly asked about the proceedings to judge the 25 Sahrawi's and recently expressed concern about the conditions of detention of the 24 detainees. The EU Delegation in Rabat also had the opportunity to meet with civil society organisations and relatives of the detainees before and after the trial.

The EU followed closely the progress and outcome of this trial and welcomed the fact that easy access was granted to many observers of all relevant groups and in particular civil society organisations, as this helped ensure that an objective analysis of the conditions not only of the trial, but also the investigation process would be available. The EU will continue to follow the case with vigilance and will base its assessment on final versions of the national and international assessment reports, including the ones produced by the National Council on Human Rights (CNDH), the Inter-ministerial Delegation for Human Rights (DIDH) and the 'Collectif d'ONGs marocaines', which are not available yet.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-denuncian-graves-irregularidades-juicio-contra-24-saharauis-marruecos-20130319122332.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003130/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Promoción de la creación musical en lenguas minorizadas

En la última reunión del Intergrupo para las minorías en Estrasburgo tuve la oportunidad de conocer la iniciativa de Liet International, una organización que se dedica a promover la creación musical en lenguas minorizadas. Liet International se creó en 2002 para ofrecer una plataforma internacional a los grupos contemporáneos que cantan en estos idiomas europeos. En diez años Liet International ha crecido hasta ser una alternativa multilingüe al festival de la canción Eurovisión. Tras conocer la intención de esta fundación de que alguno de los festivales multilingües anuales que organizan tenga lugar en la ciudad que ese año sea Capital Europea de la Cultura y citar expresamente la posibilidad de iniciar esa trayectoria en Donostia-San Sebastián, una ciudad con lengua minorizada que será Capital Europea de la Cultura en 20016, supimos que esta organización no cuenta con apoyo alguno por parte de la Comisión Europea a través de sus programas de promoción de la creación cultural europea o más específicos de apoyo al multilingüismo.

Por lo tanto quisiéramos saber:

¿Conoce la Comisión las actividades de Liet International?

¿Considera la Comisión que esta iniciativa es válida para promover la creación cultural europea en este ámbito, además de sus lenguas minorizadas?

¿Ha denegado la Comisión alguna solicitud de Liet International para acogerse a los programas europeos de promoción de la creación cultural o de la creación en lenguas minorizadas? De ser así, ¿por qué razones?

¿Apoyaría la Comisión la organización de un festival de estas características en 2016 en Donostia-San Sebastián en su condición de Capital Europea de la Cultura?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión está de acuerdo en que este tipo de iniciativas puede contribuir considerablemente a la promoción de las lenguas minoritarias y la diversidad lingüística de la UE, y apoya por ello proyectos culturales de dimensión europea, incluidos festivales, a través del programa Cultura ([1]). El programa Cultura expira en 2013 y ya han finalizado los plazos para solicitar ayudas para festivales.

La Comisión ha propuesto establecer, para el período 2014-2020, el programa Europa Creativa, que sustituye al programa Cultura y al programa MEDIA. Una vez que el Consejo y el Parlamento hayan adoptado la propuesta Europa Creativa, la Comisión publicará en su sitio web las convocatorias de propuestas y las directrices ([2]).

Liet Internacional solicitó financiación del programa Cultura en 2012 para su festival Liet Internacional Asturies 2012. La solicitud no se ajustaba a los requisitos de subvencionabilidad del capítulo sobre festivales del programa Cultura.

En el marco de la Capital Europea de la Cultura, la Comisión concede el premio Melina Mercouri, dotado con 1,5 millones de euros, a las ciudades designadas, siempre y cuando cumplan los requisitos necesarios y pongan en práctica las recomendaciones formuladas por los comités de selección, seguimiento y asesoramiento. La ciudad designada ha de decidir entonces qué iniciativas desea apoyar.

([1]) Decisión nº 1855/2006/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 12 de diciembre de 2006, por la que se establece el programa Cultura (2007-2013) (DO L 372 de 27.12.2006, p. 1).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003130/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Promotion of music in minority languages

At the last meeting of the Intergroup for Minorities in Strasbourg, I had the opportunity to learn about an initiative by Liet International, an organisation dedicated to promoting music in minority languages. Liet International was founded in 2002 to give an international stage to modern bands who sing in these languages. In 10 years, Liet International has grown to be a multilingual alternative to the Eurovision Song Contest. We learned that this foundation plans to hold one of its annual multilingual festivals in the city designated as European Capital of Culture for that year. We were told that the first of these festivals might take place in Donostia-San Sebastián, a city with a minority language, which will be the European Capital of Culture in 2016. We then learned that this organisation receives no support from the European Commission through its programmes for promoting European cultural creativity, or more specifically for supporting multilingualism.

Is it aware of the activities of Liet International?

Does it regard this as a valid initiative for promoting Europe's cultural creativity in this area, as well as its minority languages?

Has it refused any application from Liet International to qualify for the European programmes to promote cultural creativity or creative works in minority languages? If so, for what reasons?

Would it support the organisation of a Festival of this kind in 2016 in Donostia-San Sebastián, in its capacity as European Capital of Culture?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission agrees that this kind of initiatives can be valuable for the promotion of minority languages and linguistic diversity in the EU. It supports cultural projects with a European dimension, including festivals, through the Culture Programme ([1]). The Culture Programme ends in 2013 and the deadlines to apply for grants for festivals have passed.

The Commission has proposed to establish the Creative Europe Programme for the period 2014-2020, replacing both the Culture and the MEDIA Programme. Once the Creative Europe proposal has been adopted by the Council and the Parliament, the calls for proposals and guidelines will be published on the Commission website ([2]).

Liet International applied for funding under the Culture Programme in 2012 for its 'Liet International 2012 Asturias' festival. The application did not comply with the eligibility criteria of the festival strand of the Culture Programme.

In the framework of the European Capital of Culture, the Commission awards the EUR 1.5 million Melina Mercouri prize to the designated cities, provided they meet the criteria and implement the recommendations made by the selection, monitoring and advisory panels. It is then up to the designated city to decide which initiatives to support.

([1]) Decision No 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 establishing the Culture Programme (2007-2013), OJ L 372, 27.12.2006, p. 1-11.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003131/13
an die Kommission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(20. März 2013)

Betrifft: Informationszugang zu Dokumenten der EFTA-Überwachungsbehörde

Am 10. Dezember 2012 hat die Kommission meine erste schriftliche Anfrage zum oben genannten Thema beantwortet. In ihrer Antwort stellte die Kommission fest, dass die Überwachungsbehörde der EFTA (EFTA Surveillance Authority — ESA) kein Organ der Europäischen Union sei und der Informationszugang zu Dokumenten die Europäische Union deshalb nicht betreffe.

Nur wenig später, am 21. Dezember 2012, hat der EFTA-Gerichtshof entschieden, dass die Vorschriften für den Zugang der Öffentlichkeit zu Dokumenten Bestandteil des EWR-Rechts sind. Damit betrifft die in meiner ersten Anfrage thematisierte rückwirkende Einführung neuer Vorschriften durch die EFTA auch die Europäische Union. Die Kommission hatte bereits bestätigt, dass sie zu der Änderung der ESA nicht konsultiert wurde.

Ich wiederhole aus diesem Grund meine Fragen, die die Kommission in ihrer ersten Antwort nicht beantwortet hat:

1. Hält es die Kommission für akzeptabel, dass die Zugangsrechte der Öffentlichkeit zu Informationen der EFTA-Überwachungsbehörde unterhalb des Standards liegen, der für die EU-Institutionen gilt?

2. Was unternimmt die Kommission, um sicherzustellen, dass Unionsbürger Zugangsrechte zu ESA-Dokumenten erhalten, die mit denen in der Europäischen Union vergleichbar sind?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(8. Mai 2013)

Da es sich bei der EFTA-Überwachungsbehörde nicht um ein Organ der Europäischen Union handelt, finden Artikel 15 Absatz 3 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union (AEUV) und die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1049/2001 keine Anwendung auf diese Behörde. Die Entscheidung des EFTA-Gerichtshofs, dass die Vorschriften für den Zugang der Öffentlichkeit zu Dokumenten Bestandteil des EWR-Rechts sind, bedeutet nicht, dass die EFTA-Gremien an Bestimmungen des AEUV oder einer EU-Verordnung gebunden sind.

Die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1049/2001 steckt einen allgemeinen Regelungsrahmen für den Zugang der Öffentlichkeit zu im Besitz der EU-Organe befindlichen Dokumenten ab, während der Beschluss der EFTA-Überwachungsbehörde vom 5. September einen eher begrenzten, spezifischen Geltungsbereich hat.

Der Beschluss entspricht der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1049/2001, enthält zudem aber spezifische Bestimmungen im Hinblick auf Dokumente, die mit anhängigen Verfahren und der Erhebung von Informationen im Rahmen der Ermittlungsbefugnisse der Behörde in Verbindung stehen. Diese Bestimmungen sind mit der Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs der EU zum Zugang der Öffentlichkeit zu Akten in Wettbewerbssachen, wie den Urteilen in den Rechtssachen C-139/07P, C-404/10P und C-477/10P, vereinbar. Damit besteht in der Praxis kein wesentlicher Unterschied zwischen den Zugangsrechten der Öffentlichkeit im Hinblick auf Kommissionsdokumente im Bereich der Durchsetzung der Wettbewerbsregeln und im Hinblick auf Dokumente der EFTA-Überwachungsbehörde.

Da die EU-Regeln für den Zugang zu Dokumenten nicht für die EFTA-Überwachungsbehörde gelten, kann die Kommission keinen Einfluss auf die Beschlüsse dieser Behörde geltend machen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003131/13
to the Commission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Access to documents of the EFTA Surveillance Authority for information purposes

On 10 December 2012, the Commission answered my first written question on the above subject. In its reply, the Commission stated that the EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) was not a European Union body and that EU provisions concerning access to documents therefore did not apply to it.

Shortly afterwards, on 21 December 2012, the EFTA Court ruled that the provisions on public access to documents constituted part of EEA law. This means that the retrospective introduction of new rules by EFTA, to which I had referred in my first question, also affects the European Union. The Commission had already confirmed that it had not been consulted on the change to the ESA.

I therefore repeat those of my questions which the Commission did not answer in its first reply:

1. Does the Commission consider it acceptable that public access rights to EFTA Surveillance Authority information are below the standard which applies to EU institutions?

2. What is the Commission doing to ensure that Union citizens receive access rights to ESA documents which are similar to those applicable in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

Since the EFTA Surveillance Authority is not an institution of the European Union, Article 15(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 are not applicable to this body. The fact that the EFTA Court ruled that provisions on public access to documents form part of EEA law does not mean that EFTA bodies are bound by provisions of the TFEU or by an EU Regulation.

Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 provides for a general framework of rules for public access to documents held by EU institutions, whereas the decision of 5 September of the EFTA Surveillance Authority has a much more limited and specific scope.

This decision is similar to Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, but contains additional specific provisions with regard to documents related to pending proceedings and to the gathering of information under the Authority's investigative powers. These provisions are compatible with the case law of the Court of Justice of the EU with regard to public access to files in competition cases, such as the judgments in cases C-139/07P, C-404/10P and C-477/10P. Therefore, in practice, there are no major differences between the access rights of the public with regard to Commission documents in the area of the enforcement of competition rules and with regard to documents of the EFTA Surveillance Authority.

Since the EFTA Surveillance Authority is not submitted to EU rules on access to documents, the Commission has no power to influence the decisions of this Authority.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003132/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(20 mars 2013)

Objet: Carte européenne de stationnement pour les personnes handicapées

Depuis les recommandations n° 98/376/CE du Conseil, il a été instauré une carte européenne de stationnement pour les personnes handicapées. Cette carte délivrée selon des critères nationaux est valable dans l'ensemble des États membres.

La mise en place de cette carte est une excellente initiative facilitant le déplacement des titulaires de la carte dans toute l'Union européenne.

Cependant, cette harmonisation des cartes a donné lieu à une simplification à l'extrême de ces titres permettant une falsification plus facile.

Il est indiqué dans les spécifications techniques de la carte qu'elle «comporte des éléments de sécurité pour éviter les risques de contrefaçon et de falsification».

Ces éléments de sécurité sont peu connus et très peu mis en avant sur la carte, et ne permettent pas une identification facile des contrefaçons.

Dans ce contexte:

La Commission dispose-t-elle de chiffres précis sur la contrefaçon de ces cartes dans l'Union européenne?

La Commission a-t-elle prévu de mettre en place une carte plus sécurisée?

Dix ans après l'Année européenne des personnes handicapées (2003), la Commission a-t-elle prévu une révision d'ensemble de sa législation sur ce point précis?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(3 mai 2013)

La recommandation 98/376/CE du Conseil ([1]) sur le modèle communautaire uniforme de carte de stationnement pour personnes handicapées est fondée sur le principe de reconnaissance mutuelle. La délivrance et la gestion des cartes de stationnement restent de la compétence des autorités nationales et locales.

Si la Commission ne recueille pas systématiquement des données sur l'utilisation et l'abus des cartes de stationnement pour personnes handicapées dans les États membres, la question de la fraude a fait à plusieurs reprises l'objet de discussions au sein du groupe de haut niveau de l'UE sur les personnes handicapées. Lors de l'élaboration en 2008 de la modification ([2]) de la recommandation 98/376/CE, la Commission a consulté le groupe de haut niveau au sujet de la nécessité d'introduire des éléments de sécurité additionnels. Bien que certains experts nationaux reconnaissaient l'utilisation frauduleuse comme un problème potentiel, la modification de la recommandation n'a pas recueilli un soutien suffisant.

La Commission a néanmoins inclus dans la liste d'actions pour 2010-2015 ([3]) de la stratégie européenne 2010-2020 en faveur des personnes handicapées ([4]) un point relatif à l'examen des possibilités de nouvelles solutions technologiques, en finançant par exemple des projets pilotes sur la mise au point de cartes de stationnement et de systèmes de contrôle électroniques.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998H0376:FR:HTMLhttp://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998H0376:fr:HTML
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008H0205:FR:NOT
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:FR:NOT
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:fr:NOT

Dans le cadre d'une coopération entre les services compétents de la Commission, l'objectif 3.4 «Mobilité/navigation assistée pour les utilisateurs âgés ou moins valides» a été inclus dans le programme d'appui stratégique de 2013 en matière de TIC ([5]). Un appel à propositions a donc été publié, dans le cadre duquel des consortiums d'entités des États membres satisfaisant aux conditions requises peuvent solliciter un financement pour des projets pilotes ayant pour objectif de mettre au point des dispositifs de sécurité accrue pour la carte de stationnement pour personnes handicapées ([6]). La Commission a l'intention d'utiliser les résultats d'un tel projet dans son examen des possibilités de modification de la recommandation du Conseil 98/376.

([5]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/download?docId=1540055https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/download?docId=1540055

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call_CIP?callIdentifier=CIP-ICT-PSP-2013-7&specificProgram=ICT-PSP

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003132/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: European parking card for disabled people

Since Council Recommendation 98/376/EC, a European parking card for disabled people has been introduced. This card, which is issued in accordance with national criteria, is valid in all Member States.

The implementation of this card is an excellent initiative facilitating the movement of cardholders throughout the European Union.

However, this harmonisation of the cards has led to them becoming extremely simplified, allowing the cards to be forged more easily.

The technical specifications of the card state that it 'includes security features to prevent counterfeiting and forgery'.

These security features are little known and are not very obvious on the card, and they do not make it easy to identify counterfeits.

In this context:

Does the Commission have exact figures on the counterfeiting of these cards in the European Union?

Does the Commission plan to put in place a more secure card?

Ten years after the European Year of People with Disabilities (2003), does the Commission plan to revise all of its legislation on this particular point?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Council Recommendation 98/376/EC ([1]) on the EU model disability parking card is based on the principle of mutual recognition. Issuing and managing the parking cards remains in the competence of national and local authorities.

Although the Commission does not systematically collect data on disability parking card use and abuse in the Member States, the issue of fraud has been discussed several times in the EU Disability High Level Group (DHLG). When preparing the 2008 amendment ([2]) to the recommendation 98/376/EC, the Commission consulted the DHLG on the need to introduce additional security features. Although some national experts recognised fraudulent use as a potential problem, there was insufficient support for changing the recommendation.

Nevertheless, the Commission has included in the list of actions for 2010-2015 ([3]) of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([4]) an item to explore opportunities of new technological solutions, for example by funding pilot projects on the development of electronic parking cards and control systems.

In cooperation between the relevant services of the Commission, Objective 3.4 'Assisted mobility/navigation for older or impaired users' was included in the 2013 ICT Policy Support Programme ([5]). Correspondingly, a call for proposals has been published, under which consortia of eligible Member State entities may apply for support for pilot projects that aim to develop increased security features for the disability parking card ([6]). The Commission intends to make use of the outcomes of such a project in its examination of the possibilities for amending the Council Recommendation 98/376.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31998H0376:en:HTML.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008H0205:EN:NOT.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT.
([5]) https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/download?docId=1540055.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/call_CIP?callIdentifier=CIP-ICT-PSP-2013-7&specificProgram=ICT-PSP.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003134/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(20 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per lo sportello SOS Famiglia e lavoro

La disoccupazione in Europa ha raggiunto livelli allarmanti.

In Italia, secondo gli ultimi dati dell'Istituto nazionale di statistica, nel quarto trimestre 2012 il numero degli occupati è diminuito di 148.000 unità rispetto all'anno precedente.

Il tasso di disoccupazione si attesta all'11,7 %, in aumento di 0,4 punti percentuali rispetto a dicembre e di 2,1 punti nei dodici mesi. Il tasso di disoccupazione tra i 15-24enni è pari al 38,7 %. La regione Toscana, nel 2012, ha registrato una diminuzione del tasso di crescita delle imprese (passando dall'1,05 del 2011 allo 0,37). Nella provincia di Prato nel 2012 il saldo anagrafico delle imprese conta 3171 domande di iscrizioni a fronte di 2825 cessazioni.

Lo sportello SOS Famiglia e lavoro è uno sportello di pronto intervento sociale a supporto delle persone e della famiglia che offre gratuitamente sostegno psicologico, mediazione familiare, consulenza legale e commerciale alle persone che hanno perso il lavoro e si trovano in condizioni di disagio psicologico e con problematiche legali/commerciali dovuti allo stato di criticità della propria attività lavorativa.

Si tratta di un progetto del Comune di Prato ideato a seguito dell'aumento del numero di suicidi nella provincia a causa della crisi economica, che mira alla costituzione di una rete per fornire sostegno ai cittadini.

Il servizio, attuato da diversi soggetti attraverso un numero verde, ha anche l'obiettivo di intercettare direttamente o indirettamente, attraverso amici e familiari, le persone a rischio.

La Commissione ha di recente presentato un pacchetto per gli investimenti sociali che offre agli Stati membri orientamenti per perseguire politiche sociali più efficienti ed efficaci in risposta alle problematiche attuali, che comprendono gravi difficoltà finanziarie, aumento della povertà e dell'esclusione sociale, nonché livelli record di disoccupazione.

Tale pacchetto mira, tra l'altro, a garantire che i sistemi di protezione sociale soddisfino i bisogni delle persone nei momenti critici della loro vita.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se siano previsti programmi o finanziamenti per la realizzazione del progetto suesposto e quali siano le modalità di accesso ai medesimi;

2. se è a conoscenza di analoghe iniziative e buone prassi in tale ambito a livello europeo;

3. se è in grado di fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole della difficile situazione occupazionale che si registra nell'Unione europea e in Italia, in particolare per quanto concerne i giovani.

L'FSE ([1]) intende promuovere l'occupabilità e l'inclusione sociale delle persone svantaggiate nell'ottica di un loro (re)inserimento sostenibile nel mondo del lavoro. Sembrerebbe pertanto che il progetto menzionato dall'onorevole deputata possa ricevere un sostegno dell'FSE nella misura in cui mira a migliorare l'occupabilità dei beneficiari.

L'FSE è attuato per il tramite di programmi operativi (PO). Conformemente al principio di gestione condivisa, i PO dell'FSE sono gestiti a livello nazionale o regionale. Un'autorità di gestione è responsabile dell'attuazione di ciascun PO. La Commissione invita l'onorevole deputata a mettersi in contatto con l'autorità di gestione del PO Toscana per ulteriori informazioni ([2]).

([1]) Fondo sociale europeo.
([2]) Autorità di gestione, PO FSE Toscana 2007-2013, Via Pico della Mirandola 24, 50132 Firenze settorefse@regione.toscana.it.

Il neo-adottato pacchetto di investimenti sociali ribadisce la necessità di modernizzare le politiche sociali e ottimizzare la loro efficacia e efficienza nonché le loro modalità di finanziamento sia per assicurare il miglior uso delle risorse esistenti sia per evitare i potenziali, durevoli effetti negativi della crisi. In proposito, vengono menzionati quali esempi di buone pratiche gli sportelli unici. Il Consiglio ha incaricato il comitato per la protezione sociale di studiare la questione del finanziamento dei sistemi di protezione sociale e sviluppare un quadro per valutarne l'efficacia e l'efficienza. I primi risultati sono previsti nel corso di quest'anno. Per quanto concerne le misure analoghe a quelle sviluppate dal Comune di Prato rinviamo al programma unionale di valutazione tra pari nel campo della protezione sociale nonché al sito dell'FSE che contiene diversi esempi di progetti finanziati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003134/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the one-stop shop 'SOS Family and Work'

Unemployment in Europe has reached alarming levels.

In Italy, according to the latest figures from the National Institute of Statistics, in the fourth quarter of 2012 the number of employed people decreased by 148 000 units compared to the previous year.

The unemployment rate currently stands at 11.7%, up by 0.4 percentage points compared to December and by 2.1 points over the past twelve months. The unemployment rate for young people between the ages of 15 and 24 is 38.7%. In 2012, the region of Tuscany recorded a decrease in the business growth rate (from the 1.05% of 2011 to 0.37%). In the province of Prato in 2012 there were 3171 applications for business registrations and 2825 business closures.

The one-stop shop 'SOS Family and Work' provides emergency social support for individuals and families, offering free counselling, family mediation, and commercial and legal advice to people who have lost their jobs and are in a state of psychological distress, having legal or commercial difficulties caused by the critical state of their work situation.

This project was developed by the Municipality of Prato as a result of the increase in the number of suicides in the province due to the economic crisis. Its aim is to set up a network to provide support to citizens.

The service, implemented by various bodies through a freephone number, also seeks to identify, directly or indirectly, through friends and family, those who are at risk.

The Commission has recently presented a social investment package that provides guidance to Member States so that they can pursue social policies that are more efficient and effective in response to the current challenges, which include serious financial difficulties, increased poverty and social exclusion and record levels of unemployment.

This package aims, among other things, to ensure that social welfare systems meet people's needs at critical times of their lives.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. whether any programmes or funding might be available for the project described above and how they might be accessed;

2. whether it is aware of any similar measures and good practice in this field at EU level;

3. whether it can provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the difficult employment situation in the European Union and in Italy, in particular for young people.

The ESF ([1]) aims to promote the employability and social inclusion of disadvantaged people with a view to their sustainable (re)integration into employment. It therefore seems that the project mentioned by the Honourable Member could be supported by the ESF as long as the project aims to improve the beneficiaries' employability.

The ESF is implemented through operational programmes (OPs). According to the principle of shared management, ESF OPs are managed at national or regional level. A managing authority is responsible for the implementation of each OP. The Commission would invite the Honourable Member to contact the Managing Authority of the Toscana OP for more information ([2]).

([1]) European Social Fund.
([2]) Managing Authority, ESF OP Toscana 2007-2013,Via Pico della Mirandola, 2450132 Firenze, settorefse@regione.toscana.it

The recently adopted Social Investment Package stresses the need to modernise social policies and to optimise their effectiveness and efficiency, and the way they are financed, both to ensure the best use of existing resources and to avoid potential lasting adverse effects of the crisis. The use of one-stop-shop models are mentioned as good practices in this respect. The Council mandated the Social Protection Committee to work on the issue of the financing of social protection systems and to develop a framework for assessing their effectiveness and efficiency. The first results of this work are expected in the course of this year. As concerns similar measures as the one developed by the Municipality of Prato we would like to refer to the EU Peer review Programme in the social protection field as well as the dedicated ESF website containing many examples of funded projects.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003136/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Energy policy regarding peat

It is my understanding that a number of years ago it was the EU's intention to phase out peat usage as soon as possible.

Can the Commission comment on its current energy policy regarding peat, including with specific reference to forecast timelines?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

The Commission does not have a specific energy policy on peat. It recognises it as an indigenous fuel with its merit for security of energy supply and regional development, but not as a renewable energy source, due to the long period of its formation and environmental consequences of its production. The Commission recognises that some Member States include peat in their national energy mixes as a source of local energy supply, as is their right in terms of freedom of choice between different energy sources guaranteed by TFEU.

In the climate change context, cutting peat would be accounted for under the activity of wetland drainage and rewetting under the Kyoto Protocol as well as under the EU Land Use Change and Forestry Decision ([1]). However, this activity is a voluntary one.

([1]) Decision No COM(2012) 93of the European Parliament and of the Council on accounting rules on greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities relating to land-use, land-use change and forestry and on information concerning actions relating to those activities — as adopted by the Council on 22 April 2013 (number not yet available).

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-003137/13
za Komisijo
Jelko Kacin (ALDE)
(20. marec 2013)

Zadeva: Odobritev nepopolnih dnevnikov vožnje s strani oblasti

V Uredbi Sveta (ES) št. 1/2005 je določeno, da živali na vožnjah iz ene države v drugo, daljših od 8 ur, spremlja dnevnik vožnje. Dnevnik vožnje bi moral med drugim vsebovati načrt vožnje, t.j. načrtovano trajanje vožnje in predvideni 24-urni postanki na kontrolnih točkah, če je to potrebno zaradi dolžine prevoza. Pristojni organ je z uredbo zavezan k odobritvi dnevnika vožnje v kraju odhoda le, če je načrt „stvaren in je iz njega razvidna skladnost s to uredbo".

Iz poročil Urada za prehrano in veterinarstvo (FVO) o inšpekcijah na 16 misijah v 12 državah članicah (Belgija, Bolgarija, Estonija, Francija, Irska, Italija, Latvija, Litva, Luksemburg, Poljska, Romunija in Španija), objavljenih leta 2009 in 2010, je razvidno, da uradniki iz držav članic pogosto ne preverijo ustrezno dnevnikov vožnje. Zlasti se dogaja, da:

— pristojni organi držav članic odobrijo dnevnike vožnje s prekratkim načrtovanim trajanjem vožnje. Zaradi tega postanki, ki so obvezni za dolge vožnje, niso ne načrtovani ne izvedeni.

— pomembni deli dnevnika vožnje pogosto ostanejo neizpolnjeni, kljub temu pa uradniki dnevnik vožnje sprejmejo za ustreznega.

Kako namerava Komisija spremeniti dejstvo, da so pristojni organi držav članic sistematično in stalno neuspešni pri izvajanju svoje naloge, ki je odobriti le tiste dnevnike vožnje, ki so realistični in skladni z Uredbo Sveta (ES) št. 1/2005?

Odgovor komisarja Tonia Borga v imenu Komisije
(13. maj 2013)

Komisija se strinja, da so bili večkrat odobreni nerealni dnevniki vožnje in da je to lahko vplivalo na dobrobit živali, ki se prevažajo ([1]). Pri tem je šlo za neizpolnjevanje obveznosti iz Uredbe (ES) št. 1/2005 o zaščiti živali med prevozom ([2]) pristojnih organov. V skladu s členom 14(1)(a)(ii) Uredbe (ES) št. 1/2005 pristojni organ „opravi ustrezna preverjanja, da potrdi, […] da je dnevnik vožnje, ki ga predloži organizator, stvaren in da je iz njega razvidna skladnost s to uredbo".

Komisija je za odpravo nastalega položaja poleg dela, ki ga je opravil Urad za prehrano in veterinarstvo Generalnega direktorata Komisije za zdravje in potrošnike, na sestankih s kontaktnimi točkami ([3]) za Uredbo št. 1/2005 o zadevi razpravljala s pristojnimi organi.

Pomembnost preverjanja dnevnikov vožnje bo obravnavana tudi na prihodnjih usposabljanjih v okviru programa „Boljše usposabljanje za varnejšo hrano ([4])". V letih 2013 in 2014 bosta dve usposabljanji namenjeni izključno dobrobiti živali med prevozom.

Urad za prehrano in veterinarstvo bo z revizijami še naprej obravnaval to problematiko in nanjo opozarjal države članice. Proti neskladnostim, ki so ugotovljene pri teh revizijah, vključno s tistimi iz vprašanja, Urad za prehrano in veterinarstvo ukrepa, kakor je primerno.

([1]) Glej poglavje 2.6.2 Poročila Komisije Evropskemu parlamentu in Svetu o učinku Uredbe Sveta (ES) št. 1/2005 o zaščiti živali med prevozom. COM(2011) 700 final.
([2]) UL L 3, 5.1.2005, str. 1.
([3]) Kontaktne točke za namene Uredbe so bile sporočene Komisiji v skladu s členom 24(2) Uredbe.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/training/animal_welfare_2011_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003137/13
to the Commission
Jelko Kacin (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Approval of deficient journey logs by the authorities

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 requires animals transported for more than 8 hours from one country to another to be accompanied by a journey log. The journey log should, among other things, indicate the planning of the journey, i.e. the estimated journey time and the scheduled 24-hour rest stops at control posts if the length of the transport requires it. The regulation obliges the competent authority at the place of departure to approve the journey log only if the planning 'is realistic and indicates compliance with this regulation'.

FVO inspection reports published in 2009 and 2010 concerning 16 missions to 12 Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania and Spain) show that officials in the Member States often do not properly check journey logs. In particular:

— Member States' authorities accept journey logs with unrealistically short estimated journey times. As a result the obligatory rest stops for very long journeys are neither planned nor carried out.

— Important parts of the journey log are often left blank and, despite this, officials stamp the journey log as being satisfactory.

How does the Commission intend to rectify this systematic and permanent failure of the Member States' competent authorities to approve only those journey logs which are realistic and indicate compliance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005?

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

The Commission agrees that unrealistic journey logs have been approved on several occasions and that this may have had an impact on the welfare of animals being transported ([1]). This is a failure of the competent authorities to comply with their obligations laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]). According to Article 14(1) (a) (ii) of Regulation 1/2005, competent authorities shall 'carry out appropriate checks to verify that […] the journey log submitted by the organiser is realistic and indicates compliance with this regulation'.

To rectify the situation the Commission has, in addition to the work carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO), discussed the issue with the competent authorities at meetings with the contact points ([3]) for Regulation 1/2005.

The importance of checking journey logs will also be discussed at forthcoming training sessions arranged within the framework of 'Better training for safer food ([4])'. For 2013 and 2014 two sessions dealing exclusively with welfare during transport will be held.

The FVO will continue to address this issue during audits to Member States. Non-compliances found in the course of these audits, including those referred to in the question, are followed up by the FVO as appropriate.

([1]) See Chapter 2.6.2 of the report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the impact of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. COM(2011) 700 final.
([2]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([3]) Contact points for the purpose of the regulation have been communicated to the Commission in accordance to Article 24(2) of the regulation.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/training/animal_welfare_2011_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003138/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Camposol urban development, Murcia, Spain

Once again my attention has been drawn to the difficulties some of my constituents are facing regarding property they have purchased in Spain. This time it seems that a number of British nationals, as well as nationals of other EU Member States, are facing problems in the urban development of Camposol, in Murcia province (Spain).

Worryingly, the building firm involved in this project did not issue title deeds to those who bought property. The creditors of the firm have now gone to court to apply for attachment orders (*embargos*) on a number of the houses in Camposol, and without the title deeds these applications have proved successful. As a result, a number of people face the prospect of losing thousands of euros they have put into buying their properties.

The development itself has also been left to go to ruin, leaving residents with poor roads, no street lighting and no water. The development is governed from Mazarrón town hall, where officials promised to help resolve these problems but have never followed up these promises with action.

Can the Commission tell me whether it has been informed of these problems?

As the residents of this development have been left with little or no help from the Spanish authorities, and bearing in mind that these problems afflict people from a number of Member States, can the Commission tell me what help it can provide for these residents?

Does the Commission agree that a situation such as this one should not be allowed to happen within the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Commission was so far not aware of the problems mentioned by the Honourable Member.

This being said, the competences of the European Union, and consequently of the Commission, regarding real estate property ownership are limited. The issue reported seems to relate mainly to the lack of/or inadequate performance of contracts, which is a matter regulated by the national contract laws of the Member States.

Nevertheless, EU consumers are protected by Community law in situations where property developers engage in unfair practices, in particular by virtue of Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices ([1]). The directive requires traders to operate in accordance with professional diligence and to provide in clear, intelligible and timely manner material information that the average consumer needs in order to take an informed purchase decision, such as the main characteristics of the product. In the present case, if the property buyers were not informed about the existence of developers' mortgages on the Spanish properties offered for sale, then this could be considered as a misleading omission in the sense of the directive.

Cross-border unfair practices fall under the competences of the EU-wide enforcement network established by the regulation on Consumer Protection Cooperation ([2]), which empowers national enforcement authorities to detect, investigate and stop such infringements.

The UK nationals should therefore urgently bring the matter to the attention of the Office of Fair Trading.

Furthermore, the Commission has recently sent an administrative letter to the Spanish authorities enquiring about the actions taken at national level to address the problem.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([2]) OJ L 364, 9.12.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003139/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Gender ratios in Commission staff (grades AD 12 to 16)

Could the Commission please inform me what percentage of its staff (permanent, temporary, and contractual) at grades AD 12 to 16 are female?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

We would like to inform the Honorable Member that she will find Staff figures of the European Commission on the Europa website under the item 'About us', at the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/about/figures/index_en.htm

These figures are updated every month.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003140/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Staff disabilities

Could the Commission please advise me what percentage of its staff (permanent, temporary, and contractual) have a registered disability?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

For obvious data protection reasons, the Commission has no central reporting regarding the disability status of its staff. It should be noted that data collection in this field can only be based on a voluntary basis and provided that it is justified by a legitimate aim.

The Commission is promoting an active policy in terms of participation and inclusion of staff with disabilities. Such policies range from accommodating special needs when taking part in one of its selection procedures to providing special modifications and adjustments in the working environments to adapt as much as possible to their impairments of staff with disabilities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003141/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Non-EU nationals employed in Commission

Could the Commission please advise me what percentage of its staff (permanent, temporary, and contractual) are nationals of non-EU countries?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

We would like to inform the Honourable Member that she will find Staff figures of the European Commission on the Europa website under the item 'About us', at the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/about/figures/index_en.htm. These figures are updated every month.

It should be mentioned that the vast majority of non-EU Nationals are of Croatian citizenship in the framework of the upcoming enlargement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003142/13
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Prizes and awards

Can the Commission list all prizes and awards it is associated with organising on a regular basis, indicating the budget?

Can the Commission list all prizes and awards it has organised in one-off competition events in the past three years, indicating the targeted participants and age groups?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission apologizes for the delay in replying to the question.

A list of the main prizes and awards organised in the past three years is provided in an attachment sent to the Member. It contains information on recurrent prizes and awards as well as ad hoc initiatives, with indication of target groups.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003143/13
to the Commission
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Prizes and grants for journalists

Can the Commission list all prizes and grants targeted at journalists?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission apologises for the delay in replying to this question.

A list of the main journalist awards organised by and with the Commission is provided in an attachment sent to the Member.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003144/13
adresată Comisiei
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(20 martie 2013)

Subiect: Triclosan: un perturbator endocrin utilizat în pasta de dinți

Recent adoptata Rezoluție a Parlamentului European din 14 martie 2013 referitoare la protecția sănătății publice împotriva perturbatorilor endocrini (2012/2066(INI)) explică riscurile reprezentate de poluanții chimici la adresa sistemului endocrin/hormonal al ființelor umane, precum și motivul pentru care Comisia trebuie să prezinte de urgență o strategie a UE ambițioasă și adecvată privind perturbatorii endocrini. Atât recentul raport al OMS, cât și deputați în Parlamentul European au evidențiat în mod clar faptul că femeilor gravide și copiilor trebuie să li se ofere o atenție și protecție sporite în ceea ce privește poluanții chimici, dat fiind faptul că aceștia reprezintă sectoare vulnerabile ale populației.

Pe de altă parte, recentele dezbateri din Danemarca cu privire la Triclosanul chimic antibacterian scot în evidență riscul pe care îl incumbă utilizarea uneia dintre cele mai răspândite paste de dinți din lume. Ministrul Mediului din Danemarca intenționează să interzică această pastă de dinți în temeiul studiilor efectuate, indicând faptul că utilizarea acestei substanțe poate cauza rezistență antibacteriană.

Care este poziția Comisiei cu privire la utilizarea Triclosanului in compozitia pestelor de dinti?

Intenționează Comisia să adopte măsuri în această privință?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(13 mai 2013)

Conform legislației europene privind produsele cosmetice ([1]), Triclosan este autorizat în calitate de conservant în toate produsele cosmetice cu o concentrație maximă de 0,3 %. Comitetul științific pentru siguranța consumatorilor (CSSC) a adoptat două avize privind siguranța Triclosan ([2]) în care se concluziona că utilizarea lui în continuare în calitate de conservant la actuala limită de concentrație în toate produsele cosmetice nu este sigură pentru consumator din cauza amplorii expunerii agregate. Cu toate acestea, utilizarea Triclosanului la o concentrație maximă de 0,3 % în pasta de dinți, săpunul de mâini, săpunul de corp/gelurile de duș și batoanele deodorante este considerată sigură. Utilizarea suplimentară în pudrele pentru față și batoanele corectoare de imperfecțiuni și în produsele pentru unghii în această concentrație este, de asemenea, considerată sigură. În cele din urmă, utilizarea Triclosanului în ape de gură la concentrația limită de 0,15 sau 0,2 % este considerată sigură pentru consumator pe plan toxicologic, în timp ce concentrațiile mai mari nu sunt sigure.

CSSC a adoptat, de asemenea, un alt aviz ([3]), în care a concluzionat că, pe baza informațiilor științifice disponibile, nu a fost posibil să se cuantifice riscul asociat Triclosanului (inclusiv utilizarea sa în produsele cosmetice) în ceea ce privește dezvoltarea rezistenței antimicrobiene. Din cauza numărului limitat de studii *in situ* a rezistenței induse de Triclosan, CSSC ar putea doar recomanda utilizarea prudentă a Triclosan, de exemplu în aplicații pentru care poate fi demonstrat un efect benefic asupra sănătății.

Comisia pregătește, în prezent, măsuri pentru a pune în aplicare, ca un prim pas, restricțiile sugerate de CSSC.

Un nou mandat al CSSC va fi luat în considerare de îndată ce vor fi disponibile rezultatele activității în curs ale ECHA și ale autorităților competente din cadrul programului de examinare a produselor biocide.

([1]) Directiva 76/768/CEE a Consiliului din 27 iulie 1976 privind apropierea legislațiilor statelor membre cu privire la produsele cosmetice (JO L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169) va fi abrogată la 11 iulie 2013 prin Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1223/2009 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 30 noiembrie 2009 privind produsele cosmetice (JO L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59), care va fi aplicabil integral de la data respectivă.
([2]) SCCP/1192/08 și SCCS/1414/11.
([3]) SCCP/1251/09.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003144/13
to the Commission
Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Triclosan: an endocrine disruptor used in toothpaste

The recently adopted European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2013 on the protection of public health from endocrine disrupters (2012/2066(INI)) explains the risks posed by chemical pollutants to the endocrine/hormonal systems of humans and why it is urgent for the Commission to come forward with an ambitious and adequate EU strategy on endocrine disruptors. It has been clearly underlined by MEPs, as well as in the recent WHO report, that children and pregnant women, as vulnerable sectors of the population, have to be given greater attention and more protection as regards chemical pollutants.

On the other hand, the recent debates in Denmark regarding the antibacterial chemical Triclosan highlight the risk of using one of the most common toothpastes in the world. The Danish Minister of the Environment intends to ban this toothpaste on the basis of studies indicating that the use of this specific substance can cause antibacterial resistance.

What is the Commission's position with regard to the presence of Triclosan in the composition of toothpastes?

Does it intend to take any measures with regard to this problem?

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

According to the European Cosmetics legislation ([1]), triclosan is authorised as a preservative in all cosmetics at a maximum concentration of 0.3%. The Scientific Committee on Consumers Safety (SCCS) adopted two opinions concerning the safety of triclosan ([2]) in which it concluded that its continued use as a preservative at the current concentration limit in all cosmetic products was not safe for the consumer because of the magnitude of the aggregate exposure. However, the use of triclosan at a maximum concentration of 0.3% in toothpastes, hand soaps, body soaps/shower gels and deodorant sticks is considered safe. Additional use in face powders and blemish concealers and in nail products at this concentration is also considered safe. Lastly, the use of triclosan in mouthwashes at a concentration limit of 0.15 or 0.2% is considered as safe for the consumer from a toxicological perspective whereas higher concentrations are not.

The SCCS also adopted another opinion ([3]), in which it concluded that, based on the available scientific information, it was not possible to quantify the risk associated with triclosan (including its use in cosmetics) in terms of development of antimicrobial resistance. Due to the limited number of in situ studies of resistance induced by triclosan, SCCS could only recommend the prudent use of triclosan, for example in applications where a health benefit can be demonstrated.

The Commission is preparing measures to implement, as a first step, the restrictions suggested by the SCCS.

A new mandate to the SCCS will be considered once the results of the ongoing work by ECHA and the competent authorities under the Biocides Review Programme are available.

([1]) Directive 76/768/EEC of 27 July 1976 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products (OJ L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169) will be repealed on 11 July 2013 by Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products (OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59), which will become fully applicable as from that date.

([2]) SCCP/1192/08 and SCCS/1414/11.

([3]) SCCP/1251/09.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003145/13
au Conseil
Dominique Vlasto (PPE) et Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(20 mars 2013)

Objet: Exemption de notification pour les compensations de service public versées aux opérateurs ferroviaires de voyageurs

Alors que règlement (CE) nº 994/98 détermine les exemptions de notification pour plusieurs aides d'État, le règlement (CE) nº 1370/2007 prévoit, lui, spécifiquement une exemption de notification pour les compensations de service public versées aux opérateurs ferroviaires de voyageurs.

Cette exemption constitue un allégement administratif et financier précieux pour les collectivités locales, qui, en échange, répondent à toutes demandes d'information jugées nécessaires par la Commission pour déterminer si la compensation attribuée est compatible avec le règlement.

Selon l'objectif affiché de simplifier la lisibilité du régime des aides d'État et des exemptions de notification, la Commission propose désormais de supprimer l'exemption accordée au titre de l'article 9 du règlement (CE) nº 1370/2007, afin de l'intégrer dans une version modifiée du règlement (CE) nº 994/98 (COM(2012)0730).

Mais alors même que cette proposition paraît garantir les exemptions de notification pour les compensations de service public versées aux opérateurs ferroviaires de voyageurs, la Commission rappelle qu'il ne s'agit ni d'une exemption immédiate, ni intégrale, ni définitive, créant ainsi avec sa nouvelle proposition une insécurité juridique pour les collectivités locales et le secteur du transport ferroviaire de voyageurs.

Par ailleurs, revenir sur cette exemption contreviendrait à l'esprit du règlement (CE) nº 1370/2007, adopté conjointement par le Conseil et le Parlement européen selon la procédure de codécision. Il conviendrait donc que l'Union européenne révise ce règlement selon la même procédure, conformément au principe juridique de parallélisme des formes et l'article 91 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

Au regard de ces éléments:

1. Le Conseil peut-il dire s'il a l'intention de reconduire l'exemption de notification pour les compensations de service public versées aux opérateurs ferroviaires de voyageurs?

2. Alors que la Commission exclut le recours à la procédure de codécision, prévue à l'article du TFUE pour demander à modifier le règlement (CE) nº 1370/2007, le Conseil y voit-il une contradiction avec le principe juridique de parallélisme des formes et l'article 91 du TFUE?

Réponse
(28 mai 2013)

La proposition de règlement du Conseil modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 994/98 du Conseil du 7 mai 1998 sur l'application des articles 92 et 93 du traité instituant la Communauté européenne à certaines catégories d'aides d'État horizontales et le règlement (CE) n° 1370/2007 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 octobre 2007 relatif aux services publics de transport de voyageurs par chemin de fer et par route ([1]) a été présentée par la Commission le 6 décembre 2012. Son examen est actuellement en cours au sein de l'instance préparatoire compétente du Conseil.

En conséquence, aucune réponse ne peut être donnée à ce stade aux questions posées par les Honorables Parlementaires.

([1]) Doc. 17555/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003145/13
to the Council
Dominique Vlasto (PPE) and Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Notification exemptions for public service compensation paid to passenger rail operators

While Regulation (EC) No 994/98 lays down the notification exemptions for several kinds of state aid, Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 provides specifically for a notification exemption for public service compensation paid to passenger rail operators.

This exemption represents an important administrative and financial concession for local authorities, which, in turn, respond to all requests for information which the Commission considers necessary to determine whether the compensation granted is compatible with the regulation.

In accordance with the stated objective of simplifying the legibility of the state aid system and notification exemptions, the Commission is proposing, from now on, to remove the exemption granted under Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 in order to include it in an amended version of Regulation (EC) No 994/98 (COM(2012)0730).

Yet, even though this proposal seems to guarantee notification exemptions for public service compensation paid to passenger rail operators, the Commission recalls that this is not an immediate, full or permanent exemption, thereby creating with its new proposal legal uncertainty for local authorities and the passenger rail transport sector.

Furthermore, reversing this exemption would go against the spirit of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007, adopted jointly by Parliament and the Council under the codecision procedure. It would therefore be appropriate for the European Union to revise this regulation under the same procedure, in accordance with the legal principle of congruent forms and Article 91 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

In view of this:

1. Can the Council state whether it intends to renew notification exemptions for public service compensation paid to passenger rail operators?

2. While the Commission does not have recourse to the codecision procedure laid down in the TFEU article to call for an amendment to Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007, does the Council believe that this contradicts the legal principle of congruent forms and Article 91 of the TFEU?

Reply
(28 May 2013)

The proposal for a Council Regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 994/98 of 7 May 1998 on the application of Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty establishing the European Community to certain categories of horizontal state aid and Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road ([1]) was submitted by the Commission on 6 December 2012 and its examination is currently ongoing in the competent preparatory body of the Council.

No answer can therefore be provided at this point to the Honourable Members' questions.

([1]) 17555/12.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003147/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Entrada en vigor del nuevo sistema de «tax lease»

El sector de la construcción naval en España considera imprescindible que la Comisión Europea zanje en el más breve plazo posible las secuelas de la denuncia sobre el anterior régimen español de «tax lease». En noviembre del año pasado se aprobó un nuevo sistema que soluciona los problemas del anterior, pero su aplicación no va a tener efecto alguno sobre el mercado mientras no se resuelva el conflicto anterior. Los perjuicios ocasionados por este retraso no deberían sumarse a una eventual devolución de las ayudas anteriores, pues suponen ya suficiente castigo para un sector que atraviesa un momento crítico.

Los datos que aconsejan cerrar definitivamente este problema están claros. Por una parte, y a efectos internos, la ausencia de «tax lease» en España desde la denuncia anterior ha propiciado que los astilleros de este país hayan perdido la construcción de cerca de cincuenta buques, que han ido a parar a los astilleros de los Países Bajos y Noruega. Lamentablemente este flujo de contratos es simplemente interno, pues la cuota de mercado de los astilleros europeos en su conjunto frente a la de los asiáticos ha disminuido del 23 % al 5 % en los últimos quince años.

En consecuencia:

¿Considera la Comisión que no es suficiente el tiempo que llevan los astilleros españoles sin poder contratar la construcción de buques ante la falta del «tax lease», para que a estas alturas se demore la entrada en vigor del nuevo sistema, que debería ir acompañada de la anulación del anterior sin penalización alguna con cargo a los astilleros y demás beneficiarios, dado el castigo que ha supuesto la imposibilidad de contratar hasta el día de hoy?

¿No le parecen suficientes a la Comisión los perjuicios originados por la falta de contratación de los astilleros españoles, para que después de casi dos años se pretenda alargar el plazo de aprobación del sistema de «tax lease» español y se les castigue con otras penalizaciones, como la devolución de importes anteriormente recibidos?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de mayo de 2013)

Según las normas sobre ayudas estatales consagradas en el Tratado, los Estados miembros deben notificar dichas ayudas a la Comisión. Cuando la ayuda se conceda sin autorización previa de la Comisión y posteriormente se considere incompatible con el mercado interior, el Estado miembro debe poner fin a la misma. Además, toda ayuda ilegalmente concedida con anterioridad debe, en principio, ser reembolsada por los beneficiarios. Sin embargo, la Comisión debe abstenerse de exigir que se pida el reembolso de las ayudas concedidas con anterioridad cuando ello suponga infringir un principio fundamental del Derecho europeo como es la protección de la confianza legítima y la seguridad jurídica.

Como ya se indicó en la respuesta a la pregunta E-3128/2013, la Comisión está analizando los argumentos presentados por terceros interesados entre junio de 2012 y abril de 2013. La Comisión se esfuerza por adoptar una decisión final en los próximos meses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003147/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Entry into force of the new 'tax lease' scheme

The shipbuilding industry in Spain believes it is essential for the European Commission to reach a final decision as soon as possible on the consequences of the complaint about the former Spanish 'tax lease' scheme. Last November, a new system was adopted to resolve the problems of the previous one, but its application will not have any effect on the market until the previous dispute is settled. The damage caused by this delay should not be compounded by any repayment of previous aid, since the damage itself is already sufficient punishment for a sector that is going through an extremely difficult period.

The reasons why this problem needs to be settled once and for all are clear. On the one hand, internally, the absence of 'tax leases' in Spain since the earlier complaint has meant that the country's shipyards have lost orders for the building of around 50 ships, which have gone to shipyards in the Netherlands and Norway. Unfortunately, this flow of contracts is purely internal, since the market share of European shipyards as a whole compared with those in Asia has fallen from 23% to 5% in the last 15 years.

Does the Commission not believe that the Spanish shipyards have suffered long enough without being able to meet demand for shipbuilding due to the absence of 'tax leases', so that there should now be no delaying of the entry into force of the new system, which should additionally be accompanied by cancellation of the old system without any penalty fees for the shipyards and other beneficiaries, given the punishment represented by their inability to take any orders until now?

Does the Commission not consider that the damage resulting from the Spanish shipyards' inability to take any orders is punishment enough, when after almost two years it proposes to extend the deadline for adoption of the Spanish 'tax lease' scheme and punish the shipyards with further penalties such as the repayment of aid previously received?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

According to the state aid rules enshrined in the Treaty, Member State should notify state aid measures to the Commission. When aid is awarded without the Commission's prior authorisation and subsequently found incompatible with the internal market, the Member State should put an end to such aid. In addition, aid unlawfully awarded in the past should in principle be recovered from the beneficiaries. However, the Commission should refrain from requiring the recovery of aid awarded in the past when such recovery would breach a fundamental principle of European law such as the protection of legitimate expectations and legal certainty.

As indicated in the answer to Question E-3128/2013, the Commission is analysing the arguments submitted by interested third-parties between June 2012 and April 2013. It endeavours to have a final decision adopted in the coming months.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003148/13
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Fungal infections devastating trees in UK and Europe

In the *Financial Times* ([1]), Robin Lane Fox states that the lax trade in vegetation across European borders is causing the devastation of trees both in the UK and in Europe.

He says that before the UK joined the EU it was necessary to secure a permit from the UK to purchase specimen plants in Germany, for example, which was inspected by the German supplier; the specimens then had to be inspected on arrival in the UK.

'Most of these bio-invaders have been imported in nursery-stock from abroad. The plant certificate system is a shambles. I have seen photos of the "certificat phytosanitaire" which French officials […] attached to the […] cluster of sweet chestnuts which brought the […] sweet chestnut blight to us from France last year. Inspectors tend to look only at the leaves and not at the leaves of everything which is being shipped.' Mr Lane Fox continues: 'Some of the infected ash trees came from there, others from Poland and Scandinavia. One of the dendrologists told me that he had discovered how many official inspections for phytophthora took place in the EU's Ireland last year. The answer, extorted under the Freedom of Information Act, was […] 19. In Britain there were thousands.'

In Portugal, Mr Lane Fox says, there was only one official plant inspector in 1995, 'because I met a man who knew the entire expert team. The total was one, who lived in Lisbon and did not even have a car.' He continues: 'Are there more than 10 inspectors looking out for deadly oak moths in insect-friendly Poland? In the nationalised park of Rigolin near Poznań there are 1 500 superb ancient oaks, a global treasure. They are now being killed by a boring beetle. This borer, a cerambix, cannot be controlled because another committee of the EU, the one for eurobugs, has registered it as a rarity and given it a protection order. East Asia, too, has been generous with consignments of natural born killers, but the EU inspectors have failed to keep them out. Their plant health protocol is drawn up to facilitate "free trade", but not to protect the environment.'

Is the Commission aware of the diseases that are devastating UK and European vegetation, and does it intend to do nothing whilst our green heritage is gradually extirpated?

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

New pests and diseases pose a continuous threat to the health of our plants and trees. Union legislation ([2]) is in force since 1977 to prevent their introduction into, and spread within the Union. Import prohibitions and requirements are in place as appropriate for each regulated plant species, and Member States have to carry out plant health import checks. They also have to notify outbreaks of new plant pests and diseases and take immediate protective action. Where relevant, the Commission has adopted emergency measures for this purpose.

As soon as the Commission receives notifications of new pests and diseases they are communicated to the competent authorities of all Member States. Findings of harmful organisms during import inspections also need to be notified immediately through an electronic database. This early exchange of information allows Member States to adequately respond to new plant health threats.

The increased globalisation of trade in the past decades has led to an increased influx of new plant pests and diseases. Indeed, several major plant health problems have emerged in the past decade, in particular as regards trees. For these reasons, among others, the Commission is reviewing the Union plant health legislation. A proposal for a revised plant health law, reinforcing protection to our crops, trees and natural heritage, is scheduled for the first half of 2013.

In its general proposals for a rural development policy for after 2013, the Commission has proposed a measure which would offer support for prevention and restoration activities related to damage to forests from natural disasters, including pest- and disease-related damage.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/6a7e33ec-2a52-11e2-a137-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2O4ZsQsBr.
([2]) Council Directive 2000/29/EC, OJ L 169, 10.7.2000.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003149/13
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(20 mars 2013)

Objet: Viande de mouton interdite d'importation

Le mardi 19 mars 2013, les autorités sanitaires françaises ont annoncé la découverte, chez une société agroalimentaire déjà pointée du doigt début février dans le scandale européen de la viande de cheval, de 57 tonnes de viande de mouton britannique interdite d'importation.

Des analyses ont montré que la viande retrouvée a été obtenue grâce à l'utilisation d'un procédé mécanique de traitement des carcasses d'animaux, le produit final étant appelé «viande séparée mécaniquement» (VSM). Ce procédé — proscrit mais toutefois employé dans le cas présent — consiste à racler l'os pour en obtenir de la viande, mais aussi des nerfs ou du muscle de l'animal.

Or, le règlement (CE) n° 1923/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 décembre 2006 modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 999/2001 fixant les règles pour la prévention, le contrôle et l'éradication de certaines encéphalopathies spongiformes transmissibles, dispose explicitement que «[les] os de bovins, d'ovins et de caprins originaires de pays ou de régions présentant un risque d'ESB contrôlé ou indéterminé ne doivent pas être utilisés pour la production de viandes séparées mécaniquement (VSM)». De plus, la communication de la Commission (COM(2010)0704) précise en outre que «l'utilisation d'os ou de morceaux non désossés provenant de bovins, d'ovins et de caprins pour la production de VSM est interdite dans tous les États membres». Deux mois après le scandale de la viande de cheval dans les lasagnes, nous nous trouvons une nouvelle fois face à une fraude à la législation mais, en plus de cela, l'Europe encourt un nouveau risque de scandale sanitaire!

Dans le cas présent, c'est l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire européen qui est compétent. En effet, il a pour mission, par ses audits, inspections et activités connexes, de vérifier, au sein de l'Union européenne, le respect des prescriptions législatives de l'Union dans les domaines de la sécurité et de la qualité des denrées alimentaires, de la santé animale et du bien-être des animaux, ainsi qu'en matière phytosanitaire, et de contrôler, dans les pays tiers exportant vers l'Union, le respect des conditions d'importation fixées par cette dernière.

Des audits ont-ils déjà été menés sur le procédé dit «VSM»? Dans l'affirmative, quelles en sont les conclusions?

Ces pratiques sont-elles courantes?

Dans le cas présent, quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour le consommateur et à l'encontre des entreprises agroalimentaires frauduleuses?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(7 mai 2013)

Lors d'un audit de routine au Royaume-Uni en mars 2012, l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV) de la direction générale de la santé et des consommateurs (DG SANCO) a décelé des manquements à la législation de l'UE sur les viandes séparées mécaniquement (VSM). Cette constatation a été l'amorce d'une série d'audits de l'OAV axés spécifiquement sur les VSM. Ainsi, l'Italie, l'Allemagne, la France et les Pays-Bas ont déjà fait l'objet d'un audit en 2012 et le Danemark en 2013. Un audit est également prévu en Espagne et en Pologne au cours du premier semestre de cette année.

Pour le moment, seul le rapport relatif au Royaume-Uni a été publié ([1]). Ses trois principales conclusions étaient que des os de ruminants étaient utilisés pour produire des VSM, que les VSM n'étaient pas étiquetées conformément aux exigences applicables et que certaines règles d'hygiène n'étaient pas été respectées.

Les résultats des autres audits seront publiés progressivement sur le site web de la DG SANCO au terme de la procédure d'approbation et de consultation en vigueur pour les rapports d'audit de l'OAV.

Dans tous les États membres où les audits de l'OAV ont révélé des manquements à la législation applicables aux VSM, la Commission a instamment invité les autorités compétentes à prendre des mesures correctives afin de garantir le respect des dispositions de l'UE.

([1]) DG (SANCO)/2012-6432 http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003149/13
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Banned imports of mutton

On Tuesday 19 March 2013, the French health authorities announced the discovery of 57 tonnes of banned imports of British mutton in an agri-food company which had already come under fire at the beginning of February in the European horsemeat scandal.

Analyses have shown that the meat recovered had been obtained using a mechanical method for processing animal carcasses which produces a finished product known as 'mechanically separated meat' (MSM). This process — which is banned but still used in this case — involves scraping the bone to get the meat, but also nerves or muscle from the animal.

However, Regulation (EC) No 1923/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 amending Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, states explicitly that '[the] bones of bovine, ovine and caprine animals from countries or regions with a controlled or undetermined BSE risk shall not be used for the production of mechanically separated meat (MSM)'. Furthermore, Commission communication (COM(2010)0704) also states that 'the use of bones or bone-in cuts of bovine, ovine and caprine animals is prohibited in all Member States for the production of MSM'. Two months after the scandal of horsemeat found in lasagnes, we find ourselves once again faced with the evasion of legislation but, on top of this, Europe is again running the risk of a health scandal.

In this case, it is the European Food and Veterinary Office which is responsible. Its mission, through its audits, inspections and related activities, is to check on compliance with the requirements of EU food safety and quality, animal health and welfare and plant health legislation within the European Union and on compliance with EU import requirements in third countries exporting to the EU.

Have audits already been carried out on the 'MSM' process? If so, what were the conclusions of those audits?

Are these standard practices?

In this case, what measures does the Commission plan to take for consumers and against fraudulent agri-food companies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

During a routine audit in the UK in March 2012, of the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (DG SANCO), non-compliances with the EU legislation on mechanically separated meat (MSM) were identified. This finding sparked off a series of specific FVO audits on MSM. In 2012, Italy, Germany, France and the Netherlands were audited. In 2013 Denmark has already been audited and Spain and Poland will also be audited in the first half of the year.

For the moment only the report for the UK has been published ([1]). The three main findings of that audit were that ruminant bones were used for MSM production, MSM was not labelled in accordance with the relevant requirements and certain hygiene rules were not respected.

The results of the other audits will be published on the DG SANCO website progressively as the approval and consultation procedure for FVO audit reports is finalised.

In all Member States where the FVO audits revealed non-compliances with the current MSM legislation, the Commission urged the competent authorities to take corrective measures to ensure compliance with current EU rules.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm DG (SANCO)/2012-6432.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003150/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(20 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Intervento dell'UE contro il pericolo della «super Tbc»

L'Ufficio regionale Oms per l'Europa e l'ECDC (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control) rivelano che in Europa la «super Tbc» sta diventando un'emergenza sanitaria e le cure risultano ancora inadeguate.

Si stima che ogni anno circa 78 mila persone si ammalino di tubercolosi nella forma multi-resistente (Mdr) e estensivamente resistente (Xdr).

In Europa si concentra più della metà dei paesi del mondo con la più alta percentuale di casi. Meno del 50 % dei pazienti di Tbc multi-resistente viene trattato con successo, ma le cure sono molto più lunghe e centinaia di volte più costose con effetti collaterali più frequenti e gravi rispetto a quelli registrati con il trattamento per la classica Tbc.

Può la Commissione riferire:

— se è al corrente dell'espandersi di questa «super Tbc»;

— se ha valutato il rapporto causa-effetto con l'immigrazione dai paesi terzi;

— come intende intervenire a difesa della salute dei cittadini dell'UE?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che la tubercolosi (TBC) multi-resistente e estensivamente resistente, nota anche come «super TBC», rappresenti una minaccia sanitaria crescente.

La più recente relazione «Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe report 2013» indica che i paesi dell'UE/SEE hanno denunciato 1 522 casi di tubercolosi multi-resistente e 136 casi di tubercolosi estensivamente resistente ([1]). Il tasso di notifica della tubercolosi multi-resistente è rimasto stabile a circa 0,3 per 100 000 persone nell'ultimo quinquennio.

Nel 2011, 1 119 casi di TBC notificati avevano origine nei paesi dell'UE/SEE e 320 erano di origine straniera.

Su richiesta della Commissione, per proteggere la salute dei cittadini dell'UE in relazione alla TBC, il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie ha sviluppato nel 2008 un «Framework action plan to fight TB in the EU», e il quadro di monitoraggio «Progressing towards TB elimination: A follow-up to the action plan to fight TB in the EU». Queste iniziative servono a orientare le attività volte a prevenire e a controllare la TBC nell'UE/SEE. L'obiettivo di lungo termine del piano d'azione è controllare e alla fine eradicare la TBC nell'Unione europea.

Inoltre, la decisione 2119/98/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio ([2]) impone agli Stati membri dell'UE di monitorare e notificare i casi di TBC alla Commissione europea. In tale contesto, l'eventuale reazione a eventi di rilevanza transfrontaliera legati alla TBC deve essere coordinata dalla Commissione di concerto con gli Stati membri dell'UE.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf
([2]) GU L 268 del 3.10.1998, pagg. 1-7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003150/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: EU action to combat the danger of 'super TB'

According to the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), 'super TB' is becoming a health emergency and the available treatments are still inadequate.

It is estimated that around 78 000 people every year fall ill with the multidrug-resistant (MDR) and extensively drug-resistant (XDR) forms of tuberculosis.

More than half of the world's countries with the highest incidence of cases are to be found in Europe. Fewer than 50% of patients with MDR-TB are treated successfully, and the treatments take much longer and are hundreds of times more expensive — with more frequent and more serious side-effects — than the treatment for ordinary TB.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— Is it aware of the spread of this 'super TB'?

— Has it assessed the causal relationship with immigration from third countries?

— What actions does it intend to take to protect the health of EU citizens?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission is aware that multidrug-resistant and extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB) also referred to as 'super TB', represent an increasing health threat.

The latest 'Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe report 2013' shows that the EU/EEA countries reported 1 522 multidrug-resistant tuberculosis cases and 136 extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis cases ([1]). The notification rate of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis has remained stable at around 0.3 per 100 000 population in the last five years.

In 2011, 1 119 notified TB cases were of origin in the EU/EEA countries and 320 of foreign origin.

Upon request of the Commission, to protect the health of EU citizens with regard to TB, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control developed in 2008 a 'Framework action plan to fight TB in the EU', and the monitoring framework 'Progressing towards TB elimination: A follow-up to the action plan to fight TB in the EU'. These guide activities to prevent and control TB in the EU/EEA. The long-term goal of the action plan is to control and ultimately eliminate TB in the European Union.

Finally, Decision 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and the Council ([2]) requires that TB is monitored and notified by the EU Member States to the European Commission. In this context, any response to events of cross-border relevance caused by TB needs to be coordinated by the Commission together with the EU Member States.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf
([2]) OJ L 268, 3.10.1998, pp. 1-7.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003151/13
an die Kommission
Rainer Wieland (PPE)
(20. März 2013)

Betrifft: Die Notifizierungsverfahren 2012/519/D und 2012/520/D

Die Kommission hat bereits Entwürfe von Implementierungsgesetzen bzw. des Ausführungsgesetzes der Bundesländer zum Ersten Glücksspieländerungsvertrag in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland auf die Vereinbarkeit mit europäischem Recht geprüft und tut dies auch derzeit.

1. Sieht die Kommission die einzelnen Umsetzungs- bzw. Ausführungsgesetze der Länder in ihrer Gesamtheit notifizierungspflichtig?

2. Ist für die Kommission das deutsche Glücksspielrecht unionsrechtskonform?

3. Wie sieht die Kommission die unterschiedlichen Regulierungen der Automatenspiele in Spielbanken und in Spielhallen, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Transparenz der Zulassungsverfahren und Versagungsgründe?

4. Wie schätzt die Kommission das Suchtpotenzial bei Automatenspielen und stationärem Glücksspiel im Vergleich zu Spielen im Internet ein, auch im Hinblick auf die Funktion der sozialen Kontrolle.

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(13. Mai 2013)

1. Die Umsetzungs- und Durchführungsgesetze der Länder zum Ersten Änderungsvertrag des Staatsvertrags zum Glücksspielwesen in Deutschland sind im Rahmen der Richtlinie 98/34/EG im Entwurfsstadium notifizierungspflichtig, sofern sie techniche Vorschriften und/oder Vorschriften zu Diensten der Informationsgesellschaft enthalten, die unter die oben angeführte Richtlinie fallen.

2. Das neue deutsche Glücksspielgesetz ist am 1. Juli 2012 in Kraft getreten, und die deutschen Behörden setzen die neuen Bestimmungen derzeit um. Die Kommission begleitet den Umsetzungsprozess im Rahmen eines konstruktiven Dialogs mit den deutschen Behörden, um die Übereinstimmung mit den EU-Vorschriften zu gewährleisten.

3. Es ist Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten, in Übereinstimmung mit der Rechtsprechung des EuGH sowohl die Organisation und die Kontrolle des Glücksspielangebots als auch die Art der Durchführung von Glücksspielen auf ihrem Hoheitsgebiet festzulegen. Die Behörden, die Wett- und Glücksspiellizenzen vergeben, müssen jedoch die grundlegenden Vorschriften der Verträge, die Prinzipien der Gleichbehandlung und der Nicht-Diskriminierung aufgrund der Staatsangehörigkeit und die sich daraus ergebende Verpflichtung zur Transparenz einhalten.

4. Die Mitgliedstaaten legen den Rechtsrahmen für die Bereitstellung von Glücksspiel-Dienstleistungen fest, indem sie die Ziele ihrer Politik in diesem Bereich und das Schutzniveau, das in öffentlichem Interesse angestrebt wird, definieren. Die Bewertung des Suchtpotenzials verschiedener Glücksspiele liegt also hauptsächlich in der Verantwortung der Mitgliedstaaten. In diesem Bereich sind jedoch weitere Forschungstätigkeiten erforderlich. Das Projekt „ALICE RAP“ untersucht das Suchtphänomen in Europa, auch im Bereich des Glücksspiels ([1]). Die Kommission wird mithilfe einer Verhaltensstudie zu Online-Glücksspielen auch Konsumentenschutzmaßnahmen testen.

([1]) ALICE RAP („Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project“; „Sucht und Lebensstile im modernen Europa — Projekt zur Veränderung von Suchtverhalten“) ist ein interdisziplinäres Projekt mit fünfjähriger Laufzeit, das im Rahmen des 7. Rahmenprogramms finanziert wird. Ziel ist es, einen Beitrag zur Diskussion über gegenwärtige Normen und künftige Auswirkungen von Sucht und Lebensstilen in Europa über die nächsten zwanzig Jahre zu leisten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003151/13
to the Commission
Rainer Wieland (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Notification procedures 2012/519/D and 2012/520/D

Draft laws of the German federal states which were being proposed in order to implement the First Treaty amending the Rules on Gambling have already been assessed by the Commission for compatibility with European law, and the Commission is continuing to perform such assessments.

1. Does the Commission consider that the individual implementing laws of the German federal states all require notification?

2. Does the Commission consider that Germany's laws on gambling accord with European law?

3. What view does the Commission take of the differences in the regulations which apply to gaming machines in casinos and in games arcades, with particular reference to the transparency of licensing procedures and grounds for refusal?

4. What is the Commission's assessment of the potential for addiction to gaming machines and non-Internet games of chance in comparison with Internet gaming, including with reference to the function of social control?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

1. Federal States' laws that transpose and implement the modification of the First State Treaty amending the State Treaty regarding Gambling in Germany need to be notified under 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.

2. The new German gambling law has entered into force on 1 July 2012 and German authorities are currently implementing the new provisions. The Commission is closely following the implementation process in a constructive dialogue with the German authorities so as to ensure compliance with EU rules.

3. It is for the Member States in accordance with the relevant case law of the CJEU to determine both the organisation and control of the gambling offer, as well as how gambling activities should be carried out on their terrotiry. Public authorities which grant betting and gaming licences have nonetheless a duty to comply with the fundamental rules of the Treaties, the principles of equal treatment and of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality and the consequent obligation of transparency.

4. Member States establish the regulatory framework for the provison of gambling services by setting the objectives of their gambling policy and defining the level of protection sought in the public interest. The assessment of the addiction potential of different games of chance is thus primarily the responsibility of national authorities. However, further research in this area is required. 'ALICE-RAP' is studying the phenomenon of addiction in Europe, including that of gambling ([1]). The Commission will also test consumer protection measures through a behavioural study on online gambling.

([1]) ALICE-RAP (Addiction and lifestyles in contemporary Europe -reframing addictions project) is a 5-year transitional and interdisciplinary project funded through the 7th Framework Programme aimed at contributing to the debate on current norms and future implications of addiction and lifestyles in Europe over the next 20 years.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003152/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(20 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εξαίρεση από την οδηγία 97/11/ΕΚ για έργα διαχείρισης και διάθεσης αποβλήτων

Στην οδηγία 97/11/ΕΚ της 3ης Μαρτίου 1997 «περί τροποποιήσεως της οδηγίας 85/337/ΕΟΚ για την εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων ορισμένων δημοσίων και ιδιωτικών έργων στο περιβάλλον» και ειδικότερα στο άρθρο 1 αυτής, αναφέρεται:

«Με την επιφύλαξη του άρθρου 7, τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν σε εξαιρετικές περιπτώσεις να εξαιρούν, εν όλω ή εν μέρει, ένα ειδικό έργο από την παρούσα οδηγία».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Υπάρχουν περιπτώσεις κατασκευής έργων διαχείρισης και διάθεσης αποβλήτων (διαδικασίες R & D) στα κράτη μέλη στις οποίες εφαρμόστηκε η εξαίρεση από περιβαλλοντική αδειοδότηση κατ' εφαρμογή του ανωτέρω αναφερόμενου άρθρου;

— Ποιες προϋποθέσεις τέθηκαν σε κάθε ένα από τα έργα αυτά, για την εφαρμογή της εξαίρεσης αυτής;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Απριλίου 2013)

Το άρθρο 2 παράγραφος 4 της οδηγίας 2011/92/ΕΕ ([1]) προσδιορίζει ποιες διαδικασίες πρέπει να ακολουθούνται σε περίπτωση εξαίρεσης από την εκτίμηση περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων (ΕΠΕ) με επίκληση της διάταξης αυτής. Ειδικότερα, το ενδιαφερόμενο κράτος μέλος πρέπει να εξετάσει κατά πόσο ενδείκνυται άλλη μορφή εκτίμησης και κατά πόσο πρέπει να διατίθενται συγκεκριμένα στοιχεία στο ενδιαφερόμενο κοινό και την Επιτροπή, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των λόγων που δικαιολογούν την προβλεπόμενη εξαίρεση.

Η Ιταλία έκανε χρήση της εξαίρεσης δυνάμει του άρθρου 2 παράγραφος 4 επτά φορές σε σχέση με τις προσωρινές ή μόνιμες εγκαταστάσεις διαχείρισης αποβλήτων. Οι ιταλικές αρχές επικαλέστηκαν τη διαδικασία εξαίρεσης λόγω της επείγουσας και ουσιαστικής ανάγκης για τέτοια έργα, κυρίως για την κατοχύρωση της ασφάλειας των πολιτών και την προστασία της ανθρώπινης υγείας.

Σε όλες τις περιπτώσεις, η Επιτροπή έλεγξε κατά πόσον οι διαδικασίες που προβλέπονται από το άρθρο 2 παράγραφος 4 είχαν τηρηθεί.

Σε τέσσερις περιπτώσεις, εφαρμόστηκε μια ταχεία μορφή ΕΠΕ, ενώ, σε τρεις περιπτώσεις, οι ιταλικές αρχές έκριναν ότι δεν ήταν σκόπιμο να προβούν σε άλλη μορφή εκτίμησης, λόγω χρονικών περιορισμών.

Σε έξι περιπτώσεις, όλα τα απαραίτητα στοιχεία τέθηκαν στη διάθεση του ενδιαφερόμενου κοινού και της Επιτροπής. Σε μία περίπτωση, η Επιτροπή διαπίστωσε ότι το κοινό δεν ενημερώθηκε καταλλήλως· δεδομένου ότι το συγκεκριμένο έργο είχε προσωρινό χαρακτήρα, η Επιτροπή δεν έδωσε περαιτέρω συνέχεια στο θέμα.

([1]) ΕΕ L 26 της 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003152/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Exemption from Directive 97/11/EC on waste management and disposal projects

Directive 97/11/EC of 3 March 1997 'amending Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment', and specifically, Article 1, states that:

'Without prejudice to Article 7, Member States may, in exceptional cases, exempt a specific project in whole or in part from the provisions laid down in this directive'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Are there any waste management and disposal projects (R&D processes) in the Member States where exemption from environmental authorisation pursuant to the aforementioned Article has been applied?

— What conditions were laid down for each of these projects for this exemption to be applied?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

Article 2(4) of Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]) specifies which procedures must be followed when an exemption from environmental impact assessment (EIA) is invoked under this provision. In particular, the Member State concerned must consider whether another form of assessment would be appropriate and specific information should be made available to the public concerned and the Commission, including the reasons justifying the exemption granted.

Italy has used the exemption under Article 2(4) seven times in relation to temporary or permanent waste management installations. The Italian authorities invoked the exemption procedure due to the urgent and substantial need for such projects, mainly in order to ensure public safety and protect human health.

In all cases, the Commission verified whether the procedures laid down by Article 2(4) were followed.

In four cases, an accelerated form of EIA took place, while, in three cases, the Italian authorities considered that it was not appropriate to carry out another form of assessment, due to time constraints.

In six cases, all necessary information was made available to the public concerned and the Commission. In one case, the Commission found out that the public was not informed appropriately; given that the project at stake was of a temporary nature, the Commission has not pursued the issue further.

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003153/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(20 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Καταδικαστική απόφαση για τη λίμνη Κορώνεια

Η καταδικαστική για την Ελλάδα απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, για τη μη εκπλήρωση των 21 δράσεων, για τις οποίες είχε δεσμευθεί από το 2004 και οι οποίες αφορούσαν στην προστασία της λίμνης Κορώνειας, δεν θα πρέπει σε καμμία περίπτωση να σημάνει την εγκατάλειψη των προσπαθειών για τη διάσωση και την αποκατάσταση της λίμνης.

Όσοι διαχειρίστηκαν, από την πλευρά της ελληνικής πολιτείας, τις τύχες της λίμνης δεν κατάφεραν να εξαλείψουν τη ρύπανση από τις βιομηχανικές μονάδες, απέτυχαν να εξασφαλίσουν την ύπαρξη δικτύου αποχέτευσης και επεξεργασίας των αστικών λυμάτων στην ίδια περιοχή, να εγκαταστήσουν ένα αποτελεσματικό σύστημα άρδευσης και να περιορίσουν την υπεράντληση των υδάτων μέσα από τις χιλιάδες παράνομες γεωτρήσεις, ενώ ταυτόχρονα επέτρεψαν και την καταπάτηση των αποξηραμένων εδαφών της.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Τι σημαίνει για την Ελλάδα η καταδικαστική αυτή απόφαση;

— Τι δυνατότητες έχει και με ποια εργαλεία μπορεί να συμβάλει η Επιτροπή ώστε να ανακοπεί, έστω και την ύστατη στιγμή, η οριστική καταστροφή της λίμνης Κορώνειας, να επέλθει η αναγέννησή της, αλλά και να αναστραφεί το υδροβόρο και καταστροφικό για την περιοχή μοντέλο ανάπτυξης;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Απριλίου 2013)

Το Δικαστήριο καταδίκασε την Ελλάδα διότι δεν προέβη στις απαραίτητες ενέργειες για να αποφευχθεί η υποβάθμιση της συγκεκριμένης περιοχής Natura 2000 και δεν κατήρτισε σύστημα συλλογής και επεξεργασίας των αστικών λυμάτων του οικισμού του Λαγκαδά. Η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη έλθει σε επαφή με τις ελληνικές αρχές για να ενημερωθεί για τα μέτρα που επρόκειτο να ληφθούν για να συμμορφωθεί η Ελλάδα με την απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου.

Εκτός από την εν λόγω διαδικασία επί παραβάσει, η Ελλάδα πρέπει να καθορίσει μέτρα για τη λίμνη Κορώνεια στο σχέδιο διαχείρισης λεκάνης απορροής ποταμού (ΣΔΛΑΠ) για την Κεντρική Μακεδονία, όπως ορίζει η οδηγία-πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα ([1]), ώστε να επιτευχθεί καλή χημική κατάσταση στα υδάτινα συστήματα. Η Ελλάδα καταδικάσθηκε στις 19 Απριλίου 2012 διότι δεν έχει θεσπίσει ΣΔΛΑΠ (C-297/11) και, για τον λόγο αυτόν, έχει κινηθεί άλλη διαδικασία επί παραβάσει (2010/2074).

Σημειώνεται επίσης ότι η Επιτροπή έχει προτείνει η θέσπιση ΣΔΛΑΠ που ανταποκρίνεται κατάλληλα στις νομικές απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας-πλαισίου για τα ύδατα και η έγκριση μηχανισμού τιμολόγησης των υδάτων, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 9 της οδηγίας αυτής, να αποτελεί από το 2014 προϋπόθεση για τη χρηματοδότηση επενδυτικών έργων στον τομέα των υδάτων από το Ταμείο Συνοχής και τα Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία.

([1]) Οδηγία 2000/60/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003153/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Conviction over Lake Koronia

The European Union Court of Justice's conviction of Greece for failing to carry out the 21 actions which the country had committed to since 2004 in order to protect Lake Koronia should in no way lead to the abandonment of efforts to rescue and restore the lake.

Those persons acting for the Greek State who were responsible for the fate of the lake failed to i) eliminate pollution from industrial sites, ii) ensure the existence of a waste-water collection and treatment system in the area, iii) install an effective irrigation system and iv) restrict the over-abstraction of groundwater from thousands of illegal boreholes, while at the same time allowing its dried-up land to be infringed upon.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— What does this conviction mean for Greece?

— What can the Commission do and what tools can it use, even at the last minute, to prevent the complete destruction of Lake Koronia, to regenerate it but also to change the area's water-hungry and destructive development model.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2013)

The Court has condemned Greece for failing to take the required steps to avoid the deterioration of this Natura2000 area and for failing to set up a system for the collection and treatment of urban waste water for the agglomeration of Langada. The Commission has already contacted the Greek authorities in order to be informed of the measures that would be taken to comply with the ruling.

In addition to this infringement procedure, Greece needs to identify adequate measures for lake Koronia in the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for Central Macedonia as required by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([1]) in order to reach good chemical status for the water bodies. Greece has been condemned for the non-adoption of RBMP on 19 April 2012 (C-297/11) and therefore a separate infringement case is pursued (2010/2074).

It should also be noted that the Commission has proposed that the adoption of a RBMP adequately addressing the legal requirements of the WFD and the adoption of a water pricing mechanism consistent with its Article 9, is as of 2014 a pre-condition for the financing of investment projects in the water sector under the Cohesion and Structural Funds.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003154/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(20 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ρυθμίσεις του Μνημονίου αντίθετες προς το Σύνταγμα της Ελλάδας και την ΕΣΔΑ

Η ολομέλεια του Ελεγκτικού Συνεδρίου (Συνεδρίαση 23.2.2013) έκρινε αντισυνταγματική και αντίθετη προς το άρθρο 1 του Πρόσθετου Πρωτοκόλλου της Ευρωπαϊκής Σύμβασης Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου (ΕΣΔΑ) την αναδρομική μείωση των συντάξεων όσων υπάγονται στα ειδικά μισθολόγια, που είχε συμφωνηθεί στα πλαίσια του Μνημονίου.

Στην ερώτησή μου (E-000302/2013) που αφορούσε προηγούμενη απόφαση του Ελληνικού Ελεγκτικού Συνεδρίου η οποία έκρινε επίσης αντισυνταγματικές προβλέψεις του νόμου 4093/2012 για τα συνταξιοδοτικά θέματα δημοσίου, η Επιτροπή μου είχε απαντήσει ότι «Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει την υποχρέωση να διασφαλίζει τη συμμόρφωση του εθνικού δικαίου προς το Ελληνικό Σύνταγμα». Η απάντηση αυτή ασφαλώς δεν σημαίνει ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεν έχει υποχρέωση να μεριμνά και να σέβεται τη συνταγματική τάξη των κρατών μελών και τις διεθνείς υποχρεώσεις τους (ΕΣΔΑ).

Η υποχρέωση αυτή προκύπτει από το γεγονός ότι η Επιτροπή είναι θεματοφύλακας των Συνθηκών της ΕΕ, οι οποίες Συνθήκες με προσοχή και με διακριτικότητα αντιμετωπίζουν τα Συντάγματα των κρατών μελών.

Άλλωστε, στο Προοίμιο του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων τονίζεται ότι η Ένωση σέβεται την οργάνωση της δημόσιας εξουσίας των κρατών μελών σε εθνικό, περιφερειακό και τοπικό επίπεδο.

Με δεδομένο ότι, μετά τις αποφάσεις του Ανώτατου Δικαστηρίου, θα υπάρξουν προσφυγές σε δικαστήρια, οι οποίες αναμένεται να δικαιωθούν, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Τι σκέπτεται να πράξει σχετικά με τις δύο αυτές ρυθμίσεις, οι οποίες συνδιαμορφώθηκαν με την τρόικα και οι οποίες κρίθηκαν αντισυνταγματικές; Γνωρίζει αν η ελληνική κυβέρνηση σκοπεύει να τις αποσύρει; Θα δεχτεί η Επιτροπή την αλλαγή αυτών των ρυθμίσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει την ύπαρξη μέτρων στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, τα οποία να παραβιάζουν τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα ή τις συνθήκες της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή, ως θεματοφύλακας των συνθηκών, διασφαλίζει την τήρηση του κεκτημένου. Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει ότι, κατά την εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ, τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει να σέβονται τα δικαιώματα και τις ελευθερίες που κατοχυρώνονται από τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του δικαιώματος της ιδιοκτησίας που προστατεύεται από το άρθρο 17 του Χάρτη.

Η συμμόρφωση των μέτρων του προγράμματος με τις διατάξεις του ελληνικού δικαίου και του ελληνικού συντάγματος, καθώς και με άλλες συναφείς διεθνείς υποχρεώσεις στον τομέα των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, πρέπει να διασφαλίζεται από τα ελληνικά δικαστήρια. Οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν μας πληροφόρησαν για την ύπαρξη προβλήματος με τα μέτρα του νόμου 4093/2012. Εάν διαπιστωθεί ότι κάποια μέτρα παραβιάζουν το σύνταγμα ή την ελληνική νομοθεσία, τα μέτρα αυτά θα πρέπει να τροποποιηθούν από τις ελληνικές αρχές.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003154/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Provisions of the Memorandum contrary to the Constitution of Greece and the ECHR

The Court of Auditors, in plenary sitting (meeting of 23 February 2013), ruled the retrospective reductions to pensions under the special wage regimes agreed as part of the Memorandum, unconstitutional and contrary to Article 1 of the Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

In answer to my question E-000302/2013 regarding the previous ruling by Greece's Supreme Administrative Court, which also ruled unconstitutional some provisions of Law 4093/2012 on state pensions, the Commission stated that 'The Greek Government has the obligation to ensure compliance of national law with the Greek Constitution'. This answer certainly does not mean that the European Commission does not have the obligation to guarantee and respect the constitutional order of the Member States and its international obligations (ECHR).

This obligation results from the fact that the Commission is the guardian of the EU Treaties, Treaties which deal with the Constitutions of the Member States with care and discretion.

Moreover, the Preamble to the Charter of Fundamental Rights stresses that the EU respects the organisation of Member States' public authorities at the national, regional and local level.

Given that, following the High Court's decisions, appeals will be made which are expected to be upheld, will the Commission say:

— What will it do in relation to these two provisions, which were drawn up with the Troika and deemed unconstitutional? Does it know whether the Greek Government intends to revoke these provisions? Will the Commission allow these provisions to be changed?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any measures in the context of the economic adjustment programme for Greece which infringe human rights or the EU treaties. The Commission as the guardian of the treaties ensures that the *acquis* is respected. The Commission recalls that, when implementing EC law, Member States should respect the rights and freedoms laid down in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including the right to property protected under Article 17 of the Charter.

Compliance of the measures of the programme with the Greek law and the Greek constitution, as well as with other relevant international human rights obligations, is ensured by the Greek courts. The Greek authorities have not informed us that there is an issue with the measures of law 4093/2012. If any measures are found to violate the constitution or Greek law, the Greek authorities would have to amend the concerned measures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003155/13
to the Commission
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Status of European deposit guarantee schemes

Can the Commission clarify whether the proposed move to impose levies on deposits in bank accounts in Cyprus containing under EUR 100 000 contravenes the directive on Deposit Guarantee Schemes?

If it does not, would the Commission agree that there is now no legal provision preventing other governments in Europe imposing similar so-called taxes on bank accounts?

Does the Commission agree that this effectively spells the end of the deposit guarantee schemes?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The Cypriot authorities have not imposed any particular levy on deposits under EUR 100,000.

The Commission made in June 2012 a proposal for a bank resolution framework ([1]). It is currently being debated by the Council and European Parliament. Once agreed upon, the new Directive will introduce in the whole EU a framework with all the tools to intervene decisively in banking crises both before problems occur and early on in the process if they do. And, if the financial situation of a bank deteriorates beyond repair, national authorities in all Member States will have a common toolkit and roadmap to manage the failure of banks. The bail-in tool enshrined in that framework will allow a bank to be recapitalised with shareholders wiped out or diluted, and creditors would have their claims reduced or converted to shares. Deposits below EUR 100,000 are explicitly excluded from this tool and will therefore be entirely preserved.

([1]) COM/2012/0280 final.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003156/13
til Kommissionen
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(20. marts 2013)

Om: Maritim fysisk planlægning og maritim zoneinddeling i Middelhavet

En integreret maritim politik er en politik, der giver et antal muligheder for udvikling af den maritime økonomi i og hinsides Middelhavet. Kommissionens meddelelse om »Blå vækst« er et blandt flere initiativer, der fastlægger hovedkursen for en indsats på en række konkrete maritime områder.

Kommissionen vedtog for nylig sit forslag til retsakt om maritim fysisk planlægning. Kommissionen anmodes i denne forbindelse om at besvare følgende:

1. Hvordan bedømmer Kommissionen medlemsstaternes vilje til at samarbejde indbyrdes på området for maritim fysisk planlægning? Hvor let vil det være at nå frem til fælles krav og nå frem til en enkelt »one-stop-shop«, der vil kunne fremskynde procedurerne og frisætte det økonomiske potentiale i Middelhavet?

2. Har Kommissionen endvidere planer om at iværksætte initiativer, hvad angår oprettelse af maritime zoner, herunder eksklusive økonomiske zoner (EØZ) i Middelhavet?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Maria Damanaki
(30. maj 2013)

Kommissionen ser frem til et positivt og rettidigt resultat af de igangværende drøftelser mellem Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet om forslaget til et direktiv om rammerne for maritim fysisk planlægning og integreret kystzoneforvaltning. Kommissionen har i de seneste fem år arbejdet tæt sammen med eksperter fra medlemsstaterne for at foreslå et direktiv, der giver mulighed for fleksibilitet i udviklingen af den maritime fysiske planlægning, idet der bygges på eksisterende procedurer, samtidig med at der gennem proceduremæssige krav sikres ensartethed i Europa.

Forslaget berører ikke medlemsstaternes suverænitet til at fastlægge og afgrænse havområder. Når direktivet er trådt i kraft, vil det pålægge medlemsstaterne at gennemføre maritim fysisk planlægning i farvande, havbund og undergrund, hvor de har eller udøver jurisdiktion i overensstemmelse med De Forenede Nationers havretskonvention (UNCLOS). Det forudsætter ikke, at der sker en etablering eller afgrænsning af havområder.

Kommissionen følger nøje udviklingen i Middelhavet med hensyn til etablering af havområder, herunder eksklusive økonomiske zoner, og den vil fremsætte politiske henstillinger herom i medfør af UNCLOS. Dette politiske initiativ tager sigte på at bidrage til EU-medlemsstaternes fulde udnyttelse af havets rigdom med henblik på at fremme EU's interesser på området økonomisk velstand, arbejdspladser og vækst.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003156/13
to the Commission
Anna Rosbach (ECR)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Maritime spatial planning and maritime zoning in the Mediterranean

Integrated maritime policy is a policy area which offers a number of possibilities for the development of the maritime economy in the Mediterranean Sea and beyond. Among other initiatives, the Commission's communication on 'Blue Growth' sets out the main course of action in a number of concrete maritime domains.

Recently, the Commission adopted its legislative proposal for maritime spatial planning (MSP). In connection with that, can the Commission please answer the following:

1. What is its assessment of the willingness of Member States to cooperate among themselves in the field of maritime spatial planning? How easy will it be to reach common requirements and arrive at a one-stop-shop which will aim to speed up procedures and unleash economic potential in the Mediterranean?

2. In the same vein, does the Commission plan to undertake any initiatives regarding the establishment of maritime zones, including exclusive economic zones (EEZs), in the Mediterranean?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission looks forward to a positive and timely outcome of the current discussions between the European Parliament and the Council on the proposal for a directive establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management. The Commission has worked closely with experts from Member States in the past five years to propose a directive that allows for flexibility in developing maritime spatial planning, building upon existing processes, while ensuring consistency in Europe through procedural requirements.

The proposal does not touch upon the Member States sovereignty to establish and delimit maritime zones. Once entered into force, the Directive will require Member States to implement Maritime Spatial Planning in the waters, seabed and subsoil where they have or exercise jurisdictional rights, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos). It does not require the establishment or delimitation of maritime zones for its implementation.

The Commission follows closely the developments in the Mediterranean with regard to the establishment of maritime zones including Exclusive Economic Zones and will come up with political recommendations to that effect in accordance with Unclos. This political initiative will aim at contributing to the full exploitation of sea wealth by EU Member States, promoting EU interests in the domain of economic prosperity, jobs and growth.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003157/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 mars 2013)

Objet: Le dumping social allemand détruit l'emploi et le tissu socioéconomique européen

Le ministre de l'économie belge, Johan Vande Lanotte, et la ministre de l'emploi, Monica De Coninck, ont décidé de porter plainte devant la Commission contre les autorités allemandes afin de faire cesser le dumping social dans ce pays. Ceux-ci dénoncent des pratiques indignes. Certains travailleurs sont en effet payés trois ou quatre euros de l'heure pour un travail de nuit. Cette concurrence déloyale conduit les entreprises belges, françaises, hollandaises vers la faillite: plusieurs de ces entreprises ont commencé à restructurer ou à délocaliser vers l'Allemagne, car elles ne parviennent plus à faire face à cette concurrence. L'une d'entre elles ne découpe plus la viande en Belgique, mais coupe les carcasses en quatre et les envoie vers l'Allemagne. Là, des travailleurs à très bas salaires s'occupent de la découpe et c'est beaucoup plus rentable. Puisqu'il n'y a pas de salaire minimum en Allemagne, tout est permis. On n'enfreint aucune loi puisqu'il n'y en a pas!

Désormais, tout est fait pour mettre les salariés sous pression. Les allocations de chômage sont limitées dans le temps, les «mini-jobs» à temps partiel et rémunérés autour de 450 euros par mois sont légion, et ils n'ouvrent que des droits restreints en matière d'assurance maladie et de pension, avec, pour conséquence, certains employeurs qui considèrent ces emplois atypiques comme un moyen de disposer d'une main-d'œuvre bon marché et qui évitent de créer de vrais emplois, ce qui affaiblit considérablement la sécurité sociale. Le «modèle allemand» se base finalement sur l'explosion du travail à temps partiel et l'émergence de salariés pauvres. Un ensemble de réformes socioéconomiques qui a coûté 355 milliards d'euros à l'État allemand, mis 26 % de la population en emploi précaire et créé près de cinq millions d'emplois rémunérés à un euro par heure!

1. La Commission estime-t-elle que ces pratiques sont dignes et en adéquation avec l'esprit européen?

2. La Commission estime-t-elle également qu'il s'agit bien de cas avérés de dumping social?

3. Quand et comment la Commission compte-t-elle mettre à jour la législation en la matière pour éviter que cette concurrence déloyale, interne à l'Europe, ne finisse par ruiner celle-ci et désintégrer le tissu socioéconomique?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(17 mai 2013)

La Commission se penche actuellement sur la plainte des autorités belges, qui a trait aux principes d'égalité de traitement et de non-discrimination ainsi qu'à la législation sur les travailleurs détachés. Elle prendra, en temps utile, les mesures qu'elle juge nécessaires.

Elle connaît l'existence d'abus concernant les conditions de travail des travailleurs détachés. En mars 2012, elle a adopté une proposition ([1]) de directive d'exécution visant à améliorer l'application et le respect de la directive 96/71/CE par les États membres, en vue de prévenir le contournement des règles, de prévoir des sanctions en cas de non-respect de ces règles et de mieux protéger les travailleurs sur le territoire de l'Union européenne. La proposition est actuellement examinée par le Conseil et le Parlement, qui ont à présent l'occasion de renforcer dans le droit de l'Union les garanties juridiques contre les pratiques abusives en la matière.

D'autres exemples de cas présumés de dumping social figurent dans les études juridiques sur l'application de la directive 96/71/CE et dans l'analyse des incidences effectuée en vue de l'adoption de la directive d'exécution.

La Commission rappelle que ni le suivi et l'application des conditions de travail ni la rémunération effective des salariés ne relèvent de la compétence de l'Union.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003270/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Dumping sociale nell'UE

Due autorevoli esponenti del governo belga hanno recentemente denunciato come, a loro avviso, in Germania si sfruttino lavoratori romeni e bulgari assunti da società fittizie con un compenso di tre/quattro euro l'ora per dieci ore al giorno di lavoro, senza sicurezza sociale e in condizioni sanitarie disastrose.

Si tratterebbe di un vero e proprio fenomeno di dumping sociale all'interno dell'Unione europea che, secondo i due ministri belgi, sta causando enormi problemi all'interno del loro Paese, con imprese costrette a chiudere o delocalizzare altrove.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa vicenda?

Può dire se ha riscontrato altri fenomeni di dumping sociale all'interno dell'Unione?

Questa pratica sleale è una delle cause della perdita di competitività dell'UE a livello globale e non sarebbe ammissibile se si verificasse addirittura tra gli stessi Stati membri, portando vantaggi competitivi a qualche Paese rispetto ad altri su basi inaccettabili.

Risposta congiunta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(17 maggio 2013)

I servizi della Commissione stanno esaminando la denuncia presentata dal governo belga relativa ai principi della parità di trattamento e della non discriminazione e alla legislazione che si applica ai lavoratori distaccati. La Commissione adotterà a tempo debito gli interventi che riterrà necessari.

La Commissione è a conoscenza di abusi legati alla situazione lavorativa dei lavoratori distaccati. Nel marzo 2012 essa ha adottato una proposta ([1]) di direttiva volta a migliorare il modo in cui la direttiva 96/71/CE è attuata, applicata e fatta rispettare nella pratica dagli Stati membri al fine di prevenire e sanzionare l'elusione delle regole applicabili e di migliorare la tutela dei lavoratori distaccati nell'UE. La proposta è all'esame del Consiglio e del Parlamento che hanno ora l'opportunità di rafforzare le salvaguardie giuridiche contenute nella legislazione unionale contro le pratiche vessatorie nel contesto del distacco di lavoratori.

Altri casi di presunto dumping sociale sono reperibili negli studi giuridici sull'applicazione della direttiva 96/71/CE e nella valutazione di impatto realizzata ai fini dell'adozione della direttiva di attuazione.

La Commissione fa presente che il monitoraggio delle condizioni lavorative e della remunerazione effettiva dei lavoratori e il compito di far rispettare le regole nella materia non rientrano nelle competenze dell'UE.

([1]) COM(2012)131 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003157/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: German social dumping is destroying jobs and the European socioeconomic fabric

Johan Vande Lanotte, Belgian Minister for Economic Affairs, and Monica De Coninck, Minister for Employment, have decided to lodge a complaint before the Commission against the German authorities in order to put an end to social dumping in Germany. They are protesting against shameful practices. Indeed some workers are paid EUR 3 or EUR 4 per hour for night work. Such unfair competition is driving Belgian, French and Dutch companies to bankruptcy: several companies have started restructuring or relocating to Germany, because they are no longer able to compete. One company no longer cuts meat in Belgium. Instead they cut the carcasses into four and send them to Germany. There, workers on very low wages do the cutting and it is much more profitable. Since there is no minimum wage in Germany, anything goes. No legislation is breached because there is no legislation!

These days, everything is done to pile the pressure on employees. Unemployment benefits are time-limited, part-time mini-jobs paid at around EUR 450 per month are commonplace and they only offer restricted rights with regard to sickness and retirement benefits. As a result, some employers consider these atypical jobs as a source of cheap labour and a way to avoid creating real jobs, all of which considerably weakens social security. In the end, the 'German model' is based on booming part-time work and the emergence of poor employees. A series of socioeconomic reforms that cost the German State EUR 355 billion, put 26% of the population in a situation of unstable employment and created close to 5 million jobs paid at EUR 1 per hour!

1. Does the Commission think that these practices are worthy of the European spirit and reflect it?

2. Does the Commission also believe that these are established cases of social dumping?

3. When and how does the Commission intend to update the relevant legislation so that this unfair competition within Europe does not end up ruining Europe and destroying the socioeconomic fabric?

Question for written answer E-003270/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Social dumping in the EU

Two prominent members of the Belgian Government recently lodged a complaint accusing Germany of using Romanian and Bulgarian workers hired by sham companies at wages of three or four euros per hour for a ten-hour working day, with no social security and in dreadful sanitary conditions.

This is a genuine case of social dumping within the EU which, according to the two Belgian ministers, is causing huge problems in their country, with companies being forced to shut down or move elsewhere.

This unfair practice is one of the reasons why the EU is becoming less competitive globally and it is unacceptable even if it takes place between Member States, since it gives an unreasonable competitive advantage to some countries at the expense of others.

Is the Commission aware of this issue?

Has it come across any other cases of social dumping within the EU?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission services are currently looking into the complaint lodged by the Belgian Government, which relates to the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination, and to the legislation on posted workers. The Commission will take such action as it considers necessary in due course.

The Commission is aware of situations of work-related abuse concerning posted workers. In March 2012 it adopted a proposal ([1]) for an Enforcement Directive to improve the way Directive 96/71/EC is implemented, applied and enforced in practice by the Member States with the aim of preventing, and providing for sanctions for, the circumvention of the rules applicable and improving the protection of posted workers in the EU. The proposal is being examined by the Council and Parliament, which now have an opportunity to strengthen the legal safeguards in EC law against abusive practices in the context of the posting of workers.

Examples of other cases of alleged social dumping can be found in the legal studies on the application of Directive 96/71/EC and in the impact assessment made with a view to the adoption of the Enforcement Directive.

The Commission would point out that the monitoring and enforcement of working conditions and the actual remuneration of employees do not fall within the EU's competence.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003158/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(20 mars 2013)

Objet: Entrave à la concurrence dans le cas de fermetures

Certaines entreprises ferment leur établissement et licencient leur personnel sans même chercher de repreneurs, puisque ceux-ci représentent des concurrents potentiels. Un exemple emblématique est celui d'ArcelorMittal à Florange (France, qui a annoncé la fermeture de ses hauts fourneaux sans même se préoccuper d'une reprise du site de production, laissant à l'État la charge de trouver un nouveau preneur.

Certaines sociétés préfèrent fermer délibérément leur établissement, quitte à licencier des milliers de salariés, plutôt que de permettre à un repreneur de s'y installer afin d'éviter toute concurrence.

Cette démarche n'est-elle pas une entrave au droit de la concurrence tel que protégé par le droit européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(3 mai 2013)

La Commission est consciente des conséquences sociales des fermetures annoncées par ArcelorMittal sur son site sidérurgique de Florange (France). Cependant, elle ne considère pas que le droit de la concurrence s'applique dans ce cas, car rien n'indique que la fermeture de cette usine ait eu lieu dans le contexte d'une collusion concernant un partage de marché ou une limitation illégale de la production par une entreprise dominante.

En vertu des règles de concurrence de l'UE, tous accords entre entreprises, toutes décisions d'associations d'entreprises et toutes pratiques concertées qui sont susceptibles d'affecter le commerce entre États membres et qui ont pour objet ou pour effet d'empêcher, de restreindre ou de fausser le jeu de la concurrence au sein du marché intérieur sont interdits (article 101 du TFUE).

L'exploitation abusive d'une position dominante sur le marché intérieur ou dans une partie substantielle de celui-ci est également interdite, dans la mesure où le commerce entre États membres est susceptible d'en être affecté (article 102 du TFUE).

Les fermetures annoncées par ArcelorMittal ne semblent pas relever de ces dispositions.

Par conséquent, bien que la Commission soit consciente des conséquences sociales des mesures prises par ArcelorMittal, elle n'a pas connaissance, à ce stade, d'éléments indiquant que ces mesures pourraient enfreindre le droit de la concurrence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003158/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Restriction to competition caused by closures

Some companies close their plants and lay their staff off without even looking for buyers, since they are seen as potential competitors. A typical example of this is Arcelor Mittal in Florange (France), which announced the closure of its blast furnaces without even thinking that the production site could be taken over, thus leaving the State with the task of finding a buyer for the site.

Some companies prefer to deliberately close the plants, even if it means laying off thousands of employees, rather than letting another company buy the plants, in order to avoid competition.

Does this approach not contravene competition law as protected by European law?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the social consequences of the announced closures by ArcelorMittal at its steel site in Florange (France). However the Commission does not consider that competition law applies in this case in the absence of any indications that the plant closure would have taken place in the context of a cartel collusion such as market sharing or alternatively an unlawful limitation of output by a dominant undertaking.

According to EU competition rules, agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings and concerted practices which may affect trade between Member States and which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction, or distortion of competition within the internal market are prohibited (Article 101 TFEU).

The abuse of a dominant position within the internal market or in a substantial part of it is also prohibited, insofar as it may affect trade between Member States (Article 102 TFEU).

The announced closures by ArcelorMittal do not appear to fall within the scope of these provisions.

Consequently, although the Commission is conscious of the social consequences of ArcelorMittal's actions, it does not possess at this stage any indications that these actions might infringe competition law.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003159/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(20 mars 2013)

Objet: Une loi européenne pour obliger les entreprises rentables à chercher un repreneur

En période de crise économique, la priorité pour les États membres est de lutter contre les fermetures d'usines et le licenciement de leurs salariés pour maintenir l'emploi.

Certaines usines rentables ferment et licencient leurs salariés simplement parce que les propriétaires ne cherchent pas de repreneurs, puisque ces derniers représentent des concurrents potentiels. La France a donc décidé de mettre en place une loi qui obligera les propriétaires d'entreprises rentables à chercher des repreneurs pour permettre le maintien des emplois sur le site de production. Cette mesure sera bénéfique pour les salariés, mais aussi pour l'État puisqu'en cas de fermeture d'usine, c'est lui qui supporte une grande partie des coûts liés aux licenciements.

La Commission envisage-t-elle de mettre en place une telle mesure dans l'ensemble des États membres afin d'empêcher la fermeture d'usines rentables et le licenciement abusif de milliers de salariés?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(21 mai 2013)

Bien que la Commission n'ait pas le pouvoir d'interférer sur les décisions d'entreprises qui aboutissent à la fermeture d'usines en Europe, elle exhorte les entreprises et toutes les parties prenantes à anticiper les restructurations dans la mesure du possible et à les gérer d'une manière socialement responsable.

La Commission a réalisé d'importants travaux dans ce domaine avec toutes les parties prenantes et elle a relancé le débat au niveau de l'UE sur ces problèmes au moyen du livre vert «Restructurations et anticipation du changement: quelles leçons tirer de l'expérience récente?» de janvier 2012 ([1]). La recherche de solutions de remplacement aux fermetures, par la reconversion des sites ou la reprise des parties viables des entreprises restructurées, figure parmi les bonnes pratiques bien établies au sein de l'UE.

Suite à ce livre vert et à l'adoption par le Parlement européen le 15 janvier 2013 du rapport Cerca ([2]) pressant la Commission d'agir dans ce domaine, la Commission proposera une communication établissant un cadre de qualité pour les restructurations et l'anticipation du changement. Cette communication contiendra la législation en vigueur et les initiatives de l'UE dans ce domaine et présentera les meilleures pratiques à appliquer par toutes les parties prenantes.

([1]) Voir les réponses et un résumé sous http: //ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en
([2]) A7-0390/2012 / P7_TA-PROV(2013)0005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003159/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: A European law to force profitable companies to find a buyer

In this period of economic crisis, the priority for Member States is to prevent factories from closing and laying off their employees so that jobs are protected.

Some profitable companies close and make their employees redundant simply because the owners do not look for buyers, since the latter are seen as potential competitors. Therefore France has decided to pass a law that would force the owners of profitable companies to seek buyers in order to protect jobs on the production site. This measure will be beneficial to employees, but also to the State because, when a plant closes, it is the State that bears a large proportion of the costs associated with redundancies.

Does the Commission envisage implementing a similar measure in all Member States in order to stop profitable factories from closing and thousands of employees from being unfairly dismissed?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

Although the Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company decisions leading to the closure of plants in Europe, it urges companies and all stakeholders to anticipate restructuring as far as possible and to manage it in a socially responsible way.

The Commission carried out important work in this field with all stakeholders and it has re-launched the debate at EU level on these issues through the January 2012 Green Paper on 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: lessons from recent experience' ([1]). The search for alternative solutions to closures, through site reconversion or takeover of sustainable parts of the restructured company figures amongst the well-established good practices in the EU.

Following this Green Paper and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report ([2]) urging the Commission to act in this domain, the Commission will propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework for Restructuring and anticipation of change. This communication would frame the current EU legislation and initiatives in this field and it would present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([2]) A7-0390/2012 / P7_TA-PROV(2013)0005.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003160/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(20 maart 2013)

Betreft: Ecologische onderbouwing Natura 2000-grenzen Haringvliet

Is de Commissie bekend met de vorig jaar door de Nederlandse regering geuite intentie om de begrenzing van het Natura 2000-gebied Haringvliet te verkleinen?

Kan de Commissie zich vinden in de ecologische onderbouwing van het ontwerp-aanwijzigingsbesluit van het oorspronkelijk begrensde Natura 2000-gebied Haringvliet als zijnde geschikt voor herstel en uitbreiding van de habitattypen (H3270 (slikkige rivieroevers) / Ruigten en Zomen (H6430B) en habitatsoorten Elft, Fint en Noordse Woelmuis?

Deelt de Commissie de conclusie van de Nederlandse hoogste bestuursrechter, dat bij een landelijk niet-gunstige staat van instandhouding, het voldoende is om één habitatgebied met hersteldoelstelling aan te wijzen? Of moet in elk betreffend habitatgebied een gunstige staat van instandhouding worden bereikt? Gaat dit ook op voor de in het ontwerp-aanwijzigingsbesluit Haringvliet door de Nederlandse regering aangedragen habitattypen en -soorten?

Kan de Commissie aangeven in welke mate de omschreven hoge getijdenwerking van de rivier het Spui, aan de oost- en westkant van de monding van deze waterweg en de daaraan gekoppelde dynamiek van de hier realiseerbare getijdennatuur, een zwaarwegend ecologisch argument vormen voor het potentieel voor uitbreiding van de genoemde habitattypen in dit deel van het gebied Haringvliet, evenals de door Nederland aangemelde soorten zoals de Noordse woelmuis, fint en rivierprik, en de duurzame instandhouding van het ecosysteem van het hele Haringvliet?

Heeft Nederland indertijd juist gehandeld, door de grenzen en natuurdoelen van het Natura 2000-gebied Haringvliet onder andere te baseren op het natuurpotentieel voor getijdennatuur aan beide zijden van de Spuimonding, inbegrepen de polders Beningerwaard, Zuidoord en de Leenherenpolder?

Klopt het dat de grenzen van gebieden die op basis van het ecologische potentieel zijn aangewezen door een lidstaat voor de communautaire lijst niet op basis van andere dan ecologische criteria kunnen worden gewijzigd?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnikon namens de Commissie
(6 mei 2013)

De Commissie is niet bekend met enige intentie van de Nederlandse regering om de begrenzing van het gebied van communautair belang (GCB) Haringvliet te wijzigen of te verkleinen, en zij heeft ook geen verzoek in dit verband ontvangen.

De aanwijzing en afbakening van GCB's mogen uitsluitend op de in richtlijn 93/43/EEG ([1]) verankerde wetenschappelijke criteria worden gebaseerd. Op grond van deze criteria is het aantal voor een bepaald type habitat voor te stellen gebieden sterk afhankelijk van de context. De aanwijzing van één habitat met hersteldoelstelling zou in bepaalde gevallen voldoende kunnen zijn.

Wat de onderbouwing ten aanzien van de oorspronkelijke begrenzing van het GCB Haringvliet aangaat, onderschrijft de Commissie het algemene beginsel dat de grenzen van een GCB zodanig kunnen worden getrokken dat daarin gebieden worden opgenomen waarin op het desbetreffende tijdstip geen soorten of typen habitat waarop het GCB-voorstel betrekking heeft, voorkomen maar wel lokaal herstel voor die soorten of typen kan plaatsvinden.

De Commissie beschikt niet over de gegevens die nodig zijn om over afzonderlijke locaties binnen het GCB „Haringvliet" opmerkingen te kunnen maken. De desbetreffende vragen van het geachte Parlementslid kunnen niet in algemene termen worden beantwoord. Integendeel, zij houden verband met de specifieke omstandigheden van het geval en moeten op lokaal en nationaal niveau tegen de achtergrond van de staat van instandhouding van bepaalde soorten en habitats die voor de Unie van belang zijn, worden bezien.

De Commissie herinnert het geachte Parlementslid eraan dat de oorspronkelijke afbakening van de gebieden tot de verantwoordelijkheden van de lidstaten behoort. Zij bevestigt dat de grenzen van GCB's uitsluitend op basis van milieucriteria kunnen worden gewijzigd.

([1]) PB L 206 van 22.7.1992, blz. 7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003160/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Environmental justification for the Natura 2000 boundaries of Haringvliet

Is the Commission aware of the Dutch Government's intention, which it expressed last year, to reduce the boundaries of Haringvliet, a Natura 2000 area?

Does the Commission agree with the environmental justification in the draft designation decision for the original boundaries of Haringvliet, a Natura 2000 area, as being suitable for the rehabilitation and expansion of habitat types H3270 (rivers with muddy banks)/hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels type B (H6430B) and habitat species shad, twaite shad and Nordic vole?

Does the Commission share the conclusion of the Dutch Administrative High Court that, where the conservation status is unfavourable in the whole of a particular country, it is sufficient to designate a single habitat area for rehabilitation? Or does a favourable conservation status need to be achieved in each relevant habitat area? Does this also apply to the habitat types and species recommended by the Dutch Government in the draft designation decision for Haringvliet?

Can the Commission indicate to what extent the described high tidal action of the river Spui, on the east and west sides of its estuary and the tidal dynamics related thereto, constitute a compelling environmental argument for the potential for expansion of the abovementioned habitat types in this part of the Haringvliet area, including for the species Nordic vole, twaite shad and European river lamprey, as recommended by the Netherlands, and for the sustainable conservation of the ecosystem of the entire Haringvliet?

Did the Netherlands act correctly when it defined the boundaries of and targets for the Natura 2000 area Haringvliet on the basis of, *inter alia*, the natural potential of the river Spui for tidal action on both sides of its estuary, including in the polders Beningerwaard, Zuidoord and Leenheerenpolder?

Is it true that the boundaries of areas that have been designated by Member States for inclusion in the Community list on the basis of their environmental potential cannot be changed on any criteria other than environmental ones?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission is not aware of any intentions of the Dutch Government, nor has it received any request, for changing the boundaries or reducing the extent of the site of Community importance (SCI) 'Haringvliet'.

The identification and delineation of SCIs must exclusively be based on the scientific criteria laid down in Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]). Under these criteria, the number of sites to be proposed for a particular habitat type is highly context-dependent. The designation of a single habitat occurrence for rehabilitation might be sufficient in certain cases.

With regard to the justification for the original boundaries of the SCI 'Haringvliet', the Commission agrees with the general principle that SCI boundaries can be drawn so as to include areas that do not currently host any species or habitat types for which the site has been proposed, but have a potential for their local rehabilitation.

The Commission does not have the information necessary to comment on individual locations within the SCI 'Haringvliet'. The related questions of the Honourable Member cannot be answered in general terms. Instead they are case-specific and should be looked at in light of the conservation status of a particular habitat type or species of Community interest at the local and national level.

The Commission would like to remind the Honourable Member that the original delimitation of the sites is a responsibility of the Member States. It confirms that the boundaries of an SCI can only be changed on the basis of environmental criteria.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p.7.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-003161/13
до Комисията
Marietje Schaake (ALDE) и Metin Kazak (ALDE)
(20 март 2013 г.)

Относно: Въздействие на трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите върху споразумението на Турция за митнически съюз с ЕС

ЕС и САЩ започват ([1]) преговори по трансатлантическо партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите (TTIP), което би могло да има положително въздействие върху заетостта и растежа ([2]). Според Комисията „това споразумение ще определи стандарт не само за бъдещите ни двустранни търговски отношения и инвестиции, но също и за разработването на световни правила“ ([3]). Турция — страна кандидатка с пазар, тясно свързан с този на ЕС, както и голям търговски партньор на САЩ, би била пряко засегната от това партньорство, както вече е посочено в доклада Казак ([4]). Като се вземат предвид значението на икономическите и търговски отношения ЕС—Турция (с дял от 120 милиарда евро през 2011 г. ([5])), които се регулират от споразумението за митническия съюз ([6]), както и взаимните ангажименти на ЕС и Турция в процеса на присъединяване, възникват следните въпроси:

1. Работната група на високо равнище обсъдила ли е последиците от трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите за Турция от гледна точка на (увеличаването или намаляването на) техническите и нетехническите бариери пред търговията? Ако да, то може ли Комисията да сподели и/или да коментира обсъжданията?

2. Считано от 1 януари 2013 г., ще влезе в сила приет от Турция важен регламент за взаимното признаване в нехармонизираната област. Как ще се отразят евентуално трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите и неговите регулаторни и технически последици върху прилагането на този регламент?

3. Може ли Комисията да определи главните последици на трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите за търговията със стоки и услуги с Турция съгласно споразумението за митнически съюз по отношение на правата и отговорностите? Ако не, защо?

4. Комисията извършила ли е съвместно с турските органи оценка на въздействието на трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите върху икономиката и предприятията на Турция (в т.ч. МСП)? Ако не, счита ли Комисията, че това е добра идея?

5. (Проекто)мандатът на ЕС за водене на преговори включва ли позоваванията на въздействието на трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите и на отговорностите на ЕС във връзка с това спрямо задълженията на Турция съгласно митническия съюз?

6. Турция ще бъде ли информирана от Комисията — доколкото е възможно предвид изискванията за поверителност на търговските преговори — относно напредъка на преговорите по трансатлантическото партньорство в областта на търговията и инвестициите и относно възможните му отражения, и ако да, то как по-конкретно?

7. Съгласна ли е Комисията, че за ЕС представлява ключов стратегически интерес запазването и задълбочаването на икономическата и търговска интеграция с Турция в рамките на новия „положителен дневен ред“ с оглед на евентуалното членство на Турция в ЕС, при условие че бъдат изпълнени всички критерии от Копенхаген и предвид факта, че Турция има втората по големина армия в НАТО?

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=869
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf
([3]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150581.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2010-0238+0+DOC+PDF+V0//BG
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf
([6]) http://www.avrupa.info.tr/fileadmin/Content/Downloads/PDF/Custom_Union_des_ENG.pdf

Отговор, даден от г-н Де Гухт от името на Комисията
(15 май 2013 г.)

Комисията осъзнава желанието на Турция да договори споразумение за свободна търговия със САЩ паралелно на Трансатлантическото партньорство за търговия и инвестиции ЕС—САЩ (ТПТИ). Бяха направени контакти със САЩ, за да се предаде и подкрепи желанието на Турция желаят и за да се уведомят Съединените щати (САЩ) за митническия съюз ЕС-Турция. Освен това Комисията възнамерява редовно да информира Турция за напредъка в съответните области на ТПТИ.

1. Резултатите от работната група на високо равнище ЕС—САЩ (РГВР), бяха публикувани в окончателния доклад на РГВР, който е достъпен онлайн ([7])

2. ТПТИ няма да засегне регламента за взаимното признаване в нехармонизираните области, приет наскоро от Турция.

3. Що се отнася до последиците върху търговията със стоки по отношение на правата и отговорностите, ТПТИ ще има въздействие върху Турция, подобно на това от други споразумения за свободна търговия (ССТ), сключени от ЕС. Услугите не са обхванати от митническия съюз между ЕС и Турция.

4. Оценка на въздействието на ТПТИ върху Турция ще бъдат включена в предстоящата оценка на въздействието върху устойчивото развитие (ОВУР).

5. Проектът на указанията за водене на преговори за ТПТИ, който понастоящем се обсъжда в Съвета, се отнася само за рамката за преговори между ЕС и САЩ само.

6. Комисията редовно споделя на неофициални срещи и ще продължи да споделя с Турция информация за търговската политика, включително за преговори за ССТ.

7. Комисията осъзнава стратегическия интерес на ЕС да запази и задълбочи своята икономическа и търговска интеграция с Турция. Това също така е отразено в положителния график на Комисията за Турция. В усилие да модернизира и подобри ефективността на митническия съюз между ЕС и Турция Комисията започна оценка на митническия съюз.

([7]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003161/13
aan de Commissie
Marietje Schaake (ALDE) en Metin Kazak (ALDE)
(20 maart 2013)

Betreft: Gevolgen van een trans-Atlantische handels- en investeringsovereenkomst voor de overeenkomst tot instelling van een douane-unie tussen Turkije en de EU

De EU en de VS staan op het punt om onderhandelingen te starten([1]) over een trans-Atlantische handels- en investeringsovereenkomst, die positieve gevolgen zou kunnen hebben voor werkgelegenheid en groei([2]). Volgens de Commissie zal deze overeenkomst model staan niet alleen voor toekomstige bilaterale handels- en investeringsovereenkomsten maar ook voor de ontwikkeling van wereldwijde regels([3]). Voor Turkije, dat enerzijds een kandidaat-lidstaat is met een markt die onlosmakelijk verbonden is met de EU, en anderzijds een belangrijke handelspartner van de VS is, zou de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst rechtstreeks gevolgen hebben, zoals al eerder is aangegeven in het verslag-Kazak([4]). Gezien het belang van de economische en handelsbetrekkingen tussen de EU en Turkije (120 miljard EUR in 2011([5])), die geregeld zijn bij de overeenkomst tot instelling van de douane-unie tussen beide partijen, en de wederzijdse verplichtingen van Turkije in het kader van het toetredingsproces, vragen wij de Commissie het volgende:

1. Zijn de gevolgen van de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst voor Turkije, zoals (meer of minder) technische en andere handelsobstakels, in de Groep op hoog niveau ter sprake gekomen? Zo ja, wat is daarover gezegd en/of wat denkt de Commissie daarvan?

2. Vanaf 1 januari 2013 geldt een belangrijke, door Turkije goedgekeurde regeling inzake wederzijdse erkenning in de niet-geharmoniseerde sectoren. Zullen de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst en de technische en regelgevingsimplicaties ervan de toepassing van die regeling beïnvloeden, en zo ja, hoe?

3. Kan de Commissie zeggen welke de belangrijkste gevolgen zijn van de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst voor de handel in goederen en diensten met Turkije in het kader van de overeenkomst tot instelling van een douane-unie voor wat betreft rechten en verantwoordelijkheden? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Heeft de Commissie samen met de Turkse autoriteiten een beoordeling gemaakt van de gevolgen van de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst voor de economie en het bedrijfsleven (inclusief kmo's) van Turkije? Zo nee, denkt de Commissie niet dat dat een goed idee zou zijn?

5. Wordt er in het (ontwerp van) onderhandelingsmandaat ergens verwezen naar de impact van de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst en de verantwoordelijkheid van de EU enerzijds en de verplichtingen van Turkije anderzijds in het kader van de douane-unie?

6. Zal Turkije, voor zover dat bij de vereiste vertrouwelijkheid van handelsonderhandelingen mogelijk is, door de Commissie op de hoogte worden gehouden van de vorderingen bij de onderhandelingen over de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst en de potentiële gevolgen daarvan? Zo ja, op welke wijze?

7. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het in het grootste strategische belang van de EU is de economische en handelsintegratie met Turkije in stand te houden en uit te diepen, enerzijds als onderdeel van de nieuwe „positieve agenda" ter voorbereiding op de eventuele toetreding van Turkije tot de EU, mits aan alle criteria van Kopenhagen wordt voldaan, en anderzijds gezien het feit dat Turkije het op een na grootste leger van de NAVO heeft?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(15 mei 2013)

De Commissie is zich bewust van de wens van Turkije om, parallel aan de Trans-Atlantische handels- en investeringsovereenkomst tussen de EU en de VS, te onderhandelen over een vrijhandelsovereenkomst met de Verenigde Staten. Er zijn contacten gelegd met de Verenigde Staten (VS) om de wens van Turkije door te geven en te steunen en de VS te informeren over de douane-unie tussen Turkije en de EU. Bovendien is de Commissie voornemens Turkije regelmatig op de hoogte te houden van de voortgang op de betrokken gebieden van de trans-Atlantische handels- en investeringsovereenkomst.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=869.
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/februari/tradoc_150519.pdf
([3]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150581.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2010-0238+0+DOC+PDF+V0//NL.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf

1. De resultaten van de EU-VS werkgroep op hoog niveau zijn bekendgemaakt in het verslag van de EU-VS werkgroep op hoog niveau dat online te vinden is([6]).

2. De handels- en investeringsovereenkomst zal geen effect hebben op de regeling betreffende de wederzijdse erkenning in niet-geharmoniseerde gebieden die onlangs door Turkije is aangenomen.

3. Wat de gevolgen voor de rechten en verantwoordelijkheden in verband met de handel in goederen betreft zal de handel- en investeringsovereenkomst een effect op Turkije hebben dat vergelijkbaar is met andere door de EU gesloten vrijhandelsovereenkomsten. Diensten vallen niet onder de douane-unie tussen de EU en Turkije.

4. Een effectbeoordeling van de handel- en investeringsovereenkomst ten opzichte van Turkije wordt meegenomen in de komende duurzaamheidseffectbeoordeling.

5. De ontwerp-onderhandelingsrichtsnoeren voor de handels- en investeringsovereenkomst die momenteel in de Raad worden besproken, hebben alleen betrekking op het kader van de onderhandelingen tussen de EU en de VS.

6. De Commissie deelt regelmatig informatie over het handelsbeleid, waaronder informatie over onderhandelingen inzake vrijhandelsovereenkomsten met Turkije en zal dit blijven doen.

7. De Commissie is zich bewust van het strategische belang van de EU om de economische en handelsintegratie met Turkije in stand te houden en uit te diepen. Dit komt ook naar voren in de „positieve agenda" van de Commissie voor Turkije. Om de douane-unie tussen Turkije en de EU te moderniseren en de effectiviteit ervan te verbeteren heeft de Commissie een evaluatie van de douane-unie in gang gezet.

([6]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003161/13
to the Commission
Marietje Schaake (ALDE) and Metin Kazak (ALDE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Impact of a transatlantic trade and investment partnership on Turkey's Customs Union agreement with the EU

The EU and the US are to start ([1]) negations on a transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TTIP), which could have positive effects on jobs and growth ([2]). According to the Commission 'this deal will set the standard — not only for our future bilateral trade and investment but also for the development of global rules' ([3]). Turkey, a candidate country with its market intricately linked to the EU, as well as a major trading partner of the US, would be directly affected by the TTIP, as has been previously addressed in the Kazak report ([4]). Given the importance of EU-Turkey economic and trade relations (worth EUR 120 billion in 2011 ([5])), which are governed by the Customs Union agreement ([6]), and of the EU's and Turkey's mutual commitments in the accession process, the following questions arise:

1. Have the consequences of the TTIP for Turkey, in terms of (more or fewer) technical and non-technical barriers to trade, been considered in the High Level Working Group? If so, can the Commission share and/or comment on these deliberations?

2. As of 1 January 2013 an important regulation on mutual recognition in the non-harmonised area, as adopted by Turkey, will enter into force. How will the TTIP and its regulatory and technical consequences impact the application of this regulation, if at all?

3. Can the Commission set out the main consequences of the TTIP for trade in goods and services with Turkey under the Customs Union agreement, in terms of rights and responsibilities? If not, why not?

4. Has the Commission, together with the Turkish authorities, performed an assessment of the impact of the TTIP on Turkey's economy and its businesses (including SMEs)? If not, does the Commission consider this as a good idea?

5. Does the (draft) EU negotiating mandate include any references to the impact of the TTIP, and the EU's responsibilities in that regard vis-à-vis Turkey's obligations under the Customs Union?

6. Will Turkey be informed by the Commission — as far as possible given the required confidentiality of trade negotiations — on progress in negotiations on the TTIP and on its potential effects, and if so, how will it be informed?

7. Does the Commission agree that it is in the EU's key strategic interest to preserve and deepen its economic and trade integration with Turkey, as a part of the new 'positive agenda' in the run-up to eventual Turkish EU Membership, provided that all the Copenhagen criteria are met, and given the fact that Turkey has NATO's second-largest army?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of Turkey's wish to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with the US in parallel with the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Contacts have been made with the US to relay and support Turkey's wish and to inform the United States (US) about the EU-Turkey Customs Union. Furthermore, the Commission intends to keep Turkey regularly updated of progress in relevant areas in TTIP.

1. The results of the EU-US High Level Working Group (HLWG) have been published in the Final HLWG Report which can be found online ([7]).

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=869
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf
([3]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150581.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2010-0238+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf
([6]) http://www.avrupa.info.tr/fileadmin/Content/Downloads/PDF/Custom_Union_des_ENG.pdf
([7]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf

2. The TTIP will not affect the regulation on mutual recognition in non-harmonised areas recently adopted by Turkey.

3. As far as consequences on trade in goods in terms of rights and responsibilities is concerned, the TTIP will have an impact on Turkey similar to that of other Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) concluded by the EU. Services are not covered by the Customs Union between the EU and Turkey.

4. An assessment of the TTIP impact on Turkey will be included in the forthcoming Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA).

5. The Draft Negotiating Directives for the TTIP that are currently being discussed in the Council concern the framework of negotiations between the EU and the US only.

6. The Commission regularly shares and will continue to share with Turkey trade policy information, including on FTA negotiations.

7. The Commission is aware of the EU strategic interest to preserve and deepen its economic and trade integration with Turkey. This is also reflected in the Commission's positive agenda for Turkey. In an effort to modernise and improve the effectiveness of the EU-Turkey Customs Union the Commission launched an evaluation of the Customs Union.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003162/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Aditivo contra mosquitos

Considerando que:

— Um grupo de investigadores da Universidade do Minho descobriu uma tecnologia que pode ser usada por qualquer pessoa na sua roupa contra mosquitos que transmitem doenças como a malária ou a dengue;

— O coordenador do projeto explicou que este produto tem uma textura semelhante à de um detergente líquido usado para lavar roupa e que é composto por produtos ativos com antimicrobianos e repelentes de mosquitos;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tendo em conta o impacto da malária nas populações dos países mais atingidos, bem como nos europeus viajantes ou residentes nesses países, como avalia a possibilidade e a vantagem de utilização, financiamento e desenvolvimento da referida técnica?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(8 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta E-002052/2013.

Em 2009, a Comissão financiou um projeto de investigação especificamente sobre este tema (projeto NO-BUG, NMP2-SE-2009-228639) sobre o tema «Nanociências, nanotecnologias, materiais e novas tecnologias de produção». As possibilidades de financiamento para continuar a desenvolver a nova tecnologia podem ser disponibilizadas no próximo Programa-Quadro para a Investigação e a Inovação da UE, denominado «Horizonte 2020». Tal depende da decisão final dos colegisladores sobre as propostas da Comissão nesta matéria e sobre a sua execução concreta por meio de programas de trabalho.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003162/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Additive to repel mosquitoes

— A group of researchers from the University of Minho have discovered a technology which anyone can use on their clothes to repel mosquitoes transmitting diseases such as malaria and dengue.

— The project coordinator explained that this product's texture is similar to liquid detergent used for washing clothes and that it consists of active products containing antimicrobials and mosquito repellents.

Given malaria's impact on the populations of the most affected countries, as well as on European travellers and residents in those countries, how does the Commission view the possibility and the benefit of using, financing and developing this technology?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to our answer to Question E-002052/2013.

The Commission has funded a research project specifically on this topic in 2009, (project NO-BUG, NMP2-SE-2009-228639) under the Theme 'Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies'. Possibilities for funding to further develop the new technology may become available in the EU's future Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, 'Horizon 2020'. This depends on the final decision of the co-legislators on the respective Commission proposals and on its concrete implementation in work programmes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003163/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Intensificam-se as ameaças entre Coreia do Norte e Coreia do Sul

Considerando que:

— A Coreia do Norte já não responde às chamadas da Coreia do Sul, através da única linha telefónica entre os governos dos dois países;

— O habitual exercício militar em larga escala que os EUA e os sul-coreanos realizaram até ao final de abril na região, a par das sanções impostas pelas Nações Unidas, na sequência do último teste nuclear realizado pela Coreia do Norte a 12 de fevereiro, estão a fazer escalar a tensão sentida entre os dois países;

— O exercício militar que começou hoje e envolve dez mil militares sul-coreanos e três mil norte-americanos é entendido pela Coreia do Norte como um treino para a invasão do seu território;

— Segundo um diário norte-coreano, a Coreia do Norte já instalou mísseis estratégicos e sistemas de lançamento múltiplo de foguetes e todos os cidadãos do país converteram-se em soldados;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como tem acompanhado o escalar da tensão sentida entre os dois países, bem como a troca de argumentos que incitam a um eventual ataque nuclear e o início de uma guerra?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

A UE está preocupada com as tensões na Península da Coreia e com os atos de provocação e ameaças levados a cabo pela Coreia do Norte. A UE tem mantido um contacto estreito com os principais intervenientes na região através das suas delegações na China, Coreia do Sul e Japão. A UE tem também mantido canais de comunicação estreitos com Pionguiangue, presentemente através da representação local sueca. A UE prestará assistência, sempre que possível, para acalmar a situação e alcançar uma solução diplomática. Também se esforçará por manter a unidade da comunidade internacional e, em particular, por prestar apoio ao Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas (CSNU), na resposta aos atos de provocação por parte da República Popular Democrática da Coreia (RPDC).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003163/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Escalation of threats between North Korea and South Korea

— North Korea no longer responds to South Korea's calls via the single telephone line that connects the two governments.

— The routine large-scale military exercise being held in the region by the United States and South Korea until the end of April, along with the sanctions imposed by the United Nations following the latest nuclear test conducted by North Korea on 12 February, has led to an escalation of tensions between the two countries.

— North Korea regards the military exercise that began today, involving ten thousand South Korean and three thousand US soldiers, as training for an invasion of its territory.

— According to a North Korean newspaper, North Korea has installed strategic missiles and multiple launch rocket systems and all the country's citizens have become soldiers.

How has the Commission been monitoring the escalation of tensions between the two countries, as well as the exchange of arguments which may provoke a nuclear attack and the onset of war?

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

The EU is concerned about tensions on the Korean peninsula and North Korea's provocative actions and threats. The EU is in close contact with key actors in the region through its Delegations in China, South Korea and Japan. The EU also maintains close channels of communication with Pyongyang, at present through the Swedish local representation. The EU will assist where possible to cool down the situation and find a way forward to a diplomatic solution. It will also strive to maintain the unity of the international community, and in particular to work in support of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), in response to provocative actions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003164/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações de Jean-Claude Juncker

Considerando que:

— O ex-líder do Eurogrupo, Jean-Claude Juncker, advertiu, recentemente, que os conflitos na Europa podem-se agravar e que uma situação de guerra não deve ser excluída;

— Para Juncker, os primeiros sinais foram detetados no decurso das campanhas eleitorais na Grécia e na Itália, em que as campanhas eleitorais nos dois países do sul foram «excessivamente antialemãs e antieuropeias», não deixando de reconhecer que, no caso da Grécia, «a forma como alguns políticos alemães se referiram ao país deixou feridas profundas na sociedade grega»;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como interpreta o sentimento criado entre os diversos países da União Europeia, mergulhados numa profunda crise económica, política e social? Não considera que o sentimento de união dos povos, responsável pela criação da «família europeia», está a ser destruído?

Resposta dada por José Manuel Durão Barroso em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão chama a atenção do Senhor Deputado para o facto de não fazer, em princípio, comentários sobre artigos de imprensa.

No passado, a reação às crises deu um forte contributo para o progresso da integração europeia. Esse progresso implicou sempre debates intensos e compromissos difíceis. Hoje em dia a situação não é diferente. Ao mesmo tempo, devido à interdependência dentro da UE e mais ainda dentro da UEM, a melhor forma de apoiar e defender os interesses dos nossos cidadãos passa por uma maior integração. A transição para uma UEM profunda e genuína poderá requerer debates intensos e difíceis, que são no entanto, dentro de um enquadramento democrático forte, condição prévia para se obterem resultados sustentáveis.

A Comissão Europeia considera importante que os debates se baseiem em factos e decorram num espírito de equidade e honestidade intelectual. Nos próximos anos, a União Europeia terá de assegurar o restabelecimento do crescimento económico, o reforço da coesão social e a manutenção da unidade política.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003164/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Statement by Jean-Claude Juncker

— Jean-Claude Juncker, the former leader of the Eurogroup, recently warned that conflicts in Europe may worsen and that the prospect of war should not be ruled out.

— According to Juncker, the initial signs were evident during the election campaigns in Greece and Italy which, in both southern European countries, were 'excessively anti-German and thus un-European'. He also acknowledges that 'the way some German politicians have lashed out at Greece when the country fell into the crisis has left deep wounds there'.

How does the Commission interpret the feeling created between the various EU countries, which have been plunged into a deep economic, political and social crisis? Does it not believe that the sense of unity between peoples, responsible for the creation of the 'European family', is being destroyed?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that it declines in principle making comments on press reports.

European integration has in the past advanced most in response to crises. Such progress has always involved intense debates and difficult compromises. This is no different today. At the same time, because of the interdependence within the EU and even more within the EMU the interests of our Citizens can best be upheld and defended through closer integration. A transition to a deep and genuine EMU may entail intense and difficult debates. Such debates within a strong democratic framework are the precondition for sustainable results.

The European Commission believes it is important that debate takes place on the basis of facts and in a spirit of fairness and intellectual honesty. The task for the European Union in the coming years is to ensure that economic growth is restored, social cohesion enhanced and political unity upheld.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003165/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Doenças de Sobrecarga do Lisossoma (DSL)

Considerando que:

— As Doenças de Sobrecarga do Lisossoma (DSL) são, por definição, doenças raras;

— Sendo muitas vezes o resultado de uma anomalia genética rara, esta deficiência enzimática gera múltiplas complicações que podem tornar-se incapacitantes ou comportar risco de vida;

— Representam uma importante fatia dos orçamentos de saúde dos Estados-Membros da União Europeia, pois os fármacos utilizados nestas doenças são medicamentos órfãos com custos elevados;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que medidas inscreve a Comissão na agenda no que se refere ao plano de diagnóstico, tratamento, seguimento, investigação científica e formação dos profissionais de saúde no que se refere a estas doenças de sobrecarga do lisossoma?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(7 de maio de 2013)

O Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação apoiou três projetos de investigação desenvolvidos em colaboração, nomeadamente o ALPHA-MAN ([1]), o Euclyd ([2]) e o MeuSIX ([3]), que se centram nas Doenças de Sobrecarga do Lisossoma, com uma contribuição global da UE no montante de 14,8 milhões de euros.

Além disso, o Regulamento da UE relativo aos medicamentos órfãos, adotado em 1999, visa apoiar o desenvolvimento de medicamentos capazes de responder a necessidades médicas em aberto no domínio das doenças raras, através de incentivos às empresas que desenvolvem tais tratamentos. Até à data, estas medidas permitiram que 1 065 medicamentos fossem designados «medicamentos órfãos», e 75 medicamentos foram autorizados a ser introduzidos no mercado da UE.

A «designação de medicamento órfão» foi concedida aos medicamentos órfãos destinados a várias Doenças de Sobrecarga do Lisossoma, por exemplo aos medicamentos para a doença de Gaucher, a doença de Fabry, a doença de Pompe, a Cistinose e a síndrome de Sanfilippo. A introdução no mercado de alguns destes medicamentos foi autorizada, designadamente os medicamentos para a Síndrome de Hunter e para a Síndrome de Maroteaux–Lamy. No Registo Comunitário de Medicamentos Órfãos designados ([4]) estão disponíveis informações pormenorizadas a este respeito.

A Comissão não tem uma política específica orientada para as Doenças de Sobrecarga do Lisossoma. Os pacientes que sofrem de Doenças de Sobrecarga do Lisossoma poderão beneficiar de medidas desenvolvidas no âmbito da política adotada para as doenças raras.

Para mais informações sobre o trabalho desenvolvido pela UE em matéria de doenças raras, a Comissão remete para as suas respostas às perguntas escritas E-010728/12, E-006307/2012 e E-009253/12 e E-02277/2013 ([5]) sobre o mesmo assunto.

([1]) http://www.alpha-man.eu/
([2]) http://www.euclyd.eu
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13439773
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/alforphreg.htm
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003165/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Lysosomal storage diseases (LSDs)

— Lysosomal storage diseases (LSDs) are, by definition, rare diseases.

— Often the result of a rare genetic disorder, these enzyme deficiencies cause numerous complications which can become debilitating or life-threatening.

— LSDs account for a significant share of the EU Member States' health budgets as expensive orphan drugs are required to treat them.

What steps does the Commission plan to take as regards diagnosis, treatment, monitoring, scientific research and training of health professionals in relation to lysosomal storage diseases?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The 7th Framework Programme for Research has supported three collaborative research projects ALPHA-MAN ([1]), EUCLYD ([2]), and MeuSIX ([3]) focussing on Lysosomal storage diseases with the overall EU contribution of EUR 14.8 million.

In addition, the EU Regulation on Orphan Medicinal Products, adopted in 1999, aims to support the development of medicinal products to meet unmet medical needs in the area of rare diseases by offering incentives for companies developing such treatments. So far, these measures allowed 1,065 products to be designated as orphan medicines and 75 products have been authorised to be placed on the EU market.

Orphan medicinal products for several Lysosomal storage diseases have been granted orphan medicinal product designation, for instance medicines for Gaucher disease, Fabry disease, Pompe disease, Cystinosis and Sanfilippo syndrome. Some of them have received marketing authorisation, for instance, medicines for Hunter syndrome and Maroteaux–Lamy syndrome. Detailed information may be found in the Register of designated Orphan Medicinal Products ([4]).

The Commission has no specific dedicated policy on Lysosomal storage diseases. Patients with Lysosomal storage diseases could benefit from actions developed under general rare diseases policy. For more information regarding EU work on rare diseases, the Commission would refer to its answer to Written Question E-010728/12, E-006307/2012 and E-009253/12 and E-02277/2013 ([5]) on the same subject.

([1]) http://www.alpha-man.eu/
([2]) http://www.euclyd.eu
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13439773
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/alforphreg.htm
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003166/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Falhas na TDT

Considerando que:

— A TDT (Televisão Digital Terrestre) é uma tecnologia de teledifusão terrestre que veio substituir a teledifusão analógica. Este novo serviço foi introduzido em todos os países da União Europeia até ao final de 2012. Nesta data, e por determinação da Comissão Europeia, deu-se o «switch off» da transmissão analógica.

— Uma melhor qualidade de imagem, novas funcionalidades para o utilizador e uma maior eficiência do espectro radioelétrico são alguns dos benefícios associados a esta nova tecnologia.

— Em Portugal, e de acordo com um estudo realizado pela DECO, 62 % dos lares têm problemas com a TDT, a emissão sofre falhas no som e na imagem ou mesmo interrupções prolongadas, e 13 % não conseguem mesmo seguir a emissão, o que corresponde a cerca de 620 mil lares no total.

Assim pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

De que forma acompanhou o processo de transição para o sinal digital nos Estados-Membros da UE?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(30 de abril de 2013)

O Conselho acordou, em 2005, que as emissões de TV analógica terrestre deviam ser suprimidas até 2012, o mais tardar, para que a Europa pudesse explorar plenamente o chamado «dividendo digital», que poderia então ser disponibilizado para outros usos (como a banda larga sem fios). No entanto, a nível da UE, não se trata de uma obrigação legal estrita, sendo o processo concreto de transição totalmente da responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. O abandono definitivo do sistema analógico já se processou em 22 Estados-Membros da UE. Os restantes — Polónia, Bulgária, Hungria, Grécia e Roménia — devem concluir a transição para o digital entre 2013 e 2015. A Comissão sempre encorajou os Estados-Membros a acelerarem a transição para a radiodifusão digital e facilita o intercâmbio de informações, de experiências e de melhores práticas entre os Estados-Membros a fim de acelerar o processo.

Portugal pôs fim à radiodifusão terrestre analógica no final de abril de 2012. A Autoridade Nacional das Comunicações (Anacom) é a autoridade reguladora nacional competente para a condução do processo de transição, bem como para a resolução das queixas dos consumidores. A Comissão sabe que a Anacom identificou alguns problemas a nível da qualidade da receção do sinal TDT, nomeadamente a sua estabilidade, e que estão a ser tomadas medidas para melhorar a configuração da rede após consulta das partes interessadas e do público em geral. A Comissão continuará a acompanhar a situação da TDT em Portugal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003166/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Technical glitches with DTT

— DTT (Digital Terrestrial Television) is a terrestrial television broadcasting technology which has replaced analogue broadcasting. This new service was introduced throughout the EU at the end of 2012. On this date the Commission called for the analogue signal to be switched off.

— Better image quality, new user features and enhanced radio spectrum efficiency are some of the benefits associated with this new technology.

— According to a study conducted by DECO (the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection), 62% of Portuguese households have problems with DTT, experiencing both sound and image glitches and even prolonged interruptions. Some 13% cannot even receive a signal, which corresponds to around 620 000 households in total.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

How has it monitored the digital switchover in the EU Member States?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2013)

The Council already agreed in 2005 that analogue terrestrial TV transmissions should be switched-off by 2012 at the latest in order for Europe to fully exploit the so-called 'digital dividend' which could then be made available for other uses (such as wireless broadband). However, at EU level this is not a strict legal obligation and implementation of the switchover is fully within the responsibility of Member States. Switch-off has already taken place in 22 EU Member States. The remaining Member States, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece and Romania, are expected to complete switch-off between 2013 and 2015. The Commission has consistently encouraged Member States to expedite the switchover to digital broadcasting and facilitates the exchange of information, experience and best practice between Member States in order to accelerate the process.

Portugal switched-off analogue terrestrial broadcasting by the end of April 2012. The Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações (ANACOM) is the national regulatory authority competent for the implementation of the switchover process as well as for the resolution of complaints by consumers. The Commission is aware that ANACOMhas identified certain problems with the quality of the DTT signal reception, in particular with its stability and that steps are being taken to improve the configuration of the network based on a consultation of stakeholders and the general public. The Commission will continue to monitor the DTT situation in Portugal.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003167/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Cancro do estômago — nova forma de diagnóstico

Considerando que:

— Um estudo recente revelou que um simples exame ao hálito poderá diagnosticar cancro do estômago e detetar esta doença em fases iniciais permitindo assim salvar mais vidas.

— A pesquisa clínica revelou 90 % de precisão na deteção de cancros em fases iniciais e avançadas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

De acordo com a estratégia de saúde da UE, prevê algum tipo de apoio que beneficie esta investigação?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento da publicação referida pelo Senhor Deputado, realizada pela equipa do Professor Hossam Haick ([1]), bem como dos correspondentes esforços destinados a avaliar a utilização de um teste no ar expirado para o diagnóstico do cancro.

Com efeito, através do seu Sétimo Programa-Quadro de atividades em matéria de investigação e desenvolvimento tecnológico (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), a Comissão está a apoiar os esforços de investigação nesta área ([2]) ([3]) , com um contributo global de cerca de 3 milhões de euros.

De um modo mais geral, estão a ser apoiados, como parte do 7.° PQ, 58 projetos de investigação no domínio das nanopartículas e do cancro, com uma contribuição total da CE da ordem dos 90,9 milhões de euros.

O financiamento da União Europeia no domínio da investigação é concedido com base em convites anuais à apresentação de propostas em regime concorrencial, que são publicados com os Programas de Trabalho relevantes. Uma vez que o 7.° PQ está a chegar ao seu termo, não estão atualmente previstos mais convites neste domínio.

A proposta da Comissão para o Horizonte 2020 — o Programa-Quadro da Investigação e Inovação (2014-2020) ([4]), irá provavelmente oferecer oportunidades para a investigação de novas pistas de diagnóstico do cancro. No entanto, não é ainda possível saber quais os domínios específicos de investigação que poderão ser abrangidos.

No que diz respeito à deteção precoce do cancro, a organização e a disponibilização de programas de rastreio é da competência dos Estados-Membros. A orientação da UE nesta matéria é delineada na Recomendação do Conselho de 2003 sobre o rastreio do cancro ([5]), que recomenda a implementação de programas de rastreio populacionais do cancro da mama, do colo do útero e colorretal. Qualquer expansão para incluir outros tipos de cancro deve basear-se em novas provas de eficácia comprovada do rastreio populacional.

([1]) «A nanomaterial-based breath test for distinguishing gastric cancer from benign gastric conditions»; Z-q Xu, Y Y Broza, R Ionsecu, U Tisch, L Ding, H Liu, Q Song, Y-y Pan, F-x Xiong, K-s Gu, G-p Sun, Z-d Chen, M Leja e H Haick; British Journal of Cancer 108, 941-950 (5 de março de 2013).
([2]) http://www.lcaos.eu/
([3]) http://lnbd.technion.ac.il/NanoChemistry/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=84&FID=547
([4]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:327:0034:0038:PT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003167/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Stomach cancer — new form of diagnosis

— A recent study has revealed that a simple breath test can diagnose stomach cancer and detect the disease in its early stages, thereby enabling more lives to be saved.

— Clinical research has shown that the test is 90% accurate in detecting cancer in its early and advanced stages.

Does the EU's health strategy provide for some kind of support which could benefit this research?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the publication mentioned by the Honourable Member, performed by the team of Professor Hossam Haick ([1]), as well as the related efforts aimed at evaluating the use of a breath test for cancer diagnosis.

Indeed, through its Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), the Commission is supporting research efforts in this area ([2]) ([3]), for an overall contribution of some EUR 3 million.

More generally, 58 projects addressing research in the area of nanoparticles and cancer for a total EC contribution of EUR 90.9 million are being supported as part of FP7.

EU research funding is granted based on annual competitive calls for proposals published with relevant Work Programmes. As FP7 comes to an end, there are currently no more calls foreseen in this area.

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]) will likely offer opportunities for research on new cancer diagnostic approaches. However, it is yet too premature to ascertain which could be the specific research issues addressed.

As regards early detection of cancer, the organisation and delivery of screening programmes is in the competence of Member States. The EU approach is outlined in the Council Recommendation on cancer screening of 2003 ([5]), which recommends the implementation of population-based screening programmes for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer. Any expansion to include other cancers must be based on new evidences of proven efficacy of population-based screening.

([1]) 'A nanomaterial-based breath test for distinguishing gastric cancer from benign gastric conditions'; Z-q Xu, Y Y Broza, R Ionsecu, U Tisch, L Ding, H Liu, Q Song, Y-y Pan, F-x Xiong, K-s Gu, G-p Sun, Z-d Chen, M Leja and H Haick; British Journal of Cancer 108, 941-950 (5 March 2013).
([2]) http://www.lcaos.eu/.
([3]) http://lnbd.technion.ac.il/NanoChemistry/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=84&FID=547.
([4]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents.
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:327:0034:0038:EN:PDF.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003168/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Projeto Re-food

Considerando que:

— O signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011471/2012.

— Na resposta dada por Tonio Borg, em nome da Comissão, é dito que «a reunião mais recente do grupo de trabalho responsável pelo desperdício de alimentos, inserido no Grupo Consultivo da Cadeia Alimentar, da Saúde Animal e da Fitossanidade (8 de fevereiro de 2013), centrou-se em tópicos específicos, tais como a doação de excedentes de comida a bancos de alimentos, (…) entre outros.»

— Em Portugal, o projeto Re-food começou, em 2011, a distribuir a famílias carenciadas as sobras de alimentos recolhidos em restaurantes, e ajuda já mais de 400 pessoas, baseando-se numa «política de 100 % em torno da ideia de respeito por toda a comida e do seu aproveitamento integral».

— Este projeto conta ainda com mais de 300 voluntários e soma já mais de 100 parceiros entre restaurantes, padarias e pastelarias.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento deste projeto português?

Que avaliação faz do mesmo?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento do projeto Re-Food em Portugal.

A Comissão irá contactar a Presidente da Federação Portuguesa dos Bancos Alimentares para avaliar a possibilidade de incluir este projeto como uma boa prática no sítio internet da Comissão sobre desperdício de alimentos ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/gp_food_redistribution_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003168/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Re-Food project

— I submitted Question No E-011471/2012 for written answer to the Commission.

— In his answer on behalf of the Commission, Mr Borg said that: 'The most recent meeting of the Working Group on Food Waste in the context of the Advisory Group on the Food Chain, Animal and Plant Health (8 February 2013) focused on specific topics such as: the donation of surplus food to food banks, … etc.'

— The Re-Food project began in Portugal in 2011 to distribute leftover food collected from restaurants to disadvantaged families and now helps over 400 people, based on a policy of 100% respect for all food and the optimal use thereof.

— This project also relies on over 300 volunteers and over 100 partners including restaurants, bakeries and patisseries.

Is the Commission aware of this Portuguese project?

What is its assessment of it?

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

The Commission is not aware of the Re-Food project in Portugal.

The Commission will contact the president of the Portuguese Food Bank Association to find out the appropriateness to include this project as a good practice in the Commission's food waste website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/sustainability/gp_food_redistribution_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003169/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Pinheiro manso: restrições comerciais europeias

Segundo notícia recentemente veiculada pela Lusa, os deputados do PSD e do CDS-PP defenderam recentemente na Assembleia da República um projeto de resolução que visa «salvar» a madeira, casca e fruto do pinheiro manso das restrições europeias ao nível da exportação e circulação.

Considerando que:

— Os referidos parlamentares alegam que todos os estudos provam que, em Portugal, só o pinheiro bravo é suscetível ao nemátodo.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Sabendo que há estudos que comprovam que o nemátodo do pinheiro afeta apenas o pinheiro bravo, faz sentido as restrições impostas pela Comissão ao pinheiro manso?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(23 de abril de 2013)

O nemátodo da madeira do pinheiro (NMP) é um organismo prejudicial às coníferas, objeto de medidas de emergência da União ([1]), nos termos da Diretiva 2000/29/CE do Conselho ([2]). O âmbito de aplicação destas medidas no que respeita às espécies de coníferas é determinado com base em avaliações científicas dos riscos. De acordo com uma análise do risco de pragas efetuada pela Organização Europeia e Mediterrânica de Proteção das Plantas (OEPP) ([3]), a maior parte das espécies de pinheiros é suscetível ao NMP. As medidas de emergência da União em vigor, por conseguinte, são relativas ao pinheiro em geral.

A pedido da Comissão, a Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos (AESA) avaliou o risco de propagação do NMP no pinheiro manso (*Pinus pinea*), tendo em conta os dados fornecidos por Portugal para justificar que esta espécie de pinheiro não é uma planta hospedeira do NMP. A AESA emitiu um parecer segundo o qual esta conclusão não é demonstrada pelos dados apresentados ([4]). Na sequência da apresentação por Portugal de dados suplementares, a AESA está atualmente a investigar o risco do pinheiro manso em mais pormenor. O parecer de seguimento que a AESA emitirá no futuro próximo virá esclarecer se as restrições legais relativas ao pinheiro manso deverão ser reconsideradas.

([1]) JO L 266 de 2.10.2012, p. 42.
([2]) JO L 169 de 10.7.2000, p. 42.
([3]) http://www.eppo.int/QUARANTINE/Pest_Risk_Analysis/PRA_intro.htm
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2553.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003169/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Stone pine: EU trade restrictions

According to the Lusa news agency, during a recent Portuguese parliamentary session members of the PSD (Social Democratic Party) and CDS-PP (Democratic and Social Centre — People's Party) advocated a draft resolution which aims to protect stone pine wood, bark and fruit from EU export and movement restrictions.

— These politicians claim that all studies on the matter prove that, in Portugal, only maritime pine is susceptible to nematodes.

Given that studies have proven that pine wood nematode only affects maritime pine, do the Commission's restrictions on stone pine make sense?

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

Pine wood nematode (PWN) is a harmful organism of conifers, subject to Union emergency measures ([1]) pursuant to Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([2]). The scope of those measures as regards conifer species is based on scientific risk assessment. According to a pest risk analysis carried out by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) ([3]), most pine species are susceptible to PWN. The Union emergency measures in force therefore concern pines in general.

On request of the Commission, the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) evaluated the risk of stone pine (Pinus pinea) for spreading PWN, taking into account data supplied by Portugal to justify that this pine species is not a host plant for PWN. EFSA issued an opinion that that statement is not supported by the data submitted ([4]). Following the submission by Portugal of additional data, EFSA is currently investigating the risk of stone pines in further detail. The follow-up opinion of EFSA, to be issued in the near future, will clarify whether the legal restrictions on stone pine should be reconsidered.

([1]) OJ L 266, 2.10.2012, p. 42.
([2]) OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p. 1.
([3]) http://www.eppo.int/QUARANTINE/Pest_Risk_Analysis/PRA_intro.htm
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2553.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003170/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Medicamento proibido em carne de cavalo

Segundo notícias veiculadas pela comunicação social portuguesa, a Associação Portuguesa para a Defesa do Consumidor, depois de vários testes efetuados em amostras de carne picada que continham ADN de cavalo, detetou a presença de fenilbutazona.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento da referida situação?

— Qual o risco imediato para a saúde pública da UE?

— Existe algum plano de fiscalização no espaço comunitário?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão foi informada da deteção de resíduos de fenilbutazona pela Associação Portuguesa para a Defesa do Consumidor. A partilha de informações imediata através do Sistema de Alerta Rápido para Alimentos para Consumo Humano e Animal teve êxito na medida em que permitiu evitar esse risco sanitário.

No momento em que foram estabelecidas as conclusões, já estava em vigor a Recomendação da Comissão 2013/99/UE ([1]) relativa a um plano de controlo coordenado com vista a determinar a prevalência de práticas fraudulentas na comercialização de certos alimentos. Este plano de controlo coordenado a nível da UE abrange não só a presença de fenilbutazona na carne de cavalo, mas também a rotulagem fraudulenta de produtos que contêm carne de cavalo.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:048:0028:0032:PT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003170/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Banned drug in horsemeat

According to the Portuguese media, the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection has found that samples of minced beef containing horse DNA have tested positive for the drug phenylbutazone.

Is the Commission aware of this?

What is the immediate public health risk within the EU?

Is there an EU-wide monitoring plan in place?

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

The Commission was informed about the detection of residues of phenylbutazone by the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection. The immediate sharing of the information via the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food succeeded in warding off the health risk.

At the moment of the findings, Commission Recommendation 2013/99/EU ([1]) on a coordinated control plan with a view to establish the prevalence of fraudulent practices in the marketing of certain foods was already in place. This coordinated EU-wide control plan not only covers the presence of phenylbutazone in horsemeat, but also the fraudulent labelling of products containing horsemeat.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:048:0028:0032:EN:PDF.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003171/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório FAO: necessidade de maior investimento na agricultura II

O signatário apresentou à Comissão uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011470/2012.

Na resposta dada por Dacian Ciolos, em nome da Comissão, é dito que «a Comissão nota que, embora os investimentos na agricultura sejam cruciais, é igualmente necessário envidar esforços para combater a subnutrição. Uma próxima comunicação sublinhará a forma como a Comissão tenciona abordar os problemas de raquitismo e emaciação, com especial atenção para a nutrição materna e infantil.»

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Que medidas estão a ser tomadas para melhorar a nutrição materna e infantil?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(16 de maio de 2013)

Em 12 de março de 2013, a Comissão adotou uma Comunicação intitulada «Melhorar a nutrição materna e infantil no âmbito da assistência externa: quadro estratégico da UE», que visa ajudar a reduzir o atraso de crescimento e a emaciação. Esta Comunicação fixa o ambicioso objetivo de reduzir, até 2025, em pelo menos 7 milhões o número de crianças de menos de cinco anos que sofrem de atraso de crescimento e define claramente os princípios orientadores, os objetivos e as prioridades de ação da União Europeia ([1]). A Comissão começou já a alinhar a sua assistência por esses princípios e, no atual exercício de programação por país para 2014-2020, está empenhada em assegurar que a nutrição seja integrada nos programas em que tal for mais necessário. Entretanto, a Comissão tem vindo a aumentar as suas dotações de ajuda humanitária destinadas a fazer face aos problemas de subnutrição em situações de emergência.

A Comissão procurará igualmente reforçar o empenhamento político a nível de cada país, bem como a nível internacional. O êxito da reunião de alto nível do Movimento «Fomentando a Nutrição — SUN», realizada em Bruxelas em 14 e 15 de março de 2013 ([2]), e o apoio concedido pela UE à elaboração de políticas de nutrição nos países parceiros ilustram bem o papel que a UE pode desempenhar neste domínio. É igualmente necessária uma maior harmonização e uma maior coerência para reforçar a resposta internacional. A Comissão está a trabalhar em estreita colaboração com a FAO e com o Movimento SUN para promover o desenvolvimento de políticas sensíveis às questões da nutrição, bem como de um quadro de responsabilização sólido.

Para concretizar a Comunicação, a Comissão elaborou um documento de trabalho intitulado «Combater a subnutrição em situações de emergência» ([3]).

Em maio de 2013, no Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros, serão preparadas para adoção as Conclusões do Conselho em matéria de segurança alimentar e nutricional, principalmente em resposta à Comunicação da Comissão.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/enhancing_maternal-child_nutrition_in_external_assistance_en.pdf
([2]) http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/hunger-foodsecurity-nutrition/event/scaling-nutrition-sun-movement-senior-level-meeting
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/news/201303_SWDundernutritioninemergencies.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003171/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: FAO report: need for greater investment in agriculture II

I submitted Question No E-011470/2012 for written answer to the Commission.

In his answer on behalf of the Commission, Mr Ciolos said that 'the Commission notes that, while investment in agriculture is crucial, efforts also need to be made to address under-nutrition. An upcoming Communication will highlight the way it intends to tackle the problems of stunting and wasting, with a focus on maternal and child nutrition'.

What measures are being taken to improve maternal and child nutrition?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

On 12 March 2013, the Commission adopted the communication 'Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: an EU Policy Framework', which aims to help reduce both stunting and wasting. It sets the ambitious target of reducing the number of stunted children under five by at least 7 million by 2025, and defines clear guiding principles, objectives and priorities for EU action ([1]). The Commission has already begun to align its assistance with these principles and, in the current country programming exercise for 2014-2020, it is committed to ensuring that nutrition is integrated in programmes, where it is most needed. Meanwhile, the Commission has already increasingly been allocating humanitarian funds to address undernutrition in emergencies.

The Commission will also aim for stronger political commitment at country and international level. The successful Scaling Up Nutrition Senior Level meeting organised in Brussels on 14-15 March 2013 ([2]) and EU support to the development of nutrition policies in partner countries are good illustrations of the role the EU can play. Further harmonisation and coherence is also needed to reinforce the international response. The Commission is working closely with the FAO and the SUN Movement to promote the development of nutrition sensitive policies and a robust accountability framework.

To 'operationalise' the communication, a Staff Working Document 'Addressing Undernutrition in Emergencies' ([3]) has been finalised.

Council Conclusions on Food and Nutrition Security, mainly in response to the Commission's Communication, will be prepared for adoption at the May 2013 Foreign Affairs Council.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/enhancing_maternal-child_nutrition_in_external_assistance_en.pdf
([2]) http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/hunger-foodsecurity-nutrition/event/scaling-nutrition-sun-movement-senior-level-meeting
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/news/201303_SWDundernutritioninemergencies.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003172/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Acordo de livre comércio Japão-UE

Segundo notícia veiculada pelo jornal económico Nikkei, na última semana de março terá lugar em Tóquio uma cimeira para lançar oficialmente as negociações sobre um acordo de livre comércio entre o Japão e a UE.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Em que ponto se encontram estas negociações e de que contrapartida beneficiará a UE com o referido acordo?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2013)

A Cimeira UE-Japão prevista para 25 de março de 2013 em Tóquio, foi afinal adiada, em virtude da necessidade do Presidente Barroso e do Presidente Van Rompuy de permanecerem em Bruxelas, para participarem nos esforços enviados no sentido de encontrar uma solução para a situação financeira do Chipre.

Não obstante, a UE e o Japão encetaram oficialmente as negociações para um Acordo de Comércio Livre (ACL) e um Acordo Paralelo no que diz respeito à cooperação política, setorial e global em 25 de março por teleconferência entre o Presidente Barroso, o Presidente Van Rompoy e o primeiro-ministro Abe. No que toca ao ACL, o objetivo é a negociação de um acordo abrangente relativo a bens, serviços e investimento, eliminando direitos aduaneiros, barreiras não pautais e abrangendo outras questões ligadas ao comércio, tais como contratos públicos, questões de regulação, concorrência e desenvolvimento sustentável.

A primeira ronda de negociações está prevista decorrer em Bruxelas, de 15 a 19 abril de 2013.

De acordo com a avaliação de impacto, este ACL poderá gerar um aumento de 0,6 a 0,8 % do PIB, e irá resultar em crescimento e na criação de postos de trabalho. Espera-se que as exportações da UE para o Japão aumentem 32,7 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003172/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement

According to the business newspaper *Nikkei*, Tokyo is to host a summit in the last week of March to officially launch negotiations on an EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement.

What is the state of play of these negotiations and how will the EU benefit from this agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

The EU-Japan Summit scheduled to take place on 25 March 2013 in Tokyo was finally postponed because of the necessity for President Barroso and President van Rompuy to stay in Brussels to participate in the efforts to find a solution for the financial situation of Cyprus.

The EU and Japan nevertheless officially launched the negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and a parellel agreement on political, global and sectoral cooperation on 25 March via a tele-conference call between President Barroso, President van Rompuy and Prime Minister Abe. As far as the FTA is concerned, the aim is to negotiate a comprehensive agreement in goods, services and investment eliminating tariffs, non-tariff barriers and covering other trade-related issues, such as public procurement, regulatory issues, competition, and sustainable development.

The first round of negotiations is scheduled in Brussels from 15 to 19 April 2013.

According to the impact assessment, this FTA could generate a boost of 0.6 to 0.8% of its GDP and will result in growth and job creations. It is expected that EU exports to Japan could increase by 32.7%.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003173/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Asfalto inteligente

Considerando que:

— Uma equipa da Universidade do Minho desenvolveu um pavimento que muda de cor quando se forma gelo na sua superfície. Esta inovação consiste na introdução de nanocompósitos à base de óxidos no chão. Quando a temperatura baixa ao ponto de congelação, é produzida uma reação que leva o asfalto a adquirir a cor vermelha. Estas partículas à base de óxidos têm ainda a capacidade de limpar o próprio asfalto, através de uma reação química com o óleo que sai dos veículos envolvidos em acidentes, degradando-o e convertendo-o em dióxido de carbono e água;

— Esta tecnologia poderá evitar inúmeros acidentes e vítimas nas estradas de todo o mundo;

— Os governos de Portugal e da Finlândia já manifestaram interesse neste projeto que, após as provas laboratoriais na Universidade do Minho, será agora testado em ambiente real, numa autoestrada da Região Centro de Portugal, cujas condições de rigor climático, altitude, humidade e temperatura sejam consideradas propícias.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento deste projeto português, que revela evidentes vantagens rodoviárias e ambientais?

Considera que este projeto poderá ser financiado pela União Europeia? De que forma?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente das evoluções recentes no domínio dos pavimentos, em especial no do asfalto adaptável, automonitorizável e inteligente, incluindo o seu potencial para reduzir os acidentes rodoviários.

A questão das tecnologias inovadores para as infraestruturas de transportes tem, pois, considerável interesse e está a ser tida em conta na preparação do programa Horizonte 2020.

Se esta tecnologia concreta poderá ou não beneficiar de financiamento da UE, ao abrigo do programa de investigação e inovação Horizonte 2020 ou de outros programas da UE, depende em grande medida do seu estado preciso de desenvolvimento (ainda em desenvolvimento, pronta para utilização ou outro estado) e do preenchimento das regras aplicáveis do programa mais adequado.

No entanto, a escolha dos materiais e das tecnologias de construção é da responsabilidade dos beneficiários e das autoridades nacionais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003173/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Intelligent asphalt

A team from the University of Minho has developed a road surface that changes colour when ice starts to form on it. This innovation uses oxide-based nanocomposites that are incorporated in the surface. When the temperature drops to freezing point, there is a reaction that turns the asphalt red. These oxide-based particles are also able to clean the asphalt by using a chemical reaction that breaks down the oil leaked from vehicles involved in accidents and converts it into carbon dioxide and water.

This technology could help to prevent a significant number of accidents and casualties on roads throughout the world.

The Portuguese and Finnish Governments have already expressed interest in the project which, following laboratory tests at the University of Minho, will now be tested in a real environment: a motorway in central Portugal, whose harsh climate, altitude, humidity and temperature provide ideal testing conditions.

Is the Commission aware of this Portuguese project which promises considerable benefits for both the roads and the environment?

Does it believe that the EU may be able to finance this project? How?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of recent developments in the field of road surfaces, and in particular of adaptive, self-monitoring and intelligent asphalts, including its potential to reduce road accidents.

The issue of innovative technologies for transport infrastructure is therefore of considerable interest and is being taken into account in the preparation of the Horizon 2020 Programme.

Whether this particular technology could benefit from EU funding, either under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme or under other EU programmes, depends very much on the precise state of development (still under development, or ready for deployment, or otherwise) and the fulfilment of the applicable rules of the programme that would be most appropriate.

However the choice of the materials and construction technologies are the responsibility of the beneficiaries and of National Authorities.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003174/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório Eurostat — Pessoas em situação de exclusão social

São consideradas pessoas em situação de exclusão social as que aufiram de rendimentos inferiores a 60 % da média nacional. Na União Europeia há 120 milhões de pessoas em exclusão social, ou seja, quase 1 em 4 cidadãos estavam em 2011 nesta situação.

Segundo um relatório do Eurostat, revelado esta semana, Portugal estava em 2011 entre os países em que o risco de pobreza e exclusão social nas crianças e nos idosos suplantava a média da União Europeia (UE).

Outros países onde também vigoram programas de assistência financeira internacional, como a Irlanda e a Grécia, ou que tenham adotado políticas de austeridade, como a Espanha e a Itália, estavam em 2011 em situação ainda mais grave do que Portugal.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que análise faz dos referidos dados?

Que medidas pensa a Comissão adotar para combater esta situação, principalmente no que respeita aos Estados-Membros onde vigoram programas de assistência financeira?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão partilha as preocupações sobre as consequências sociais da crise provocada pelas medidas de consolidação orçamental necessárias para corrigir os défices orçamentais públicos, nomeadamente perda de rendimento, pobreza e desigualdade. O impacto nos rendimentos familiares foi especialmente violento na Grécia, mas vários outros países, por exemplo, Espanha e Portugal, foram também fortemente atingidos ([1]).

Para alcançar as metas em matéria de pobreza e exclusão social da Estratégia Europa 2020, o quadro de acompanhamento e orientação estabelecido pelo Semestre Europeu apoia ações destinadas a combater a pobreza, através da coordenação com os Estados-Membros e as partes interessadas relevantes.

A Comissão e os Estados-Membros estão a elaborar uma abordagem política que conjuga os esforços de consolidação orçamental com uma estratégia integrada de crescimento económico, emprego e coesão social.

Adotado recentemente, o Pacote de Investimento Social ([2]) estabelece uma nova agenda para as políticas sociais a fim de ajudar os Estados-Membros a modernizar os respetivos sistemas sociais, combater a pobreza e a exclusão social, bem como a sair da crise mais fortes, mais coesos e mais competitivos a longo prazo. Este pacote, cuja aplicação conta com o apoio dos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus, contribuirá para combater a tendência crescente para a pobreza em toda a Europa. Além disso, contém uma proposta específica relativa ao estabelecimento de orçamentos de referência para ajudar a garantir a adequação do apoio ao rendimento. A Comissão irá acompanhar os progressos através do Semestre Europeu.

Os Fundos da UE ([3]) estão a promover o acesso aos mercados de trabalho e a inclusão social, e continuarão a fazê-lo, contribuindo, assim, para a redução da pobreza.

([1]) A análise trimestral do emprego e da situação social na UE de março de 2013 inclui uma análise dos efeitos distributivos dos programas de consolidação orçamental. (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes).
([2]) Pacote de Investimento Social, COM(2013) 83 final, adotado em fevereiro de 2013.
([3]) Por exemplo FSE, FEDER, Progress, instrumento de microfinanciamento «Progress» e FEG, bem como o futuro FEAD.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003174/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Eurostat report — People suffering social exclusion

People with an income of 60% below the national average are considered to suffer social exclusion. In 2011, 120 million people in the European Union, that is nearly one in four EU citizens, found themselves in this situation.

According to a Eurostat report published this week, in 2011 Portugal was among the countries where the risk of poverty and social exclusion among children and the elderly surpassed the EU average.

In the same year, other countries such as Ireland and Greece that also receive international financial assistance, and those that have adopted austerity policies, such as Spain and Italy, were in an even worse situation than Portugal.

What is the Commission's assessment of this data?

What measures will the Commission adopt to tackle this situation, particularly regarding Member States that are receiving financial assistance?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The Commission shares the concerns about the social impact of the crisis the fiscal consolidation measures necessary to address government budget deficits, affected income poverty and inequality. The impact on household incomes was particularly strong in Greece, but a number of other countries, including Spain and Portugal were also heavily affected ([1]).

To achieve the Europe 2020 poverty and social exclusion targets, monitoring and guidance in the European Semester support actions addressing poverty by coordinating with Member States and relevant stakeholders.

The Commission and the Member States are developing a policy approach that combines fiscal consolidation efforts with an integrated strategy for economic and employment growth, and social cohesion.

The recently adopted SIP ([2]) sets a new agenda for social policies to help Member States modernise their social systems, address poverty and social exclusion, and emerge from the crisis stronger, more cohesive and more competitive in the long run. This Package, implemented with the support of the European Structural and Investment Funds, will help to counteract the rising trend of poverty throughout Europe. Moreover, it contains a specific proposal on the setting up of reference budgets to help ensure the adequacy of income support. The Commission will monitor progress through the European Semester.

The EU Funds ([3]) are and will promote access to labour markets and social inclusion thus helping to reduce poverty.

([1]) The March 2013 Quarterly Review of the EU Employment and Social Situation includes an analysis of the distributional impact of fiscal consolidation programmes. (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes).
([2]) Social Investment Package, COM(2013) 83 final adopted in February 2013.
([3]) such as the ESF, ERDF, PROGRESS, Progress Microfinance, the EGF and the future FEAD.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003175/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Escassez de alimentos no sul de África

Considerando que:

— De acordo com a Federação Internacional da Cruz Vermelha e do Crescente Vermelho (FICV/CV), a escassez de alimentos no sul de África põe em risco de desnutrição e doença seis milhões de pessoas;

— Os países mais afetados são o Maláui, onde dois milhões de pessoas estão em risco de sofrer de falta de alimentos, Angola, com mais de 1,8 milhões, o Zimbabué, com 1,6 milhões de pessoas, e o Lesoto, onde mais de 700 mil pessoas se encontram em situação similar;

— Esta situação é, em grande parte, consequência dos contínuos ciclos de seca severa, seguidos de inundações, que «estão a destruir as culturas, o gado e o fornecimento de água potável», de acordo com a porta-voz da FICV/CV;

— Esta situação atinge mais gravemente os doentes com SIDA e há também uma preocupação acrescida com o número de mulheres e raparigas que se prostituem para obter alimentos para a família.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz desta situação?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está a acompanhar atentamente a situação da segurança alimentar na África Austral e está plenamente consciente das dificuldades que se colocam em diversas partes da região.

O auge da recente crise ocorreu em finais de 2012. Em resposta, a Comissão afetou imediatamente 15 milhões de euros para a prestação de assistência humanitária às populações mais vulneráveis nos países mais atingidos, ou seja, Angola, Lesoto, Maláui e Zimbabué. Para o efeito, os fundos da UE foram canalizados através de organizações não governamentais (ONG) e de organizações das Nações Unidas (ONU) que estão atualmente a desenvolver projetos de assistência alimentar e nutrição em favor das populações mais vulneráveis.

Além disso, o Lesoto já tinha recebido anteriormente uma dotação de 1,5 milhões de euros na sequência das fortes inundações ocorridas no início de 2012. Em 2013, foi atribuído a este país um montante adicional de 2 milhões de euros para o ajudar a enfrentar a crise alimentar.

Graças à resposta humanitária, juntamente com uma boa pluviosidade, as perspetivas imediatas de segurança alimentar melhoraram consideravelmente na região. Além disso, a UE está profundamente empenhada em enfrentar de forma mais estrutural os desafios em matéria de segurança alimentar na África Austral através da ajuda ao desenvolvimento. A segurança alimentar constitui atualmente um importante domínio de cooperação em alguns países, como Angola, Maláui, Moçambique e Zimbabué, e é provável que continue a receber uma assistência considerável ao longo de todo o período abrangido pelo 11.° Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento (2014-2020).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003175/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Food shortage in southern Africa

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), food shortages in southern Africa are putting 6 million people at risk of malnutrition and disease.

The most severely affected countries are Malawi, where 2 million people are facing starvation, Angola, with more than 1.8 million, Zimbabwe, with 1.6 million people, and Lesotho, where over 700 000 people are in the same situation.

To a large extent, this situation has been brought about by continuous cycles of severe drought followed by flooding, which 'are destroying crops, livestock and safe drinking water supplies', according to an IFRC spokesperson.

This situation is affecting those living with AIDS more acutely and there is also an additional concern about the number of women and girls turning to prostitution to feed their families.

What is the Commission's view of this situation?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission is following very carefully the food security situation in Southern Africa and is fully aware of the difficulties in various parts of in the region.

The peak of the recent crisis was already in late 2012. In response, the Commission promptly allocated EUR 15 million for humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable in the most affected countries, i.e. Angola, Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe. To this end, EU funds have been channelled through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) organisations that are currently implementing food assistance and nutrition projects benefitting the most vulnerable.

Moreover, Lesotho had previously already received an allocation of EUR 1.5 million following heavy floods earlier in 2012. In 2013, an additional EUR 2 million have been allocated to Zimbabwe to face the food crisis.

Through the humanitarian response, along with good rains, the immediate food security prospects have considerably improved in the region. In addition, the EU is deeply engaged in more structurally addressing food security challenges in Southern Africa through development assistance. Food security is currently an important area of cooperation in countries such as Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and is likely to continue receiving considerable assistance throughout the period covered by the 11th European Development Fund (2014-2020).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003176/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Eleições europeias

Considerando que:

— Os últimos dados divulgados pelo Eurobarómetro revelam um grande afastamento dos cidadãos em relação à União Europeia. Em dezembro, os números mostravam que apenas um terço dos cidadãos confiava na UE como instituição;

— Segundo os dados do inquérito mais recente sobre os direitos dos cidadãos enquanto eleitores europeus, a esmagadora maioria dos inquiridos (86 % em Portugal) acredita que, se houvesse mais informação sobre o impacto da UE nas suas vidas, haveria mais pessoas a votar nas eleições europeias;

— A Comissão apresentou um pacote de recomendações com o objetivo de informar melhor os eleitores, incentivar um debate à escala europeia e melhorar a afluência às urnas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Que mecanismos serão postos em prática de forma a efetivar estas recomendações?

Pensa coordenar ações de informação à escala europeia?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2013)

A recomendação a que se refere o Senhor Deputado destina-se a reforçar a realização democrática e eficaz das eleições para o Parlamento Europeu e a fortalecer a dimensão europeia destas eleições ([1]). Apoia-se, *inter alia*, na expectativa dos cidadãos de poderem escolher entre opções políticas significativas que se debrucem sobre temas europeus e na necessidade de dar maior proeminência ao processo de eleição dos deputados do Parlamento Europeu. A recomendação segue também a resolução do Parlamento Europeu sobre as eleições para o Parlamento de 2014 ([2]).

A recomendação da Comissão dirige-se aos partidos políticos nacionais e europeus, bem como aos Estados-Membros. Estabelece que os eleitores devem ser informados da filiação entre partidos nacionais e partidos europeus, designadamente, através da indicação de tal filiação nos boletins de voto e da sua inclusão nos materiais de campanha dos partidos políticos nacionais. Os partidos políticos europeus e nacionais devem dar a conhecer o candidato a Presidente da Comissão Europeia que apoiam e os partidos nacionais devem assegurar que os tempos de antena também são utilizados para informar os cidadãos acerca do candidato e do seu programa.

A aplicação destas recomendações requer que se tomem medidas relativas às disposições eleitorais nacionais e às atividades de campanha efetuadas pelos partidos políticos. Por conseguinte, a contribuição das partes envolvidas, nomeadamente das autoridades nacionais e dos partidos políticos é essencial nestes esforços comuns. A Comissão irá acompanhar e apresentar um relatório sobre a aplicação da recomendação sobre as eleições para o Parlamento Europeu de 2014.

([1]) Recomendação da Comissão, de 12 de março de 2013, sobre o reforço da realização democrática e eficaz das eleições para o Parlamento Europeu (2013/142/UE).
([2]) Resolução do Parlamento Europeu, de 22 de novembro de 2012, sobre as eleições para o Parlamento Europeu em 2014[2012/2829(RSP)].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003176/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: European elections

The latest Eurobarometer figures show that the public feels very disengaged from the European Union. In December, figures showed that only one third of people believed in the EU as an institution.

According to data from the most recent survey on the rights of citizens as European voters, the overwhelming majority of respondents (86% in Portugal) believe that more people would vote in European elections if there were more information on the impact the EU had on their lives.

The Commission has tabled a package of recommendations with the aim of keeping voters better informed, encouraging an EU-wide debate and increasing turnout at the polls.

What mechanisms will be introduced to implement those recommendations?

Will the Commission coordinate information schemes across the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The recommendation to which the Honourable Member refers is aimed at further enhancing the efficient and democratic conduct of European elections and strengthening the European dimension of these elections ([1]). It draws, *inter alia*, on the expectation of citizens to be offered a choice between meaningful political options on European issues and on the necessity to give more prominence to the process for electing the Members of the European Parliament. The recommendation also follows the European Parliament resolution on the 2014 European elections ([2]).

The recommendation of the Commission is addressed to national and to European political parties, as well as to the Member States. It provides that voters should be informed of the affiliation between national parties and European parties, *inter alia* by the indication of such an affiliation on the ballots and by displaying it in campaign materials of national political parties; European and national political parties should make known the candidate for President of the European Commission they support; national parties should ensure that their political broadcasts are also used to inform citizens about that candidate and the candidate's programme.

The implementation of these recommendations requires measures to be taken with regard to the national electoral arrangements and to the campaign activities carried out by the political parties. Therefore, a contribution of the involved actors, namely of the national authorities and of the political parties is essential for these common endeavours. The Commission will follow and report on the implementation of the recommendation in the 2014 European elections.

([1]) Commission Recommendation of 12 March 2013 on enhancing the democratic and efficient conduct of the elections to the European Parliament (2013/142/EU).
([2]) European Parliament resolution of 22 November 2012 on the elections to the European Parliament in 2014(2012/2829(RSP)).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003177/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Produção industrial

Considerando que:

— Desde 2008, a UE perdeu 3 milhões de empregos na indústria e a produção industrial caiu cerca de 10 %;

— Segundo o Eurostat, em janeiro do presente ano, a produção industrial, em Portugal, face ao mês anterior, foi das que mais subiu na União, 3,5 %;

— Na UE a 27, a variação da produção industrial face ao mês anterior foi de - 0,4 %,

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como interpreta estes dados?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está plenamente ciente do grave impacto da crise na economia real dos Estados-Membros, em especial no que respeita ao desemprego e à produção industrial. Com efeito, de acordo com as últimas previsões da Comissão ([1]), o PIB da UE-27 deverá diminuir até 0,1 % e o desemprego irá atingir 12,2 % em 2013, embora a recuperação esteja prevista para 2014 para a UE-27 e a área do euro.

A Comissão regista igualmente os dados recentes referentes à produção industrial em Portugal, que registou também um aumento de 1,3 % em fevereiro de 2013 relativamente ao mês anterior ([2]). Estes números encorajadores deverão contribuir para manter o forte empenho e a perseverança necessários para aplicar o programa de ajustamento económico. Contudo, a Comissão salienta que as reformas estruturais precisam de tempo para produzir os efeitos almejados e que os dados mensais tendem a ser voláteis e, por conseguinte, nem sempre correspondem plenamente às perspetivas económicas.

Há igualmente que salientar que as exportações para o exterior da UE desempenharam um importante papel na sustentação da atividade transformadora na Europa em 2012, em contraste com uma fraca procura interna. Por exemplo, em Portugal, o reequilíbrio da economia no sentido de um crescimento mais orientado para as exportações prossegue a um ritmo tão sustentado que a balança de transações correntes deverá atingir o equilíbrio este ano pela primeira vez em mais de 40 anos.

([1]) Comissão Europeia, Previsões Económicas Europeias — primavera de 2013, disponível em: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

([2]) Eurostat, News Release EuroIndicators 57/2013 de 12 de abril de 2013, disponível em: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/4-12042013-AP/EN/4-12042013-AP-EN.PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003177/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Industrial production

— Since 2008 the EU has lost 3 million manufacturing jobs and industrial production has fallen by around 10%.

— According to Eurostat, industrial production in Portugal grew by 3.5% in January this year over the previous month, one of the highest growth figures in the EU.

— The change in industrial production over the previous month across the EU-27 was –0.4%.

1. How does the Commission interpret these data?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the harsh impact of the crisis on the real economy of Member States, in particular in terms of unemployment and industrial production. Indeed, according to the latest Commission forecasts ([1]), EU-27 GDP is expected to decline by 0.1% and unemployment will reach 12.2% in 2013, although recovery is expected in 2014 for the EU-27 and the Eurozone.

The Commission also takes note of the recent data for industrial production in Portugal, which also experienced a 1.3% increase in February 2013 over the previous month ([2]). These encouraging figures should contribute to maintain the strong commitment and perseverance needed to implement the Economic Adjustment Programme. Still, the Commission also highlights the fact that structural reforms require time to produce all the sought effects and that monthly data tend to be volatile and thus are not always fully explanatory of the economic outlook.

It must also be noted that exports outside the EU played a major role in sustaining manufacturing activity in Europe in 2012, in contrast with a weak internal demand. For example, in Portugal, the rebalancing of the economy towards a more export-oriented growth continues at such good pace that the current account is projected to be balanced this year for the first time in more than 40 years.

([1]) European Commission, European Economic Forecast — Spring 2013, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2013/pdf/ee2_en.pdf

([2]) Eurostat, News Release EuroIndicators 57/2013 of 12 April 2013, available at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/4-12042013-AP/EN/4-12042013-AP-EN.PDF

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003178/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Proteção de dados pessoais

Considerando que:

— Uma notícia do *Financial Times* revela que um algoritmo utilizado por uma equipa da Universidade de Cambridge consegue extrair das contas de Facebook dos cidadãos dados que estes não revelam na rede social;

— Estes dados podem ser explorados para fins comerciais, para campanhas de publicidade ou de *marketing*, mas também podem revelar informações muito pessoais;

— Existem diversos domínios públicos ([1]) que permitem a recolha destes dados pessoais.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Que análise faz do estudo enunciado?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(12 de junho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do artigo publicado no *Financial Times*, mas não analisou o estudo da Universidade de Cambridge referido pelo Senhor Deputado. Se, como é indicado, a forma como a função «gosto» é utilizada e os «gráficos sociais» das pessoas no *Facebook* permitem descobrir com um elevado grau de probabilidade as características pessoais do indivíduo, nomeadamente dados sensíveis como a raça, as opiniões políticas, questões relacionadas com a saúde ou a orientação sexual, existem razões legítimas para preocupação quanto à proteção dos dados pessoais.

O artigo vem demonstrar a importância de uma proteção eficaz dos dados pessoais, também no futuro. O tratamento de dados pessoais na UE está atualmente sujeito às obrigações previstas nas legislações nacionais que transpõem a Diretiva 95/46/CE ([2]). A proposta da Comissão relativa a um Regulamento Geral sobre a Proteção de Dados ([3]) esclarece e reforça os direitos das pessoas a quem respeitam os dados no contexto das atividades em linha, como as redes sociais. A proposta está atualmente a ser negociada pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho.

([1]) www.wolframalpha.com
([2]) Diretiva 95/46/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 24 de outubro de 1995, relativa à proteção das pessoas singulares no que diz respeito ao tratamento de dados pessoais e à livre circulação desses dados, JO L 281 de 23.11.1995.
([3]) COM(2012) 11 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003178/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Personal data protection

According to a report in the *Financial Times*, a team at the University of Cambridge has devised an algorithm that can extract from public Facebook accounts information which account holders do not share on the social network.

This data can be used for commercial purposes, for advertising and marketing campaigns, but it can also reveal highly personal information.

There are several public search engines ([1]) that make it possible to harvest this personal information.

What is the Commission's view of the above study?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the article published by the *Financial Times* but has not analysed the Cambridge study referred to. If, as reported, Facebook 'like' patterns and the social graph of individuals allow uncovering with a high degree of likelihood individual's personal characteristics, including sensitive data, such as race, political opinions, health related issues or sexual orientation, this raises some legitimate personal data protection concerns.

The article shows the importance of protecting personal data effectively, also in the future. The processing of personal data in the EU is currently subject to the obligations of national laws implementing Directive 95/46/EC ([2]). The Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([3]) clarifies and strengthens the rights of data subjects in the context of online activities, such as social networking. This proposal is currently being negotiated by the the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) www.wolframalpha.com.
([2]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.
([3]) COM(2012) 11 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003179/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Portugal é o 25.º país mais inovador do mundo

Considerando que:

— De acordo com o *Global Innovation Index*, da agência financeira Bloomberg, Portugal é o 25.º país mais inovador do mundo, tendo em conta sete fatores: intensidade de investigação e desenvolvimento (I&D), produtividade, densidade de alta tecnologia, concentração da investigação, capacidade industrial, níveis de educação e atividade de patentes;

— Países como a Grécia (41.º), a China (29.º), Hong Kong (36.º), Espanha (27.º), a Estónia (31.º), constam também da lista da Bloomberg, tendo Portugal alcançado uma classificação superior.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Numa avaliação feita entre duzentos países, Portugal alcança um lugar de excelência, evidenciando o seu potencial enquanto país, devendo tal constituir um forte sinal para reforçar a confiança no seu desempenho.

Estes indicadores são tidos em conta no decurso das avaliações a que Portugal é submetido no âmbito do Programa de Assistência Financeira?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

Portugal tem vindo a alargar o seu sistema de investigação e inovação ao longo da última década, tendo aumentado o seu investimento em investigação a uma notável taxa real de crescimento anual médio de 7 % entre 2000 e 2007. A intensidade da I&D portuguesa representava cerca de 1,5 % do produto interno bruto (PIB) em 2011, repartida de forma equilibrada entre os setores público e empresarial, cada um dos quais com uma intensidade de I&D equivalente a 0,69 % do PIB.

A Comissão considera que a I&D é um instrumento fundamental para aumentar a produtividade e acompanhar o processo de transição para uma economia mais baseada no conhecimento e orientada para a exportação. Essa será uma condição importante para assegurar um crescimento económico maior e mais duradouro, bem como para evitar os desequilíbrios macroeconómicos. .

No contexto dos resultados relativamente positivos do país em termos de investimento na I&D, continuam a subsistir desafios importantes, como o reforço das ligações estabelecidas entre os participantes (empresas, universidades e institutos de investigação e tecnologia) no âmbito do sistema nacional de investigação e inovação ou a resposta ao desfasamento parcial entre as necessidades da economia e as qualificações universitárias, bem como o estímulo à assimilação dos conhecimentos pelas empresas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003179/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Portugal, 25th most innovative country in the world

According to the Global Innovation Index, published by the Bloomberg financial agency, Portugal is the 25th most innovative country in the world, based on seven factors: research and development (R&D) intensity, productivity, high-tech density, researcher concentration, manufacturing capability, education levels and patent activity.

Portugal is ranked higher on the Bloomberg list than countries such as Greece (41st), China (29th), Hong Kong (36th), Spain (27th) and Estonia (31st).

Portugal has scored very highly in an assessment of 200 countries, which shows its potential as a country and must send out a strong message to boost confidence in its performance.

Were these indicators taken into account during the assessments that Portugal was subject to under the Financial Assistance Programme?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

Portugal has expanded its research and innovation system over the last decade, increasing its investment in research at a remarkable average annual real growth rate of 7% between 2000 and 2007. Portuguese R&D intensity was around 1.5% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2011, with an evenly distributed public sector and business R&D intensity of 0.69% of GDP each.

The Commission considers R&D a key instrument to boost productivity and to accompany the transition towards a more knowledge-intensive and export oriented economy. This is an important condition to higher and more sustainable economic growth and to avoid macroeconomic imbalances.

In the context of the relatively good results of the country in terms of R&D spending, there are still important challenges such as strengthening the linkages established between participants (businesses, universities and research and technological institutes) in the national research and innovation system or addressing the partial mismatch between economic needs and university qualifications as well as stimulating knowledge absorption by enterprises.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003180/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Gripe A

Considerando que:

— Foram confirmados, em Portugal, vinte e sete internamentos por contaminação com o vírus H1N1, tendo sido registados na Ilha Terceira, nos Açores, trinta e sete casos e no arquipélago da Madeira cinco casos;

— Estão registadas já cinco vítimas mortais;

— O vírus que está a afetar os doentes é o mesmo que provocou uma pandemia em 2009-2010, com mais de 18 000 mortes em todo o mundo. Em Portugal, houve 122 mortes e mais de 160 000 casos;

— Após a pandemia, o vírus — que passou a ser denominado A (H1N1) — manteve-se em circulação, juntamente com as outras estirpes de vírus da gripe.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem acompanhado a evolução da situação?

2. Considera serem estes valores consistentes com a época?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente da situação epidemiológica relativa à gripe na Europa. O Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo de Doenças (CEPCD) está a acompanhar de perto a situação e transmite regularmente informações atualizadas, usando os dados obtidos pelas redes nacionais de vigilância da gripe em todos os Estados-Membros. Além disso, publica semanalmente um boletim ([1]) relativo à gripe e prepara também uma avaliação de risco sazonal no início da época da gripe ([2]).

Os números mencionados pelo Senhor Deputado não são incomuns. A época de 2012-2013 em Portugal começou por volta da terceira semana de 2013 e atingiu o pico por volta da nona semana. As taxas verificadas nos períodos de pico das doenças «de tipo gripal» em 2013, na verdade, foram inferiores às verificadas nas duas épocas anteriores.

Durante toda a época de 2012-2013, Portugal nunca reportou uma grande incidência da doença. Uma vez que Portugal não reporta casos hospitalizados, o CEPCD não tem nenhuma informação sobre a importância da gripe grave na época de 2012-2013 ou nas anteriores.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-weekly-surveillance-overview-15-mar-2013.pdf
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-season-risk-assessment-europe-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003180/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Influenza A

It has been confirmed that 27 people have been admitted to hospital with the H1N1 virus in Portugal, with 37 cases recorded on Terceira Island, in the Azores, and five cases in the Madeira archipelago.

Five people have already died.

The virus the patients have is the same one that caused a pandemic in 2009-2010, which claimed over 18 000 lives worldwide. In Portugal, there were 122 deaths and over 160 000 confirmed cases.

After the pandemic, the virus — which came to be known as A (H1N1) — continued to be passed on, along with other strains of the influenza virus.

1. Has the Commission been monitoring developments in the situation?

2. Does it think that these figures are right for the time of year?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the epidemiological situation of influenza in Europe. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) monitors the situation closely and provides regular updates, using data collected by national influenza surveillance networks in all Member States. It furthermore publishes a weekly influenza bulletin ([1]) and also prepares a seasonal risk assessment early in the influenza season ([2]).

The figures mentioned by the Honourable Member are not unusual. The 2012-2013 season in Portugal started around the third week of 2013 and peaked around the ninth week. The peak rates of influenza like illnesses in 2013 were actually lower than in the two previous seasons.

During the entire 2012-2013 influenza season, Portugal has never reported high intensity of influenza. Since Portugal does not report hospitalised cases, the ECDC has no information on the burden of severe influenza in the current or previous seasons.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-weekly-surveillance-overview-15-mar-2013.pdf
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/influenza-season-risk-assessment-europe-2013.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003181/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Declínio do poder económico da UE

Considerando que:

— As economias poderosas da União Europeia têm vindo a perder terreno para países emergentes como o Brasil e o México;

— Se previa que os sete países emergentes (China, Índia, Brasil, Rússia, Indonésia, México e Turquia) ultrapassassem o PIB agregado do G7 (que inclui a Alemanha, a França, a Itália e o Reino Unido) em 2020;

— A previsão foi agora antecipada em três anos;

— A cimeira desta semana de coordenação e vigilância das políticas económicas, considerada como crucial para a análise dos progressos dos vários países na consolidação orçamental, poderá ser utilizada como forma de promover a competitividade e reduzir o desemprego jovem.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Que análise faz a Comissão da acentuação do declínio do poderio económico da UE?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2013)

A UE27 representa 25,7 % do PIB mundial, o que a torna o maior bloco no mundo, à frente dos EUA (22,9 %) e da China (9,1 %). Contudo, durante o período de 2000 a 2010, a taxa de crescimento real nas economias desenvolvidas, tais como a UE e os Estados Unidos, foi geralmente mais baixa que a registada nas economias emergentes, como a China ou a Índia ([1]). Tais diferenças de crescimento podem, em certa medida, ser atribuídas ao processo de convergência destas economias emergentes em direção à fronteira tecnológica. As economias desenvolvidas já se encontram na fronteira tecnológica e têm que investir na educação e inovação de modo a gerar crescimento económico. É por esta razão que a Comissão Europeia adotou a estratégia Europa 2020 que visa a promoção do crescimento inteligente, através de investimentos mais eficientes na educação, na investigação e na inovação; sustentável, rumo a uma economia com baixas emissões de carbono; e inclusivo, com forte ênfase na criação de emprego e na redução da pobreza ([2]).

A fim de realizar progressos no que se refere à estratégia Europa 2020 é essencial que a UE restabeleça a estabilidade macroeconómica. Em conformidade com o estabelecido na Análise Anual do Crescimento, tal implica a adoção de outras políticas quanto a cinco prioridades: prosseguir uma consolidação orçamental diferenciada e favorável ao crescimento, restabelecer as condições normais de concessão de crédito à economia, incentivar o crescimento e a competitividade no presente e no futuro, combater o desemprego e as consequências sociais da crise, bem como modernizar a administração pública ([3]).

Neste contexto, também é importante implementar medidas a nível da UE e dos Estados-Membros no âmbito do Pacto para o Crescimento e o Emprego, aprovado em junho de 2012, a fim de relançar o crescimento, o investimento e o emprego ([4]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-30-12-861/EN/KS-30-12-861-EN.PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_pt.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/131388.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003181/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: The EU's dwindling economic power

The EU's major economies have been losing ground to emerging countries such as Brazil and Mexico.

The GDP of the seven emerging countries (China, India, Brazil, Russia, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey) was expected to exceed the combined GDP of the G7 (which includes Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom) in 2020.

That prediction has now been brought forward to three years' time.

This week's summit on coordination and surveillance of economic policies, which is vital for examining the progress several countries have made in terms of fiscal consolidation, could be used as a way of promoting competitiveness and reducing youth unemployment.

What is the Commission's view of the worsening decline in the EU's economic power?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

The EU-27 represents 25.7% of global GDP, which makes it the biggest block in the world ahead of the USA (22.9%) and China (9.1%). However, over the period 2000-2010, the real growth rate in developed economies such as the EU or the United States were generally lower than those recorded in emerging economies such as China or India ([1]). These differences in growth can to some extent be attributed to the catching up process of these emerging economies towards the technology frontier. The developed economies are already at the technology frontier and have to invest in education and innovation to create economic growth. This is why the European Commission has adopted the Europe 2020 strategy which is about delivering growth that is: smart, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation; sustainable, moving towards a low-carbon economy; and inclusive, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction ([2]).

To make progress on the Europe 2020 strategy it is essential that the EU restores macroeconomic stability. As set out in the Annual Growth Survey this requires further policy action on five priorities: pursuing differentiated, growth friendly fiscal consolidation, restoring normal lending to the economy, promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow, tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis and modernizing our public administrations ([3]).

In this context it is also important to implement the EU and Member State level action of the compact for Growth and Jobs that has been agreed in June 2012 with the aim launching growth, investment and employment ([4]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-30-12-861/EN/KS-30-12-861-EN.PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/131388.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003182/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Cientistas desenvolvem teste que identifica a doença de Alzheimer através de análise ao sangue

Considerando que:

— Investigadores da Universidade de Nottingham estão a desenvolver um teste que, através de uma análise de sangue, identifica os casos de Alzheimer;

— O teste poderá fazer-se em qualquer clínica e baseia-se na identificação de um «conjunto de marcadores» no sangue que são diferentes nas pessoas sãs e nas que têm a doença;

— Os marcadores são essencialmente proteínas que os cientistas associam à doença de Alzheimer, como a amilóide ou a apolipoproteína.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento do desenvolvimento deste importante teste?

2. Que tipo de fundo estrutural está alocado ao apoio às investigações sobre o diagnóstico precoce da doença de Alzheimer?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do teste sanguíneo de diagnóstico precoce da doença de Alzheimer que está atualmente a ser desenvolvido pelo Professor Kevin Morgan na Universidade de Nottingham. O teste ainda carece de mais investigação, em especial com vista à respetiva validação, e não será de esperar qualquer utilização clínica potencial antes de vários anos.

Embora este estudo não seja apoiado pelo sétimo programa-quadro de investigação e desenvolvimento tecnológico (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), esse mesmo programa já investiu 202 milhões de euros na investigação sobre a doença de Alzheimer, incluindo o diagnóstico precoce, desde 2007. A título de exemplo, o projeto LUPAS ([1]) visa desenvolver novos agentes luminescentes e métodos de diagnóstico, prevenção da agregação das proteínas e tratamento da doença de Alzheimer e das doenças causadas por priões.

A Comissão apoia igualmente a execução da iniciativa de programação conjunta sobre as doenças neurodegenerativas, em especial a doença de Alzheimer (JPND) ([2]), uma iniciativa liderada pelos Estados-Membros que visa aumentar o impacto da investigação europeia nesta área através da coordenação dos esforços entre os vários países. A iniciativa JPND apoia os projetos Biomarkapd ([3]) e Demtest ([4]), que incidem no diagnóstico das demências, incluindo a doença de Alzheimer.

Por último, a promoção de um diagnóstico atempado representa também um dos principais temas de trabalho entre os Estados-Membros no contexto da ação comum «ALzheimer COoperative Valuation in Europe» (Alcove) ([5]), cofinanciada pelo programa da UE «Saúde 2008-2013». Em março de 2013, foi publicado um relatório de síntese com as conclusões e recomendações resultantes dessa ação comum.

([1]) http://www.lupas-amyloid.eu
([2]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/initiatives/biomarker-transnational-call/results-of-funding-call/biomarkapd/
([4]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/initiatives/biomarker-transnational-call/results-of-funding-call/demtest/
([5]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003182/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Blood test developed by scientists to detect Alzheimer's disease

Researchers at the University of Nottingham are developing a blood test to detect cases of Alzheimer's disease.

The test can be done in any clinic and works by looking for a 'combination of markers' in the blood which are different in healthy people compared with those with the disease.

The markers are essentially proteins that scientists associate with Alzheimer's disease, such as amyloid and apolipoprotein.

1. Is the Commission aware of the development of this important test?

2. What structural fund support is granted for research into early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the blood test for early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease currently developed by Professor Kevin Morgan at the University of Nottingham. This test still needs further research, in particular to be validated, and any potential clinical use cannot be expected before several years.

Although this study is not supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7, 2007-2013), FP7 invested since 2007 EUR 202 million for research on Alzheimer's disease, including on early diagnosis. As an example, the project LUPAS ([1]) aims at developing novel luminescent agents and methods for diagnostic, prevention of protein aggregation and treatment of Alzheimer's and prion diseases.

The Commission also supports the implementation of the Joint Programming Initiative on Neurodegenerative Diseases, in particular Alzheimer's (JPND) ([2]), a Member State-led initiative which aims at increasing the impact of European research in this area by coordinating efforts across countries. The JPND supports the projects BIOMARKAPD ([3]) and DEMTEST ([4]) focusing on diagnosis for dementia including Alzheimer's.

Finally, the promotion of timely diagnosis was also a key theme of work between Member States in the context of the Joint Action Alzheimer COoperative Valuation in Europe (ALCOVE) ([5]) co-financed from the EU-Health Programme 2008-2013. A synthesis report with the findings and recommendations resulting from the Joint Action was published in March 2013.

([1]) http://www.lupas-amyloid.eu/.
([2]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/.
([3]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/initiatives/biomarker-transnational-call/results-of-funding-call/biomarkapd/.
([4]) http://www.neurodegenerationresearch.eu/initiatives/biomarker-transnational-call/results-of-funding-call/demtest/.
([5]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003183/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Regulamentação europeia para evitar gases poluentes do ar condicionado

Considerando que:

— Em Portugal, entre 1995 e 2010, verificou-se um aumento de emissões de 66 para 1 232 milhares de toneladas de CO_2 (dióxido de carbono), devido ao aumento de emissão de gases utilizados em equipamentos de ar condicionado;

— O objetivo da Comissão, fixado em 2011, é de 20 % de corte nas emissões de CO_2, de melhoria da eficiência energética e do aumento da produção a partir de fontes renováveis;

— As metas foram definidas há dois anos, como parte da política comunitária de combate às alterações climáticas e melhoria da eficiência energética,

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que análise faz do cumprimento das metas de emissões de gases com efeito de estufa?

2. Figura como proposta da Comissão a proibição de colocação no mercado de equipamentos baseados em hidrofluorcarbonos, com um potencial de aquecimento global centenas ou milhares de vezes maior?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

O objetivo da UE de redução de 20 % das emissões de gases com efeito de estufa foi acordado em 2009 no contexto do pacote Clima e Energia. Em 2011, as emissões de gases com efeito de estufa abrangidas por esse pacote foram estimadas em 16 % abaixo dos níveis de 1990. A UE está no bom caminho para atingir o seu objetivo de 2020, mas existem diferenças significativas entre os Estados-Membros ([1]).

Os gases fluorados são visados especificamente no Regulamento Gases Fluorados ([2]) e na Diretiva SMAC ([3]). Graças a esta legislação, as emissões de gases fluorados deixaram de aumentar, estando a estabilizar-se nos níveis de 2010 ([4]). Prevê-se que, em 2020, a redução relativa das emissões seja de 46 milhões de toneladas equivalentes de CO_2, ou seja, 28 % ([4]), ([5]).

A Comissão propôs ainda ([6]) a redução das emissões de gases fluorados para um terço dos níveis de 2010, em consonância com o roteiro para uma economia hipocarbónica ([7]). Esta proposta, que está a ser discutida pelos colegisladores, inclui uma medida de redução progressiva da utilização de gases fluorados nos novos equipamentos para 21 % do nível atual até 2030.

Além disso, prevê-se que os regulamentos relativos à conceção ecológica ([8]) e à rotulagem energética ([9]) conduzam, no que respeita à eficiência energética dos aparelhos de ar condicionado, a uma redução relativa anual de 3,8 milhões de toneladas equivalentes de CO_2 em 2020. Estes regulamentos preveem incentivos destinados a orientar o mercado para fluidos refrigerantes com reduzido impacto climático. Este aspeto será também ponderado na futura legislação em matéria de conceção ecológica para outros equipamentos, designadamente os de refrigeração profissional.

Se a UE realizar o seu objetivo de eficiência energética de 20 % até 2020, haverá uma redução suplementar das emissões de 25 % ([7]).

([1]) COM(2013) 169 final, «Um quadro para as políticas de clima e de energia em 2030».
([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 842/2006.
([3]) Diretiva 2006/40/CE (Diretiva Sistemas Móveis de Ar Condicionado).
([4]) COM(2011) 581 final.
([5]) SWD(2012) 364 final.
([6]) COM(2012) 643 final.
([7]) COM(2011) 112 final, «Roteiro de transição para uma economia hipocarbónica competitiva em 2050».
([8]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 206/2012 da Comissão.
([9]) Regulamento Delegado (UE) n.° 626/2011 da Comissão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003183/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: EU legislation to curb pollution caused by gases used in air conditioning

Between 1995 and 2010 in Portugal, CO_2 (carbon dioxide) emissions went up from 66 000 to 1.232 million tonnes, owing to a rise in emissions of gases used in air conditioning equipment.

The Commission set a target in 2011 to cut CO_2 emissions by 20%, improve energy efficiency and produce more energy from renewable sources.

The targets were set two years ago as part of the EU policy to tackle climate change and improve energy efficiency.

1. What is the Commission's view of progress made in achieving greenhouse gas emission targets?

2. Does the Commission propose to ban the placing on the market of equipment that uses hydrofluorocarbons, which have a global warming potential hundreds or thousands of times greater than CO_2?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The EU's 20% greenhouse gas emission reduction target was agreed in 2009 in the context of the climate and energy package. In 2011, greenhouse gas emissions as covered by the package were estimated at 16% below 1990 levels. The EU is on track to achieve its 2020 target, but significant differences exist between Member States ([1]).

As for fluorinated gases, these are targeted specifically by the F-gas Regulation ([2]) and the MAC Directive ([3]). Through this legislation the growth of fluorinated gases has been halted and emissions are stabilising at 2010 levels ([4]); 46 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalents, or 28%, are expected to be saved in 2020Error: Reference source not found ([5]).

The Commission has further proposed ([6]) to reduce emissions of fluorinated gases to one-third of 2010 levels, in line with the Low Carbon Roadmap ([7]). This proposal which is currently discussed by the co-legislators includes a phase-down measure limiting fluorinated gases in new equipment to 21% of today's use by 2030.

Further, Ecodesign ([8]) and Energy Labelling ([9]) regulations on energy efficiency of air conditioners are expected to save 3.8 million tonnes of CO_2 per year by 2020. These regulations contain incentives to steer the market towards refrigerants with reduced climate impact. This will also be considered in future ecodesign legislation on other equipment, notably in professional refrigeration.

If the EU delivers on its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020, this would translate into an additional emission reduction of 25% ([7]).

([1]) COM(2013) 169 final, 'A 2030 framework for climate and energy polices'.
([2]) COM(2006) 842 final.
([3]) 'Mobile Air Conditioning (MAC)' Directive 2006/40/EC.
([4]) COM(2011) 581 final.
([5]) SWD (2012) 364 final.
([6]) COM(2012) 643 final.
([7]) COM(2011) 112 final, 'A roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050'.
([8]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 206/2012.
([9]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 626/2011.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003184/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Funcionário da União Europeia morto em ataque na Síria

Considerando que:

— Um funcionário da delegação da União Europeia na Síria desde 2007 foi morto, esta segunda-feira, num ataque com um rocket em Daraa, a menos de 100 quilómetros de Damasco;

— Foi o primeiro elemento da UE a morrer em dois anos de guerra no país;

— A declaração oficial da União Europeia não faz qualquer referência à responsabilidade pelo ataque;

— O Observatório Sírio para os Direitos Humanos, com sede no Reino Unido, garante que o ataque que vitimou o funcionário da delegação da União Europeia foi lançado por forças do regime de Bashar al-Assad, sem avançar pormenores,

Pergunto à Comissão:

Confirma a autoria do ataque?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

A UE não pode de modo independente confirmar quem realizou o ataque, mas dado que a morte ocorreu durante o bombardeamento da zona de Daraya, que sofreu ataques aéreos regulares pelo regime de Assad, existe uma forte probabilidade de o funcionário da UE ter morrido durante um desses ataques.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003184/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: EU official killed in an attack in Syria

An official who had been a member of the EU delegation to Syria since 2007 was killed on Tuesday 12 March 2013 in a rocket attack in Daraa, less than 100 kilometres from Damascus.

He was the first EU official to be killed in two years of war in the country.

The EU's official statement made no reference whatsoever to responsibility for the attack.

The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights insists that the forces of Bashar al-Assad's regime were behind the attack in which the EU delegation official was killed, without giving further details.

Can the Commission confirm who carried out the attack?

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

The EU cannot independently confirm who carried out the attack, but given that the death happened during the shelling of Daraya neighbourhood, which undergoes regular aerial attacks by the Assad regime, there is a high probability that the EU official died during one of these attacks.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003185/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Reforço do controlo do sistema de segurança alimentar

Considerando que:

— A confiança do público foi muito perturbada pelo caso de substituição da carne de vaca por carne de cavalo em refeições ultracongeladas;

— É necessário encontrar formas de responder, imediatamente, com os instrumentos apropriados, a esta queda de confiança nos consumidores, reforçando o controlo a nível de controlo e rotulagem quanto à origem dos produtos, bem como quanto às sanções aplicáveis,

Pergunto à Comissão:

Prevê implementar um sistema de rotulagem obrigatória quanto ao país de origem dos produtos, sabendo que é um tema que não reúne consenso entre os Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(17 de abril de 2013)

A Comissão gostaria de remeter o Senhor Deputado para a sua resposta às questões escritas E-001410/2013 e E-001559/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003185/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Stepping up food safety system controls

Public confidence has been deeply shaken by the scandal involving horsemeat being used instead of beef in frozen prepared meals.

Suitable instruments need to be devised to address this decline in consumer confidence immediately, stepping up controls in terms of inspection and labelling in respect of the origin of products, as well in terms of applicable penalties.

Does the Commission plan to introduce a compulsory labelling system in respect of the country of origin of products, given that this is not an issue on which the Member States agree?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-001410/2013 and E-001559/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003186/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Infeção rara faz nona vítima mortal

Considerando que:

— Até hoje, a Organização Mundial de Saúde registou 15 casos confirmados de infeção humana com o novo coronavírus (nCov) da família do que causa a Síndrome Respiratória Aguda Severa (SARS), incluindo 9 mortes;

— O novo coronavírus provoca uma falência renal rápida;

— Num comunicado, a Organização Mundial de Saúde apela aos Estados-Membros que mantenham a vigilância sobre infeções respiratórias severas agudas e que revejam cuidadosamente qualquer padrão pouco habitual,

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem acompanhado o desenvolvimento desta infeção rara?

2. Recomenda controlos especiais nos pontos de entrada ou restrições a viagens e trocas comerciais?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(3 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem acompanhado de perto o desenvolvimento do novo coronavírus desde o primeiro caso conhecido, em setembro de 2012, em estreita cooperação com os Estados-Membros, o Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças e a Organização Mundial de Saúde (CEPCD).

Foram trocadas informações e tomadas medidas mútuas para proteger a saúde pública da UE através do sistema de alerta rápido e resposta, instituído pela Decisão n.° 2119/1998/CE ([1]), que permite à Comissão e às autoridades responsáveis pela saúde pública nos Estados-Membros da UE comunicar de modo estruturado e permanente entre si. O Comité de Segurança da Saúde, o comité informal que coordena a segurança da saúde na UE, também tem estado envolvido neste intercâmbio de informações.

O Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças produziu uma rápida avaliação dos riscos do novo coronavírus, que tem sido atualizada regularmente à luz do aparecimento de novos casos. A última e terceira atualização data de 19 de fevereiro de 2013 ([2]). O CEPCD criou também um sítio Web dedicado a este vírus ([3]).

A Comissão irá continuar a acompanhar os acontecimentos relacionados com o novo coronavírus em colaboração com o CEPCD, os Estados-Membros da UE e a OMS.

Em consonância com as avaliações e recomendações da OMS e do CEPCD, a Comissão não recomenda atualmente controlos especiais nos pontos de entrada, nem restrições de viagem.

([1]) JO L 268 de 3.10.1998, p. 1.
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=1056
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/coronavirus-infections/Pages/index.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003186/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Rare infection claims its ninth victim

— The World Health Organisation has so far recorded 15 confirmed cases of people infected with the novel coronavirus (nCov), which belongs to the same family as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus. Nine of these cases have been fatal.

— The novel coronavirus causes rapid kidney failure.

— In an official communiqué, the World Health Organisation asked the Member States to continue their surveillance for severe acute respiratory infections and carefully review unusual patterns.

1. Has the Commission been monitoring the development of this rare infection?

2. Does it recommend special checks at points of entry or any travel or trade restrictions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

The Commission has been closely monitoring the development of the novel coronavirus since the first case was known in September 2012, in close cooperation with the Member States, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the World Health Organisation.

Mutual information and measures to protect public health have been exchanged via the EU Early Warning and Response System, the network established by Decision 2119/1998 ([1]) which brings the Commission and the public health authorities in the EU Member States into structured and permanent communication with one another. The Health Security Committee, the informal committee which coordinates health security in the EU, has also been involved in this information exchange.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has produced a rapid risk assessment novel coronavirus which has been regularly updated in the light of the emergence of new cases. The latest and third update is from 19 February 2013 ([2]). The ECDC has also created a website for the virus ([3]).

The Commission will continue to monitor events related to the novel coronavirus in collaboration with the ECDC, EU Member States and the WHO.

In line with the WHO and ECDC assessments and recommendations, the Commission does not recommend at present special checks at points of entry, nor travel restrictions.

([1]) OJ L 268, 3.10.1998, p. 1-7.
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=1056
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/coronavirus-infections/Pages/index.aspx

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003187/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: O impacto da crise no mercado de estupefacientes

Considerando que:

— Há cada vez mais jovens a dedicarem-se à venda ou ao cultivo de droga para ganhar dinheiro, revelou, ontem, um estudo divulgado pela Comissão Europeia;

— É expectável que as dificuldades económicas façam aumentar os problemas relacionados com drogas e álcool, tornando-se o cenário cada vez mais propício à extensão do mercado das substâncias sintéticas, menos dispendiosas e vendidas em larga escala pela internet;

— O ritmo de surgimento de novas drogas tem sido acelerado: nos últimos dois anos verificou-se que todas as semanas surgiu uma nova substância;

— Dados preliminares relativos a 2012 revelam que foram já detetadas mais de 50 substâncias psicoativas novas;

— A crise económica deverá igualmente provocar uma redução dos fundos consagrados às políticas de luta contra a droga, em especial no que respeita aos tratamentos e às medidas de redução dos seus efeitos nocivos, o que levará, inevitavelmente, ao aumento dos crimes relacionados com a obtenção de dinheiro para a droga,

Pergunto à Comissão:

Quais as prioridades inscritas na agenda da Comissão para o combate ao aumento do cultivo e venda destas novas substâncias ilícitas?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento de que o surgimento e a venda de novas substâncias psicoativas no mercado interno da União Europeia se têm intensificado, inclusive pela Internet, e de que essas substâncias gozam de crescente popularidade entre os jovens.

A alegação de que estas novas substâncias são alternativas legais às substâncias sujeitas a controlo, a rapidez com que novos compostos aparecem no mercado e o facto de os seus riscos, quer agudos quer a longo prazo, serem frequentemente desconhecidos representam uma ameaça para a saúde pública e um sério desafio para a capacidade de resposta das autoridades nacionais e da UE.

Na sua comunicação «Para uma resposta europeia mais eficaz na luta contra a droga» ([1]), de outubro de 2011, a Comissão anunciou várias iniciativas para enfrentar os problemas de estupefacientes existentes e emergentes na Europa, com destaque para o desafio suscitado pela grande mutabilidade do mercado de novas substâncias psicoativas. A Comissão anunciou a sua intenção de apresentar uma proposta legislativa destinada a reforçar o mecanismo vigente a nível da UE em matéria de intercâmbio de informações, avaliação de riscos e controlo de novas substâncias psicoativas — a Decisão 2005/387/JAI do Conselho ([2]) —, a fim de possibilitar uma ação mais rápida, efetiva e proporcionada a nível europeu.

A Comissão está igualmente a financiar vários projetos de apoio ao desenvolvimento de programas de tratamento e prevenção através de diferentes fontes de financiamento da UE, com destaque para o programa «Informação e prevenção em matéria de droga» ([3]). Tais projetos deverão ajudar a melhorar o conhecimento dos riscos que estas substâncias ocasionam, desenvolver boas práticas para a sua resolução e aumentar a sensibilização para eles, em especial entre os jovens.

([1]) COM(2011) 689 final.
([2]) JO L 127 de 20.5.2005, p. 32.
([3]) JO L 257 de 3.10.2007, p. 23.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003187/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: The impact of the crisis on the narcotics market

— A study published by the Commission yesterday revealed that an increasing number of young people are turning to selling or growing drugs to raise money.

— Economic difficulties can be expected to increase drug- and alcohol-related problems, and the situation will increasingly favour an expansion of the market in synthetic drugs, which are cheaper and widely sold online.

— New drugs have been appearing at an astonishing rate: one new substance has emerged every week for the last two years.

— Preliminary data show that over 50 new psychoactive substances were detected in 2012.

— The economic crisis is also likely to result in less funding for drug control policies, particularly for treatment and measures to mitigate the harmful effects of drugs. That will inevitably lead to more crimes committed to raise money for drugs.

Can the Commission explain what measures it is prioritising to fight the increased cultivation and sale of these new illegal substances?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the increasing emergence and sale of new psychoactive substances in the EU internal market, including over the Internet, and of their rising popularity among young people.

The publicised status of these new psychoactive substances as legal alternatives to controlled substances, the rapidity at which new compounds appear on the market, and the fact that their acute and longer term risks are often unknown, pose a threat to public health and seriously challenge the capacity of national and EU authorities to respond.

In its communication 'Towards a stronger European response to drugs' ([1]) of October 2011, the Commission announced various initiatives to address the existing and emerging European drug problems, in particular the challenge posed by the fast-changing market of new psychoactive substances. The Commission announced its intention to table a legislative proposal to enhance the existing mechanism for EU-level information exchange, risk assessment and control of new psychoactive substances — the Council Decision 2005/387/JHA ([2]) — to enable swifter, more effective and proportionate action at European level.

The Commission is also financing various projects to support the development of treatment and prevention programmes through different EU funding, primarily the Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([3]). These should help improve the knowledge of the risks that these substances pose, develop best practices to address them and raise awareness of such risks, particularly among young people.

([1]) COM(2011) 689 final.
([2]) OJ L 127, 20.5.2005, p. 32.
([3]) OJ L 257, 3.10.2007, p. 23.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003188/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Proposta de Diretiva do tabaco

Considerando que:

— A medida da Comissão Europeia, proposta em dezembro, relativa à aproximação das disposições legislativas, regulamentares e administrativas dos Estados-Membros no que respeita ao fabrico, à apresentação e à venda de produtos do tabaco, impõe que 75 % da área externa das embalagens de tabaco seja ocupada com advertências de saúde, exigindo que as mensagens não fossem inferiores a 64 mm de altura e 55 mm de largura;

— Estas medidas colocam em risco a continuidade da produção dos maços de tabaco nos Açores, de tamanho regular, pois a dimensão requerida pela Comissão não é compatível com cerca de 50 % da produção nestas fábricas;

— Na Região Autónoma dos Açores existem, atualmente, em funcionamento, duas fábricas de tabaco, as quais dão emprego direto a 133 pessoas;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Não considera que a proposta de diretiva negligencia o facto de o mercado de cigarros em Portugal, e especialmente, na Região Autónoma dos Açores, ser seriamente afetado com o possível desaparecimento da categoria de produtos de «tamanho regular», ao invés dos mercados de outros Estados-Membros, onde esta categoria de produtos de tabaco apresenta uma natureza praticamente marginal?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2013)

A proposta da Comissão de rever a Diretiva relativa aos Produtos do Tabaco estabelece uma dimensão mínima para as advertências relativas à saúde, a fim de garantir a sua eficácia. Com base nas medidas de um pacote de cigarros estandardizado ([1]), que corresponde ao pacote de cigarros predominante no mercado da UE, a área total máxima legislada equivaleria a cerca de 70 %. Além de melhorarem o funcionamento do mercado interno, as regras propostas ajudarão a sensibilizar os cidadãos para os riscos de saúde decorrentes do consumo de tabaco. Isto é especialmente importante para desencorajar os jovens a iniciar o consumo de produtos de tabaco.

Em conformidade com as orientações da Comissão em matéria de avaliações de impacto, a avaliação centrou-se na análise dos impactos no conjunto da UE. As avaliações de impacto dos Estados-Membros individuais, ou suas regiões, apenas estão previstas quando um determinado Estado-Membro é afetado de forma desproporcionada, situação que a Comissão não considera ser a do caso em apreço.

Tendo em conta uma possível queda de 2 % no consumo de tabaco, no período de cinco anos após a entrada em vigor da diretiva, é de prever a perda de 5 700 postos de trabalho no setor do tabaco em toda a União Europeia. No entanto, esta situação deverá ser compensada pela criação de aproximadamente 8 000 novos empregos noutros setores, em consequência de um aumento da despesa dos ex-fumadores com outros bens ou serviços que exigem um maior número de trabalhadores do que a produção automatizada de cigarros.

([1]) Cerca de 8,8 cm de altura, 5,5 cm de largura e 2,2 cm de profundidade.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003188/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Proposed Tobacco Products Directive

— The measure that the Commission proposed in December 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 requires that 75% of the external area of tobacco product packaging should be covered with health warnings, which should be not less than 64 mm in height and 55 mm in width.

— These measures jeopardise the continued production of 'regular-sized' packs of tobacco products in the Azores, since the dimensions the Commission requires are not compatible with about 50% of these factories' output.

— Two tobacco factories are currently operating in the Azores, employing 133 people directly.

Does the Commission agree that this proposal for a directive ignores the fact that the cigarette market in Portugal, and especially the Azores, would be badly affected by the possible disappearance of 'regular-sized' packs, unlike the markets in other Member States, where this size pack is hardly ever sold?

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

The Commission proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive foresees a minimum size for the dimension of health warnings to ensure their effectiveness. Based on the size of a standard cigarette package ([1]), which is the predominant package for cigarettes on the EU market, the total maximum legislated area would amount to about 70%. Next to improving the functioning of the internal market, the proposed rules will contribute to improve citizens' awareness about the health risks stemming from tobacco consumption. This is particularly important to discourage young people from starting to use tobacco products.

In line with the Commission's Impact Assessment guidelines, the assessment focused on the impacts for the EU as a whole. Assessments of impacts for individual Member States, or regions thereof, are only foreseen if a given Member State is affected in a disproportionate manner, which the Commission does not consider to be the case here.

Based on a possible drop in tobacco consumption of 2% in five years after the entry into force of the directive, it is estimated that 5 700 jobs would be lost in the tobacco sector in the European Union as a whole. However, this would be compensated by the creation of approximately 8 000 new jobs in other sectors as a result of ex-smokers' increased expenditure in other goods or services that require more workers than the automated production of cigarettes.

([1]) approximately 8.8 cm height, 5.5 cm width, 2.2 cm depth.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003189/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Verbas para o combate à tuberculose

Segundo notícia veiculada pela Agência Lusa, a Organização Mundial de Saúde e o Fundo Mundial de Luta contra o VIH/SIDA, a tuberculose e a malária alertaram, esta segunda-feira, que faltam 1,6 mil milhões de dólares para combater a tuberculose e salvar seis milhões de vidas entre 2014 e 2016.

Considerando que:

— Duas regiões — África e Europa — não estão ainda a caminho de alcançar o objetivo global de reduzir para metade a taxa de mortalidade por tuberculose entre 1990 e 2015;

— Em 2011, 1,4 milhões de pessoas morreram com tuberculose, com a maior taxa de mortalidade «per capita» registada em África;

— A OMS e o Fundo Mundial alertam ainda para a ameaça da tuberculose multirresistente, que afeta atualmente 630 000 pessoas em todo o mundo, segundo as estimativas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

A Comissão pondera conceder alguma ajuda extraordinária para fazer face a este grave problema? Qual?

Qual o grau de incidência da tuberculose no espaço comunitário?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(8 de maio de 2013)

De acordo com os dados mais recentes publicados no «Relatório Mundial sobre a Tuberculose 2012» ([1]), em 2011, 6,2 milhões de casos de tuberculose (TB) foram notificados em todo o mundo. A Organização Mundial de Saúde (OMS) estima que a incidência da tuberculose é, presentemente, de 8,7 milhões de casos e que 1,4 milhões de pessoas foram vítimas mortais desta doença. No que diz respeito à situação na Europa, segundo o relatório sobre vigilância e acompanhamento da tuberculose na Europa de 2013 ([2]), em 2011 foram notificados 72 334 casos de tuberculose pelos 29 países que fazem parte da União Europeia e do Espaço Económico Europeu.

A contribuição financeira da Comissão Europeia para o Fundo Mundial de luta contra a SIDA, a tuberculose e a malária é fundamental, ascendendo a mais de 1,1 mil milhões de euros desde 2001. Dos mais de 18 mil milhões de USD desembolsados até à data, o fundo mundial despendeu cerca de 18 % para controlo da doença, especialmente em África e também na Europa de Leste. No âmbito do programa «Saúde», a Comissão prestou apoio financeiro a sete ações destinadas a prevenir, acompanhar e controlar a tuberculose na UE, num montante total de 2 991 350,15 euros.

Além disso, a Comissão Europeia investiu mais de 130 milhões de euros em atividades de investigação relacionadas com a tuberculose no âmbito do Sexto e Sétimo Programas-Quadro de Investigação. Desde o início da Parceria Europa — Países em Desenvolvimento para a Realização de Ensaios Clínicos, em 2003, até hoje, foram financiados 37 projetos no domínio dos ensaios clínicos relativos à tuberculose e ao reforço das capacidades na África Subsariana, num valor total de 65,22 milhões de euros.

([1]) http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/75938/1/9789241564502_eng.pdf
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003189/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Funding to fight tuberculosis

The Portuguese press agency Agência Lusa has reported that on Monday the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria warned that USD 1.6 billion was needed to fight tuberculosis (TB) and save 6 million lives in 2014-2016.

— Two regions — Africa and Europe — are not on track to achieve the global target of halving the TB death rate between 1990 and 2015.

— In 2011, 1.4 million people died of TB, with Africa having the highest per capita death rate.

— The WHO and the Global Fund also warned of the threat posed by multi-drug-resistant TB, which currently affects an estimated 630 000 people worldwide.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Does it intend to provide any special aid to address this serious problem? If so, what aid is it?

What is the incidence of tuberculosis in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

According to the latest data published in *The Global Tuberculosis Report 2012* ([1]), in 2011, 6.2 million cases of tuberculosis (TB) were notified worldwide. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that the incidence of TB is actually 8.7 million cases and that 1.4 million people died from it. As regards the situation in Europe, according to the report on 'Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2013' ([2]), 72 334 cases of TB were notified by the 29 European Union and European Economic Area countries in 2011.

The European Commission is a major contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and has contributed over EUR 1.1 billion to the Fund since 2001. Of the more than USD 18 billion disbursed so far, the Global Fund has spent about 18% on TB control, particularly in Africa and also in Eastern Europe. Under the Health Programme, the Commission has provided financial support to seven actions to prevent, monitor and control tuberculosis in the EU, with a total of EUR 2 991 350.15.

In addition, the European Commission invested more than EUR 130 million on tuberculosis related research under the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes for Research. From the start of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership Programme in 2003 until today, 37 projects in the area of TB clinical trials and capacity building in sub-Saharan Africa were funded for a total of EUR 65.22 million.

([1]) http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/75938/1/9789241564502_eng.pdf
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003190/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Verbas para o combate à tuberculose multirresistente

Segundo notícia veiculada pela Agência Lusa, a Organização Mundial de Saúde e o Fundo Mundial de Luta contra o VIH/SIDA, a tuberculose e a malária alertaram, esta segunda-feira, que faltam 1,6 mil milhões de dólares para combater a tuberculose e salvar seis milhões de vidas entre 2014 e 2016.

Considerando que:

— Duas regiões — África e Europa — não estão ainda a caminho de alcançar o objetivo global de reduzir para metade a taxa de mortalidade por tuberculose entre 1990 e 2015;

— Em 2011, 1,4 milhões de pessoas morreram com tuberculose, com a maior taxa de mortalidade «per capita» registada em África;

— A OMS e o Fundo Mundial alertam ainda para a ameaça da tuberculose multirresistente, que afeta atualmente 630 000 pessoas em todo o mundo, segundo as estimativas.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

Qual o grau de incidência da tuberculose multirresistente no espaço comunitário?

Existem, ou estão previstas, verbas para o combate à referida doença? Quais?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(8 de maio de 2013)

Em 2011, 1 522 casos de tuberculose multirresistente (TB) foram comunicados pelos países da UE/EEE.

O total anual de novos casos na UE, ou a incidência, de tuberculose multirresistente é estimado em 2 114. Esta estimativa baseia-se na modelização de dados com a metodologia descrita pela OMS no relatório mundial sobre a doença. Pode obter-se mais informação pormenorizada no relatório sobre a vigilância e monitorização da doença na Europa em 2013 ([1]), que é publicado conjuntamente pelo Centro Europeu de Prevenção e Controlo das Doenças e pelo Gabinete Regional da OMS para a Europa.

A Comissão Europeia é um importante contribuinte para o Fundo Mundial de Luta contra o VIH/SIDA, a tuberculose e a malária, tendo contribuído com mais de 1,1 mil milhões de euros para o fundo desde 2001. Dos mais de 18 milhões de USD desembolsados até à data, o Fundo Mundial gastou cerca de 18 % para controlo da TB, especialmente em África e também na Europa de Leste. No âmbito do programa de saúde, a Comissão forneceu apoio financeiro a sete ações de prevenção, acompanhamento e controlo da tuberculose nos países da UE, num total de 2 991 350,15 euros.

Além disso, a Comissão Europeia já investiu mais de 130 milhões de euros em investigação relacionada com a tuberculose, provindos das verbas para a cooperação na saúde, do Sexto e Sétimo Programas-Quadro de Investigação, incluindo os projetos que abordam especificamente a tuberculose multirresistente. Além disso, desde o início do programa Parceria Europa — Países em Desenvolvimento para a Realização de Ensaios Clínicos em 2003 até hoje, foram financiados pelo programa 37 projetos na área dos ensaios clínicos e reforço das capacidades na África Subsariana no domínio da TB, num total de 65,22 milhões de euros.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003190/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Funding to fight multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis

The Portuguese press agency Agência Lusa has reported that on Monday the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria warned that USD 1.6 billion was needed to fight tuberculosis (TB) and save 6 million lives in 2014-2016.

— Two regions — Africa and Europe — are not on track to achieve the global target of halving the TB death rate between 1990 and 2015.

— In 2011, 1.4 million people died of TB, with Africa having the highest per capita death rate.

— The WHO and the Global Fund also warned of the threat posed by multi-drug-resistant TB, which currently affects an estimated 630 000 people worldwide.

Can the Commission say what the incidence of multi-drug-resistant TB is in the EU?

Does funding exist or is any funding planned to fight this disease? If so, what funding is it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

In 2011, 1 522 cases of multi drug resistant Tuberculosis (TB) were reported by the EU/EEA countries.

The yearly total number of new cases in EU, or incidence, of multi drug resistant TB is estimated at 2 114 cases. This estimate is based on modelling of data using a methodology described in the Global TB Report by the WHO. More detailed information can be obtained from the report 'Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2013' ([1]) which is jointly published by the European Centre of Disease Prevention and Control and the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

The European Commission is a major contributor of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and has contributed more than EUR 1.1 billion to the Fund since 2001. Of the more than USD 18 billion disbursed so far, the Global Fund has spent about 18% on TB control, particularly in Africa and also in Eastern Europe. Under the Health Programme, the Commission has provided financial support to seven actions to prevent, monitor and control tuberculosis in the EU countries, with a total of EUR 2 991 350,15.

In addition, the European Commission has invested more than EUR 130 million on tuberculosis related research from the Cooperation Health part of the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes in research on TB including projects addressing specifically MDR TB. In addition, since the start of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership Programme in 2003 until today, 37 projects in the area of TB clinical trials and capacity building in sub-saharan Africa have been funded by the Programme, for a total amount of EUR 65.22 million.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-2013.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003191/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Aplicação da reforma da PAC 4

Recentemente, no Comité Especial de Agricultura, o Comissário europeu da Agricultura falou oficialmente, pela primeira vez, de um adiamento da Reforma da Política Agrícola Comum. Dacian Ciolos esclareceu que, segundo o plano previsto, 2014 seria um ano de transição e a nova PAC teria início a 1 de janeiro de 2015, e anunciou que na próxima primavera a Comissão Europeia poderia apresentar a proposta de regulamento de transição a aplicar em 2014.

Sucede que tal situação irá provocar confusão para agricultores, agentes do setor e administração nacional dos Estados membros.

Considerando que:

— A Comissão admite para Portugal, o aumento do valor por hectare em 1 de janeiro de 2014;

— Será muito difícil explicar aos agricultores a alteração dos valores num espaço de um ano e já com uma reforma aprovada;

Pergunto à Comissão:

De que formas prevê fazer o referido aumento?

Tem a Comissão previsto um mecanismo de ajustamento para responder a estas situações?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003193/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Aplicação da reforma da PAC 3

Recentemente, no Comité Especial de Agricultura, o Comissário europeu da Agricultura falou oficialmente, pela primeira vez, de um adiamento da Reforma da Política Agrícola Comum. Dacian Ciolos esclareceu que, segundo o plano previsto, 2014 seria um ano de transição e a nova PAC teria início a 1 de janeiro de 2015, e anunciou que na próxima primavera a Comissão Europeia poderia apresentar a proposta de regulamento de transição a aplicar em 2014.

Sucede que tal situação irá provocar confusão para agricultores, agentes do setor e administração nacional dos Estados-Membros.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como será feita a articulação entre a convergência externa de 1 de janeiro de 2014 e a convergência interna de 1 de janeiro de 2015?

Resposta conjunta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

A Comissão adotou em 18 de abril uma proposta de medidas transitórias para 2014 ([1]).

Sem prejuízo da decisão final a tomar pelos colegisladores, a proposta incluirá uma alteração dos envelopes nacionais fixados no quadro do anexo VIII da legislação atualmente aplicável ([2]). Em consequência desta alteração, o valor dos direitos ao pagamento terá de ser revisto para o exercício de 2014.

Dado que o processo de convergência interna é um dos elementos do futuro regime de pagamento de base e do futuro regime de apoio direto em geral, apenas passará a ter impacto no valor dos direitos ao pagamento a partir do exercício de 2015.

([1]) COM(2013) 226 final.
([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 73/2009 do Conselho, JO L 30 de 31.1.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003191/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the CAP reform 4

In a recent meeting of the Special Committee on Agriculture, the Commissioner for Agriculture spoke for the first time officially about postponing the common agricultural policy (CAP) reform. Mr Ciolos explained that, according to the plan set out, 2014 would be a transitional year and that the new CAP would enter into force on 1 January 2015. He also announced that next spring the Commission may present the proposal for a regulation on the transition to be implemented in 2014.

This situation will cause confusion among farmers, industry players and national authorities in the Member States.

— The Commission will grant Portugal more money per hectare as of 1 January 2014.

— It will be very difficult to explain to farmers how amounts have changed in the space of a year under an already approved reform.

How does the Commission plan to make this increase?

Has it provided for an adjustment mechanism to respond to these situations?

Question for written answer E-003193/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the CAP reform 3

In a recent meeting of the Special Committee on Agriculture, the Commissioner for Agriculture spoke for the first time officially about postponing the common agricultural policy (CAP) reform. Mr Ciolos explained that, according to the plan set out, 2014 would be a transitional year and that the new CAP would enter into force on 1 January 2015. He also announced that next spring the Commission may present the proposal for a regulation on the transition to be implemented in 2014.

This situation will cause confusion among farmers, industry players and national authorities in the Member States.

How will the Commission link the external convergence of 1 January 2014 with the internal convergence of 1 January 2015?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission has adopted on 18 April a proposal for transitional measures for the year 2014 ([1]).

Without prejudice to the final decision to be taken by the co-legislators, the proposal will include a modification of the national envelopes fixed under Annex VIII of the currently applicable legislation ([2]). As a consequence of this change, the value of payment entitlements will need to be reviewed for claim year 2014.

The internal convergence process being one of the elements of the future Basic Payment Scheme and of the future direct support system in general, it will start impacting the value of payment entitlements only as from claim year 2015.

([1]) COM(2013) 226 final.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003192/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Aplicação da reforma da PAC 2

Recentemente, no Comité Especial de Agricultura, o Comissário europeu da Agricultura falou oficialmente, pela primeira vez, de um adiamento da reforma da Política Agrícola Comum. Dacian Ciolos esclareceu que, segundo o plano previsto, 2014 seria um ano de transição e a nova PAC teria início a 1 de janeiro de 2015, e anunciou que na próxima primavera a Comissão Europeia poderia apresentar a proposta de regulamento de transição a aplicar em 2014.

Sucede que tal situação irá provocar confusão para agricultores, agentes do setor e administração nacional dos Estados-Membros.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que parte da reforma será aplicada em 1 de janeiro de 2015?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003194/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Aplicação da reforma da PAC 1

Recentemente, no Comité Especial de Agricultura, o Comissário europeu da Agricultura falou oficialmente, pela primeira vez, de um adiamento da Reforma da Política Agrícola Comum. Dacian Ciolos esclareceu que, segundo o plano previsto, 2014 seria um ano de transição e a nova PAC teria início a 1 de janeiro de 2015, e anunciou que na próxima primavera a Comissão Europeia poderia apresentar a proposta de regulamento de transição a aplicar em 2014.

Sucede que tal situação irá provocar confusão para agricultores, agentes do setor e administração nacional dos Estados-Membros.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que parte da reforma será aplicada em 1 de janeiro de 2014?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003197/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Reforma da PAC: medidas transitórias 1

Dado que a maior parte da reforma da PAC se aplica a 1 de janeiro de 2015, haverá necessidade de a Comissão propor um pacote de medidas transitórias.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que medidas transitórias estão previstas?

Resposta conjunta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

Com o objetivo de alcançar um acordo entre as instituições sobre o quadro financeiro plurianual e um acordo político sobre a reforma da política agrícola comum (PAC) antes do verão de 2013, prevê-se que as bases jurídicas da nova PAC entrem em vigor em 1 de janeiro de 2014.

No entanto, são necessárias regras transitórias para definir disposições técnicas que permitam uma adaptação harmoniosa às novas condições, assegurando ao mesmo tempo a continuidade do apoio da PAC.

No que diz respeito aos pagamentos diretos, é necessário que os Estados-Membros disponham de tempo suficiente para se prepararem e para informar os agricultores sobre as novas regras. Assim, a Comissão propôs que fossem aplicadas regras transitórias aos pedidos relativos a 2014. A proposta adotada pela Comissão em 18 de abril ([1]) prevê o prolongamento dos regimes existentes: RPU ([2]), RPUS ([3]), ajudas associadas e apoio específico ao abrigo do artigo 68.° ([4]), para o exercício de 2014. Além disso, propõe-se que o atual SAA ([5]), o SIGC ([6]) e a condicionalidade permaneçam, em geral, aplicáveis. Sem prejuízo da decisão final relativa ao quadro financeiro plurianual, a proposta incorpora os impactos da revisão do montante disponível para os pagamentos diretos, o processo de convergência externa e disposições que permitem aos Estados-Membros transferir fundos entre pilares da PAC.

Em relação ao desenvolvimento rural, foram propostas disposições transitórias, nomeadamente para definir o modo como as medidas atuais serão levadas a cabo durante o próximo período de programação, incluindo o seu financiamento a partir do novo envelope financeiro. Além disso, estas disposições definirão as regras de base e as regras de condicionalidade que devem ser aplicadas em 2014.

([1]) Proposta da Comissão COM(2013) 226.
([2]) Regime de pagamento único.
([3]) Regime de pagamento único por superfície.
([4]) Artigo 68.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 73/2009 do Conselho.
([5]) Sistema de aconselhamento agrícola.
([6]) Sistema Integrado de Gestão e de Controlo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003192/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the CAP reform 2

In a recent meeting of the Special Committee on Agriculture, the Commissioner for Agriculture spoke for the first time officially about postponing the common agricultural policy (CAP) reform. Mr Ciolos explained that, according to the plan set out, 2014 would be a transitional year and that the new CAP would enter into force on 1 January 2015. He also announced that next spring the Commission may present the proposal for a regulation on the transition to be implemented in 2014.

This situation will cause confusion among farmers, industry players and national authorities in the Member States.

What part of the reform will be implemented on 1 January 2015?

Question for written answer E-003194/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the CAP reform 1

In a recent meeting of the Special Committee on Agriculture, the Commissioner for Agriculture spoke for the first time officially about postponing the common agricultural policy (CAP) reform. Mr Ciolos explained that, according to the plan set out, 2014 would be a transitional year and that the new CAP would enter into force on 1 January 2015. He also announced that next spring the Commission may present the proposal for a regulation on the transition to be implemented in 2014.

This situation will cause confusion among farmers, industry players and national authorities in the Member States.

What part of the reform will be implemented on 1 January 2014?

Question for written answer E-003197/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: CAP reform: transitional measures 1

Most of the CAP reform to be implemented from 1 January 2015 will require the Commission to propose a package of transitional measures.

What transitional measures are planned?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

With the pursued objective of reaching an agreement between the institutions on the Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) and a political agreement on the common agricultural policy (CAP) reform before the summer 2013, the legal bases for the new CAP are foreseen to enter into force on 1 January 2014.

However, transitional rules are needed for defining technical arrangements to permit a smooth adaptation to the new conditions, while at the same time ensuring continuity of CAP support.

As regards direct payments, sufficient time must be available to allow Member States preparing and to inform farmers on new rules. Therefore, the Commission has proposed that 2014 claims be treated under transitional rules. The proposal adopted by the Commission on 18 April ([1]) provides for the prolongation of the existing schemes: SPS ([2]), SAPS ([3]), coupled aids, specific support under Article 68 ([4]), for claim year 2014. Besides, it is proposed that the current FAS ([5]), IACS ([6]) and cross-compliance systems generally remain applicable. Without prejudice to the final decision regarding the MFF, the impacts of the revision of the amount available for direct payments, the external convergence process and provisions allowing Member States to transfer funds between pillars have been incorporated in the proposal.

For rural development, transitional rules have been proposed, in particular to define how certain current measures will be carried over to the next programming period, including their financing from the new financial envelope. In addition, these rules shall define which baseline and cross-compliance rules will apply in 2014.

([1]) Commission proposal COM(2013) 226.
([2]) Single Payment Scheme.
([3]) Single Area Payment Scheme.
([4]) Article 68 of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.
([5]) Farm Advisory System.
([6]) Integrated Administration and Control System.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003195/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Reforma da PAC: medidas transitórias 3

Dado que a maior parte da reforma da PAC se aplica a 1 de janeiro de 2015, haverá necessidade de a Comissão propor um pacote de medidas transitórias.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Partindo do princípio de que não haverá Programas de Desenvolvimento Rural aprovados em 2014, que será, por isso, um ano perdido, que solução prevê a Comissão?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003196/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Reforma da PAC: medidas transitórias 2

Dado que a maior parte da reforma da PAC se aplica a 1 de janeiro de 2015, haverá necessidade de a Comissão propor um pacote de medidas transitórias.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Para quando está prevista a aprovação dos programas de desenvolvimento rural?

Resposta conjunta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2013)

No contexto do desenvolvimento rural, a definição de disposições transitórias entre dois períodos de programação representa uma prática comum, pois os dois períodos consecutivos de programação sobrepõem-se inevitavelmente devido à regra orçamental n+2. As disposições transitórias são necessárias apenas para os transpor, tal como se verificou também no início do período vigente.

É difícil prever o calendário exato ou eventuais atrasos na adoção dos programas de desenvolvimento rural. No entanto, a experiência demonstra que estes programas não são, normalmente, aprovados antes do início dos respetivos períodos — neste caso, antes de 1 de janeiro de 2014 —, mas mais tarde, durante o primeiro ano de execução ou mesmo no início do segundo ano. De qualquer forma, tal não significa que 2014 seja um ano perdido para a política de desenvolvimento rural.

Em primeiro lugar, nos termos da proposta de regulamento que estabelece disposições comuns, a elegibilidade da despesa para o período de programação seguinte teria início na data de apresentação do programa ou a 1 de janeiro de 2014, consoante o que ocorrer primeiro. Por conseguinte, se estiverem suficientemente estabilizados, os Estados-Membros podem dar início aos seus programas de desenvolvimento rural a partir de 1 de janeiro de 2014, por sua conta e risco, caso ainda não tenham sido aprovados.

Em segundo lugar, a Comissão propõe disposições jurídicas específicas sobre a transição para 2014, que abrangem também as possibilidades de continuar a adotar novos compromissos relativamente a beneficiários de medidas de desenvolvimento rural relacionadas com a superfície e os animais, até adoção de novos programas, em caso de esgotamento da dotação financeira vigente. Estas disposições permitem o lançamento atempado das aplicações anuais das medidas relacionadas com a superfície e os animais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003195/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: CAP reform: transitional measures 3

Most of the CAP reform to be implemented from 1 January 2015 will require the Commission to propose a package of transitional measures.

What solution does the Commission envisage, assuming that no rural development programmes will be approved in 2014, thereby rendering it a lost year?

Question for written answer E-003196/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: CAP reform: transitional measures 2

Most of the CAP reform to be implemented from 1 January 2015 will require the Commission to propose a package of transitional measures.

When does the Commission expect the rural development programmes to be approved?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

In the context of rural development definition of transitional rules between two programming periods represents a standard practice as the two consecutive programming periods inevitably overlap due to the n+2 budgetary rule. Transitional rules are simply needed to bridge the two programming periods, which was also the case at the beginning of the current programming period.

It is difficult to anticipate the exact timetable or possible delays in the adoption of the rural development programmes. However, experience shows that the rural development programmes are generally not approved before the programming period starts, in this case by 1 January 2014, but later on during the first year of implementation or even at the beginning of the second year. In any case this does not mean that 2014 would be a lost year for rural development policy.

Firstly, according to the draft Common Provisions Regulation, the eligibility of expenditure for the next programming period would start from the submission of the programme or 1 January 2014, whichever is earlier. Therefore, Member States can start implementing their rural development programmes from 1 January 2014 onwards if sufficiently stabilised and at their own risk even if the programmes are not yet approved.

Secondly, the Commission is proposing specific legal provisions on transition for 2014 which cover also the possibilities to continue undertaking new legal commitments to beneficiaries of area and animal-related rural development measures under the rules of the current programmes until the adoption of new programmes in case the current financial envelope of the programme is exhausted. These provisions will allow launching the annual applications for the area and animal-related measures in time.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-003198/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(20 maart 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Transparantie subsidiestromen aan ngo's inzake het Israëlische/Palestijnse conflict

De Europese Commissie is niet transparant wat betreft EU-subsidiestromen aan niet-gouvernementele organisaties (hierna te noemen: ngo's) die in het kader van het Israëlische/Palestijnse conflict opereren. Gebleken is dat de Commissie dikwijls zonder toelichting heeft geweigerd om geldstromen te verantwoorden. Het gaat hier om minimaal 10 miljoen euro per jaar!

1. Is de VV/HV bekend met het memorandum „Ending Secrecy in European Union Funding to Political Advocacy NGOs Operating in the Arab-Israeli Conflict" van „NGO Monitor — Making NGOs Accountable"? ([1])

Hoe denkt de VV/HV over de daarin getrokken conclusie dat zij níet transparant is wat betreft de EU-subsidiestromen aan ngo's, die in het kader van het Israëlische/Palestijnse conflict opereren? Hoe verklaart de VV/HV haar niet-transparante houding en is zij bereid deze te wijzigen? Zo niet, hoe verklaart de VV/HV dan de conclusie van de „NGO Monitor"?

2. Hoe verklaart de VV/HV haar niet-transparante houding in verhouding tot Artikel 11 van Titel II van het Verdrag van Lissabon, waarin het transparantiebeginsel van de Europese instellingen is neergelegd? Deelt de VV/HV de mening dat haar houding in strijd is met het hiervoor genoemde artikel? Hoe verantwoordt de VV/HV dit tegenover de Europese burger, uit wiens zakken de betreffende jaarlijks aan ngo's verstrekte 10 miljoen euro uiteindelijk afkomstig is?

3. Houdt deze niet-transparante houding van de VV/HV verband met haar partijdigheid inzake het Israëlisch/Palestijnse conflict en hoe onderbouwt de VV/HV deze partijdigheid? Is de VV/HV bereid zich in het betreffende conflict duidelijk pro-Israël uit te spreken?

4. Hoe geeft de VV/HV de garantie dat de betreffende verstrekte geldstromen níet in verkeerde handen terechtkomen? Hoe garandeert de VV/HV dat de geldstromen níet bij Palestijnse personen/organisaties belanden die strijden tegen Israël en/of de vernietiging van Israël nastreven?

5. Is de VV/HV het eens met het feit dat haar niet-transparante houding en het achterhouden van informatie steeds meer argwaan en wantrouwen onder de Europese bevolking wekt? Is de VV/HV het eens met het feit dat dit een slechte zaak is en het ernstige democratische tekort van de EU aantoont? Hoe gaat de VV/HV dit rechtzetten?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(23 april 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid vermelde publicatie maar aanvaardt de aantijgingen niet van een gebrek aan transparantie bij de financiering van projecten die in de context van van het Israëlisch-Palestijnse conflict door ngo's worden uitgevoerd. Subsidies voor projecten die worden toegekend aan ngo's in het kader van het EIDHR en het initiatief Partnerschap voor vrede, worden verleend na openbare oproepen tot het indienen van voorstellen. Deze oproepen worden bekendgemaakt op de website van het directoraat-generaal Ontwikkeling en Samenwerking en op de websites van de betrokken EU-delegaties ([2]). De namen van de geselecteerde projecten alsook de begunstigden ervan worden nadien op diezelfde websites bekendgemaakt.

Het standpunt van de Europese Unie over het vredesproces in het Midden-Oosten blijft ongewijzigd. Onze inspanningen zijn erop gericht het conflict te beëindigen op basis van een tweestatenoplossing, met een levensvatbare, soevereine, aaneengesloten en democratische Palestijnse staat in vreedzame co-existentie met de Staat Israël.

([1]) http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/memo_ending_secrecy_in_european_union_funding_to_political_advocacy_ngos_operating_in_the_arab_israeli_conflict.

([2]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome & nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd & orderbyad=Desc & searchtype=RS&aofr=134082&userlanguage=en.
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/funding_opportunities/grants/index_en.htm

Subsidies voor projecten kunnen enkel worden gebruikt in overeenstemming met de begroting voor de actie, die deel uitmaakt van het contract. Voor alle contracten worden regelmatig financiële verslagen ingediend die aan externe financiële controle worden onderworpen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003198/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(20 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Transparency of subsidies to NGOs in the context of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict

The Commission does not act with transparency with regard to EU subsidies for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the context of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. It has been found that the Commission has often refused to account for the funding provided, giving no explanation for its refusal. The sums involved amount to at least EUR 10 m per annum!

1. Is the VP/HR familiar with the memorandum 'Ending Secrecy in European Union Funding to Political Advocacy NGOs Operating in the Arab-Israeli Conflict' by 'NGO Monitor — Making ANGOs Accountable'([1])?

What view does the VP/HR take of the conclusion stated there that she does not act with transparency with regard to EU subsidies for NGOs operating in the context of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict? How does the VP/HR explain her non-transparent attitude, and will she change it? If not, how does the VP/HR explain the conclusion reached by NGO Monitor?

2. How does the VP/HR explain her non-transparent attitude in the light of Article 11 of Title II of the Lisbon Treaty, which lays down the transparency principle applicable to the European institutions? Does the VP/HR agree that her attitude breaches that article? How does the VP/HR account for this to European citizens, who ultimately have to provide the EUR 10 m given to NGOs each year?

3. Is there any connection between this non-transparent attitude on the part of the VP/HR and her partiality in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, and what reasons can the VP/HR adduce for this partiality? Will the VP/HR adopt a clear pro-Israeli position in the conflict?

4. How will the VP/HR ensure that the funding provided does not fall into the wrong hands? How will she ensure that the funding is not passed on to Palestinian people/organisations fighting against Israel and/or seeking the destruction of Israel?

5. Does the VP/HR agree that her non-transparent attitude and the withholding of information are arousing more and more suspicion and mistrust among the people of Europe? Does the VP/HR agree that this is undesirable and that it demonstrates the serious democratic deficit of the EU? How will the VP/HR rectify this?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2013)

The Commission is aware of the publication referred to by the Honourable Member but does not accept the allegations of non-transparency in funding for projects implemented by NGOs in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Grants for projects which are awarded to NGOs under the EIDHR and the Partnership for Peace initiative are attributed following public calls for proposals. The calls are published on the website of the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation and of the EU Delegations concerned ([2]). The names of the projects selected as well as the beneficiary are thereafter published on the same websites.

The position of the European Union on the Middle East Peace Process remains unchanged. Our efforts are directed towards obtaining a resolution of the conflict based on a 'two-state' solution, with a viable, contiguous and democratic Palestinian State which will co-exist peacefully with the State of Israel.

Funds awarded for projects can only be used in accordance with the budget of the action, which forms part of the contract. All contracts submit regular financial reports which are subject to external financial verification.

([1]) http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/memo_ending_secrecy_in_european_union_funding_to_political_advocacy_ngos_operating_in_the_arab_israeli_conflict

([2]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype= RS&aofr=134082&userlanguage=en; http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/funding_opportunities/grants/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-003199/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(21. März 2013)

Betrifft: Teilnahme der Kommission an von der Industrie gesponserten Veranstaltungen zu Schiefergas

Der Veranstalter CWC organisiert am 21./22. Mai 2013 eine Konferenz mit der Bezeichnung „The Europe Retreat" ([1]). Die Teilnahme an dieser zweitägigen Veranstaltung kostet rund 4 000 EUR. Die Teilnehmer sind in einem 5-Sterne-Hotel in Brügge untergebracht.

Hat die Kommission ihre Teilnahme an dieser Konferenz bestätigt? Wenn ja, bezahlen die Bediensteten der Kommission die Teilnahmegebühr von 4 000 EUR? Oder wurde ihnen die Teilnahmegebühr erlassen?

Wenn letzterer Fall zutrifft, wie passt die Gratis-Teilnahme an einer 4 000-Euro-Veranstaltung mit der Verpflichtung der Kommission zusammen, die sie in ihrem Kodex für gute Verwaltungspraxis ([2]) eingegangen ist, wonach ihre Bediensteten „[…] stets objektiv und unparteiisch […] [handeln]" (S. 4)?

Kann die Kommission mitteilen, an wie vielen von der Industrie gesponserten Veranstaltungen zu Schiefergas ihre Bediensteten in den letzten beiden Jahren teilgenommen haben?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(25. April 2013)

In den vergangenen beiden Jahren fanden in der EU zahlreiche Veranstaltungen zu Schiefergas statt, insbesondere zwei vom Europäischen Parlament 2012 durchgeführte Workshops. Wenn ein dienstliches Interesse besteht und die erforderlichen Mittel zur Verfügung stehen, dürfen Kommissionsbedienstete auch an von der Industrie gesponserten Veranstaltungen teilnehmen. Die einschlägigen Vorschriften für Dienstreisen und Gastgeschenke sind dabei stets zu beachten. Die Teilnahme an einer Veranstaltung läuft dem im Statut und im Kodex für gute Verwaltungspraxis festgeschriebenen Gebot der Objektivität und Unparteilichkeit nicht zuwider.

Die Kommission beabsichtigt nicht, an der von der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochenen Veranstaltung teilzunehmen.

Die Zahl der von der Industrie gesponserten Veranstaltungen, an denen Kommissionsbedienstete teilgenommen haben, lässt sich nicht ohne weiteres ermitteln. Das Zusammentragen dieser Daten aus allen Dienststellen würde einen unverhältnismäßigen Aufwand bedeuten.

([1]) http://europe.world-shale.com/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/code/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003199/13
to the Commission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Participation of the Commission at industry-sponsored events on shale oil and gas

The CWC Group, an event organiser, is arranging a two-day gathering on shale oil and gas, 'The Europe Retreat', on May 21-22 ([1]). The participation fee is around EUR 4 000, and participants will stay at a 5-star hotel in Bruges.

Has the Commission confirmed that it will attend this meeting? If so, are participating Commission officials to pay the EUR 4 000 fee, or has it been waived for them?

If the latter is the case, how does a 'free' EUR 4 000 event square with the Commission's commitment, set out on page 4 of its Code of Good Administrative Behaviour ([2]), to ensure that its civil servants 'shall always act objectively and impartially'?

Can the Commission indicate how many industry-sponsored events on shale oil and gas its officials have participated in over the past two years?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2013)

Over the past two years, numerous events on shale gas took place in the EU, notably two workshops organised by the Parliament in 2012. If deemed to be in the interest of the service and if necessary resources are available, Commission staff may also participate in industry-sponsored events. The relevant rules concerning mission and hospitality are always to be respected. Attending an event does not impair the duty of objectivity and impartiality foreseen by the Staff Regulations and the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour.

The Commission has no plans to attend the particular meeting to which the Honourable Member refers.

The Commission does not have information on the number of industry-sponsored events attended by staff readily available. Collecting it from across the services would represent a disproportionate effort.

([1]) http://europe.world-shale.com/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/code/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003200/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Imports of panels from China

Last year, the Commission initiated both an anti-dumping investigation concerning imports of solar panels originating in the People's Republic of China and an anti-subsidy investigation on the same imports. Since then, it has proposed that all solar panels originating in China should be subject to compulsory registration by the customs authorities.

Reporting on these investigations has mainly focused on the effects of any potential levies on generators and installers, and has eschewed discussion of the capital equipment businesses that would also be affected.

1. Is the Commission aware that a large number, if not the majority, of the machines used to manufacture photovoltaic solar cells are actually built in Europe and exported to China?

2. Is the Commission taking into account the effects that any protectionist levies would have on European capital equipment businesses?

3. If so, what will be done to militate against any detrimental effects on their business?

4. Does the Commission expect that a similar levy will be placed on European businesses by China? What effect does the Commission foresee this would have on European capital equipment businesses?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission is aware that the machines used to manufacture photovoltaic modules and its main components (cells and wafers) are produced in the EU and exported also to China.

Indeed, the Commission's analysis in the framework of these ongoing anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations includes an assessment of whether there are compelling reasons not to impose measures despite findings of injurious dumping (so-called Union interest). In this context the Commission will also take into account the consequences on EU machinery producers and other upstream and downstream operators.

At this stage it is premature to comment on possible results as the investigation is still ongoing. The Commission is not aware of any measures by the Chinese government concerning the EU machinery producers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003201/13
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Verso una tassazione armonizzata per le imprese vitivinicole

La presenza di regimi fiscali differenti per ogni Stato membro dell'Unione europea rappresenta un aspetto controverso nell'ambito della tutela delle condizioni di parità atte a garantire una competitività eguale per le imprese agricole europee.

In particolare, alla vigilia dell'entrata in vigore della Politica agricola comune per il periodo 2014/2020, può la Commissione riferire:

— cosa abbia finora impedito la realizzazione di un'armonizzazione della tassazione dei redditi agricoli nell'ambito dell'Unione europea;

— quale procedura potrebbe essere fin da adesso attivata — sia a livello del singolo Stato membro sia a livello di UE — al fine di garantire un'omogenea tassazione dei redditi agricoli nel comparto vitivinicolo, in modo da evitare sperequazioni commerciali nonché delocalizzazioni produttive nell'ambito degli stessi Stati membri.

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2013)

I redditi derivanti da attività agricole sono soggetti di norma all'imposta sul reddito o, nel caso di aziende di più grosse dimensioni, all'imposta sulle società nello Stato membro in cui tali attività sono svolte.

L'articolo 115 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea fornisce una base giuridica per il ravvicinamento delle disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative degli Stati, comprese quelle nel settore dell'imposizione diretta, che hanno un impatto diretto sul funzionamento del mercato interno. Nella misura in cui tale ravvicinamento sia avvenuto, gli Stati membri sono liberi di definire una normativa propria in ambito fiscale in linea con i rispettivi obiettivi strategici, purché tale normativa non sia discriminatoria e non violi altrimenti le disposizioni del trattato, compresa la normativa in vigore in materia di aiuti di Stato finalizzata a prevenire distorsioni della concorrenza. Se tali parametri sono rispettati, la Commissione ritiene che l'imposta sul reddito e sulle società siano aspetti che rientrano nella sovranità nazionale e su cui ciascuno Stato membro può decidere autonomamente.

La Commissione non ha pertanto in programma la proposta di un sistema uniforme per l'imposizione diretta all'interno dell'UE. La Commissione, tuttavia, ha proposto e continuerà a proporre iniziative per l'armonizzazione di determinati aspetti dell'imposizione diretta nella misura in cui essi permettono di migliorare il funzionamento del mercato interno. Tra esse si può citare la proposta relativa a una base imponibile consolidata comune per l'imposta sulle società ([1]), attualmente oggetto di discussione con gli Stati membri e che, se adottata, dovrebbe garantire benefici agli operatori economici soggetti alla tassazione di impresa, compresi i produttori vitivinicoli, grazie all'eliminazione degli ostacoli alle attività transfrontaliere all'interno dell'Unione europea.

([1]) Proposta di direttiva del Consiglio relativa a una base imponibile consolidata comune per l'imposta sulle società (CCCTB) COM(2011)121.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003201/13
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Towards harmonised taxation for wine producers

The fact that each EU Member State has different tax systems is a controversial issue when it comes to establishing a level playing field to ensure that European farms are equally competitive.

In particular, on the eve of the entry into force of the common agricultural policy for the period 2014-2020, can the Commission say:

— what has so far prevented the harmonisation of tax on agricultural income in the European Union;

— what steps could be taken, as of now — at both individual Member State level and EU level — to ensure uniform taxation of agricultural income in the wine sector, in order to avoid trade disparities and relocation of production between the Member States themselves?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2013)

Income from agricultural activities will normally be subject either to income tax or, in the case of larger incorporated units, corporate tax in the Member States in which the activities are carried out.

Article 115 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides a legal base for the approximation of such laws, regulations or administrative provisions of the Member States, including those in the direct tax field, as directly affect the establishment or functioning of the internal market. To the extent that no such approximation has taken place Member States are free to establish their own tax rules in line with their different policy objectives as long as those rules are not discriminatory and do not otherwise infringe the provisions of the Treaties including rules on state aid that exist to prevent distortions of competition. Within these parameters, the Commission believes that income and corporate tax rates are issues of national sovereignty for each Member State to decide for itself.

The Commission therefore has no plans to propose a uniform system of direct taxation within the EU. However, the Commission has proposed and will continue to propose initiatives for harmonisation of certain aspects of direct taxation where this would improve the functioning of the internal market. One such initiative is the proposal for a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (the CCCTB) ([1]) which is currently being discussed with the Member States. The CCCTB should, if adopted, benefit economic operators taxed as corporations, including wine producers, when it comes to eliminating obstacles to cross-border activity within the Union.

([1]) Proposal for a Council Directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) COM(2011) 121.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003202/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Retirada de oligoelementos como el Cobre-Oro-Plata

A raíz de la publicación del Real Decreto 1487/2009, de 26 de septiembre, relativo a los complementos alimenticios que traspone la Directiva 2002/46/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 10 de junio de 2002, relativa a la aproximación de las legislaciones de los Estados miembros en materia de complementos alimenticios, se han retirado en el Estado español la comercialización de diversos oligoelementos como el Cobre-Oro-Plata. También ha afectado a otros como el Bismuto, el Cobalto, el Manganeso-Cobalto, el Zinc-Niquel-Cobalto, el Manganeso-Cobre-Cobalto o el Litio, entre otros.

El oligoelemento Cobre-Oro-Plata, con una larga tradición de comercialización de más de 25 años, sin embargo, se sigue produciendo y comercializando en países como Francia. Las autoridades españolas han explicado que la retirada de este producto se debe a la adaptación de la norma europea.

¿Confirma la Comisión que la retirada de la comercialización del oligoelemento Cobre-Oro-Plata se debe a la Directiva 2002/46/CE o a cualquier otra?

En caso afirmativo, ¿dispone la Comisión de estudios que demuestren algún tipo de efecto negativo en la salud humana de dicho producto?

En caso negativo, ¿piensa pedir la Comisión al Gobierno español que permita la comercialización del oligoelemento al igual que sucede en otros Estados miembros?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de abril de 2013)

La Directiva 2002/46/CE ([1]), sobre complementos alimenticios, establece normas armonizadas para el etiquetado de dichos complementos e introduce normas específicas para las vitaminas y los minerales en los mismos. La Directiva establece, en su anexo I, la lista de vitaminas y minerales autorizados que pueden utilizarse en la fabricación de complementos alimenticios y, en su anexo II, sus formas autorizadas.

En la lista positiva de vitaminas y minerales del anexo I figuran aquellos nutrientes que el Comité Científico de Alimentación Humana considera esenciales en su informe sobre consumo de energía y nutrientes en la Comunidad Europea (serie 31ª). En el anexo II figuran las sustancias químicas que, aprobadas por dicho Comité, pueden utilizarse en la fabricación de alimentos destinados a lactantes y a niños pequeños y de otros alimentos con fines nutricionales especiales.

Solo podrán utilizarse en la fabricación de complementos alimenticios las vitaminas y los minerales enumerados en el anexo I en las formas especificadas en el anexo II. Determinados minerales mencionados por Su Señoría no figuran en la lista. No obstante, hasta el 31 de diciembre de 2009, y en determinadas condiciones, los Estados miembros han podido permitir en su territorio el uso de vitaminas y minerales no enumerados en el anexo I, o en una forma que no figure en el anexo II.

En este contexto, de conformidad con el Reglamento (CE) n° 178/2002 ([2]) del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, los explotadores de las empresas alimentarias son los responsables de garantizar la conformidad de los productos con los requisitos de la legislación alimentaria general. Los Estados miembros hacen cumplir la legislación alimentaria y han de controlar y verificar que los explotadores de las empresas alimentarias cumplan los requisitos de la legislación alimentaria pertinentes.

([1]) DO L 183 de 12.7.2002, p. 51.
([2]) DO L 31 de 1.2.2002, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003202/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Withdrawal of trace elements such as copper-gold-silver

Following the publication of Royal Decree 1487/2009 of 26 September 2009 on food supplements, transposing Directive 2002/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 June 2002 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to food supplements, the marketing of various trace elements such as copper-gold-silver has been stopped in Spain. Other trace elements have also been affected, such as bismuth, cobalt, manganese-cobalt, zinc-nickel-cobalt, manganese-copper-cobalt and lithium.

The trace element copper-gold-silver, which has been sold over a long period of more than 25 years, is still, however, being produced and marketed in countries such as France. The Spanish authorities have explained that the withdrawal of this product is due to compliance with the European legislation.

Can the Commission confirm whether the withdrawal of the sale of the trace element copper-gold-silver is due to Directive 2002/46/EC or any other directive?

If so, does the Commission have studies available demonstrating that the product has any kind of adverse effect on human health?

If not, does the Commission intend to ask the Spanish Government to allow the marketing of this trace element, in line with the practice in other Member States?

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

Directive 2002/46/EC ([1]) on food supplements establishes harmonised rules for the labelling of food supplements and introduces specific rules on vitamins and minerals in food supplements. This directive provides, in its Annex I, for the list of authorised vitamins and minerals that may be used in the manufacture of food supplements and, in its Annex II, for their authorised forms.

The positive list of vitamins and minerals in Annex I comprises those nutrients which the Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) in its report on Nutrient and Energy Intakes for the European Community (31st series) considered essential, while Annex II was based on the substances, approved by the SCF, in the context of chemical substances that may be used in the manufacture of foods for infants and young children and in other foods for particular nutritional uses.

Only vitamins and minerals listed in Annex I, in the forms listed in Annex II, may be used for the manufacture of food supplements. Certain minerals mentioned by the Honourable Member are not included in that list. By way of derogation, until 31 December 2009, and under certain conditions, Member States could have allowed in their territory the use of vitamins and minerals not listed in Annex I, or in a form not listed in Annex II.

In that context, according to Regulation (EC) 178/2002 ([2]) of the European Parliament and of the Council food business operators are responsible for compliance of foods with the requirements of general food law and Member States shall enforce food law, monitor and verify that the relevant requirements of food law are fulfilled by food business operators.

([1]) OJ L 183, 12.7.2002, p. 51-57.
([2]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1-24.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003203/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Campbell Bannerman (ECR)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Prizes and competitions — EEAS delegations outside the EU

Can the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative list all prizes and competitions organised by EEAS delegations outside the EU over the past two years?

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

Over the last two years the EEAS via our EU delegations has organised a number of competitions around the world to promote Europe and the ideals of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Where appropriate, delegations have sought to incentivise participation with appropriate prizes such as language lessons for students or cameras for young journalists.

In many cases delegations have worked alongside local partners and other multilateral organisation to share the cost, reach more citizens and advance shared goals.

The annex attached reflects the results from almost half of the EU delegations around world. We will continue to update the list as we receive further information.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003204/13
alla Commissione
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Revisione dell'accordo UE-Marocco sui prodotti agricoli

L'UE ha stipulato con il Regno del Marocco un accordo di liberalizzazione per i prodotti agricoli e della pesca entrato in vigore il 1° ottobre 2012. Il comparto agricolo e ortofrutticolo del Sud Europa, italiano e siciliano in particolare, lamenta una distorsione del mercato dovuta a costi di produzione inferiori dei prodotti marocchini importati a discapito della competitività delle produzioni europee.

Preso atto che l'accordo in oggetto prevede una clausola di revisione entro i tre anni dall'entrata in vigore (artt. 6-7) e considerato che la Commissione intende aprire un nuovo negoziato con il Marocco per un più profondo e comprensivo accordo di libero scambio, può essa chiarire:

1. se dispone di dati sull'evoluzione degli scambi commerciali di prodotti agricoli tra Marocco e Unione Europea dopo l'entrata in vigore dell'accordo;

2. se dispone di informazioni sugli effetti negativi per le aziende agricole e ortofrutticole europee del Mediterraneo e in particolare del Sud Europa;

3. se sta tenendo conto della sofferenza del comparto agricolo per definire future condizioni di partnership commerciale con il Marocco più rispondenti all'esigenza del comparto agricolo europeo;

4. se intende predisporre misure di reale sostegno in favore degli agricoltori per le produzioni sensibili dell'Europa meridionale più esposte alla concorrenza dei produttori dell'altra sponda del Mediterraneo;

5. se risponde al vero che le produzioni importate dal Marocco — relative all'accordo in questione — corrispondono al 15 %-25 % di quelle esportate dall'UE nel Regno del Marocco?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2013)

1. Negli ultimi tre anni e nel periodo ottobre — febbraio (per il quale sono disponibili i dati dell'ultimo anno) le importazioni agricole dal Marocco sono state relativamente stabili, senza registrare alcuna tendenza significativa. Le esportazioni dell'Unione europea verso il Marocco per lo stesso periodo, ottobre — febbraio, hanno registrato un aumento negli ultimi tre anni e si stanno attualmente stabilizzando.

2. Non è stato evidenziato nessun effetto negativo particolare sulla produzione degli Stati membri meridionali in seguito all'accordo agricolo tra l'Unione europea e il Marocco. Dopo l'applicazione del nuovo accordo agricolo, i prezzi del comparto nell'Unione europea, tra cui i prezzi dei prodotti ortofrutticoli, hanno mantenuto un livello soddisfacente, pressoché allineato alla media degli ultimi tre anni.

3. Nel quadro dell'accordo agricolo in vigore dal 1° ottobre 2012, i prodotti sensibili non sono stati liberalizzati e rientrano nei contingenti tariffari per evitare distorsioni del mercato. In tale contesto, nessuna parte ha espresso interesse per proseguire i negoziati del comparto agricolo nella futura zona di libero scambio globale e approfondito (DCFTA).

4. Con le proposte per la PAC 2020 i produttori del comparto ortofrutticolo dell'Unione europea beneficeranno di misure aggiuntive, segnatamente con il rafforzamento della base giuridica per le misure eccezionali e con una nuova riserva per le crisi. È altresì prevista una nuova distribuzione dei diritti nell'ambito del regime di pagamento di base, grazie alla quale i produttori del comparto ortofrutticolo potranno beneficiare dell'assegnazione di diritti, percependo così pagamenti diretti.

5. Le importazioni dal Marocco nell'Unione europea ammontano a 8,573 milioni di EUR, mentre l'Unione europea esporta per circa 15,370 milioni di EUR, con un saldo netto attivo per l'Unione di circa 6,797 milioni di EUR (media 2010-2012). L'Unione europea importa prodotti agricoli per 1,225 milioni di EUR e ne esporta per 1,215 milioni di EUR (dati relativi allo stesso periodo).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003204/13
to the Commission
Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Review of the EU-Morocco agreement on agricultural products

The EU has signed a free trade agreement with the Kingdom of Morocco for agricultural and fishery products, which entered into force on 1 October 2012. The southern European agriculture and fruit and vegetables sector — particularly in Italy and Sicily — is complaining of a distortion of the market due to the lower production costs of imported Moroccan products, undermining the competitiveness of European products.

The agreement provides for a review to be carried out within three years of its entry into force (Articles 6-7). Since the Commission intends to enter into fresh negotiations with Morocco with a view to concluding a more wide-ranging and comprehensive free trade agreement, can it answer the following questions:

1. Is there any data on trends in the trade in agricultural products between Morocco and the EU since the entry into force of the agreement?

2. Is there any information on the negative effects on European agricultural and fruit and vegetable businesses in the Mediterranean region, and particularly in southern Europe?

3. Is the Commission taking account of the suffering of the agriculture sector in defining future conditions for a trading partnership with Morocco that will better meet the needs of the European agriculture sector?

4. Does it intend to take concrete measures to support the growers of southern Europe's sensitive products, which are most exposed to competition from producers on the other side of the Mediterranean?

5. Is it true that the products imported from Morocco — in relation to the above agreement — amount to 15-25% of those exported from the EU to Morocco?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

1. Over the last three years and for the period October — February (for which data are available for this last year) agriculture imports from Morocco are quite stable and do not show any significant trend. EU exports to Morocco over the same period, October — February, have shown an increase over the last three years and are currently stabilising.

2. No particular negative effect of the EU-Morocco Agriculture Agreement has been reported on EU Southern Member States production. EU agricultural prices, including for fruits and vegetables, have maintained a satisfactory level since the implementation of the new Agriculture Agreement, almost in line with the average of the last three years.

3. In the framework of the Agriculture Agreement implemented since 1 October 2012, sensitive products have not been liberalised but are subject to tariff rate quotas in order to avoid any market disruption. In this context, neither party has expressed an interest to further negotiate agriculture in the future DCFTA.

4. Under the CAP 2020 proposals EU growers in the fruit and vegetable sector will benefit from additional measures, notably by reinforcing the legal basis for exceptional measures and a new reserve for crisis. There will also be a new distribution of entitlements under the basic payment scheme so that fruit and vegetable producers may benefit from the allocation of entitlements and thereby receive direct payments.

5. Total EU imports from Morocco amount to EUR 8,573 million while the EU is exporting for about EUR 15,370 million, which results in a net exporting position for the EU of about EUR 6,797 million (average 2010-2012). EU imports for agricultural products amount to EUR 1,225 million while EU exports sum to EUR 1,215 million (over the same period).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003205/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili rischi per la salute derivanti dalla sigaretta elettronica e necessità di una regolamentazione in materia

Negli scorsi mesi è stato introdotto massicciamente sul mercato europeo un dispositivo denominato sigaretta elettronica: tale dispositivo ha l'aspetto di una normale sigaretta e consente di inspirare vapore misto ad aromi e nicotina, prodotto a partire da un liquido contenuto in un serbatoio interno e surriscaldato tramite la batteria integrata.

Stante la recente introduzione sul mercato di detto dispositivo, sia gli studi scientifici sugli effetti indotti sull'organismo umano dall'utilizzo della sigaretta elettronica, sia la legislazione in materia, risultano scarsi e lacunosi; tuttavia, la forte dipendenza psicologica indotta dalla nicotina, ormai accettata come dato acquisito dalla comunità scientifica, nonché la possibile presenza di sostanze tossiche all'interno delle miscele a partire dalle quali viene prodotto il vapore inalato dall'utente, ed infine il rischio di esplosione per surriscaldamento della batteria al litio integrata, con conseguente ferimento dell'utilizzatore, come già avvenuto in alcuni casi, suggeriscono la necessità di compiere studi approfonditi sugli effetti derivanti dall'uso di tale dispositivo e di regolamentarne produzione, vendita e utilizzo.

A riguardo è stata recentemente predisposta una direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, avente per oggetto il ravvicinamento delle disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative degli Stati membri relative a lavorazione, presentazione e vendita dei prodotti del tabacco e dei prodotti correlati.

In riferimento a detta normativa, chiediamo alla Commissione:

— su quali basi scientifiche sono state stabilite le soglie di 2 mg di nicotina per unità di prodotto e di 4mg/ml di nicotina, indicate dall'articolo 18 di detta direttiva, superate le quali un prodotto necessiterebbe, per essere immesso sul mercato, di autorizzazione ai sensi e a norma della direttiva 2001/83/CE?

— considerando che, nel testo della direttiva recentemente redatta, i prodotti che superano le soglie sopra indicate vengono equiparati a dispositivi medici, è stata effettuata una valutazione preventiva dei costi legati al processo di richiesta e rilascio dell'autorizzazione ai sensi della direttiva 2001/83/CE che andrebbero a gravare sui produttori?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2013)

Le soglie di nicotina previste nella proposta di direttiva riveduta sui prodotti del tabacco sono state definite tenendo conto del tenore di nicotina delle terapie di sostituzione della nicotina che hanno già ricevuto dagli Stati membri un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione in forza della legislazione sui prodotti medicinali.

Uno degli effetti del fatto di assoggettare i prodotti contenenti nicotina al di là di certe soglie al regime che si applica ai prodotti medicinali consisterà nell'incoraggiare la ricerca, l'innovazione e lo sviluppo di prodotti efficaci per la cessazione del fumo di tabacco che siano stati previamente sottoposti a un'analisi rischi/benefici. La legislazione sui prodotti medicinali assicura anche buone pratiche di fabbricazione.

La valutazione della Commissione sugli impatti economici della proposta figura nel pertinente documento di valutazione d'impatto della Commissione ([1]). Si calcola che i costi per gli attori economici derivanti dal sistema di autorizzazione di cui alla legislazione sui prodotti medicinali varieranno tra gli Stati membri e andranno da 10 400 euro a 47 230 euro. Poiché in molti Stati membri i prodotti contenenti nicotina sono già considerati alla stregua di prodotti medicinali ciò non dovrebbe comportare cambiamenti rispetto alla situazione attuale.

([1]) SWD(2012)452 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003205/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Potential health risks of electronic cigarettes and the need for regulation on the issue

In recent months, the European market has seen the widespread introduction of a device known as the electronic cigarette. This looks like a normal cigarette and allows the smoker to inhale water vapour mixed with fragrances and nicotine, produced from a liquid contained in an internal reservoir and heated by the integrated battery.

Because this device came on to the market only recently, scientific research into its effects on the human body is sparse and patchy, as is the applicable legislation. However, it is now taken for granted by the scientific community that nicotine produces a strong psychological dependency. With the electronic cigarette, there may also be additional toxic substances in the mixture used to produce the vapour inhaled by the user, not to mention the risk of injury caused by explosion of the integrated lithium battery due to overheating, as has happened on several occasions. All of these factors suggest that in-depth studies on the effects of using this device are required, as well as regulation of its production, sale and use.

A 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 has recently been drafted.

In view of this legislation:

— What was the scientific basis for setting a nicotine level of 2 mg per unit and a nicotine concentration of 4 mg/ml, as set out in Article 18 of the proposal, as the thresholds above which products may only be placed on the market if they have been authorised pursuant to Directive 2001/83/EC?

— Since products exceeding these levels are compared to medical devices in the text of the proposal, has a prior assessment been made of the costs that would be incurred by manufacturers in relation to the process of requesting and issuing authorisation pursuant to Directive 2001/83/EC?

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

The nicotine thresholds in the proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive have been identified by considering the nicotine content of nicotine replacement therapies that have already received a marketing authorisation by Member States under the legislation for medicinal products.

One effect of subjecting nicotine containing products above certain thresholds to the medicinal products regime will be to encourage research, innovation and development of effective smoking cessation products which have undergone a prior risk/benefit assessment. The legislation for medicinal products also ensures good manufacturing practices.

The Commission's assessment of the economic impacts of the proposal is set out in the Commission's Impact Assessment. ([1]) It is expected that costs for economic players relating to the authorisation scheme under the medicinal products legislation will vary between Member States, ranging from EUR 10,400 to EUR 47,230 EUR. Since nicotine containing products in many Member States are already considered as medicinal products, this however would be no change compared to the current situation.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003206/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(21 maart 2013)

Betreft: PICUM

Verleent de Commissie financiële of enige andere steun aan de organisatie PICUM (Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants)? Zo ja, over welke bedragen (of andere vormen van steun) gaat het voor de jaren 2010, 2011 en 2012?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(24 mei 2013)

De organisatie PICUM heeft geen aanvraag tot steun ingediend voor de jaren 2010, 2011, 2012 en 2013. Zij heeft in die periode geen steun ontvangen in het kader van communautaire acties uit hoofde van het Europees Integratiefonds, het Europees Vluchtelingenfonds, het Europees Terugkeerfonds of het Buitengrenzenfonds.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003206/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: PICUM

Does the Commission provide financial or other support to the organisation PICUM (Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants)? If it does, what amounts (or other forms of support) are involved for 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The organisation PICUM has not submitted any application nor received any financial support from neither the Commission under the European Integration Fund-Community Actions for the years of 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 nor from the European Refugee Fund-Community Actions, European Return Fund-Community Actions respectively the European Border Fund-Community Actions for the same period.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003207/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Evolução das relações entre a União Europeia e a Soberana e Militar Ordem Hospitalária de São João de Jerusalém, Rodes e Malta (Ordem de Malta)

Considerando que:

— A Ordem de Malta é uma ordem religiosa católica, de natureza militar, cavaleira e nobre/aristocrática, composta por cerca de 12 500 cavaleiros e damas, cujo objetivo é prestar auxílio médico, social e humanitário em mais de 120 países;

— A Ordem de malta possui relações diplomáticas com 104 países;

— A União Europeia assinou com a Ordem de Malta um Memorando de Entendimento com vista à cooperação em assuntos de interesse comum, consulta e troca de informações;

— A Ordem de Malta auxiliou a Comissão Europeia a implementar projetos e programas com vista à erradicação da fome e à assistência especial em caso de conflitos internacionais;

— A Ordem de Malta gasta, anualmente, cerca de mil milhões de dólares americanos nas suas atividades de auxílio médico, social e humanitário e, por isso, beneficia de recursos financeiros da Comissão Europeia (ECHO).

Pergunta-se à Alta Representante:

1. Qual o ponto atual da situação das relações entre a União Europeia e a Ordem de Malta?

2. Quais os montantes disponibilizados à Ordem de Malta no âmbito das relações diplomáticas entre a União Europeia e a Ordem de Malta?

3. Quais os projetos e programas que a União Europeia desenvolveu e implementou com o auxílio e a cooperação da Ordem de Malta?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(21 de maio de 2013)

1. A UE mantém relações oficiais com a Ordem de Malta e considera-a uma entidade de direito internacional público *sui generis*. Um representante da Ordem está acreditado junto da UE e o chefe da Delegação da UE em Roma está acreditado junto da Ordem. As relações são mantidas através de reuniões ocasionais entre os altos representantes de ambas as organizações e através da Delegação da UE em Roma. A Comissão concluiu um Memorando de Entendimento com a Ordem com vista à cooperação, consulta e troca de informações.

2.-3. É concedido financiamento a título de ajuda humanitária da UE e de cooperação para o desenvolvimento à Malteser International, através da Malteser Alemanha (Malteser Hilfsdienst e.V.), enquanto agência humanitária internacional da Ordem. No que respeita à ajuda humanitária, a Malteser International recebeu 3 565 000 euros e 3 545 000 euros, em 2012 e 2011, respetivamente, de apoio, entre outros, a projetos médicos e no domínio da saúde na República Democrática do Congo e na fronteira entre a Tailândia e Mianmar. Mais informações disponíveis em: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/grants_contracts/agreements_en.htm

No domínio da cooperação para o desenvolvimento, a Comissão mantém atualmente 11 subvenções em curso com a Malteser International num valor total de 11 500 000 euros. Informação sobre estas subvenções disponível em: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/beneficiaries/index.cfm?lang=en. O Sistema de Transparência Financeira da Comissão também pode ser consultado em: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003207/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Development of relations between the EU and the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (Order of Malta)

— The Order of Malta is a military, chivalrous and noble/aristocratic Catholic religious order made up of around 12 500 knights and dames, whose aim is to provide medical and social care and humanitarian aid in over 120 countries.

— The Order of Malta maintains diplomatic relations with 104 countries.

— The EU concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Order of Malta on cooperation in matters of common interest, consultation and exchange of information.

— The Order of Malta has helped the Commission to implement projects and programmes aimed at eradicating hunger and providing special assistance in the case of international conflicts.

— The Order of Malta spends around USD 1 billion annually on its medical and social care and humanitarian aid activities and therefore receives funding from the Commission (ECHO).

1. What is the current state of relations between the EU and the Order of Malta?

2. How much money is made available to the Order of Malta under the diplomatic relations it maintains with the EU?

3. What projects and programmes has the EU developed and implemented with the Order of Malta's assistance and cooperation?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

1. The EU has official relations with the Order of Malta and considers it to be a sui generis subject of public international law. A representative of the Order is accredited to the EU and the Head of the EU Delegation in Rome is accredited to the Order. Relations are maintained through occasional meetings between senior representatives of the two organisations and through the EU's Delegation in Rome. The Commission has concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Order on cooperation, consultation and exchange of information.

2 and 3. EU humanitarian aid and development cooperation funding is awarded to Malteser International, through Malteser Germany (Malteser Hilfsdienst e.V.), as worldwide relief agency of the Order. With respect to humanitarian aid, Malteser International received EUR 3 565 000 and EUR 3 545 000 in 2012 and 2011 respectively in support, *inter alia*, of health and medical projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo and on the Thai-Myanmar border. More information is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/grants_contracts/agreements_en.htm

In the development cooperation area, the Commission has currently 11 ongoing grants with Malteser International for a total value of EUR 11 500 000. Information on these grants is available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/beneficiaries/index.cfm?lang=en. The Commission's Financial Transparency System may also be consulted (at: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_fr.htm).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003208/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Evolução das relações entre a União Europeia e a Sereníssima República de San Marino

Considerando que:

— A União Europeia e a Sereníssima República de San Marino cooperam a vários níveis, estabelecendo contactos regulares nas principais organizações internacionais, quer em Nova Iorque, quer em Genebra;

— Essa cooperação diplomática versa sobre vários assuntos de ordem europeia e/ou global, como referido pelo Serviço Europeu para a Ação Externa;

— A União Europeia possui relações económicas com a Sereníssima República de San Marino em matéria económica por via do Acordo de Cooperação e União Aduaneira, assinado em 1991, e por via do acordo relativo à tributação dos rendimentos da poupança sob forma de juros, assinado em 2004;

— A União Europeia, através da República Italiana, possui relações com este Estado em matéria monetária por via do Acordo Monetário para a cunhagem de euros próprios;

— A União Europeia e a Sereníssima República de San Marino pretendem uma maior integração da última no mercado único da União Europeia;

— A Sereníssima República de San Marino não exclui a possibilidade de poder vir a aderir à União Europeia ou ao Espaço Económico Europeu (EEE) como forma de melhorar a integração no mercado único.

Pergunta-se à Alta Representante:

1. Qual o ponto atual da situação das relações entre a União Europeia e a Sereníssima República de San Marino?

2. De que forma pensam a União Europeia e a Sereníssima República de San Marino aprofundar a integração da última no mercado único? Qual a atual posição da Sereníssima República de San Marino quanto a uma possível adesão à UE ou ao EEE?

3. Quais as outras áreas de cooperação de interesse para a UE no quadro de um eventual aprofundamento das relações entre a UE e a Sereníssima República de San Marino?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

As relações da UE com a República de São Marinho são excelentes. Em 20 de novembro de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma Comunicação — COM(2012) 680 final — ao Parlamento Europeu, ao Conselho, ao Comité Económico e Social e ao Comité das Regiões, sobre o reforço das relações da UE com o Principado de Andorra, o Principado do Mónaco e a República de São Marinho, acompanhada de um documento de trabalho dos seus serviços, SWD (2012) 388 final. Em resposta, o Conselho adotou conclusões em 20 de dezembro de 2012, congratulando-se com a comunicação e convidando a Comissão e a Alta Representante (conforme adequado) a prosseguir a sua análise de duas opções possíveis para uma integração mais estreita destes três países com a UE: i) a participação no Espaço Económico Europeu (EEE); e ii) a negociação de um ou mais acordo(s) — quadro de associação.

O SEAE está a trabalhar com os serviços da Comissão na análise acima referida, com o objetivo de apresentar um relatório ao Conselho até ao final de 2013. Para o efeito, o SEAE e os serviços da Comissão iniciaram conversações preliminares com São Marinho. No entanto, não estão a decorrer quaisquer negociações atualmente. A UE não tem conhecimento de qualquer posição formal por parte de São Marinho no que diz respeito à sua adesão à UE ou à sua participação no Espaço Económico Europeu.

A Comissão está interessada em reforçar a cooperação em todos os domínios suscetíveis de trazerem benefícios para ambas as partes, alguns dos quais são mencionados na comunicação de 20 de novembro de 2012. No entanto, com exceção do mercado interno, é ainda cedo para definir as zonas específicas em que a UE procurará desenvolver as suas relações com São Marinho. A Comissão atribui também grande importância à correta implementação dos acordos existentes entre a UE e São Marinho, nomeadamente a Convenção Monetária, que continuará a acompanhar de perto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003208/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Development of EU-San Marino relations

— The EU and San Marino cooperate at various levels, establishing regular contacts in major international organisations in both New York and Geneva.

— This diplomatic cooperation concerns various European and/or global issues, as stated by the European External Action Service.

— The EU maintains economic relations with San Marino through the 1991 Agreement on Cooperation and Customs Union and through the 2004 Agreement on the taxation of savings income in the form of interest payments.

— The EU, via Italy, maintains monetary relations with San Marino through the Monetary Agreement which enables the country to mint its own euros.

— The EU and San Marino intend to integrate the latter more closely into the EU single market.

— San Marino has not ruled out the possibility of joining the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA) to achieve further integration into the single market.

1. What is the current state of EU-San Marino relations?

2. How will the EU and San Marino integrate the latter more closely into the EU single market? What is San Marino's current position regarding its possible accession to the EU or to the EEA?

3. What other areas of cooperation are of interest to the EU as part of a possible strengthening of EU-San Marino relations?

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

EU relations with San Marino are excellent. On 20.11.2012, the Commission adopted a communication — COM(2012) 680 final — to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on enhancing the EU's relations with Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, accompanied by a Staff Working Document, SWD(2012) 388 final. In response, the Council adopted conclusions on 20.12.2012 welcoming the communication and inviting the Commission and the High Representative (as appropriate) to continue their analysis on two options for the greater integration of these three countries with the EU: (i) participation in the European Economic Area (EEA); and (ii) the negotiation of one or more Framework Association Agreement(s).

The EEAS is working with the Commission services on the abovementioned analysis, with the aim of submitting a report to the Council by the end of 2013. To this end, the EEAS and Commission services have begun exploratory talks with San Marino. However, no negotiations are taking place at the present time. The EU is not aware of any formal position by San Marino regarding accession to the EU or participation in the European Economic Area.

The Commission is interested in enhancing cooperation in all areas which may be of mutual benefit, some of which are mentioned in the communication of 20.11.2012. However, beyond the internal market, it is too early to determine the specific areas in which the EU will seek to develop its relations with San Marino. The Commission also attaches great importance to the correct implementation of existing agreements between the EU and San Marino, including the Monetary Agreement, which it will continue to follow closely.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003209/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Evolução das relações entre a União Europeia e o Principado do Mónaco

Considerando que:

— A União Europeia e o Principado do Mónaco cooperam a vários níveis, estabelecendo contactos regulares nas principais organizações internacionais, quer em Nova Iorque, quer em Genebra;

— Essa cooperação diplomática versa sobre vários assuntos de ordem europeia e/ou global, como referido pelo Serviço Europeu para a Ação Externa;

— A União Europeia, através da República Francesa, possui relações em matéria económica e monetária por via da sua integração aduaneira com o Principado do Mónaco e por via do Acordo Monetário para a cunhagem de euros próprios;

— A União Europeia possui relações com o Principado do Mónaco em matéria fiscal por via do acordo relativo à tributação dos rendimentos da poupança sob a forma de juros;

— A União Europeia e o Principado do Mónaco pretendem uma maior integração do último no mercado único da União Europeia;

— O Principado do Mónaco tem como preferência, para uma maior integração no mercado único, a assinatura de um Acordo de Associação com a UE.

Pergunta-se à Alta Representante:

1. Qual o ponto atual da situação das relações entre a União Europeia e o Principado do Mónaco?

2. De que forma pensam a União Europeia e o Principado de Mónaco aprofundar a integração do último no mercado único?

3. Quais as outras áreas de cooperação de interesse para a UE no quadro de um eventual aprofundamento das relações entre a UE e o Principado do Mónaco?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

1. As relações da UE com o Mónaco são excelentes. Em 20 de novembro de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma comunicação ao Parlamento, ao Conselho, ao Comité Económico e Social Europeu e ao Comité das Regiões sobre o reforço das relações da UE com o Principado de Andorra, o Principado do Mónaco e a República de São Marinho ([1]), acompanhada de um documento de trabalho dos seus serviços ([2]). Em 20 de dezembro de 2012, o Conselho adotou conclusões congratulando-se com esta comunicação, convidando a Comissão e a Alta Representante (conforme adequado) a prosseguir a sua análise de duas opções possíveis para uma integração mais estreita destes três países com a UE: i) a participação no Espaço Económico Europeu (EEE) e ii) a negociação de um ou mais acordos — quadro de Acordos de Associação.

2. O Serviço de Ação Externa da UE (SEAE) está a trabalhar com os serviços da Comissão na análise acima referida, com o objetivo de apresentar um relatório ao Conselho até ao final de 2013. Para o efeito, o SEAE e os serviços da Comissão iniciaram conversações preliminares com o Mónaco. No entanto, atualmente não estão a decorrer quaisquer negociações.

([1]) COM(2012) 680 final.
([2]) SWD(2012) 388 final.

3. A Comissão está interessada em reforçar a cooperação em todos os domínios suscetíveis de trazerem benefícios para ambas as partes, alguns dos quais são mencionados na comunicação de 20 de novembro de 2012. No entanto, com exceção do mercado interno, é ainda demasiado cedo para definir as zonas específicas em que a UE procurará desenvolver as suas relações com o Mónaco, além da atualização do acordo relativo à tributação dos rendimentos da poupança sob a forma de juros e um novo acordo em matéria de luta contra a fraude e reforço da cooperação fiscal, relativamente às quais estão já pendentes no Conselho duas propostas da Comissão relativas à autorização para negociar. A Comissão atribui também grande importância à implementação adequada dos acordos existentes entre a UE e o Mónaco, nomeadamente a Convenção Monetária.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003209/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Development of EU-Monaco relations

— The EU and Monaco cooperate at various levels, establishing regular contacts in major international organisations in both New York and Geneva.

— This diplomatic cooperation concerns various European and/or global issues, as stated by the European External Action Service.

— The EU, via France, maintains economic and monetary relations with Monaco through customs integration and through the Monetary Agreement which enables the country to mint its own euros.

— The EU maintains tax relations with Monaco through the Agreement on the taxation of savings income in the form of interest payments.

— The EU and Monaco intend to integrate the latter more closely into the EU single market.

— Monaco is looking to conclude an Association Agreement with the EU to achieve further integration into the single market.

1. What is the current state of EU-Monaco relations?

2. How will the EU and Monaco integrate the latter more closely into the EU single market?

3. What other areas of cooperation are of interest to the EU as part of a possible strengthening of EU-Monaco relations?

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

1. EU relations with Monaco are excellent. On 20 November 2012, the Commission adopted a communication to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on enhancing the EU's relations with Andorra, Monaco and San Marino ([1]), accompanied by a Staff Working Document ([2]). On 20 December 2012, the Council adopted conclusions welcoming the communication and inviting the Commission and the High Representative (as appropriate) to continue their analysis on two options for the greater integration of these three countries with the EU: i) participation in the European Economic Area (EEA); and ii) the negotiation of one or more Framework Association Agreement(s).

2. The European External Action Service (EEAS) is working with the Commission services on the abovementioned analysis, with the aim of submitting a report to the Council by the end of 2013. To this end, the EEAS and Commission services have begun exploratory talks with Monaco. However, no negotiations are taking place at the present time.

3. The Commission is interested in enhancing cooperation in all areas which may be of mutual benefit, some of which are mentioned in the communication of November 2012. However, beyond the internal market, it is too early to determine the specific areas in which the EU will seek to develop its relations with Monaco, apart from an updating of the Savings Agreement and a new agreement on the fight against fraud and enhancing tax cooperation, for which two Commission proposals for the authorisation to negotiate are already pending with the Council. The Commission also attaches great importance to the correct implementation of existing agreements between the EU and Monaco, including the Monetary Agreement.

([1]) COM(2012) 680 final.
([2]) SWD(2012) 388 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003210/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Dois anos de guerra na Síria e a proposta de fim do embargo de armas

Tendo em conta que:

— A guerra civil na Síria dura já há dois anos consecutivos, com prejuízos sociais impossíveis de quantificar, e levou à morte de mais de 70 mil pessoas, pondo em causa uma geração inteira, e que esta situação está a criar uma instabilidade sem precedentes na região, causando um número crescente de refugiados que já ultrapassou a barreira de 1 milhão de pessoas;

— Não foi encontrada nenhuma solução para esta questão nos fóruns internacionais, em parte pela posição da China e da Rússia no Conselho de Segurança da ONU, e os embargos impostos pela União não alteraram o posicionamento das partes na Síria;

— A França, através do seu Presidente François Hollande, com o apoio do Reino Unido, pediu o fim do embargo de armas, uma vez que esta posição enfraquece o posicionamento dos opositores ao regime de Assad, já que este último continua a receber apoio militar de inúmeros países;

— Vários Estados-Membros mostraram-se relutantes quanto a esta questão, mas a própria inação da União e do mundo está a levar ao massacre da população civil;

— Várias ONG já denunciaram o aumento dos abusos cometidos pela oposição, sublinhando também que as forças governamentais continuam a bombardear indiscriminadamente civis, registando-se assim elevados níveis de destruição e violência;

Pergunta-se à Alta Representante da União:

1. Qual a posição da União quanto ao fim deste embargo? Implica a inação da União o prolongamento do conflito, uma vez que não se conseguiu encontrar até agora uma solução política?

2. O uso do *soft power* inerente à característica da política externa da União não é contraditório face ao papel da União no mundo?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(23 de maio de 2013)

O Conselho dos Negócios Estrangeiros de 28 de fevereiro decidiu alterar o embargo de armas previsto na Decisão 2012/739/PESC do Conselho, de 29 de novembro de 2012, de forma a permitir o fornecimento de equipamento militar não letal para a proteção de civis ou à Coligação Nacional das Forças da Revolução e Oposição Sírias (Cnfros) para a proteção de civis. A Decisão 2012/739/PESC foi prorrogada até 1 de junho de 2013 e é objeto de reapreciação permanente.

A Decisão 2013/186/PESC do Conselho, de 22 de abril de 2013, alterou, por sua vez, a Decisão 2012/739/PESC, no intuito de ajudar a população civil síria, permitindo que as autoridades competentes dos Estados-Membros autorizem a compra, a importação ou o transporte de petróleo bruto e produtos petrolíferos e de equipamentos e tecnologias essenciais para a indústria do petróleo e do gás. Para garantir que este comércio beneficia a população civil síria, e não o regime sírio, e que as derrogações não serão utilizadas para contornar as medidas, a UE e os seus Estados-Membros tencionam trabalhar em estreita colaboração com a Cnfros e os Estados-Membros consultarão esta coligação a respeito de todas as transações propostas ao abrigo desta derrogação.

É impossível estimar com precisão quanto tempo durará ainda o conflito na Síria e a UE está constantemente a adaptar as suas políticas à evolução da situação. A UE tem envidado múltiplos esforços diplomáticos para encontrar uma solução pacífica para o conflito. Disponibilizou também assistência humanitária e não humanitária aos sírios afetados pelo conflito, dentro e fora da Síria. A UE dispõe de muitos instrumentos para promover uma política externa coerente com o seu papel no mundo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003210/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Two years of war in Syria and the proposal to end the arms embargo

The Syrian civil war has continued unabated for two years, causing immeasurable social harm, claiming the lives of more than 70 000 people and putting an entire generation at risk. This is creating unprecedented regional instability, with the number of refugees standing at 1 million and rising.

It has not been possible to find a solution in international forums, partly because of the stance adopted by China and Russia in the UN Security Council, and the embargoes imposed by the EU have not changed the positions of the factions in Syria.

French President François Hollande, supported by the United Kingdom, has asked for the arms embargo to be lifted on the grounds that it undermines those opposing the Assad regime, which continues to receive military support from many countries.

While several Member States have voiced their opposition, the failure of the EU and the rest of the world to act means that the civilian population is being massacred.

There are high levels of destruction and violence, with several NGOs reporting a rise in abuses committed by the opposition, while stressing that government forces continue to bomb civilians indiscriminately.

1. What is the EU's position on lifting this embargo? As no political solution has yet been found, does inaction on the part of the EU mean that the conflict will continue?

2. Using soft power is an inherent part of EU foreign policy, but is this not inconsistent with the EU's role in the world?

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

The Foreign Affairs Council of 28 February decided to amend the arms embargo contained in Council Decision 2012/739/CFSP of 29 November 2012, so as to allow for the provision of non-lethal military equipment for the protection of civilians or to the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces (SNCORF) for the protection of civilians. Decision 2012/739/CFSP has been extended until 1 June 2013 and is kept under constant review.

Council Decision 2013/186/CFSP of 22 April 2013 has further amended Decision 2012/739/CFSP with a view to helping the Syrian civilian population by permitting competent authorities of Member States to authorise the purchase, import or transport of crude oil and petroleum products and key equipment and technology for the oil and gas industry. To ensure this trade benefits the Syrian civilian population, as opposed to the Syrian regime, and that the derogations will not be misused to circumvent the measures, the EU and its Member States intend to work closely together with SNCORF, and Member States will consult SNCORF on each proposed transaction under this derogation.

It is impossible to estimate with any precision how long the conflict in Syria will last, and the EU is constantly adjusting its policies to the unfolding developments. The EU has been very active in its diplomatic efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It has also provided humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance to Syrians in and outside Syria affected by the conflict. The EU has many instruments at its disposal to promote a foreign policy consistent with its role in the world.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003211/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Evolução das relações entre a União Europeia e o Principado de Andorra

Considerando que:

— A União Europeia e o Principado de Andorra cooperam a vários níveis, estabelecendo contactos regulares nas principais organizações internacionais, quer em Nova Iorque, quer em Genebra;

— Essa cooperação diplomática versa sobre vários assuntos de ordem europeia e/ou global, como referido pelo Serviço Europeu para a Ação Externa;

— A União Europeia possui relações económicas com o Principado de Andorra em matéria económica por via do Acordo que estabelece uma União Aduaneira com o respetivo Protocolo sobre Medidas de Segurança Aduaneira, assinado em 1990, e por via do Acordo de Cooperação, assinado em 2004;

— A União Europeia possui relações com o Principado de Andorra em matéria monetária por via do Acordo Monetário para o uso do euro como moeda oficial do Principado e que a partir de 2014 irá ter cunhagem própria;

— A União Europeia e o Principado de Andorra pretendem uma maior integração do último no mercado único da União Europeia;

— O Principado de Andorra tem como preferência, para uma maior integração no mercado único, a assinatura de um Acordo de Associação com a UE.

Pergunta-se à Alta Representante:

1. Qual o ponto atual da situação das relações entre a União Europeia e o Principado de Andorra?

2. De que forma pensam a União Europeia e o Principado de Andorra aprofundar a integração do último no mercado único? Já se iniciaram conversações ou negociações para a assinatura de um Acordo de Associação?

3. Quais as outras áreas de cooperação de interesse para a UE no quadro de um eventual aprofundamento das relações entre a UE e o Principado de Andorra?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

As relações da UE com Andorra são excelentes. Em 20 de novembro de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma Comunicação ao Parlamento Europeu, ao Conselho, ao Comité Económico e Social Europeu e ao Comité das Regiões ([1]), sobre o reforço das relações da UE com o Principado de Andorra, o Principado do Mónaco e a República de São Marinho, acompanhada de um documento de trabalho dos seus serviços ([2]). Em resposta, o Conselho adotou conclusões em 20 de dezembro de 2012, congratulando-se com a comunicação e convidando a Comissão e a Alta Representante (conforme adequado) a prosseguir a sua análise de duas opções possíveis para uma integração mais estreita destes três países com a UE: i) a participação no Espaço Económico Europeu (EEE) e ii) a negociação de um ou mais acordos — quadro de Acordos de Associação.

O Serviço Europeu para a Ação Externa (SEAE) está a trabalhar com os serviços da Comissão na análise acima referida, com o objetivo de apresentar um relatório ao Conselho até ao final de 2013. Para o efeito, o SEAE e os serviços da Comissão iniciaram conversações preliminares com Andorra. No entanto, atualmente não estão a decorrer quaisquer negociações.

([1]) COM(2012) 680 final.
([2]) SWD(2012) 388 final.

A Comissão está interessada em reforçar a cooperação em todos os domínios suscetíveis de trazerem benefícios para ambas as partes, alguns dos quais são mencionados na comunicação de 20 de novembro de 2012. No entanto, com exceção do mercado interno, é ainda demasiado cedo para definir as zonas específicas em que a UE procurará desenvolver as suas relações com Andorra. A Comissão atribui também grande importância à implementação adequada dos acordos existentes entre a UE e Andorra, nomeadamente a Convenção Monetária, que continuará a acompanhar de perto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003211/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Development of EU-Andorra relations

— The EU and Andorra cooperate at various levels, establishing regular contacts in major international organisations in both New York and Geneva.

— This diplomatic cooperation concerns various European and/or global issues, as stated by the European External Action Service.

— The EU maintains economic relations with Andorra through the 1990 Agreement establishing a customs union and its Protocol on customs security measures and through the 2004 Cooperation Agreement.

— The EU maintains monetary relations with Andorra through the Monetary Agreement which enables the country to use the euro as its official currency and to mint its own coins from 2014.

— The EU and Andorra intend to integrate the latter more closely into the EU single market.

— Andorra is looking to conclude an Association Agreement with the EU to achieve further integration into the single market.

1. What is the current state of EU-Andorra relations?

2. How will the EU and Andorra integrate the latter more closely into the EU single market? Have conversations or negotiations on concluding an Association Agreement begun?

3. What other areas of cooperation are of interest to the EU as part of a possible strengthening of EU-Andorra relations?

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

EU relations with Andorra are excellent. On 20 November 2012, the Commission adopted a communication to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions ([1]) on enhancing the EU's relations with Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, accompanied by a Staff Working Document ([2]). In response, the Council adopted conclusions on 20 December 2012 welcoming the communication and inviting the Commission and the High Representative (as appropriate) to continue their analysis on two options for the greater integration of these three countries with the EU: i) participation in the European Economic Area (EEA); and ii) the negotiation of one or more Framework Association Agreement(s).

The European External Action Service (EEAS) is working with the Commission services on the abovementioned analysis, with the aim of submitting a report to the Council by the end of 2013. To this end, the EEAS and Commission services have begun exploratory talks with Andorra. However, no negotiations are taking place at the present time.

The Commission is interested in enhancing cooperation in all areas which may be of mutual benefit, some of which are mentioned in the communication of 20 November 2012. However, beyond the internal market, it is too early to determine the specific areas in which the EU will seek to develop its relations with Andorra. The Commission also attaches great importance to the correct implementation of existing agreements between the EU and Andorra, including the Monetary Agreement, which it will continue to follow closely.

([1]) COM(2012) 680 final.
([2]) SWD(2012) 388 final.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003212/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Negociações para o Acordo de Livre Comércio com a Tailândia

Considerando que:

— A Comissão foi incentivada pelos Estados-Membros a concluir um conjunto de acordos bilaterais de Livre Comércio com os países membros da ASEAN e que, desde 2009, a CE tem vindo a reforçar as negociações, uma vez que o mercado asiático dos países da ASEAN conta com 580 milhões de consumidores, sendo o terceiro maior parceiro comercial fora da União, depois dos Estados Unidos e da China;

— As relações UE-Tailândia têm vindo a ser reforçadas, não só através da abertura destas negociações para um Acordo de Livre Comércio como também pelo Acordo político de Parceria e Cooperação alcançado em fevereiro deste ano;

— A Tailândia é o terceiro maior parceiro comercial do conjunto de países membros da ASEAN e a União é também o terceiro maior parceiro comercial da Tailândia, depois do Japão e da China.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tendo em conta os valores acima enunciados, demonstrando a importância deste país para o conjunto da União, e uma vez que o crescimento económico de países em desenvolvimento no continente asiático, nos últimos dez anos, tem sido uma realidade que era pouco expectável, qual o potencial, em termos qualitativos e quantitativos, da realização deste Acordo de Livre Comércio para ambas as partes?

2. Quais os pontos frágeis e as vantagens da Tailândia, por um lado, e da União, por outro lado, no contexto da negociação?

3. Uma vez que a contrafação é uma economia paralela dentro da economia de mercado tailandesa, quais as medidas da União para a proteção das marcas da União? Poderá a União pedir que haja um aumento do controlo deste mercado por parte das instituições governamentais?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2013)

A Tailândia é o quarto país da ASEAN que encetou negociações com a UE sobre um acordo de comércio livre (ACL). Comprova-se assim o empenho da UE nas relações com as economias asiáticas dinâmicas e em expansão. O comércio bilateral entre a UE e a Tailândia foi de cerca de 32 mil milhões de euros em 2012. No entanto, ambas as partes consideram que ainda há potencialidades por explorar na relação comercial e mais benefícios mútuos a retirar do ACL. A Tailândia e a UE exprimiram um compromisso político para concluir, no prazo de dois anos, um ACL global que abarque um amplo leque de questões.

Para a UE, a Tailândia é um parceiro interessante na medida em que é a segunda maior economia e uma das economias mais avançadas na região da ASEAN com um ambicioso mercado de consumo. Por sua vez, o ACL garantirá à Tailândia um acesso previsível e a longo prazo ao importante mercado da UE. Os desafios na negociação incluirão domínios como os serviços, o desenvolvimento sustentável, a propriedade intelectual e o facto de a Tailândia ser um forte exportador para zonas de particular interesse para a UE.

A UE está ciente de que a Tailândia necessita de melhorar a proteção e a aplicação dos direitos de propriedade intelectual, incluindo no domínio do combate à contrafação e às mercadorias-pirata. A Tailândia é, por esta razão, identificada como um dos países prioritários no relatório de 2012 sobre a proteção e a aplicação efetiva dos direitos de propriedade intelectual em países terceiros. No quadro do diálogo entre a UE e a Tailândia em matéria de DPI, iniciado em 2011, a UE colabora estreitamente com as autoridades tailandesas e manifesta a sua preocupação sobre as questões de proteção e respeito da propriedade intelectual, incluindo contrafação e mercadorias-pirata. Além disso, o ACL irá também incluir um capítulo sobre o reforço da proteção e aplicação dos direitos de propriedade intelectual.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003212/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with Thailand

— The Member States encouraged the Commission to conclude a series of bilateral Free Trade Agreements with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. Since 2009, it has been strengthening these negotiations, since the ASEAN market accounts for 580 million consumers and is the EU's third largest trading partner outside Europe, after the United States and China.

— EU-Thailand relations have been strengthened by the opening of negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement and by the partnership and cooperation agreement concluded in February this year.

— Thailand is the EU's third largest trading partner among the ASEAN countries and in turn the EU is Thailand's third largest trading partner, after Japan and China.

1. Since these figures demonstrate Thailand's importance for the EU as a whole, and since the economic growth of developing Asian countries over the last 10 years has been somewhat unexpected, how likely, in qualitative and quantitative terms, is the conclusion of a Free Trade Agreement between both parties?

2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Thailand, on the one hand, and of the Union, on the other, regarding these negotiations?

3. Since counterfeiting is a black economy within the Thai market economy, what measures will the EU take to protect its own brands? Can the Union request that government institutions take greater control over this market?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

Thailand is the fourth ASEAN country that the EU has engaged with in negotiations on a free trade agreement (FTA). This shows the EU's engagement with dynamic and growing Asian economies. Bilateral trade between the EU and Thailand amounted to close to EUR 32 billion in 2012. However, both sides believe there is still untapped potential in the trade relationship and mutual benefits should accrue from the FTA. Thailand and the EU have expressed the political commitment to conclude a comprehensive FTA covering a broad range of issues within two years.

For the EU, Thailand is an attractive partner as it is the second largest economy and one of the most advanced economies in the ASEAN region with an aspirational consumer market. For Thailand, the FTA will secure long-term and predictable access to the large EU market. Challenges in the negotiation will include areas such as services, sustainable development, intellectual property and the fact that Thailand is a strong exporter in areas with EU sensitivities.

The EU is aware of the need by Thailand to improve the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, including the fight against counterfeit and pirated goods. Thailand is for this reason identified as one of the priority countries in the EU's 2012 report on the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights in third countries. In the framework of the EU-Thailand IPR Dialogue set up in 2011, the EU cooperates closely and raises its concerns with the relevant Thai authorities on protection and enforcement of intellectual property, including on the issue of counterfeit and pirated goods. Moreover, the FTA will also include a chapter on strengthening the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003213/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — As relações da União com Mianmar

Tendo em conta que:

— Mianmar viveu 5 décadas de um regime ditatorial e, desde as eleições de 2011, o país encontra-se num importante processo de transição política, económica e social, e, acima de tudo, num processo de reconciliação nacional, criando um sentimento de confiança e pertença da sociedade birmanesa às intuições estatais;

— O crescimento económico deste país continua a ser um dos mais baixos do conjunto de países do sudoeste Asiático e têm-se registado progressos a nível da abertura do país, nomeadamente através da libertação de alguns presos políticos, das preocupações da população civil face aos problemas ecológicos e económicos, da elaboração de leis no plano laboral e do processo de paz com as etnias regionais;

Pergunta-se à Alta Representante da União:

1. Que tipo de medidas foram tomadas no último encontro de 5 março de 2013 com os representantes das instituições europeias e o Presidente da República da União de Mianmar para reforçar a cooperação política e económica já estabelecida?

2. Uma vez que continuam a eclodir conflitos étnicos nalgumas regiões, qual o papel que a União poderá ter no processo de reconciliação nacional?

3. Que tipo de medidas pretende a União tomar para atrair o investimento privado da União para o mercado de Mianmar?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(13 de maio de 2013)

1. Em 5 de março de 2013, o Presidente do Conselho Europeu, o Presidente da Comissão, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente e o Presidente U Thein Sein, em visita, tiveram reuniões muito frutuosas. A declaração conjunta emitida por ocasião da visita ilustra em que medida a UE e Mianmar partilham a mesma ambição de levar a cabo a transição do país e de desenvolver relações bilaterais. Foi identificada uma série de domínios prioritários em que a contribuição da UE poderia facilitar a transformação política, social e económica do país. A reforma eleitoral, os direitos humanos, o Estado de direito, o desenvolvimento económico e a redução da pobreza são alguns destes domínios em que se acordou intensificar o diálogo e a cooperação.

2. A UE está já a apoiar o processo de reconciliação nacional por diferentes meios e mecanismos, nomeadamente através do financiamento do Centro para a Paz de Mianmar e da concessão de ajuda ao desenvolvimento (saúde, educação e meios de subsistência) e de ajuda humanitária nas zonas habitadas por minorias étnicas. A UE está também prestes a ajudar o país na desminagem das zonas de conflito. Essas medidas serão reforçadas e alargadas no período seguinte, em paralelo com os progressos realizados no processo de paz.

3. Durante a visita do Presidente U Thein Sein em 5 de março de 2013, foi igualmente decidido estudar a viabilidade de um acordo de investimento bilateral com o objetivo de aumentar o investimento da UE no país.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003213/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Myanmar relations

— Myanmar has been undergoing an important political, economic and social transition process in the wake of the 2011 elections, following five decades of dictatorial rule. Above all, it has been undergoing a national reconciliation process, instilling a sense of trust and belonging in the Burmese people as regards the country's state institutions.

— The country continues to have one of the lowest economic growth levels in Southeast Asia and is gradually opening up to the world, having released some political prisoners, addressed civilian concerns regarding environmental and economic issues and drafted labour laws and peace processes with regional ethnic groups.

1. What types of measures were adopted at the latest meeting of 5 March 2013, attended by representatives from the EU institutions and the Burmese President, to strengthen the political and economic cooperation established to date?

2. What role can the EU play in the national reconciliation process, given that ethnic conflicts continue to erupt in some regions?

3. What measures will the EU adopt to attract private EU investment to the Burmese market?

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

1. On 5 March 2013, the President of the European Council, the Presidnet of the Commission, the High Representative/Vice Presidnet and the visiting President U Thein Sein had very productive meetings. The Joint Statement issued on the occasion of the visit shows the extent to which the EU and Myanmar have a joint ambition for the transtition of the country and for developing further bilateral relations. A number of priority areas were identified where the EU's contribution could facilitate the country's political, social and economic transformation. Electoral reform, human rights, rule of law, economic development and poverty alleviation are some of these areas where it was agreed to step up dialogue and cooperation.

2. The EU is already supporting the national reconciliation process through different means and mechanism, including by funding the Myanmar Peace Centre and by providing development aid (health, education and livelihoods) and humanitarian in the ethnic areas. The EU is also about to help the country in the demining of conflict zones. Such measures will increase and expand in the following period in parallel with progress in the peace process.

3. During the visit of President U Thein Sein on 5 March 2013, it was also agreed to explore the feasibility of a bilateral investment agreement with the aim of increasing EU investment in the country.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003214/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Projetos de Alta Velocidade para Portugal

Tendo em conta que:

— Portugal se encontra a executar um programa de contenção da despesa e gastos públicos, a fim de reequilibrar as finanças públicas e a dívida externa, e permitir o ultrapassar desta crise;

— Portugal assumiu os seguintes compromissos na RTE-T:

a) Linha de TGV Porto-Vigo

b) Linha de TGV Lisboa-Madrid (troço transfronteiriço Évora-Mérida) e a Terceira Travessia do Tejo

c) Linha de TGV Lisboa-Porto;

— Segundo as respostas da Comissão E-008776/2010 e E-005752/2011, a data final de elegibilidade das despesas é 31 de dezembro de 2015;

— Diversos meios de comunicação em Portugal noticiam informações contraditórias sobre quais os projetos que Portugal pretende avançar e com prazos para a conclusão dos mesmos díspares das datas anunciadas pela Comissão;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Para dissipar as dúvidas surgidas na comunicação social, tem informação do Estado Português sobre que projetos de TGV irão avançar e sobre os projetos que, por força das circunstâncias económicas e financeiras, não poderão avançar no período de tempo concedido pela atual rubrica orçamental da RTE-T?

2. Se a resposta for afirmativa, quais serão os custos efetivos dos projetos redesenhados e qual será a parte financiada pelo Estado Português?

3. Quais os projetos que a Comissão considera mais importantes para os objetivos da coesão territorial, económica e social?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2013)

1. A Comissão recebeu das autoridades portuguesas a confirmação de que a ligação de alta velocidade Lisboa-Porto está atualmente posta de parte; O mesmo se aplica à ligação Porto-Vigo, estando a ser realizado um projeto alternativo.

2. A Comissão aguarda a apresentação formal do projeto revisto para a ligação Lisboa-Madrid; por conseguinte, é prematuro indicar os custos relacionados com o mesmo.

3. Tal como indicado na sua posição para o período de programação 2014-2020, a Comissão é favorável a uma mudança modal nos transportes em favor de modos de transporte mais respeitadores do ambiente e do desenvolvimento de ligações a redes europeias e internacionais. Sendo o transporte um setor fundamental para apoiar a competitividade da economia, a tónica deve ser colocada na rede de base, que diz respeito às ligações ferroviárias do corredor atlântico, nomeadamente Lisboa-Porto e Sines/Lisboa-Caia-Madrid. Estas linhas, juntamente com a ligação existente Aveiro-Salamanca, situam-se no corredor atlântico da rede principal («Lisboa-Estrasburgo») devido à sua importância para aproximar a costa atlântica europeia, nomeadamente Portugal, do centro da Europa, tornar o país mais acessível e mais integrado no mercado interno, bem como explorar plenamente o seu potencial marítimo.

Deve igualmente ser dada prioridade à redução dos congestionamentos e à melhoria das ligações ferroviárias, em coordenação com a estratégia de desenvolvimento portuário, o desenvolvimento da intermodalidade e ligações a plataformas logísticas. São igualmente importantes melhorias na rede ferroviária convencional existente, incluindo a eletrificação de linhas de caminho-de-ferro e a renovação de vias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003214/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: High-speed rail projects for Portugal

Portugal is implementing an austerity programme with the aim of rebalancing its public finances and external debt to enable it to overcome the current crisis.

Portugal has undertaken the following trans-European transport network (TEN-T) commitments:

a) Oporto-Vigo high-speed rail link;

b) Lisbon-Madrid high-speed rail link (Évora-Mérida cross-border section) and the third Tagus crossing;

c) Lisbon-Oporto high-speed rail link.

In its answers to Questions E-008776/2010 and E-005752/2011, the Commission stated that the funding must be spent by 31 December 2015.

Several Portuguese media outlets have given contradictory reports on the projects that Portugal intends to undertake, with deadlines that differ from those stated by the Commission.

1. To dispel the doubts that have arisen in the media, has the Commission received any information from the Portuguese authorities on which high-speed rail projects will be undertaken and which projects, for economic and financial reasons, will not take place within the timescale established under the current TEN-T budget heading?

2. If it has, what will be the actual costs of the redesigned projects and what proportion of the funding will come from the Portuguese State?

3. Which projects does the Commission consider to be most important in terms of territorial, economic and social cohesion?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

1. The Commission has received confirmation by the Portuguese Authorities that the high-speed link Lisboa-Oporto is currently set aside; the same applies for the Oporto-Vigo, where an alternative project is taking place.

2. The Commission is awaiting the formal submission of the revised project for the Lisboa-Madrid connection; it is therefore premature to indicate the costs related to the project.

3. As the Commission has indicated in its 'Position paper' for the programming period 2014-2020, it prones a modal shift in transport in favour of more environmental friendly transport modes and the development of links to European and international networks. Transport being a key area to support the competitiveness of the economy, the focus should be on the core network, which concerns the Atlantic corridor rail links, namely Lisbon-Porto and Sines/Lisboa-Caia-Madrid. These lines, together with the existing link Aveiro-Salamanca, lie on the Atlantic Core Network Corridor ('Lisboa-Strasbourg'), for their value in bringing the Atlantic coast of Europe, and notably Portugal, closer to the centre of Europe, more accessible and integrated into the Internal market, fully exploiting its maritime potential.

Priority should also be given to reducing bottlenecks and improving railway connections, in coordination with the port development strategy, development of intermodality and connections to logistic platforms. Improvements to the existing conventional rail network are also important, including the electrification of railway lines and renewal of tracks.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003215/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Vestígios de Pesticidas — Relatório da Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos de 2010

Considerando que:

— O relatório da Autoridade Europeia para a Segurança dos Alimentos (AESA) de 2010 indica que foram encontrados vestígios de pesticidas, acima dos valores legalmente permitidos, em comida embalada para bebé na República Portuguesa, no Reino de Espanha, na República Federal da Alemanha, na Hungria e na República Eslovaca;

— Os vestígios foram encontrados em 2 % do total das amostras de comida embalada para bebé analisadas e o mesmo relatório dá conta de que foram encontradas, na República Portuguesa, maçãs com resíduos de pesticidas acima do legislado;

— A AESA considera necessário melhorar a ligação entre a legislação sobre comida para bebé com as leis que autorizam e regulam os limites de pesticidas;

— A União Europeia possui uma competência exclusiva em matéria de política agrícola, nomeadamente em matéria de comércio de produtos agrícolas, ao abrigo do artigo 38.° do TFUE, e deve garantir a segurança dos abastecimentos, de acordo com o artigo 39.°, n.° 1, alínea d);

— Ao abrigo do artigo 169.° do TFUE, a União Europeia deve promover os interesses dos consumidores e assegurar a defesa destes, ao contribuir «para a proteção da saúde, da segurança e dos interesses económicos dos consumidores bem como para a promoção do seu direito à informação».

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. De que forma pode garantir que os pesticidas encontrados não põem em causa a saúde dos cidadãos a longo prazo, quando a própria AESA recomenda que a legislação em causa seja revista?

2. Quais as medidas que pretende adotar no sentido de sentido de melhorar a ligação entre a legislação existente sobre a comida para bebé e as diferentes leis que autorizam e regulam os limites de pesticidas presentes nos produtos alimentares?

3. Quais as medidas que pretende tomar para garantir a proteção da saúde pública, eliminando qualquer suspeita relacionada com a possibilidade de os níveis de pesticidas estarem acima dos valores permitidos nos produtos atualmente em circulação?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2013)

Os níveis máximos de pesticidas em alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças de tenra idade são fixados no limite de quantificação de 0,01 mg/kg, ou até menos, no caso de alguns pesticidas. Tal significa que os alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças de tenra idade têm de cumprir regras muito mais rigorosas do que os alimentos para a população em geral. Estes níveis são estabelecidos de modo a assegurar que se aplicam a esses alimentos os níveis mais baixos possíveis, tendo em conta que os lactentes e as crianças de tenra idade são grupos vulneráveis da população. Por conseguinte, a Comissão dará seguimento aos resultados com produtores de alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças de tenra idade, a fim de assegurar que as matérias-primas sejam cuidadosamente produzidas de modo a garantir que não impliquem excedências dos limites máximos de resíduos estabelecidos na legislação da UE.

No que respeita à relação entre a legislação específica em matéria de alimentos destinados a lactentes e crianças jovens ([1]) e a legislação geral relativa aos resíduos de pesticidas nos alimentos ([2]), a Comissão está ciente de que há diferenças de redação que se devem à história de desenvolvimento dos vários diplomas legislativos. A legislação da UE nesta matéria está a ser revista. O Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho chegaram rapidamente a um acordo em segunda leitura sobre o assunto e o regulamento pertinente deverá ser adotado nos próximos meses. No decurso dos debates sobre a aplicação do regulamento que se seguirão à sua adoção serão abordadas estas divergências.

([1]) Diretiva 2006/125/CE da Comissão, de 5 de dezembro de 2006 , relativa aos alimentos à base de cereais e aos alimentos para bebés destinados a lactentes e crianças jovens (JO L 339, 6.9. 2006, p. 16).
Diretiva 2006/141/CE da Comissão, de 22 de dezembro de 2006, relativa às fórmulas para lactentes e fórmulas de transição e que altera a Diretiva 1999/21/CE, JO L 401 de 30.12.2006, p. 1.

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 396/2005 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 23 de fevereiro de 2005, relativo aos limites máximos de resíduos de pesticidas no interior e à superfície dos géneros alimentícios e dos alimentos para animais, de origem vegetal ou animal, e que altera a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho, JO L 70 de 16.3.2005, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003215/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Pesticide residues — 2010 report of the European Food Safety Authority

According to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) report for 2010, the legal limits for pesticide residues in baby food were exceeded in Portugal, Spain, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia.

Residues were found in 2% of all baby food samples tested and the same report states that pesticide residues above the legal limit were found in apples in Portugal.

EFSA believes that better links should be established between baby food legislation and the laws governing pesticide limits.

The EU has exclusive competence for agricultural policy, with specific regard to the sale of agricultural products, under Article 38 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and must assure the availability of supplies in accordance with Article 39(1)(d).

Under Article 169 TFEU, the EU must promote and protect consumers' interests by contributing to 'protecting the health, safety and economic interests of consumers, as well as to promoting their right to information'.

1. How can the Commission ensure that the pesticides detected do not endanger the long-term health of the public when EFSA itself recommends that the relevant legislation should be reviewed?

2. What action will the Commission take to improve the link between existing baby food legislation and the various laws governing pesticide limits in food products?

3. What action will it take to protect public health by removing any possibility that pesticide levels in food products might exceed legal limits?

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

Maximum levels for pesticides in food intended for infants and young children are set at the limit of quantification at 0.01 mg/kg or even lower for some pesticides. This means that food intended for infants and young children has to comply with much stricter rules than food for the general population. These levels are set to ensure that the lowest possible levels apply to this food taking into account that infants and young children are vulnerable population groups. Therefore, the Commission will follow up on the findings with producers of food intended for infants and young children to ensure that raw products are carefully sourced so as to guarantee that they do not lead to exceedances of the maximum residues levels set in EU legislation.

As regards the link between the specific legislation on food intended for infants and young children ([1]) and the general legislation on pesticide residues in food ([2]), the Commission is aware that there are drafting differences that are due to the history of development of the different pieces of legislation. The EU legislation that covers food for infants and young children is being revised. The European Parliament and the Council have reached an early second reading agreement on the subject and the relevant Regulation is expected to be adopted in the coming months. In the course of the discussions on the implementation of the regulation that will follow its adoption, these differences will be addressed.

([1]) Commission Directive 2006/125/EC of 5. December 2006 on processed cereal based foods and baby foods for infants and young children (OJ L 339, 6.9. 2006, p. 16).
Commission Directive 2006/141/EC of 22 December 2006 on infant formulae and follow on formulae and amending Directive 1999/21/EC, OJ L 401, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels n pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending Council Directive 91/414/EEC, OJ L 70, 16.3.2005, p. 1.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003216/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Programas de Ajustamento em consequência da crise da dívida europeia

Considerando que:

— O recente estudo publicado pelo International Institute of Finance (IFF) aponta para uma recessão da economia helénica na ordem dos 20 %, acompanhada por uma taxa de desemprego de 26 %;

— O IFF explicita que, para que a República Helénica seja bem-sucedida em termos de recuperação económica, como a Irlanda, a primeira necessitará de um financiamento adicional da Zona Euro e do Fundo Monetário Internacional;

— O IFF aponta para o perigo da economia helénica poder sofrer uma nova deterioração devido à consolidação orçamental que lhe é requerida, podendo tal ajustamento implicar uma queda do PIB helénico entre os quatro e cinco pontos percentuais, acompanhado de um aumento de nove a dez pontos percentuais na dívida do país;

— O IFF considera vital que a economia helénica volte a crescer para quebrar o círculo vicioso em que a mesma se encontra.

Assim, pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Se não considera importante apoiar o crescimento da economia helénica através dos fundos estruturais da UE, relançando o investimento público, dando início a um círculo virtuoso?

2. Se equaciona um reajustamento das metas orçamentais para que seja possível à economia helénica recuperar, de forma sustentável, o seu crescimento?

3. Se existe o risco da economia portuguesa entrar no mesmo círculo vicioso em que a República Helénica se encontra?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(4 de junho de 2013)

Em dezembro de 2012, a trajetória orçamental para a Grécia já foi prorrogada por dois anos, a fim de ter em conta a recessão económica mais acentuada do que o esperado. Os objetivos para o novo saldo primário foram fixados em 0 %, 1,5 %, 3 % e 4,5 % do PIB relativamente ao período quadrienal 2013-2016.

Os Fundos Estruturais da UE desempenharão um papel fundamental na promoção do investimento e na recuperação económica na Grécia. Neste contexto, a Comissão encoraja uma resolução rápida das negociações em curso para o próximo Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (QFP), a fim de facilitar a rápida atribuição dos fundos estruturais da UE para a Grécia para o período de programação 2014-2020.

Em comparação com a Grécia, Portugal encontra-se numa situação diferente. Para 2013, o crescimento deverá continuar permanecer negativo, mas com uma estabilização no segundo semestre. Prevê-se um crescimento moderado para 2014. A economia será apoiada por um rápido processo de reequilíbrio das exportações, em combinação com o aumento previsto da procura externa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003216/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Adjustment programmes in response to the European debt crisis

According to a recent study published by the Institute of International Finance (IIF), the Greek economy has shrunk by 20% and unemployment stands at 26%.

The IIF explains that for the Greek economy to successfully recover, like Ireland, additional financing will be required from the euro area and the International Monetary Fund.

The IIF warns that the fiscal consolidation being demanded of the Greek economy could lead to further deterioration that would see Greek GDP contract by between four and five percentage points, accompanied by an increase of nine to ten percentage points in the country's debt.

The IIF believes it is vital for the Greek economy to return to growth to break the vicious cycle in which it is stuck.

1. Does the Commission not believe it is important to support Greek economic growth using EU structural funds to boost public investment and start a virtuous cycle?

2. Does it plan to adjust the budgetary targets so that sustainable economic growth can recover in Greece?

3. Is there any risk that the Portuguese economy will enter into the same vicious cycle as Greece?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

In December 2012, the fiscal path for Greece has already been extended by two years to take into account the deeper-than-expected economic recession. New primary balance targets were set at 0.0%, 1.5%, 3.0% and 4.5% of GDP respectively for the four years 2013-16.

EU structural funds will play a key role in promoting the investment and economic recovery in Greece. In this light, the Commission encourages an early resolution of the ongoing negotiations for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in order to facilitate the timely allocation of EU structural funds to Greece for the 2014-2020 programming period.

Portugal is in a different position compared with Greece. For 2013, growth is still projected to remain in negative territory but with a stabilisation in the second half of the year. Moderate growth is forecast for 2014. The economy will be supported by a rapid rebalancing towards exports which combines with the sustained projected increase in external demand.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003217/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Adesão da República da Islândia à União Europeia

Considerando que:

— A República da Islândia, atual membro da EFTA, fez o seu pedido de adesão em julho de 2009, tendo o Conselho decidido em junho de 2010 a abertura das respetivas negociações;

— A República da Islândia apresenta um elevado nível de integração face à União Europeia, fruto da sua participação no Espaço Económico Europeu, no Espaço Schengen, na OTAN e através da assinatura do Regulamento de Dublin sobre a Política de Asilo;

— A República da Islândia participa no mercado único e numa série de programas e agências europeias, ainda que sem direito de voto;

— São 35 os capítulos de negociação (que abrangem áreas tão diversas como a agricultura, regulação financeira, concorrência, livre circulação de capitais, etc. …) apresentados pela União Europeia e cuja legislação a República da Islândia tem que alinhar com o «acquis communautaire», isto é, com conjunto acumulado de legislação, atos jurídicos, e jurisprudência que formam o corpo do Direito da União Europeia;

— A República da Islândia tenciona concluir as negociações ainda neste ano de 2013;

— Um forte euroceticismo está atualmente presente na sociedade islandesa,

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o ponto atual das negociações entre a União Europeia e a República da Islândia?

2. Que capítulos apresentam maior divergência em relação ao «acquis communautaire»? Que esforços concretos deverá providenciar o Governo islandês para contornar essas mesmas divergências?

3. Considera viável o término das negociações com a República da Islândia ainda este ano?

4. Considera que o Governo islandês tem promovido o esclarecimento junto da população quanto à adesão da República da Islândia à União Europeia?

Resposta dada por Štefan Füle em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2013)

O avanço das negociações de adesão da Islândia à UE tem sido positivo. Dos 27 capítulos de negociação encetados, foram provisoriamente encerrados onze, desde a abertura oficial das negociações, em junho de 2010.

O Relatório Intercalar de 2012 da Comissão ([1]) refere que o nível global de preparação da Islândia relativamente ao acervo se mantém positivo, sobretudo devido à sua participação no Espaço Económico Europeu e em Schengen. Menciona igualmente diversos desafios a vencer antes da adesão, nos seguintes domínios: serviços financeiros, agricultura e desenvolvimento rural, ambiente, pescas, livre circulação de capitais, segurança alimentar, política veterinária e fitossanitária, fiscalidade e alfândegas.

O próximo relatório intercalar, a publicar em outubro de 2013, apresentará uma visão atualizada dos progressos realizados pela Islândia no sentido do cumprimento das disposições da UE e uma avaliação do nível geral de preparação para a adesão.

No que respeita ao calendário de conclusão das negociações, estas dependem da evolução da Islândia no sentido do cumprimento das referidas disposições.

Não cabe à Comissão opinar sobre as informações que o Governo da Islândia deve divulgar aos seus cidadãos.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/is_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003217/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Accession of the Republic of Iceland to the EU

The Republic of Iceland, already a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), submitted its application for accession to the EU in July 2009 and in June 2010 the Council decided to start accession negotiations.

The Republic of Iceland enjoys a high degree of integration with the EU through its participation in the European Economic Area, the Schengen Area and NATO, and is a signatory to the Dublin Regulation on asylum policy.

The Republic of Iceland participates in the single market and a number of European programmes and agencies, albeit without voting rights.

The EU has presented 35 chapters for negotiation (covering various areas such as agriculture, financial control, competition, free movement of capital, etc.) and the Republic of Iceland has to align its legislation in these areas with the *acquis communautaire*, which is all the legislation, legal acts and case law that make up the body of EC law.

The Republic of Iceland intends to conclude the negotiations in 2013.

Euroscepticism is rife in Icelandic society.

1. Can the Commission say what the current state of play is in the negotiations between the EU and the Republic of Iceland?

2. In respect of which chapters is there the most deviation from the *acquis communautaire*? What concrete efforts must the Icelandic Government make to overcome these differences?

3. Does the Commission think that completing the negotiations with the Republic of Iceland this year is realistic?

4. Does it believe that the Icelandic Government is keeping the population sufficiently informed about the Republic of Iceland's accession to the EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2013)

The EU accession negotiations with Iceland have been progressing well. 27 negotiation chapters have been opened, of which 11 have been provisionally closed since the official opening of accession negotiations in June 2010.

The Commission's 2012 Progress Report ([1]) notes that Iceland's overall level of preparedness to meet *acquis* requirements remains good, in particular due to Iceland's participation in the European Economic Area and Schengen. It also mentions a number of challenges, which will need to be addressed, prior to accession in the following areas: financial services; agriculture and rural development; environment; fisheries; free movement of capital; food safety, veterinary and phyto-sanitary policy; taxation and customs.

The next Progress Report that will be published in October 2013 will provide an update of the progress achieved by Iceland in meeting EU requirements and will assess its overall level of preparedness for membership.

As regards the timing of the completion of negotiations, the negotiations are based on Iceland's own merits and the pace depends on Iceland's progress in meeting the requirements for membership.

It is not for the Commission to comment on the dissemination of information by the Icelandic Government to their people.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/is_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003218/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Evolução das relações entre a União Europeia e a Santa Sé

Considerando que:

— A União Europeia e a Santa Sé estabeleceram relações diplomáticas a um nível de reciprocidade mútua desde 2006;

— As relações diplomáticas entre a União Europeia e a Santa Sé focam-se em assuntos como o diálogo intercultural e inter-religioso, a situação política em vários continentes (nomeadamente, África, Médio Oriente, relações com a China), a pobreza e a fome;

— A posição da Santa Sé nem sempre é coincidente com a da União Europeia ou dos seus Estados-Membros, em especial no que diz respeito à estrutura familiar ou às raízes cristãs da Europa;

— As posições divergentes da Santa Sé em relação às relações entre a União Europeia e a República da Turquia, em especial a posição expressa por S.S. Bento XVI, Papa Emérito, e a sua oposição à adesão da República da Turquia à UE;

— A União Europeia, através da República Italiana, possui relações em matéria económica e monetária por via das isenções alfandegárias concedidas à Cidade-Estado do Vaticano e por via do Acordo Monetário para a cunhagem de euros próprios.

Pergunta-se à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

1. Qual o ponto atual da situação das relações entre a União Europeia e a Santa Sé?

2. Quais as principais áreas de cooperação, para além das mencionadas, de interesse para a UE no quadro de um eventual aprofundamento?

3. Que resultados concretos, de ambas as partes, traduzem as relações estabelecidas entre ambas as entidades?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

1. A Santa Sé é um parceiro importante da UE em relação aos assuntos europeus e mundiais. As relações que a UE mantém com a Santa Sé incluem visitas mútuas, como a participação dos Presidentes do Conselho Europeu, da Comissão Europeia e do Parlamento Europeu na cerimónia de entronização do recém-eleito Papa Francisco e a visita recente de S. Exa. o Secretário da Santa Sé para as Relações com os Estados, Monsenhor Mamberti, às instituições da UE em Bruxelas, que teve lugar em novembro de 2012.

A UE tem uma Convenção Monetária com o Estado da Cidade do Vaticano, que constitui uma entidade distinta da Santa Sé, em conformidade com o direito internacional.

2. A UE está interessada no desenvolvimento de relações mais estreitas com a Santa Sé em quaisquer domínios em que o diálogo e/ou a cooperação possam ser mutuamente benéficos.

3. A UE está atualmente a estudar a melhor forma de reforçar as relações com a Santa Sé, nomeadamente através do aprofundamento do diálogo sobre um conjunto de questões.

Além das relações diplomáticas com a Santa Sé, a UE mantém com a Igreja Católica um diálogo aberto, transparente e regular no contexto do diálogo em curso com as igrejas, associações e comunidades religiosas, bem como com as organizações filosóficas e não confessionais, ao abrigo do artigo 17.° do TFUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003218/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Development of relations between the EU and the Holy See

— The EU and the Holy See established mutually beneficial diplomatic relations in 2006.

— Diplomatic relations between the EU and the Holy See focus on issues such as intercultural and interreligious dialogue, the political situation in several continents (including Africa, the Middle East, and relations with China), poverty and hunger.

— The Holy See's position does not always coincide with that of the EU or its Member States, particularly with regard to family structure or to Europe's Christian roots.

— The Holy See also holds differing opinions on EU-Turkey relations, particularly with regard to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's opposition to Turkey's accession to the EU.

— The EU, via Italy, maintains economic and monetary relations with the Holy See through customs exemptions granted to Vatican City State and through the Monetary Agreement which enables the country to mint its own euros.

1. What is the current state of relations between the EU and the Holy See?

2. What main areas of cooperation, aside from those mentioned, are of interest to the EU as part of a possible strengthening of relations?

3. What specific results, on both sides, reflect the relations established between the two parties?

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

1. The Holy See is an important partner for the EU on both European and global affairs. The relations which the EU maintains with the Holy See include mutual visits, such as the participation of the Presidents of the European Council, European Commission and European Parliament at the inaugural ceremony of newly elected Pope Francis and the recent visit of H.E. Monsignor Mamberti, Holy See Secretary for Relations with States, to the EU institutions in Brussels in November 2012.

The EU has a Monetary Agreement with the Vatican City State, which is a separate entity from the Holy See under international law.

2. The EU is interested in developing closer relations with the Holy See in any areas where dialogue and/or cooperation may be mutually beneficial.

3. The EU is currently considering how relations with the Holy See could be strengthened, such as through the enhancing dialogue on a number of issues.

In addition to the EU's diplomatic relations with the Holy See, the EU maintains an open, transparent and regular dialogue with the Catholic Church in the context of the ongoing dialogue with Churches, religious associations and communities as well as philosophical and non-confessional organisations under Article 17 TFEU.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003219/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Conclusões do Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (PNUD)

Tendo em conta que:

— O relatório do PNUD intitulado *A Ascensão do sul: Progresso humano num mundo diversificado*, de 2013, divulgado no passado dia 14 de março, na cidade do México, mostra que os países do hemisfério sul, para além dos BRIC, estão a crescer a uma escala sem precedentes, tirando da pobreza centenas de milhões de pessoas e integrando-as numa nova classe média mundial, e que a percentagem de pessoas em situação de extrema pobreza caiu de 43 % em 1990 para 22 % em 2008;

— Este documento fala de um «reequilíbrio global sem precedentes», uma vez que os países do hemisfério norte se encontram numa crise económica sem precedentes, com estagnação e recessão nos padrões de crescimento, embora não deixe de frisar que os países em crescimento enfrentam também enormes desafios;

— Segundo o mesmo documento, em 2020, o produto combinado das três principais economias do Sul, nomeadamente a China, o Brasil e a Índia, ultrapassará o produto dos seguintes países: Estados Unidos, França, Itália e Canadá, sendo que atualmente a produção dos três primeiros países é praticamente igual ao PIB combinado do Canadá, França, Alemanha, Itália, Reino Unido e Estados Unidos;

— O relatório do PNUD prevê que as relações comerciais entre países do sul vão ser maiores que as existentes entre os países mais desenvolvidos e que a migração entre países do sul já é maior que migração do sul para os países desenvolvidos;

Pergunta-se à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante da União:

1. Como avalia a Comissão estas conclusões?

2. Não considera que é altura de repensar a governação global, nomeadamente as instituições multilaterais, uma vez que os países do hemisfério sul estão sub-representados ainda numa lógica de pós-Segunda Guerra Mundial? Que papel poderá ter a União neste processo?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2013)

Nos últimos anos, o mundo sofreu mudanças radicais com alterações profundas a nível da dinâmica global. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente concorda com a análise do relatório do PNUD. De facto, o mundo tornou-se multipolar e os desafios globais como as alterações climáticas e a pressão sobre os ecossistemas tornam necessária uma maior cooperação entre os países.

A nível das parcerias e da cooperação para o desenvolvimento da UE existe uma constante adaptação a este contexto em mutação. A UE continua, nomeadamente, a reforçar as suas parcerias estratégicas e o diálogo e a cooperação com os atores existentes e emergentes a nível mundial, como o diálogo UE-Brasil sobre assuntos gerais relacionados com a ONU, a cooperação UE-Índia sobre a dimensão política e de segurança ou o diálogo e a cooperação UE-China sobre urbanização, diálogo entre as populações, energia e alterações climáticas. No âmbito da Política Europeia de Vizinhança, a UE desempenha um papel crucial no apoio às reformas políticas e económicas, na promoção da democracia, dos direitos humanos, da inclusão social e do desenvolvimento.

A UE continua a promover a reforma do sistema da ONU e dos respetivos órgãos, incluindo uma reforma profunda do Conselho de Segurança e um acordo sobre alterações climáticas para o período pós-2020, no âmbito do qual todas as partes assumem compromissos em função das suas possibilidades. O G20 tem-se revelado um fórum adequado para a coordenação das respostas aos desafios globais. A UE participou ativamente no apoio à cooperação entre o G20 e a comunidade mundial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003219/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Conclusions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The UNDP report *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*, launched on 14 March 2013 in Mexico City, shows that the countries of the southern hemisphere, in addition to the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China), are growing at an unprecedented rate, lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and into a new global middle class. The proportion of people living in extreme poverty has plunged from 43% in 1990 to 22% in 2008.

The report describes an 'epochal global rebalancing', as northern countries face an unprecedented economic crisis, with economies stagnating or in recession, although it acknowledges that developing countries also face enormous challenges.

By 2020, the report projects, the combined output of the three leading southern economies (China, Brazil and India) will surpass the production of the United States, France, Italy, and Canada, given that the output of the three southern countries is now virtually equal to the combined GDP of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The report predicts that trade between southern countries will exceed current trade between the more developed countries and that migration between southern countries is already greater than migration from the south to developed countries.

1. What is the Commission's view of these conclusions?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative agree that it is time to rethink global governance, and multilateral institutions in particular, since southern countries are still under-represented in a system that dates back to the end of the Second World War? What role can the EU play in this process?

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

The world has undergone enormous change over recent years with a profound shift in global dynamics. The HR/VP agrees with the analysis of the 2013 UNDP Report. Indeed, the world has become multipolar and global challenges such as climate change and stressed ecosystems require a stronger cooperation among countries.

The EU partnerships and development cooperation are already and constantly adapting to this evolving context. In particular, the EU continues strengthening its strategic partnerships, dialogues and cooperation with existing and emerging global players, including EU-Brazil dialogues on general UN matters; EU-India cooperation on the political and security dimension; EU-China dialogue and cooperation on urbanisation, people-to-people dialogue, energy and climate change. In the European Neighbourhood, the EU is playing a crucial role in supporting political and economic reforms, promoting democracy, human rights, social inclusion and development.

The EU continues to promote reform of the UN System and of its bodies and organs, including the comprehensive reform of the Security Council and a post-2020 climate change agreement where all parties take commitments according to their capabilities. The G20 has proven an effective forum for coordinating responses to global challenges. The EU participated actively in supporting the idea of the G20 working with the global community.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003221/13
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(21 martie 2013)

Subiect: Garanția pentru tineri — combaterea șomajului în rândul tinerelor femei

Garanția pentru tineri constituie o măsură decisivă pentru combaterea șomajului în rândul tinerilor și a repercusiunilor economice, dar și sociale catastrofale ale acestui fenomen în întreaga UE.

Costul european al șomajului este de peste 153 de miliarde euro: aceasta este suma pe care UE a cheltuit-o în 2011 pentru susținerea șomerilor, dintre care 80% sunt tineri.

Șomajul în rândul tinerilor este o temă foarte importantă, mai ales când este vorba despre tinerele femei, care reprezintă o categorie socială cu anumite caracteristici: sunt în majoritate beneficiarele unei diplome, mai multe tinere fiind absolvente de studii superioare decât tinerii bărbați, mobilitatea profesională a crescut în mod exponențial în rândurile tinerelor și, în plus, acestea sunt principalele destinatare ale presiunii sociale a scăderii natalității în UE.

Consideră Comisia a fi oportună o abordare de gen a șomajului în rândul tinerilor? Poate Comisia veni cu soluții specifice pentru combaterea șomajului în rândul tinerelor femei?

Cum va reuși Comisia să realizeze o piață europeană unică, în condițiile în care mai multe state membre au solicitat și obținut de la Comisie suspendarea accesului pe piața muncii interne a unora dintre cetățenii altor state membre, dintre care, este știut, majoritatea sunt tineri?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(21 mai 2013)

Comisia recunoaște că egalitatea între bărbați și femei este una dintre dimensiunile pe care măsurile de politică ar trebui să ia în considerare pentru a lupta împotriva șomajului în rândul tinerilor.

Criza actuală a afectat în special tinerii, femei și bărbați. În comparație cu bărbații tineri, este mai probabil ca tinerele femei să nu aibă un loc de muncă, să nu urmeze un ciclu de învățământ sau un curs de formare profesională, în principal pentru că este mai probabil ca acestea să nu fie în câmpul muncii (sau să fie inactive). Bărbații tineri au mai frecvent experiența unei tranziții reușite (și anume, care se termină cu un contract pe durată nedeterminată). În schimb, este mai mare probabilitatea ca femeile tinere să fie angajate cu o fracțiune de normă sau să fie lucrători temporari și să debuteze în situația deosebit de delicată pe care o presupune un loc de muncă temporar cu fracțiune de normă.

Recomandarea Consiliului privind instituirea unei garanții pentru tineret ([1]), specifică așadar că mecanismele garanției pentru tineret ar trebui să acorde atenție diferențelor între femei și bărbați și diversității tinerilor cărora li se adresează.

Dispoziții tranzitorii, care permit statelor membre să restricționeze pentru o perioadă limitată de timp libera circulație a forței de muncă, au fost incluse în cinci din ultimele șapte tratate de aderare la UE. Astfel de aranjamente permit o derogare temporară de la libertatea fundamentală la liberă circulație a lucrătorilor, care reprezintă un pilon esențial al pieței unice a UE. Anumite restricții privind libera circulație a lucrătorilor români și bulgari sunt aplicate în prezent de 9 state membre. Cu toate acestea, drepturile totale la libera circulație trebuie să fie garantate de aceste state membre începând de la 1 ianuarie 2014.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/ro/13/st06/st06944.ro13.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003221/13
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Youth Guarantee — combating unemployment among young women

Youth Guarantee is a decisive measure to combat unemployment among young people and the catastrophic economic and social repercussions of this phenomenon EU-wide.

The European cost of unemployment is over EUR 153 billion. This is the sum that the EU spent in 2011 to support the unemployed, of whom 80% are young people.

Youth unemployment is a very important issue, particularly for young women, who represent a social category with certain characteristics. The majority of them have a diploma. More of them have graduated from higher education than young men. Professional mobility has increased exponentially among young women. Moreover, they are also the main recipients of social pressure due to the declining birth rate in the EU.

Does the Commission consider a gender-based approach to youth unemployment to be timely? Can the Commission come up with specific solutions to combat unemployment among young women?

How will the Commission achieve a single European market when several Member States have requested and obtained from the Commission the suspension of access to the internal labour market for some of the citizens of other Member States, knowing that the majority of these citizens are young people?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2013)

The Commission recognises that gender is one of the dimensions that policy measures should take into account in order to effectively fight youth unemployment.

The current crisis has particularly hit young women and men. Young women are more likely than young men to be not in employment, education or training, mainly because they are more likely to be out of the labour force (or inactive). Young men more frequently experience a successful transition path (i.e. ending with a permanent contract). In contrast, young women are more likely to be part-time and temporary workers and to start in the doubly fragile position of a temporary, part-time job.

The Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee ([1]) thus specifies that Youth Guarantee schemes should pay attention to the gender and diversity of the young people who are being targeted.

Transitional arrangements, which permit Member States to restrict for a limited period of time the free movement of labour, have been included in five out of the last seven EU accessions treaties. Such arrangements temporarily derogate from the fundamental freedom of free movement of workers, which is an essential pillar of the EU's Single Market. Certain restrictions concerning the free movement of Romanian and Bulgarian workers are currently applied by 9 Member States. Full free movement rights must however be guaranteed by these Member States as from 1st January 2014.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003222/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Cumplimiento del objetivo de déficit y posible violación de los Tratados

Cataluña, Andalucía, Extremadura, Valencia y Canarias no recibirán del Gobierno de Rajoy ninguna partida económica destinada a sanidad, educación y servicios sociales, entre otros motivos por no estar al día en el pago de la Seguridad Social ni haber cumplido los objetivos de déficit. Los médicos de las comunidades mencionadas no recibirán fondos estatales para la formación en donaciones y trasplantes. Según la Ley de Presupuestos Generales del Estado para el año 2013, de 27 de diciembre, el Ministerio de Hacienda bloqueará cualquier transferencia a las comunidades que no cumplan con estos requisitos, entre otros. Esta decisión se ha tomado para aplicar las políticas destinadas a cumplir el objetivo de déficit y las recomendaciones del «paquete de seis». Sin embargo, el Gobierno español ha incumplido en los últimos años el pago, establecido por ley, de 2 200 millones para Cataluña en concepto del fondo de competitividad, y en 2012 redujo un 92 % las transferencias dedicadas a gasto social. El artículo 9 del TFUE dice que «la Unión tendrá en cuenta las exigencias relacionadas con la promoción de un nivel de empleo elevado, con la garantía de una protección social adecuada, con la lucha contra la exclusión social y con un nivel elevado de educación, formación y protección de la salud humana». Y el artículo 168 deja claro que, en la implementación de las políticas de la Unión, se deberá proteger la salud humana. Por otro lado, el artículo 6, apartado 5, del texto acordado por la Comisión, el Parlamento y el Consejo basado en la propuesta 2011/0385(COD) del «paquete de dos» dice que «los esfuerzos de consolidación presupuestaria establecidos en el programa de ajuste macroeconómico tendrán en cuenta la necesidad de garantizar recursos suficientes para las políticas fundamentales, como la educación y la salud».

¿No cree la Comisión que esta decisión del Gobierno español no ha tenido en cuenta la necesidad de garantizar recursos suficientes para las políticas fundamentales, como la educación y la salud como se establece en el paquete de los dos?

¿Piensa recomendar la Comisión al Gobierno español que su programa de ajuste macroeconómico no afecte a la financiación del programa de trasplantes de órganos?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a su propia pregunta escrita E-002428/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003222/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Meeting deficit targets and possible violations of the EU Treaties

The autonomous communities of Catalonia, Andalusia, Extremadura, Valencia and the Canary Islands will not receive any financial contributions from Rajoy's government for health, education or social services, due to, among other reasons, their failure to keep up to date with social security payments and meet deficit targets. Doctors in these autonomous communities will not receive any state funds for training on organ donation and transplants. According to the law on the general state budgets for 2013, on 27 December the Ministry of Finance will block any transfers to those autonomous communities which have not met the requirement to pay social security contributions and keep to their deficit targets, *inter alia*. This decision is related to the implementation of policies aimed at meeting deficit targets and the recommendations included in the six-pack. Although it is required to do so by law, the Spanish Government has failed to pay EUR 2.2 billion to Catalonia from the competitiveness fund in the past few years, and in 2012 it reduced the amount transferred for social expenditure in this autonomous community by 92%. Article 9 of the TFEU states that 'the European Union shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health'. Article 168 makes it clear that human health must be protected in the implementation of Union policies. In addition, Article 6(5) of the text adopted by Parliament and Council following a proposal by the Commission as part of the 2011/0385(COD) legislative co-decision procedure on the two-pack says that 'the fiscal consolidation efforts set out in the macroeconomic adjustment programme shall take into account the need to ensure sufficient means for fundamental policies, such as education and healthcare.'

Does the Commission agree that this decision by the Spanish Government has failed to take into account the need to ensure sufficient means for fundamental policies, such as education and healthcare, as laid down in the two-pack?

Will the Commission recommend to the Spanish Government that its macroeconomic adjustment programme should not affect funding for the organ transplant programme?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the Honourable Member's Written Question E-002428/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003223/13
alla Commissione
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: 11 marzo 2013, termine per la messa al bando di test cosmetici sugli animali

Il 13 marzo 2013 è terminato il periodo di graduale eliminazione dei test sugli animali per i prodotti cosmetici in Europa. A partire da tale data, i cosmetici sperimentati sugli animali non possono più essere commercializzati nell'Unione europea, in applicazione della direttiva 2003/15/CE che ha ampliato la direttiva 76/768/CEE.

La Commissione ha esaminato attentamente le ripercussioni del divieto di commercializzazione e ritiene che esistano motivi imperativi a favore della sua imposizione. Questo punto di vista corrisponde a quello di molti cittadini europei, profondamente convinti che lo sviluppo di prodotti cosmetici non giustifichi i test sugli animali.

La ricerca di metodi alternativi continuerà, fa sapere la Commissione, dato che ancora non è del tutto possibile sostituire la sperimentazione sugli animali con metodi alternativi. La Commissione aveva stanziato per tale ricerca circa 238 milioni di euro tra il 2007 e il 2011.

Può la Commissione riferire nel dettaglio i risultati di tale ricerca?

Ritiene essa che la ricerca di metodi alternativi alla sperimentazione animale possa progredire e portare a risultati soddisfacenti nel breve o medio termine in mancanza di fondi stanziati a tal fine?

Nella partecipazione attiva alla ricerca di metodi alternativi, qual è il ruolo che essa attribuirà ai milioni di cittadini che si oppongono alla sperimentazione animale?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(18 aprile 2013)

La ricerca finanziata dall'Unione europea nell'ambito del Sesto e del Settimo programma quadro (PQ6 e PQ7) è incentrata sul principale obiettivo degli studi sui metodi alternativi, ovvero colmare la carenza di conoscenze scientifiche di base nelle scienze biomediche e tossicologiche. Queste conoscenze sono essenziali per determinare con certezza tutti i possibili effetti negativi che una sostanza chimica può procurare a un organismo.

La ricerca finanziata dall'Unione europea ha prodotto un vasto corpus di conoscenze scientifiche, pubblicate nelle principali riviste scientifiche. Per condurre questi studi si sono dovuti sviluppare in parallelo nuovi metodi di ricerca, basati sulle tecnologie «omiche», sulla biologia dei sistemi, sugli approcci computazionali e sui sistemi di test cellulari in vitro, che hanno costituito di per se stessi uno dei risultati delle ricerche condotte. Queste attività continuano nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro, per esempio attraverso il consorzio misto pubblico-privato SEURAT-1 (http://www.seurat-1.eu/). Il laboratorio di riferimento dell'Unione europea per le alternative alla sperimentazione animale (EURL ECVAM) del Centro comune di ricerca della Commissione segue con attenzione la questione fondamentale della convalida dei metodi alternativi. Ulteriori dettagli sui risultati e sugli attuali progressi dei progetti finanziati dall'Unione europea sono reperibili sul sito web dell'azione di coordinamento dell'Unione europea AXLR8 (http://www.axlr8.eu).

La proposta della Commissione per Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020), prevede un ulteriore sostegno a favore dei metodi che offrono un'alternativa ai test sugli animali ([1]). In questa fase del processo legislativo, tuttavia, non è possibile prevedere gli stanziamenti di eventuali fondi destinati a quest'area di ricerca. Come per il Settimo programma quadro, la Commissione incentiverà il coinvolgimento di tutte le parti interessate nelle attività di Orizzonte 2020.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:it:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003223/13
to the Commission
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: No more testing of cosmetics on animals after 11 March 2013

The period for phasing out animal testing for cosmetic products in Europe ended on 11 March 2013. With effect from that date, cosmetics tested on animals may no longer be marketed within the EU, as has been laid down in Directive 2003/15/EC amending Directive 76/768/EEC.

The Commission has carefully weighed up the effects of a marketing ban and considers that there are compelling reasons to impose one. That view is shared by the many European citizens who firmly believe that developing cosmetic products is not an end to be achieved by means of animal testing.

According to the Commission, research into alternative methods will continue, given that animal testing cannot yet be replaced completely by such methods. The Commission allocated approximately EUR 238 million for that purpose between 2007 and 2011.

Can the Commission say in detail what has been the outcome of this research?

Does it think that the research into methods offering an alternative to animal testing can move forward and produce satisfactory results in the short or medium term when there are no funds earmarked for it?

As regards active participation in the research into alternative methods, what role will be played by the millions of citizens opposed to animal testing?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(18 April 2013)

EU-funded research under the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes (FP6 and FP7) has focused on the main challenge in research into alternative methods, namely the lack of basic scientific knowledge in toxicological and biomedical sciences. Such knowledge is essential to be able to ascertain with confidence all the possible adverse effects that a chemical could have on an organism.

EU-supported research has produced a large body of scientific knowledge, which has been published in mainstream scientific journals. This research has required — and resulted in — the simultaneous development of new research methods, based on 'omics' technologies, systems biology and computational approaches, and in vitro (cell based) test systems. This activity is continuing under FP7, for example through the public-private consortium SEURAT-1 (http://www.seurat-1.eu). The key aspect of validation of alternative methods is closely followed by the European Union Reference Laboratory for Alternatives to Animal Testing (EURL ECVAM) of the Commission's Joint Research Centre. Further details on results and current progress in EU-supported projects are available at the website of the EU coordination action AXLR8 (http://www.axlr8.eu).

The Commission proposal for Horizon 2020 — the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) envisages further support to methods offering an alternative to animal testing. ([1]) At this stage of the legislative process, however, it is not possible to predict the possible allocation of funds to this area of research. As under in FP7, the Commission will encourage the involvement of all stakeholders in Horizon 2020 activities.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003224/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Aplicación de la Directiva marco 2008/56/CE sobre la estrategia marina en la isla de Menorca

Parece ser que el Puerto de Maó abocará 200 000m³ de lodos contaminados con mercurio, plomo y cobre a la costa de Menorca ([1]). Los lodos provienen del dragado de la parte industrial del puerto y la Autoridad Portuaria los quiere trasladar tan solo a una milla de la costa, sin tener en cuenta que la isla es Reserva de la Biosfera. Parece ser que los lodos tienen una contaminación de nivel 3 y que, por lo tanto, son una amenaza real para el ecosistema y para aquellos que se alimenten de los peces u otros seres vivos que vivan allí. También es preocupante el efecto que pueda tener sobre la calidad de las aguas para el baño, ya que están muy cerca las playas de Cala Sant Esteve, Cala Rafalet, S'Algar y Cala Alcaufar. Parece ser que un informe del Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO) desaconsejaba abocar este lodo del puerto de Maó al mar, por los riesgos de contaminación de las aguas oceánicas en el consumo de pescado y el ecosistema marino ([2]).

¿Cree la Comisión que se están cumpliendo la Directiva marco 2008/56/CE sobre la estrategia marina de la UE, así como el Convenio de Barcelona y sus protocolos en este proceso?

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-006184/2011, de 28 de septiembre de 2011, el Sr. Potočnik, en nombre de la Comisión, declaró que «en el contexto de la Política Marítima Integrada de la UE, la Comisión ha iniciado una serie de conversaciones periódicas con todos los Estados de la cuenca mediterránea, con el objetivo de sensibilizar e intercambiar buenas prácticas para lograr un enfoque integrado de todas las actividades que tienen repercusiones sobre los mares, en aras de un desarrollo sostenible». ¿Ya ha hablado la Comisión con el Reino de España sobre este tema? En caso afirmativo, ¿podría indicar la Comisión los acuerdos alcanzados?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de mayo de 2013)

La Directiva marco sobre la estrategia marina (DMEM-2008/56/CE) ([3]) exige que los Estados miembros alcancen o mantengan el buen estado medioambiental a más tardar en 2020. Solo será posible apoyarse en sus disposiciones cuando hayan entrado en vigor los requisitos sobre seguimiento (artículo 11), es decir, después del 15 de julio de 2014.

Las disposiciones del Convenio de Barcelona y sus protocolos exigen que las Partes prevengan, reduzcan, combatan y en la mayor medida de lo posible eliminen la contaminación. Se aplican en la EU a través de varias disposiciones legislativas, entre ellas la Directiva marco sobre residuos (2008/98/CE) ([4]), según la cual las operaciones de vertido como las que describe Su Señoría deben ser aprobadas por las autoridades competentes.

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de que la operación a que se hace referencia ha sido suspendida por las autoridades portuarias regionales a instancias de la Fiscalía ([5]).

Teniendo en cuenta que existe un procedimiento en curso ante los tribunales españoles, la Comisión no considera necesario poner en marcha una investigación en este momento.

En lo que se refiere al diálogo mencionado por Su Señoría, la Comisión creó en 2009 un grupo de trabajo sobre la política marítima integrada en el Mediterráneo dentro del marco de EuroMed. España participa en las reuniones del grupo, que actúa como foro de debate. Hasta la fecha no se ha alcanzado ningún acuerdo concreto.

([1]) http://www.ambientum.com/boletino/noticias/Un-informe-desaconseja-dragado-puerto-Mahon.asp
([2]) http://oceana.org/es/eu/prensa-e-informes/comunicados-de-prensa/oceana-saca-a-la-luz-un-informe-desfavorable-del-ieo-al-proyecto-de-dragado-de-puerto
([3]) DO L 164 de 25.6.2008, p. 19.
([4]) DO L 312 de 22.11.2008, p. 3.
([5]) http://www.portsdebalears.com/311.php3?idioma=esp&idNoticia=197

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003224/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Application of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC in the island of Menorca

Apparently, Port Maó is to release 200 000 m^3 of sludge contaminated with mercury, lead and copper along the coast of Menorca ([1]). The sludge comes from the dredging of the industrial area of the port and the port authority is asking for it to be moved only a mile away from the coast, without taking into account the fact that the island is a Biosphere Reserve. It seems that the sludge has a contamination level of 3 and, therefore, poses a real threat to the ecosystem and to those eating fish and other sea creatures from that area. Also of concern is the effect that this could have on bathing water quality, since the beaches of Cala Sant Esteve, Cala Rafalet, S'Algar and Cala Alcaufar are very close. Apparently, a report by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO) advised against the sludge being discharged from Port Maó into the sea, because of the risks that the pollution of ocean water might have in terms of fish consumption and the marine ecosystem ([2]).

Does the Commission believe that this process complies with the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC and the Barcelona Convention and its protocols?

In his answer of 28 September 2011 to question E-006184/2011, Mr Potočnik, on behalf of the Commission, said that 'in the context of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy, the Commission has launched a regular dialogue with all Mediterranean coastal States, aimed at raising awareness and exchanging best practices on an integrated approach to all activities having an impact at sea and the achievement of sustainable growth thereto'. Has the Commission already spoken with the Kingdom of Spain on this issue? If so, could the Commission indicate what agreements have been reached?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD-2008/56/EC) ([3]) requires Member States to achieve or maintain good environmental status by 2020. It will only be possible to rely on its provisions when the requirements on monitoring (Art.11) will have entered into effect, i.e. after 15 July 2014.

The provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols require that Parties prevent, abate, combat and to the fullest possible extent eliminate pollution. They are implemented in the EU through various pieces of legislation including the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) ([4]) according to which disposal operations of the kind described by the Honourable Member necessitate the approval of the competent authorities.

The Commission is aware that the disposal operation referred to has been suspended by the regional port authorities further to a Prosecutor's order ([5]).

Considering that proceedings are ongoing before the Spanish courts, the Commission does not deem it necessary to initiate an enquiry at this time.

As regards the dialogue referred to by the Honourable member, the Commission has set up in 2009 a Working Group on Integrated Maritime Policy in the Mediterranean under the EuroMed framework. Spain participates in the meetings of the group which provides a forum for discussion. No specific agreements have been reached to date.

([1]) http://www.ambientum.com/boletino/noticias/Un-informe-desaconseja-dragado-puerto-Mahon.asp
([2]) http://oceana.org/en/eu/media-reports/press-releases/oceana-publishes-an-ieo-report-against-the-project-for-the-dredding-of-mao-harbour
([3]) OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19.
([4]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3.
([5]) http://www.portsdebalears.com/311.php3?idioma=esp&idNoticia=197

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003225/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(21 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Imposición de recortes a las subvenciones para formación de sanitarios especializados en trasplantes en las regiones que no cumplan los objetivos de estabilidad presupuestaria de la UE

El Ministerio de Hacienda del Gobierno de España ha anunciado que las Comunidades Autónomas que no cumplan en 2013 con el objetivo de estabilidad presupuestaria impuesto por la Comisión Europea no podrán beneficiarse de las subvenciones públicas destinadas a la formación del personal sanitario especializado en la donación y trasplantes de órganos.

La formación del personal sanitario que participa en la extracción y transplante de órganos se articula a través de cursos formativos y actividades que organizan las autoridades sanitarias de las Comunidades Autónomas mediante subvenciones otorgadas por el Ministerio de Sanidad. Estas actividades, que incluyen tanto formación médica como formación en materia de atención psicológica y familiar, constituyen una de las claves del éxito del sistema español de trasplantes de órganos. El sistema español de donación y trasplantes de órganos ha llevado a España a ocupar una posición de liderazgo mundial en donación y trasplantes desde hace 21 años y ha obtenido el reconocimiento de la Organización Mundial de la Salud como un modelo a seguir y a copiar por el resto de países.

El Gobierno de España ha decidido que, a partir de 2013, el Ministerio de Hacienda tenga que emitir un informe vinculante que certifique que la Comunidad Autónoma en cuestión cumple con los objetivos de déficit público antes de otorgar las subvenciones a estos fines formativos. Esta medida no sólo pone peligro la integridad del sistema español de donación y trasplantes y la seguridad de los pacientes, sino que además supone una vulneración del principio de igualdad de los ciudadanos en el acceso a la salud y una vulneración del principio de no discriminación de los ciudadanos por razón del lugar en el que habitan, condicionando la formación del personal sanitario a la buena gestión de sus gobernantes regionales.

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de esta medida anunciada por el Ministerio de Hacienda del Gobierno de España?

¿Es compatible esta medida con el artículo 6, apartado 5, del Reglamento sobre el reforzamiento de la supervisión económica y presupuestaria de los Estados miembros cuya estabilidad financiera dentro de la zona del euro experimenta o corre el riesgo de experimentar graves dificultades, que establece que los esfuerzos de consolidación presupuestaria establecidos en el programa de ajuste macroeconómico tendrán en cuenta la necesidad de garantizar recursos suficientes para las políticas fundamentales como la salud?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2013)

1. La Comisión está al corriente de la Orden SSI/561/2013, de 5 de abril, por la que se convocan las subvenciones para el fomento de la donación y el trasplante de órganos y tejidos humanos ([1]), pero esta Orden no incluye las condiciones a las que se refiere Su Señoría. La Comisión no está al corriente de las medidas a las que se refiere Su Señoría.

Además, España participa en el «Plan de acción ([2]) sobre donación y trasplante de órganos (2009-2015): Cooperación reforzada entre los Estados miembros», adoptado por la Comisión en 2008. En virtud de este Plan de acción, que complementa la legislación de la UE ([3]), la primera de las diez acciones prioritarias establece que los Estados miembros deben explotar plenamente el potencial de obtención de órganos de donantes fallecidos mediante el fomento de la función de los «coordinadores de trasplantes en todos los hospitales con potencial de donación de órganos», incluida la ejecución de programas eficaces de formación de esos coordinadores. Al amparo del programa de salud de la UE, la Comisión ha financiado proyectos europeos de formación en este ámbito (ETPOD ([4]), Formación de instructores ([5])) dirigidos por expertos españoles.

2. España no tiene un programa de ajuste macroeconómico.

([1]) http://www.ont.es/Documents/BOE-A-2013-3788.pdf
([2]) COM(2008) 819/3, http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_threats/human_substance/oc_organs/docs/organs_action_es.pdf
([3]) Directiva 2010/53/UE sobre normas de calidad y seguridad de los órganos humanos destinados al trasplante.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005205
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/tenders_H03_2010.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003225/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Cuts to subsidies for the training of health workers specialising in transplants, in regions that do not meet the EU's budget stability targets

Spain's Ministry of Finance has announced that autonomous communities which, in 2013, do not meet the budget stability target set by the Commission will not be able to benefit from public subsidies for the training of health workers specialising in organ donation and transplants.

Health workers involved in organ removal and transplant receive their training on courses and through activities which the health authorities in the autonomous communities organise using subsidies from the Ministry of Health. These activities, which include both medical training and training in psychological and family care, are one of the keys to the success of the Spanish organ transplant system.

The Spanish organ donation and transplant system has made Spain a world leader in donation and transplants for the past 21 years. Spain has been recognised by the World Health Organisation as a model for other countries to follow and emulate.

The Spanish Government has now decided that, as of 2013, the Ministry of Finance has to issue a mandatory report certifying that the autonomous community in question is adhering to the public deficit targets, before the subsidies for this training can be granted.

Not only does this measure jeopardise the whole Spanish donation and transplant system and the safety of patients but, in making the training of health workers dependent on the sound management of their regional governments, it would also seem to infringe the principle that all citizens have equal access to healthcare and the principle of non-discrimination against citizens on the grounds of where they live.

Is the Commission aware of this measure that the Spanish Ministry of Finance has announced?

Is this measure compatible with Article 6(5) of the regulation on the strengthening of economic and budgetary surveillance of Member States experiencing or threatened with serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability in the euro area, which states that the fiscal consolidation efforts set out in the macroeconomic adjustment programme shall take into account the need to ensure sufficient means for fundamental policies, such as healthcare?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of Ministerial Order SSI/561/2013 of 5 April 2013, calling for 2013 grants to promote the donation and transplantation of human organs and tissues ([1]). But this Order does not include the conditionality mentioned by the Honourable Member. The Commission is not aware of the measures referred to by the Honourable Member.

Moreover, Spain is participating in the 'Action Plan ([2]) on Organ donation and transplantation (2009-2015): Strengthened Cooperation between Member States' adopted by the Commission in 2008. Under this Action Plan which is complementary to the EU legislation ([3]), the first of 10 priority actions states that Member States should reach the full potential of deceased donation by 'promoting the role of transplant donor coordinators in every hospital where there is a potential for organ donation', including the implementation of effective training programmes for coordinators. Via the EU Health Programme, the Commission has funded in this field European training projects (ETPOD ([4]), Train the trainers ([5])) led by Spanish experts.

2. Spain does not have a macroeconomic adjustment programme.

([1]) http://www.ont.es/Documents/BOE-A-2013-3788.pdf
([2]) COM(2008) 819/3, http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_threats/human_substance/oc_organs/docs/organs_action_en.pdf
([3]) Directive 2010/53/EU on standards of quality and safety of human organs intended for transplantation.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005205.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/tenders_H03_2010.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003226/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(21 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απογραφή πληθυσμού στην ΠΓΔΜ

Ο Επίτροπος κ. Fule απάντησε στην ερώτησή μου με αριθμό E-010109/2012 αναφέροντας κάποια απογραφή πληθυσμού που έγινε πριν 11 χρόνια στα Σκόπια, η οποία όμως έχει προξενήσει ενστάσεις ως προς την αξιοπιστία της από όλες τις μειονότητες της χώρας αυτής, δηλαδή τους Αλβανούς, του Έλληνες, τους Εβραίους, τους Ρομά κ.λπ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Γιατί δεν ζητεί από τα Σκόπια μια πραγματικά αξιόπιστη απογραφή πληθυσμού (υπό την αιγίδα αποκλειστικά της ΕΕ στην οποία θέλει να ενταχθεί η ΠΓΔΜ), αφού τα πολιτικά κριτήρια της Κοπεγχάγης είναι συγκεκριμένα και δεν επιτρέπουν παρεκκλίσεις και «εκπτώσεις» ιδιαιτέρως για χώρες που έχουν βεβαρημένο παρελθόν;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την τήρηση των κριτηρίων της Κοπεγχάγης για την προσχώρηση στην ΕΕ και αναφέρεται σ'αυτά στις ετήσιες εκθέσεις προόδου που καταρτίζει ([1]). Η επόμενη έκθεση προόδου θα δημοσιευθεί τον Οκτώβριο του 2013.

Η απογραφή πληθυσμού του 2002 που πραγματοποιήθηκε στην Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας έγινε στο πλαίσιο διεθνούς παρακολούθησης και παρατήρησης από εμπειρογνώμονες των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ και από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, που κάλυψε όλα τα στάδια της απογραφής. Η απογραφή κρίθηκε σύμφωνη με τα διεθνή πρότυπα.

Η Πρώην Γιουγκοσλαβική Δημοκρατία της Μακεδονίας προγραμμάτισε τη διενέργεια απογραφής του πληθυσμού και των κατοικιών το 2011. Για να εξασφαλιστεί η διαφάνεια και να ενισχυθεί η εμπιστοσύνη στα αποτελέσματα της απογραφής, οι αρχές ζήτησαν να αξιολογηθεί η απογραφή του πληθυσμού από ομοτίμους ειδικούς σε διεθνές επίπεδο και στο επίπεδο της ΕΕ. Η αξιολόγηση από ομοτίμους κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι η χώρα ήταν τεχνικώς προετοιμασμένη για τη διενέργεια απογραφής σύμφωνα με τις διεθνείς συστάσεις που έχουν δημοσιευτεί από την UNECE/Eurostat. Ωστόσο, κατά τη διάρκεια του σταδίου καταμέτρησης, λόγω δυσκολιών εφαρμογής της μεθοδολογίας που προβλέπει η νομοθεσία, η πράξη ακυρώθηκε από την κρατική επιτροπή απογραφής.

Είναι σημαντικό οι απογραφές να προετοιμάζονται καταλλήλως και να διεξάγονται με ασφάλεια, ειρηνικά και κατά τρόπο ώστε να παράγεται ακριβή εικόνα του πληθυσμού της χώρας. Όσον αφορά το θέμα αυτό, οι εθνικές αρχές διερευνούν επί του παρόντος τεχνικές μεθόδους για τη συλλογή των απαιτούμενων πληροφοριών απογραφής, με βάση τα διδάγματα που αποκομίστηκαν από την ακύρωση της απογραφής του 2011, καθώς και τις βέλτιστες διεθνείς πρακτικές.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003226/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Population census in FYROM

In his answer to my written question E-010109/2012 Commissioner Füle referred to a population census that took place eleven years ago in Skopje, which, however, has provoked complaints with regards to its reliability from the country's ethnic minorities, i.e. Albanians, Greeks, Jews, Roma, etc.

Will the Commission say:

— Why has it not asked Skopje to carry out a reliable population census (monitored exclusively by the EU, which the FYROM wants to join), given that the Copenhagen political criteria specifically forbid exceptions and 'concessions', particularly for countries with a bad track record?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The European Commission closely monitors and reports on the fulfilment of the Copenhagen Criteria for membership in the EU in its annual progress reports ([1]). The next progress report will be published in October 2013.

The 2002 census held in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was conducted with international monitoring and observation by experts from EU Member States and the European Commission, covering all stages of the census. The census was assessed as being in line with international standards.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia planned to have a population and housing census in 2011. In order to ensure transparency and strengthen the trust in the census results, authorities requested an international/EU peer assessment of the population census. The peer assessment concluded that the country was technically prepared to conduct a census in line with the international recommendations published by UNECE/Eurostat. However during the enumeration phase due to difficulties in implementing the methodology prescribed by the law, the operation was cancelled by the State Census Committee.

It is of importance that censuses are prepared appropriately and conducted safely, calmly and in such a way that produces an accurate picture of the population in the country. The national authorities are in this respect currently exploring technical ways to collect the necessary census information, taking into consideration the lessons learnt from the 2011 cancelled census as well as the best international practices.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003227/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(21 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δήμευση καταθέσεων στις τράπεζες

Η ΕΕ έχει ως βασική της αρχή την λειτουργία της ελεύθερης οικονομίας και των μηχανισμών της, μεταξύ των οποίων εξέχουσα θέση έχει, φυσικά, η λειτουργία των τραπεζών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Επιτρέπεται από τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ η δήμευση καταθέσεων για την αντιμετώπιση δημοσιονομικών ανισορροπιών;

— Σε ποια χώρα της ΕΕ έχει εφαρμοστεί — και πότε — κάποιο τέτοιο μέτρο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Μαΐου 2013)

Οι κυπριακές αρχές έλαβαν μέτρα σύμφωνα με τα οποία οι ανασφάλιστες καταθέσεις στην Τράπεζα της Κύπρου χρησιμοποιήθηκαν για να ανακεφαλαιοποιηθούν οι τράπεζες καταθέσεων, όπως προβλέπεται στην επικείμενη οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών, ενώ οι ανασφάλιστες καταθέσεις στη Λαϊκή Τράπεζα της Κύπρου θα αντιμετωπισθούν με τη συνήθη διαδικασία αφερεγγυότητας. Σε ουδεμία των ως άνω διαδικασιών εθίγησαν ασφαλισμένες καταθέσεις.

Ουδέποτε κατασχέθηκαν καταθέσεις στην Κύπρο για να αντιμετωπισθούν δημοσιονομικές ανισορροπίες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003227/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Confiscation of bank deposits

A basic EU principle is the functioning market economy and its mechanisms, where the operation of banks, of course, plays a prominent role.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does EU legislation permit the confiscation of deposits as a measure to deal with budgetary imbalances?

— In which EU Member States — and when — has such a measure been implemented?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Cypriot authorities adopted measures according to which uninsured deposits within Bank of Cyprus have been used to recapitalise the deposit holders' bank, as envisioned in the forthcoming Recovery and Resolution Directive, whilst uninsured deposits within Popular Bank of Cyprus will go through the normal insolvency procedure. In neither operation were insured deposits touched.

At no point in Cyprus have deposits been seized to handle budgetary imbalances.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003228/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(21. März 2013)

Betrifft: Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005

In Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 werden, im Gegensatz zu früheren Rechtsvorschriften, Tierhaltern am Versand-, Umlade- und Bestimmungsort bestimmte Verantwortlichkeiten zugewiesen, d. h. die Tierhalter müssen die Vorschriften bezüglich der Transportfähigkeit der Tiere (Anhang I Kapitel I) und die Vorschriften bezüglich des Verladens, Entladens und des Umgangs mit Tieren sowie des Absonderns von Tieren (Anhang I Kapitel III Abschnitt 1) einhalten.

Diese neue Herangehensweise, bei der den Tierhaltern die Verantwortung für die Einhaltung bestimmter Vorschriften der Verordnung übertragen wird, wurde von der Kommission als großer Fortschritt im Vergleich zu früheren Rechtsvorschriften bezeichnet.

Es ist Aufgabe der Mitgliedstaaten, diese Verordnung durchzusetzen, daher sind sie dafür zuständig, Geldbußen für Tierhalter festzulegen, die gegen die für sie geltenden Anforderungen verstoßen. Wenn es um Transporte über weite Strecken geht, sind die Tierhalter oft in anderen Mitgliedstaaten ansässig. In diesen Fällen ist mit Schwierigkeiten zu rechnen, wenn es darum geht, die Täter zur Zahlung der Geldbußen zu zwingen.

Um zu bewerten, ob die neue Herangehensweise nützlich ist, muss bekannt sein, ob die Tierhalter (im Inland oder aus anderen Mitgliedstaaten) in der Praxis zur Verantwortung gezogen werden, d. h. ob ihnen für Verstöße gegen für sie geltende Anforderungen Geldbußen auferlegt werden und ob diese Geldbußen tatsächlich bezahlt werden.

Sehen alle Mitgliedstaaten in ihren nationalen Rechtsvorschriften Geldbußen für Tierhalter vor, die gegen die für sie geltenden Anforderungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 verstoßen?

Wie viele Geldbußen wurden 2010 in den Mitgliedstaaten gegen im Inland ansässige Tierhalter verhängt und von diesen tatsächlich bezahlt, d. h. Tierhalter in demselben Mitgliedstaat, in dem die Verstöße auch aufgedeckt wurden?

Wie viele Geldbußen wurden 2010 in den Mitgliedstaaten gegen in anderen Mitgliedstaaten ansässige Tierhalter verhängt und von diesen tatsächlich bezahlt, d. h. Tierhalter in einem anderen Mitgliedstaat als dem, in dem die Verstöße aufgedeckt wurden?

Ist die Kommission auf der Grundlage der Antworten auf die drei obenstehenden Fragen der Auffassung, dass die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 durch die Zuweisung bestimmter Verantwortlichkeiten an Tierhalter zu einer verbesserten Durchsetzung und Einhaltung der Vorschriften geführt hat?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(6. Mai 2013)

1. Alle Mitgliedstaaten haben gemäß Artikel 25 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 ([1]) über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport Angaben über ihre Sanktionsregelungen vorgelegt. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind jedoch nicht verpflichtet, konkrete Angaben dazu zu machen, wem ein Verstoß oder eine Straftat zur Last gelegt und wie dieser/diese geahndet wird. Auch sind sie nicht verpflichtet anzugeben, ob Geldbußen tatsächlich gezahlt werden.

2./3. Daher kann die Kommission die gewünschte Auskunft über Geldbußen, die verhängt bzw. von den Tierhaltern gezahlt wurden, nicht erteilen.

4. In dem Bericht der Kommission über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport ([2]) wurde der Schluss gezogen, dass sich die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 positiv auf den Schutz von Tieren während des Transports ausgewirkt hat. Die Kommission hat jedoch nicht untersucht, inwiefern die den Tierhaltern auferlegten Verpflichtungen hierzu beigetragen haben.

([1]) ABl. L 3 vom 5.1.2005, S. 1.
([2]) Bericht der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat über die Auswirkungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1/2005 über den Schutz von Tieren beim Transport, KOM(2011)700 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003228/13
to the Commission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Regulation (EC) No 1/2005

Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, in contrast to the previous legislation, assigns certain responsibilities to keepers of animals at the place of departure, transfer and destination, i.e. keepers are required to respect the rules on the fitness of the animals for transport (Chapter I of Annex I) and on the rules concerning the loading, unloading, handling, and separation of animals (Chapter III, Section 1 of Annex I).

This new approach of assigning responsibility to keepers for compliance with certain requirements of the regulation was stated by the Commission to be a big step forward compared to the previous legislation.

It is the Member States' responsibility to enforce the regulation, and thus it is their responsibility to establish fines for keepers who violate the requirements for which they are responsible. Where long-distance transport,is involved, the keepers are often located in other Member States. In such cases difficulties can be expected in forcing the perpetrators to pay the fines.

In order to evaluate whether the new approach is to be considered useful, it is necessary to know whether keepers (national or from other Member States) are in practice being held responsible, i.e. whether they are fined for violations of requirements they are responsible for, and whether these fines are actually paid.

Have all Member States provided in their national legislation for fines to be imposed on keepers violating the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 for which they are responsible?

How many fines were handed out and actually paid in the Member States in 2010 concerning national keepers of animals, i.e. keepers resident in the same Member States where the violations were detected?

How many fines were handed out and actually paid in the Member States in 2010 concerning keepers located in other Member States, i.e. keepers resident in a Member State different from the one where the violation was detected?

On the basis of the answers provided to the above three questions, is the Commission of the opinion that regulation (EC) No 1/2005, by assigning certain responsibilities to the keepers of animals, has led to improved enforcement and compliance?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

1. All Member States have provided information on penalties according to Article 25 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 ([1]) on the protection of animals during transport. Member States are however not obliged to provide precise information on how, or to whom, an infringement or offence is sanctioned. Nor are they obliged to inform on whether fines are paid.

2 and 3. As a consequence, the requested information concerning fines handed out and paid by keepers cannot be provided by the Commission.

4. The Commission Report on animal welfare during transport ([2]) concluded that regulation 1/2005 has had beneficial impact on the welfare of animals during transport. The Commission has however not studied the possible impact the assigning of certain responsibilities to the keepers of animals had in relation to these improvements.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003229/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Inceneritore di Baciacavallo

Negli scorsi giorni sono stati resi noti i risultati di un'indagine, commissionata da alcune associazioni e comitati, in merito all'inquinamento presente nell'area attorno all'inceneritore di Baciacavallo presso Prato: dall'analisi di alcuni animali allevati nel raggio di due chilometri attorno all'impianto è emerso che questi presentano livelli di diossina abbondantemente superiori rispetto a quanto consentito dalle norme di legge, con valori che vanno dalle quattro alle dodici volte oltre il limite massimo tollerato. In particolare, i campioni risultano gravemente contaminati per la presenza di diossine, policlorobifenili (PCB) e esaclorobenzene (HCB), sostanze altamente pericolose per la salute umana.

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione dell'inceneritore di Baciacavallo? Dispone di dati o analisi riguardanti il possibile inquinamento causato nelle aree circostanti l'impianto?

Quali misure sono previste a livello europeo per prevenire o ridurre l'inquinamento dell'atmosfera, dell'acqua e del terreno provocato dall'incenerimento dei rifiuti e i relativi rischi per la salute umana?

Come valuta infine la possibilità di sviluppare alternative credibili al sistema degli inceneritori? Vi sono delle concrete opportunità in merito?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 maggio 2013)

La situazione riguardante l'inceneritore di Baciacavallo, presso Prato, è già stata oggetto di una risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-003236/2009. Alla luce delle nuove informazioni trasmesse, la Commissione ha ricontattato le autorità italiane competenti chiedendo di essere informata circa le misure adottate.

Gli impianti di incenerimento di rifiuti pericolosi e non pericolosi rientrano nell'ambito di applicazione della direttiva 2000/76/CE ([1]) sull'incenerimento dei rifiuti e nella maggior parte dei casi anche in quello della direttiva 2008/1/CE ([2]) sulla prevenzione e la riduzione integrate dell'inquinamento, che sono sostituite dalla direttiva 2010/75/UE ([3]) relativa alle emissioni industriali. Queste direttive stabiliscono che gli impianti devono operare conformemente a determinate autorizzazioni, comprese quelle riguardanti i valori limite di emissioni definite sulla base delle migliori tecniche disponibili, con l'obiettivo di prevenire e, ove ciò non fosse possibile, in generale ridurre le emissioni e l'impatto sull'ambiente nel suo complesso. In ogni caso, le emissioni devono almeno rispettare i limiti stabiliti nelle direttive.

L'incenerimento dei rifiuti è una delle tecnologie utilizzate per lo smaltimento dei rifiuti e, secondo la gerarchia dei rifiuti fissata nella direttiva quadro 2008/98/CE ([4]), è preferibile allo smaltimento in discarica ma non altrettanto efficiente del riciclaggio, del riutilizzo e della riduzione dei rifiuti prodotti. La scelta del metodo di trattamento dipende anche dal tipo di rifiuti in questione. In diversi casi, per esempio, il termotrattamento può essere preferibile per la distruzione di bifenili policlorinati o di altri inquinanti organici persistenti.

([1]) GU L 332 del 28.12.2000.
([2]) GU L 24 del 29.1.2008.
([3]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.
([4]) GU L 312/3 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003229/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Baciacavallo incinerator

The results were recently published of an investigation, commissioned by a number of associations and committees, into pollution in the area around the Baciacavallo incinerator in Prato. Analysis of animals reared within a 2°kilometre radius of the plant revealed dioxin levels far exceeding the legal limits, with values 4 to 12 times higher than the permitted maximum. In particular, the samples were seriously contaminated with dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and hexachlorobenzenes (HCBs), all of which are extremely poisonous to humans.

Is the Commission aware of the situation with regard to the Baciacavallo incinerator? Does it have any data or analyses concerning the possible pollution caused in the surrounding areas?

What measures are in place at EU level to prevent or reduce air, water and ground pollution caused by waste incineration and the associated risks for human health?

What does it think of the possibility of developing credible alternatives to incinerator plants? Are there any concrete opportunities in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2013)

The Baciacavallo incinerator situation in Prato was previously highlighted in response to Question EWritten Question E-003236/2009. In the light of the new information provided in the question, the Commission has re-contacted the Italian competent authorities asking them to inform the Commission of the measures taken.

Installations for thermal treatment of non-hazardous or hazardous waste fall under Directive 2000/76/EC ([1]) on the incineration of waste and in most cases also under Directive 2008/1/EC ([2]) concerning integrated pollution prevention and control that are being replaced by Directive 2010/75/EU ([3]) on industrial emissions. These Directives require installations to operate in accordance with permits including emission limit values based on the best available techniques (BAT), designed to prevent and, where that is not practicable, generally to reduce emissions and the impact to the environment as a whole. As a minimum, the emissions shall not exceed the limits set out in the directives themselves.

Waste incineration is one in a range of technologies used for waste treatment, and according to the waste hierarchy established in the Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC ([4]) is preferable to landfill, but inferior to recycling, re-use and reduced generation of waste. The choice of treatment method depends also on the type of waste to be treated. In a number of cases thermal treatment may be the preferred option, for example, in destruction of polychlorinated biphenyls or other persistent organic pollutants.

([1]) OJ L 332, 28.12. 2000.
([2]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008.
([3]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.
([4]) OJ L 312/3, 22.11.2008.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-003230/13
an die Kommission
Peter Jahr (PPE)
(21. März 2013)

Betrifft: Errichtung eines Windparks im deutsch-tschechischen Grenzgebiet

Im Kammgebiet des zu Deutschland und der Tschechischen Republik gehörenden Erzgebirges plant ein Investor 18 Windkraftanlagen zu errichten. Der geplante Windpark befindet sich inmitten eines europäischen Vogelschutzgebiets und grenzt unmittelbar an das Landschaftsschutzgebiet „Oberes Osterzgebirge". Anfang März endete die Frist für die letztmalige Stellungnahme im Rahmen der Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung.

1. Welche juristischen Personen oder Institutionen sind im Rahmen einer Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung gemäß der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU insbesondere bei grenzüberschreitender Prüfung, berechtigt, die Rechtmäßigkeit der Entscheidung anzufechten?

2. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis darüber, welche Maßnahmen in der Tschechischen Republik im Zuge der Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU ergriffen worden sind, um sicherzustellen, dass die betroffene Öffentlichkeit Zugang zu einem Überprüfungsverfahren gemäß Artikel 11 der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU hat?

3. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis darüber, inwieweit die Tschechische Republik gemäß Artikel 5 Absatz 11 der Richtlinie 2011/92/EU sichergestellt hat, dass der Öffentlichkeit Informationen über den Zugang zum gerichtlichen Überprüfungsverfahren und zu dessen Nutzung zur Verfügung gestellt werden?

4. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob die Tschechische Republik finanzielle Unterstützung der Europäischen Union für den geplanten Windpark beantragt hat?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2013)

1. Juristische Personen oder Institutionen, die zu der „betroffenen Öffentlichkeit" im Sinne von Artikel 11 der UVP-Richtlinie ([1]) gehören, können — auch gemäß Artikel 9 des Aarhus-Übereinkommens — ihr Recht auf eine Überprüfung durch die tschechischen Gerichte geltend machen.

2./3. Ja. Die Kommission hat die tschechischen Rechtsvorschriften zur Umsetzung der UVP-Richtlinie in tschechisches Recht eingehend geprüft. Einige mögliche strukturelle Probleme des tschechischen UVP-Systems wurden ermittelt, auch im Zusammenhang mit dem Zugang zur Justiz. Auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse der genannten Prüfung beschloss die Kommission am 25. April 2013, im Einklang mit Artikel 258 AEUV ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren einzuleiten.

4. Nach den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen hat die Tschechische Republik keine EU-Unterstützung für dieses Projekt beantragt.

([1]) Richtlinie 2011/92/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 13. Dezember 2011 über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei bestimmten öffentlichen und privaten Projekten (ABl. L 26 vom 28.1.2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003230/13
to the Commission
Peter Jahr (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Construction of a wind farm in the German-Czech border region

An investor is planning to build 18 wind turbines in the crest area of the Erzgebirge mountains, which form the border between Germany and the Czech Republic. The planned windfarm is located in the middle of a European bird protection area and immediately adjacent to the 'Oberes Osterzgebirge' landscape protection area. The deadline for final observations concerning the environmental impact assessment was the beginning of March.

1. What legal persons or institutions are entitled to challenge the legality of a decision in the context of an environmental impact assessment pursuant to Directive 2011/92/EU, in particular where cross-border consideration is involved?

2. Does the Commission know what measures have been taken in the Czech Republic, as part of the process of transposing Directive 2011/92/EU, to ensure that members of the public concerned have access to a review procedure pursuant to Article 11 of Directive 2011/92/EU?

3. Does the Commission know to what extent the Czech Republic has ensured, pursuant to Article 11(5) of Directive 2011/92/EU, that information is made available to the public on access to and the use of judicial review procedures?

4. Does the Commission know whether the Czech Republic has sought financial support from the European Union for the planned windfarm?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2013)

1. Legal persons or institutions which fall under the 'public concerned' as referred to in Article 11 of the EIA Directive ([1]) and in accordance with Article 9 of the Aarhus Convention, are entitled to exert their rights for judicial review before Czech Courts.

2 & 3. Yes. The Commission has made a thorough analysis of the Czech legislation transposing the EIA Directive into national law. A number of concerns on possible structural problems of the Czech EIA system have been identified, including provisions related to access to justice. Based on the results of the above analysis and investigation, on 25 April 2013, the Commission decided to initiate an infringement procedure in accordance with Article 258 TFEU.

4. On the basis of the information available, the Czech Republic has not requested any EU funding for this project.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-003231/13
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Suspensão do programa POSEI Pescas (Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007)

De acordo com o regulamento que institui um regime de compensação dos custos suplementares relativos ao escoamento dos produtos da pesca das regiões ultraperiféricas (Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007), nomeadamente com o estipulado no seu artigo 8.°, estabelece-se que «até 31 de dezembro de 2011, a Comissão, com base numa avaliação independente, apresenta ao Parlamento Europeu, ao Conselho e ao Comité Económico e Social Europeu um relatório sobre a aplicação da compensação, acompanhado, se necessário, de propostas legislativas».

A Comissão não cumpriu, até à presente data, o estipulado neste Regulamento conhecido por POSEI Pescas. Não obstante, tomou a iniciativa de o suspender, integrando-o na proposta para o Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e da Pesca (2011/0380(COD)). Desta forma, pretende tratar o regulamento que se dirige exclusivamente às regiões ultraperiféricas de três Estados-Membros como qualquer outro dos restantes quatro regulamentos também agora integrados no FEAMP, que se dirigem a todos os Estados-Membros; mais, a Comissão pretende sacrificar a discriminação positiva em favor das RUP, consagrada pelos Tratados, à simplificação de regulamentos.

Perante o exposto, pergunto:

1. Como justifica a Comissão o atual atraso de 1 ano e 3 meses para a apresentação do relatório a que o Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 a obriga? Quando tenciona apresentá-lo? Acompanhá-lo-á de uma proposta legislativa?

2. Qual o fundamento para a proposta da Comissão de suspender o programa POSEI Pescas?

3. Esta proposta é da iniciativa da Comissão dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas ou do colégio de Comissários? Uma vez que o POSEI Agricultura se mantém, como se justifica um procedimento diferente no setor das pescas?

4. A Comissão ponderou as consequências políticas e económicas, presentes e futuras, desta sua proposta no que se refere à eliminação da discriminação positiva reconhecida como um direito das RUP ao abrigo do artigo 299.° do Tratado?

5. Que peso vai reconhecer à apreciação do PE sobre o relatório ainda em falta?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(4 de junho de 2013)

A Senhora Deputada faz referência ao Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 do Conselho, que institui um regime de compensação dos custos suplementares relativos ao escoamento de determinados produtos da pesca das regiões ultraperiféricas dos Açores, da Madeira, das ilhas Canárias, da Guiana Francesa e da Reunião ([1]).

A Comissão reconhece as carências especiais das regiões ultraperiféricas, bem como a necessidade de ter em conta os condicionalismos geográficos e económicos específicos que essas mesmas regiões ultraperiféricas enfrentam. A Comissão está empenhada na continuação deste regime de compensação para a pesca, só o tendo integrado no FEAMP para simplificar a sua aplicação pelos Estados-Membros e aumentar a sua eficiência.

Considerando o pedido de um instrumento jurídico separado para a continuação desse regime de compensação no setor das pescas, a Comissão irá analisar a questão com vista a encontrar uma abordagem comum para os diferentes fundos a nível da UE.

([1]) JO L 176 de 6.7.2007.

Na preparação das suas propostas para a reforma da política comum das pescas, a Comissão tirou partido da avaliação independente das medidas ao abrigo do Regulamento (CE) n.° 791/2007 do Conselho, que estava em curso na altura, e considerou o eventual impacto de tais propostas nas regiões ultraperiféricas. O relatório da avaliação independente está disponível no sítio Web da Comissão ([2]), tendo o Secretariado PECH sido informado desse facto em 16 de abril. Esse documento inclui informação exaustiva e detalhada sobre a aplicação do regime de compensação.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/outermost-regions/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003231/13
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Discontinuation of the POSEI Fisheries programme (Regulation (EC) No 791/2007)

Article 8 of the regulation introducing a scheme to compensate for the additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the outermost regions (Regulation (EC) No 791/2007) stipulates that 'by 31 December 2011, the Commission shall on the basis of an independent evaluation, report to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on the implementation of the compensation, accompanied, where necessary, by legislative proposals'.

The Commission has not yet complied with this requirement laid down in the POSEI Fisheries Regulation. It nevertheless took the initiative to discontinue the programme, incorporating it into the proposal for a European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (2011/0380 (COD)). This means that the regulation that was previously geared exclusively to the outermost regions of three Member States will in future be treated in exactly the same way as any of the four remaining regulations that have also now been incorporated into the EMFF, covering all the Member States. Moreover, the Commission is intending to sacrifice positive discrimination in favour of the outermost regions, which is enshrined in the Treaties, in the interests of simplifying the regulations.

1. How does the Commission justify the delay of one year and three months in submitting its report pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 791/2007? When will it submit this report? Will the report be accompanied by a legislative proposal?

2. What was the basis for the Commission's proposal to discontinue the POSEI Fisheries programme?

3. Did this proposal stem from an initiative of the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, or from an initiative of the College of Commissioners? Given that POSEI Agriculture is to continue, what justification is there for taking a different line in the case of fisheries?

4. Has the Commission weighed up the present and future political and economic consequences of its proposal to end the positive discrimination to which the outermost regions are entitled under Article 299 of the Treaty?

5. What significance will the Commission attach to Parliament's assessment of the report which it still has to submit?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The Honourable Member refers to Regulation (EC) No 791/2007 to compensate for the additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the outermost regions of Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands, French Guiana and Réunion ([1]).

The Commission recognises the special needs of the outermost regions and the need to take account of the specific geographical and economic handicaps that the outermost regions have to face. The Commission is committed to the fisheries compensation scheme and has only integrated it into the EMFF to simplify its implementation by the Member States and to increase efficiency.

Considering the request for a separate legal instrument for the continuation of the fisheries compensation scheme the Commission will look into this issue with a view to finding a common approach for the different funds at EU level.

([1]) OJ L 176, 6.7.2007.

When preparing its proposals for the Reform of the common fisheries policy the Commission took advantage of the, at the time ongoing, independent evaluation of the measures under Council Regulation 791/2007 and considered the possible impacts of such proposals on the outermost regions. The report of the independent evaluation is made available on the Commission's website ([2]) and the PECH secretariat was informed about this on 16 April. This document includes extensive and detailed information on the implementation of the compensation regime.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/outermost-regions/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003232/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: Preocupante informe sobre la polución atmosférica

La Agencia Europea del Medio Ambiente acaba de publicar los datos de polución y son varios los Estados miembros de la Unión (Luxemburgo, Francia, Austria…) que incumplen la Directiva 2001/81/CE, de 23 de octubre de 2001, que establece los «techos» nacionales de emisión de determinados contaminantes atmosféricos. Además, la citada Agencia ha mostrado su preocupación porque en determinados países se han incrementado de manera considerable las emisiones de óxido de nitrógeno, que procede fundamentalmente del tráfico de vehículos. Tal es el caso de Luxemburgo, Chipre y España.

La protección ambiental es una de las finalidades de la Unión Europea, como destaca en muchos de sus preceptos el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea. Es más, como es bien sabido, la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea establece que las políticas de la Unión garantizarán «un alto nivel de protección del medio ambiente y la mejora de su calidad» (artículo 37).

1. ¿No considera la Comisión que debe abrirse una investigación para que, con profundidad, analice las causas de tanto incumplimiento?

2. ¿No cree la Comisión que deben incrementarse las actuaciones que reduzcan el tráfico contaminante, como incrementar las ayudas para potenciar el transporte por ferrocarril o los coches eléctricos?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de mayo de 2013)

Del informe de la Agencia Europea de Medio Ambiente se desprende que una serie de Estados miembros han comunicado emisiones de contaminantes atmosféricos por encima de los techos nacionales fijados para 2010 en la Directiva 2001/81/CE ([1]). Para definir el probable cumplimiento o incumplimiento, la Comisión examina minuciosamente los informes de los Estados miembros elaborados en virtud de dicha Directiva. La Comisión solicitará formalmente a los Estados miembros incumplidores información adicional, y, cuando resulte necesario, incoará procedimientos de infracción.

Las actuaciones en el sector del transporte son clave para alcanzar los techos nacionales fijados en la Directiva, así como otros objetivos de la UE. Por lo tanto, la Comisión apoya decididamente el desarrollo de sistemas de transporte limpios, tal como quedó reflejado en el Libro Blanco de 2011 «Hoja de ruta hacia un espacio único europeo de transporte: por una política de transportes competitiva y sostenible» ([2]), en el que la Comisión aborda el transporte limpio y sostenible, también en relación con la contaminación atmosférica en las zonas urbanas. Además, de acuerdo con el paquete de 2013 «Energía limpia para el transporte» ([3]), a largo plazo todos los modos de transporte deberán utilizar combustibles producidos de forma limpia y sostenible. Estos combustibles aportarán importantes beneficios para el medio ambiente, en particular respecto a la calidad del aire y a las emisiones de CO_2 procedentes del transporte. Paralelamente, la Comisión promueve el desarrollo y el uso de vehículos con bajas emisiones, tal como se deduce de la Comunicación «CARS 2020» ([4]) y se plasma en la implicación financiera en la Iniciativa Europea por unos Coches Verdes ([5]), que se centra en la eficiencia energética y en los sistemas de propulsión alternativos.

Asimismo, en el marco de la política de cohesión de la UE, los Estados miembros pueden hacer uso de importantes posibilidades de financiación para invertir en transporte sostenible, incluidos proyectos innovadores.

([1]) DO L 309 de 27.11.2001.
([2]) COM(2011) 144 final.
([3]) COM(2013) 17 final.
([4]) COM(2012) 636 final.
([5]) http://www.green-cars-initiative.eu/public/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003232/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: A concerning report on air pollution

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has recently published data on pollution, according to which several Member States of the European Union (Luxembourg, France, Austria, etc.) are failing to comply with Directive 2001/81/EC of 23 October 2001, which sets out the national emissions ceilings for certain air pollutants. Furthermore, the EEA has expressed its concern that in certain countries nitrogen oxide emissions have increased considerably, largely as a result of vehicle use. This is the case in Luxembourg, Cyprus and Spain.

Environmental protection is one of the aims of the European Union, as highlighted in many of the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Moreover, as is common knowledge, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union sets out that the policies of the Union shall guarantee 'a high level of environmental protection and the improvement of the quality of the environment' (Article 37).

1. Does the Commission not think that it should initiate an in-depth inquiry in order to analyse the causes of such infringements?

2. Does the Commission not think that it should increase measures to reduce polluting traffic, such as increased support to promote rail transport or electric cars?

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

The EEA report shows that a number of Member States have reported air pollution emissions above the 2010 national ceilings set in Directive 2001/81/EC ([1]). Member States' reports established under that directive are carefully reviewed by the Commission to define likely compliance or non-compliance. The Commission will formally ask non-compliant Member States for additional information, and, where deemed necessary, open infringement cases.

Action in the transport sector is key for reaching the national ceilings defined in the directive as well as other EU objectives. The Commission therefore strongly supports the development of clean transport systems. This is reflected in the 2011 White Paper 'Roadmap to a Single Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system' ([2]), where the Commission addresses clean and sustainable transport, also in relation to air pollution in urban areas. Further, clean and sustainably produced fuels should be used in all transport modes in the long term, according to the 2013 package on Clean Power for Transport ([3]). These fuels will bring considerable benefits for environment, in particular for air quality and for CO2 emissions from transport. In parallel, the Commission promotes the development and uptake of low emitting vehicles as spelled out in the CARS 2020 Communication ([4]) and reflected by a financial involvement in the European Green Vehicle Initiative ([5]), which focuses on energy efficiency and alternative powertrains.

Also, in the framework of the EU cohesion policy, Member States can draw on significant funding opportunities to invest in sustainable transport, including innovative projects.

([1]) OJ L 309, 27.11.2001
([2]) COM(2011) 144 final
([3]) COM(2013) 17 final
([4]) COM(2012) 636 final
([5]) http://www.green-cars-initiative.eu/public/

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003233/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 de marzo de 2013)

Asunto: La necesaria incorporación de Ceuta a la Unión aduanera

Las autoridades de la Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta han facilitado recientemente datos económicos que muestran el incremento del «comercio atípico», eufemismo con el que se alude a los negocios de contrabando consentidos por el Gobierno de Marruecos.

En las inmediaciones de la frontera física entre España y Marruecos está localizado un polígono, denominado Tarajal, al que miles de porteadoras marroquíes acuden diariamente para cargar sobre sus cabezas inmensos bultos con el mayor peso que soporten y que están llenos de ropa, productos de limpieza, alimentos y otras mercancías que luego se venden en los zocos. Junto a esas muestras de explotación de mujeres, se han producido desgraciadas tragedias con fallecimiento de porteadoras.

Conoce ya este diputado que la regulación europea del Código aduanero ha excluido a Ceuta y Melilla de su ámbito de aplicación, pero considero que dicha previsión suena disonante con la pretensión de construir una Unión Europea íntegra, en la que se desenvuelva el libre tráfico interior de mercancías y haya un régimen común con terceros países.

Por ello, pregunto lo siguiente:

1. ¿No tiene previsto la Comisión promover la modificación del Reglamento de 12 de octubre de 1992 que regula el Código aduanero para su aplicación en las ciudades de Ceuta y Melilla?

2. ¿No cree la Comisión que consentir la situación de contrabando entre un país miembro y un tercero contraviene el mandato que tiene dicha Comisión de «promover los intercambios comerciales entre los Estados miembros y terceros», intercambios lógicamente legítimos, como establece el artículo 32 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión europea? ¿Abrirá la Comisión alguna investigación para comprobar el volumen de ese intercambio comercial «ilegítimo»?

3. ¿No considera la Comisión que consentir tales situaciones de maltrato a mujeres, aunque no tengan la ciudadanía europea, pero que se acercan diariamente a suelo comunitario, minora el esplendor del estandarte que levanta la Unión Europea de protección de los derechos fundamentales? ¿Por qué no se acerca una delegación de la Comisión para ver de cerca la situación que diariamente acontece en el Tarajal?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2013)

El artículo 1, apartado 2, del Protocolo nº 2 del Acta relativa a las condiciones de adhesión del Reino de España establece que el territorio aduanero de la Unión no incluirá Ceuta y Melilla. De conformidad con el artículo 24, apartado 4, de dicha Acta, a petición del Reino de España, el Consejo, por unanimidad y a propuesta de la Comisión y previo dictamen del Parlamento, podrá decidir la inclusión de Ceuta y Melilla en el territorio aduanero de la Unión. A falta de tal petición del Reino de España, la Comisión no puede plantear una modificación del Código Aduanero Comunitario a este respecto.

La Comisión es consciente de los fenómenos que lleva aparejados el comercio ilícito entre Marruecos y Ceuta y Melilla pero, habida cuenta de la situación descrita anteriormente, tal vez su Señoría desee plantear esta cuestión en primer lugar a las autoridades españolas. Todos los demás aspectos mencionados, como el problema de la trata de seres humanos y la explotación de las mujeres, se están abordando con las autoridades marroquíes en los subcomités correspondientes en el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación UE/Marruecos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003233/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: The necessary incorporation of Ceuta into the Customs Union

The authorities of the Autonomous City of Ceuta have recently supplied economic data that demonstrates the increase in 'atypical trade', a euphemism alluding to smuggling tolerated by the Moroccan Government.

An industrial estate known as Tarajal is located in the vicinity of the physical border between Spain and Morocco, where thousands of female Moroccan porters congregate on a daily basis to load immense packages onto their heads, which are as heavy as they can manage and are full of clothes, cleaning products, food and other merchandise which they then sell in the souk markets. In addition to this example of the exploitation of women, unfortunate tragedies have occurred resulting in the death of porters.

This MEP is aware that European regulation in the form of the Customs Code excludes Ceuta and Melilla from its scope. However, I believe that this precautionary measure is at odds with the aspiration to construct an inclusive European Union, with free internal movement of goods and common rules with third countries.

1. Does the Commission not intend to push for the amendment of the regulation of 12 October 1992 which governs the Customs Code in order to broaden it to the cities of Ceuta and Melilla?

2. Does the Commission not believe that to allow smuggling between a Member State and a third country contravenes the mandate of the Commission to 'promote trade between the Member States and third countries' and, logically, lawful trade as set out in Article 32 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union? Will the Commission launch an investigation to verify the volume of this 'unlawful' trade?

3. Does the Commission not believe that allowing such cases of abuse of women, though they do not have European citizenship but are in close proximity to Community territory on a daily basis, diminishes the excellence of the standard upheld by the European Union to protect fundamental rights? Why does a Commission delegation not travel to Tarajal to get a close-up view of the situation that is occurring on a daily basis?

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

Article 1(2) of Protocol 2 of the Act concerning the conditions of Accession of the Kingdom of Spain stipulates that the customs territory of the Union shall not include Ceuta and Melilla. In accordance with Article 24(4) of that Act, at the request of the Kingdom of Spain, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting Parliament, may decide to include Ceuta and Melilla in the customs territory of the Union. In the absence of such request by the Kingdom of Spain, the Commission is not in a position to envisage proposing any amendment to the Community Customs Code in that respect.

The Commission is aware of the phenomena of illicit trade between Morocco and Ceuta and Melilla but given the situation described above, the Honourable Member may therefore wish to question primarily the Spanish authorities on this issue. All other aspects mentioned such as the problem of human trafficking and the exploitation of women are being addressed with the Moroccan authorities in the relevant Sub-committees under the EU/Morocco Association Agreement.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003234/13
an die Kommission
Hubert Pirker (PPE) und Georges Bach (PPE)
(21. März 2013)

Betrifft: EU-weit einheitliche Pflicht zur Kennzeichnung von gewerbsmäßig zugelassenen und eingesetzten Lkw

Mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 wurde ein Rechtsrahmen für Kabotagefahrten geschaffen, die vorsieht, dass drei Kabotagebeförderungen mit demselben Fahrzeug innerhalb von sieben Tagen durchgeführt werden können. Ziel der Verordnung war es, einen gemeinsamen Rechtsrahmen für die Durchführung der Kabotage in der Europäischen Union zu schaffen, nicht aber eine permanente Geschäftstätigkeit ausländischer Transportunternehmen, was klarerweise aufgrund der gegenwärtigen unterschiedlichen wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Rahmenbedingungen im Hinblick auf das Transportgewerbe nicht umsetzbar ist.

Die Praxis zeigt allerdings, dass die Kontrolle unbefugter Kabotagefahrten unzureichend ist und damit Missbrauch kaum geahndet wird. Die Möglichkeiten für die Überwachung und Kontrolle sind nach wie vor nicht zufriedenstellend. So bleibt das Risiko illegaler Handlungen immanent.

1. Die Kommission ist gemäß Artikel 17 Absatz 3 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 verpflichtet, bis Ende 2013 einen Bericht über den Stand des Kraftverkehrsmarkts der Gemeinschaft zu erstellen. Unter anderem soll der Bericht eine Analyse der Marktlage, einschließlich einer Bewertung der Wirksamkeit der Kontrollen, enthalten. Wann wird die Kommission diesen Bericht vorlegen? Wird dieser Bericht noch vor der möglichen Vorlage eines Legislativvorschlags vorgestellt, damit eine Bewertung auch im Europäischen Parlament durchgeführt werden kann?

2. Was unternimmt die Kommission, um Kontrollen wegen unbefugter Gewerbeausübung und Kabotagefahrten zu erleichtern und wirksamer zu machen? Wie sehen diese konkreten Strategien und Vorschläge aus, die mit den Mitgliedstaaten diskutiert werden?

3. Wie steht die Kommission zu dem Vorschlag, dass auf den Fahrzeugen, die zum gewerblichen Verkehr eingesetzt werden, eine Tafel oder eine andere Form der Kennzeichnung angebracht wird, so dass die gewerbliche Tätigkeit eindeutig erkennbar gemacht ist? Prüft die Kommission die Möglichkeit einer derartigen Kennzeichnung? Wenn nein: Welche Alternativen gibt es für eine effizientere Kontrolle illegaler Kabotagefahrten?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(3. Mai 2013)

1. Der Bericht wird höchstwahrscheinlich im Herbst 2013, auf jeden Fall aber vor Jahresende vorgelegt. In Abhängigkeit von den Schlussfolgerungen des Berichts sowie in Einklang mit dem Initiativrecht der Kommission kann er gemeinsam mit oder noch vor einem Legislativvorschlag vorgelegt werden. Der Legislativvorschlag würde dann vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat erörtert.

2. Die Durchsetzung der Bestimmungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 ([1]) fällt in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten. Die Kommission unterstützt eine Reihe von Initiativen zur Förderung der besseren Durchsetzung und der Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten bei der Durchsetzung des Besitzstands im Güterkraftverkehr. Dazu zählen auch die Überwachung der Umsetzung der Sozialvorschriften im Straßenverkehr und die Erörterung von Durchsetzungsfragen mit den Mitgliedstaaten und den Sozialpartnern.

3. Gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 müssen Fahrer im grenzüberschreitenden gewerblichen Güterverkehr eine Gemeinschaftslizenz, eine beglaubigte Kopie dieser Lizenz oder, im Falle von Fahrern aus Drittländern, eine Fahrerbescheinigung mit sich führen. Anhand dieser Unterlagen kann geprüft werden, ob ein Verkehrsunternehmer berechtigt ist, Beförderungen im grenzüberschreitenden gewerblichen Güterverkehr vorzunehmen. Zusätzlich kann anhand von Frachtbriefen, beispielsweise den CMR ([2]), überprüft werden, ob die spezifischen Kabotagevorschriften eingehalten wurden. Der Kommission liegen bislang keine Belege dafür vor, dass durch eine Kennzeichnung von Fahrzeugen, die zum gewerblichen Verkehr eingesetzt werden, die Kontrolle der Einhaltung der Kabotagevorschriften verbessert würde.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1072/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. Oktober 2009 über gemeinsame Regeln für den Zugang zum Markt des grenzüberschreitenden Güterkraftverkehrs, ABl. L 300 vom 14.11.2009, S. 72-87.

([2]) Nach dem UN-ECE-Übereinkommen über den Beförderungsvertrag im internationalen Güterkraftverkehr (Convention relative au contrat de transport international de marchandises par route) ausgestellter Frachtbrief.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003234/13
à la Commission
Hubert Pirker (PPE) et Georges Bach (PPE)
(21 mars 2013)

Objet: Obligation commune à l'échelle de l'Union européenne relative au marquage des poids lourds immatriculés et utilisés dans un cadre professionnel

Le règlement (CE) nº 1072/2009 a permis d'établir un cadre juridique régissant le transport de cabotage, qui prévoit que trois transports de cabotage peuvent être effectués avec le même véhicule dans un délai de sept jours. L'objectif de ce règlement était d'instaurer un cadre juridique commun régissant les activités de cabotage au sein de l'Union européenne, et non pas de permettre une activité permanente d'entreprises de transport étrangères, ce qui, clairement, est impossible en raison des conditions économiques et sociales très diverses qui existent à l'heure actuelle dans le secteur des transports.

La pratique montre toutefois que les transports de cabotage illégaux sont insuffisamment contrôlés, si bien que les abus restent dès lors largement impunis. Les moyens de surveillance et de contrôle ne sont toujours pas satisfaisants. Dès lors, le risque d'activités illégales reste fort.

1. Conformément à l'article 17, paragraphe 3, du règlement (CE) nº 1072/2008, la Commission doit établir un rapport sur la situation du marché communautaire des transports routiers avant la fin de 2013. Ce rapport doit entre autres contenir une analyse de la situation du marché, notamment une évaluation de l'efficacité des contrôles. Quand la Commission présentera-t-elle ce rapport? Sera-t-il publié avant l'éventuelle présentation d'une proposition législative, afin que le Parlement européen puisse également l'évaluer?

2. Quelles mesures la Commission met-elle en œuvre afin de faciliter et de rendre plus efficace le contrôle de l'exercice illégal d'activités commerciales et de transports de cabotage? Quelle forme prennent ces stratégies et propositions concrètes qui font l'objet de négociations entre les États membres?

3. Que pense la Commission de la proposition de placer une plaque ou une autre forme de marquage sur les véhicules qui sont utilisés dans le cadre d'un transport commercial afin que leur utilisation à titre professionnel soit rendue clairement identifiable? La Commission évalue-t-elle l'opportunité d'un tel marquage? Dans la négative, quelles alternatives existe-t-il pour rendre plus efficaces les contrôles des transports de cabotage illégaux?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(3 mai 2013)

1. Le rapport sera très vraisemblablement soumis après l'été 2013 et, dans tous les cas, avant la fin de l'année. En fonction des conclusions du rapport, et conformément au droit d'initiative de la Commission, il pourrait être présenté en même temps qu'une proposition législative, ou avant, laquelle serait alors examinée par le Parlement européen et par le Conseil.

2. Le contrôle de l'application des dispositions du règlement (CE) nº 1072/2009 ([1]) relève de la compétence des États membres. La Commission soutient un certain nombre d'initiatives visant à mieux faire appliquer l'acquis en matière de transport routier et à renforcer la coopération entre les États membres sur ce point. Ces initiatives portent, entre autres, sur le suivi de la mise en œuvre de la règlementation sociale dans le transport routier et sur l'examen, avec les États membres et les partenaires sociaux, des difficultés d'application.

3. Conformément au règlement (CE) nº 1072/2009, les conducteurs exerçant des activités de transport international par route pour compte d'autrui doivent être titulaires d'une licence de l'UE, d'une copie certifiée conforme ou, pour les conducteurs des pays tiers, d'une attestation de conducteur. Ces documents peuvent être utilisés pour contrôler si un transporteur est habilité à effectuer des activités de transport commercial international. En outre, les feuilles de route telles que celle visée par la CMR ([2]) peuvent servir à vérifier le respect des dispositions spécifiques sur le cabotage. La Commission ne dispose, à ce jour, d'aucun élément tangible qui prouverait que le marquage des véhicules commerciaux rendrait plus efficaces les contrôles relatifs aux dispositions sur le cabotage.

([1]) Règlement (CE) nº 1072/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 21 octobre 2009 établissant des règles communes pour l'accès au marché du transport international de marchandises par route (JO L 300 du 14.11.2009, p. 72).

([2]) Lettre de voiture établie conformément à la Convention relative au contrat de transport international de marchandises par route (CMR) de la CEE-ONU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003234/13
to the Commission
Hubert Pirker (PPE) and Georges Bach (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Mandatory uniform identification of commercially licensed and operated lorries throughout the EU

Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 established a legal framework for cabotage transport operations that permits three cabotage transport operations, using the same vehicle, to be carried out within a seven-day period. The regulation aimed to establish a common legal framework for carrying out cabotage transport in the European Union, but not to enable foreign transport companies to be engaged in business operations on a permanent basis, which is clearly impossible because of the current diversity of economic and social framework conditions in relation to the transport network.

However, practice shows that controls over unauthorised cabotage transport are currently inadequate, so that any abuses go largely undetected. Monitoring and control options are still unsatisfactory, so that a major risk of illegal practices remains.

1. Pursuant to Article 17(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009, the Commission is obliged to produce a report on the state of the Community road transport market by the end of 2013. Among other things, the report is to contain an analysis of the market situation, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of controls. When will the Commission submit this report? Will this report be submitted prior to the possible presentation of a legislative proposal, so that it can also be evaluated in the European Parliament?

2. What is the Commission doing to render controls in relation to unauthorised cabotage transport simpler and more effective? What are these specific strategies and proposals that are to be discussed with the Member States?

3. What is the Commission's view of the proposal that the vehicles to be used for commercial transport should carry a plate or some other form of identification, so that their commercial use is clearly apparent? Is the Commission examining the possibility of such identification? If not, what alternatives exist for more efficient checks on illegal cabotage transport?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2013)

1. The report will be submitted most likely after the summer 2013 and in any case before the end of the year. Depending on the reports' conclusions, and in line with the Commission's right of initiative, it may be presented with or before a legislative proposal, which would then be discussed in the European Parliament and Council.

2. Enforcement of the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 ([1]) is a competence of Member States. The Commission supports a number of initiatives to promote better enforcement and cooperation between Member States in enforcing the road haulage acquis, including monitoring implementation of social rules in road transport and reviewing enforcement issues with Member States and social partners.

3. According to Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009, drivers involved in international transport for hire and reward must carry a Community license, a certified copy thereof or in the case of drivers from third countries, a driver attestation. These documents can be used to check whether a haulier is entitled to carry out international commercial transport. In addition waybills, such as the CMR ([2]), can be used to check whether the specific provisions on cabotage have been complied with. The Commission has so far not received evidence showing that the use of identification of commercial vehicles would help to improve checks related to cabotage provisions.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 72-87.

([2]) Consignment letter established according to the UN-ECE Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (Convention relative au contrat de transport international de Marchandises par Route).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003236/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Carbon capture and storage — NER300 first phase

The NER300 funding programme was established by the EU Emissions Trading Directive and Commission Decision 2010/670/EU, with monies made available in the first phase through the monetisation of 200 million allowances.

1. What was the exact total sum raised?

2. What was the total sum allocated to innovative renewable energy projects?

3. What was the total sum allocated to a CCS project, and, as this is not now proceeding, what has been done with the money?

4. What was the total sum paid to the European Investment Bank for the services it provided?

5. What was the total of other sums paid for administration or other purposes?

6. Has any of the money raised not been accounted for by the answers to the above questions, and if so what has been done with it?

7. What will be done with any money now allocated towards innovative renewable energy projects that subsequently do not proceed?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

1. Pursuant to the cooperation agreement between the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) ([1]) the first EUR 200 million allowances have been sold under forward and futures contracts for delivery and payment in December 2013. Some EUR 1.6 billion are expected to be raised upon delivery at the end of the year.

2. The total sum allocated to the 23 projects pursuant to the Award Decision under the first call for proposal of the NER300 funding programme ([2]) amounted to EUR 1,211,945,062.

3. As outlined in Recital 9 of the Award Decision, one CCS project was confirmed but then withdrawn after the closure of the confirmation process with Member States. The sum allocated to this project was some EUR 264 million. These unspent funds will be available to finance further demonstration projects under the second call in line with Article 11.6 of the NER300 Decision.

4. The remuneration of the EIB for the performance of its tasks to implement the NER300 Programme is laid down in the cooperation agreement between the European Commission and the EIB. The EIB has submitted invoices for EUR 20,680,437.50 for the tasks performed so far. Further fees will be due for future tasks until the completion of the Programme in accordance with the terms of the cooperation agreement.

5. Besides administrative expenditures, the Commission spent a total of EUR 858,257 under operational budget over the years 2010-2012 for the preparation and implementation of the NER300 first call for proposal.

6. No.

7. Pursuant to Article 11 of the NER300 Decision, revenues which are not disbursed to projects and income generated from the management of revenues shall be used to co-finance further demonstration projects under the NER300 Programme until 31 December 2015.

([1]) 2010/C 358/01; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:358:0001:0018:EN:PDF
([2]) C(2012)9432; http://ec.europa.eu/clima/news/docs/c_2012_9432_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003237/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(21 Μαρτίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επίπεδο πληρωμών στις 28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013

Σε συνέχεια της έγκρισης του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού (ΣΔΠ) αριθ. 6/2012, η αρμόδια για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχή, αναμένει από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να υποβάλει σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού για να καλύψει τα 2,9 εκατομμύρια ευρώ απαιτήσεων που εκκρεμούν από το 2012, και οι οποίες αποτελούσαν μέρος του ΣΔΠ 6/2012 (που κάλυπτε απαιτήσεις πληρωμών μέχρι την 31η Οκτωβρίου 2012).

Επιπλέον, το Νοέμβριο και το Δεκέμβριο του 2012 υποβλήθηκαν στην Επιτροπή πρόσθετα αιτήματα πληρωμών στο πλαίσιο επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης για συνολικό ποσό ύψους 16,2 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, το οποίο θα πρέπει να καταβληθεί κατά τη διάρκεια τους έτους 2013.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη όλα τα ανωτέρω και δεδομένου του γεγονότος ότι το επίπεδο πληρωμών για τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ όσον αφορά το 2013 είναι κατά 5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ χαμηλότερο από τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής για τις ανάγκες πληρωμών στο σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού της, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το επίπεδο των αιτημάτων πληρωμών που της έχουν διαβιβασθεί μέχρι τις 28 Φεβρουαρίου 2013;

Ειδικότερα, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να μας ενημερώσει σχετικά με τα αιτήματα πληρωμών που έχει παραλάβει κατά τους μήνες του Ιανουαρίου και Φεβρουαρίου 2013, κατανεμημένα ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Μαΐου 2013)

Η αναλυτική κατανομή των έγκυρων αιτημάτων πληρωμών ([1]) που υποβλήθηκαν τον Φεβρουάριο για τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από το ΕΚΤ, το ΕΤΠΑ και το ΤΣ επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα της περιόδου 2007-2013, παρατίθεται στο Παράρτημα Ι της παρούσας απάντησης, ενώ τα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ΕΤΑ παρατίθενται στο Παράρτημα ΙΙ. Όσον αφορά το ΕΓΤΑΑ, δεν υπάρχουν νέα αιτήματα πληρωμών για τον μήνα Φεβρουάριο: ωστόσο, κατά τις τελευταίες 4 ημέρες του Ιανουαρίου υποβλήθηκαν επιπλέον αιτήματα πληρωμών για 1 δισ. ευρώ. Τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία του πίνακα προκύπτουν από τη σύγκριση των αιτημάτων πληρωμής που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Φεβρουαρίου 2013 με εκείνα που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Ιανουαρίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αποφασίσει την αλλαγή χαρακτηρισμού ενός αιτήματος πληρωμής από «Αποδεκτή» σε «Πλήρως απορριφθείσα» ή «Επιστραφείσα προς διόρθωση» και συνεπώς, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των παραρτημάτων της παρούσας απάντησης ενδέχεται να αποτελέσουν αντικείμενο περαιτέρω προσαρμογών, μετά το τέλος των συνήθων ελέγχων. Τα αρνητικά υπόλοιπα του ΕΚΤ για την Τσεχική Δημοκρατία, για παράδειγμα, είναι αποτέλεσμα τέτοιας αλλαγής κατάστασης.

Ανάλογα δεδομένα για το μήνα Ιανουάριο διατέθηκαν στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην ερώτηση E-1090/2013 ([2]).

Εν κατακλείδι, προκειμένου να καλύψει όλες τις αναμενόμενες ανάγκες πληρωμών, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε το σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 2 στον γενικό προϋπολογισμό του 2013 στις 27 Μαρτίου 2013, ζητώντας αύξηση των πιστώσεων πληρωμών κατά 11,2 δισ. ευρώ στους τομείς 1α, 1β, 2, 3α, 3β και 4.

([1]) Με εξαίρεση τα ποσά που έχουν απορριφθεί πλήρως.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003237/13
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Level of payments as of 28 February 2013

Following the approval of Draft Amending Budget (DAB) No 6/2012, the Budgetary Authority is looking to the Commission to submit a draft amending budget to cover the EUR 2.9 million in suspended claims from 2012, which formed part of DAB 6/2012 (covering payment claims until 31 October 2012).

On top of that, in November and December 2012 additional payment requests under shared management for an overall amount of EUR 16.2 billion were submitted to the Commission and will have to be paid out during the course of 2013.

Taking all of the above into consideration, and given that the level of payments for the 2013 EU budget is EUR 5 billion lower than the Commission's estimates for payment needs in its draft budget, could the Commission provide us with detailed information on the level of payments received by 28 February 2013?

Specifically, could the Commission inform us of the payments received in the months of January and February 2013, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

A detailed breakdown of the valid payment claims ([1]) received in February for the 2007-2013 ESF, ERDF and CF-funded operational programmes is provided in Annex I to this reply, while for EFF the data is included in Annex II. For EAFRD there were no new payment requests submitted in February; however, during the last 4 days of January some additional EUR 1 billion were submitted. The figures in the table result from comparing valid payment claims submitted until the end of February 2013 with those submitted until the end of January 2013. The Commission may decide to change the status of a payment claim from 'Accepted' to 'Fully rejected' or 'Returned for corrections' and therefore the figures presented in the annexes to this reply could still undergo further adjustments after the usual controls. A negative ERDF balance for the Czech Republic, for instance, is the result of such changes in status.

Similar data for the month of January were provided by the Commission to Question E-1090/2013 ([2]).

Finally, in order to cover all expected payment needs, the Commission adopted Draft Amending Budget No 2 to the General Budget 2013 on 27 March 2013 requesting an increase of payment appropriations of EUR 11.2 billion across headings 1a, 1b, 2, 3a, 3b and 4.

([1]) Excluding fully rejected amounts.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003238/13
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE) e Marco Scurria (PPE)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Dichiarazioni Commerzbank su prelievo forzoso in Italia

Nei giorni scorsi, il capo economista della Commerzbank, ha dichiarato al quotidiano finanziario Handelsblatt che, essendo i patrimoni finanziari degli italiani corrispondenti al 173 % del PIL — rispetto ad esempio a quelli dei tedeschi pari al 124 % — basterebbe applicare in Italia una tassa una tantum del 15 % sui depositi, sui titoli e persino sulle attività finanziarie, per abbassare il debito pubblico italiano sotto la soglia del 100 % del PIL.

Considerando che queste dichiarazioni arrivano proprio mentre Cipro si trova in una situazione drammatica con il possibile prelievo forzoso sui conti correnti per recuperare i fondi necessari alla condivisione dei costi del salvataggio previsto dalla BCE per gli istituti bancari dell'isola, si chiede alla Commissione:

— Intende la Commissione intervenire in futuro per stigmatizzare atteggiamenti che rischiano di aprire la strada ad azioni speculative nei confronti del debito di uno Stato membro nonché di scatenare il panico tra i risparmiatori?

— Alla luce dell'evolversi della vicenda cipriota, non considera il prelievo forzoso su titoli e depositi bancari una misura negativa e del tutto insostenibile, nonché inapplicabile ad altri Stati membri che hanno nel risparmio privato una delle principali garanzie di tenuta del proprio sistema bancario?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(14 maggio 2013)

La Commissione non intende commentare sui pareri di analisti del settore privato.

Il programma di assistenza finanziaria e le misure applicate a Cipro rispondono alla situazione economica e finanziaria specifica del paese in questione.

Le dimensioni del settore bancario, unitamente alla sua struttura, al livello di rischi assunti e alla vigilanza non ottimale, hanno fatto di Cipro un caso unico nel suo genere. Le misure adottate sono state studiate appositamente per rispondere alla situazione eccezionale venutasi a creare a Cipro e perseguono l'obiettivo di risanare il settore bancario e, al tempo stesso, proteggere i depositi fino a 100 000 euro, conformemente alla legislazione dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003238/13
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE) and Marco Scurria (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Commerzbank comments on an enforced tax in Italy

A few days ago Commerzbank's chief economist told the financial daily *Handelsblatt* that because Italy's net assets amount to 173% of its GDP — compared, for example, with a figure of 124% for Germany — it would take only a one-off 15% tax on bank deposits, securities, and financial assets to bring the Italian public debt below the requisite threshold, namely 100% of GDP.

Given that these comments come at a time when Cyprus is facing an acute crisis, with a possible enforced tax on current accounts to raise the funds needed to share the cost of the ECB's proposed bailout for the island's banking sector:

— Will not the Commission, in future, roundly condemn attitudes that could open the door to debt speculation and spark panic among savers?

— In the light of the developments regarding Cyprus, does it not consider that an enforced tax on securities and bank deposits is a harmful and entirely unsustainable measure which cannot be applied to other Member States where private savings are one of the mainstays of the banking system?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The Commission does not comment on the views of private-sector analysts.

The financial assistance programme and the measures applied in Cyprus are specific to the economic and financial situation in Cyprus.

Cyprus is a unique case because of the size of its banking sector, combined with its structure, level of risk-taking and suboptimal supervision. Measures are tailor-made to the very exceptional situation in Cyprus in order to restore the viability of the banking sector while, at the same time, protecting all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU rules.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003239/13
à la Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) et Michel Dantin (PPE)
(21 mars 2013)

Objet: Marchés publics concernant le tunnel du Mont Blanc

Le tunnel du Mont Blanc est géré par un groupement européen d'intérêt économique (GEIE) créé par le règlement (CEE) nº 2137/85 du Conseil du 25 juillet 1985, qui appartient pour 50 % à une société italienne et pour 50 % à une société française. Il existe une convention entre les deux pays, à savoir la convention de Lucques de 2006, qui prévoit que les avis d'appels d'offres publics pour la sécurisation du tunnel sont publiés alternativement selon le droit italien et selon le droit français. En 2012, le GEIE a lancé un appel d'offres pour l'attribution du service de sécurité, dont la procédure est régie par le droit français (ce même appel d'offres avait été lancé précédemment en 2006 selon le droit italien puis, en 2009, selon le droit français). D'après les indications du dernier avis, la valeur estimée de l'appel d'offres s'élève, nette de TVA, à 12 millions d'euros pour trois ans, contre 14,6 millions d'euros pour l'appel d'offres de 2006 régi par le droit italien et 15 millions d'euros pour celui de 2009 régi par le droit français.

Sachant que la diminution du montant de l'appel d'offres ne semble pas justifiée compte tenu des accidents extrêmement graves survenus dans le tunnel, notamment l'incendie de mars 1999, la Commission peut-elle dire:

1. Si elle a connaissance des faits et si elle entend procéder à une évaluation transparente sur la base des éléments mis à sa disposition par l'autorité adjudicatrice ainsi que sur la base des critères suivis, afin de remédier aux conséquences négatives que pourrait entraîner une diminution drastique des montants alloués pour la sécurité?

2. Si une telle décision a été prise conformément aux critères établis par la directive 2004/18/CE relative à la coordination des procédures de passation des marchés publics de travaux, de fournitures et de services, en particulier son article 9 sur les méthodes de calcul de la valeur estimée des marchés publics?

3. Si elle estime que le montant alloué pour la sécurité peut être considéré comme raisonnable afin de maintenir un niveau de sécurité adéquat pour le transit des citoyens européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(13 mai 2013)

La directive 2004/18/CE contient des dispositions relatives à la coordination des procédures de passation des marchés publics visant à assurer le respect des principes consacrés par le traité et garantir l'ouverture des marchés publics à la concurrence. Elle ne constitue pas un corpus complet et exhaustif de règles européennes qui harmoniserait intégralement les procédures de passation de marchés. S'ils doivent veiller à ce que leurs règles nationales soient compatibles avec celles de la directive et avec les principes consacrés par le traité, les États membres peuvent néanmoins conserver et établir leurs propres règles procédurales et de fond relatives aux marchés publics dès lors que celles-ci respectent le droit de l'Union.

La directive laisse en particulier aux pouvoirs adjudicateurs la compétence de déterminer le contenu des marchés et d'en estimer la valeur. L'article 9 établit un certain nombre de méthodes pour le calcul de la valeur estimée d'un marché afin de vérifier si celui-ci entre dans le champ d'application de la directive, ce qui est le cas en l'espèce. Sur la base des informations transmises par l'Honorable Parlementaire, rien n'indique a priori l'existence d'une infraction aux dispositions de la directive. Par conséquent, la Commission n'a pas l'intention de procéder à une évaluation sur une question qui relève de la compétence du pouvoir adjudicateur et des autorités nationales compétentes.

La Commission ne dispose d'aucun élément indiquant que les montants prévus compromettraient le respect des exigences de sécurité du tunnel.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003239/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Michel Dantin (PPE)
(21 marzo 2013)

Oggetto: Appalti pubblici al tunnel del Monte Bianco

Il traforo del Monte Bianco è gestito da un gruppo europeo di interesse economico (GEIE) istituito dal regolamento (CEE) n. 2137/85 del Consiglio, del 25 luglio 1985, e partecipato al 50 % da una società italiana e al 50 % da una società francese. Tra i due Paesi esiste una convenzione (convenzione di Lucca del 2006) la quale prevede che le gare d'appalto pubbliche per la messa in sicurezza del tunnel siano bandite alternatamente in base al diritto italiano e al diritto francese. Nel 2012 il GEIE ha indetto una gara per l'affidamento del servizio per la sicurezza la cui procedura è soggetta al diritto francese (precedentemente la stessa gara d'appalto era stata indetta nel 2006, in base al diritto italiano, e nel 2009, in base al diritto francese). Secondo quanto riportato in quest'ultimo bando, il valore stimato dell'appalto, al netto dell'IVA, è dell'ordine di 12 milioni di EUR per 3 anni, mentre le precedenti procedure di gara (2006 e 2009) avevano, rispettivamente, un importo a base d'asta di 14 600 000 EUR e di 15 000 000 EUR ed erano state assoggettate al diritto italiano (nel 2006) e a quello francese (nel 2009).

Premesso che la riduzione dell'importo non appare giustificato, considerando i molteplici gravissimi incidenti come l'incendio del marzo 1999, si interroga la Commissione per conoscere:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti e se intende procedere ad una valutazione trasparente in base agli elementi messi a disposizione dall'amministrazione giudicatrice e ai criteri seguiti, al fine di scongiurare le conseguenze negative che potrebbero derivare da una drastica riduzione degli importi messi a disposizione della sicurezza;

2. se tale decisione risulta adottata in base ai criteri della direttiva 2004/18/CE relativa al coordinamento delle procedure di aggiudicazione degli appalti pubblici di lavori, di forniture e di servizi, in particolare in base all'articolo 9 che stabilisce i metodi di calcolo del valore stimato degli appalti pubblici;

3. se ritiene che la riduzione dell'importo messo a disposizione della sicurezza possa essere considerato ragionevole al fine di mantenere un livello di sicurezza adeguato al transito dei cittadini europei.

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(13 maggio 2013)

La direttiva 2004/18/CE contiene disposizioni sul coordinamento delle procedure di aggiudicazione degli appalti pubblici con l'obiettivo di assicurare il rispetto dei principi del trattato e garantire l'apertura degli appalti pubblici alla concorrenza. Non definisce una regolamentazione completa ed esaustiva a livello dell'UE capace di armonizzare integralmente le procedure di appalto. Gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad assicurare la compatibilità delle norme nazionali con quelle della direttiva e con i principi del trattato, ma possono conservare e adottare norme sostanziali o procedurali in materia di appalti pubblici, a condizione che siano conformi al diritto dell'UE.

In particolare, la direttiva lascia alle amministrazioni aggiudicatrici la responsabilità di determinare i contenuti degli appalti e stimare il loro valore. L'articolo 9 intende stabilire un certo numero di metodi di calcolo del valore stimato di un appalto per verificare se si applicano le soglie previste dalla direttiva, come nel caso in questione. In base alle informazioni trasmesse dall'onorevole deputato, nulla indica a priori una violazione delle norme stabilite dalla direttiva. La Commissione non intende pertanto procedere a una valutazione su una questione che rientra fra le responsabilità dell'amministrazione aggiudicatrice e delle rispettive autorità nazionali competenti.

La Commissione non dispone di elementi indicanti che i fondi stanziati potrebbero compromettere il rispetto dei requisiti in materia di sicurezza nelle gallerie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003239/13
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Michel Dantin (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Public works contracts for the Mont Blanc tunnel

The Mont Blanc tunnel is operated by a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), created on the basis of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85 of 25 July 1985 and owned in equal shares by an Italian company and a French company. There is a convention between the two countries (the Lucca convention of 2006) which provides that calls to tender for public works contracts for maintaining the safety of the tunnel should be issued alternately on the basis of Italian and French law. In 2012 the EEIG issued a call for tenders for safety works under a procedure governed by French law (the same call for tenders had previously been issued in 2006 based on Italian law and in 2009 based on French law). According to this latest call for tenders, the estimated value of the contract, net of VAT, is in the order of EUR 12 million for 3 years, while the previous tender procedures (2006 and 2009) had starting prices of EUR 14 600 000 and EUR 15 000 000 respectively and were subject to Italian law (in 2006) and French law (in 2009).

The reduction in value does not appear to be justified, given the many extremely serious incidents, such as the fire of March 1999.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of these matters, and does it intend to carry out a transparent evaluation — based on the information made available by the awarding authority and the criteria applied — to avoid the negative consequences that could arise from a drastic reduction in the sums devoted to safety?

2. Was this decision taken on the basis of the criteria of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts, particularly Article 9 of that directive, which establishes methods for calculating the estimated value of public contracts?

3. Does it consider that the reduction in the sum devoted to safety can be regarded as reasonable for maintaining an adequate level of safety for European citizens passing through the tunnel?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

Directive 2004/18/EC contains rules on the coordination of procedures for the award of public contracts designed to ensure respect of the principles of the Treaty and guarantee the opening-up of public procurement to competition. The directive does not lay down a complete and exhaustive body of EU rules which would fully harmonise procurement procedures. Member States, while required to ensure compatibility of national rules with those of the directive and with Treaty principles can maintain and adopt substantive or procedural rules related to public contracts on condition that these rules comply with EC law.

In particular, the directive leaves to the contracting authorities the responsibility to determine the content and estimate the value of a contract. The purpose of Article 9 is to establish a number of methods for calculating the estimated value of a contract in order to verify whether the thresholds for the application of the directive are met, which is the case here. From the information transmitted by the Honourable Member, there is a priori no indication that any of the rules laid down in the directive would have been infringed. Therefore the Commission does not intend to carry out an evaluation on a matter that is within the remit of the contracting authority and the relevant responsible national authorities.

The Commission has no indication that the allocated funds would endanger the compliance with the tunnel safety requirements.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-003240/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. kovo 21 d.)

Tema: Gestacinio diabeto patikra Europos Sąjungoje

Gestacinis diabetas ir nutukimas nėštumo metu didina perinatalinį sergamumą bei mirtingumą ir šių moterų vaikai turi didesnę riziką vėliau susirgti antro tipo cukriniu diabetu. Šiuo metu Europoje sergamumas gestaciniu diabetu svyruoja nuo 2 iki 22 procentų, tačiau nėra nei bendros visuotinės patikros, nei bendros tyrimo metodikos, nei visuotinio patikrinimo rezultatų vertinimo.

Pasaulyje stengiamasi optimizuoti visuotinį nėščiųjų patikrinimą, siekiant nustatyti, ar nesergama gestaciniu diabetu. JAV nacionalinis sveikatos institutas aktyviai dirba ir teikia pasiūlymus šiuo klausimu.

Norėčiau paklausti Komisijos, ar, atsižvelgiant į žalingą šios ligos poveikį ir paplitimo mastą, šiuo metu imamasi gestacinio diabeto prevencijos veiksmų ir ar imamasi veiksmų dėl bendros šios ligos patikros atlikimo Europos Sąjungoje?

T. Borgo atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. gegužės 8 d.)

Komisijai yra žinoma apie tai, kad gestacinis diabetas ir nutukimas didina vaikų sergamumą ir mirtingumą.

Komisija yra įsipareigojusi spręsti vis augančią diabeto epidemijos problemą, įskaitant II tipo diabeto prevenciją, ypač imantis veiksmų žinomų rizikos veiksnių, kaip antai mityba ir nepakankamas fizinis aktyvumas, atžvilgiu. Tuo tikslu Komisija parengė išsamią strategiją.

Siekdama toliau remti II tipo diabeto prevenciją ir ankstyvąją diagnostiką, Komisija drauge su valstybėmis narėmis ėmėsi bendrųjų veiksmų dėl lėtinių ligų, kurie yra bendrai finansuojami pagal Sveikatos programą. Viena šių bendrųjų veiksmų plano dalis yra skirta būtent diabetui: siekiama nustatyti diabeto prevencijos, atrankinės patikros ir gydymo kliūtis ir gerinti valstybių narių bendradarbiavimą.

Be to, Komisija remia du gestacinio diabeto mokslinių tyrimų projektus pagal Mokslinių tyrimų ir technologinės plėtros septintąją bendrąją programą (7BP, 2007-2013 m.).

Tai yra DALI ([1]) projektas, kuriuo siekiama nustatyti geriausias diabeto prevencijos nėštumo metu priemones (ES įnašas – 2,99 mln. EUR); ir „EarlyNutrition“ ([2]) projektas, skirtas nagrinėti svarbiausias galimas nutukimo ir susijusių sutrikimų ankstyvuoju gyvenimo etapu priežastis ir prevencijos būdus (ES įnašas – 8,99 mln. EUR).

Kalbant apie diabeto atrankinės patikros vykdymą, tai yra sveikatos priežiūros klausimas, kuris yra išimtinė valstybių narių kompetencija.

([1]) http://www.dali-project.eu/.
([2]) http://www.project-earlynutrition.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003240/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Gestational diabetes testing in the European Union

Gestational diabetes and obesity during pregnancy increase perinatal morbidity and mortality, and the children of such women have a greater risk of later developing type 2 diabetes. The incidence of gestational diabetes in Europe currently ranges between 2% and 22%, but there are no general universal screenings, common testing methods or a universal assessment of test results.

Globally, efforts are underway to optimise universal prenatal screening in order to establish whether gestational diabetes is present. The US National Institutes of Health is working actively and putting forward proposals on this issue.

I would like to ask the Commission whether, given the damaging impact of this disease and its prevalence, action is currently being taken to prevent gestational diabetes and whether action is being taken to carry out general screening for this disease in the European Union.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the negative impacts of gestational diabetes and obesity on the morbidity and mortality of children.

The Commission is fully committed to addressing the rising challenge of the diabetes epidemic, including the prevention of diabetes type II, in particular by taking action on known risk factors such as nutrition and lack of physical activity, where the Commission has put in place a comprehensive strategy.

To further support the development of prevention and early diagnosis of diabetes type II, the Commission developed a joint action on chronic diseases with the Member States, which is co-financed by the Health Programme. One working package of this joint action is specifically devoted to diabetes, and aims at studying the barriers to prevention, screening and treatment of diabetes and at improving cooperation among Member States.

In addition, the Commission is supporting two research projects on gestational diabetes within the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013).

These are the DALI ([1]) project, which aims to identify the best available measures to prevent gestational diabetes during pregnancy (EU contribution: EUR 2.99 million); and the EarlyNutrition ([2]) project, which explores the key hypotheses on likely causes and pathways to prevention of early life origins of obesity and associated disorders (EU contribution: EUR 8.99 million).

As regards the implementation of screening for diabetes, this is a healthcare issue which falls under the exclusive responsibility of Member States.

([1]) http://www.dali-project.eu/
([2]) http://www.project-earlynutrition.eu/

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-003241/13
Komisijai
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(2013 m. kovo 21 d.)

Tema: Nevienodų kainų taikymas tam tikrose srityse Maltos piliečiams ir iš kitų ES šalių atvykusiems asmenims

Europos Sąjunga saugo tokias pamatines vertybes kaip žmogaus orumas, laisvė, demokratija, lygybė ir pagarba žmogaus teisėms. Bet kuris asmuo, turintis kurios nors ES šalies pilietybę, savaime laikomas ir ES piliečiu. Vadinasi, taikant nacionalines mokesčių taisykles valstybėse narėse, privaloma laikytis pagrindinio principo, draudžiančio diskriminuoti asmenis, atvykusius iš kitų ES valstybių, ir negalima jiems taikyti kitokių standartų nei savos šalies piliečiams.

Gavau ES piliečio skundą dėl diskriminuojančios situacijos Maltoje. Jame nurodoma, kad ES piliečiams (netgi turintiems Maltos tapatybės kortelę), tačiau ne Maltos gyventojams, yra taikomi skirtingi vandens ir elektros mokesčiai (nuo 35 % iki 65 % didesni), taikomos skirtingos kainos autobusų bilietams, reikalaujami užstatai televizijos, interneto, telefono kompanijose ir pan.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad tokiu būdu yra diskriminuojami iš kitų valstybių narių atvykę ES piliečiai?

Be to, kokių priemonių imasi ar planuoja imtis Komisija, siekdama užkirsti kelią tokiai vykdomai diskriminacinei politikai?

V. Reding atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. gegužės 30 d.)

Gerbiamojo nario keliami klausimai Komisijai žinomi. 2012 m. rugsėjo 27 d. Komisija pradėjo pažeidimo nagrinėjimo procedūrą prieš Maltą. Konkrečiai Komisija mano, kad skirtingų vandens ir elektros energijos tarifų taikymas pažeidžia vienodo požiūrio principą.

Maltos valdžios institucijos 2013 m. sausio mėn. atsakė į oficialų Europos Komisijos pranešimą. Komisija svarsto tolesnius šios srities žingsnius.

Komisijos dėmesiui keletą kartų buvo pateikta informacija apie galimą diskriminaciją dėl pilietybės Maltoje, taikant skirtingus autobusų transporto tarifus. Komisija pasikeitė laiškais su Maltos valdžios institucijomis ir 2013 m. sausio 24 d. pradėjo prieš Maltą pažeidimo nagrinėjimo procedūrą dėl netiesioginės diskriminacijos dėl pilietybės.

Maltos valdžios institucijos 2013 m. sausio mėn. atsakė į oficialų Europos Komisijos pranešimą. Šiuo metu Komisija aptaria ir vertina Maltos atsakymą.

Komisija nagrinėja ir kitus atvejus, kai Maltos gyventojams galimai buvo sudarytos palankesnės sąlygos lyginant su kitais ES piliečiais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003241/13
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Application of unequal prices in certain areas to citizens of Malta and people from other EU Member States

The European Union protects such fundamental values as human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality and respect for human rights. Any person who is a citizen of an EU Member State is naturally also considered a citizen of the EU. This means that when applying national tax regulations in the Member States, the basic principle prohibiting discrimination against people from other EU Member States must be respected and they cannot be made subject to different standards from the citizens of the country in question.

I have received a complaint from an EU citizen concerning a discriminatory situation in Malta. It indicates that people who are EU citizens (even those possessing a Maltese identity card), but not Maltese residents have to pay different water and electricity charges (from 35% to 65% higher), and that there are different prices for bus tickets. Deposits are also required by television, Internet and telephone companies, etc.

Does the Commission not consider that EU citizens from other Member States are thus being discriminated against?

Furthermore, what measures is the Commission taking or does it plan to take to stop such discriminatory policies?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issues raised by the Honourable Member. On 27 September 2012 the Commission opened an infringement procedure against Malta. In particular, the Commission considers that the application of different water and electricity tariffs violates the principle of equal treatment.

The Maltese authorities replied to the letter of formal notice of the European Commission in January 2013. The Commission is considering further steps in this case.

The issue of alleged discrimination with regard to bus transport tariffs in Malta on the grounds of nationality has been brought to the attention of the Commission on several occasions. Following exchanges of correspondence with the Maltese authorities, the Commission initiated infringement proceedings against Malta on 24 January 2013 for indirect discrimination based on nationality.

The Maltese authorities replied to the letter of formal notice of the Commission in March 2013. The Commission is currently assessing the Maltese reply.

The Commission is also investigating other cases in which Maltese nationals have apparently obtained preferential treatment in comparison with other EU citizens.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003242/13
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(21 maart 2013)

Betreft: Gecoördineerde bestrijding van sociale wanpraktijken en oprichting van een Sociale Europol

Recentelijk beklaagden de Belgische Federale Ministers verantwoordelijk voor Economie, Consumentenbescherming, Arbeid en Sociale Zaken zich over de wanpraktijken inzake uitbuiting, sociale ongelijkheid en lage lonen in Duitse bedrijven, voornamelijk in de vleesindustrie. Voornamelijk Oost-Europese arbeiders worden er uitgebuit. Ze werken er tot zestig uur per week voor een schamele 400 à 600 euro.

Op 11 november 2005 stelde voormalige Europarlementslid Anne Van Lancker de parlementaire vraag P-004250/2005 ([1]) over de oprichting van een Sociale Europol waardoor een betere grensoverschrijdende samenwerking tussen arbeidsinspectiediensten mogelijk zou worden.

Op 12 december 2005 antwoordde de heer Spidla dat de Commissie niet van plan was een voorstel op tafel te leggen voor de oprichting van een „sociale Europol", aangezien „de nationale arbeidsinspecties van alle lidstaten al vanaf de oprichting van het Comité van hoge functionarissen van de arbeidsinspectie door de Commissie in 1995 met elkaar samenwerken".

Blijkbaar werkt dit systeem niet. De Europese vakbonden, voornamelijk uit de bouw-, de transport- en de landbouwsector vragen vanwege dit soort uitbuiting, sociale ongelijkheid en lage lonen naast de oprichting van een sociale Europol ook om de instelling van een Europese sociale identiteitskaart, een Europese aansprakelijkheid voor de opdrachtgevers en hoofdaannemers, heldere definities die een onderscheid maken tussen een werkelijke zelfstandige en een werknemer en strenge nationale controles met duidelijke doelstellingen.

1. Mag ik van de Commissie vernemen of zij van plan is initiatieven te nemen ter oprichting van een sociale Europol, de instelling van een Europese sociale identiteitskaart, een Europese aansprakelijkheid voor de opdrachtgevers en hoofdaannemers, heldere definities die een onderscheid maken tussen een werkelijke zelfstandige en een werknemer en strenge nationale controles met duidelijke doelstellingen?

2. Zo neen, mag ik van de Commissie vernemen welke maatregelen ze dan wel zal opstarten teneinde dit soort wanpraktijken te voorkomen?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(17 mei 2013)

1. De Commissie is niet van plan om de aanzet te geven tot het opzetten van een „sociale" Europol noch om een Europese sociale identiteitskaart te introduceren. Zij is ervan op de hoogte dat een aantal lidstaten op de werkplek bepaalde identiteitskaarten gebruiken of dat van plan zijn. Dit gebruik moet echter geen onnodige administratieve last vormen of tot ongerechtvaardigde belemmeringen voor buitenlandse dienstenverleners leiden.

Het voorstel ([2]) voor een richtlijn betreffende de handhaving van richtlijn 96/71/EG ([3]) introduceert een beperkt regime van gezamenlijke en persoonlijke aansprakelijkheid om de rechten van ter beschikking gestelde werknemers te beschermen en om uitbuiting in het uitbestedingsproces te voorkomen. Wat betreft het toezicht op nationaal niveau voorziet het voorstel in nieuwe instrumenten voor samenwerking tussen nationale rechtshandhavingsinstanties, waarin ook het gebruik van het Informatiesysteem voor de interne markt is opgenomen.

De Commissie is niet van plan om een algemene definitie van een werkelijke zelfstandige of van een werknemer aan te nemen, omdat de bevoegdheid op dit vlak voornamelijk bij de lidstaten ligt.

2. Nog in 2013 zal de Commissie een initiatief presenteren om een Europees platform ter versterking van samenwerking op te zetten door op Europees niveau informatie en beste praktijken van rechtshandhavingsinstanties uit de lidstaten, zoals de arbeidsinspectiediensten, belasting- en sociale zekerheidsautoriteiten en andere belanghebbenden, samen te brengen met als doel een efficiëntere en samenhangende aanpak van het voorkomen en afschrikken van zwartwerk te bewerkstelligen. Daarnaast blijft het Comité van hoge functionarissen van de arbeidsinspectie een positieve rol spelen bij de samenwerking tussen nationale arbeidsinspectiediensten.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2005-4250+0+DOC+XML+V0//NL.
([2]) COM(2012) 131 definitief van 21 maart 2012.
([3]) Richtlijn 96/71/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 16 december 1996 betreffende de terbeschikkingstelling van werknemers met het oog op het verrichten van diensten, Publicatieblad Nr. L 18 van 21.1.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003242/13
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Coordinated fight against social malpractice and creation of a 'social' Europol

The Belgian federal ministers responsible for Economic Affairs, Consumer Protection, Labour and Social Affairs have recently complained about malpractices such as exploitation, social inequality and low wages in German companies, mainly in the meat industry. Eastern European workers are mainly being exploited there. They are working up to 60 hours per week for a mere EUR 400-600.

On 11 November 2005, former MEP Anne van Lancker submitted parliamentary Question P-004250/2005 ([1]) on the establishment of a 'social' Europol so as to facilitate better cross-border cooperation between labour inspectorates.

On 12 December 2005, Mr Spidla replied that the Commission was not considering a proposal for the establishment of a 'social Europol', since 'the national labour inspectorates of all Member States have been officially collaborating since 1995 when the Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors was set up by the Commission'.

It is clear that this system is not working. In view of such exploitation, social inequality and low wages, European trade unions in the construction, transport and agricultural sectors are demanding that, in addition to a 'social' Europol, a European social identity card should also be introduced, European liability for employers and main contractors, clear definitions distinguishing between a real self-employed person and an employee and strict national supervision with clear objectives.

1. Can the Commission inform me if it intends to initiate the establishment of a 'social' Europol, a European social identity card, European liability for employers and main contractors, clear definitions distinguishing between a real self-employed person and an employee and strict national supervision with clear objectives?

2. If not, can the Commission inform me what measures it is going to take in order to prevent such malpractice?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

1. The Commission does not intend to initiate the establishment of a 'social' Europol nor is it intending to introduce a European social identity card. It is aware that several Member States are using or planning to use identity cards of some sort at the workplace. However, this practice should not create an unnecessary administrative burden or lead to unjustified obstacles for foreign service-providers.

The proposal ([2]) for a directive on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC ([3]) introduces a limited system of joint and several liabilities to protect posted workers' rights and avoid exploitation in the subcontracting process. As regards national supervision, the proposal introduces new instruments for cooperation among national enforcement agencies, including the use of the internal market Information System.

The Commission is not considering adopting a general definition of a self-employed person or of an employee, since competence in this field lies primarily with the Member States.

2. In 2013 the Commission will present an initiative to establish a European platform to step up cooperation by pooling information and best practice at EU level between Member States' enforcement bodies, such as the labour inspectorates, tax and social security authorities and other stakeholders, to achieve a more effective and consistent approach to preventing and deterring undeclared work, In addition, the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee continues to play a positive role in cooperation between national labour inspectorates.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2005-4250+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN
([2]) COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012.
([3]) Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, OJ L 18, 21.1.1997.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003243/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(21 marca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja związana z funkcjonowaniem szpitali w Polsce

W ostatnim czasie polskie media podają niepokojące informacje na temat niestabilnej sytuacji finansowej związanej z funkcjonowaniem wielu szpitali w Polsce. Takim przykładem jest choćby Wojewódzki Specjalistyczny Szpital Dziecięcy w Kielcach.

Osoby odpowiedzialne za zarządzanie, mówiąc o zadłużeniu szpitala, wskazują na pomysł restrukturyzacji placówki zdrowia czy redukcji zatrudnienia. Likwidacja szpitalnych łóżek, co jednoznacznie można stwierdzić, przyczyni się do ograniczenia wydajności opieki medycznej dla najmłodszych pacjentów.

Należy w miejscu tym podnieść, że to jedyny specjalistyczny szpital dziecięcy w województwie świętokrzyskim.

Czy Komisja monitoruje stan służby zdrowia w poszczególnych krajach Unii Europejskiej, a co za tym idzie czy Komisja prowadzi w tym zakresie jakiekolwiek statystyki?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(31 maja 2013 r.)

Komisja Europejska nie gromadzi danych dotyczących sposobu funkcjonowania szpitali ani zarządzania nimi w państwach członkowskich UE.

Komisja Europejska prowadziła, wraz z państwami członkowskimi, projekty dotyczące wskaźników zdrowotnych Wspólnoty Europejskiej, mających na celu opracowanie spójnego wykazu wskaźników służących monitorowaniu zdrowia. Głównym rezultatem tych projektów jest lista 88 wskaźników obejmujących wszystkie aspekty zdrowia.

Wskaźniki te obejmują demografię i sytuację społeczno-gospodarczą, stan zdrowia populacji, czynniki warunkujące stan zdrowia oraz interwencje w zakresie ochrony zdrowia zarówno w ramach usług zdrowotnych, jak i promocji zdrowia. Wartość dodana tych wskaźników polega na tym, że są one dobrze zdefiniowane i umożliwiają porównywanie sytuacji w państwach członkowskich i między nimi, a także są dobrym narzędziem harmonizacji i porównywalności zgromadzonych danych.

Świadczenia zdrowotne oraz opieka zdrowotna są jednym z obszarów polityki objętych wskaźnikami zdrowotnymi Wspólnoty Europejskiej; eksperci w dziedzinie zdrowia zasugerowali w tej dziedzinie wybór 36 wskaźników, które umożliwiają monitorowanie wyników działania systemów opieki zdrowotnej, w tym jakości świadczeń. Większość danych w tej dziedzinie jest rozpowszechniana przez Eurostat i jest dostępna w jego bazie danych ([1]), jak również na stronie Internetowej DG SANCO ([2]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/introduction
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003243/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: State of affairs in Polish hospitals

The Polish media have recently published worrying information on the impact of the unstable financial situation on the way in which a large number of Polish hospitals are being run. One such hospital is the Kielce Province Children's Hospital.

The hospital's management has proposing restructuring the hospital or reducing staff numbers in response to high levels of debt. Reducing the number of hospital beds would unquestionably have an adverse effect on the standard of medical care provided to young patients.

It must be emphasised that this is the only specialised paediatric hospital in the Świętokrzyskie province.

Is the Commission monitoring the state of medical services in the Member States? If so, is it keeping anystatistics?

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

The European Commission does not collect data about the performance or the management of hospitals in the EU Member States.

The European Commission, together with the Member States, has run the European Community Health Indicators (ECHI) projects to develop a coherent list of indicators for monitoring health. The main result of these projects is a shortlist of 88 indicators that cover all aspects of health.

These indicators cover demography and socioeconomic situation, health status, determinants of health, health interventions both for health services and health promotion. The added value of these indicators is that they are well defined and allow for comparison within and between the Member States as well as being a good tool for the harmonisation and comparability of data collected.

One of the policy areas that the ECHI indicators cover is Health services and Healthcare; in this area, health experts have suggested 36 indicators for monitoring Health systems' performance including quality of care. Most such data is disseminated by Eurostat and available in their database ([1]) as well as on DG SANCO's homepage ([2]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/introduction.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003244/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de março de 2013)

Assunto: Serviço de coordenação antifraude

Considerando o seguinte:

— O serviço de coordenação antifraude (AFCOS) foi criado em todos os países que aderiram à UE depois de 2004, assim como nos países candidatos;

— O AFCOS é uma autoridade nacional responsável pela coordenação das atividades administrativas e operacionais destinadas a proteger os interesses financeiros da UE contra a fraude;

— Este serviço coordena a partilha de informações entre as autoridades nacionais de prevenção da fraude e o OLAF;

Pergunto à Comissão:

Qual o motivo que justifica que esta autoridade não seja criada também nos países que aderiram à UE antes de 2004?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(6 de maio de 2013)

O conceito subjacente aos Serviços de coordenação antifraude (AFCOS) foi introduzido pela primeira vez em dezembro de 2002, antes do alargamento de 2004, como parte das medidas destinadas a reforçar a capacidade institucional dos países candidatos para a proteção dos interesses financeiros da União, no contexto das negociações sobre o acervo comunitário. Foi concebido para os países candidatos à adesão e não tinha qualquer base jurídica explícita dentro do quadro legislativo da UE, para além do artigo 280.° do Tratado CE ([1]).

A Comissão propõe que este conceito seja implementado em todos os Estados-Membros e na revisão do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1073/1999 ([2]) prevê-se que todos os Estados-Membros designem um AFCOS para facilitar e melhorar a cooperação.

([1]) Artigo 280.° do Tratado CE, n.° 3: «Sem prejuízo de outras disposições do presente Tratado, os Estados-Membros coordenarão as respetivas ações no sentido de defender os interesses financeiros da Comunidade contra a fraude. Para o efeito, organizarão, em conjunto com a Comissão, uma colaboração estreita e regular entre as autoridades competentes.».

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1073/1999 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 25 de maio de 1999, relativo aos inquéritos efetuados pelo Organismo Europeu de Luta Antifraude (OLAF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003244/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Anti-fraud coordination service

— An anti-fraud coordination service (AFCOS) has been set up in all countries that joined the EU after 2004, as well as in all countries that are official candidates for EU membership.

— An AFCOS is a national authority responsible for coordinating administrative and operational activities aimed at protecting the EU's financial interests from fraud.

— The service coordinates the sharing of information between the national fraud-prevention authorities and OLAF.

Why is this authority not being set up in the countries that joined the EU prior to 2004?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Anti-fraud coordination service (AFCOS) concept was first introduced in December 2002, prior to the enlargement of 2004, as part of the activities reinforcing the candidate countries' institutional capacity for the protection of the Communities' financial interests, in the context of the negotiations on the a*cquis communautaire*. It was only targeting the candidate countries and had no explicit legal background within the EU legislative framework, apart from the article 280 of the EC Treaty ([1]).

The Commission is proposing that this concept is set up in all Member States and in the revision of Regulation 1073/1999 ([2]) there is a provision for all Member States to designate an AFCOS to facilitate and improve further cooperation.

([1]) Article 280 of the EC Treaty, paragraph 3: 'Without prejudice to other provisions of this Treaty, the Member States shall coordinate their action aimed at protecting the financial interests of the Community against fraud. To this end they shall organise, together with the Commission, close and regular cooperation between the competent authorities'.

([2]) Regulation (EC) 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003245/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Problematika ratingových agentúr

Problematika ratingových agentúr vzbudzuje oprávnený záujem verejnosti a živú politickú diskusiu. Aktivity ratingových agentúr majú totiž ďalekosiahly vplyv na správanie hospodárskych a finančných subjektov a na fungovanie verejných inštitúcií. Ich regulácia by výrazne ovplyvnila fungovanie finančných trhov. V Európskom parlamente sme prísnejší regulačný rámec požadovali ešte v roku 2011 a poukazovali sme na potrebu znížiť nadmerné spoliehanie sa na ratingové agentúry. Ratingy by sa mali považovať za informácie, ktoré treba brať do úvahy, avšak agentúry by nemali mať osobitné postavenie a ani by nemali automaticky ovplyvňovať činnosť hospodárskych a finančných subjektov a verejných inštitúcií.

Aký je názor Komisie na tvrdenie, že členské štáty by sa mali oslobodiť od svojej závislosti od ratingových hodnotení?

V prípade, že sa Komisia domnieva, že by to bolo vhodné, akým spôsobom to chce docieliť?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(6. júna 2013)

Komisia podporuje názor, že nadmerné spoliehanie sa na externé úverové ratingy by sa malo obmedziť.

V novom regulačnom rámci EÚ, ktorý sa týka ratingových agentúr ([1]), sa od členských štátov bude požadovať, aby obmedzili nadmerné spoliehanie sa na úverové ratingy v právnych predpisoch. ESMA vypracuje na tento účel usmernenia a odporúčania pre príslušné sektorové a vnútroštátne orgány. Komisia má navyše v úmysle preskúmať v prvom rade to, či existujú v právnych predpisoch Únie odkazy na úverové ratingy, ktoré spúšťajú alebo majú potenciál spúšťať automatické spoliehanie sa na úverové ratingy. V druhom rade sa preskúmajú všetky odkazy na úverové ratingy na regulačné účely s cieľom nahradiť ich do roku 2020, a to za predpokladu, že sa identifikujú a zavedú náležité alternatívne riešenia k hodnoteniu úverového rizika.

Na medzinárodnej úrovni sa v novembri 2010 na samite skupiny G20 v Soule schválili zásady FSB ([2]) týkajúce sa obmedzenia miery spoliehania sa orgánov a finančných inštitúcií na úverové ratingy. Plán realizácie ([3]) sa schválil na plenárnom zasadnutí FSB v októbri 2012. FSB podnikla na tento účel tematické partnerské preskúmanie, ktorého hlavným cieľom je pomôcť vnútroštátnym orgánom pri plnení ich záväzkov, a to uľahčovaním výmeny skúseností a účinných postupov medzi vnútroštátnymi orgánmi vrátane podporovania účastníkov trhu, aby vypracovali a zaviedli vhodné postupy hodnotenia úverového rizika. Komisia je členom tímu vykonávajúceho partnerské preskúmanie a koordinuje odpovede z EÚ.

([1]) Legislatívne uznesenie Európskeho parlamentu k návrhu nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady, ktorým sa mení nariadenie (ES) č. 1060/2009 o ratingových agentúrach, prijaté 16. januára 2013.

([2]) FSB, zásady obmedzovania miery spoliehania sa na ratingy ratingových agentúr, prijaté 27. októbra 2010. Dostupné na: http://www.financialstabilityboard.org/publications/r_101027.pdf

([3]) Plán realizácie je dostupný na http://www.financialstabilityboard.org/publications/r_121105b.pdf a časový harmonogram je pripojený ako príloha B k tejto správe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003245/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Rating agencies

The issue of rating agencies is stirring public interest and lively political debate, and this is justified on account of the fact that their activities have far-reaching effects on the behaviour of economic and financial entities and on the functioning of public bodies. Bringing them under regulation would have a profound effect on the functioning of financial markets. Parliament called for a stricter regulatory framework back in 2011, and it has pointed out the need to reduce our excessive reliance on rating agencies. Ratings should be viewed as information worthy of consideration; however, rating agencies should not enjoy a special position, nor should they automatically influence the behaviour of economic and financial entities or public bodies.

In the Commission view, should the Member States break free from their dependence on ratings?

If the Commission feels that this would be appropriate, how could it be achieved?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission supports the view that overreliance on external credit ratings should be reduced.

EU's new regulatory framework on credit rating agencies ([1]) will require Member States to reduce regulatory overreliance on credit ratings. To this end, ESMA will develop guidelines and recommendations for sectorial and national competent authorities. Moreover, the intention of the Commission is to review, at a first stage, whether any references to credit ratings in Union law trigger or have the potential of triggering mechanistic reliance on credit ratings. In a second stage, all references to credit ratings for regulatory purposes will be reviewed with a view to replacing them by 2020, provided that appropriate alternatives to credit risk assessment are identified and implemented.

At the international level, the FSB principles ([2]) regarding the reduction of the reliance of authorities and of financial institutions on credit ratings were endorsed by the G20 Seoul Summit in November 2010. A roadmap ([3]) was endorsed at the FSB Plenary meeting in October 2012. To this end, the FSB undertook a thematic peer review, the main objective of which is to assist national authorities to fulfil their commitments by facilitating the sharing among national authorities of experience and effective practices, including by encouraging market participants to develop and implement appropriate credit rating assessment processes. The Commission is part of the peer review team and coordinates the responses from the EU.

([1]) European Parliament legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies, adopted on 16 January 2013.

([2]) FSB, principles for reducing reliance on CRA ratings, adopted on 27 October 2010. Available from: http://www.financialstabilityboard.org/publications/r_101027.pdf

([3]) The Roadmap is available at http://www.financialstabilityboard.org/publications/r_121105b.pdf and the milestones are attached as Annex B to this note.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003246/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Európska ratingová agentúra

Ratingové agentúry v Európskej únii sú vystavené dlhodobej kritike. V súčasnosti sa však diskutuje o otázke európskej ratingovej agentúry. Nemecký podnikateľ zverejnil model ratingovej agentúry, ktorá by bola súkromnou neziskovou organizáciou fungujúcou na princípe nadácie. Svoju činnosť by mohla začať už do polovice mája tohto roka. Za jej služby by klienti platili. Agentúra by tiež niesla zodpovednosť za dôsledky svojich analýz.

Aký je postoj Komisie k týmto plánom?

Predstaví Komisia vlastný návrh európskej verejnej ratingovej agentúry?

Ak áno, kedy môžeme predmetný návrh Komisie očakávať?

Odpoveď pána Barniera v mene Komisie
(13. mája 2013)

Komisia víta akékoľvek súkromné iniciatívy, ktoré by podporili väčšiu možnosť voľby a súťaž na trhu s úverovými ratingmi. Komisia v rámci dohody o nových pravidlách EÚ pre ratingové agentúry ([1]) preskúma situáciu na trhu s úverovými ratingmi a do 1. januára 2016 predloží správu, ktorá sa konkrétne zameria na primeranosť existujúcich a alternatívnych modelov odmeňovania ratingových agentúr.

Komisia okrem toho vypracuje analýzu situácie na trhu s úverovými ratingmi a do 31. decembra 2016 predloží Európskemu parlamentu správu o uskutočniteľnosti posúdenia úverovej bonity štátneho dlhu členských štátov EÚ, o európskej ratingovej agentúre zameranej na posudzovanie úverovej bonity štátneho dlhu členských štátov a/alebo o európskej nadácii pre úverový rating zameranej na všetky ostatné ratingy.

([1]) Legislatívne uznesenie Európskeho parlamentu k návrhu nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady, ktorým sa mení a dopĺňa nariadenie (ES) č. 1060/2009 o ratingových agentúrach, prijaté 16. januára 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003246/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: A European rating agency

Rating agencies in the EU have been subject to criticism for some time now. However, the idea of establishing a European rating agency is currently being discussed. A German entrepreneur has published a proposal for a rating agency that would operate as a private, not-for-profit foundation. It could be ready to start operating as early as mid-May 2013. Its services would be paid for by clients. Furthermore, the agency would be answerable for the consequences of its analyses.

What is the Commission's view on these plans?

Will the Commission submit its own proposal for a European public rating agency?

If so, when can we anticipate such a proposal?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission welcomes any private initiatives that could foster more choice and competition in the credit rating market. As part of the agreement on new EU rules on credit rating agencies ([1]), the Commission will review the situation in the credit rating market and report by 1 January 2016, specifically on the appropriateness of existing and alternative remuneration models of credit rating agencies.

Moreover, the Commission will analyse the situation in the rating market and report by 31 December 2016 to the European Parliament on the feasibility of creditworthiness assessments of sovereign debt of EU Member States, a European credit rating agency dedicated to assessing the creditworthiness of Member States' sovereign debt and/or a European Credit Rating Foundation for all other ratings.

([1]) European Parliament legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies, adopted on 16 January 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003247/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Zneužívanie finančných prostriedkov Európskej únie

V európskom rozpočte vznikajú v dôsledku protiprávneho konania každoročne obrovské straty. V roku 2010 bolo zaznamenaných celkovo 600 prípadov podozrenia z podvodov týkajúcich sa výdavkov a príjmov EÚ. Členské štáty nahlásili prípady podozrenia z podvodu, ktoré sa týkali prostriedkov vo výške 600 miliónov EUR. Viac ako 90 % peňazí európskeho rozpočtu spravujú členské štáty. Prípady, keď s cieľom získať financovanie, napríklad v oblasti regionálneho rozvoja, žiadatelia o finančné prostriedky poskytnú nepravdivé informácie, alebo prípady, keď úradníci v členských štátoch prijmú peniaze za udelenie verejnej zákazky v rozpore s pravidlami verejného obstarávania, sú čoraz častejšie. Takéto zneužívanie finančných prostriedkov výrazne ohrozuje napĺňanie hlavného cieľa rozpočtu Únie, ktorým je zlepšovanie životných podmienok a podpora rastu a zamestnanosti.

Akým spôsobom bude v nasledujúcom období Komisia bojovať proti protiprávnemu konaniu, ako je korupcia, pranie špinavých peňazí, či marenie verejného obstarávania, ktorých spoločným znakom je vytváranie zisku na úkor spoločného eurorozpočtu, a teda na úkor všetkých európskych daňových poplatníkov?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(23. mája 2013)

Za ochranu finančných záujmov EÚ sú rovnako zodpovedné tak členské štáty, ako aj Komisia, a to predovšetkým Európsky úrad pre boj proti podvodom (ďalej len „úrad OLAF“) ([1]).

Komisia by chcela pani poslankyňu požiadať, aby vzala do úvahy jej odpoveď na otázku E-2957/13, ktorá sa týka činností úradu OLAF v tejto oblasti politiky.

V súvislosti so zriadením Európskej prokuratúry ([2]), ktoré je súčasťou pracovného programu Komisie na rok 2013, Komisia v súčasnosti uskutočňuje potrebné konzultácie a prípravné práce.

Komisia sa ujala legislatívnej iniciatívy zameranej na posilnenie boja proti trestným činom, ktoré majú negatívny vplyv na rozpočet EÚ, a v júli 2012 prijala návrh smernice ([3]), ktorou by sa mal nahradiť Dohovor o ochrane finančných záujmov Európskych spoločenstiev ([4]). Tento návrh by nemal pokrývať iba podvody v užšom zmysle slova, ale takisto korupciu, pranie špinavých peňazí a marenie verejného obstarávania.

Nová iniciatíva týkajúca sa smernice o posilnení trestnoprávnej ochrany eura a ostatných mien proti falšovaniu ([5]) vychádza z rámcového rozhodnutia o zvýšenej ochrane pred falšovaním prostredníctvom pokút a ďalších trestných sankcií v súvislosti so zavádzaním eura ([6]) a zároveň toto rámcové rozhodnutie nahrádza.

Pokiaľ ide o pravidlá EÚ v oblasti verejného obstarávania, Komisia v rámci ich revízie, ktorá v súčasnosti prebieha, navrhla pravidlá, ktorými sa zabezpečuje zvýšená transparentnosť a prehľadnosť, a ďalšie osobitné opatrenia na boj proti korupcii, ako aj pravidlá EÚ proti narušovaniu hospodárskej súťaže ([7]).

Komisia 5. februára 2013 uverejnila návrh revidovanej smernice o boji proti praniu špinavých peňazí ([8]), ktorou sa posilní účinnosť rámca EÚ v oblasti boja proti praniu špinavých peňazí.

([1]) Článok 325 ZFEÚ.
([2]) V súlade s článkom 86 ZFEÚ.
([3]) COM(2012) 363 final.
([4]) Dohovor z 26. júla 1995 (Ú. v. ES C 316, 27.11.1995. s. 49) (podvody); prvý protokol z 27. septembra 1996 (Ú. v ES C 313, 23.10.1996, s. 2) a dohovor z 26. mája 1997 (Ú. v. ES C 195, 25.6.1997) (korupcia); protokol z 29. novembra 1996 (Ú. v. ES C 151, 20.5.1997. s. 2) (výklad súdu); druhý protokol z 19. júna 1997 (Ú. v. ES C 221, 19.7.1997. s. 12) (pranie špinavých peňazí).
([5]) COM(2013) 42.
([6]) 2000/383/JHA z 29. mája 2000.
([7]) Konkrétne bol objasnený pojem „konflikt záujmov“ a členské štáty majú prijať opatrenia na účinné predchádzanie konfliktom záujmov, ich identifikáciu a odstraňovanie. Okrem toho sa posilnili a rozšírili dôvody na vylúčenie napr. na prípady ovplyvňovania rozhodovacieho procesu neprimeraným spôsobom alebo skresľovania skutočností pri poskytovaní informácií, ak k vylúčeniu nedošlo.
([8]) COM(2013) 45 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003247/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Misuse of EU funds

Each year, the European budget incurs huge losses as a consequence of illegal activities. In 2010, a total of 600 suspected cases of fraud were recorded with regard to EU expenditure and revenue. Member States reported suspected fraud cases concerning a total of EUR 600 million. More than 90% of the EU budget is managed by the Member States. Cases in which applicants for funding in areas such as regional development provide false information, or in which civil servants in Member States receive money in exchange for the award of public contracts, contrary to the rules of public procurement, are increasingly common. Such misuse of funds represents a clear threat to the EU budget's chances of achieving its main objectives, which are improving living standards and stimulating growth and employment.

What steps does the Commission intend to take in the near future to combat illegal activities, including corruption, money laundering and obstructing public procurement procedures, the common feature of which is profiting at the expense of the EU budget, and thus at the expense of all EU taxpayers?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The protection of the EU financial interests is a shared responsibility of both the Member States and the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in particular ([1]).

The Commission would invite the Honourable Member to consider its reply to Question E-2957/13 which refers to OLAF's activities in the policy field.

The Commission is currently conducting the necessary consultations and preparatory works in view of the establishment of a European Public Prosecutor's Office ([2]) which is included in the Commission Work Programme for 2013.

The Commission has taken legislative initiatives to reinforce the fight against criminal offences affecting the EU budget by adopting in July 2012 a proposal of a directive ([3]) that should replace the PIF Convention ([4]). Not only fraud in its strict sense should be covered by this proposal, but also corruption, money laundering and obstruction of public procurement procedures.

The new initiative for a directive on reinforcing the protection of the euro and other currencies against counterfeiting by criminal law ([5]) builds on and replaces the framework Decision ([6]) on increasing protection by criminal penalties and other sanctions against counterfeiting in connection with the introduction of the euro.

Concerning EU public procurement rules, the Commission has proposed, in the context of their current revision, rules that provided for increased transparency and clarity, and additional specific measures to combat corruption and distortion of competition EU rules ([7]).

On 5 February 2013, the Commission published a proposal for a revised Money Laundering Directive ([8]) which will strengthen the efficiency of the EU framework to fight money laundering.

([1]) Art. 325 TFEU.
([2]) In accordance with Article 86 TFEU.
([3]) COM(2012)363final.
([4]) Convention of 26 July 1995 (OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 49) (fraud); First Protocol of 27 September 1996 (OJ C 313, 23.10.1996, p. 2) and Convention of 26 May 1997 (OJ C 195, 25.6.1997) (corruption); Protocol of 29 November 1996 (OJ C 151, 20.5.1997, p. 2) (court interpretation); Second Protocol of 19 June 1997 (OJ C 221, 19.7.1997, p. 12) (money laundering).
([5]) COM(2013) 42.
([6]) 2000/383/JHA of 29 May 2000.
([7]) In particular, the notion of 'conflict of interests' is being clarified and Member States shall take measures to effectively prevent, identify and remedy conflicts of interest. Furthermore, exclusion grounds are strengthened and extended e.g. to cases of unduly influence on the decision process or serious misrepresentation in providing information on the absence of exclusion.
([8]) COM(2013) 45 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003248/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Program írskeho predsedníctva

V nadchádzajúcich šiestich mesiacoch bude Európskej únii predsedať Írsko. Na budúci rok to bude 40 rokov od vstupu Írska do EÚ, Íri Únii predsedajú už po siedmykrát. Krajina bola veľmi vážne zasiahnutá krízou a je stále pod obrovským tlakom. Priority, ktoré chce Dublin presadzovať počas svojho polročného predsedníctva sa nesú v znamení stability, ekonomického rastu a tvorby pracovných miest, najmä pre mladú generáciu. Ide o veľmi zásadné a potrebné opatrenia.

Očakáva Komisia, že írske predsedníctvo bude v súvislosti so snahou dosiahnuť zmenu, ktorá povedie k stabilite, zamestnanosti a rastu, efektívne a účinné?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(15. mája 2013)

Po uplynutí viac ako polovice obdobia írskeho predsedníctva Rady, a nadväzujúc na pokrok dosiahnutý počas predchádzajúcich predsedníctiev, vidíme skutočný pokrok a konkrétne výsledky v značnom počte oblastí. Patrí medzi ne okrem iného: dohoda medzi Radou a Európskym parlamentom o takzvanom balíku dvoch legislatívnych návrhov týkajúcom sa správy ekonomických záležitostí, o prepracovaných bankových predpisoch, ako aj dohoda s Európskym parlamentom o jednotnom mechanizme dohľadu nad bankami, ktorá tvorí základný prvok balíka predpisov o bankovej únii a ktorá nadobudne platnosť v roku 2014; ďalej dohoda , ktorej cieľom bude vysporiadať sa s nezamestnanosťou mládeže a poskytnúť mladým ľuďom šancu na lepšiu budúcnosť. Okrem toho pokračujú rokovania o viacročnom finančnom rámci, ktoré sa jasne zameriavajú na zamestnanosť a rast, pričom sa zvyšuje prídel prostriedkov EÚ na výskum a rozvoj. Pokročila reforma Spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky, ako aj rokovania o dohode medzi EÚ a USA o obchode a investíciách.

Pozornosť budúcich predsedníctiev si však budú vyžadovať ďalšie dôležité otázky. Na nedávnom neformálnom zasadnutí Rady ECOFIN v Dubline sa prerokúvalo, ako možno posilniť budúce vyhliadky Európy na rast. Rozsiahle rokovania sa viedli aj o prehlbovaní hospodárskej a menovej únie, a to predovšetkým so zreteľom na budúce usporiadanie bankovej únie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003248/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Programme of the Irish Presidency

Ireland will take over the Presidency of the Council of the EU for the upcoming six-month period. Next year will mark the 40th anniversary of Ireland's accession to the EU, and this will be Ireland's seventh term in the Presidency. The country has been hit hard by the crisis and is under enormous pressure. The priorities that Dublin seeks to promote during its six-month Presidency focus primarily on stability, economic growth and job creation, particularly for young people. Such measures are of critical importance.

Does the Commission think that the Irish Presidency will be able to bring about changes that will promote stability, employment and growth?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

More than half way through the Irish Presidency of the Council, and building on the progress made during previous presidencies, we have seen real progress and concrete results in a significant number of areas. These include but are not limited to: agreement between the Council and the European Parliament on the so called 'Two Pack' of economic governance legislation, on overhauling banking regulations and the agreement which will enter into force as of 2014, with the European Parliament on the Single Supervisory Mechanism for banks, a cornerstone in the banking union package; the agreement of the Youth Guarantee which will tackle youth unemployment and give young people a chance for a better future. Furthermore, negotiations continue on the Multiannual Finance Framework which has a clear focus on jobs and growth with an increase in EU spending in research and development; And the reform of the common agricultural policy; And negotiations on an EU-US Trade and Investment agreement are advancing.

But important issues will need the attention of future presidencies. The recent informal Ecofin in Dublin discussed how to enhance future growth prospects for Europe and extensive discussions were held regarding the deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union in particular with regards to the future shape of the Banking Union.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003249/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Fond solidarity EÚ

Fond solidarity Európskej únie sa prejavil ako jeden z najúspešnejších a zároveň pozitívne vnímaných nástrojov Únie, pretože je to jeden z mála nástrojov, ktoré máme k dispozícii a pomocou ktorých môžeme prejaviť svoju solidaritu s európskymi občanmi a svoju blízkosť k nim. Od svojho vzniku v roku 2002 až do septembra 2012 poskytol Fond solidarity Európskej únie finančnú podporu na kompenzáciu škôd spôsobených 49 katastrofami, hlavne požiarmi a povodňami, v celkovej výške približne 3 miliardy EUR. Súčasné pravidlá však nie sú dostatočne jasné. Od svojho vzniku neboli v nariadení vykonané žiadne zmeny. Komisia sa rozhodla preskúmať súčasné platné nariadenie o Fonde solidarity EÚ s cieľom zlepšiť jeho fungovanie a operatívnosť.

Nespôsobia však navrhované zmeny a doplnenia ďalšiu záťaž pre rozpočty Únie alebo členských štátov, a to aj vzhľadom na súčasnú hospodársku krízu?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(6. mája 2013)

Komisia vo svojom oznámení o budúcnosti Fondu solidarity EÚ z októbra 2011 ([1]) predložila súbor návrhov na zvýšenie účinnosti fondu a zlepšenie jeho fungovania. Komisia si je však naďalej vedomá, že v súčasnej ekonomickej a rozpočtovej situácií by bolo akékoľvek dodatočné zaťaženie rozpočtu EÚ a rozpočtov členských štátov nevhodné. Preto zostane legislatívny návrh na zmenu nariadenia o Fonde solidarity EÚ, ktorý Komisia plánuje predložiť vo vhodnom čase, z rozpočtového hľadiska úplne neutrálny a nebude obsahovať žiadnu zložku, ktorá by mohla viesť k vyšším výdavkom v budúcnosti.

([1]) KOM(2011) 613.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003249/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: EU Solidarity Fund

The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) has proved to be one of the EU's more successful and well-regarded instruments, since it is one of the few instruments available that enable us to demonstrate our solidarity and proximity to Europe's citizens. From its inception in 2002 until September 2012, the EUSF has provided financial assistance as compensation for damages caused by 49 disasters, mainly fires and floods, totalling approximately EUR 3 billion. However, current rules are not sufficiently clear. No amendments have been made to the EUSF Regulation since its inception. The Commission has decided to review the current EUSF Regulation in order to improve its functioning.

However, given the current economic crisis, do the proposed amendments not represent yet another burden on the budgets of the EU and the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

In its communication on the future of the EU Solidarity Fund of October 2011 ([1]), the Commission presented a series of ideas on how to improve the effectiveness and functioning of the Fund. However, the Commission was and continues to be fully aware that, under the current economic and budgetary circumstances. Any additional burden on the EU's and Member States' budgets would be inappropriate. Therefore, the legislative proposal to amend the Solidarity Fund Regulation that the Commission intends to present in due course will remain perfectly neutral in budgetary terms and not contain any element that might lead to higher spending in the future.

([1]) COM(2011)613.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003250/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Násilie páchané na ženách

Podľa výskumov Inštitútu pre verejné otázky spomedzi dospelých žien žijúcich v partnerskom vzťahu je len na Slovensku vystavených násiliu zo strany partnera až 25 % žien, pričom 11 % zažíva vyhranený násilný vzťah. Násilie sa najčastejšie objavuje v manželskom vzťahu, v ktorom sú až v 85 % prípadov prítomné deti. Násilie zasahuje ženy v rôznych obdobiach života od detstva po dospelosť. Dochádza k nemu v rodine, v práci, v škole, v rovesníckych skupinách, na verejnosti. Násilie páchané na ženách nadobúda rozmanité formy – od fyzického a sexuálneho cez psychické až po ekonomické násilie. Podľa údajov niekoľkých agentúr OSN (napr. WHO, UNIFEM, UNESCO) má násilie na ženách vážny vplyv na fyzické aj psychické zdravie žien a dievčat a výrazne obmedzuje ich vzdelávacie aj ekonomické možnosti, rovnako ako právo na dôstojný život.

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom bojuje Komisia proti jednotlivým formám násilia páchaného na ženách?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(22. apríla 2013)

Komisia odkazuje váženú pani poslankyňu na svoje odpovede na ústnu otázku O-4/2013. Komisia sa zaviazala politickou cestou dôrazne reagovať v oblasti boja proti všetkým druhom násilia voči ženám. Tento záväzok je predovšetkým obsiahnutý v akčnom pláne na implementáciu Štokholmského programu, Charte žien a stratégii rovnosti žien a mužov. K hlavným prioritám patrí posilnenie postavenia žien, zvyšovanie informovanosti, legislatívna činnosť, výmena osvedčených postupov, zlepšovanie poznatkov a zber údajov. Z programu Daphne III sa poskytujú finančné prostriedky na medzinárodné projekty.

Medzi účinné trestnoprávne a občianskoprávne opatrenia patria právne predpisy týkajúce sa obchodovania s ľuďmi ([1]), sexuálneho zneužívania a sexuálneho vykorisťovania detí ([2]), ako aj práva obetí trestnej činnosti. Súbor právnych predpisov Komisie týkajúci sa obetí násilia zahŕňa smernicu (prijatú 4. októbra 2012), ktorou sa stanovujú minimálne normy v oblasti práv, podpory a ochrany obetí trestných činov, ktoré zabezpečia jednotlivé posúdenie potrieb obetí a náležité zaobchádzanie s najzraniteľnejšími obeťami vrátane obetí násilia založeného na pohlaví ([3]).

V záujme ďalšieho zvyšovania informovanosti o problematike násilia voči ženám Komisia bude v roku 2013 realizovať a podporovať činnosti zamerané na zvyšovanie informovanosti na úrovni EÚ aj na úrovni členských štátov, a to o problematike ženskej obriezky a právach ženských obetí. Komisia 6. marca 2013 hostila okrúhly stôl na vysokej úrovni a takisto otvorila verejnú konzultáciu o problematike ženskej obriezky.

([1]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2011/36/EÚ z 5. apríla 2011 o prevencii obchodovania s ľuďmi a boji proti nemu a o ochrane obetí obchodovania, ktorou sa nahrádza rámcové rozhodnutie Rady 2002/629/SVV (Ú. v. EÚ L 101, 15.4.2011, s. 1 – 11).

([2]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2011/93/EÚ z 13. decembra 2011 o boji proti sexuálnemu zneužívaniu a sexuálnemu vykorisťovaniu detí a proti detskej pornografii, ktorou sa nahrádza rámcové rozhodnutie Rady 2004/68/SVV (Ú. v. EÚ L 335, 17.12.2011, s. 1 – 14).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003250/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Violence against women

Studies carried out by the Slovak Institute for Public Affairs show that 25% of adult women in a relationship experience violence from their partners in Slovakia, while 11% are in outright violent relationships. Violence occurs most commonly within marriages, and children are present in as many as 85% of cases. Violence affects women at various periods of their lives: from childhood to adulthood. It occurs within the family, at work, in school, in peer groups and in public. Violence against women appears in many forms — from physical and sexual to psychological and economic violence. According to data from various UN agencies, including WHO, UNIFEM and Unesco, violence against women has a significant impact on the physical and psychological health of women and girls. Furthermore, it restricts their educational and economic potential, as well as their right to a dignified life.

How specifically is the Commission combating the various forms of violence against women?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answers to oral question O-4/2013. The Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women. This commitment is shown, in particular, in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men. Key priorities are the empowerment of women, awareness raising, legislative action, exchanges of good practice, improving knowledge and data collection. The Daphne III Programme provides financial support for transnational projects.

Effective criminal and civil justice measures include legislation on human trafficking ([1]), sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children ([2]) and the rights of victims of crime. The Commission's Victims' Package includes a directive (adopted on 4 October 2012) establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime that will ensure that needs of victims are individually assessed and that the most vulnerable including victims of gender-based violence receive appropriate treatment ([3]).

In order to further raise awareness of the issue of violence against women, the Commission will conduct and support awareness-raising activities at EU and national levels on female genital mutilation and the rights of women victims of violence in 2013. On 6 March 2013, the Commission hosted a High Level Round table and also launched a public consultation on female genital mutilation.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1-11.

([2]) Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA, OJ L 335, 17.12.2011, p. 1-14.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003251/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Demografické zmeny v EÚ

Európska únia zažíva v súčasnosti výrazné demografické zmeny. Naša populácia enormne rýchlo starne. Počet obyvateľov nad 65 rokov bol v roku 2008 až 85 miliónov. Na základe vedeckých prognóz očakávame, že do roku 2060 sa toto číslo zvýši na neuveriteľných 151 miliónov, čiže sa takmer zdvojnásobí. V roku 2010 tvorili ľudia starí 60 rokov a viac 20 % populácie, očakávame, že do roku 2015 sa tento údaj zvýši na minimálne 35 %. Starnúca populácia a klesajúci počet produktívneho obyvateľstva však Únii spôsobujú veľké ekonomické problémy. Zaťažujú naše penzijné a dôchodkové systémy a systém zdravotníckej starostlivosti. Podľa odhadov OSN sa pomer detí v európskej populácii zníži zo 17 % v roku 2000 na 15 % v roku 2050. Zároveň budú ľudia okolo roku 2045 – 50 žiť dlhšie, pretože predpokladaná dĺžka života v Európe sa zvýši z aktuálnych 73,2 roka až na 80,5 roka. Starnutie populácie spôsobuje aj sociálne problémy, starým ľuďom hrozí vylúčenie zo spoločnosti.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zmiernenie očakávaných nepriaznivých dopadov demografických zmien v Európskej únii prijala Komisia v poslednej dobe?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(8. mája 2013)

Dňa 1. januára 2012 dosiahla populácia 27 členských štátov EÚ 89,8 mil. osôb vo veku 65 rokov a viac a 78,5 mil. detí (veková skupina 0 – 14), čo predstavuje 17,8 % a 15,6 % celkovej populácie EÚ-27. Podľa posledných prognóz Eurostatu o vývoji počtu obyvateľstva sa do roku 2060 populácia osôb nad 65 rokov zvýši na 152,7 mil. (29,5 %), zatiaľ čo počet detí (veková skupina 0 – 14) dosiahne 73,7 mil. (14,2 %). V roku 2011 bola na úrovni EÚ-27 odhadovaná stredná dĺžka života pri narodení u žien 83,2 a u mužov 77,4 roka. Odhaduje sa, že do roku 2060 dosiahne u žien 89,1 a u mužov 84,6 roka.

Ako je uvedené v oznámení z roku 2006 „Demografická budúcnosť Európy – Pretvorme výzvu na príležitosť ([1])“, Komisia pripisuje demografickým zmenám veľký význam. Toto oznámenie zdôrazňuje päť oblastí politiky na zastavenie demografického poklesu a rozvíjanie ľudských zdrojov. V rámci bielej knihy o dôchodkoch z roku 2012 bol predložený súbor iniciatív, ktorých cieľom je pomôcť pri vytváraní vhodných podmienok, aby tí, ktorí sú schopní, mohli naďalej pracovať – čo povedie k lepšej rovnováhe medzi časom v práci a časom na dôchodku. Európsky rok aktívneho starnutia 2012 a solidarita medzi generáciami boli hybnou silou politickej iniciatívy v tejto oblasti. Demografické zmeny zohrávajú v rámci balíka o sociálnych investíciách ([2]) hlavnú úlohu vo zvyšovaní efektívnosti sociálnych výdavkov, aby tak v európskom hospodárstve a sociálnom systéme mohol byť dostatok primeraných ľudských zdrojov. V rámci európskeho semestra boli vydané odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny týkajúce sa zosúladenia pracovného a osobného života a udržateľnosti a primeranosti dôchodkov.

([1]) Pozri http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en
([2]) Pozri COM(2013) 83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003251/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Demographic changes in the EU

The EU is currently undergoing major demographic changes, with a rapidly ageing population. The number of people over the age of 65 reached 85 million in 2008. According to academic projections, this figure is set to grow to an incredible 151 million by 2060 — an almost two-fold increase. In 2010, the over-60s comprised 20% of the population; however, it is estimated that this figure will reach 35% by 2015. The ageing population and the falling number of working-age people are causing significant problems for the EU. This is placing burdens on our pension, retirement and healthcare systems. According to UN estimates, the ratio of children in the European population is set to fall from 17% in 2000 to 15% in 2050. Furthermore, in the 2045-50 period, people will be living longer, with the average projected lifespan increasing from the current 73.2 years to 80.5 years. The ageing of the population is also causing social problems, as the elderly are at risk of social exclusion.

What specific measures has the Commission adopted recently to alleviate the anticipated adverse effects of demographic changes in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2013)

The EU-27 population at 1st January 2012 comprised 89.8 million persons aged 65 or over and 78.5 million children (age group 0-14), representing 17.8% and 15.6% respectively from the EU-27 total population. According to the latest population projections produced by Eurostat, the population over 65 is projected to rise to 152.7 million (29.5%) while the number of children (age group 0-14 years old) is projected to reach 73.7 million (14.2%) by 2060. In 2011, at EU-27 level, the estimated life expectancy at birth for women was 83.2 years and 77.4 years for men, while by 2060 they are projected to reach 89.1 years for women and 84.6 year for men.

The Commission attaches great importance to demographic challenges, as outlined in its 2006 Communication 'The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity ([1])', highlighting five policy areas to stem demographic decline and develop our human resources. The 2012 White paper on pensions put forward initiatives to help create the right conditions so that those who are able can continue working — leading to a better balance between time in work and time in retirement. The 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and solidarity between generations gave political momentum to policy initiatives in this area. The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([2]) identified demographic change as a major engine of change towards making social spending more effective so that Europe's economy and social system can continue counting on adequate human resources. Within the European Semester country-specific recommendations have been issued concerning work-life reconciliation and tackling pension sustainability and adequacy.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en.
([2]) See COM(2013) 83.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003252/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Regulácia cien liekov

Komisia nedávno predložila návrh, ktorého cieľom je nahradiť existujúcu smernicu 89/105/EHS tak, že sa jej ustanovenia upravia vzhľadom na súčasnú situáciu vo farmaceutickej oblasti, pričom sa zachová jej všeobecný základ. Hlavným cieľom tohto návrhu by teda mala byť aktualizácia existujúceho legislatívneho rámca. Týmto spôsobom by sa mali objasniť procedurálne záväzky členských štátov a malo by sa zabezpečiť dobré fungovanie vnútorného trhu a účinnosť právnych predpisov, ktoré upravujú jeho fungovanie.

Keďže v tejto oblasti majú výlučnú právomoc jednotlivé členské štáty, nemyslí si Komisia, že by bolo vhodné ustanoviť pre príslušné vnútroštátne orgány minimálne procedurálne požiadavky, slúžiace na zabezpečenie čo najväčšej možnej transparentnosti, ako aj právnej istoty?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(13. mája 2013)

Cieľom návrhu Komisie ([1]) o procedurálnych pravidlách vnútroštátneho rozhodovania o cenách liekov a ich uhrádzaní, ktorým sa má nahradiť existujúca smernica 89/105/EHS ([2]), je dosiahnuť aktualizáciu a zlepšiť fungovanie a účinnosť súčasnej smernice, aby reagovala na zásadne odlišnú situáciu, ktorá dnes panuje, v porovnaní so situáciou spred viac ako 20 rokov. V návrhu sa preto zohľadňujú najmä závery vyšetrovania vo farmaceutickom odvetví ([3]), nedávny vývoj situácie na trhu a vývoj cien liekov a opatrenia týkajúce sa ich uhrádzania, a judikatúra Súdneho dvora Európskej únie.

Je potrebné zdôrazniť, že v novom návrhu sa zachoval celkový duch existujúcej smernice – obsahuje iba minimum procedurálnych pravidiel, ktoré sú nevyhnutné na zabezpečenie riadneho fungovania vnútorného trhu s farmaceutickými výrobkami, pričom sa zachováva právomoc členských štátov, pokiaľ ide o organizáciu systémov zdravotného poistenia. Inými slovami, návrh Komisie – tak ako súčasná smernica – materiálne nezasahuje do vnútroštátneho rozhodovania o úrovni cien a uhrádzaní daných výrobkov.

([1]) Návrh smernice Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o transparentnosti opatrení regulujúcich stanovovanie cien liekov na humánne použitie a ich zaraďovanie do pôsobnosti verejných systémov zdravotného poistenia. Pôvodný návrh: COM(2012) 84 final. Zmenený a doplnený návrh: COM(2013) 168 final/2.

([2]) Smernica Rady 89/105/EHS z 21. decembra 1988 o transparentnosti opatrení upravujúcich stanovovanie cien humánnych liekov a ich zaraďovanie do vnútroštátnych systémov zdravotného poistenia, Ú. v. ES L 40, 11.2.1989, s. 8.

([3]) Oznámenie Komisie o vyšetrovaní vo farmaceutickom odvetví, KOM(2009) 351; pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie, SEK(2009) 952.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003252/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Regulating medicine prices

The Commission recently presented a proposal to replace the existing Directive 89/105/EEC which seeks to adapt the directive's provisions to the current pharmaceutical environment while maintaining its core foundations. The proposal's overall objective should therefore be to update the current legislative framework. This would clarify the procedural obligations incumbent upon Member States and ensure the smooth functioning of the internal market and the effectiveness of the legal provisions regulating it.

Given that the individual Member States have exclusive jurisdiction in this area, does the Commission not consider it appropriate to establish minimum procedural requirements for the competent national bodies, with a view to ensuring the highest possible levels of transparency and legal certainty?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission Proposal ([1]) to replace the existing Directive 89/105/EEC ([2]), concerning procedural rules on national decisions on price and reimbursement of medicines, aims to update and improve the functioning and effectiveness of the current Directive so as to reflect the fundamentally different context compared to the one that existed more than 20 years ago. The proposal therefore takes into particular account the conclusions of the Pharmaceutical Sector Inquiry ([3]), the recent market developments and the evolution of pricing and reimbursement measures and the case-law of the Court of Justice.

It is important to underline that the spirit of the existing Directive has been maintained in the new proposal: it only contains minimal procedural rules which are necessary to ensure a proper functioning of the internal market for pharmaceutical products, while preserving the competence of Member States for the organisation of their health insurance systems. In other words, the Commission Proposal, like the current Directive, does not interfere with the substance of the national decisions concerning the level of pricing and reimbursement of these products.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to the transparency of measures regulating the prices of medicinal products for human use and their inclusion in the scope of public health insurance systems. Initial proposal: COM(2012) 84 final. Amended proposal: COM(2013) 168 final/2.

([2]) Council Directive 89/105/EEC of 21 December 1988 relating to the transparency of measures regulating the prices of medicinal products for human use and their inclusion in the scope of national health insurance systems [1989] OJ L 40/8.

([3]) Commission Communication on the Pharmaceutical Sector Inquiry, COM(2009) 351; Staff Working Document, SEC(2009) 952.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003253/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Ročný prieskum rastu

Komisia predložila výsledky ročného prieskumu rastu ešte v novembri 2012. Tieto výsledky poukázali na kritickosť situácie, a to najmä v oblasti zamestnanosti a v sociálnej oblasti. Od posledného RPR v roku 2012 sa situácia výrazne zhoršila a vyzerá to tak, že sa nezlepší ani v roku 2013. Za posledných dvanásť mesiacov sa počet nezamestnaných zvýšil o ďalšie 2 milióny, čím bola dosiahnutá úroveň 25 miliónov nezamestnaných v EÚ, 10,5 % obyvateľov dokonca v produktívnom veku. Aj naďalej rástla segmentácia trhu práce a dlhodobá nezamestnanosť dosiahla alarmujúcu úroveň. V mnohých členských štátoch klesajú priemerné príjmy domácností a ukazovatele poukazujú na závažnejšie formy chudoby a sociálneho vylúčenia, ako aj na chudobu zamestnaných. Pokrok v súvislosti s plnením cieľov stratégie Európa 2020 je minimálny. Kríza dramaticky zasiahla najmä mladých. V celej EÚ je viac ako jeden z piatich mladých ľudí bez práce (22 %), pričom miera nezamestnanosti mládeže v niektorých členských štátoch dosahuje 50 %.

Aká je reakcia Komisie na tieto otrasné výsledky prieskumu?

Prijme Komisia v tejto súvislosti nejaký druh opatrení, napr. odporúčania adresované členským štátom s cieľom zlepšiť celkovú situáciu v EÚ?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(30. mája 2013)

Komisia považuje súčasnú sociálnu situáciu v EÚ za neprijateľnú, pričom s osobitným znepokojením vníma mieru nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí. V januári 2013 miera nezamestnanosti dosiahla 10,9 % celej aktívnej populácie v EÚ-27 a 12 % v eurozóne, zároveň sa ďalej prehĺbili rozdiely medzi členskými štátmi ([1]). Komisia súhlasí s pani poslankyňou, že závažnosť účinkov krízy si vyžaduje zosilnenie boja proti chudobe a sociálnemu vylúčeniu a zlepšenie efektívnosti a účinnosti sociálnych výdavkov v zmysle odporúčaní obsiahnutých v balíku o sociálnych investíciách ([2]).

Komisia reagovala zintenzívnením svojho politického úsilia. Na boj proti nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí Rada na základe návrhu Komisie ([3]) schválila odporúčania o zavedení systému záruk pre mladých ľudí ([4]) s cieľom poskytnúť nezamestnaným mladým ľuďom ponuku zamestnania, vzdelávania, odbornej prípravy alebo učňovskej prípravy v období štyroch mesiacov. Komisia oznámila novú iniciatívu: Európske združenie učňovskej prípravy, ktoré začne svoju činnosť v júli 2013. V rámci iniciatívy na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí bude v nasledujúcom viacročnom finančnom rámci vyčlenená suma vo výške 6 mld. EUR na podporu opatrení na boj proti nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí vo všetkých regiónoch, v ktorých miera nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí prekračuje 25 % ([5]).

V rámci európskeho semestra Komisia do júna 2013 navrhne odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny na usmernenie reformného úsilia členských štátov. Tieto odporúčania sa budú týkať výziev stojacich pred jednotlivými členskými štátmi v súlade s ročným prieskumom rastu a usmerneniami politík zamestnanosti.

([1]) GR pre zamestnanosť, „Štvrťročná správa o stave zamestnanosti a sociálnej situácii v EÚ“, marec 2013 http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=sk&catId=89&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes

([2]) Európska komisia, „K sociálnym investíciám do rastu a súdržnosti – vrátane realizácie Európskeho sociálneho fondu v rokoch 2014 – 2020“, COM(2013) 83 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0083:FIN:SK:DOC

([3]) Európska komisia, „Dostať mladých do zamestnania“, COM(2012) 727 final http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=sk&catId=89&newsId=1731

([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/sk/13/st06/st06944.sk13.pdf

([5]) Európska komisia, „Iniciatíva na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí“, COM(2012) 144 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0144:FIN:SK:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003253/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Annual growth survey

In November 2012, the Commission released the results of the annual growth survey. They showed just how desperate the situation is, particularly in the employment and social fields. The situation has deteriorated dramatically since the last AGS in 2012, and it is unlikely to improve in 2013. In the last 12 months, the number of unemployed people has increased by a further 2 million, bringing the total number of unemployed people in Europe up to 25 million, or 10.5% of the working-age population. Labour market segmentation is also on the increase, and long-term unemployment has reached alarming levels. In many Member States, average household incomes are falling, and indicators show the existence of serious forms of poverty and social exclusion, as well as in-work poverty. Minimal progress has been made with regard to achieving the targets set out in the Europe 2020 strategy. The crisis has had a dramatic impact on young people in particular. Across the EU, more than one in every five young people (22%) is unemployed, while the youth unemployment rate in some Member States has reached 50%.

What is the Commission's view on the disturbing results of the annual growth survey?

Will the Commission adopt any measures, e.g. addressing recommendations to the Member States, in order to improve the situation in the EU?

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

The Commission regards the current social situation in the EU as unacceptable, with particular concern for youth unemployment levels. In January 2013, the unemployment rate reached 10.9% of total active population in the EU-27 and 12% in the Euro Area, with increasing divergence between Member States ([1]). The Commission agrees with the Hon. MEP that the severity of effects of the crisis calls for strengthening the fight against poverty and social exclusion and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of social expenditure, along the lines recommended in the Social Investment Package ([2]).

The Commission has reacted by stepping up its policy efforts. To counter youth unemployment, the Council approved a recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee ([3]), building on a Commission's proposal ([4]) to provide unemployed young people with an offer of employment, education, training or apprenticeship within four months. The Commission announced a new initiative: the EU Alliance for Apprenticeships, which will be launched in July 2013. Under the Youth Employment Initiative, EUR 6 billion will be mobilised in the next multiannual financial framework to support measures to fight youth unemployment in all regions with a youth unemployment rate above 25% ([5]).

In the context of the European Semester, the Commission will propose country-specific recommendations by June 2013 to guide Member States' reform efforts. These Recommendations will address national challenges in line with the Annual Growth Survey and the Employment Guidelines.

([1]) DG Employment, 'EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review', March 2013 http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1852&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) European Commission, 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion — including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020', COM(2013) 83 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0083:FIN:EN:DOC.
([3]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf
([4]) European Commission, 'Moving Youth Into Employment', COM(2012) 727 final http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1731.
([5]) European Commission, 'Youth Employment Initiative', COM(2012) 144 final. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0144:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003254/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Európsky priemysel

Na odvetvie priemyslu pripadajú 4/5 vývozu z Európy. 80 % investícií súkromného sektora v oblasti výskumu a vývoja pochádza z odvetvia výroby. Európska únia zaujíma vo svete vedúce postavenie v mnohých strategických sektoroch, ku ktorým napríklad patrí automobilový priemysel, inžinierstvo, kozmický priestor, chemický a farmaceutický priemysel. Vzhľadom na pokračujúcu hospodársku krízu je však náš priemysel pod obrovským tlakom, vyrába sa o 10 % menej ako pred krízou, v oblasti priemyslu došlo k výraznej strate vyše 3 miliónov pracovných miest. Dôvera spotrebiteľov a podnikov je na nízkej úrovni. Problémy v bankovom sektore sťažujú prístup k financiám, pričom investície sú brzdené.

Keďže oživenie hospodárskeho rastu a zamestnanosti musíme podporovať reálnou ekonomikou, akým spôsobom chce Komisia zvrátiť zmenšujúcu sa úlohu priemyslu v Európskej únii?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(6. mája 2013)

Zvrátenie úpadku priemyslu sa stalo kľúčovou prioritou Komisie. V tejto súvislosti Komisia nedávno uverejnila oznámenie ([1]), ktorým sa aktualizuje „Integrovaná priemyselná politika vo veku globalizácie“ ([2]) prijatá v roku 2010 ako súčasť stratégie Európa 2020.

V revidovanej stratégii sa navrhuje zvýšiť investície do technológií a priemyselných inovácií a zamerať sa pritom na 6 prioritných akčných línií ([3]).

Okrem toho je cieľom Komisie obnoviť tak dynamiku jednotného trhu, ako aj medzinárodných trhov, a to prostredníctvom podpory podnikania a prostredníctvom uľahčenia prieniku MSP na medzinárodné trhy.

V uvedenom oznámení sa ďalej navrhuje prijatie opatrení, ktoré by obnovili tok úverov do reálnej ekonomiky a ktoré by pre pracovnú silu v EÚ zabezpečili potrebné zručnosti.

Komisia sa prostredníctvom aktualizovanej priemyselnej stratégie usiluje zvrátiť úpadok priemyslu v Európe a zvýšiť jeho podiel na HDP do roku 2020 z terajších približne 16 % na 20 %.

V tejto súvislosti je potrebné poznamenať, že úspech tejto stratégie závisí v prevažnej miere od skutočného a fungujúceho partnerstva medzi EÚ, členskými štátmi a priemyslom samotným. Zlepšenie podnikateľského prostredia pre spoločnosti je predovšetkým zodpovednosťou členských štátov.

([1]) „Silnejší európsky priemysel v prospech rastu a oživenia hospodárstva“ [COM(2012) 582 final z 10. októbra 2012] k dispozícii na: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0582:FIN:SK:PDF

([2]) COM(2010) 614 final z 28. októbra 2010, k dispozícii na: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0614:FIN:SK:PDF

([3]) Pokročilé výrobné technológie, kľúčové podporné technológie, biovýrobky, udržateľná priemyselná politika a politika pre oblasť stavebníctva a suroviny, ekologicky čisté vozidlá a inteligentné siete.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003254/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: European industry

The industrial sector accounts for four-fifths of European exports. 80% of private-sector investments in research and development originate in the manufacturing sector. The European Union is a world leader in many strategic sectors, such as the automobile, engineering, space, chemical and pharmaceutical industries. However, the ongoing economic crisis is putting European industry under enormous pressure, with production down by 10% compared with the period before the crisis and over 3 million jobs lost. Consumer and business confidence is at low levels. Problems in the banking sector are making it more difficult to access funding, and investments are being delayed.

Given that we must support the real economy in order to stimulate economic growth, how does the Commission intend to reverse the decline of industry's role in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2013)

The Commission has made reversing the decline of industry a top priority and has recently released a communication ([1]) updating the 'Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era' ([2]) adopted in 2010 as part of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The renewed strategy proposes, notably, to boost investments in technologies and industrial innovation focusing on 6 priority action lines ([3]).

The Commission also aims at bringing renewed dynamism in the single market and international markets by focusing on fostering entrepreneurship and facilitating SMEs internationalisation.

Furthermore, the communication suggests measures to reinvigorate lending to the economy and to equip the EU workforce with the necessary skills.

With its renewed industrial strategy, the Commission seeks to reverse the declining role of industry in Europe from its current level of around 16% to 20% by 2020.

It should be stressed that the success of this strategy crucially depends on a genuine and functioning partnership between the EU, Member States and industry. In particular, it is primarily for Member States to improve the business environment for companies.

([1]) 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery' (COM(2012) 582 final of 10 October 2012), at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0582:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) COM(2010) 614 final of 28 October 2010, at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0614:FIN:EN:PDF

([3]) Advanced manufacturing technologies, key enabling technologies, bio-based products, sustainable industrial and construction policy and raw materials, clean vehicles, smart grids.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003255/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Sociálna zodpovednosť podnikov

Význam sociálnej zodpovednosti podnikov neustále rastie. Je to spôsobené rozvojom procesu globalizácie, ktorý umožňuje rozvoj sociálnych noriem, ako aj lepšou informovanosťou občianskej spoločnosti, ktorá celkom oprávnene od podnikov požaduje väčšiu mieru zodpovednosti. V súlade s novou definíciou, ktorú navrhuje Európska komisia, musia mať podniky k dispozícii postup zahrňujúci do ich obchodnej a základnej stratégie otázky týkajúce sa sociálnej oblasti, životného prostredia, morálky, ľudských práv a požiadaviek spotrebiteľov. To by malo uľahčiť predchádzanie a zmierňovanie negatívnych účinkov vyplývajúcich z fungovania podniku. Rovnako by sa tým zvýšila dôvera občanov v podniky a zmiernili by sa rozdiely medzi očakávaniami občanov a tým, čo je vnímané ako reálne správanie podnikov. Opatreniami zameranými na posilnenie vzájomného vzťahu medzi obchodnými stratégiami podnikov a sociálnej situácie, v ktorej rozvíjajú svoju činnosť by sa teda celkovo upevnil vzťah medzi sociálnou zodpovednosťou zo strany podnikov, konkurencieschopnosťou a občanmi.

Akým spôsobom však Komisia zabezpečí, aby si pri prijímaní rôznych regulačných kritérií podniky zachovali potrebnú mieru flexibility a aby zo strany podnikov nedošlo k prevzatiu základných funkcií verejných orgánov?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(25. apríla 2013)

Komisia vo svojom oznámení o sociálnej zodpovednosti podnikov z roku 2011 definuje sociálnu zodpovednosť podnikov ako zodpovednosť podnikov za ich vplyvy na spoločnosť. Dodržiavanie právnych predpisov je základným prvkom takéhoto zodpovedného správania. Aby si podniky splnili svoju povinnosť v súvislosti so sociálnou zodpovednosťou, Komisia zastáva názor, že by mali mať zavedený postup začlenenia sociálnych, environmentálnych a etických aspektov, aspektov ľudských práv a spotrebiteľských aspektov do ich obchodných operácií a základnej stratégie v úzkej spolupráci s ich zainteresovanými stranami.

Komisia nemá v úmysle navrhnúť právne predpisy, v ktorých by sa od podnikov vyžadovalo, aby dodržiavali nejaký konkrétny súbor usmernení alebo zásad o sociálnej zodpovednosti podnikov. Uznáva, že by podniky mali mať dostatočnú flexibilitu, aby dodržali požiadavku sociálnej zodpovednosti v súlade s ich príslušnými okolnosťami a vplyvmi na spoločnosť.

Žiadne z opatrení, s ktorými sa počíta v oznámení Komisie o sociálnej zodpovednosti podnikov ([1]) z roku 2011, nebude mať za následok, že podniky na seba prevezmú funkcie verejných orgánov, pretože sú jasne zamerané na obchodné operácie podnikov.

([1]) KOM(2011) 681 v konečnom znení.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003255/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Corporate social responsibility

Corporate social responsibility is increasingly important. This is due to globalisation, which advances social standards, and to improved public awareness, which justly demands that companies take on greater responsibility. A new definition of corporate social responsibility proposed by the Commission states that companies must have procedures in place to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations. The aim of this is to make prevention easier and to alleviate the adverse effects of corporate activity. It would also increase the public's trust in companies and reduce the gap between the public's expectations and their perception of how companies really behave. Measures to strengthen the connection between corporate commercial strategies and the social context in which companies conduct their business would create a solid relationship between corporate social responsibility, competitiveness and the public.

When the various regulatory criteria are being adopted, how does the Commission intend to ensure that companies maintain the necessary degree of flexibility and do not take over the basic functions of public bodies?

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

In its communication on Corporate Social Responsibility of 2011, the Commission defines corporate social responsibility as the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society. Legal compliance is a pre-requisite for meeting that responsibility. In order to fully meet their social responsibility, the Commission believes that enterprises should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders.

The Commission has no intention of proposing legislation that would require enterprises to respect any particular set of CSR guidelines or principles. It recognises the need for enterprises to have sufficient flexibility to meet their social responsibility in a way that corresponds to their particular circumstances and societal impacts.

None of the actions foreseen in the Commission's Communication on CSR ([1]) of 2011 will have the effect of enterprises taking over the functions of public bodies because they are clearly focused on companies' business operations.

([1]) COM(2011) 681 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003256/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Budúcnosť Európskej únie

Únia čelí neľahkej situácii. Hospodárska a finančná kríza, ktorá momentálne otriasa Európskou úniou, bude mať dlhodobý a silný vplyv nielen na európske hospodárstvo, ale tiež na mieru zamestnanosti, verejné úspory a sociálne investície. V stratégii Európa 2020 sme si stanovili ciele, ktoré sa však nedarí napĺňať. Z môjho pohľadu je nesmierne dôležité, aby sme sa v nadchádzajúcom období zamerali na účinné nástroje boja proti kríze, najmä na problematiku inteligentného, trvalo udržateľného a inkluzívneho rastu, na riešenie otázok nezamestnanosti a tvorbu novej generácie pracovných miest, na problematiku regulácie finančného trhu, a najmä na riešenie aktuálnych problémov prehlbujúcej sa sociálnej krízy. Je potrebné klásť dôraz na sociálne trhové hospodárstvo a je potrebné prijímať opatrenia v duchu vzájomnej solidarity, spolupatričnosti a v duchu jednotnej Európskej únie. Pre budúcnosť EÚ je otázka rastu absolútne kľúčová.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zmiernenie negatívnych dopadov krízy a na podporu inteligentného, trvalo udržateľného a inkluzívneho rastu plánuje Komisia prijať v najbližšom období a akým spôsobom bude v týchto opatreniach zohľadnený sociálny rozmer krízy?

Odpoveď pána Barrosa v mene Komisie
(13. mája 2013)

Komisia súhlasí, že otázka rastu a solidarity je pre budúcnosť Európy a prekonanie ekonomickej a sociálnej krízy rozhodujúca. Komisia preto určila inteligentný, udržateľný a inkluzívny rast ako hlavný cieľ stratégie Európa 2020. V ročnom prieskume rastu v roku 2013 stanovila politické priority na tento rok, ktoré následne schválila Európska rada. Zahŕňajú opatrenia na boj proti nezamestnanosti a sociálnym dôsledkom krízy a vytvárajú tiež podmienky na vytvorenie pracovných miest. Očakáva sa, že členské štáty uznajú tieto priority pri vypracúvaní národných programov reforiem. Na konci mája Komisia predloží návrhy odporúčaní pre jednotlivé krajiny založené na posúdení národných programov reforiem a na implementácii štrukturálnych reforiem na úrovni jednotlivých členských štátov s cieľom podporiť inteligentný, udržateľný a inkluzívny rast.

Balík o sociálnych investíciách prijatý Komisiou vo februári 2013 dopĺňa vyššie uvedené opatrenia a predstavuje politický rámec a kľúčové činnosti na zvýšenie účinnosti a efektívnosti sociálnych politík a posilnenie rozmeru sociálnych investícií v rámci európskych systémov sociálnej starostlivosti.

V Decembri 2012 Komisia predložila balík opatrení pre zamestnanosť mladých, ktorý obsahuje odporúčania týkajúce sa systému záruk pre mladých ľudí. Rada ministrov dosiahla politickú dohodu o tomto odporúčaní 28. februára 2013. Komisia taktiež nedávno navrhla revíziu nariadení o štrukturálnych fondoch, aby sa tak umožnila rýchla implementácia iniciatívy na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí navrhnutej na februárovom zasadnutí Európskej rady s rozpočtom 6 mld. EUR počas siedmich rokov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003256/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Future of the EU

The EU is in dire straits. The economic and financial crisis currently shaking the EU will undoubtedly have a long-term and severe impact on the European economy, employment rates, public savings and social investments. We set ourselves targets in the Europe 2020 strategy that we are not on track to achieve. I believe that it is vital to focus in the upcoming period on effective anti-crisis instruments, with particular reference to intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth; tackling unemployment; creating new jobs; regulating the financial market; and dealing with the deepening social crisis. The social market economy must be emphasised, and measures must be adopted which are based on mutual solidarity, a sense of community and in the spirit of a unitary EU. The issue of growth is absolutely crucial to Europe's future.

What specific measures does the Commission plan to adopt in the near future to alleviate the adverse effects of the crisis and to support intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth, and how will these measures take account of the social aspect of the crisis?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission agrees that the issues of growth and solidarity are absolutely crucial to the future of Europe in order to fully overcome the economic and social crisis. This is why the Commission set smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as the key objective of the Europe 2020 strategy. In its 2013 Annual Growth Survey, the Commission identified the policy priorities for the current year that have been subsequently endorsed by the European Council. These include measures to tackle unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis as well as create conditions for job creation. Member States are expected to follow these priorities when elaborating the National Reform Programmes. At the end of May, the Commission will issue proposals for country specific recommendations based on the assessment of the NRPs and on the implementation at Member State level of structural reforms to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Social Investment Package adopted by the Commission in February 2013 complements the aforementioned developments and presents a policy framework and key actions to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of social policies and to enhance the social investment dimension of European welfare systems.

The Commission put forward a Youth Employment Package in December 2012, which includes a recommendation on a Youth Guarantee. The Council of Ministers reached political agreement on this recommendation on 28 February 2013. The Commission has also recently proposed to revise the regulations on structural funds to allow quick implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative proposed by the February European Council with a budget of EUR 6 billion over seven years.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003257/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Problematika reštrukturalizácie

Reštrukturalizácia nie je v Európe novým javom. Práve naopak, v posledných rokoch sa aj v dôsledku hospodárskej krízy stáva stále častejším. Má viacero rôznych foriem a pre hospodársku a sociálnu štruktúru členských štátov má nepredvídateľné dôsledky. Kríza si logicky vyžaduje, aby boli prijaté určité zmeny s cieľom zlepšiť konkurencieschopnosť a posilniť zamestnanosť. Reštrukturalizácia sa pre zainteresované strany stáva problémom najmä v neskoršom štádiu, najčastejšie až vtedy, keď sa zvažuje prepúšťanie. Počet zrušených pracovných miest v treťom štvrťroku 2011 bol pritom oproti počtu vytvorených pracovných miest takmer dvojnásobný a tento trend sa vzhľadom na oznámené veľké reštrukturalizácie v strategických oblastiach pravdepodobne ešte zosilní. Napríklad v odvetviach stavebníctva a výroby v rokoch 2008 až 2011 došlo k strate 6,4 milióna pracovných miest. Národné vlády nie sú schopné primeranej reakcie, reštrukturalizácia je celoeurópskym problémom, a preto potrebuje celoeurópsku odpoveď.

Akým spôsobom Komisia zabezpečí, aby sa proces reštrukturalizácie vykonával vyváženým, transparentným a poctivým spôsobom?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(28. mája 2013)

Komisia v posledných rokoch vykonala dôležitú prácu so všetkými zúčastnenými stranami, pri ktorej ich nabádala, aby v maximálnej možnej miere predvídali reštrukturalizačné procesy a riadili ich sociálne zodpovedným spôsobom. Na úrovni EÚ opätovne otvorila diskusiu o týchto otázkach prostredníctvom zelenej knihy „Reštrukturalizácia a predvídanie zmien: poučenie z nedávnych skúseností“ z januára 2012 ([1]).

Komisia nedávno rozhodla, že navrhne oznámenie o vytvorení rámca kvality pre reštrukturalizáciu a predvídanie zmien. Toto oznámenie by vytvorilo rámec súčasnej legislatívy a iniciatív EÚ v tejto oblasti a predstavilo by osvedčené postupy, ktoré majú uplatňovať všetky zúčastnené strany. Komisia bude pravidelne posudzovať potrebu revízie navrhovaného rámca kvality a v stanovenej lehote bude informovať Európsky parlament. Toto posudzovanie môže pripraviť pôdu pre budúci legislatívny návrh.

([1]) Pozri odpovede a zhrnutie na adrese http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003257/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Restructuring

Restructuring is not a new phenomenon in Europe. On the contrary, in recent years as a result of the economic crisis it has become increasingly common. There are several different forms of restructuring, and its effects on the economic and social structure of Member States are impossible to predict. The logical response to the crisis would be to make specific changes in order to improve competitiveness and bolster employment. Restructuring becomes a problem for stakeholders, especially in the later stages, and most often when redundancies are under consideration. The number of jobs lost in the third quarter of 2011 was almost twice as great as the number of jobs created, and this trend is likely to become more pronounced owing to major restructuring in strategic areas. For instance, in construction and manufacturing 6.4 million jobs were lost between 2008 and 2011. National governments are unable to respond appropriately. Restructuring is a Europe-wide problem, so a Europe-wide response is necessary.

How does the Commission intend to ensure that the restructuring process is carried out in a balanced, transparent and honest way?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission carried out in recent years important work with all stakeholders urging them to anticipate restructuring as far as possible and to manage it in a socially responsible way. It has re-launched the debate at EU level on these issues through the January 2012 Green Paper on 'Restructuring and anticipation of change: lessons from recent experience' ([1]).

The Commission has recently decided to propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework for Restructuring and anticipation of change. This communication would frame the current EU legislation and initiatives in this field and it would present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders. The Commission will keep under review the need to revise the proposed quality framework and will keep the European Parliament informed within a given deadline. This review might prepare the ground for a future legislative proposal.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003259/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Bilaterálne investičné dohody

Priame zahraničné investície sú po nadobudnutí platnosti Lisabonskej zmluvy zahrnuté do zoznamu záležitostí patriacich do oblasti spoločnej obchodnej politiky. Únia má vo veciach spoločnej obchodnej politiky výlučnú právomoc. Stanovuje to článok 3 ods. 1 písm. e) ZFEÚ. V tejto oblasti preto môže vykonávať legislatívnu činnosť a prijímať právne záväzné akty len Únia, členské štáty jedine v prípade, ak ich na to Únia splnomocní. Spoločné pravidlá týkajúce sa pohybu kapitálu medzi členskými štátmi a tretími krajinami, okrem iného aj pohyb kapitálu, ktorý zahŕňa investície, stanovuje ZFEÚ. Na tieto pravidlá môžu vplývať medzinárodné dohody uzavreté členskými štátmi, ktoré sa týkajú zahraničných investícií. ZFEÚ neobsahuje žiadne výslovné prechodné ustanovenia týkajúce sa takýchto dohôd, ktorých uzatváranie je teraz vo výlučnej právomoci Únie. Niektoré z týchto dohôd môžu pritom zahŕňať ustanovenia, ktoré vplývajú na spoločné pravidlá týkajúce sa pohybu kapitálu. Tieto bilaterálne dohody sú pre členské štáty samozrejme v zmysle medzinárodného verejného práva naďalej záväzné, pričom postupne budú nahradené budúcimi dohodami Únie s tým istým predmetom úpravy. Potrebujeme určiť vhodné podmienky na ich ďalšiu existenciu a ich vzťah k našim politikám. Hlavným cieľom musí byť vytvorenie čo najlepšieho systému ochrany investícií pre investorov a spravodlivé a rovnaké podmienky investovania na trhoch tretích krajín.

Akým spôsobom bude nová investičná politika zohľadňovať práva investorov, ktorých investície patria do rozsahu pôsobnosti týchto dohôd?

Odpoveď pána De Guchta v mene Komisie
(15. mája 2013)

Nariadenie (EÚ) č. 1219/2012 ([1]), ktorým sa ustanovujú prechodné opatrenia pre bilaterálne investičné dohody medzi členskými štátmi a tretími krajinami, ustanovuje právny rámec pre tieto bilaterálne investičné dohody (ďalej len „BID“). Nariadenie:

— zachováva viac ako 1200 BID, ktoré sú platné v rámci právnych predpisov EÚ a ktoré boli podpísané pred nadobudnutím platnosti Lisabonskej zmluvy. Komisia uverejnila zoznam týchto dohôd 8. mája 2013.

— stanovuje postupy, ktorými Komisia poveruje jednotlivé členské štáty otvorením rokovaní o BID s tretími krajinami alebo podpisom BID s tretími krajinami. Takéto poverenie môže byť udelené, ak je splnených niekoľko podmienok vrátane kompatibility dotknutých BID s povinnosťami členských štátov, ktoré vyplývajú z ich členstva v EÚ.

([1]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (EÚ) č. 1219/2012 z 12. decembra 2012, ktorým sa ustanovujú prechodné opatrenia pre bilaterálne investičné dohody medzi členskými štátmi a tretími krajinami, *Ú. v. L 351, 20.12.2012.*

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003259/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Bilateral investment agreements

Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, foreign direct investment is included in the list of matters falling under the common commercial policy. In accordance with Article 3(1) (e) of the TFEU, the Union has exclusive competence with respect to the common commercial policy. Accordingly, only the Union may legislate and adopt legally binding acts within that area, while the Member States are able to do so only if empowered by the Union. The TFEU lays down common rules on the movement of capital between Member States and third countries, including in respect of capital movements involving investments. Those rules can be affected by international agreements relating to foreign investment concluded by Member States. The TFEU does not contain any explicit transitional provisions for such agreements, which have now come under exclusive Union competence. Furthermore, some of those agreements may include provisions affecting the common rules on capital movements. Bilateral agreements will naturally remain binding on the Member States under public international law; however, they will be progressively replaced by future agreements of the Union relating to the same subject matter. We must create conditions that support their continued existence and their relationship with EU policies. The main objective must be to create the best possible investment protection system for investors, as well as fair and equal conditions for investing in the markets of third countries.

How will the new investment policy take account of the rights of investors whose investments fall into the scope of these agreements?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 1219/2012 ([1]) establishing transitional arrangements for Member States' bilateral investment treaties (BITs) sets the legal framework of these BITs. The regulation:

— maintains valid in EC law the more than 1200 BITs which were signed by Member States before the entry in force of the Lisbon Treaty. The Commission published the list of such agreements on 8 May 2013,

— sets a procedure whereby the Commission may authorise individual Member States to open negotiations on BITs with third countries or sign BITs with third countries. Such authorisation shall be granted if a number of conditions are met, including the compatibility of the BIT in question with the Member State's obligations stemming from its EU membership.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1219/2012 of Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2012 establishing transitional arrangements for bilateral investment agreements between Member States and third countries, OJ L 351, 20.12.2012.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003260/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Podvodné konania cezhraničného charakteru

V nedávnom období sa na mňa obrátil občan Slovenskej republiky, a teda aj občan Európskej únie, ktorý sa nachádza v zúfalej situácii. Podvodným konaním prišiel o značnú sumu finančných prostriedkov. Išlo o cezhraničnú kúpu hnuteľnej veci, keď bola do iného členského štátu zaslaná dohodnutá kúpna cena, tovar však nikdy zaslaný nebol. Vnútroštátne orgány činné v trestnom konaní v riešení predmetného trestného činu zlyhávajú a podvedený občan svoje peniaze už zrejme nikdy neuvidí.

Akým spôsobom sú chránené práva a záujmy obyvateľov Európskej únie pred podvodnými konaniami podobného charakteru?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(17. mája 2013)

Ctená poslankyňa by mala vedieť, že už existujú právne predpisy Únie, ktoré chránia spotrebiteľov pred praktikami nepoctivých obchodníkov, menovite smernica 2005/29/ES ([1]), ktorou sa obchodníkom zakazuje využívať klamlivé a agresívne obchodné praktiky voči spotrebiteľom.

Pokiaľ ide o obchodníkov, ktorí pôsobia na cezhraničnej úrovni, v nariadení (ES) č. 2006/2004 ([2]) sa ustanovuje zriadenie celoeurópskej siete na presadzovanie práv spotrebiteľov (sieť CPC) a vymedzuje sa rámec a podmienky umožňujúce odhaľovať, vyšetrovať a zastaviť cezhraničné nekalé praktiky.

Spotrebitelia, ktorí sa stali obeťami takýchto praktík, by mali o svojom prípade informovať ich vnútroštátne orgány presadzovania práva, ktoré sú zodpovedné v prvom rade za vyšetrovanie praktík konkrétnych spoločností pôsobiacich na ich území.

Spotrebitelia sa tak isto vyzývajú, aby sa spojili s Európskou sieťou spotrebiteľských centier (ECC-Net) ([3]), ktorá pomáha spotrebiteľom získať príslušné informácie v prípade porušenia ich práv pri cezhraničných transakciách a pomáha im pri ich kontaktoch s prevádzkovateľmi obchodnej činnosti.

V súlade s Európskym programom Komisie pre spotrebiteľov ([4]) sa v Správe o uplatňovaní smernice 2005/29/ES ([5]), ktorá bola prijatá 14. marca 2013, určujú kľúčové priority pre činnosti vrátane postupného presadzovania práva.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([2]) Ú. v. EÚ L 364, 9.12.2004.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/index_en.htm
([4]) COM(2012) 225.
([5]) COM(2013) 139.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003260/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Fraudulent activities of a cross-border nature

I was recently contacted by a citizen of the Slovak Republic — and therefore also of the EU — who found himself in a desperate situation having been defrauded of a significant amount of money. The fraud concerned a cross-border purchase of an item of movable property. Although the agreed-upon payment had been sent to another Member State, the goods were never dispatched. National law enforcement agencies have thus far failed to solve this criminal case, and it is unlikely that the victim of the fraud will ever see his money again.

How are the rights and interests of EU citizens protected from such fraudulent activities?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Honourable Member should know that there is already Union legislation which protects consumers against the practices of rogue traders, namely Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) which prohibits traders from engaging in misleading and aggressive commercial practices towards consumers.

As concerns traders operating cross-border, Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 ([2]) establishes an EU wide enforcement network (the 'CPC Network') and defines a framework and conditions enabling them to detect, investigate and stop cross-border unfair practices.

Consumers who have been victims of such practices should report their case to their national enforcement authorities which are primarily competent for investigating the practices of particular companies operating on their territories.

Consumers are also encouraged to contact the European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net) ([3]) which helps consumers getting the appropriate information in case of a violation of their rights in cross-border transactions and assist them in their contacts with the business operator.

In line with the Commission's Consumer Agenda ([4]), the report on the application of Directive 2005/29/EC ([5]) adopted on 14 March 2013 identifies key priorities for action including stepped up enforcement.

([1]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([2]) OJ L 364, 9.12.2004.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/index_en.htm
([4]) COM(2012) 225.
([5]) COM(2013) 139.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003261/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Násilné uplatňovanie islamského náboženstva v Európskej únii

Občianka Slovenskej republiky, a teda aj Európskej únie mi nedávno adresovala list, v ktorom vyjadrila svoje obavy z násilného uplatňovania islamského náboženstva na území Európskej únie. Prípady extrémnych a agresívnych prejavov islamského náboženstva sú čoraz častejšie, pričom najohrozenejšou skupinou sú najmä ženy.

Akým spôsobom bojuje Komisia proti násilnému uplatňovaniu akejkoľvek viery, ktoré ohrozuje ľudské práva a základné slobody obyvateľov Európskej únie, najmä žien?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(14. mája 2013)

Európska únia je založená na hodnotách úcty k ľudskej dôstojnosti, slobody, demokracie, rovnosti, právneho štátu a rešpektovania ľudských práv.

Sloboda náboženského vyznania spolu so slobodou myslenia a svedomia predstavuje jeden zo základných kameňov našich demokratických spoločností, ktorý je zakotvený v Charte základných práv Európskej únie a Európskom dohovore o ľudských právach. Okrem toho v súlade s článkom 10 charty Únia rešpektuje kultúrnu, náboženskú a jazykovú rôznorodosť.

Situácie, o ktorých sa zmieňuje vážená pani poslankyňa, sa týkajú rôznych základných práv zakotvených v Charte základných práv Európskej únie vrátane slobody náboženského vyznania, práva na úctu k ľudskej dôstojnosti a osobnú integritu a zásady nediskriminácie na základe pohlavia. Je rozhodne nutné zabezpečiť rešpektovanie každého z nich.

Komisia využíva prostriedky, ktoré má k dispozícii, v súlade s právomocami, ktoré sa na Úniu preniesli na základe zmlúv, na boj proti prejavom neznášanlivosti. Právne predpisy EÚ konkrétne zakazujú podnecovanie k násiliu alebo nenávisti z dôvodu napríklad náboženského vyznania ([1]). Sú to však vnútroštátne orgány vrátane súdov, kto má preskúmať jednotlivé prípady a určiť, či predstavujú podnecovanie k xenofóbnemu alebo rasovému násiliu alebo neznášanlivosti. Komisia zároveň poskytuje finančnú podporu na činnosti zainteresovaných strán zamerané napríklad na podporu lepšieho porozumenia medzi rôznymi kultúrami a náboženskými vyznaniami, ako aj väčšej tolerancie v rámci EÚ ([2]).

([1]) Viac informácií o práci Komisie v tejto oblasti sa nachádza na: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm

([2]) Viac informácií o práci Komisie v tejto oblasti sa nachádza na: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003261/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Violent imposition of Islam in the EU

A female citizen of the Slovak Republic — and thus also of the EU — recently sent me a letter in which she expressed her concerns at the violent imposition of the Islamic faith in the EU. Extreme and aggressive manifestations of Islamic faith are becoming increasingly common, and women are the most threatened group.

How is the Commission fighting to stop any faith that threatens the human rights and fundamental freedoms of people — particularly women — in the EU from being violently imposed?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

The European Union is based on the values of respect for human dignity, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Freedom of religion, along with freedom of thought and conscience, constitutes one of the essential foundations of our democratic societies, enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights. Furthermore, according to Article 10 of the Charter, the Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

The situations referred to by the Honourable Member may involve various fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, including the freedom of religion, right to human dignity and the integrity of the person, and the principle of non-discrimination on the ground of sex. It is crucial to ensure the respect of all of them.

The Commission uses all the instruments at its disposal, in line with the powers conferred to the Union by the Treaties, to fight against hate speech. EC law specifically prohibits incitement to violence or hatred based for instance on religion ([1]). It is however for national authorities, including the courts, to look into individual cases and to determine whether they represent incitement to xenophobic or racist violence or hatred. The Commission is also providing financial support to stakeholders' activities aimed for instance at promoting better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance in the EU ([2]).

([1]) For further information on the Commission's work in this field, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/framework-decision/index_en.htm

([2]) For further information on the Commission's work in this field, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-003262/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21. marca 2013)

Vec: Negatívny vplyv sociálnej krízy na ženy

V kolotoči protikrízových opatrení a nezmyselných škrtov sa na sociálnu krízu zabúda. Neustále sa však zhoršuje a ovplyvňuje najmä ženy. Ženy v EÚ postihla tichá kríza. Jej účinky síce prichádzali pomalšie a v menšej intenzite ako v prípade mužov, mužská práca sa však bude obnovovať rýchlejšie, pričom úsporné opatrenia, ku ktorým došlo vo verejných službách, ovplyvnia ženskú prácu omnoho trvalejším spôsobom. Ženy, ktoré pracujú vo verejnom sektore, kde predstavujú v priemere 70 % zamestnancov, sú hlavnými obeťami rozpočtových úspor národných vlád. V roku 2011 bolo 31,6 % žien v pracovnom pomere na kratší pracovný čas. Európska komisia to však už nenazýva pracovným pomerom na kratší pracovný čas, ale nezamestnanosťou pri práci na čiastočný úväzok. Ak aj je žena riadne zamestnaná, jej zamestnanie je často na nižšej kvalifikačnej úrovni ako jej dosiahnuté vzdelanie. Zvyšovanie daní a znižovanie sociálnych dávok núti ženy siahať po provizórnych riešeniach.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zmiernenie negatívnych vplyvov sociálnej krízy na ženy prijala Komisia v poslednom čase?

Domnieva sa Komisia, že rodové hľadisko je pri prijímaní protikrízových oparení zohľadňované dostatočne?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(14. mája 2013)

Komisia monitoruje zamestnanosť a sociálny vývoj v rámci stratégie Európa 2020 pomocou ukazovateľov rozdelených podľa pohlavia. Miera zamestnanosti mužov klesla zo 77,9 % v roku 2007 na 74,6 % v roku 2012, čo predstavuje najnižšiu úroveň od roku 1997, zatiaľ čo zamestnanosť žien sa znížila len nepatrne z 62,8 % v roku 2007 na 62,4 % v roku 2012. Napriek tomu sú rodové rozdiely v zamestnanosti, zárobku a počte pracovných hodín naďalej vysoké. Práca na čiastočný úväzok je stále veľmi bežným sprievodným javom zamestnanosti žien (31,6 % v porovnaní s 8,1 % zamestnanosti mužov).

Schopnosť EÚ výrazne zvýšiť mieru udržateľnej zamestnanosti a znížiť rodové rozdiely závisí okrem iného od makroekonomickej situácie, ale aj od presadenia štrukturálnych politík umožňujúcich ženám a mužom nájsť rovnováhu medzi pracovným a súkromným životom. V tejto súvislosti je kľúčová dostupnosť služieb starostlivosti o deti.

Rodová rovnosť je neoddeliteľnou súčasťou stratégie Európa 2020: Odporúčania jednotlivým krajinám vydané v rámci posledných dvoch európskych semestrov sa venovali aj aspektom rodovej rovnosti. Členským štátom sa adresovala výzva, aby rozvíjali kvalitné a cenovo dostupné zariadenia starostlivosti o deti. Okrem toho členské štáty už dostali podporu z fondov EÚ a najmä ESF ([1]), aby poskytovali kvalitné služby starostlivosti o deti.

V návrhoch budúcich nariadení, ktoré Komisia predložila na programové obdobie politiky súdržnosti 2014 – 2020, sa členské štáty vyzývajú, aby si naplánovali a uskutočnili konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na rodovú rovnosť: boj proti rodovým stereotypom v systémoch vzdelávania a odbornej prípravy, podpora rozvoja systémov starostlivosti, ktoré priaznivo vplývajú na rovnováhu medzi pracovným a súkromným životom. Je možné, že budú potrebné určité opatrenia na zmenu spôsobu, akým verejná správa a tvorcovia politík navrhujú a vykonávajú politiky.

([1]) Európsky sociálny fond.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003262/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(21 March 2013)

Subject: Negative impact of the social crisis on women

Amid the merry-go-round of anti-crisis measures and senseless cuts, the social crisis is in danger of being forgotten. Despite this, the crisis continues to deepen, and it is being particularly keenly felt by women. A quiet crisis has struck women in the EU. The effects of the crisis became apparent more slowly, and they were of a lower intensity than in the case of men. However, employment for men is set to recover more rapidly, while the austerity measures imposed in the public sector will have a much more long-term impact on female employment. Women working in the public sector, where they represent approximately 70% of employees, are the main victims of national governments' budget cuts. In 2011, 31.6% of women worked part-time. It has reached the point where the Commission no longer talks about part-time work, but rather about part-time unemployment. Even when women manage to keep their jobs, they are often overqualified for the jobs that they do. Raising taxes and reducing social benefits is forcing women to resort to ad-hoc solutions.

What specific steps has the Commission taken recently to alleviate the social crisis's negative impact on women?

Does the Commission believe that the gender perspective is given sufficient consideration during the adoption of anti-crisis measures?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

In the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission monitors the employment and social developments, using indicators broken down by sex. Male employment rate went down from 77.9% in 2007 to 74.6% in 2012, its lowest level since 1997, while female employment decreased only slightly from 62.8% in 2007 to 62.4% in 2012. However, the gender gaps remain high in terms of employment, pay and number of worked hours. Part-time working remains a much more common feature of female employment (31.6% compared to 8.1% of male employment).

The ability of the EU to significantly increase sustainable employment rates and decrease gender gaps depends, among other things, on the macroeconomic situation, but also on more structural policies enabling women and men to reconcile their professional and private lives. The availability of childcare services is crucial in this regard.

Gender equality is an integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy: in the last two European Semesters, several country-specific recommendations have covered gender equality aspects and urged Member States to develop quality and affordable childcare facilities. In addition, EU Funds and notably the ESF ([1]) have already supported Member States in their efforts to provide high-quality childcare services.

For the 2014-2020 programming period of cohesion policy, the future Regulations proposed by the Commission invite the Member States to programme and implement specific actions aiming at gender equality: combating gender stereotypes in education and training systems, promoting the development of care schemes which favour the reconciliation between work and private life. Some actions may also be needed to change the way policies are designed and implemented by public administrations and policy-makers.

([1]) European Social Fund.