IV

*(Informacje)*

# INFORMACJE INSTYTUCJI, ORGANÓW I JEDNOSTEK ORGANIZACYJNYCH UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

# PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

## PYTANIA PISEMNE Z ODPOWIEDZIĄ

## Pytania pisemne skierowane przez posłów do Parlamentu Europejskiego i odpowiedzi na te pytania udzielone przez instytucję Unii Europejskiej

(2013/C 81 E/01)

**Treść** **Strona**

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011897/11**
**à Comissão**
**Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(14 de Dezembro de 2011)*

*Assunto:* Energia eólica offshore flutuante

A energia eólica pode constituir uma das possíveis alternativas na prossecução das políticas energéticas. No entanto, com os locais mais interessantes para a instalação de turbinas eólicas em terra já ocupados e com o forte aumento da potência das novas turbinas que, embora com enormes economias de escala, implicam pás de dimensões tais que não podem ser transportadas por terra, e cujos impactos ambientais (visuais e de ruído) tornariam a sua implantação em terra ainda mais difícil, ganha cada vez mais força a ideia da forte implantação de eólicas no mar. Para mais, no mar os ventos são mais fortes e mais constantes que em terra.

Tal opção em águas profundas — predominantes na UE e a distâncias da costa que tornem admissíveis os impactos em terra das novas eólicas — é, contudo, demasiado cara se a respectiva implantação for fixa. Neste contexto, está a surgir a proposta da instalação de plataformas flutuantes para a implantação de eólicas no mar longe das costas.

Recentemente a imprensa deu conta da instalação de um projecto de demonstração de eólica offshore flutuante em Portugal, ao largo da Póvoa de Varzim.

Assim, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe do seguinte:

1. Conhece outros projectos de eólica offshore flutuante na UE? Se sim, onde, desde quando se encontra em funcionamento, com que potência instalada e com que resultados?

2. Há algum estudo sobre a evolução destas alternativas energéticas e sobre a evolução dos seus custos?

3. Que perspectivas existem quanto ao seu financiamento comunitário?

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-011996/11**
**à Comissão**
**António Fernando Correia De Campos (S&D), Ana Gomes (S&D), Edite Estrela (S&D), Elisa Ferreira (S&D), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), Luís Paulo Alves (S&D) e Vital Moreira (S&D)**
*(19 de Dezembro de 2011)*

*Assunto:* Demonstração de eólicas offshore flutuantes

A energia eólica vai seguramente constituir um dos principais pilares na prossecução das políticas energéticas e de sustentabilidade da UE nas próximas décadas, tanto mais que a quase totalidade das outras fontes de energia renováveis se baseiam em tecnologias ainda demasiado embrionárias e caras para poderem dar um contributo significativo e competitivo no médio prazo. No entanto, com os locais mais interessantes para a instalação de turbinas eólicas em terra já ocupados e com o forte aumento da potência das novas turbinas que, embora com enormes economias de escala, implicam pás de dimensões tais que não podem ser transportadas por terra e cujos impactos ambientais (visuais e de ruído) tornariam a sua implantação em terra ainda mais difícil, ganha cada vez mais força a ideia da forte implantação de eólicas no mar. Para mais, no mar os ventos são mais fortes e mais constantes que em terra.

Tal opção em águas profundas — predominantes na UE e a distâncias da costa que tornem admissíveis os impactos em terra das novas eólicas — é, contudo, demasiado cara se a respetiva implantação for fixa. Neste contexto, surge como incontornável a instalação de plataformas flutuantes para a implantação de eólicas no mar longe das costas.

Recentemente a imprensa deu conta da instalação de um projeto de demonstração de eólica offshore flutuante em Portugal, ao largo da Póvoa de Varzim.

A demonstração de viabilidade deste tipo de solução é essencial para a sua adopção de forma mais generalizada, a qual contribuirá para o objectivo europeu de 20 % de energia de fontes renováveis em 2020. Com vista à prossecução deste objectivo importará conhecer e disseminar experiências já adquiridas neste âmbito.

Para além deste projecto, está a Comissão a par de qualquer outro projecto de eólica offshore flutuante na UE? Se sim, onde, desde quando se encontra em funcionamento, com que potência instalada e com que resultados?

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012190/11**
**à Comissão**
**Paulo Rangel (PPE), Mário David (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Regina Bastos (PPE) e José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)**
*(21 de Dezembro de 2011)*

*Assunto:* Eólicas offshore flutuantes

A energia eólica, como fonte energética renovável, representa cada vez mais uma das soluções de futuro de que dispomos para uma aposta num crescimento verdadeiramente sustentável e no combate às alterações climáticas.

A Europa tem estado na linha da frente no sector das chamadas energias limpas, mas não deixa de ter concorrentes de peso cujo papel está a ser cada vez mais preponderante, como a China, os Estados Unidos ou as chamadas economias emergentes.

Como europeus, devemos ter a ambição de manter a liderança neste sector.

A procura de novas fontes de energia, como é sabido, exige a tomada de opções políticas claras, aposta na investigação e avultados investimentos. Mas é também um motor de desenvolvimento económico, de criação de emprego, de crescimento.

A par da investigação sobre as fontes de energia, tem havido igualmente uma busca de novos espaços para a instalação de eólicas.

Em Portugal vierem recentemente a público notícias que dão conta da instalação de um projecto de demonstração de eólica offshore flutuante ao largo da Póvoa de Varzim.

Para além deste, está a Comissão a par de qualquer outro projecto de eólica offshore flutuante na UE?

Se sim, onde, desde quando se encontra em funcionamento, com que potência instalada e com que resultados obtidos?

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012680/11**
**à Comissão**
**Nuno Melo (PPE) e Diogo Feio (PPE)**
*(11 de Janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Eolica offshore flutuante

A energia eólica vai seguramente constituir um dos principais pilares na prossecução das políticas energéticas e de sustentabilidade da UE nas próximas décadas, tanto mais que a quase totalidade das outras fontes de energia renováveis se baseiam em tecnologias ainda demasiado embrionárias e caras para poderem dar um contributo significativo e competitivo no médio prazo. No entanto, com os locais mais interessantes para a instalação de turbinas eólicas em terra já ocupados e com o forte aumento da potência das novas turbinas já anunciadas pelos principais fabricantes que, embora com enormes economias de escala, implicam pás de dimensões tais que não podem ser transportadas por terra e cujos impactos ambientais (visuais e de ruído) tornariam a sua implantação em terra ainda mais difícil, ganha cada vez mais força a ideia da forte implantação de eólicas no mar.

Tal opção em águas profundas — predominantes na UE e, em todo o caso, inerentes longe das costas (a distâncias destas que tornem admissíveis os impactos visuais e de ruído das novas eólicas) — é, contudo, demasiado cara se a respetiva implantação for fixa. Neste contexto, surge como incontornável a instalação de plataformas flutuantes para a implantação de eólicas no mar.

Acresce que tal também poderá revitalizar a indústria da construção naval e os respetivos estaleiros na UE que passam por grandes dificuldades.

Recentemente a imprensa deu conta da instalação de um projeto de demonstração de eólica *offshore* flutuante em Portugal ao largo da Póvoa de Varzim.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento do projeto de demonstração de eólica *offshore* flutuante em Portugal? Como o avalia?

— Para além deste, está a Comissão a par de qualquer outro projeto de eólica *offshore* flutuante na UE? Se sim, onde, desde quando se encontra em funcionamento, com que potência instalada e com que resultados?

**Resposta conjunta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão**
*(14 de Fevereiro de 2012)*

A investigação sobre turbinas eólicas flutuantes é financiada no contexto do projeto HiPRWind, ao abrigo do sétimo Programa-Quadro (7.° PQ). As atividades de investigação no âmbito do 7.° PQ abrangem também novos conceitos de turbinas eólicas de maiores dimensões (> 10MW) e estruturas flutuantes afins.

A demonstração de estruturas flutuantes competitivas em termos de custos foi incluída no convite à apresentação de propostas no domínio da energia ao abrigo do 7.° PQ, em 2011.

Embora, até uma época recente, as experiências *in situ* se tenham limitado a alguns protótipos (como o projeto Hywind, na Noruega), o convite à apresentação de propostas ao abrigo do 7.°PQ, em 2011, pretende demonstrar e avaliar os benefícios e a competitividade em termos de custos das turbinas eólicas *offshore* com uma potência de vários MW, numa estrutura flutuante.

Os sistemas de turbinas eólicas flutuantes *offshore* com uma capacidade nominal de 25 $MW_e$ foram também considerados elegíveis para financiamento ao abrigo do convite à apresentação de propostas NER300 ([1]), estando em curso o respetivo processo de avaliação.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/lowcarbon/ner300/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-011897/11**
**to the Commission**
**Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**
*(14 December 2011)*

*Subject:* Floating offshore wind farms

Wind power is one of the options for consideration when developing energy policies. However, the best locations for installing land-based wind turbines have already been taken and huge economies of scale have led to the development of new, much more powerful turbines with blades so large that they can no longer be transported by land and for which it is increasingly difficult to find appropriate land-based locations for environmental reasons due to their visual impact and noise levels. This has led to increasing interest in the idea of strongly promoting offshore wind farms. Offshore winds are also stronger and more prevalent than inland ones.

However, the option of setting up offshore wind farms in deep sea areas, of which there is no shortage in the EU, far enough away from the coast to reduce the terrestrial impact of the new wind technologies to acceptable levels, is too expensive if fixed installations are used. This has led to the design of floating platforms on which to set up wind farms far from the coast.

The print media recently reported on a pilot floating offshore wind power project in Portugal, at Póvoa de Varzim.

1. Is the Commission aware of any other floating offshore wind farms in the EU? If so, how long have they been operating, what is their installed capacity and what results have they produced?

2. Has any studies been carried out into developments regarding these alternative sources of energy and their costs?

3. What possibilities are there that they could be eligible for Community funding?

**Question for written answer E-011996/11**
**to the Commission**
**António Fernando Correia De Campos (S&D), Ana Gomes (S&D), Edite Estrela (S&D), Elisa Ferreira (S&D), Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D), Luís Paulo Alves (S&D) and Vital Moreira (S&D)**
*(19 December 2011)*

*Subject:* Demonstration of floating offshore wind turbines

Wind power will undoubtedly be a mainstay of the energy and sustainability policies to be pursued by the EU in the decades ahead, especially since almost all other renewable energy sources are based on technologies that are still too embryonic and costly to be able to make a significant and competitive contribution in the medium term. However, the most suitable inland sites for wind turbines are already occupied; and the higher power of the new turbines (albeit with huge economies of scale) is such that the blades would be too big to transport by land and, because of their environmental impact (visually and in terms of noise), more and more difficult to install inland. That being the case, the idea of large offshore wind farms is becoming increasingly more persuasive. Furthermore, sea-winds are stronger and more constant than inland winds.

On the other hand, in deep waters — as EU waters mostly are — and at such distances from the coast that the inland impacts of the new turbines would be acceptable, that option would be too expensive if the arrays in question were fixed. Consequently, floating platforms for turbines a long way out to sea are being viewed as the necessary solution.

It was recently reported in the press that a floating offshore wind turbine demonstration project had been set up in Portugal, off Póvoa de Varzim.

Solutions of this type have to shown to be viable if they are to be adopted more widely and hence help to meet the European target of 20 % of energy generated from renewable sources in 2020. To that end it will be essential to find out about and disseminate experience already acquired.

Apart from the above project, does the Commission know of any other floating offshore wind turbine projects in the EU? If so, where are they sited and how long have they been in operation? What is their installed power, and what has been their outcome?

**Question for written answer E-012190/11**
**to the Commission**
**Paulo Rangel (PPE), Mário David (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), Regina Bastos (PPE) and José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)**
*(21 December 2011)*

*Subject:* Floating offshore wind turbines

Wind energy, as a renewable form of energy, is increasingly becoming one of the forward-looking solutions available to us to support genuinely sustainable growth and combat climate change.

Although Europe is at the forefront of 'clean energy' development, it has some serious rivals, which are becoming increasingly influential, such as China, the United States and the 'emerging economies'.

As Europeans, we should seek to maintain our dominant position in this sector.

The quest for new energy sources obviously calls for clear political decisions to be made in favour of research and substantial investment. It can also be a motor for economic development, job creation and growth.

Alongside research into energy sources, efforts have also been made to look for new sites on which to set up wind farms.

News was recently published in Portugal about the creation of a pilot floating offshore wind farm near Póvoa de Varzim.

Is the Commission aware of the existence of any other floating offshore wind energy projects in the EU?

If so, since when have they been in operation, what is their installed capacity and what results have been obtained from them?

**Question for written answer E-012680/11**
**to the Commission**
**Nuno Melo (PPE) and Diogo Feio (PPE)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Floating offshore wind farms

Wind energy will undoubtedly be one of the main elements of the European Union's energy and sustainability policies over the next decades, even more so since almost all other forms of renewable energy involve technologies that are as yet too undeveloped or too expensive to make a significant and competitive contribution in the medium term. However, as the areas best suited to the installation of wind turbines are already inhabited, and given the greatly increased power of these turbines, according to the principal manufacturers, which, although there are enormous economies of scale, involve rotor blades too large to be transported on land and whose environmental effects in terms of visual and noise impact would make installing them on land even more difficult, all this makes the idea of major wind farm installations at sea even more attractive

This option, in deep water — which predominates in the EU or, in any case, away from the coasts — at sufficient distance to render the visual and noise impact acceptable) — would still be too expensive if the installations were fixed. In this context, the installation of floating platforms for wind farms at sea becomes unavoidable.

Also, this could help to revive the EU's naval construction industry and shipyards which are experiencing serious difficulties

Recently it was reported in the press that a pilot floating offshore wind farm has been constructed in Portugal near Póvoa de Varzim.

Is the Commission aware of this pilot project for a floating offshore wind farm in Portugal? What is its opinion?

Apart from this one, does the Commission know of any other floating offshore wind farm projects within the EU? If the answer is yes, how long has it been running, how much power does it produce and with what results?

**Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 February 2012)*

Research into floating systems has been funded through a Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) grant to the HiPRWind project. The FP7 research activities also address new concepts for larger wind turbines (>10MW) and corresponding floating structures.

Demonstration of cost-competitive floating structures was included as a topic in the FP7 Energy call 2011.

Whereas, until recently, on-site experience was limited to a few prototypes (such as the HYWIND project in Norway), the FP7 call 2011 aims to demonstrate and assess benefits and cost competitiveness of grid-connected multi MW offshore turbines on a floating structure.

Floating off-shore wind systems with a nominal capacity of 25 MWe were also eligible for funding under the NER300 call ([1]). The evaluation process is ongoing.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/lowcarbon/ner300/index_en.htm

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012591/11**
**a la Comisión**
**Daniel Caspary (PPE), Bernd Lange (S&D), Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE) y Iuliu Winkler (PPE)**
*(13 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Acuerdos de comercio internacional: tiempo transcurrido entre la conclusión de las negociaciones y la autorización de firma de la Comisión

La reciente experiencia relativa al Acuerdo de Asociación entre la Unión Europea y Centroamérica, así como en relación con el Acuerdo comercial con Perú y Colombia, ha demostrado que puede transcurrir un intervalo de tiempo muy largo entre la conclusión de las negociaciones pertinentes y el momento en que la Comisión propone autorizar la firma del acuerdo. En estos dos casos en los que participan países latinoamericanos, el lapso temporal ha sido casi de 18 meses. El retraso se ha atribuido al proceso de verificación jurídica y de traducción.

Habida cuenta de que, en las cuestiones económicas de escala mundial, a menudo es importante obtener acceso al mercado y a reducciones arancelarias lo antes posible, este retraso genera una clara desventaja para la Unión Europea y los Estados miembros con respecto a sus competidores económicos, en particular, con respecto a Estados Unidos, donde la necesidad de traducción es inexistente o bastante reducida.

En vista de lo expuesto:

1. ¿Es posible reducir considerablemente este intervalo, o al menos hasta cierto punto, a fin de colocar a la UE en una situación de menor desventaja frente a sus principales competidores a escala mundial?

2. ¿Qué medidas específicas podrían emprender las instituciones europeas para acelerar el proceso, respetando en todo momento las prerrogativas otorgadas a cada institución en el marco del Tratado de Lisboa?

**Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión**
*(14 de marzo de 2012)*

1. Dado que los acuerdos comerciales de la UE son textos voluminosos, que generalmente contienen calendarios de liberalización muy detallados, la verificación jurídica («depuración») puede durar varios meses, en función de la longitud y complejidad de los documentos y de los recursos de que disponen ambas Partes. Posteriormente, los textos verificados se traducen a veintidós lenguas oficiales de la UE y se incorporan en una propuesta, elaborada por la Comisión, de Decisión del Consejo por la que se autoriza la firma. Finalmente, los textos son verificados por los juristas lingüistas del Consejo. Por tanto, pese a los esfuerzos de todos los interesados por actuar más rápidamente, transcurre más de un año entre el final de las negociaciones y la Decisión del Consejo por la que se autoriza la firma.

En los acuerdos que mencionan Sus Señorías, el plazo necesario para preparar a la firma fue excepcionalmente largo, puesto que el Acuerdo de Asociación se celebró con seis países de América Central que tenían que coordinar sus posiciones entre sí y el Acuerdo multilateral con Colombia y Perú se había negociado en dos lenguas. En cambio, solo fueron necesarios nueve meses para verificar y traducir el Acuerdo de Libre Comercio UE-Corea.

2. La Comisión ha introducido medidas de eficiencia mediante una mejor planificación del trabajo y una notificación previa de los traductores de la Comisión y los juristas lingüistas del Consejo. Sería posible conseguir un mayor ahorro si las tres instituciones implicadas llegaran a un acuerdo sobre unos requisitos de formato normalizados para los textos correspondientes, lo cual constituye una cuestión más amplia que la que actualmente plantean Sus Señorías.

Los retrasos en la firma de los acuerdos comerciales obviamente retrasan los beneficios esperados por los agentes económicos de ambas partes.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012591/11**
**an die Kommission**
**Daniel Caspary (PPE), Bernd Lange (S&D), Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE) und Iuliu Winkler (PPE)**
*(13. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Internationale Handelsabkommen: zeitliche Verzögerung zwischen dem Abschluss von Verhandlungen und der Unterzeichnungs-genehmigung durch die Kommission

Die jüngsten Erfahrungen beim Assoziierungsabkommen zwischen der Europäischen Union und Mittelamerika sowie beim Handelsabkommen mit Peru und Kolumbien haben gezeigt, dass der Zeitraum zwischen dem Abschluss der jeweiligen Verhandlungen und dem Zeitpunkt, an dem die Kommission die Unterzeichnung des Abkommens empfiehlt, sehr lang sein kann. In diesen beiden Fällen, in denen lateinamerikanische Länder beteiligt waren, betrug die zeitliche Verzögerung fast 18 Monate. Die Verzögerung wird auf den Prozess der Übersetzung und rechtlichen Prüfung zurückgeführt.

Da es in der globalen Wirtschaft häufig wichtig ist, so schnell wie möglich Zugang zum Markt zu erhalten und Zollermäßigungen zu erzielen, bedeutet diese Verzögerung für die Europäische Union und die Mitgliedstaaten einen deutlichen Nachteil gegenüber Wettbewerbern, insbesondere den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, für die kein bzw. nur ein geringer Übersetzungsbedarf besteht.

In Anbetracht obiger Ausführungen:

1. Ist es möglich, diesen Zeitraum erheblich oder zumindest in einem gewissen Maß zu verkürzen, damit die EU gegenüber ihren weltweiten Hauptkonkurrenten weniger benachteiligt ist?

2. Welche speziellen Maßnahmen könnten die Europäischen Institutionen ergreifen, um den Prozess zu beschleunigen und gleichzeitig die Befugnisse der einzelnen Institution gemäß dem Vertrag von Lissabon zu berücksichtigen?

**Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission**
*(14. März 2012)*

1. Handelsübereinkünfte der EU sind sehr umfangreich und enthalten in der Regel sehr detaillierte Liberalisierungspläne. Deshalb kann die rechtliche Prüfung (im internen Jargon auch „Scrubbing" genannt) mehrere Monate in Anspruch nehmen, je nachdem, wie voluminös und komplex die Dokumente sind und wie viele Ressourcen auf beiden Seiten zur Verfügung stehen. Anschließend werden die geprüften Texte in 22 Amtssprachen der EU übersetzt und in einen Kommissionsvorschlag für einen Beschluss des Rates eingefügt, mit dem dieser die Unterzeichnung genehmigt. Zudem werden die Texte noch einer Überprüfung durch die Rechts— und Sprachsachverständigen des Rates unterzogen. Obwohl sich alle Beteiligten darum bemühen, schneller voranzukommen, vergeht ein gutes Jahr zwischen dem Abschluss der Verhandlungen und dem endgültigen Ratsbeschluss zur Genehmigung der Unterzeichnung.

Die Vorbereitungen zur Unterzeichnung der von den Herren Abgeordneten angesprochenen Übereinkünfte nahmen außergewöhnlich viel Zeit in Anspruch, weil zum einen das Assoziierungsabkommen gleich mit sechs zentralamerikanischen Staaten geschlossen wurde, die ihre Positionen untereinander abstimmen mussten, und weil zum anderen über das multilaterale Übereinkommen mit Kolumbien und Peru in zwei Sprachen verhandelt worden war. Im Gegensatz dazu konnten die Prüfung und die Übersetzung des Freihandelsabkommens der EU mit Korea in neun Monaten durchgezogen werden.

2. Die Kommission hat Effizienzmaßnahmen ergriffen, die eine bessere Planung der Arbeiten sowie eine frühere Einbeziehung der Kommissionsübersetzer und der Rechts— und Sprachsachverständigen des Rates vorsehen. Weitere Effizienzgewinne wären möglich, wenn die drei beteiligten Institutionen sich auf einheitliche Formate für die einschlägigen Texte einigen würden; diese Frage geht jedoch über das hinaus, was die Herren Abgeordneten in ihrer Anfrage angesprochen haben.

Es ist offensichtlich, dass durch den Verzug bei der Unterzeichnung von Handelsübereinkünften auch die von den Wirtschaftsbeteiligten auf beiden Seiten erhofften Vorteile verzögert werden.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012591/11**
**to the Commission**
**Daniel Caspary (PPE), Bernd Lange (S&D), Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE) and Iuliu Winkler (PPE)**
*(13 January 2012)*

*Subject:* International trade agreements: time lag between conclusion of negotiations and the Commission's authorisation of signature

Recent experience involving the Association Agreement between the European Union and Central America as well as the Trade Agreement with Peru and Colombia has shown that the interval between conclusion of the relevant negotiations and the time when the Commission proposes that signing be authorised can be very long. In these two cases involving Latin American countries the time lag was nearly 18 months. The delay has been attributed to the translation and legal verification process.

Since in global economic affairs it is often important to gain market access and tariff reductions as soon as possible, this time lag creates a clear disadvantage for the European Union and the Member States over economic competitors, in particular the United States, where the need for translation is non-existent or fairly limited.

In the light of the above:

1. Is it possible to shorten this interval considerably, or at least to some extent, in order to put the EU at less of a disadvantage vis-à-vis its major competitors in the world?

2. What specific action could the European institutions take to speed up the process, whilst respecting each Institution's prerogatives under the Lisbon Treaty?

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 March 2012)*

1. As EU trade agreements are voluminous texts, usually containing very detailed liberalisation schedules, legal verification (or 'scrubbing') can last several months, depending on the length and complexity of the documents and resources available to both sides. Thereafter, the verified texts are translated in 22 official EU languages and are put in to a Commission proposal for a Council decision authorising signature. They are further verified by the Council's lawyer linguists. It thus takes well over a year between the end of negotiations and the actual Council decision authorising signature, despite efforts of all involved to move more quickly.

The agreements referred to by the Honourable Members took an exceptionally long time to prepare for signature because the Association Agreement was concluded with six Central American countries that needed to coordinate their positions among themselves and the Multiparty Agreement with Colombia and Peru had been negotiated in two languages. Conversely, it took nine months to verify and translate the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

2. The Commission has introduced efficiency measures through better planning of work and earlier notification of Commission's translators and Council's lawyer linguists. Further savings would be possible if all three institutions involved were to agree on standardised formatting requirements for the relevant texts — a wider issue than presently raised by the Honourable Members.

Delays in signing trade agreements obviously defer the gains awaited by economic operators on both sides.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012595/11**
**an die Kommission**
**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**
*(12. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Unterstützung und Förderung der Demokratieprozesse und Frauenrechte in den Ländern des arabischen Frühlings

In den Ländern des arabischen Frühlings wie Ägypten, Jordanien, Tunesien und Libyen finden gravierende politische und gesellschaftliche Umbrüche statt.

1. Unterstützt und fördert die EU durch ihre auswärtige Politik — basierend auf der Universalität der Menschenrechte — die Demokratie— und Reformbestrebungen dieser Länder? Wenn ja, welche und wie?

2. Unterstützt und fördert die EU im Speziellen die Frauenrechte und Geschlechtergleichstellung in diesen Ländern? Wenn ja, welche Instrumente setzt sie hierfür ein und in welchen Ländern?

3. Welche konkreten Ergebnisse konnten bereits erzielt werden?

**Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission**
*(13. März 2012)*

Die Reaktion der Europäischen Union auf die Ereignisse in den Ländern des arabischen Frühlings wurde in zwei Mitteilungen skizziert: „Eine Partnerschaft mit dem südlichen Mittelmeerraum für Demokratie und gemeinsamen Wohlstand“ vom 8. März 2011 und „Eine neue Antwort auf eine Nachbarschaft im Wandel“ vom 25. Mai 2011. Die EU erkennt an, dass eine starke Zivilgesellschaft zur Achtung der Menschenrechte, einschließlich der Frauenrechte, sowie zur Förderung von Demokratie und guter Regierungsführung beitragen und so eine wichtige Rolle bei der Eindämmung staatlicher Übergriffe spielen kann. Dies ist ein Schlüsselelement für den Aufbau einer vertieften Demokratie.

Die Hohe Vertreterin /Vizepräsidentin Catherine Ashton hat immer wieder auf die zentrale Rolle hingewiesen, die Frauen in der Gesellschaft spielen. Im September 2011 lud sie am Rande der UN-Generalversammlung in New York unter anderem Hillary Clinton, Helen Clark und Michelle Bachelet zu einem hochrangigen Treffen ein, um die internationale Aufmerksamkeit darauf zu lenken, dass weltweit und somit auch in Nordafrika eine aktive Beteiligung von Frauen an politischen Prozessen sichergestellt werden muss. Die EU setzt sich seit langem nachdrücklich für die Frauenrechte und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter in allen Bereichen der Gesellschaft ein. 2006 hat sie sich im Rahmen der Europa-Mittelmeer-Partnerschaft dem „Istanbul-Prozess“ verpflichtet, der die Geschlechtergleichstellung fördert.

Neben einem speziellen Programm zur Förderung der Geschlechtergleichstellung steht der Zivilgesellschaft eine Reihe von Instrumenten zu Verfügung, die ihre Bemühungen um die Sicherstellung der Frauenrechte unterstützen. Dazu zählt vor allem das Europäische Instrument für Demokratie und Menschenrechte. Auf Initiative von Kommissar Füle, der für die Erweiterung und die Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik zuständig ist, richtete die Kommission im September 2011 außerdem die Fazilität zur Förderung der Zivilgesellschaft in den Nachbarschaftsländern ein. Darüber hinaus leitet die EU eine regionale Kampagne für die politische Teilhabe von Frauen in Nahost und Nordafrika ein, die sich auf ihre „Leitlinien betreffend Gewalt gegen Frauen und Mädchen und die Bekämpfung aller Formen der Diskriminierung von Frauen und Mädchen“ stützt.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012595/11**
**to the Commission**
**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**
*(12 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Support and promotion of democratic processes and women's rights in the countries affected by the Arab Spring

The countries affected by the Arab Spring, such as Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Libya, are experiencing major political and social upheaval.

1. Is the EU supporting and encouraging the efforts to bring about democracy and reform in these countries through its foreign policy, based on the universality of human rights? If so, which and how?

2. In particular, does the EU support and promote women's rights and gender equality in these countries? If so, what instruments is it using and in which countries?

3. What concrete results have already been achieved?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

The European Union's response to events in the Arab Spring countries was outlined in the two communications: 'A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the southern Mediterranean' of 8 March 2011 and 'A new response to a changing Neighbourhood' of 25 May 2011. The EU recognises that a thriving civil society can help uphold human rights, including women's rights, and contribute to democracy building and good governance, playing an important role in checking government excesses. It is a key element for building deep democracy.

In meetings and visits, the High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Catherine Ashton has constantly highlighted the central role women play in their respective societies. In New York in September 2011, in the margins of the UN General Assembly, she convened a high level meeting with, *inter alia*, Hillary Clinton, Helen Clark and Michelle Bachelet to draw international attention to the need to ensure women's active participation in the political processes worldwide, including in North Africa. The EU has a long-lasting and strong commitment to women's rights and gender equality in all aspects of society. Within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the EU since 2006 committed itself to the 'Istanbul Process' which promotes gender equality.

As well as a dedicated programme towards gender, a number of instruments are available to civil society in their efforts to ensure women's rights. This includes in particular the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. At the initiative of Commissioner Füle, responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, the Commission established also the Neighbourhood Civil Society facility in September 2011. In addition, the EU is launching a regional campaign on 'Women's Political participation in the Middle East and North Africa' under the EU's guidelines on violence and discrimination against women and girls.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012608/11**
**a la Comisión**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) y Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Fondo de Solidaridad de la UE

La Unión Europea está construida sobre los principios de solidaridad y de responsabilidades compartidas dentro de la Comunidad con el fin de ofrecer calidad de vida a todos los ciudadanos. Como respuesta a las graves inundaciones que tuvieron lugar en Europa Central durante el verano de 2002, la Unión Europea creó el Fondo de Solidaridad para ayudar a los países que lo necesitaban.

1. ¿Está la Comisión de acuerdo en que la prevención de las catástrofes naturales es de vital importancia para reducir al mínimo las consecuencias de futuras catástrofes naturales?

2. ¿Está la Comisión de acuerdo en que las actividades preventivas se deben incluir en el Fondo de Solidaridad de la UE?

3. ¿Qué cambios se pueden prever para incluir criterios orientados hacia la prevención en el nuevo reglamento para el Fondo de Solidaridad de la UE 2014-2020?

**Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión**
*(10 de febrero de 2012)*

1. La Comisión, junto con los Estados miembros y respaldada por el Parlamento, está poniendo en práctica una ambiciosa estrategia de prevención que abarque la mejora de los conocimientos, la evaluación del riesgo y la planificación de la gestión del riesgo, y que además utilice íntegramente las posibilidades de financiación de la UE para respaldar medidas, como la gestión de las inundaciones. Además, la reciente propuesta de la Comisión de revisar la legislación de protección civil integra, por primera vez, disposiciones para la prevención, con el objetivo de abordar la totalidad del ciclo de gestión de las catástrofes.

2. El Fondo de Solidaridad de la Unión Europea se creó con el propósito específico de conceder asistencia financiera para operaciones de emergencia en el contexto de las consecuencias de las catástrofes naturales importantes. Los mecanismos para activar y aplicar el Fondo de Solidaridad y la manera en que se obtienen los créditos presupuestarios necesarios —aparte del presupuesto normal de la UE— están encaminados a ese único objetivo. Si bien la prevención de catástrofes es una prioridad clave entre las políticas de la UE, la Comisión estima que el Fondo de Solidaridad debería seguir centrándose en su propósito inicial.

3. El Reglamento (CE) n° 2012/2002 del Consejo, por el que se crea el Fondo de Solidaridad de la Unión Europea, no tiene fecha límite, sino que seguirá en vigor hasta que sea sustituido o modificado. El 6 de octubre de 2011, la Comisión presentó una Comunicación sobre el futuro del Fondo de Solidaridad, que contiene una serie de propuestas para mejorar las operaciones de dicho instrumento; las propuestas incluyen reflexiones sobre la posibilidad de condicionar la ayuda del Fondo de Solidaridad a la realización de esfuerzos previos en términos de prevención. Dependiendo del resultado de la discusión de la presente Comunicación con el Parlamento, el Consejo y otras partes interesadas, se presentará una propuesta legislativa.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012608/11**
**à la Commission**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) et Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 janvier 2012)*

*Objet:* Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne

L'Union européenne est fondée sur les principes de solidarité et de responsabilité partagée au sein de la communauté, afin d'apporter une certaine qualité de vie à tous les citoyens. À la suite des importantes inondations qui ont touché l'Europe centrale lors de l'été 2002, l'Union européenne a instauré le Fonds de solidarité en vue d'aider ces pays dans le besoin.

1. La Commission convient-elle que la prévention des catastrophes naturelles revêt une importance fondamentale afin de réduire au minimum les conséquences de futures catastrophes naturelles?

2. La Commission convient-elle que des activités de prévention devraient être intégrées dans le Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne?

3. Quels changements sont à prévoir afin d'inclure des critères axés sur la prévention dans le nouveau règlement du Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne pour 2014-2020?

**Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission**
*(10 février 2012)*

1. La Commission, en collaboration avec les États membres et avec le soutien du Parlement, met actuellement en œuvre une stratégie de prévention ambitieuse comprenant un renforcement des connaissances, une évaluation des risques et une planification de la gestion des risques, tout en tirant pleinement parti des possibilités de financement de l'UE afin de soutenir des mesures telles que la gestion des inondations. En outre, la récente proposition de la Commission de révision de la législation en matière de protection civile intègre pour la première fois des dispositions en matière de prévention ayant pour finalité de traiter l'ensemble du cycle de gestion des catastrophes.

2. Le Fonds de solidarité de l'UE a été spécifiquement mis en place pour fournir une assistance financière d'urgence à la suite de catastrophes naturelles majeures. Les mécanismes d'activation et de mise en œuvre des crédits du Fonds de solidarité et les modalités de mobilisation des crédits budgétaires nécessaires — au-delà du budget normal de l'UE —, tendent vers ce seul objectif. Même si la prévention de catastrophes naturelles fait partie des priorités d'action majeures de l'UE, la Commission estime que le Fonds de solidarité ne devrait pas s'écarter de sa finalité première.

3. Le règlement (CE) nº 2012/2002 du Conseil instituant le Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne n'est pas limité dans le temps et demeure en vigueur jusqu'à ce qu'il soit remplacé ou modifié. Le 6 octobre 2011, la Commission a présenté une communication sur l'avenir du Fonds de solidarité. Elle contenait diverses propositions destinées à améliorer l'utilisation de cet instrument, parmi lesquelles des réflexions sur l'opportunité de subordonner l'aide du Fonds de solidarité à des efforts préalables en matière de prévention. En fonction des résultats du débat sur la présente communication avec le Parlement, le Conseil et les autres parties prenantes, une proposition législative suivra.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012608/11**
**alla Commissione**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) e Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE

L'Unione europea è costruita sulla base dei principi di solidarietà e di responsabilità condivisi nella Comunità allo scopo di fornire un'adeguata qualità di vita a tutti i cittadini. In risposta alle gravi inondazioni avvenute nell'Europa centrale nell'estate del 2002, l'Unione europea ha istituito il Fondo di solidarietà al fine di aiutare questi paesi nel momento del bisogno.

1. La Commissione è d'accordo che la prevenzione di disastri naturali è di importanza essenziale al fine di minimizzare le conseguenze dei futuri disastri naturali?

2. La Commissione è d'accordo sul fatto che le attività preventive debbano essere incluse nel Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE?

3. Quali cambiamenti possono essere previsti al fine di includere i criteri finalizzati alla prevenzione nel nuovo regolamento relativo al Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE 2014-2020?

**Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione**
*(10 febbraio 2012)*

1. La Commissione, di concerto con gli Stati membri e con il sostegno del Parlamento, sta portando avanti una strategia ambiziosa di prevenzione finalizzata a migliorare le conoscenze, a valutare i rischi e a pianificare la gestione dei rischi, nonché a sfruttare appieno le possibilità di finanziamento da parte dell'Unione di misure quali la gestione delle inondazioni. Inoltre, per la prima volta, la recente proposta della Commissione di revisione della legislazione in materia di protezione civile prevede disposizioni sulla prevenzione, con l'obiettivo di coprire l'intero ciclo di gestione delle catastrofi.

2. Il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea è stato istituito con l'intento specifico di sostenere finanziariamente interventi d'urgenza all'indomani di gravi catastrofi naturali. I meccanismi per attivare il Fondo di solidarietà e le modalità di mobilitazione degli stanziamenti necessari — in aggiunta al normale bilancio dell'UE — hanno questo unico obiettivo. Anche se la prevenzione delle catastrofi naturali è una delle priorità fondamentali delle politiche dell'UE, la Commissione ritiene che il Fondo di solidarietà non debba perdere di vista il suo obiettivo iniziale.

3. Il regolamento (CE) n. 2012/2002 del Consiglio che istituisce il Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea non ha scadenza, ma resta in vigore fino a quando non sarà sostituito o modificato. Il 6 ottobre 2011 la Commissione ha presentato una comunicazione sul futuro del Fondo di solidarietà, contenente una serie di proposte destinate a migliorare il funzionamento di questo strumento, in cui è prospettata anche la possibilità di subordinare l'intervento del Fondo di solidarietà all'azione di prevenzione svolta in precedenza. In base all'esito del dibattito sulla comunicazione con il Parlamento, il Consiglio e le altre parti interessate, sarà presentata una proposta legislativa.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012608/11**
**aan de Commissie**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) en Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* Solidariteitsfonds van de EU

De Europese Unie is gestoeld op de beginselen van solidariteit en gedeelde verantwoordelijkheden binnen de Gemeenschappen om alle burgers een goede levenskwaliteit te bieden. Als reactie op de ernstige overstromingen in Centraal-Europa in de zomer van 2002, richtte de Europese Unie het Solidariteitsfonds op om de landen in nood te helpen.

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat het voorkomen van natuurrampen van essentieel belang is om de gevolgen van toekomstige natuurrampen tot een minimum te beperken?

2. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat preventieactiviteiten opgenomen moeten worden in het Solidariteitsfonds van de EU?

3. Welke wijzigingen kunnen er doorgevoerd worden om op preventie gerichte criteria op te nemen in de nieuwe verordening voor het Solidariteitsfonds van de EU 2014-2020?

**Antwoord van de heer Hahn namens de Commissie**
*(10 februari 2012)*

1. Om maatregelen zoals overstromingsbeheer te ondersteunen, werkt de Commissie, samen met de lidstaten en met de steun van het Parlement, aan de uitvoering van een ambitieuze preventiestrategie, die gebaseerd is op verruimde kennis, risicobeoordeling en planning van risicobeheersing in combinatie met een maximaal gebruik van de financieringsmogelijkheden van de EU. Het recente voorstel van de Commissie om de wetgeving inzake civiele bescherming te herzien, combineert bovendien voor het eerst preventiebepalingen met de doelstelling om de gehele rampenbeheercyclus aan te pakken.

2. Het Solidariteitsfonds van de EU is opgericht met de specifieke bedoeling financiële steun te verstrekken voor noodacties in de nasleep van grote natuurrampen. De mechanismen om het Solidariteitsfonds te activeren en in te schakelen en de manier waarop de noodzakelijke begrotingsmiddelen worden vergaard, los van de normale EU-begroting, zijn op die doelstelling afgestemd. Aangezien het voorkomen van rampen tot de hoogste prioriteiten van het EU-beleid behoort, is de Commissie van mening dat het Solidariteitsfonds zich op zijn oorspronkelijke doelstelling moet blijven concentreren.

3. Verordening nr. 2012/2002 van de Raad tot oprichting van het Solidariteitsfonds van de EU is niet beperkt in de tijd en blijft geldig tot zij wordt vervangen of gewijzigd. De Commissie heeft op 6 oktober 2011 een mededeling over de toekomst van het Solidariteitsfonds ingediend waarin zij een aantal voorstellen doet om de operaties van deze instrumenten te verbeteren, met inbegrip van overwegingen om steun uit het Solidariteitsfonds afhankelijk te stellen van eerdere inspanningen op het gebied van preventie. Afhankelijk van het resultaat van de discussie met het Parlement, de Raad en andere belanghebbenden over deze mededeling zal er een wetsvoorstel volgen.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012608/11**
**do Komisji**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) oraz Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 stycznia 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Fundusz Solidarności UE

Unia Europejska opiera się na zasadach solidarności i podziału odpowiedzialności w ramach Wspólnoty w celu zapewnienia jakości życia wszystkim obywatelom. W reakcji na intensywne powodzie w Europie Środkowej, do których doszło latem 2002 r., Unia Europejska utworzyła Fundusz Solidarności, aby pomóc państwom w potrzebie.

1. Czy Komisja zgadza się ze stwierdzeniem, że zapobieganie klęskom żywiołowym ma kluczowe znaczenie dla minimalizacji skutków przyszłych klęsk żywiołowych?

2. Czy Komisja zgadza się, że należy uwzględnić działania prewencyjne w Funduszu Solidarności UE?

3. Jakie zmiany należy przewidzieć w nowym rozporządzeniu w sprawie Funduszu Solidarności UE 2014-2020, aby uwzględnić kryteria ukierunkowane na zapobieganie?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji**
*(10 lutego 2012 r.)*

1. Komisja, przy poparciu Parlamentu, realizuje wraz z państwami członkowskimi ambitną strategię zapobiegawczą, obejmującą – oprócz maksymalnego wykorzystywania unijnych możliwości finansowania – poszerzanie wiedzy, ocenę ryzyka i planowanie zarządzania ryzykiem, w celu wspierania takich środków, jak zarządzanie zagrożeniem powodziowym. Ponadto niedawna propozycja Komisji, aby dokonać przeglądu prawodawstwa w zakresie ochrony ludności, po raz pierwszy łączy przepisy dotyczące zapobiegania, co pozwoli zająć się kwestią pełnego cyklu zarządzania katastrofami.

2. Fundusz Solidarności UE został ustanowiony w szczególnym celu udzielania pomocy finansowej na działania nadzwyczajne w następstwie wystąpienia poważnych klęsk żywiołowych. Mechanizmy uruchamiania i wdrażania Funduszu Solidarności oraz sposób, w jaki podwyższane są niezbędne środki budżetowe – przekraczające zwykły budżet UE – służą spełnieniu tego jedynego celu. Podczas gdy zapobieganie katastrofom jest kluczowym priorytetem polityk UE, Komisja uważa, że Fundusz Solidarności powinien w dalszym ciągu skupiać się na swoim pierwotnym celu.

3. Rozporządzenie Rady 2012/2002 ustanawiające Fundusz Solidarności UE nie jest ograniczone w czasie i pozostaje w mocy do momentu jego zastąpienia lub zmiany. W dniu 6 października 2011 r. Komisja przedstawiła komunikat w sprawie przyszłości Funduszu Solidarności zawierający kilka propozycji usprawnienia funkcjonowania tego instrumentu, w tym propozycję uzależnienia pomocy z Funduszu Solidarności od wcześniejszych wysiłków w zakresie zapobiegania. W zależności od wyników debaty na temat tego komunikatu z Parlamentem Europejskim, Radą i innymi zainteresowanymi stronami kolejnym krokiem będzie przygotowanie wniosku legislacyjnego.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012608/11**
**à Comissão**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) e Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 de Janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Fundo de Solidariedade da UE

A União Europeia é construída com base nos princípios da solidariedade e das responsabilidades partilhadas no seio da Comunidade para fornecer qualidade de vida a todos os cidadãos. Em resposta a cheias graves na Europa Central, no verão de 2002, a União Europeia organizou o Fundo de Solidariedade para ajudar os países em necessidade.

1. Concorda a Comissão que a prevenção de catástrofes naturais é crucial para minimizar as consequências de catástrofes naturais futuras?

2. Concorda a Comissão que as atividades de prevenção deviam ser incluídas no Fundo de Solidariedade da UE?

3. Que alterações se podem prever que incluam critérios orientados para a prevenção na nova regulamentação do Fundo de Solidariedade 2014/2020?

**Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão**
*(10 de Fevereiro de 2012)*

1. A Comissão, juntamente com os Estados-Membros e com o apoio do Parlamento, está a implementar uma ambiciosa estratégia de prevenção, que prevê uma melhoria do conhecimento, da avaliação dos riscos e do planeamento da gestão dos riscos, além da plena utilização das possibilidades financeiras da UE para apoiar medidas como a gestão das inundações. Além disso, a recente proposta da Comissão para rever a legislação relativa à proteção civil integra, pela primeira vez, disposições em matéria de prevenção com o objetivo de responder a todo o ciclo de gestão das catástrofes.

2. A criação do Fundo de Solidariedade da UE teve como objetivo específico apoiar financeiramente as operações de emergência após a ocorrência de catástrofes naturais graves. Os mecanismos de ativação e aplicação do Fundo de Solidariedade e a forma como as dotações orçamentais necessárias são disponibilizadas — adicionalmente ao orçamento normal da UE — estão orientados para esse único objetivo. Embora a prevenção de catástrofes seja uma prioridade fundamental das políticas da UE, a Comissão considera que o Fundo de Solidariedade deve manter-se centrado no seu objetivo inicial.

3. O Regulamento (CE) n.° 2012/2002 do Conselho, de 11 de novembro de 2002, que institui o Fundo de Solidariedade da União Europeia, não é limitado no tempo e continuará em vigor até à sua substituição ou alteração. Em 6 de outubro de 2011, a Comissão apresentou uma comunicação sobre o futuro do Fundo de Solidariedade, que contém um conjunto de propostas destinadas a melhorar a utilização destes instrumentos, incluindo uma reflexão sobre a possibilidade de condicionar a ajuda do Fundo de Solidariedade a esforços prévios em termos de prevenção. Dependendo dos resultados dos debates sobre esta comunicação com o Parlamento Europeu, o Conselho e as outras partes interessadas, deverá ser apresentada uma proposta legislativa.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012608/11**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) şi Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Fondul de solidaritate al Uniunii Europene

Uniunea Europeană are la bază principiul solidarității și al responsabilităților comune din cadrul Comunității pentru asigurarea calității vieții tuturor cetățenilor. Ca urmare a inundațiilor severe din Europa Centrală din vara anului 2002, Uniunea Europeană a instituit Fondul de solidaritate pentru a ajuta statele la nevoie.

1. Este Comisia de acord că prevenirea dezastrelor naturale are o importanță esențială în reducerea consecințelor viitoarelor dezastre naturale?

2. Este Comisia de acord că activitățile de prevenire ar trebui incluse in Fondul de solidaritate al Uniunii Europene?

3. Ce schimbări ar putea fi anticipate pentru a include criterii orientate spre prevenire în noul regulament privind Fondul de solidaritate al Uniunii Europene 2014-2020?

**Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei**
*(10 februarie 2012)*

1. Comisia, împreună cu statele membre și susținută de către Parlament, este în curs de implementare a unei strategii ambițioase în materie de prevenire care vizează îmbunătățirea cunoștințelor, evaluarea riscurilor și planificarea gestionării riscurilor, pe lângă utilizarea deplină a posibilităților de finanțare la nivelul UE a măsurilor de sprijin precum gestionarea inundațiilor. Pe de altă parte, recenta propunere a Comisiei de revizuire a legislației de protecție civilă include, pentru prima dată, dispoziții în materie de prevenire având obiectivul de a aborda întregul ciclu de gestionare a dezastrelor.

2. Fondul de Solidaritate al Uniunii Europene a fost înființat cu scopul specific de a acorda asistență financiară pentru operațiuni de urgență în urma unei catastrofe naturale majore. Mecanismele pentru activarea și punerea în aplicare a Fondului de solidaritate și modul în care sunt obținute alocările bugetare necesare — suplimentare față de bugetul normal al UE — sunt orientate spre atingerea aceluiași obiectiv unic. Deși prevenirea dezastrelor este o prioritate cheie în cadrul politicilor UE, Comisia consideră că Fondul de Solidaritate al Uniunii Europene ar trebui să se concentreze, în continuare, asupra scopului său inițial.

3. Regulamentul 2012/2002 al Consiliului de instituire a Fondului de Solidaritate al Uniunii Europene nu este limitat în timp și continuă să fie în vigoare până în momentul în care va fi înlocuit sau modificat. La 6 octombrie 2011, Comisia a prezentat o comunicare privind viitorul Fondului de solidaritate care conține o serie de propuneri de îmbunătățire a operațiunilor acestui instrument, printre care se numără reflecții cu privire la posibilitatea de a condiționa acordarea sprijinului prin Fondul de Solidaritate de depunerea, în prealabil, a unor eforturi în materie de prevenire. În funcție de rezultatul dezbaterii pe marginea acestei comunicări cu Parlamentul, Consiliul și alte părți interesate, se va elabora o propunere legislativă.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012608/11**
**to the Commission**
**Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE), Jan Olbrycht (PPE), Iosif Matula (PPE), Nuno Teixeira (PPE), Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) and Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)**
*(10 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EU Solidarity Fund

The European Union is built around the principles of solidarity and of shared responsibilities within the Community to provide quality of life for all citizens. In response to the severe floods in Central Europe in the summer of 2002, the European Union set up the Solidarity Fund to help those countries in need.

1. Does the Commission agree that prevention of natural disasters is of essential importance to minimise the consequences of future natural disasters?

2. Does the Commission agree that prevention activities should be included in the EU Solidarity Fund?

3. What changes can be foreseen to include prevention-orientated criteria in the new regulation for the EU Solidarity Fund 2014-2020?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(10 February 2012)*

1. The Commission, together with Member States and supported by the Parliament, is implementing an ambitious prevention strategy covering enhanced knowledge, risk assessment and risk management planning, in addition to making full use of EU financing possibilities to support measures such as flood management. Furthermore, the recent Commission proposal to revise the Civil Protection legislation integrates, for the first time, provisions for prevention with the objective to address the full disaster management cycle.

2. The EU Solidarity Fund was set up with the specific purpose of granting financial assistance for emergency operations in the aftermath of major natural disasters. The mechanisms to activate and implement the Solidarity Fund and the way in which the necessary budgetary appropriations are raised — over and above the normal EU budget — are geared towards that sole objective. While the prevention of disasters is a key priority among EU policies, the Commission believes that the Solidarity Fund should remain focused on its initial purpose.

3. Council Regulation 2012/2002 establishing the EU Solidarity Fund is not limited in time and continues to be in force until it is replaced or amended. On 6 October 2011, the Commission has presented a communication on the future of the Solidarity Fund containing a number of proposals to improve the operations of this instruments which include reflections about making Solidarity Fund aid conditional to prior efforts in terms of prevention. Depending on the outcome of the discussion of this communication with the Parliament, the Council and other stakeholders, a legislative proposal will follow.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012612/11**
**à Comissão**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(10 de Janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Articulação entre o Fundo Social Europeu e o Programa Europeu para a Mudança Social e a Inovação

A Comissão Europeia lançou a estratégia Europa 2020, criando condições para a União Europeia alcançar um crescimento inteligente, sustentável e inclusivo. Entre as várias prioridades estratégicas, salienta-se o objetivo de alcançar uma economia com uma taxa de emprego elevada que assegure a coesão económica, social e territorial.

Em outubro de 2011, a Comissão Europeia publicou as propostas de regulamentos da Política de Coesão para o período de 2014/2020.

Entre as propostas apresentadas, salienta-se o Fundo Social Europeu (COM(2011)0607 final) e o Programa Europeu para a Mudança Social e a Inovação (COM(2011)0607 final). Ambos os programas consideram como sendo prioritário o apoio aos cidadãos em matéria de emprego e inclusão social.

Segundo a proposta da Comissão Europeia, o Fundo Social Europeu pretende trabalhar em sinergia com o novo programa integrado em prol da mudança e da inovação social. Juntos, constituem a vasta iniciativa europeia em matéria de emprego e inclusão social.

Considera-se que a União Europeia possui uma abordagem estratégica e integrada dos diferentes fundos estruturais para apoiar as pessoas com dificuldades a nível laboral, estimulando novas oportunidades que irão solucionar as dificuldades mais prementes.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Quais as principais diferenças ao nível de intervenção social entre o Fundo Social Europeu e o Programa Europeu para a Mudança Social e a Inovação?

2. Como se prevê a correta articulação entre os dois programas em causa?

3. Além do crescimento inclusivo que consta da estratégia Europa 2020, tem a Comissão alguma outra linha de ação programática para corresponder ao objetivo de diminuir as dificuldades das populações no mercado laboral?

**Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão**
*(14 de Fevereiro de 2012)*

O Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) e o Programa da União Europeia para a Mudança Social e a Inovação têm objetivos similares, mas diferem substancialmente. O Programa da União Europeia para a Mudança Social e a Inovação retoma e alarga o âmbito de aplicação de três programas existentes («Progress» ([1])«Progress» ([2])

O Programa da União Europeia para a Mudança Social e a Inovação centrar-se-á no apoio à coordenação política, no reforço das capacidades, na partilha de boas práticas, na recolha de dados fundamentais, no desenvolvimento de instrumentos estatísticos a nível da UE e no ensaio de políticas inovadoras. As medidas mais bem sucedidas serão reforçadas com o apoio do FSE ([3]), a fim de que o Programa da União Europeia para a Mudança Social e a Inovação possa ser visto como uma plataforma experimental para as atividades do FSE. A Comissão vai privilegiar a exploração de sinergias entre o FSE e Programa da União Europeia para a Mudança Social e a Inovação e assegurar a sua complementaridade.

Embora os dois instrumentos constituam a principal fonte de financiamento da UE para promover o emprego e a inserção social, outros instrumentos da UE, como os Fundos Estruturais e os Programas Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida e Juventude em Ação, têm igualmente uma incidência indireta no emprego. A estratégia «Europa 2020», nomeadamente as iniciativas emblemáticas como a Plataforma Europeia contra a Pobreza e a Exclusão Social, a de Juventude em Movimento e Uma União da Inovação e o método aberto de coordenação, proporciona um quadro político global para a cooperação entre os Estados-Membros e a Comissão que abrange a reforma estrutural. A 20 de dezembro de 2011, a Comissão propôs também a iniciativa «Oportunidades para a Juventude», que prevê uma ação com vista a prevenir e combater o desemprego dos jovens.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=987&langId=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=836&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012612/11**
**to the Commission**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(10 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The relationship between the European Social Fund and the European Union Programme for Social Change and Innovation

The European Commission has launched Europe 2020, a strategy for creating conditions for the European Union to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Foremost among the various strategic objectives is to create an economy with high levels of employment in order to ensure economic, social and territorial cohesion.

In October 2011 the European commission published its proposals for Regulations on the Cohesion Policy for 2014-2020.

The proposals put forward stressed the importance of the European Social Fund (COM(2011) 0607 final) and the European Union Programme for Social Change and Innovation (COM(2011) 0607 final). Both programmes prioritise support for citizens in the areas of employment and social inclusion.

According to the European Commission's proposals, the European Social Fund should work in synergy with the new integrated programme for change and social innovation. Together they form a major European initiative in the areas of employment and social change.

The European Union has a strategic and integrated policy approach involving different Structural Funds aimed at supporting people experiencing employment problems, encouraging new opportunities which should solve the most pressing problems.

I should like to ask the Commission:

1. What are the main differences in terms of social intervention between the European Social Fund and the European Union Programme for Social Change and Innovation?

2. What does it see as the appropriate relationship between these two programmes?

3. Besides the overall growth envisaged in the Europe 2020 strategy, does the Commission have any other lines of action under the programme action aimed at reducing the difficulties people face in the labour market?

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

The European Social Fund (ESF) and the Programme for Social Change and Innovation (PSCI) have similar aims but differ substantially. The PSCI incorporates and extends the coverage of three existing programmes (Progress ([1]), EURES and Progress Microfinance ([2])). Its total budget (EUR 850 million) will amount to about 1 % of the proposed ESF budget (EUR 84 billion) and will be managed directly by the Commission, while the ESF is implemented at national or regional level through operational programmes drawn up by the Member States and adopted by the Commission (shared management).

The PSCI will focus on supporting policy coordination, sharing best practice, capacity-building, gathering evidence, developing statistical tools at EU level and testing innovative policies. The most successful measures will be scaled up with ESF support ([3]), so PSCI may be regarded as an experimental platform for ESF activities. The Commission will put special emphasis on harnessing synergy between the ESF and the PSCI and will ensure they are complementary.

Although the two instruments are the main source of EU funding for promoting employment and social inclusion, other EU instruments, such as the Structural Funds and the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) and Youth in Action, also have an indirect impact on employment. The Europe 2020 strategy, including such flagship initiatives as the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, Youth on the Move and Innovation Union, and the Social Open Method of Coordination provide a comprehensive policy framework for cooperation between the Member States and the Commission that covers structural reform. On 20 December 2011 the Commission also proposed a Youth Opportunities Initiative, which provides for action to prevent and fight youth unemployment.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=987&langId=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=836&langId=en
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012640/11**
**to the Commission**
**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Ensuring first class medical care is afforded to Alzheimer's patients who are admitted to Accident and Emergency departments

Can the Commission state what 'checks and balances' are in place to ensure first class medical care is afforded to Alzheimer's patients who are admitted to Accident and Emergency departments across the European Union, with specific regard to the United Kingdom?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 February 2012)*

The communication from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council on a European initiative on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias ([1]) from 2009 is the basis for Commission action in the area of Alzheimer's disease.

The question of organising emergency healthcare response for Alzheimer's patients in specific Member States is, however, an issue under the responsibility of each individual Member State in accordance with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

([1]) COM (2009) 380 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012646/11**
**to the Commission**
**Charles Tannock (ECR)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Human rights of Turkish Kurds and the alleged use of 'chemical' weapons by the Turkish air force against Kurdish guerrillas

I have been contacted by a constituent from a London-based charity called Roj Women about the Turkish State's intensifying military operation against Kurdish guerrilla fighters since August 2011.

Roj Women also claims that civilian human-rights activists and elected BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) members, BDP supporters and non-Kurdish supporters have been arrested and detained on a large scale.

As Turkey's Government extends military operations for another year, allowing the armed forces to carry out cross-border operations into the Iraqi Kurdish regions, Turkish warplanes have been accused by this UK-based NGO of bombing Kurdish civilians in northern Iraq with resulting casualties.

According to the Diyarbakir Human Rights Association, Turkish warplanes have also allegedly killed 36 guerrilla fighters with napalm bombs and what have been termed 'chemical' weapons in the Guze Reshe and Gunde Pire areas of Chele district. Roj Women alleges that the armed forces have prohibited post-mortem examinations of these fighters to establish the true cause of death.

Is the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy aware of these alarming and controversial allegations of the use of 'chemical' weapons, and, if they are proven to be true by independent observers, is such a military measure ever permissible under international law? Has the EU raised these allegations with the Turkish Government or demanded an investigation to establish the facts, given that Turkey is an EU candidate country?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(17 April 2012)*

The High Representative/Vice-President is concerned about the allegations on the use of chemical weapons in recent months. During discussions at working level with the Commission at the beginning of December 2011 Turkey replied that an investigation has been launched and that the bodies of the PKK members killed during the clashes have been sent to the Forensic Medicine Institution (FMI) to identify the cause of death. The Commission will continue to monitor the issue.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012647/11**
**to the Commission**
**Charles Tannock (ECR)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Human rights of Turkish Kurds and the alleged use of 'chemical' weapons by the Turkish air force against Kurdish guerrillas

I have been contacted by a constituent from a London-based charity called Roj Women about the Turkish State's intensifying military operation against Kurdish guerrilla fighters since August 2011.

Roj Women also claims that civilian human-rights activists and elected BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) members, BDP supporters and non-Kurdish supporters have been arrested and detained on a large scale.

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Is the Commission aware of these alarming and controversial allegations of the use of 'chemical' weapons, and, if they are proven to be true by independent observers, is such a military measure ever permissible under international law? Has the Commission raised these allegations with the Turkish Government or demanded an investigation to establish the facts, given that Turkey is an EU candidate country?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 February 2012)*

The Commission is concerned about the allegations regarding the use of chemical weapons in recent months, and has raised the issue with the Turkish authorities. During discussions at working level at the beginning of December 2011, Turkey replied that an investigation *has* been launched and that the bodies of the PKK members killed during the clashes have been sent to the Forensic Medicine Institution (FMI) to identify the cause of death. The Commission will continue to raise the issue.

In this context, the Commission would like to underline that all parties need to work unremittingly to bring peace and prosperity for all the citizens of Turkey. The south-east of Turkey needs peace, democracy and stability as well as social, economic and cultural development. This can only be achieved through consensus on concrete measures expanding the social, economic and cultural rights of the people living in the region.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012649/11**
**alla Commissione**
**Roberta Angelilli (PPE)**
*(11 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Possibili programmi e finanziamenti a sostegno di progetti comuni realizzati all'interno del partenariato tra le città di Roma (Italia) e di Cork (Irlanda)

Le Associazioni culturali «Insight Cities» e «Irlanda italiana», con il supporto del Comune di Roma, propongono un progetto di partenariato tra la città di Roma e Cork City. Si tratta, infatti, di due città che condividono una forte eredità cristiana ed europea ed un ampio patrimonio artistico e culturale.

I partenariati tra città sono intesi a formare vincoli tra i comuni e i loro cittadini rafforzando i legami culturali e commerciali. In questo caso, sono stati proprio i cittadini delle due città a chiedere ai Comuni un partenariato ufficiale. Quest'ultimo sarà incentrato su aree quali arte e cultura, ambiente, sport e tempo libero, sviluppo, lavoro, giovani e istruzione. A tal fine, verrà promosso il «gemellaggio» tra istituti culturali e scolastici (scuole superiori ed università) in Irlanda e in Italia.

Il partenariato, inoltre, farà perno sul turismo culturale, sulle arti e sulle tradizioni letterarie che da sempre svolgono un ruolo chiave nell'economia di entrambe le città. Gli ultimi dati disponibili mostrano come il turismo italiano in Irlanda apporta entrate per circa 162 milioni di euro l'anno, e che i turisti italiani negli ultimi anni sono aumentati del 10 %.

La realizzazione di un simile progetto potrebbe favorire gli scambi commerciali, il turismo e il dialogo interculturale. Infine, il progetto, oltre a essere sostenuto da diversi Consiglieri del Comune di Roma, è a conoscenza dell'Ambasciata irlandese in Italia.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione indicare:

1. se all'interno del programma di partenariato tra città esistono programmi o finanziamenti volti a sostenere la realizzazione di progetti comuni;

2. un quadro generale della situazione?

**Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione**
*(24 febbraio 2012)*

La Commissione è favorevole ai raduni di cittadini e di gruppi di cittadini di città gemellate, che possono così beneficiare dei partenariati tra comuni per sviluppare una migliore consapevolezza e buone relazioni tra i rispettivi cittadini.

Dall'avvio del programma «Europa per i cittadini» 2007-2013, si è assistito ad uno sviluppo molto positivo dell'attività di gemellaggio di città, specialmente in relazione a progetti multilaterali e reti di città gemellate. Ogni anno il programma finanzia circa 1 000 progetti di gemellaggio, con oltre 3 000 città. Il numero di progetti multilaterali di gemellaggio di città è stato sempre maggiore e ha appena raggiunto la metà di tali progetti.

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare il sito Internet del programma in cui potrà trovare tutte le informazioni pertinenti, inclusi, tra l'altro, la guida del programma ([1]), il funzionamento della procedura di candidatura e di selezione ([2]), le opportunità di finanziamento per il 2012, le rispettive scadenze e le informazioni necessarie per presentare una candidatura ([3]). I punti di contatto per l'Europa per i cittadini negli Stati membri possono anch'essi fornire informazioni e assistenza ([4]).

Un portale quale «A Universe of Twinning» (Un universo di gemellaggi) ([5]) è un buon esempio di piattaforma a sostegno del gemellaggio di città, che fornisce scambio di informazioni, condivisione delle pratiche ottimali, strumenti per la ricerca di partner e altre informazioni utili.

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme/programme_guide_en.php
([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme/how_does_it_work_en.php
([3]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/funding/2012/index_en.php
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/the-europe-for-citizens-programme-in-the-member-states/index_en.htm
([5]) http://www.twinning.org

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012649/11**
**to the Commission**
**Roberta Angelilli (PPE)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Possible programmes and funding to support joint projects carried out as part of the partnership between the city of Rome (Italy) and Cork (Ireland)

The cultural associations 'Insight Cities' and 'Irlanda italiana' are proposing a partnership project between the city of Rome and Cork City with the support of the City of Rome. These two cities share a strong Christian and European tradition, as well as a vast artistic and cultural heritage.

The aim of partnerships between cities is the forging of links between municipalities and their citizens so as to strengthen cultural and commercial ties. In this case, it was none other that the citizens of both cities who asked the municipalities to establish an official partnership. The partnership will focus on areas such as art and culture, the environment, sports and leisure, development, work, youth and education. To this end, 'twinning' between cultural and educational institutions (colleges and universities) will be promoted in Ireland and Italy.

The partnership also will hinge on cultural tourism, on the arts and on literary traditions, which have always played a key role in the economies of both cities. The latest statistics indicate that Italian tourism brings a total of around 162 million euro a year into Ireland, and that the number of Italian tourists has increased by 10 % in recent years.

The carrying out of such a project could benefit trade, tourism and intercultural dialogue. Finally, apart from being supported by several Councillors of the City of Rome, the project is also known to the Irish Embassy in Italy.

In this regard, can the Commission provide:

1. information about whether the partnership programme includes programmes or funds for the support and implementation of joint projects;

2. an overview of the situation?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(24 February 2012)*

The Commission supports gatherings of citizens and citizens' groups from twinned towns so as to benefit from the partnership between municipalities to develop better understanding and good relations between their citizens.

Since the launching of the Programme Europe for Citizens 2007-2013 there has been a very positive development of town twinning activities, especially in relation to multilateral projects and networks of twinned towns. Every year the Programme funds almost 1 000 town-twinning projects, involving more than 3 000 cities. The number of multilateral town twinning projects has been increasing and they are now just over half of such projects.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the Internet site of the programme where she will find all the relevant information, including, *inter alia*, the programme guide ([1]), how the application and selection procedure works ([2]), funding opportunities for 2012, respective deadlines and necessary information to submit an application ([3]). The Europe for Citizens Contact Points in the Member States can also provide more information and support ([4]).

A portal like 'A Universe of Twinning' ([5]) is a good example of a platform that supports town twinning providing information exchange, sharing of best practice, partner search tools and other useful information.

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme/programme_guide_en.php
([2]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme/how_does_it_work_en.php
([3]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/funding/2012/index_en.php
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/the-europe-for-citizens-programme-in-the-member-states/index_en.htm
([5]) http://www.twinning.org

*(българска версия)*

**Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-012656/11**
**до Комисията**
**Антония Първанова (ALDE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Jo Leinen (S&D), Nessa Childers (S&D) и Philippe Juvin (PPE)**
*(11 януари 2012 г.)*

*Относно:* Ранно диагностициране и разходоефективно управление на наследствената хемохроматоза

Наследствената хемохроматоза (НН) е генетично състояние, характеризиращо се с пренасищане на кръвта с желязо. Макар и болестността от това генетично увреждане (хомозиготност на мутация C282Y на гена за наследствена хемохроматоза (HFE)) варира в голяма степен между държавите-членки, според оценките 2 милиона жители в ЕС са потенциално засегнати от заболяването. Групите на учените и пациентите вече работят за повишаване на осведомеността относно наследствената хемохроматоза, която, ако не се диагностицира рано, може да доведе до сериозни увреждания на жизненоважни органи (цироза и карцином на черния дроб, диабет, полиартрит и хормонални смущения), включително не само до влошаване качеството на живота, но и до увреждания и дори смърт.

В момента вече съществуват прости и разходоефективни начини за ефективно диагностициране и лечение на наследствената хемохроматоза. Една предполагаема диагноза може да бъде поставена чрез много лесни и евтини кръвни изследвания (насищане на трансферин и феритин) и може лесно да се потвърди от чувствителен и специфичен генетичен тест (виж мутация C282Y). Ако тестът е положителен, на него се подлагат и на родните на пациента. Съществуващото лечение се състои от кръвопускане или флеботомия. Извършването на флеботомия периодически се повтаря, за да се елиминира пренасищането с желязо.

С оглед на трансграничното измерение на наследствената хемохроматоза, а също така и броя на потенциално засегнатите европейски пациенти, и като се признава основната отговорност на държавите-членки за организиране и предоставяне на здравни услуги и медицински грижи, би ли могла Комисията да отговори на следните въпроси:

1. Обмисля ли Комисията инициативи или програми, които биха могли да повишат осведомеността относно наследствената хемохроматоза, по-специално такива, насочени към рисковите групи от населението и специалистите в областта на здравеопазването (особено общопрактикуващите лекари)?

2. Комисията ще разгледа ли възможността за разработване на специални насоки за подобряване на ранното откриване и диагностициране на наследствената хемохроматоза, като по този начин съдейства за разходоефективното управление на заболяването в рамките на системите на здравеопазването в Европа чрез намаляване броя на късно диагностицираните пациенти?

3. Възнамерява ли Комисията да продължи и да увеличи подкрепата си за изследвания на наследствени или генетични заболявания?

**Отговор, даден от г-н Дали от името на Комисията**
*(21 февруари 2012 г.)*

Хемохроматозата е едно от най-често срещаните наследствени заболявания в Европа. Тя често не се диагностицира — отчасти поради факта, че нейните симптоми са сходни с тези на редица други заболявания. Няма признато изследване на европейско равнище относно разпространението на заболяването. Макар да продължава да съществува несигурност относно точните епидемиологични данни в Европа, на заинтересованите страни се препоръчва да използват възможностите, които предлага рамката на ЕС в областта на редките заболявания.

Действията на Комисията по отношение на редките заболявания са представени в „Съобщение относно редките заболявания: предизвикателствата за Европа“ ([1]).. Поради много големия брой заболявания Комисията не разполага с необходимите средства, за да предприеме специфични мерки по отношение на всяко едно рядко заболяване. Поради тази причина Комисията полага усилия да осигури решения по отношение на редките заболявания като цяло и не възнамерява да разработва специални насоки за ранно откриване и диагностициране на наследствената хемохроматоза, нито планира да организира кампании за повишаване на осведомеността, насочени към специалистите в областта на здравеопазването.

Комисията, обаче, подпомага от 2007 г. насам съвместната научноизследователска дейност в тази област чрез своята Рамкова програма за научни изследвания (РП7). Комисията подкрепи проекта за научни изследвания EUROIRON относно генетичния контрол на патогенезата на заболявания, дължащи се на натрупването на желязо ([2]), и по-

([1]) COM(2008) 679 окончателен.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=9776633

специално хемохроматоза. В рамките на мрежата EuroGentest ([3]) също бяха разработени полезни средства за генетични изследвания на хемохроматозата. При поканите за представяне на предложения в рамките на РП7 в бъдеще може да възникнат други възможности за изследване на заболяванията, свързани с нарушената обмяна на желязо.

Комисията предложи на Парламента и на Съвета да отделят необходимото внимание на генетичните заболявания в рамките на раздел „Здравеопазване, демографски промени и благосъстояние“ от приоритета „Обществени предизвикателства“ в нейното предложение за „Хоризонт 2020“ — рамковата програма за научни изследвания и иновации (2014-2020 г.).

([3]) Мрежата EuroGentest за разработване на тестове, хармонизиране, утвърждаване и стандартизация на генетичните изследвания в Европа, http://www.eurogentest.org/

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012656/11**
**an die Kommission**
**Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Jo Leinen (S&D), Nessa Childers (S&D) und Philippe Juvin (PPE)**
*(11. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Früherkennung und kosteneffektive Behandlung der erblichen Hämochromatose

Bei der erblichen Hämochromatose handelt es sich um eine genetische Veranlagung, die durch eine Eisenüberladung des Blutes gekennzeichnet ist. Obwohl die Verbreitung dieses genetischen Defekts (Homozygotie der Mutation C282Y im HFE-Gen) zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten stark variiert, wird geschätzt, dass 2 Millionen Einwohner der EU potenziell von dieser Krankheit betroffen sind. Wissenschaftler und Patientengruppen haben bereits Anstrengungen unternommen, die Bekanntheit der erblichen Hämochromatose zu steigern, die, sofern sie nicht frühzeitig erkannt wird, zu schweren Schädigungen lebenswichtiger Organe (Zirrhose und Karzinom der Leber, Diabetes, Polyarthritis und hormonelle Störungen) und somit nicht nur zu einer verschlechterten Lebensqualität, sondern auch zu Behinderungen und sogar zum Tod führen kann.

Derzeit bestehen bereits einfache und kostengünstige Möglichkeiten zur Diagnose und wirksamen Behandlung der erblichen Hämochromatose. Eine Verdachtsdiagnose kann mittels sehr einfacher und preiswerter Bluttests (Transferrinsättigung und Ferritinwert) erfolgen und leicht durch einen empfindlichen und spezifischen Gentest (Suche nach Mutation C282Y) bestätigt werden. Falls der Test positiv ausfällt, wird er auf die Verwandten des Patienten ausgeweitet. Die derzeitige Behandlung besteht aus Blutentnahme oder Aderlass. Aderlässe werden regelmäßig wiederholt, um die Eisenüberladung zu beheben.

In Anbetracht der grenzüberschreitenden Dimension der erblichen Hämochromatose sowie der Anzahl der potenziell betroffenen europäischen Patienten und unter Anerkennung der primären Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten für die Organisation und Bereitstellung von Gesundheitsdiensten und medizinischer Versorgung wird die Kommission um Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen gebeten:

1. Erwägt die Kommission Initiativen oder Programme, die die Sensibilisierung für die erbliche Hämochromatose steigern könnten, insbesondere solche, die auf Risikogruppenpopulationen und im Gesundheitswesen tätige Personen (vor allem praktische Ärzte) abzielen?

2. Würde die Kommission die Entwicklung von spezifischen Leitlinien zur Verbesserung der Früherkennung und Diagnose von erblicher Hämochromatose in Betracht ziehen und damit den Gesundheitssystemen in Europa eine kosteneffektive Behandlung der Krankheit durch die Verringerung der Anzahl spät diagnostizierter Patienten ermöglichen?

3. Beabsichtigt die Kommission, ihre Unterstützung für die Erforschung von Erbkrankheiten und genetischen Erkrankungen fortzuführen und zu intensivieren?

**Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission**
*(21. Februar 2012)*

Hämochromatose ist eine der häufigsten Erbkrankheiten in Europa. Oft bleibt sie unerkannt, zum Teil weil ihre Symptome denen einer Reihe anderer Erkrankungen ähnlich sind. Es gibt keine anerkannte europäische Studie über die Prävalenz dieser Erkrankung. Auch wenn ein Zweifel an den genauen epidemiologischen Daten in Europa bestehen bleibt, wurde den Beteiligten empfohlen, die Möglichkeiten des EU-Rahmens für seltene Krankheiten zu nutzen.

Die Maßnahmen der Kommission im Bereich seltener Krankheiten werden in der „Mitteilung über seltene Krankheiten — eine Herausforderung für Europa“ ([1]) dargelegt. Wegen der hohen Anzahl solcher Krankheiten hat die Kommission nicht die Mittel, auf jede einzelne seltene Krankheit mit spezifischen Maßnahmen einzugehen. Aus diesem Grund ist die Kommission bestrebt, Globallösungen für seltene Krankheiten zu finden; sie beabsichtigt nicht, spezifische Leitlinien für Früherkennung und Diagnose der erblichen Hämochromatose zu erarbeiten. Auch hat sie nicht vor, Sensibilisierungskampagnen für Beschäftigte des Gesundheitswesens zu organisieren.

Hingegen unterstützt die Kommission seit 2007 die Forschungszusammenarbeit auf diesem Gebiet durch ihr Forschungsrahmenprogramm (FP7), beispielsweise durch das Forschungsprojekt EUROIRON über die genetische

([1]) KOM(2008)679 endg.

Kontrolle der Pathogenese von Erkrankungen aufgrund von Eisenakkumulation ([2]), insbesondere Hämochromatose. Auch das Netz EuroGentest ([3]) hat nützliche Instrumente für Gentests auf Hämochromatose entwickelt. Weitere Möglichkeiten für die Erforschung von Erkrankungen des Eisenstoffwechsels können sich mit künftigen Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Rahmen des FP7 ergeben.

Die Kommission hat dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat vorgeschlagen, genetisch bedingte Erkrankungen im Bereich der gesellschaftlichen Herausforderung „Gesundheit, demografischer Wandel und Wohlergehen" in ihrem Vorschlag für Horizont 2020, das Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Innovation (2014-2020), gebührend zu berücksichtigen.

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([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=9776633

([3]) EuroGentest Netz zur Entwicklung, Vereinheitlichung, Validierung und Standardisierung von Gentests in Europa http://www.eurogentest.org/

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012656/11**
**à la Commission**
**Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Jo Leinen (S&D), Nessa Childers (S&D) et Philippe Juvin (PPE)**
*(11 janvier 2012)*

*Objet:* Diagnostic précoce et gestion rentable de l'hémochromatose héréditaire

L'hémochromatose héréditaire (HH) est une maladie génétique qui se manifeste par un surplus de fer dans le sang. Bien que la prévalence de cette anomalie génétique (homozygotie de la mutation C282Y dans le gène HFE) varie beaucoup d'un État membre à l'autre, on estime que 2 millions d'habitants de l'Union européenne sont potentiellement affectés par cette maladie. Des scientifiques et des groupes de patients ont déjà mené des actions de sensibilisation à l'hémochromatose héréditaire. Si elle n'est pas diagnostiquée à temps, cette maladie peut causer de graves dommages aux organes vitaux (cirrhose et carcinome du foie, diabète, polyarthrite et troubles hormonaux), entraînant non seulement une mauvaise qualité de vie, mais également des handicaps, et même la mort.

Aujourd'hui, des moyens simples et rentables existent déjà pour diagnostiquer et traiter efficacement l'hémochromatose héréditaire. Un diagnostic suspect peut être établi au moyen de tests sanguins très simples et peu coûteux (saturation de la transferrine et de la ferritine) et peut facilement être confirmé par un test génétique spécifique et sensible (recherche de la mutation C282Y). Si le test est positif, il est également effectué sur les proches du patient. Le traitement actuel consiste en des saignées ou phlébotomies. Les phlébotomies sont répétées périodiquement afin d'éliminer le surplus de fer.

Étant donné la dimension transfrontalière de l'hémochromatose héréditaire, ainsi que le nombre de patients européens potentiellement affectés, et tout en reconnaissant que la responsabilité principale de l'organisation et de la prestation de services de santé et de soins médicaux incombe aux États membres, la Commission pourrait-elle répondre aux questions suivantes:

1. La Commission étudie-t-elle des initiatives ou des programmes qui pourraient améliorer la sensibilisation à l'hémochromatose héréditaire, en ciblant notamment les populations à risques et les professionnels de la santé (en particulier, les médecins généralistes)?

2. La Commission voudrait-elle étudier l'élaboration de directives spécifiques afin d'améliorer la détection et le diagnostic précoces de l'hémochromatose héréditaire, permettant ainsi une gestion rentable de la maladie par les systèmes des soins de santé en Europe grâce à une diminution du nombre de malades diagnostiqués tardivement?

3. La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de poursuivre et d'intensifier son soutien à la recherche sur les maladies héréditaires et génétiques?

**Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission**
*(21 février 2012)*

L'hémochromatose est l'une des maladies héréditaires les plus fréquentes en Europe. Elle est généralement sous-diagnostiquée, notamment parce que ses symptômes sont similaires à ceux de diverses autres maladies. Aucune étude européenne reconnue n'existe sur la prévalence de cette maladie. Même si un doute persiste quant à l'exactitude des données épidémiologiques en Europe, il a été recommandé aux parties concernées d'utiliser les possibilités offertes par le cadre de l'Union européenne sur les maladies rares.

L'action de la Commission dans le domaine des maladies rares est présentée dans la communication intitulée «Les maladies rares: un défi pour l'Europe» ([1]). En raison du nombre très élevé de maladies, la Commission n'a pas les moyens de prendre des mesures spécifiques à l'égard de chaque maladie rare. C'est pourquoi elle s'efforce d'appréhender ces maladies de façon globale et ne compte pas élaborer de lignes directrices particulières sur le dépistage et le diagnostic précoces de l'hémochromatose héréditaire; elle ne prévoit pas non plus d'organiser des campagnes de sensibilisation à l'intention des professionnels de la santé.

En revanche, la Commission soutient depuis 2007 la recherche collaborative dans ce domaine par l'intermédiaire de son 7e programme-cadre de recherche (PC7). Elle a apporté son aide au projet de recherche EUROIRON concernant le contrôle génétique de la pathogenèse de maladies liées à une surcharge en fer ([2]), et notamment de l'hémochromatose.

([1]) COM(2008) 679 final.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=9776633

Le réseau EuroGentest ([3]) a également mis au point des outils utiles pour le dépistage de cette maladie par test génétique. D'autres possibilités de recherche sur les maladies du métabolisme du fer pourront se présenter dans de futurs appels à propositions dans le cadre du PC7.

La Commission a proposé au Parlement européen et au Conseil de prendre dûment en considération les maladies génétiques dans le volet «Santé, évolution démographique et bien-être» de la priorité «Défis de société» de sa proposition de programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation (2014-2020) pour Horizon 2020.

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([3]) Réseau EuroGentest chargé du développement, de l'harmonisation, de la validation et de la standardisation des tests génétiques en Europe, http://www.eurogentest.org/

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012656/11**
**to the Commission**
**Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Corinne Lepage (ALDE), Jo Leinen (S&D), Nessa Childers (S&D) and Philippe Juvin (PPE)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Early diagnosis and cost-effective management of hereditary haemochromatosis

Hereditary haemochromatosis (HH) is a genetic condition marked by iron overload in the blood. While the prevalence of this genetic defect (homozygosity of the C282Y mutation in the HFE gene) varies widely among Member States, it is estimated that 2 million inhabitants in the EU are potentially affected by the disease. Scientists and patients' groups have already worked on raising awareness of hereditary haemochromatosis which, if not diagnosed early, can result in severe damage to vital organs (cirrhosis and carcinoma of the liver, diabetes, polyarthritis and hormonal disorders) inducing not only poor quality of life but also disabilities and even death.

At present, simple and cost-effective ways already exist to diagnose and treat hereditary haemochromatosis effectively. A suspected diagnosis can be given by means of very simple and low-cost blood tests (transferrin saturation and ferritin) and can easily be confirmed by a sensitive and specific genetic test (search for C282Y mutation). If the test is positive it is extended to the patient's relatives. The current treatment consists of blood-letting or phlebotomy. Phlebotomies are periodically repeated in order to eliminate iron overload.

Given the cross-border dimension of hereditary haemochromatosis as well as the number of European patients potentially affected, and while recognising the primary responsibility of Member States for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission considering initiatives or programmes which could enhance awareness of hereditary haemochromatosis, notably targeting risk-group populations and health professionals (particularly general practitioners)?

2. Would the Commission consider the development of specific guidelines to enhance early detection and diagnosis of hereditary haemochromatosis, thus allowing cost-effective management of the disease for healthcare systems in Europe by reducing the number of late-diagnosed patients?

3. Does the Commission intend to continue and step up its support for research into hereditary or genetic diseases?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(21 February 2012)*

Haemochromatosis is one of the most frequent hereditary diseases in Europe. It tends to be under-diagnosed, partly because its symptoms are similar to those of a range of other illnesses. There is no accepted European study on the prevalence of the disease. Even if a doubt about exact epidemiological data in Europe persists, it has been recommended to stakeholders to use the facilities of the EU framework on rare diseases.

The Commission's action on rare diseases is presented in the communication on Rare Diseases: Europe's challenges ([1]). Due to the very high number of diseases, the Commission does not have the means to address each individual rare disease with specific actions. This is why the Commission seeks to provide solutions for rare diseases as a whole and does not intend to develop specific guidelines on early detection and diagnosis of hereditary haemochromatosis, nor is it planning to organise awareness campaigns addressing health professionals.

The Commission has however been supporting collaborative research in this area through its Framework Programme for Research (FP7) since 2007. The Commission supported the research project EUROIRON on Genetic control of the pathogenesis of diseases based on iron accumulation ([2]) especially haemochromatosis. The EuroGentest Network ([3]) has also developed useful tools for genetic testing in haemochromatosis. Further opportunities for investigating diseases of iron metabolism may arise in future calls for proposals within FP7.

The Commission has proposed to the Parliament and the Council to give due consideration to genetic diseases in the Health, demographic change and wellbeing section of the Societal Challenges priority in its proposal for Horizon 2020, the FP for Research and Innovation (2014-2020).

([1]) COM(2008) 679 final.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=9776633
([3]) EuroGentest Network for test development, harmonisation, validation and standardisation of genetic testing in Europe, http://www.eurogentest.org/

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012684/11**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE), Oriol Junqueras Vies (Verts/ALE), Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) y Raimon Obiols (S&D)**
*(11 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Posible inclusión de regiones de importancia sistémica en el proceso del Semestre Europeo

El 12 de julio de 2011, el Consejo Europeo adoptó sus recomendaciones sobre los programas nacionales de reforma y sus opiniones sobre los programas de estabilidad y de convergencia en el marco del Semestre Europeo de 2011. Con la adopción de las recomendaciones específicas por país, para que los Estados miembros apliquen estas recomendaciones antes de tomar decisiones clave en el terreno presupuestario.

Este programa, que se encuentra, pues, en su fase inicial, está siendo constantemente revisado con el objetivo de convertirlo en una herramienta eficaz para coordinar efectivamente los presupuestos de los Estados miembros en Europa. Aun así, por el momento no tiene en cuenta todavía el rol de las regiones con poderes fiscales y legislativos ni su importancia vital en la lucha contra el déficit y la armonización presupuestaria en Europa.

La OCDE ([1]), en un estudio del año 2009, abordó esta temática concreta e hizo público que las comunidades autónomas españolas son las responsables de aproximadamente el 30 % del gasto en el Estado español; en la República Federal de Alemania el nivel de gasto de los *Länder* llega también a una cifra muy similar, así como en el caso de Bélgica.

La coordinación es, pues, necesaria también con el nivel regional en algunos casos. Este hecho queda subrayado cuando una región aplica medidas económicas de acuerdo con los estándares europeos, pero no tiene modo de recibir la aprobación de las instituciones europeas, que las legitimaría, haciendo más difícil así que sus ciudadanos entiendan la importancia de tales medidas.

¿Cree la Comisión que sería útil la inclusión de algún mecanismo en el marco del Semestre Europeo que permitiera incluir a aquellas regiones con poderes fiscales y legislativos que, por su volumen económico y exportador comparable al de Estados miembros, tienen una importancia sistémica para toda la UE?

¿Cree la Comisión que es posible habilitar algún mecanismo voluntario para que aquellas regiones con poderes fiscales y legislativos que les concedan importancia sistémica puedan participar del proceso del Semestre Europeo?

¿No cree la Comisión que la participación en el Semestre Europeo de dichas regiones con poderes fiscales y legislativos podría ser un incentivo racional y legitimador para aprobar las medidas de armonización presupuestaria requeridas para conseguir una mayor coordinación a nivel europeo?

**Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión**
*(8 de marzo de 2012)*

El semestre europeo es el mecanismo de la UE para la coordinación y supervisión multilateral de las políticas económicas de los Estados miembros. De conformidad con lo establecido en el Tratado y en el Derecho derivado, las recomendaciones formuladas por la Comisión y adoptadas por el Consejo en este contexto se dirigen a los Estados miembros. Incumbe a los gobiernos nacionales o federales garantizar la adopción de medidas para seguir las recomendaciones adoptadas por el Consejo. En cuanto al objetivo de evitar déficit excesivos, el Protocolo n° 12 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea establece que los gobiernos de los Estados miembros son responsables de los déficit de las administraciones públicas y que los procedimientos nacionales deberán permitir a los Estados miembros cumplir sus obligaciones presupuestarias. A la luz de la importancia de la adhesión a las necesarias reformas económicas, la Comisión siempre ha instado a los Estados miembros a que garanticen que las partes interesadas, incluidas las regiones, participen adecuadamente en la formulación de los programas nacionales de reforma. De modo más general, los acuerdos nacionales de carácter jurídico y político deben garantizar una participación adecuada de todas las partes interesadas en el marco del semestre europeo.

([1]) http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/6/42783063.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-012684/11**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE), Oriol Junqueras Vies (Verts/ALE), Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE), Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D) and Raimon Obiols (S&D)**
*(11 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Possible inclusion of regions of systemic importance in the European Semester process

On 12 July 2011, the European Council adopted its recommendations on national reform programmes and its opinions on stability and convergence programmes under the 2011 European Semester. With the adoption of country-specific recommendations, so that the Member States might apply these recommendations before taking any key budgetary decisions.

This programme, still in its initial phase, is undergoing constant revision in order to make it into an efficient tool for effectively coordinating the budgets of the Member States of Europe. Notwithstanding, it does not yet take into consideration the role of regions with fiscal and legislative powers nor their crucial importance in combating the deficit and working towards budgetary harmonisation in Europe.

The OECD ([1]), in a 2009 study, addressed this specific issue and made it known that the Spanish *Comunidades Autónomas* are responsible for approximately 30 % of the expenditure of the Spanish state; in the Federal Republic of Germany the level of expenditure of the *Länder* is also of a similar order, as is the case in Belgium.

Therefore, coordination is also necessary at regional level in certain cases. This is particularly relevant when a region applies economic measures in line with European standards, but is unable to receive the approval of the European institutions to legitimise these, which makes it even more difficult for its citizens to understand the importance of measures of this nature.

Does the Commission believe that it would be useful to include some mechanism within the framework of the European Semester which would allow for the inclusion of those regions with fiscal and legislative powers which, given their economic turnover and volume of exports comparable to those of Member States, are of systemic importance for the entire European Union?

Does the Commission believe that it is possible to find some voluntary mechanism so that regions with fiscal and legislative powers which make them of systemic importance can participate in the European Semester process?

Does the Commission not believe that participation in the European Semester by the aforementioned regions with fiscal and legislative powers could be a rational and legitimising incentive for the approval of the budgetary harmonisation measures required if we are to achieve greater coordination at European level?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

The European Semester is the EU-level mechanism for the multilateral surveillance and coordination of Member States' economic policies. As provided for by the Treaty and the relevant secondary legislation, the recommendations formulated by the Commission and adopted by the Council in this context are addressed to Member States. It is the responsibility of national or federal governments to ensure that action is taken in response to the recommendations adopted by the Council. With regard to the avoidance of excessive deficits, Protocol 12 to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union establishes that the governments of Member States are responsible for the deficits of the general government and that national procedures should enable Member States to meet their budgetary obligations. In view of the importance of the ownership of necessary economic reforms, the Commission has however always called on Member States to ensure that relevant stakeholders, including regions, are appropriately involved in the formulation of National Reform Programmes. More generally, national legal and political arrangements should ensure that, all relevant stakeholders are involved within the framework of the European Semester as appropriate.

([1]) http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/6/42783063.pdf

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000123/12**
**à la Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(17 janvier 2012)*

*Objet:* Sanction infligée en Italie à une société informatique pour refus d'informer et d'appliquer la législation sur les garanties

L'autorité italienne de la concurrence a, en décembre 2011, condamné la firme informatique Apple à une amende de 900 000 euros pour ne pas avoir respecté la loi accordant une garantie de 2 ans en application de la directive européenne sur les garanties des biens de consommation.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer:

— si elle est informée par les États membres des contrôles et, le cas échéant, des infractions enregistrées pour non-application de cette directive;

— dans quelle mesure elle ne devrait pas entreprendre une étude systématique sur l'application de cette directive, qui semble être peu ou mal appliquée par l'industrie et le commerce des États membres;

— dans quelle mesure elle ne devrait pas financer une vaste campagne d'information afin de permettre aux associations de consommateurs de faire connaître ce droit élémentaire à une garantie de 2 ans pour tous les biens de consommation?

**Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission**
*(8 mars 2012)*

La Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à sa réponse à la question écrite E-7524/2011 ([1]) sur l'application de l'acquis en matière de protection des consommateurs. C'est aux États membres qu'il incombe en premier lieu de veiller à l'application effective des règles.

La décision des autorités italiennes de prendre des sanctions contre Apple, en décembre 2011, constitue un exemple parmi beaucoup d'autres du travail effectué par les autorités compétentes nationales. La Commission présume que cette décision nationale se fondait non pas sur la directive 1999/44/CE relative à la vente des biens de consommation, mais bien sur la directive 2005/29/CE concernant les pratiques commerciales déloyales.

La Commission soutient l'action des autorités nationales visant à faire appliquer la législation, que ce soit en appuyant le travail des organisations de consommateurs, en coordonnant les efforts des autorités nationales via le réseau de coopération pour la protection des consommateurs ou en favorisant le développement, à l'échelle de l'UE, du réseau des centres européens des consommateurs.

Les États membres ne notifient pas à la Commission les inspections effectuées dans le cadre de la directive sur les biens de consommation, ni les infractions relevées. Cependant, la Commission ne ménage pas ses efforts pour garantir une transposition homogène des directives de l'UE dans les législations nationales de tous les États membres, et assure le suivi de leur mise en œuvre ([2]). Lorsque cela s'avère nécessaire, elle engage des procédures d'infraction, conformément à l'article 258 du TFUE.

En ce qui concerne les campagnes d'information, la Commission renvoie par ailleurs l'Honorable Parlementaire à sa réponse à la question écrite E-315/2012 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) Voir, à cet égard, la communication de la Commission concernant la mise en œuvre de la directive sur certains aspects de la vente et des garanties des biens de consommation, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0210:FIN:FR:PDF, et le compendium du droit de l'Union en matière de consommation (Consumer Law Compendium), http://www.eu-consumer-law.org/study_fr.cfm.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000123/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marc Tarabella (S&D)**
*(17 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Penalty imposed on an IT company in Italy for refusing to supply information and apply legislation on guarantees

In December 2011, the Italian competition authority fined the IT firm Apple EUR 900 000 for not complying with the law that grants a two-year guarantee pursuant to the European Directive on the sale of consumer goods and related guarantees.

— Is the Commission notified by Member States of inspections, and of infringements of the directive where they are detected?

— Should not the Commission undertake a systematic study on the application of this directive, which seems to be rarely or inadequately applied by trade and industry in the Member States?

— Should it not finance a major information campaign enabling consumer associations to publicise this basic right to a two-year guarantee for all consumer goods?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the Written Question E-7524/2011 ([1]) on enforcement of the consumer *acquis*. The primary responsibility for effectively enforcing the rules lies with Member States.

The decision of the Italian authorities to sanction Apple in December 2011 is one example amongst many of the work done by national authorities. The Commission understands that this national decision was based not on the Consumer Sales Directive (1999/44/EC) but on the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC).

The Commission supports the action of national authorities on enforcement for instance supporting consumer organisations' work, coordinating the efforts of national authorities through the Consumer Protection Cooperation network and supporting the further development of the EU-wide network of European Consumer Centres.

The Commission is not notified by Member States of inspections and infringements of the Consumer Sales Directive. The Commission invests significant effort into ensuring that the transposition of EU Directives into national laws is consistent in all the Member States and monitors their implementation ([2]). Where appropriate it initiates infringement proceedings in accordance with Article 258 TFEU.

On information campaigns, the Commission would additionally refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the Written Question E-315/2012 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.
([2]) See, e.g., the Commission communication on the implementation of the directive on Sale of Consumer Goods and Guarantees, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/guarantees/CSD_2007_EN_final.pdf, and the EU Consumer Law Compendium, http://www.eu-consumer-law.org/study_en.cfm.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000151/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)**
*(18 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Diffusa attività di bracconaggio nel Parco del delta del fiume Po in provincia di Rovigo in violazione della direttiva 2009/147/CE (già direttiva 79/409/CEE)

Il delta del Po veneto rappresenta un'importante zona di sosta, riproduzione, svernamento per uccelli migratori, in particolare acquatici. La regione Veneto ha incluso valli, lagune e tratti terminali dei rami del fiume Po nei siti di importanza comunitaria ([1]) e zone di protezione speciale ([2]) della rete Natura 2000.

Con legge n. 36/1997 la regione Veneto ha istituito il Parco regionale del delta del Po veneto che comprende i rami deltizi del Po e porzioni di valli e di lagune.

L'intera area purtroppo è interessata da un intenso fenomeno di bracconaggio. Il locale WWF ([3]), segnala da anni attività di caccia illegale praticata ai danni dell'avifauna migratoria in tutto il comprensorio lagunare e vallivo del delta del Po. Dal 2004 ad oggi in una serie di sopralluoghi effettuati in zone, giorni e orari diversi, il WWF ha riscontrato nel 100 % delle uscite la costante e diffusa presenza di bracconieri in azione; ben 125 sono gli episodi registrati di caccia sanzionabili penalmente, segnalati alle autorità competenti, come l'uso di registratori e di armi semiautomatiche con caricatore contenente più di due cartucce ([4]).

La vigilanza effettuata dagli organismi preposti si è rivelata del tutto inadeguata ad affrontare il fenomeno che negli anni non è diminuito. Nel 2007 la polizia provinciale di Rovigo ha sequestrato con un singolo controllo oltre 700 uccelli abbattuti in una valle da pesca in violazione del limite consentito di uccelli abbattibili. Attualmente il WWF ha segnalato invano alla provincia di Rovigo la presenza di numerosi appostamenti fissi di caccia attivi addirittura all'interno del Parco del delta. Numerosi sono stati nel tempo i recuperi di uccelli non cacciabili feriti o uccisi dai bracconieri tra i quali l'uccisione di una gru (Grus grus).

Alla luce di quanto esposto, ritiene la Commissione di intervenire per verificare quanto illustrato al fine di adottare tutti quei provvedimenti necessari per la tutela degli uccelli acquatici migratori che ogni anno svernano nel comprensorio del delta del fiume Po provenienti dal nord Europa?

In particolare come intende la Commissione procedere nei confronti delle autorità locali relativamente:

1. alla continua violazione della direttiva 2009/147/CE con riferimento all'uso di registratori e di armi semiautomatiche con caricatore contenente più di due cartucce?

2. all'abbattimento di specie protette di uccelli?

3. alla scarsità ed inadeguatezza dei controlli effettuati dalle autorità locali competenti affinché la direttiva 2009/147/CE sia rispettata?

([1]) SIC IT3270017 Delta del Po: tratto terminale e delta veneto.
([2]) ZPS IT3270023 Delta del Po.
([3]) Fondo Mondiale per la Natura.
([4]) attività illecite ai sensi dell'allegato IV della Direttiva 2009/147/CE.

**Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(24 febbraio 2012)*

Ai sensi della direttiva 2009/147/CE del Consiglio concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici ([5]), l'uccisione deliberata di uccelli selvatici protetti e l'uso dei mezzi elencati nell'allegato IV sono attività illegali. Incombe a ciascuno Stato membro predisporre il sistema di protezione richiesto per prevenire il fenomeno del bracconaggio e prendere gli opportuni provvedimenti per contrastarlo là dove esiste.

La Commissione ha avviato un dialogo con gli Stati membri, l'organizzazione BirdLife International e la Federazione delle associazioni di caccia e conservazione dell'UE (FACE) per affrontare questa problematica. In tale contesto, nel luglio 2011 la Commissione ha partecipato, insieme a rappresentanti degli Stati membri, di BirdLife International, della FACE e di altre ONG, ad una conferenza internazionale sulla caccia, la cattura e il commercio illegali di uccelli, organizzata dal segretariato della convenzione di Berna a Larnaca (Cipro). Sulla scia di questa conferenza, la Commissione sta esplorando diverse possibilità per suscitare una presa di coscienza e prestare sostegno agli Stati membri nei loro sforzi per arginare il problema.

Quanto alla particolare situazione denunciata dall'onorevole parlamentare, la Commissione indagherà presso le autorità italiane circa l'efficacia dei provvedimenti adottati per porvi rimedio.

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([5]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 30 novembre 2009, concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 20 del 26.1.2010, pag. 7) che codifica la direttiva 79/409/CEE del Consiglio, del 2 aprile 1979, sulla conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 103 del 25.4.1979).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000151/12**
**to the Commission**
**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)**
*(18 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Widespread poaching activities in the Po delta wildlife park in the province of Rovigo, in breach of Directive 2009/147/EC (formerly Directive 79/409/EEC)

The Po delta in the Veneto is an important rest stop, breeding ground wintering area for migratory birds, particularly waterfowl. The Veneto region has included valleys, lagoons and the estuaries of several branches of the river Po in Sites of Community Importance ([1]) and Natura 2000 Special Protection Areas ([2]).

Under Law 36/1997, the Veneto regional authorities established the Po delta regional wildlife park, which includes branches of the river Po and parts of valleys and lagoons.

The whole area is unfortunately affected by intense poaching activity. The local WWF ([3]) has for years been reporting illegal hunting activities endangering migratory birds around the lagoons and the delta area of the Po valley. In a series of surveys carried out in different sites, on different dates and at different times since 2004, the WWF observed the constant and widespread presence of poachers in every single case. 125 episodes of hunting activities punishable by law were recorded and reported to the authorities. These included the use of tape recorders and of semi-automatic weapons with magazines holding more than two cartridges ([4]).

The supervision carried out by the bodies in charge has proven totally inadequate in dealing with this phenomenon, which has not diminished over the years. In 2007, in a single raid, Rovigo's Provincial Police seized over 700 birds shot in a fishing valley in violation of the maximum permissible kill. The WWF has recently reported the to the Rovigo provincial authorities the presence of several hunting emplacements situated within the delta wildlife park itself. However, no action has been taken. Many protected birds either injured or killed by poachers have been recovered, including a dead crane (Grus grus).

In view of this, will the Commission investigate matters and take all necessary measures for the protection of migratory waterfowl flying in from Northern Europe to winter in the Po river delta area every year?

In particular, how does the Commission plan on taking legal action against local authorities in relation to:

1. the constant infringement of Directive 2009/147/EC, with regard to the use of tape recorders and semi-automatic weapons with magazines holding more than two cartridges,

2. the slaughter of protected bird species,

3. the insufficient and inadequate checks carried out by local authorities to ensure compliance with Directive 2009/147/EC?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(24 February 2012)*

The deliberate killing of protected wild birds and the use of the means listed in Annex IV are illegal activities under Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds ([5]). It is the responsibility of each Member State to put in place the requisite system of protection to prevent the problem of poaching and to take the necessary action to address it where it occurs.

The Commission has initiated a dialogue with Member States, BirdLife International and the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU (FACE) to address the issue. In this context in July 2011 the Commission took part, together with representatives of Member States, BirdLife International, FACE, and other NGOs, in an international conference on illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds organised by the Secretariat of the Bern Convention in Larnaca (Cyprus). Further to this conference the Commission is exploring different ways to raise awareness and support Member States' efforts to tackle the problem.

([1]) SCI IT3270017: main branch and Veneto delta.
([2]) SPA IT3270023 Po delta.
([3]) World Wildlife Fund.
([4]) Activities deemed illegal under Annex IV of Directive 2009/147/EC.
([5]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010, that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 103, 25.4.1979.

On the particular issue raised by the Honourable Member, the Commission will investigate with the Italian authorities about the effectiveness of the measures taken to tackle the problem.

*(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)*

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000173/12**
**Komisijai**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(2012 m. sausio 18 d.)*

*Tema:* Reglamentas (EB) Nr. 2252/2004 dėl valstybių narių išduodamų pasų ir kelionės dokumentų apsauginių savybių ir biometrikos standartų

Įgyvendinant Reglamentą (EB) Nr. 2252/2004 yra pereita prie biometrinės pasų kontrolės – pasai išduodami nuskaitant dešinės ir kairės rankų dviejų pirštų atspaudus.

Į mane kreipėsi Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo narys ir atkreipė dėmesį į tai, jog ši biometrinių duomenų sistema nėra sujungta su Policijos daktiloskopinių duomenų registru. Jo nuomone, sujungus pasų išdavimo sistemą su Policijos daktiloskopinių duomenų registru būtų galima efektyviau identifikuoti policijos ieškomus, įtariamus ir kaltinamus asmenis, kadangi pasų poskyriuose pagal asmens piršto atspaudą būtų matoma visa policijos turima informacija: ar asmuo ieškomas, įtariamas padaręs nusikaltimą ar kitaip nusižengęs.

Noriu sužinoti Komisijos nuomonę, ar gali būti sudaroma galimybė biometrinę pasų išdavimo sistemą sujungti su kitų duomenų registrais (gyventojų, policijos ieškomų, neatpažintų lavonų, įtariamųjų, kaltinamųjų ir teistų asmenų), kuriuose kaupiami, apdorojami ir sisteminami rankų ar rankų pirštų atspaudai, siekiant efektyvesnės nusikalstamų veikų kontrolės ir prevencijos?

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000492/12**
**Komisijai**
**Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)**
*(2012 m. sausio 23 d.)*

*Tema:* Biometrinės pasų kontrolės sistemos taikymo efektyvumas

Lietuvoje įgyvendinant Tarybos reglamentą (EB) Nr. 2252/2004 pereinama prie biometrinės pasų kontrolės, t. y. pasai išduodami nuskaičius dešinės ir kairės rankų dviejų pirštų atspaudus. Tačiau šis reglamentas riboja asmens dokumentų biometrinių duomenų panaudojimą, kadangi 4 straipsnio 3 punkte nustatyta, kad „pagal šį reglamentą biometrinės savybės pasuose ir kelionės dokumentuose naudojamos tik patikrinti dokumento autentiškumą ir savininko asmens tapatybę pagal tiesiogiai prieinamas palyginamas savybes“.

Kaip Komisija vertina galimybę sujungti į vieną sistemą duomenų registrus (gyventojų, policijos ieškomų, neatpažintų palaikų, įtariamųjų, teistų asmenų ir kt.) bei sistemas (biometrinę pasų kontrolės sistemą), kuriose kaupiami, apdorojami ir sisteminami rankų pirštų atspaudai, kad būtų įmanoma atlikti palyginimo bei kitus reikalingus veiksmus, siekiant efektyvesnės nusikalstamų veikų kontrolės ir prevencijos?

Ar Komisija nemano, jog ši sistemų ir registrų sąveika padėtų efektyviau identifikuoti policijos ieškomus, įtariamus ir kaltinamus asmenis?

**Bendras atsakymas, C. Malmström atsakymas Komisijos vardu**
*(2012 m. kovo 1 d.)*

Remdamasi atsakymais į klausimus raštu E-3962/09, E-4811/09, E-4867/09 ir E-8825/2011 ([1]), Komisija patvirtina, kad Reglamentu (EB) Nr. 2252/2004 siekiama nustatyti pasų ir kelionės dokumentų apsaugos nuo klastojimo standartus. Be to, siekiant nustatyti patikimą ryšį tarp tikrojo savininko ir dokumento, į pasą ar kelionės dokumentą reikėtų integruoti biometrinius identifikatorius. Reglamentu nenustatyta, kaip valstybės narės turi saugoti asmens duomenis.

Tai, kad teisės aktu suteikiama galimybė susipažinti su pasuose pateiktais asmens duomenimis ir biometrine informacija kitu nei Reglamente (EB) Nr. 2252/2004 nustatytu tikslu, reiškia, kad vėliau asmens duomenys tvarkomi. Duomenys turi būti tvarkomi laikantis Direktyvoje 95/46/EB nustatytų duomenų apsaugos, ypač būtinumo ir proporcingumo, principų.

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

Susipažinimas su asmens duomenimis siekiant užkirsti kelią nusikaltimui, jį ištirti ir patraukti kaltininką baudžiamojon atsakomybėn gali būti laikomas teisėtu tikslu demokratinėje visuomenėje, jei tai atitinka nacionalinės teisės aktą, kuriuo įgyvendinama Direktyva 95/46/EB, reikiamai apsaugomos duomenų subjektų teisės ir imamasi griežtų saugumo bei organizacinių priemonių. Be to, nacionalinėms duomenų apsaugos institucijoms turi būti suteiktas įgaliojimas stebėti, kaip tvarkomi asmens duomenys, ir užtikrinti, kad būtų apsaugomos duomenų subjektų teisės ir laikomasi nustatytų saugumo priemonių.

Nuo šių reikalavimų vykdymo iš esmės priklauso, ar bus užkirstas kelias pagrindinės teisės – teisės į asmens duomenų apsaugą – pažeidimams.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000173/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(18 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States

The implementation of Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 is a move towards biometric passport control — passports are issued after scanning two fingers of the right and left hands.

I was approached by a member of the Lithuanian Parliament who drew my attention to the fact that the biometric system is not linked to the Police fingerprint database. In his opinion, by merging the passport issuing system with Police fingerprint database it would be possible to more effectively identify wanted, suspected and accused persons, because, having obtained a person's fingerprints, the passport services would be able to see all the information available to the police: whether a person is wanted, or suspected of having committed a crime or other offences.

I would like to know the Commission's opinion as to whether it would be possible to merge the biometric passport issuing system with other data registers (civic records, police databases of wanted people, unidentified human remains, suspected, accused and convicted persons) that collect, process and organise hand or fingerprints for more effective crime control and prevention?

**Question for written answer E-000492/12**
**to the Commission**
**Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)**
*(23 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The effectiveness of the application of the system of biometric passport controls

Lithuania is moving over to a system of biometric passport controls, i.e. involving passports containing a scan of two fingerprints from the left and right hands, for the purposes of implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004. However, this regulation restricts the use of the biometric data on personal documents given that Article 4(3) stipulates that 'for the purpose of this regulation, the biometric features in passports and travel documents shall only be used for verifying the authenticity of the document and the identity of the holder by means of directly available comparable features'.

What is the Commission's view concerning the possibility of combining various data records (of population, persons sought by the police, unidentified remains, suspects, convicted persons) and systems (the system of biometric passport controls) involving the storage, processing and filing of fingerprints in one system so that it is possible to make a comparison and perform other necessary actions in order to ensure more effective crime control and prevention?

Does the Commission not think that merging these systems and records would help identify persons sought by the police or suspected or accused of crimes more effectively?

**Joint answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(1 March 2012)*

Referring to the answers to Written Question E-3962/09, E-4811/09, E-4867/09 and E-8825/2011 ([1]), the Commission confirms that the objective of Regulation 2252/2004 is to set up security standards for passports and travel documents to protect against falsification. At the same time, biometric identifiers should be integrated in the passport or travel document to establish a reliable link between the genuine holder and the document. The regulation does not make provisions on the manner whereby personal data shall be stored by Member States.

A legislation that provides the access to personal data and biometric information contained in passports for a purpose other than that laid down in Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004, implies a further processing of personal data. This has to comply with data protection principles laid down in Directive 95/46/EC, in particular principles of necessity and proportionality.

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

The access to these personal data for the purpose of prevention, investigation and prosecution of crime can be considered a legitimate purpose in a democratic society provided it complies with national law implementing Directive 95/46/EC and it is subject to appropriate safeguards to protect the rights of data subjects and strict security and organisational measures. National data protection authorities must also be given authority to monitor this processing of personal data and ensure the protection of rights of data subjects as well as compliance with security measures that have to be adopted.

The fulfilment of these requirements is essential to prevent a violation of the fundamental right to the protection of personal data.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000201/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(18 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Αιτίες αδυναμίας ολοκλήρωσης των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων για το 2007 και το 2008, για την αντιμετώπιση της παράνομης μετανάστευσης στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με την απάντηση της Επιτροπής σε προηγούμενη ερώτηση μου (E-010361/2011) που αφορά το ποσοστό εκτέλεσης των κονδυλίων των ευρωπαϊκών Ταμείων για την αντιμετώπιση της παράνομης μετανάστευσης στην Ελλάδα, προκύπτει ότι το κλείσιμο των πρώτων ετήσιων προγραμμάτων για το 2007 και το 2008 δεν έχει ακόμη ολοκληρωθεί. Η Επιτροπή, επομένως, δεν είναι σε θέση να αξιολογήσει το συνολικό επίπεδο εκτέλεσης των προγραμμάτων και τη γενική απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων των Ταμείων στην Ελλάδα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποίοι είναι οι λόγοι της σοβαρής χρονικής καθυστέρησης του κλεισίματος των πρώτων ετήσιων προγραμμάτων για το 2007 και το 2008; Πότε αναμένεται να ολοκληρωθούν;

2. Εκτιμά η Επιτροπή πως η καθυστέρηση αυτή θα έχει επιπτώσεις στην απορρόφηση κοινοτικών πόρων για τη μετανάστευση στην Ελλάδα και στην υλοποίηση των έργων των ετήσιων προγραμμάτων του 2011 και του 2012;

**Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(20 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

Επί του παρόντος 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». Το κλείσιμο αυτών των προγραμμάτων είναι μια διαδικασία που απαιτεί διάφορους τεχνικούς ελέγχους τόσο σε επιχειρησιακό όσο και σε οικονομικό επίπεδο. Ο χρόνος που απαιτείται για το κλείσιμο κάθε προγράμματος εξαρτάται από την πολυπλοκότητα του προγράμματος, την πληρότητα των απαιτούμενων πληροφοριών και την έγκαιρη υποβολή του στην Επιτροπή.

Κάθε ετήσιο πρόγραμμα έχει τον δικό του κύκλο ζωής και κάθε κλείσιμο είναι μια διοικητική διαδικασία που αρχίζει όταν ένα πρόγραμμα έχει ήδη ολοκληρωθεί. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι κάθε καθυστέρηση στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας κλεισίματος δεν έχει αντίκτυπο στην πραγματική εκτέλεση των μετέπειτα προγραμμάτων.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000201/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(18 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Reasons for the failure to complete the 2007 and 2008 annual programmes addressing illegal immigration in Greece

According to the Commission's reply to my previous question (E-010361/2011) concerning the take-up rate of European funds to deal with illegal immigration in Greece, it would appear that the first annual programmes, for 2007 and 2008, have not yet been completed. The Commission, therefore, is not in a position to evaluate the overall level of implementation of programmes and the general take-up rate of funds by Greece.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. What are the reasons for the serious delay in closing the first annual programmes for 2007 and 2008? When are they expected to be completed?

2. Does the Commission consider that this delay will impact on the take-up of Community funds for immigration in Greece and on the implementation of projects under the 2011 and 2012 annual programmes?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 February 2012)*

The final reports on the implementation of the 2007 and 2008 annual programmes submitted to the Commission for the four Funds of the General Programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' are currently under examination. The closure of these programmes is a procedure requiring various technical checks at both operational and financial levels. The time needed for the closure of each programme depends on the complexity of the programme, the completeness of the required information and its timely submission to the Commission.

Each annual programme has its own project life cycle and every closure is an administrative procedure that starts when a programme has already ended. This means that any delay within the closure procedure has no impact on the actual implementation of the subsequent programmes.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000291/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(19 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Δηλώσεις του πρώην πρωθυπουργού της Τουρκίας Μ. Γιλμάζ και δημοσιεύματα τουρκικού Τύπου σχετικά με παράνομες δραστηριότητες μηχανισμών του τουρκικού κράτους

Σε συνέχεια των πρόσφατων αποκαλυπτικών δηλώσεων του πρώην πρωθυπουργού της Τουρκίας Μεσούτ Γιλμάζ στην εφημερίδα «*BirGün*» περί προσχεδιασμένου εμπρησμού ελληνικών δασών από τις τουρκικές μυστικές υπηρεσίες, την περίοδο 1993-1996, ακολούθησαν σειρά δημοσιευμάτων στον τουρκικό Τύπο που αναφέρονται εκτενώς σε παράνομες δραστηριότητες του τουρκικού κράτους, επιβεβαιώνοντας ουσιαστικά τις αρχικές δηλώσεις Γιλμάζ.

Ενδεικτικά, οι εφημερίδες «Μιλιέτ» και «Βατάν» δημοσίευσαν άρθρα που αναφέρονται στη διαβόητη υπόθεση «Σουσούρλουκ» και συγκεκριμένα στην ύπαρξη έκθεσης που είχε συντάξει ο διευθυντής του γραφείου του τότε πρωθυπουργού της Τουρκίας Μεσούτ Γιλμάζ, η οποία, όπως αναφέρουν τα σχετικά δημοσιεύματα, περιγράφει εκτενώς τη δράση του τουρκικού «παρακρατικού» μηχανισμού και κάνει λόγο για πυρκαγιές σε ελληνικά δάση, τοποθέτηση βομβών σε αρμενικούς στόχους στην Ευρώπη, κ.λπ.

Κατόπιν των συγκλονιστικών αυτών αποκαλύψεων και με δεδομένη την έντονη ανησυχία και τον έντονο προβληματισμό που έχουν προκαλέσει οι σοβαρές αυτές αποκαλύψεις σχετικά με κατ' ουσίαν εχθρικές ενέργειες έναντι κράτους-μέλους, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι ενήμερη για τις παραπάνω πληροφορίες που αφορούν σε παράνομες δραστηριότητες του τουρκικού κράτους και εάν ναι, προτίθεται να ζητήσει περισσότερες σχετικές πληροφορίες;

— Πιστεύει ότι θα πρέπει να υπάρξει άμεση και ενδελεχής διερεύνηση των δηλώσεων του πρώην πρωθυπουργού της Τουρκίας κ. Γιλμάζ, όπως με τη σύσταση κοινοβουλευτικής επιτροπής της Μεγάλης Τουρκικής Εθνοσυνέλευσης ή/και αυτεπάγγελτη κινητοποίηση της τουρκικής Δικαιοσύνης για τον ίδιο σκοπό;

— Εάν η τουρκική πλευρά τελικώς αποφασίσει να μην κινηθεί προς την κατεύθυνση της πλήρους διαλεύκανσης της παραπάνω υπόθεσης, τι θα μπορούσε αυτό να σημάνει για τις σχέσεις ΕΕ-Τουρκίας;

— Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να θέσει το ζήτημα στις τουρκικές αρχές και να ζητήσει διευκρινίσεις για μια υπόθεση που φαίνεται να συνδέεται με επιθέσεις και σε άλλες πέραν της Ελλάδος χώρες της ΕΕ και διαβεβαιώσεις ότι τέτοιες πρακτικές δολιοφθορών δεν πρόκειται να επαναληφθούν ή να γίνουν ανεκτές;

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000482/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Mara Bizzotto (EFD)**
*(24 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Ανάμειξη της τουρκικής κυβέρνησης στις πυρκαγιές στην Ελλάδα το 1995

Το 1998, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση διένειμε εσωτερικώς έγγραφο εντός της ΕΕ και του ΝΑΤΟ με το οποίο επισήμαινε την ανάμειξη της Άγκυρας στις πυρκαγιές που επανειλημμένα αφάνισαν ελληνικά δάση τη δεκαετία του 90. Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ισχυρίστηκε ότι είχε λάβει τις σχετικές πληροφορίες από την εθνική της υπηρεσία πληροφοριών (την ΕΥΠ). Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2011, ο πρώην Πρωθυπουργός της Τουρκίας Mesut Yilmaz επιβεβαίωσε τις αποκαλύψεις του εγγράφου που είχε εκδώσει η Αθήνα, δηλώνοντας ότι η τουρκική κυβέρνηση είχε πράγματι διατάξει πράκτορες της εθνικής της υπηρεσίας πληροφοριών (ΜΙΤ) να θέσουν πυρκαγιές σε ελληνικά δάση.

Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή περαιτέρω στοιχεία σχετικά με την εν λόγω υπόθεση;

Σε περίπτωση που επιβεβαιωθούν οι κατηγορίες κατά της Άγκυρας και δεδομένης της σοβαρότητάς τους, ποια δράση θα αναλάβει η Επιτροπή;

**Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(13 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τα Αξιότιμα Μέλη στην απάντηση της στις προηγούμενες γραπτές ερωτήσεις E-012686/2012 και E-000036/2012 ([1]).

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

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000291/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(19 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Dichiarazioni dell'ex Primo ministro turco Mesut Yilmaz e notizie riportate dalla stampa turca riguardo ad attività illegali di agenzie del governo turco

A seguito delle recenti dichiarazioni rivelatrici rilasciate dall'ex Primo ministro turco Mesut Yilmaz al quotidiano turco BirGün secondo cui i servizi segreti turchi avrebbero appiccato il fuoco ai boschi della Grecia nel periodo compreso fra il 1993 e il 1996, sono stati pubblicati sulla stampa turca articoli che contengono dettagli sulle attività illegali del governo turco e che in sostanza confermano le accuse originarie di Mesut Yilmaz.

A titolo di esempio, i quotidiani *Milliyet* e *Vatan* hanno pubblicato articoli che fanno riferimento all'infame caso Susurluk e più in particolare all'esistenza di una relazione del Capo di Gabinetto di Mesut Yilmaz, all'epoca Primo ministro; in tali articoli si afferma che la relazione descrive dettagliatamente le attività del giro di organizzazioni «clandestine» turche e menziona gli incendi nelle foreste greche, il bombardamento di obiettivi armeni in Europa e via di seguito.

In considerazione delle sconvolgenti affermazioni di cui sopra e delle forti preoccupazioni causate da queste gravi rivelazioni riguardanti atti sostanzialmente ostili nei confronti di uno Stato membro, si chiede alla Commissione:

— È a conoscenza delle soprammenzionate informazioni riguardanti attività illegali del governo turco? In caso di risposta affermativa, intende la Commissione ricercare ulteriori informazioni sulla questione?

— Ritiene la Commissione che si debba procedere a un'indagine immediata e approfondita sulla base delle affermazioni dell'ex Primo ministro turco Yilmaz, ad esempio istituendo una commissione parlamentare in seno alla Grande assemblea turca e/o mobilitando ex officio il sistema giudiziario turco a tale scopo?

— Qualora la parte turca dovesse scegliere di non prendere provvedimenti in vista di una risoluzione globale della questione, questo sviluppo cosa potrebbe significare per le relazioni UE-Turchia?

— Intende la Commissione sottoporre la questione alle autorità turche e cercare chiarimenti riguardo a un caso apparentemente legato ad attacchi contro paesi dell'UE diversi dalla Grecia, nonché la garanzia che detti atti di sabotaggio non saranno ripetuti né tollerati?

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000482/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Mara Bizzotto (EFD)**
*(24 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Coinvolgimento del governo turco negli incendi che hanno colpito la Grecia nel 1995

Nel 1998, il governo greco ha fatto circolare all'interno dell'UE e della NATO un documento che indicava il coinvolgimento del governo di Ankara negli incendi che hanno ripetutamente devastato le foreste della Grecia nel corso degli anni Novanta. Il governo greco sosteneva di aver ottenuto queste informazioni dal proprio servizio nazionale di intelligence (l'EYP). Nel dicembre 2011, l'ex Primo Ministro turco Mesut Yilmaz ha confermato quanto contenuto nel documento emesso da Atene, dichiarando che il governo turco aveva effettivamente ordinato ad agenti dell'intelligence nazionale turca (MIT) di appiccare incendi nelle foreste greche.

Dispone la Commissione di ulteriori informazioni al riguardo?

Nel caso in cui le accuse a carico di Ankara vengano confermate e considerata la gravità delle stesse, quali misure intende adottare?

**Risposta congiunta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione**
*(13 marzo 2012)*

La Commissione rimanda gli onorevoli parlamentari alla sua risposta alle precedenti interrogazioni scritte E-012686/2012 e E-000036/2012 ([1]).

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000291/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)**
*(19 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Allegations by the former Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz and reports in the Turkish press regarding illegal activities by agencies of the Turkish Government

Following recent revealing allegations by the former Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz to the Turkish newspaper *BirGün* regarding the intentional arson of Greek forests by the Turkish secret services in the period between 1993 and 1996, a series of stories have been printed in the Turkish Press, giving details on illegal activities by the Turkish Government and in essence confirming Yilmaz's original allegations.

By way of example, *Milliyet* and *Vatan* posted articles referring to the infamous 'Susurluk' case and more specifically to the existence of a report by the chief of the bureau of Mesut Yilmaz, Prime Minister at the time; these articles claim that the report describes in detail the activities of the Turkish ring of 'clandestine' organisations and cites fires in Greek forests, bombings of Armenian targets in Europe and so on.

Further to the above shocking revelations and in view of the major concern triggered by these grave revelations regarding essentially hostile acts against a Member State, will the Commission answer the following:

— Is the Commission aware of the above information referring to illegal activities by the Turkish Government? If so, does the Commission intend to seek further information on the matter?

— Does the Commission consider that an immediate and thorough investigation of the claims made by the former Turkish Prime Minister Mr Yilmaz must ensue, for instance by establishing a parliamentary committee of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and/or the ex officio mobilisation of the Turkish legal system for the same purpose?

— Should the Turkish side eventually elect not to take steps towards comprehensively solving the above case, what could this development signal for EU-Turkey relations?

— Does the Commission intend to refer the issue to the Turkish authorities and seek clarification on a case apparently linked to attacks on further EU countries other than Greece, and assurances that such acts of sabotage will not be repeated or tolerated?

**Question for written answer E-000482/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mara Bizzotto (EFD)**
*(24 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Involvement of the Turkish government in the fires in Greece in 1995

In 1998, the Greek Government circulated a document internally within the EU and NATO which pointed to the involvement of Ankara in the fires which repeatedly devastated Greek forests during the 1990s. The Greek Government claimed to have obtained this information from its own national intelligence service (the EYP). In December 2011, the former Turkish Prime Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, confirmed the revelations in the document released by Athens, declaring that the Turkish government had in fact ordered agents of its national intelligence service (MIT) to start fires in Greek forests.

Does the Commission have any further information in this regard?

In the event that the charges against Ankara are confirmed and given their seriousness, what action will the Commission take?

**Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Members to its reply to previous Written Questions E-012686/2012 and E-000036/2012 ([1]).

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

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-000297/12**
**à la Commission**
**Gaston Franco (PPE)**
*(17 janvier 2012)*

*Objet:* Nouvelle gouvernance euro-méditerranéenne: rôle des villes et des régions dans l'Union pour la Méditerranée et renforcement de la coopération décentralisée

Le Printemps arabe a fait naître de nouveaux espoirs de relance et d'approfondissement du partenariat euro-méditerranéen. La société civile a montré son importance dans les changements politiques intervenus au sud de la Méditerranée, et c'est donc à un nouvel échelon, celui de la proximité, qu'il convient de fonder les nouvelles collaborations.

Pour consolider les avancées démocratiques et travailler sur des projets concrets associant les deux rives de la Méditerranée, une nouvelle gouvernance euro-méditerranéenne doit se mettre en place, impliquant davantage les villes et les régions dans le cadre de l'Union pour la Méditerranée. Ceci renfoncera sans aucun doute le sentiment d'appropriation du processus de coopération par les citoyens euro-méditerranéens.

Deux initiatives méritent d'être saluées et renforcées. Le 21 janvier 2010 a été lancée à Barcelone l'Assemblée Régionale et Locale Euro-Méditerranéenne (ARLEM), nouvel espace institutionnel de dialogue pour les autorités locales et régionales au sein de l'UpM.

Précédemment, en 2000, la Ville de Bordeaux avait mis en place le Réseau des Villes Euromed, dont la prochaine session plénière se tiendra les 9 et 10 février 2012 à Nice, ville qui préside le réseau depuis novembre 2008.

1. Quel rôle institutionnel la Commission compte-t-elle attribuer à l'ARLEM et au Réseau des Villes Euromed dans le cadre de l'Union pour la Méditerranée?

2. Plus largement, quelle place la Commission européenne entend-elle accorder à la coopération décentralisée euro-méditerranéenne dans le cadre de la politique européenne de voisinage? Dans ce contexte, quelles mesures et quels financements envisage-t-elle?

3. Dans le cadre de la coopération décentralisée euro-méditerranéenne, quelles initiatives la Commission prévoit-elle de soutenir dans les domaines du développement durable, des déchets, de l'eau, des transports et de la gestion urbaine?

**Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission**
*(21 mars 2012)*

1. Lors de leur réunion des 3 et 4 novembre 2008 à Marseille, les ministres des affaires étrangères des pays de l'Union pour la Méditerranée ont reconnu l'importance de la dimension locale et régionale et du rôle joué par l'Assemblée régionale et locale euro-méditerranéenne. La Commission maintiendra une coopération étroite avec l'ARLEM et renforcera sa coordination avec les villes Euromed.

2. La Commission et la Vice-présidente/Haute représentante ont insisté sur le rôle important joué par les autorités locales et régionales et leur participation à la définition de la politique européenne de voisinage. La Commission prévoit d'octroyer une aide financière concrète aux autorités locales en vue de soutenir leur processus de décentralisation; cette aide revêtira trois formes principales, à savoir des programmes d'aide bilatéraux et régionaux, ainsi que les programmes d'aide thématiques intitulés «acteurs non-étatiques et autorités locales dans la politique du développement».

3. L'UE finance plusieurs actions dans le cadre euro-méditerranéen, notamment a) un projet régional antérieur intitulé MED-PACT, doté d'un budget de 5 millions d'euros (programme de partenariat avec les autorités locales du bassin méditerranéen), portant sur la période 2006-2009 et destiné à encourager la coopération entre les villes; b) le programme Ciudad (coopération en matière de développement urbain et de dialogue), en cours, doté d'un budget de 14 millions d'euros, portant sur la période 2009-2013 et destiné à soutenir la planification d'un développement urbain durable sur le long terme en encourageant les partenariats entre les autorités locales; c) un nouveau projet régional intitulé «Cleaner Energy-Saving Mediterranean Cities», doté d'un budget de 5 millions d'euros pour la période 2012-2015 et destiné à renforcer les capacités des autorités locales à mettre en œuvre des politiques durables à leur échelon (énergies renouvelables, gestion efficace des ressources en eau, etc.), ainsi qu'à les préparer à adhérer au pacte des maires; d) des programmes d'aide portant sur des thèmes spécifiques et s'adressant aux acteurs non-étatiques ainsi qu'aux autorités locales.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000297/12**
**to the Commission**
**Gaston Franco (PPE)**
*(17 January 2012)*

*Subject:* New Euro-Mediterranean governance: role of the cities and regions in the Union for the Mediterranean and strengthening decentralised cooperation

The Arab Spring has given rise to new hopes of reviving and deepening the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Civil society has demonstrated its importance in the political changes that have taken place in the southern Mediterranean, and our cooperation should now be founded on a new basis, that of closeness to the citizen.

In order to consolidate the democratic advances that have been made and work on concrete projects bringing together the two sides of the Mediterranean, a new Euro-Mediterranean governance should be put in place, involving cities and regions more intensively in the Union for the Mediterranean. This will undoubtedly strengthen the feeling of ownership of the cooperation process among Euro-Mediterranean citizens.

Two initiatives should be welcomed and supported. On 21 January 2010, the Euro-Mediterranean Local and Regional Assembly (ARLEM), a new institutional forum for dialogue among local and regional authorities within the UfM, was established in Barcelona.

Previously, in 2000, the City of Bordeaux set up the Euromed Cities Network, which will hold its next plenary session on 9 and 10 February 2012 in Nice, a city which has chaired the network since November 2008.

1. What institutional role does the Commission intend to accord to ARLEM and the Euromed Cities Network in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean?

2. More broadly, what place does the European Commission aim to give to decentralised Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy? In this context, what measures and financing does it envisage?

3. In the framework of decentralised Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, what measures does the Commission plan to support in the areas of sustainable development, waste, water, transport and urban management?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(21 March 2012)*

1. The UfM Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their meeting on 3-4 November 2008 in Marseilles acknowledged the importance of the local and regional level and the role of a Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly. The Commission will continue having close cooperation with ARLEM and enhance coordination with the Euro-Med Cities.

2. The Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President emphasised the importance and involvement of local and regional authorities in shaping the European Neighbourhood Policy. It envisages concrete financial support to local authorities to assist them in their decentralisation process through three main channels i.e. bilateral and regional support programmes and the thematic support programme called Non —State Actors and Local Authorities in Development.

3. EU-funded actions in the Euro-Med framework include a) a previous EUR 5 million MED-PACT regional project (Local Authorities Partnership Programme in the Mediterranean) from 2006 to 2009, encouraged cooperation between cities; b) the ongoing regional EUR 14 million CUIDAD Programme (Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue) for 2009-2013, supported sustainable and long term urban development planning by enhancing partnerships among local authorities; c) a new EUR 5 million regional project called 'Cleaner Energy Saving Mediterranean Cities' with a budget for 2012-2015 with a view to strengthening the capacity of local authorities to implement more sustainable local policies (renewable energy, efficient water etc.) and to prepare them for signing up to the Covenant of Mayors; d) specific thematic support programmes on non-state actors and local authorities.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000333/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)**
*(19 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Muerte de Idrissa Diallo en el Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros (CIE) de Barcelona. Permanente vulneración de los derechos humanos, malos tratos y represión en los CIE españoles

En la madrugada del pasado 6 de enero falleció en el Centro de Internamiento de la Zona Franca de Barcelona Idrissa Diallo, joven africano de 21 años, que había sido trasladado a Barcelona desde el CIE de Melilla el pasado 22 de diciembre. Esta muerte se suma a la de otras tres personas muertas en circunstancias confusas en el mismo CIE y, al menos, a otra muerte en el CIE de Valencia, y son numerosos los casos de denuncias por deficiencias en el tratamiento de enfermedades y adicciones.

En los CIE se priva de libertad a personas por carecer de permiso de residencia, una irregularidad tipificada como falta administrativa que, a pesar de ser equivalente en el marco legislativo español a una multa de tráfico, conlleva una reclusión obligada de hasta 60 días. La existencia de estos centros responde a la política europea migratoria actual, defendida por socialdemócratas y conservadores, que instrumentaliza a las personas extranjeras y las trata como simple mano de obra barata, expulsando a las que el mercado no necesita.

La habitabilidad de estos centros, como vienen denunciando numerosas organizaciones sociales, es nula, con unas condiciones peores que en las cárceles comunes, y las personas allí recluidas ven vulnerados sus derechos humanos fundamentales y tienen que enfrentarse a actos de represión policial y malos tratos que quedan impunes la mayoría de las veces, ya que los que se atreven a denunciarlos son deportados.

La gestión de estos centros y las condiciones a las que están expuestas las personas recluidas se caracterizan por la opacidad y la ausencia de control sobre el trato que reciben los internos. De hecho, aún no ha sido aprobado ningún tipo de reglamento sobre su funcionamiento e incluso existen centros que se utilizan como CIE sin estar reconocidos por el Estado español.

Teniendo en cuenta además que, tal y como denuncia el último informe de la red euroafricana Migreurop, que integra a 40 organizaciones de 14 países, titulado «CIE, derechos vulnerados», las personas recluidas en estos centros se ven privadas injustamente de derechos fundamentales tan primordiales como la intimidad, la asistencia jurídica, la integridad moral y la propia dignidad,

¿Piensa la Comisión solicitar al Gobierno español el cierre de estos centros para poner fin a la vulneración de los derechos fundamentales de las personas allí recluidas? ¿Dispone la Comisión de información sobre estos centros o piensa solicitarla al Gobierno español? ¿Piensa investigar la Comisión Europea la muerte de este joven y las condiciones a las que se enfrentan las personas recluidas? ¿Puede informar la Comisión sobre centros de este tipo en otros países miembros de la UE?

**Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión**
*(24 de febrero de 2012)*

La evaluación de incidentes específicos y la persecución de posibles delitos cometidos en centros de internamiento nacionales es, ante todo, competencia de las autoridades y los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales.

Se llama la atención de Su Señoría sobre la *Directiva 2008/115/CE relativa a normas y procedimientos comunes en los Estados miembros para el retorno de los nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular* ([1]), que contiene salvaguardias importantes para garantizar unas condiciones de internamiento humanas y dignas en los Estados miembros, en particular, en sus artículos 15 a 17. Esta Directiva debía ser incorporada por los Estados miembros a su legislación nacional a más tardar el 24 de diciembre de 2010.

En 2011 España notificó a la Comisión Europea la transposición plena de dicha Directiva sobre el retorno. Como ya señaló en su respuesta a la pregunta escrita 11745/2011, la Comisión examinará sistemáticamente la compatibilidad de la legislación nacional de ejecución notificada con las obligaciones impuestas por la Directiva sobre el retorno, incluidas sus disposiciones relacionadas con el internamiento. Para ese examen podrá contarse con un estudio a nivel de la UE sobre las posibles deficiencias, cuyos resultados se darán a conocer a lo largo del presente año. Además, durante 2013 se llevará a cabo otro estudio sobre la aplicación práctica en los Estados miembros de la Directiva sobre

([1]) Directiva 2008/115/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de diciembre de 2008, relativa a normas y procedimientos comunes en los Estados miembros para el retorno de los nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular (DO L 348 de 24.12.2008).

el retorno. Ambos estudios servirán de base para la incoación, en caso necesario, de procedimientos de infracción, centrándose también en la situación de los centros de internamiento.

La Comisión lamenta no disponer de suficiente información en este momento para responder a las preguntas de Su Señoría acerca de la situación en los centros de internamiento en los Estados miembros de la UE en general.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000333/12**
**to the Commission**
**Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)**
*(19 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Death of Idrissa Diallo in the Detention Centre for Foreigners (CIE) in Barcelona. Permanent violation of human rights, mistreatment and repression in Spanish Detention Centres.

In the early hours of 6 January 2012, Idrissa Diallo, a young African man of 21 years of age, died in the Detention Centre for Foreigners in Barcelona's Zona Franca. He had been transferred to Barcelona from the Detention Centre in Melilla on 22 December 2011. This follows the death of three other people in mysterious circumstances in the same Detention Centre, as well as one other death in Valencia's Detention Centre. Moreover, there have been numerous complaints regarding deficiencies in treatments of illnesses and addictions in these centres.

The Detention Centres are used to incarcerate people who have no residence permit; an irregularity classed as an administrative offence that, despite being akin to a speeding fine in Spanish law, carries a prison sentence of up to 60 days. The existence of these centres is in response to current European immigration policy, supported by both social democrats and conservatives, which dehumanises foreign people and treats them as cheap labour, expelling those the market does not need.

Several social organisations have complained that these centres are uninhabitable. Conditions are worse than in common prisons, and confined people have their fundamental human rights violated and face acts of political repression and mistreatment that are seldom punished, since those who do dare to report such acts are deported.

The management of these centres and the conditions to which people confined there are exposed are characterised by opaqueness and the absence of control over the treatment of detainees. In fact, there is still no kind of regulation regarding their day-to-day operation and there are even centres used as CIEs that are not recognised by the Spanish State.

Moreover, we should take into account that people confined in these centres are deprived unjustly of their most basic, fundamental rights such as privacy, legal assistance, moral integrity and personal dignity, as shown in the most recent report from the Euro-African network Migreurop, which involves 40 organisations from 14 countries, titled 'CIE, violated rights'.

Will the Commission call on the Spanish Government to close down these centres in order to end the violation of fundamental rights of the people confined in them? Does the Commission have any information on these centres, or will it request information from the Spanish Government? will the Commission investigate the death of this young man and the conditions faced by those confined in such centres? Can the Commission provide information on centres of this kind in other EU Member States?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(24 February 2012)*

The assessment of individual incidents and pursuit of possible criminal offences which take place in national detention centres is a matter primarily for the national authorities and courts concerned.

The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to Directive 2008/115/EC on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals ([1]) which contains important safeguards to ensure humane and dignified detention conditions in Member States, notably in its Articles 15-17. This directive was due to be transposed by Member States into national legislation by 24 December 2010.

In 2011, Spain notified the full transposition of the Return Directive to the European Commission. As already set out in its reply to written question 11745/2011, the Commission will systematically check the compatibility of the notified national implementing legislation with the obligations imposed by the Return Directive, including its detention related provisions. This examination will benefit from an EU-wide study on identifying possible shortcomings, the results of which will be available in the course of this year. In addition, a study relating to the practical application of the Return Directive in Member States will be carried out in the course of 2013. Both studies will serve as factual basis for launching — if necessary — infringement procedures focusing also in particular on the situation in detention centres.

([1]) Directive 2008/115/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, OJ L 348, 24.12.2008.

The Commission regrets that it does not have sufficient information at this moment to be able to answer the questions of the Honourable Member related to the situation in detention centres in EU Member States in general.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000344/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Hermann Winkler (PPE)**
*(19. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Kommunale Abwasserpolitik: Umsetzung der Richtlinien 91/271/EWG, geändert durch 98/15/EG und 2000/60/EG

Die notwendige Zweitbehandlung von kommunalem Abwasser vor der Einleitung in die Kanalisation, wie sie in der Richtlinie 91/271/EWG in Artikel 4 statuiert wird, wird in der Region Sachsen gerade in den ländlichen Regionen mithilfe der Umrüstung privater Kleinkläranlagen für eine solche biologische Reinigung bzw. mit dem Angebot von Gruppenkläranlagen gegen sogenannte „freiwillige Baukostenzuschüsse" gewährleistet. Gerade der Landbevölkerung, die auf solche Kleinkläranlagen zurückgreifen muss, werden damit unverhältnismäßig hohe finanzielle und andere Belastungen, auch im Vergleich zur Stadtbevölkerung, auferlegt. (Sachsen hat offensichtlich alle Gebiete als „empfindlich" deklarieren lassen, mit der Konsequenz, dass in ganz Sachsen eine Zweitbehandlung erfolgen muss.)

Nun sind dies im Einzelnen natürlich keine Vorgaben der EU, da dieses spezielle Instrument nicht vorgeschrieben wird bzw. werden kann. Für Gebiete unter 2 000 Einwohnern gibt es dort außerdem gar keine Vorgaben. Jedoch ist laut zuständigem Ministerium zumindest der Zeitpunkt der spätmöglichsten Nachrüstung vorhandener Kleinkläranlagen im Rahmen der Richtlinie 2000/60/EG mit dem Jahr 2015 vorgegeben, welche bis dahin einen „guten Zustand" aller Gewässer fordert.

— Ist dies korrekt oder hätte Deutschland von einer Verlängerungsmöglichkeit gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 4 Gebrauch machen können? Und in welchem Verhältnis stehen die Richtlinien 91/271/EWG und 2000/60/EG und ihre jeweiligen Fristen zueinander?

— Ist der Kommission die o. g. Problematik bekannt, und ist der Kommission bekannt, wie die Umsetzung dieser Vorschrift in den anderen Mitgliedstaaten erfolgt ist?

— Die betroffenen Bürger sehen in dieser Form der Umsetzung neben den finanziellen Belastungen das Ziel der Richtlinie sowie der gesamten EU-Klima- und Ressourcenschutzpolitik konterkariert, da der Energieverbrauch extrem hoch sei. Sieht die Kommission u. a. deshalb eine Möglichkeit, gegen diese spezifische Umsetzung vorzugehen sowie bei der für 2012 anstehenden Revision der Richtlinie 2000/60/EG und der gesamten Wasserpolitik der EU das o. g. Problem zu verhindern?

**Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission**
*(28. Februar 2012)*

Ziel der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie 2000/60/EG ([1]) ist es, dass alle Gewässer bis 2015 in gutem Zustand sind. Alle Maßnahmen müssen bis Ende 2012 anwendungsbereit sein.

In der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie sind alle Belastungen der aquatischen Umwelt erfasst, einschließlich kleiner Abwassereinleitungen, wenn diese erhebliche Auswirkungen haben. Die Richtlinie stützt sich u. a. auf die Richtlinie 91/271/EWG über die Behandlung von kommunalem Abwasser ([2]). Nach Artikel 7 der letztgenannten Richtlinie sollten die Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, dass Einleitungen in Binnengewässer und Ästuare aus Gemeinden mit weniger als 2 000 Einwohnern zur Erreichung der in den EU-Vorschriften festgelegten Ziele eine geeignete Behandlung erfahren.

Es ist Sache der Mitgliedstaaten, die einzelnen Maßnahmen festzulegen, mit denen sie die Ziele der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie erreichen wollen, und wie sie die Finanzierungsbedingungen hierfür gestalten wollen. Artikel 9 der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie verpflichtet die Mitgliedstaaten, die Wasserpreise auf Basis des Kostendeckungs- und des Verursacherprinzips festzusetzen. Bei der Festlegung dieser Verfahren können die Mitgliedstaaten die sozialen, ökologischen und wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen des Kostendeckungsprinzips berücksichtigen.

Was den Energieverbrauch anbelangt, so obliegt es den Mitgliedstaaten, dafür zu sorgen, dass die sachgemäße Behandlung des Abwassers energieeffizient und in Übereinstimmung mit der EU-Klima- und Energiepolitik erfolgt.

([1]) ABl. L 327 vom 22.12.2000.
([2]) ABl. L 135 vom 30.5.1991.

Die Wasserrahmenrichtlinie sieht die Möglichkeit vor, die Ziele nach 2015 zu verwirklichen, wenn sich dies bis 2015 aus Gründen der technischen Durchführbarkeit oder unverhältnismäßig hoher Kosten nicht erreichen lässt. Die Kommission bewertet zurzeit die Bewirtschaftungspläne für die Flusseinzugsgebiete, die von den Mitgliedstaaten übermittelt wurden, und prüft die Anträge auf Ausnahmen, um sicherzustellen, dass sie mit den Verpflichtungen aus der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie vereinbar sind. Sie wird ihre Feststellungen im November 2012 veröffentlichen.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000344/12**
**to the Commission**
**Hermann Winkler (PPE)**
*(19 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Urban waste-water policy: implementation of Directive 91/271/EEC, as amended by Directives 98/15/EC and 2000/60/EC

The required secondary treatment of urban waste-water before it is discharged into sewers, as set down in Article 4 of Directive 91/271/EEC, is currently being implemented specifically in the rural parts of Saxony through the conversion of small private sewage treatment plants for biological purification and the provision of group sewage treatment plants in return for so-called 'voluntary construction cost grants'. Thus, in comparison with urban dwellers, rural communities, which are dependent on these small sewage treatment plants, are subject to disproportionately high financial costs and other burdens. (Saxony has obviously had all its territories declared 'environmentally sensitive', so that secondary treatment is required throughout the region.)

Naturally these are not requirements of the EU, because this special instrument is not, and cannot be, prescribed. Furthermore, the EU has no requirements in relation to areas with populations of less than 2 000. According to the responsible Ministry, however, 2015 marks the deadline for the upgrading of existing small sewage treatment plants under Directive 2000/60/EC, which requires all waters to achieve 'good status'.

— Is this correct, or could Germany have availed itself of an extension according to Article 4(4)? What is the relationship between Directives 91/271/EEC and 2000/60/EC and their respective deadlines?

— Is the Commission familiar with this problem and does the Commission know how this provision has been implemented in the other Member States?

— As well as suffering a financial burden, the affected citizens also believe that this form of implementation runs counter to the objectives of the directive and the entire EU climate and resource protection policy because the level of energy consumption is extremely high. Does the Commission therefore see any way of proceeding against this specific implementation and preventing the aforementioned problem when it comes to the pending revision of Directive 2000/60/EC and the entire water policy of the EU planned for 2012?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 February 2012)*

The Water Framework Directive (WFD 2000/60/EC ([1]) aims to achieve good status of all waters by 2015. All measures need to be operational by the end of 2012.

The WFD covers all pressures on the aquatic environment, including small waste water discharges, if these are causing significant impacts. The WFD objective builds, among others, on the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD 91/271/EEC ([2]). According to Article 7 of UWWTD Member States should ensure that any discharge to freshwater or estuaries from agglomerations smaller than 2 000 population equivalents is subject to appropriate treatment to meet the objectives under EU legislation.

It is for the Member States to define the precise measures to achieve the WFD objectives and to establish the financing modalities. Article 9 of the WFD establishes the obligation for Member States to set up water pricing policies based on the principles of recovery of costs and polluter pays. However, in setting the policies, Member States may have regard to the social, environmental and economic effects of the cost recovery.

As regards energy consumption, it is for Member States to ensure that the proper treatment of waste water is energy efficient and compatible with the EU Climate and Energy policy.

The WFD includes the possibility to delay the achievement of the objectives to later than 2015 for reasons of disproportionate cost and technical unfeasibility. The Commission is assessing the river basin management plans reported by Member States and will scrutinise the application of exemptions to ensure they are in line with the obligations of the WFD. The Commission will publish its findings in November 2012.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([2]) OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000365/12**
**a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(20 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* VP/HR — Caso urgente — Violación de los derechos humanos en Rusia — Situación de la libertad de expresión y el Estado de Derecho en Rusia — Sentencia judicial de prohibición de materiales de Falun Gong

El 22 de diciembre de 2011, el tribunal regional de Krasnodar (Rusia) confirmó la sentencia del tribunal de distrito en virtud de la cual los materiales de Falun Gong (incluida su obra principal, *Zhuan Falun*, libro traducido a más de 39 lenguas y distribuido libremente en más de cien países, el *Informe sobre presuntos robos de órganos de practicantes de Falun Gong en China*, del que son autores los juristas canadienses David Matas y David Kilgour, y diversos opúsculos sobre la persecución de Falun Gong en China) seguirán en la lista de publicaciones extremistas mantenida por el Ministerio de Justicia de la Federación de Rusia.

Durante el juicio se produjeron numerosas violaciones de principios procesales, ya que no se respetó ni se tuvo en cuenta el derecho de los practicantes de Falun Gong a defenderse. Hasta hoy, el sistema judicial ruso no protege los derechos de las personas, sino que sirve a los objetivos políticos de las autoridades rusas, que en este caso actúan presionadas por el régimen chino. En esta ocasión, la sentencia puede dar lugar a medidas restrictivas contra los practicantes rusos de Falun Gong: sanciones penales, sanciones administrativas y multas, registros y requisas de materiales relacionados con Falun Gong, cierre de locales para prácticas en grupo, prohibición de actividades públicas, detenciones de participantes, etc.

Las asociaciones Falun Gong están legalmente registradas en varias ciudades de Rusia y sus miembros son residentes que respetan la ley, en consonancia con la práctica de meditación de Falun Gong. Esta decisión judicial constituye una violación evidente de los derechos humanos de los practicantes de Falun Gong: la libertad de expresión y la libertad religiosa, garantizadas en virtud de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos y del Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos, de los que Rusia es signataria.

Después de las palabras pronunciadas por la Alta Representante, Lady Ashton, en relación con el Informe anual sobre Derechos Humanos el 13 de diciembre de 2011 en Estrasburgo, la Unión Europea no puede mantener su postura de *business as usual* en sus relaciones con el Gobierno ruso.

¿Es conocedora la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de estas violaciones de derechos humanos? En tal caso, ¿qué medidas ha adoptado hasta la fecha la Delegación de la UE en Rusia para proteger los derechos fundamentales de los practicantes de Falun Gong?

¿Piensa la Vicepresidente/Alta Representante suscitar esta cuestión ante el Gobierno ruso durante la próxima cumbre UE-Rusia e incluirla en el capítulo de condiciones de los acuerdos con Rusia en todos los niveles del diálogo bilateral?

Los firmantes pedimos a la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que investigue los casos de malos tratos sufridos por los practicantes de Falun Gong en Rusia y adopte todas las medidas necesarias para garantizar sus derechos.

**Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión**
*(27 de marzo de 2012)*

Estamos muy pendientes del asunto Falun Gong en Rusia. Miembros del personal del SEAE se han reunido con los representantes de Falun Gong de Rusia, en numerosas ocasiones, para obtener información de primera mano sobre el asunto. La AR/VP está al tanto de la sentencia judicial que confirma la decisión de incluir el material de Falun Gong en una lista del Ministerio de Justicia de publicaciones extremistas y de medidas restrictivas, como procesamientos, registros, multas y decomisos, que se derivan de la misma. La AR/VP está muy preocupada por este asunto y por las consecuencias que podría tener en un contexto más amplio.

Tanto la libertad de expresión como la aplicación de la legislación antiextremista y el respeto a las leyes en los tribunales rusos son cuestiones que se están planteando a las autoridades rusas. El tema del uso y abuso de la Ley Antiextremista se ha abordado durante las tres últimas consultas sobre derechos humanos con Rusia. La cuestión de la lista de publicaciones extremistas del Ministerio de Justicia ha formado parte de las discusiones. El SEAE planteó el tema de los materiales prohibidos del movimiento Falun Gong en la consulta del 29 de noviembre. La delegación de la UE en Moscú realizará el seguimiento de los procesos judiciales sobre los materiales prohibidos, asunto que Falun Gong ha llevado al Tribunal Supremo de la Federación de Rusia.

Además de los debates de estos asuntos en diferentes foros, la UE hace uso de otros instrumentos para fomentar cambios positivos en las estructuras institucionales de Rusia y de la sociedad en general. Uno de dichos instrumentos es nuestra Asociación para la Modernización con Rusia, cuya piedra angular es el Estado de Derecho. La UE anima a Rusia a que, entre otras cosas, prosiga sus reformas del sistema judicial también en este contexto.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000365/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(20 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Urgent case regarding violation of human rights in Russia — Situation of freedom of expression and the rule of law in Russia, court case banning Falun Gong materials

On 22 December 2011, the regional court in Krasnodar, Russia, upheld the decision by the district court that Falun Gong materials, including its main book 'Zhuan Falun', translated into over 39 languages and distributed freely in more than 100 countries, 'Report into Allegations of Organ Harvesting of Falun Gong Practitioners in China', authored by two Canadian lawyers David Matas and David Kilgour, and leaflets about the persecution of Falun Gong in China, are to remain on the Russian Ministry of Justice's list of extremist publications.

There were numerous violations in the court proceedings, in which the rights of Falun Gong practitioners to defend themselves were not respected and taken into account. So far, the Russian judiciary system has not defended people's rights, but has instead served the political agenda of the Russian authorities, which in this case are acting under the pressure from the Chinese regime. This court decision may result in restrictive measures against Russian Falun Gong practitioners: criminal prosecution; administrative arrests and fines; searches and confiscation of Falun Gong-related materials; prohibition of group practice sites and public activities, and the arrest of participants.

The Falun Gong association has been legally registered in several cities in Russia and Falun Gong practitioners in Russia are law-abiding residents, who follow the peaceful meditation practice of Falun Gong. This court case is an obvious violation of the fundamental human rights of Falun Gong practitioners — freedom of expression and freedom of belief, which are guaranteed by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, which Russia has signed.

Following the speech by the High Representative, Lady Ashton, on the Annual Human Rights Report in Parliament in Strasbourg on 13 December 2011, the EU cannot continue with its 'business as usual' approach to its relations with the Russian Government.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these human rights violations? If so, what action has the EU Delegation in Russia taken so far to protect the fundamental rights of Russian Falun Gong practitioners?

Will the Vice-President/High Representative raise this issue with the Russian Government during the next EU-Russia summit and include this issue as one condition in the agreements with Russia at all levels of bilateral dialogue?

We call on the Vice-President/High Representative to investigate the mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners in Russia and to take all necessary action to guarantee their rights.

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 March 2012)*

The case of Falun Gong in Russia is being followed closely. Staff from the EEAS have met with the Falun Gong representatives from Russia on numerous occasions to get the firsthand information on this case. The HR/VP is thus aware of the court ruling upholding a decision to include Falun Gong material on a Ministry of Justice's list of extremist publications, and of restrictive actions, including prosecutions, searches, fines and confiscations, that ensue from this and such decisions. The HR/VP remains very concerned about this case and about its broader implications.

Issues relating to the freedom of expression, the application of the anti-extremist law, and the due process of law in the Russian courts are all being raised with the Russian authorities. The issue of the use and abuse of the Law of the Anti-Extremism has been raised during the last three consecutive human rights consultations with Russia. The issue of the Ministry of Justice's list of extremist publications has been part of those discussions. The EEAS raised the case of the banned Falun Gong materials at the November 29 meeting of the consultations. The EU Delegation in Moscow will be monitoring the judicial proceedings on the banned material, which Falun Gong has now brought to the level of the Supreme Court of the RF.

In addition to discussions of these questions in different fora, the EU uses a number of other instruments to encourage positive change in Russia's institutional structures and the society at large. One of such is our Partnership for Modernisation with Russia. Rule of law is at the core of this Partnership; the EU encourages Russia to inter alia pursue reforms of the judiciary system also in this context.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000367/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto rappresentante)**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(20 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Condanna dell'Ex Primo Ministro ucraino, condizioni di detenzione disumane

È sempre più difficile sostenere che quella contro l'ex Primo Ministro Ucraino, Yulia Tymoshenko, non sia una persecuzione politica. Il Primo Ministro è stato condannato lo scorso 11 ottobre a 7 anni di carcere per un accordo su una fornitura di gas alla Russia di Putin, ed è ora sottoposta a un rigidissimo regime di carcerazione.

Yulia Tymoshenko è filmata contro il suo volere in carcere, trasferita in una colonia penale dove deve dormire con la luce accesa sotto costante controllo di una telecamera, privata, secondo i suoi avvocati, delle cure di cui avrebbe bisogno. Dalle ultime notizie, sembrerebbe che il governo ucraino abbia deciso anche di prendersela con la sua famiglia, per aumentare la pressione sulla Tymoshenko. Il governo della Repubblica Ceca ha concesso asilo politico al marito, contro il quale sarebbe stato aperto un procedimento penale. Non è escluso che nel prossimo futuro anche la figlia decida di riparare all'estero. L'attuale presidente ucraino Viktor Yanukovich e, naturalmente, i tribunali sostengono che l'ex Primo Ministro ha danneggiato il Paese firmando l'accordo sul gas con il premier russo Vladimir Putin.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede all'Alto Commissario:

1. se ritiene che i modi in cui si è svolto il processo e la successiva pena detentiva possano essere considerati legittimi e rispettosi dei diritti umani fondamentali;

2. se così non fosse, se s'intende intervenire, e in che modo, per salvaguardare la dignità di una persona che più volte è venuta a riferire davanti alle istituzioni europee e a noi Deputati;

3. quale posizione sta mantenendo l'UE nelle relazioni con l'Ucraina, soprattutto a seguito del blocco del trattato di associazione che doveva dar vita a relazioni più strette tra l'UE e codesto Paese, e se si prevede già una prossima data in agenda per la ridiscussione del negoziato.

**Risposta data dall'Alta rappresentante/vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(4 maggio 2012)*

L'Alta rappresentante/vicepresidente Ashton ha espresso, a nome dell'UE, il suo forte disappunto per la sentenza del Tribunale distrettuale di Pechersk in Ucraina nel processo a Yulia Tymoshenko. La sentenza è giunta dopo un processo che non ha rispettato le norme internazionali da applicare a un procedimento giudiziario equo, trasparente e indipendente. Le relative dichiarazioni dell'Alta rappresentante e del suo portavoce possono essere consultate online ([1]).

L'Alta rappresentante/vicepresidente si è inoltre detta preoccupata del fatto che il processo di appello non abbia affrontato adeguatamente le lacune del processo iniziale. Considerato che è stato segnalato un peggioramento delle condizioni di salute di Yulia Tymoshenko, l'Alta rappresentante/vicepresidente ha più volte sollecitato un esame medico indipendente e la prestazione delle opportune cure mediche in tempi rapidi. Il 12 dicembre 2011 il commissario Füle ha visitato in cella la signora Tymoshenko, che ha potuto così informarlo delle sue condizioni di detenzione. Di recente, medici tedeschi e canadesi sono stati autorizzati ad effettuare una visita medica indipendente.

L'Alta rappresentante/vicepresidente si rallegra che l'Ucraina abbia accettato di pubblicare le osservazioni preliminari della recente visita nel paese del comitato del Consiglio d'Europa per la prevenzione della tortura e delle pene e trattamenti inumani o degradanti, che ha preso in esame anche l'assistenza sanitaria prestata ad alcuni detenuti, tra cui Yulia Tymoshenko.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/127124.pdf;
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/125033.pdf;
http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/124193.pdf;
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/122218.pdf

Nei suoi interventi pubblici, l'Alta rappresentante/vicepresidente ha sottolineato il nesso tra il grado di rispetto dello Stato di diritto e dei diritti fondamentali da parte dell'Ucraina e lo sviluppo delle relazioni bilaterali tra il paese e l'UE, anche per quanto riguarda la firma e la conclusione dell'accordo di associazione e la sua successiva attuazione.

I negoziati dell'accordo di associazione UE-Ucraina sono ormai conclusi ed è possibile completare, dal punto di vista tecnico, l'ultima versione consolidata dell'accordo, anche per gli aspetti relativi alla zona di libero scambio globale e approfondito, da siglare non appena possibile.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000367/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(20 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — The conviction of the former Prime Minister of Ukraine and the inhumane conditions in which she is being detained

It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain that the way the former Ukrainian Prime Minister, Yulia Tymoshenko, is being treated does not amount to political persecution. On 11 October last year, she was sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment in connection with an agreement to supply gas to Putin's Russia. She is now being subjected to harsh prison conditions.

Yulia Tymoshenko is being filmed in prison against her will, and has been transferred to a penal colony where she is forced to sleep with the lights on and kept under constant CCTV surveillance. According to her lawyers, she is being denied access to the medical treatment she needs. According to recent reports, it seems that the Ukrainian government has also decided to increase the pressure on Tymoshenko by victimising her family. The Government of the Czech Republic has granted political asylum to her husband, against whom criminal proceedings have reportedly been initiated. There is a possibility that her daughter will also decide to move abroad in the near future The current Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and, of course, the courts claim that the former Prime Minister damaged the country by signing the gas deal with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

In view of the foregoing:

1. Does the High Commissioner regard the conduct of Yulia Tymoshenko's trial, and the way she is being treated in prison, as lawful and in accordance with fundamental human rights?

2. If not, would the High Commissioner state whether, and in what way, she intends to intervene to uphold the dignity of a person who has appeared on several occasions before the European institutions and the Members of the European Parliament?

3. What position is the EU adopting in its relations with Ukraine, especially following the stalling of the association agreement which was intended to establish closer relations between the EU and Ukraine, and has an early date been set for the resumption of negotiations?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(4 May 2012)*

The High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has expressed on behalf of the EU her deep disappointment with the verdict of the Pechersk District Court in Ukraine in the case of Ms Yulia Tymoshenko. The verdict came after a trial which did not respect the international standards as regards fair, transparent and independent legal process. Relevant statements by the High Representative and her spokesperson are available online ([1]).

The HR/VP also expressed concern that the appeals process did not adequately address failings in the original trial. Against the background of a reported deteriorating health condition of Ms Tymoshenko, the HR/VP called on several occasions for timely and independent medical examination and medical care, as appropriate. Commissioner Füle visited Ms Tymoshenko in her cell on 12 December 2011. This gave the chance for Ms Tymoshenko to inform Commissioner Füle about her situation in detention. Recently, German and Canadian doctors were allowed to undertake an independent medical examination.

The HR/VP welcomes Ukraine's agreement to publication of the preliminary comments of the recent visit of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to the country which also examined the healthcare being provided to certain prisoners, including to Mrs Tymoshenko.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/127124.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/125033.pdf
http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/124193.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/122218.pdf

The HR/VP stressed in her public interventions the relation between Ukraine's performance in respecting the Rule of Law and fundamental rights and the development of EU-Ukraine bilateral relations, including as regards the signature and conclusion of the Association Agreement and its subsequent implementation.

The negotiations on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement have been finalised and the way is now open for technical completion of the final consolidated version of the Agreement, including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, with a view to its initialling as soon as possible.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000385/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mairead McGuinness (PPE)**
*(23 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers — differentiated responsibility of food business operators

Article 8, paragraphs 1-4 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers rightly has the objective of clarifying the responsibilities of each food business operator vis-à-vis the information obligations imposed, in particular, by European food legislation.

Paragraph 5 appears to be intended to cover those cases that are not covered by the preceding paragraphs.

Taking account of Article 37 of the regulation, does the Commission believe that paragraph 5 of Article 8 allows a Member State, by way of a national rule or regulatory practice, to consider any food business operator on its territory to be responsible for, and bound by, an obligation to verify the correctness of the mandatory information that must accompany a food product which originates from another Member State?

Notwithstanding paragraphs 1-4 of Article 8, which clearly define the respective responsibilities of each food business operator concerning such information, does the Commission take the view that any incorrect information supplied to consumers would be misleading?

Paragraph 5 of Article 8 states that, without prejudice to paragraphs 2-4, food business operators are bound to ensure and verify compliance with the requirements of (European Union) food information law and relevant national provisions.

In order to avoid any confusion, and with a view to determining clearly who must do what, leaving aside the obligations concerning the use of languages, can the Commission indicate to what precise circumstances paragraph 5 refers?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 February 2012)*

Article 8 (2) and (3) of Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 ([1]) establishes distinct responsibilities of food-business operators. In accordance with (1) and (2) the EU operator under whose name, or business name, the food is marketed, or the importer into the Union, must ensure the presence and accuracy of the food information. Pursuant to paragraph (3), food business operators who are not involved in the labelling of food information are only obliged to refrain from supplying food which they know, or presume, on the basis of the information in their possession as professionals, to be non-compliant with EU and national food information law.

Given that the aim of the article is to prevent a fragmentation of the rules on the responsibility of food business ([2])operators, paragraph 5 cannot be used in conjunction with Article 38 to invalidate the legal effect of paragraphs 1 to 4. This is further explained by the use of the wording '*without prejudice to*' in that paragraph. Thus, Member States may not, through national law, require that a food-business operator who is not involved in the labelling of food information be obliged to check for the presence or accuracy of food information.

Paragraph 5 would cover all cases not directly falling within paragraphs 2 to 4, for instance the use of language, obliging food-business operators who are not involved in the labelling of food information to ensure that national language requirements are satisfied. Due to the complexity of interactions and contractual obligations, and in particular the potential for future technical developments or logistical synergies in the food supply chain, this general provision operates mainly as a 'safety net' against legal gaps.

The misleading character of any food information is to be assessed by the national competent authorities on a case-by-case basis.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.
([2]) Recital 21.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000408/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Heinz K. Becker (PPE)**
*(20. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Dringende europäische Initiativen im Kampf gegen die Lebensmittelteuerung: gegen Finanzmarkt-Spekulation und gegen das Diktat unterschiedlicher Einstandspreise

Europa leidet seit einigen Monaten an einer überproportionalen Teuerungswelle bei Lebensmitteln, welche die Kaufkraft unserer Bevölkerung zunehmend bedroht. Die Preisexplosion bei Gütern des täglichen Bedarfs ist mir, als Sozialsprecher der österreichischen EVP-Delegation, vor allem angesichts der sich in ganz Europa anbahnenden Sparpakete und Steuererhöhungen sowie des dadurch zu befürchtenden Rückgangs der Reallöhne ein Anliegen allerhöchster Priorität. Es sind speziell die Personen niedrigen Einkommens, wie etwa Senioren, für die das eine oft unüberwindbare Bürde in der Bewältigung des Lebensalltags darstellt.

1. Finanzmarkt-Spekulation: Einen inakzeptablen Faktor stellen die Auswüchse der Finanzmarkt-Spekulationen auf Lebensmittelrohstoffe dar. Das Wetten auf höhere Preise führt hier oft auch tatsächlich zum Preisanstieg im Supermarktregal. Bei vollster Kenntnis der für die Lebensmittelversorgung wichtigen Funktion der internationalen Rohstoffmärkte sowie der bereits durch die Kommission veranlassten Regulierung der Finanzmärkte im Allgemeinen stellt sich dennoch die dringende Frage:

Wie wird die Kommission die Missstände in der Lebensmittelspekulation ab sofort unterbinden?

2. Binnenmarkt: Besonders irritierend ist die Tatsache, dass Lebensmittel in Österreich oft um ein Vielfaches teurer gehandelt werden als in wirtschaftlich vergleichbaren Ländern wie Deutschland (Preisanstieg seit 1996: Ö 33 %, D 18,5 %). Aufgrund uns vorliegender vertraulicher Informationen seitens führender Handelsmanager steht fest, dass dies in hohem Ausmaß auf die Praxis internationaler Lebensmittelproduzenten zurückzuführen ist, beim Verkauf identischer Waren an österreichische Handelsunternehmen signifikant höhere Einstandspreise als in anderen EU-Staaten zu verlangen. Gegen diesen „Österreich-Aufschlag" sind Handelsbetriebe nicht nur in Österreich machtlos, weil ihnen von den internationalen Lebensmittelherstellern verboten wird, die identischen Markenartikel aus anderen EU-Staaten zum oft niedrigeren Preis zu importieren.

Wie wird die Kommission eine derart den Zielsetzungen des Binnenmarktes und des freien Handels krass widersprechende Praxis unterbinden, damit der Binnenmarkt nicht nur für Endverbraucher, sondern endlich auch für Handelsunternehmen zur Realität wird?

Wie wird die Kommission bei ihren zukünftigen Maßnahmen die europäischen Sozialpartner einbinden und die nationalen Regierungen in ihrem jeweiligen Zuständigkeitsbereich in die Verantwortung nehmen?

**Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission**
*(20. Februar 2012)*

1. Besser funktionierende Rohstoffmärkte sind ein zentrales Anliegen der Kommission: Dies hat sie unter anderem mit ihren am 20. Oktober 2011 angenommenen Vorschlägen zur Änderung der Richtlinie über Märkte für Finanzinstrumente (MiFID) und der Richtlinie über Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulationen (MAD) zum Ausdruck gebracht. Die Vorschläge zielen auf eine maßgebliche Verbesserung der Marktstabilität, der Transparenz und der Aufsichtsmodalitäten auf den Rohstoffderivatemärkten ab und beinhalten eine Reihe von Maßnahmen, die sich konkret auf diese Märkte beziehen, z. B. Abbau von Ausnahmeregelungen, mehr Transparenz, vorgeschriebene Positionsmeldungen, Positionslimits und Positionsmanagementbefugnisse sowie strengere Vorschriften, um Marktmissbrauch einzudämmen.

2. Die Preisgestaltung auf den Lebensmittelmärkten richtet sich nach externen und internen Faktoren wie Inputpreisen, Marktstrukturen und den jeweils geltenden Vorschriften. Diese Faktoren werden von den Kommissionsdienststellen und den Mitgliedern des Hochrangigen Forums für die Verbesserung der Funktionsweise der Lebensmittelversorgungskette geprüft. Im Rahmen dieses Forums haben sich Unternehmensverbände, die die Lebensmittelversorgungskette vertreten, auf Grundsätze guten Geschäftsgebarens geeinigt. 2012 wird sich das Forum mit den verschiedenen Möglichkeiten für die konkrete Umsetzung dieser Grundsätze befassen.

3. Sollte es Anzeichen dafür geben, dass Marktbeteiligte der Lebensmittelbranche innerhalb der Union eine Preisdiskriminierung oder Marktsegmentierung verfolgen, kann die Kommission diesen nachgehen, sobald ihr Anscheinsbeweise für ein solches Verhalten vorliegen. Die Kommission und die mitgliedstaatlichen Wettbewerbsbehörden sind bereits in Fällen tätig geworden, in denen die Wettbewerbsbedingungen in der Lebensmittelversorgungskette aufgrund einer Verletzung von Artikel 101 bzw. 102 AEUV beeinträchtigt wurden. Die Kommission arbeitet zur Zeit an einem ausführlichen Bericht über die wichtigsten Durchsetzungs-, Aufklärungs — und Monitoringmaßnahmen, die die mitgliedstaatlichen Wettbewerbsbehörden und die Kommission in den letzten Jahren in Bezug auf die Lebensmittelbranche ergriffen haben. Die Kommission wird dem Parlament mitteilen, wann der Bericht, dessen Veröffentlichung für dieses Jahr geplant ist, vorliegt.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000408/12**
**to the Commission**
**Heinz K. Becker (PPE)**
*(20 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Urgent European initiatives to combat rising food prices: combating speculation on the financial markets and the imposition of different cost prices

For some months, Europe has been experiencing a disproportionate wave of price rises involving foodstuffs, representing an increasing threat to the purchasing power of our population. The explosion in the prices of daily comestibles is a matter of the highest priority for me as the social affairs spokesperson of the Austrian EPP delegation, particularly in view of the forthcoming austerity packages and tax increases throughout Europe, and the consequent fears of a decline in income in real terms. Those on low incomes, such as the elderly, often find it impossible to get by on a day-to-day basis.

1. Financial market speculation: the excesses which are occurring in speculation in raw foodstuffs as commodities is an unacceptable factor. Betting on higher prices often leads to actual price rises on the supermarket shelves. While fully acknowledging the important function of the international raw materials markets for food supplies, and the general regulation of the financial markets already implemented by the Commission, one urgent question remains:

How does the Commission intend to put an end to the irregularities in foodstuff speculation with immediate effect?

2. The internal market: it is particularly irritating that foodstuffs in Austria are often traded at prices which are many times higher than in economically comparable countries, such as Germany (since 1996, prices have risen by 33 % in Austria compared with 18.5 % in Germany). Confidential information that has been made available to us by leading distribution managers indicates that this can mainly be explained by the practices of international food producers, who demand significantly higher cost prices when selling identical goods to Austrian distributors than in other EU countries. Like similar businesses in other countries, distributors in Austria are powerless in the face of this 'Austria surcharge' because they are prohibited by the international food manufacturers from importing the identical branded articles from other EU countries at prices which are often lower.

How does the Commission intend to put a stop to this practice, which flies in the face of the objectives of the internal market and free trade, so that the internal market will finally become a reality not just for consumers, but also for retail distributors?

How does the Commission intend to involve the European social partners in its future activities and induce national governments to take responsibility in their respective areas of competence?

**Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 February 2012)*

1. Improving the functioning of the commodity markets is one of the Commission's priorities, as shown by its proposals on the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) and the Market Abuse Directive (MAD) reviews adopted on 20 October 2011. The proposals are intended to significantly improve market stability, transparency and supervisory oversight in commodity derivative markets, and include a number of measures specific to the commodity derivatives markets, such as reducing exemptions, enhancing transparency, position reporting requirements, limits and management powers, and improved provisions to reduce abuse.

2. Price formation in food markets depends on external and internal factors, such as the cost of inputs, market structures and regulatory frameworks. These are being examined by Commission services and stakeholders in the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain. Within the Forum, business organisations representing the food supply chain agreed principles of good practice. In 2012, the Forum will work on options for the implementation of these principles in business practice.

3. The Commission stands ready to investigate any indications of intra-EU price discrimination or market segmentation by food sector operators, if it is provided with prima facie evidence of such behaviour. The Commission and National Competition Authorities (NCAs) have intervened where access to competitive supplies in the food supply chain has been jeopardised in violation of Article 101 or 102 TFEU. The Commission is preparing a detailed report of the most significant enforcement, advocacy and monitoring actions taken by NCAs and the Commission in recent years in the food sector. The Commission will inform Parliament of this report when published this year.

*(Slovenské znenie)*

**Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000610/12**
**Komisii**
**Vladimír Maňka (S&D)**
*(26. januára 2012)*

*Vec:* Trh s hračkami

Vedecký výbor pre zdravotné a environmentálne riziká dôrazne upozorňuje, že norma EN 71-3, predpísaná na meranie migrácie chemických prvkov, nie je spoľahlivá.

Aké kroky a v akom časovom rámci podnikne Komisia na riešenie tohto problému?

Aké sú iniciatívy Komisie v oblasti dohľadu nad trhom s hračkami?

**Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie**
*(29. februára 2012)*

Komisia spolu s členskými štátmi a zainteresovanými stranami, a najmä s Európskym výborom pre normalizáciu (CEN), zastáva názor výboru SCHER ([1]), pokiaľ ide o revíziu normy EN 71-3. Táto norma sa v súčasnosti reviduje v rámci novej smernice o bezpečnosti hračiek 2009/48/ES ([2]). Nová norma sa očakáva v júli 2013 (dátum nadobudnutia účinnosti chemických požiadaviek novej smernice o bezpečnosti hračiek).

Pokiaľ ide o dohľad nad trhom, je to predovšetkým zodpovednosť členských štátov. Podľa smernice o bezpečnosti hračiek musia členské štáty uskutočňovať kontroly, prijímať príslušné opatrenia proti hračkám, ktoré nie sú v súlade s predpismi a nachádzajú sa na trhu, a zodpovedajúcim spôsobom informovať Komisiu a iné členské štáty.

([1]) Vedecký výbor pre zdravotné a environmentálne riziká.
([2]) Ú. v. EÚ, L 170, 30.6.2009, s. 1.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000610/12**
**to the Commission**
**Vladimír Maňka (S&D)**
*(26 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The toy market

The Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks stresses that the EN 71-3 standard, which is prescribed to measure the migration of chemical elements, is not reliable.

What steps will the Commission take to resolve this problem, and in what timeframe?

What are the Commission's initiatives in the area of market surveillance for toys?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The Commission shared the SCHER's ([1]) opinion with Member States and stakeholders, and in particular with CEN, dealing with the revision of EN 71-3. This standard is currently being revised, in the framework of the new Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC ([2]). The new standard is expected for July 2013 (date of the entry into application of the chemical requirements of the new toy safety directive).

As regards market surveillance, it is primarily the responsibility of Member States. According to the Toy Safety Directive, Member States have to perform checks, take appropriate measures against non-compliant toys found on the market and inform the Commission and other Member States accordingly.

([1]) Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks.
([2]) OJ L 170, 30.6.2009, p. 1.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000611/12**
**à Comissão**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(26 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Envolvimento de entidades portuguesas nos Agrupamentos Europeus de Cooperação Territorial

Tendo em conta que:

— A Cooperação Territorial Europeia tem como principal objetivo estimular uma maior coesão territorial entre Estados-Membros ou entre estes e países terceiros;

— No Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2007/2013, a Comissão Europeia deu um novo impulso à coesão territorial, estimulando o desenvolvimento de projetos a nível transfronteiriço (vertente A), transnacional (vertente B) e inter-regional (vertente C);

— Portugal possui uma participação ativa nos programas do Objetivo 3, nomeadamente na vertente transfronteiriça (vertente A) e transnacional (vertente B), como é o caso dos programas: «Bacia do Mediterrâneo», «Espaço Mediterrâneo», «Espaço Atlântico», «Sudoeste Europeu», «Madeira-Açores-Canárias» e «Portugal-Espanha». As regiões portuguesas participam ainda em projetos de cooperação inter-regional;

— O Regulamento (CE) n.° 1082/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 5 de julho de 2006, estabeleceu a possibilidade de serem criados Agrupamentos Europeus de Cooperação Territorial (AECT) com o objetivo de eliminar obstáculos que subsistiam a uma eficaz e eficiente cooperação territorial.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

— Quantos AECT foram constituídos a nível europeu para gerir projetos de cooperação territorial europeia no período 2007/2013?

— Quais os AECT em que Portugal ou as suas regiões possuem uma posição ativa e quais são efetivamente as entidades portuguesas envolvidas e com responsabilidade na gestão?

— Tem a Comissão conhecimento de possíveis novos AECT que venham a ser constituídos e que envolvam entidades a nível nacional ou regional?

**Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão**
*(29 de fevereiro de 2012)*

O âmbito das atividades atualmente desenvolvidas pelos agrupamentos europeus de cooperação territorial (AECT) é muito amplo e abarca desde a gestão conjunta de recursos naturais a um melhor acesso a sistemas de transportes transfronteiras ou a uma gestão de serviços públicos de interesse geral (como a saúde ou a educação).

1. De acordo com as informações prestadas pela Plataforma AECT, gerida pelo Comité das Regiões, alguns dos 24 AECT atualmente existentes participaram nos convites para a apresentação de propostas no âmbito de vários programas de cooperação territorial europeia (CTE). Atualmente, o AECT Pyrénées-Méditerrannée é o único que executa um projecto (CreaMed), no âmbito do programa Interreg IV B SUDOE. Contudo, o AECT Grande Région (Luxemburgo, Région Wallonne da Bélgica, região Lorraine de França e os Länder alemães de Rhineland-Pfalz e Saarland) constitui um exemplo de AECT que funciona na qualidade de autoridade de gestão para um programa transfronteiriço de cooperação territorial europeia. Do mesmo modo, o AECT Ister-Granum desenvolveu um fundo de solidariedade utilizado por alguns dos seus parceiros para cofinanciar as ações de diferentes programas do FEDER.

2. Entre os AECT que envolvem entidades portuguesas, destaca-se o Galicia-Norte de Portugal que executa o planeamento operacional da cooperação territorial entre Espanha e Portugal no domínio em causa.

3. Entre os AECT mais recentemente estabelecidos que envolvem organismos nacionais ou regionais encontram-se o AECT Abaúj-Abaújban, que inclui 14 autoridades locais e regionais da Hungria e da Eslováquia, e o AECT Euregio Tirolo-Alto Adige-Trentino, que envolve parceiros regionais de Itália e Áustria.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000611/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(26 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Involvement of Portuguese bodies in European Groupings for Territorial Cooperation

Given that:

— European Territorial Cooperation is mainly aimed at promoting greater territorial cohesion among Member States or between Member States and third countries;

— in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2007-13, the Commission gave new impetus to territorial cohesion, with a view to promoting crossborder (component A), transnational (component B) and interregional (component C) project development;

— Portugal participates actively in the programmes under Objective 3, especially in the crossborder and transnational aspects (components A and B); this applies to such programmes as those for the Mediterranean basin, the Mediterranean area, the Atlantic area, south-west Europe, Madeira/the Azores/the Canary Islands, and Portugal/Spain; the Portuguese regions also participate in interregional cooperation projects;

— Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 lays down the possibility of creating European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), with the aim of removing obstacles to effective and efficient territorial cooperation,

can the Commission state:

— how many EGTCs have been established in Europe for purposes of managing European territorial cooperation projects for the period 2007-13;

— which EGTCs in Portugal or its regions have an active role, and which Portuguese bodies are actively involved in management responsibilities;

— whether it is aware of any new EGTCs that have been established involving national or regional bodies?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The scope of activities currently undertaken by European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) is very broad, ranging from the joint management of natural resources, to improved access to cross-border transport systems or management of services of general interest (such as health or education).

1. According to the information provided by the EGTC Platform managed by the Committee of the Regions, there are currently 24 EGTCs in existence, of which several have applied to calls for proposals under various European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes. At present, Pyrénées-Méditerrannée is the only EGTC running a project (CreaMed), in the framework of the Interreg IV B SUDOE Programme. However, EGTC Grande Région (Luxembourg, the Région Wallonne (Belgium), Lorraine (France) and the German *Länder* of Rhineland-Pfalz and Saarland) is an example of an EGTC acting as managing authority for an ETC cross-border cooperation programme. Likewise, EGTC Ister-Granum has developed a solidarity fund used by some of its partners to co-finance different actions under ERDF programmes.

2. Among EGTCs involving Portuguese entities, EGTC Galicia-Norte de Portugal implements the Operational Planning of territorial cooperation between Spain and Portugal in the area concerned.

3. Some of the most recently established EGTCs involving national or regional bodies are EGTC Abaúj-Abaújban, which includes 14 local and regional authorities from Hungary and Slovakia**,** and EGTC Euregio Tirolo-Alto Adige-Trentino, with regional partners from Italy and Austria.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000614/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Violazione della direttiva uccelli da parte della Regione Sardegna per approvazione del calendario venatorio 2011/2012 senza il parere obbligatorio dell'I.S.P.R.A.

In Sardegna (Italia), su ricorso di varie associazioni ambientaliste come Gruppo d'intervento giuridico, Lega per l'abolizione della caccia e Amici della terra, il Consiglio di Stato il 21 dicembre 2011 ([1]) ha disposto la sospensiva del calendario venatorio regionale sardo, riformando l'ordinanza cautelare del T.A.R. Sardegna del 14 novembre 2011 ([2]) .

Nonostante tale decisione, la Regione autonoma ha fissato ugualmente il calendario della stagione venatoria 2011-2012, con decreto dell'Assessore difesa ambiente del 23 dicembre 2011 ([3]) e con decreto dell'Assessore difesa ambiente del 4 gennaio 2012 ([4]) , senza il previsto parere vincolante dell' I.S.P.R.A. (l'Istituto superiore per la protezione e la ricerca ambientale) e senza procedere al censimento faunistico alternativo validato scientificamente, in violazione della direttiva uccelli, n. 2009/147/CE e degli articoli 7 e 18 della legge italiana sulla tutela della fauna selvatica, la n. 157/1992.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti esposti?

2. Intende chiedere chiarimenti e prendere opportuni provvedimenti nei confronti dell'autorità regionale sarda che, come già accaduto in passato, non ottempera agli obblighi previsti nella direttiva uccelli e nella normativa italiana di recepimento?

**Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(5 marzo 2012)*

1. Sì, la Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che la Regione Sardegna ha approvato il calendario venatorio per il 2011/2012 stabilendo, per determinate specie, periodi di caccia più lunghi di quanto previsto dalla normativa nazionale. La Commissione deduce, anche dal testo delle citate decisioni dei tribunali amministrativi regionali e nazionali, che tale decisione è stata adottata dalla Regione Sardegna senza il parere dell'Istituto superiore per la protezione e la ricerca ambientale, che è previsto dalla legislazione nazionale. La Commissione ha inoltre ricevuto informazioni riguardo alle più recenti decisioni regionali citate dall'onorevole parlamentare (decreti del 23.12.2011 e del 7.1.2012).

2. La Commissione valuterà tutte le informazioni disponibili e determinerà le eventuali misure appropriate, al fine di assicurare il rispetto delle disposizioni pertinenti della direttiva sugli uccelli ([5]), in particolare dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 4, che stabilisce i limiti e le condizioni delle attività venatorie.

([1]) ordinanza Consiglio di Stato Sez. V, 21 dicembre 2011, n. 9460.
([2]) ordinanza cautelare T.A.R. Sardegna, Sez. II, 14 novembre 2011, n. 452.
([3]) decreto n. 29968/DecA/44 del 23 dicembre 2011 pubblicato in B.U.R.A.S. n. 38, parti I e II, del 29 dicembre 2011.
([4]) decreto Assessore difesa ambiente n. 131/DecA/10 del 4 gennaio 2012 pubblicato in B.U.R.A.S. n. 1, parti I e II, del 7 gennaio 2012.
([5]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 30 novembre 2009, concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 20 del 26.1.2010, pag. 7) che codifica la direttiva 79/409/CEE del Consiglio, del 2 aprile 1979, concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 103 del 25.4.1979).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000614/12**
**to the Commission**
**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Violation of the Birds Directive by the Region of Sardinia in approving the 2011/2012 hunting calendar without the obligatory opinion of I.S.P.R.A (Institute for Environmental Protection and Research)

In Sardinia, Italy, following appeals by various environmental associations such as the *Gruppo d'intervento giuridico* (Italian Legal Intervention Group), the Italian League for the Abolition of Hunting and Friends of the Earth, on 21 December 2011 the Italian Council of State ([1]) ordered the suspension of the Sardinian regional hunting calendar, amending the precautionary order by the Regional Administrative Court of Sardinia of 14 November 2011 ([2])

Despite this decision, the Sardinia Region set its calendar for the 2011-12 hunting season all the same, by an executive order of the environmental protection councillor of 23 December 2011 ([3]) and by a further order of 4 January 2012 ([4]) from the same councillor, without the required binding opinion of I.S.P.R.A. (Institute for Environmental Protection and Research) and without conducting a scientifically validated alternative faunal census. This is in breach of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) and of Articles 7 and 18 of Italian Law No 157/1992 on the protection of wildlife.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. Does it intend to seek clarification and take appropriate measures with respect to the Sardinian regional authority which, as in the past, is failing to comply with the requirements laid down in the Birds Directive and in the Italian implementing regulations?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

1. Yes, the Commission is aware that the region of Sardinia has approved its hunting calendar for 2011/2012 setting, for certain species, longer hunting periods than foreseen in the national law. The Commission understands, also from the text of the mentioned decisions of the regional and national administrative courts that such a decision by the region of Sardinia was taken without the opinion of the national Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, which is required by national law. The Commission has also received information about the more recent regional decisions mentioned by the Honourable Member (decrees of 23.12.2011 and of 7.1.2012).

2. The Commission will assess all the available information and will determine any further appropriate steps in order to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Birds Directive ([5]), namely its Article 7 paragraph 4, which sets specific limits and conditions to hunting activities.

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([1]) Council of State order Sec. V, 21 December 2011, No 9460.
([2]) precautionary order by the Regional Administrative Court of Sardinia, Sec. II, 14 November 2011, No 452.
([3]) Executive Order No 29968 /DecA/44 of 23 December 2011 published in the Official Bulletin of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (BURAS) No 38, Parts I and II of 29 December 2011.
([4]) environmental protection Councillor decree No 131 DecA/10 of 4 January 2012 published in the Official Bulletin of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (BURAS) No 1, Parts I and II, of 7 January 2012.
([5]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010) that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 103, 25.4.1979).

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000615/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**
*(26. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Schiffsunglück der „Costa Concordia“ am 13.1.2012 vor der toskanischen Küste

Das tragische Schiffsunglück dieser Tage vor der toskanischen Küste (Italien) indiziert, dass trotz modernster Technologie nach wie vor menschliches Versagen derartige Katastrophen verursachen kann. Die Frage ist, inwieweit verbesserte Trainings-, Qualifikations- und Schulungsmaßnahmen (Zertifizierungen) einen Beitrag zu mehr Sicherheit für Passagiere, Seeverkehr und Umwelt leisten können.

1. Welche Maßnahmen (Regulierungen etc.) hat die Kommission ergriffen, um die Qualität der Ausbildung des seefahrenden Personals innerhalb der Union zu standardisieren und damit zu verbessern?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, im Nachgang zu oben geschildertem Unglück diesbezüglich tätig zu werden?

3. Wenn ja, welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission zu unternehmen?

**Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission**
*(24. Februar 2012)*

1. Im EU-Recht sind bereits detaillierte einheitliche Anforderungen für die Ausbildung von Seeleuten und die Erteilung von Befähigungszeugnissen vorgeschrieben, die exakt den auf internationaler Ebene vereinbarten Normen entsprechen. Die Ausbildung von Seeleuten und die Erteilung von Befähigungszeugnissen sind im Übereinkommen der Internationalen Seeschifffahrts-Organisation (IMO) von 1978 über Normen für die Ausbildung, die Erteilung von Befähigungszeugnissen und den Wachdienst von Seeleuten („STCW-Übereinkommen“) geregelt. Das STCW-Übereinkommen wurde 1994 durch eine Richtlinie in EU-Recht aufgenommen, die mehrfach geändert wurde, um jeweils der Überarbeitung des STCW-Übereinkommens Rechnung zu tragen. Die einschlägigen EU-Vorschriften wurden 2008 in der derzeit geltenden Richtlinie 2008/106/EG ([1]) neu gefasst. Die Kommission überprüft die Umsetzung dieser Richtlinie durch die Mitgliedstaaten durch Inspektionen, die von der Europäischen Agentur für die Sicherheit des Seeverkehrs (EMSA) durchgeführt werden. Darüber hinaus prüft die Kommission mit Unterstützung der EMSA, ob die in Drittstaaten vorhandenen Systeme für die Ausbildung von Seeleuten und die Erteilung von Befähigungszeugnissen mit dem STCW-Übereinkommen in Einklang stehen.

2 und 3. Hinsichtlich weiterer Maßnahmen auf diesem Gebiet möchte die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihren Vorschlag aus dem Jahr 2011 ([2]) hinweisen, durch den die oben genannte Richtlinie aktualisiert und an die jüngsten Änderungen des STCW-Übereinkommens (Manila-Änderungen von 2009) angepasst werden soll. Über diesen Vorschlag berät derzeit das Europäische Parlament. Zusätzlich zu diesen Maßnahmen im Bereich der Ausbildung und Zeugniserteilung hat die Kommission mit der Überarbeitung der Vorschriften für die Fahrgastsicherheit begonnen, in deren Folge möglicherweise entsprechende Vorschläge vorgelegt werden.

([1]) Richtlinie 2008/106/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 19. November 2008 über Mindestanforderungen für die Ausbildung von Seeleuten (ABl. L 323 vom 3.12.2008, S. 33-61).
([2]) KOM(2011)555.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000615/12**
**to the Commission**
**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**
*(26 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The '*Costa Concordia*' shipwreck on 13 January 2012 off the Tuscan coast

The recent tragic shipwreck off the coast of Tuscany (Italy) goes to show that despite the latest technology, human error can still cause disasters of this sort. The question is to what extent improved training, qualification and educational measures (certification) can contribute to greater safety for passengers, maritime transport and the environment.

1. What measures (regulations, etc.) has the Commission taken in order to standardise and thereby improve the quality of training for ships' crews within the Union?

2. Does the Commission intend to take action in this area following the abovementioned shipwreck?

3. Is so, what measures does the Commission intend to take?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(24 February 2012)*

1. EC law already contains detailed mandatory common standards for training and certification of seafarers, which strictly reflect the ones agreed upon at an international level. Training and certification of seafarers is the subject-matter of the Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers ('STCW Convention') concluded in 1978 under the auspices of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). The STCW Convention was integrated into the EC law in 1994 by means of a directive, which was modified many times following the revision of the STCW Convention. The EU rules in this field were recast in 2008 by Directive 2008/106/EC ([1]), currently in force. The Commission verifies the implementation by Member States of this directive by means of inspections carried out by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). Furthermore, the Commission assisted by EMSA assesses the compliance of maritime education and seafarers certification systems of non-EU countries with the STCW Convention.

2 and 3. Regarding further measures in this area, the Commission wishes to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to its 2011 proposal ([2]) to update the above directive in order to bring this into line with the latest amendment to the STCW Convention (the 2009 Manila Amendment). This proposal is currently under consideration by the European Parliament. In addition to certification and training, the Commission has started work on a review of the rules on passenger safety which may lead to appropriate proposals.

([1]) Directive 2008/106/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on the minimum level of training of seafarers, OJ L 323, 3.12.2008, p. 33-61.
([2]) COM(2011) 555.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000617/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Il segreto bancario

Dopo la pubblicazione — avvenuta l'estate scorsa — di un'inchiesta del New York Time nella quale si denuncia che nelle more della «War on Terror» il governo americano acquisisce ormai da anni la totalità dei dati del consorzio interbancario SWIFT, ci si interroga su che cosa è accaduto al segreto bancario degli europei. Dall'inchiesta risulta infatti che non solo vengono acquisiti i dati bancari dei cittadini americani, ma che anche quelli dei cittadini europei che usufruiscono del sistema SWIFT vengono intercettati. Già il governo del Belgio, dove ha sede il consorzio SWIFT, ha dichiarato illegale il trasferimento di questi dati all'amministrazione americano. La Svizzera, a quanto pare, ha riconosciuto la morte del segreto bancario e la stessa UE ha chiesto di discutere la cosa con urgenza.

1. Può la Commissione riferire se questa discussione abbia avuto luogo e, in caso affermativo, con quale esito?

2. Non ritiene che la scomparsa del segreto bancario rappresenti un grave attentato alla privacy ed al sacrosanto principio della proprietà privata?

3. Ritiene ammissibile che dei «burocrati», americani od europei, possano violare il segreto bancario senza essere autorizzati da un magistrato nell'ambito di una ipotesi di reato?

4. Quali iniziative intende intraprendere per garantire il diritto a tale segreto ai cittadini europei?

**Risposta data da Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione**
*(8 marzo 2012)*

In generale, la Commissione riconosce l'importanza della riservatezza delle informazioni finanziarie personali dei clienti delle banche; tuttavia ciò non deve ostacolare la lotta a reati gravi quali il riciclaggio di denaro o il finanziamento del terrorismo. La raccomandazione 9 del Gruppo di azione finanziaria, l'organismo che definisce gli standard globali nell'ambito del contrasto al riciclaggio di denaro e al finanziamento del terrorismo, chiede infatti esplicitamente agli Stati di assicurare che la legislazione sul segreto bancario non ostacoli l'attuazione di tali standard. Inoltre, l'articolo 26 della terza direttiva antiriciclaggio (direttiva 60/2005/CE) stabilisce che la comunicazione in buona fede, conformemente all'obbligo di segnalare le operazioni sospette, non costituisce una violazione di eventuali restrizioni alla comunicazione di informazioni.

I dati bancari delle persone fisiche costituiscono dati personali e pertanto sono tutelati dal diritto fondamentale alla protezione dei dati di carattere personale, sancito dall'articolo 8 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea. Tuttavia, ai sensi dell'articolo 52 della Carta, e nel rispetto del principio di proporzionalità, possono essere apportate limitazioni a tale diritto fondamentale laddove ciò sia necessario per combattere il riciclaggio di denaro o il finanziamento del terrorismo.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000617/12**
**to the Commission**
**Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Banking secrecy

Following the publication last summer of an investigation by the *New York Times* in which it reported that as part of its 'War on Terror', the US Government had for many years had access to the entire database of the interbank consortium SWIFT, we question what has happened to the banking secrecy of Europeans. The investigation showed that not only had the banking details of US citizens been acquired, but that those of EU citizens using the SWIFT system were also being intercepted. The government of Belgium, where the headquarters of the SWIFT consortium are located, has already declared the transfer of these data to the US administration to be illegal. Switzerland, it would appear, has acknowledged the death of banking secrecy and the EU itself has asked for the matter to be discussed with urgency.

1. Can the Commission say whether these discussions have taken place and, if so, what the outcome was?

2. Does it not consider that the disappearance of banking secrecy represents a serious attack on privacy and the sacrosanct principle of private property?

3. Does it consider it acceptable that American or European 'bureaucrats' are able to contravene banking secrecy without the authorisation of a magistrate in the context of an alleged offence?

4. What measures does it intend to take to guarantee the right of European citizens to banking secrecy?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

While the Commission is in no doubt of the importance of bank customers' wish for confidentiality of personal financial information in general, this must not thwart efforts to effectively fight serious crime such as money laundering or the financing of terrorism. Consequently Recommendation 9 of the Financial Action Task Force, the global standard setter in the context of anti-money laundering and countering terrorist financing, explicitly asks countries to ensure that financial institution secrecy laws do not inhibit the implementation of these global standards. In addition, Article 26 of the 3rd Anti-Money Laundering Directive (Directive 2005/60/EC) stipulates that a disclosure in good faith to comply with the obligation to report suspicious transactions shall not constitute the breach of any restriction on disclosure of information.

Banking details of natural persons constitute personal data, and are protected by the fundamental right to the protection of personal data enshrined in Article 8 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. However, in accordance with Article 52 of the Charter, and subject to the principle of proportionality, this fundamental right may be restricted when this is necessary to fight money laundering and terrorist financing.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000618/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**
*(26 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Modificación de la Ley de costas española

El Informe sobre el impacto de la urbanización extensiva en España en los derechos individuales de los ciudadanos europeos, el medio ambiente y la aplicación del Derecho comunitario, con fundamento en determinadas peticiones recibidas — conocido como Informe Auken —, aprobado la pasada legislatura en el Parlamento Europeo, hizo una precisa descripción de las graves consecuencias sociales y ambientales de la presión urbanística en las costas del Estado español, especialmente en la mediterránea. Sin lugar a dudas, algunos aspectos de la Ley de costas se han aplicado con arbitrariedad y de forma caótica, afectando a centenares de propietarios que adquirieron sus viviendas legalmente, tal y como reconoce el citado informe.

Es decir, una reforma parcial de la Ley podría estar justificada. Sin embargo, la reforma anunciada por el nuevo ministro de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente del Estado Español, plantea una reforma integral de la Ley, desprotegiendo al litoral y permitiendo la urbanización sin restricciones. Esta reforma, además, se integra dentro de una estrategia gubernamental de potenciación del sector de la construcción para contribuir a la salida de la crisis económica.

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión respecto a la anunciada reforma de la Ley de costas, que podría desproteger el litoral español?

**Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión**
*(16 de marzo de 2012)*

La Comisión está preocupada por el aumento en el litoral mediterráneo de presiones medioambientales que amenazan los ecosistemas costeros.

La UE ha establecido varios instrumentos legislativos para preservar los recursos costeros. Entre esos instrumentos se cuentan la Directiva marco sobre la Estrategia Marina ([1]), las Directivas de Aves y de Hábitats ([2]) y la Directiva marco del Agua ([3]). La Comisión, además, adoptó en 2011 la Estrategia de Biodiversidad 2020, que reviste particular importancia para el litoral de la UE, ya que sólo el 8 % de los hábitats costeros presenta un estado de conservación favorable y que únicamente el 11 % de las especies que habitan esas zonas se encuentra en buenas condiciones.

Habida cuenta de la importancia de las zonas costeras como fuente de recursos ecológicos, económicos y sociales y con el fin de impulsar una respuesta integrada, la Unión Europea adoptó en 2002 la Recomendación sobre la gestión integrada de las zonas costeras (ICZM) ([4]) y ratificó en 2010 el Protocolo ICZM ([5]) del Convenio de Barcelona para el Mar Mediterráneo.

El Gobierno español no ha publicado todavía los textos legales para la anunciada reforma de la Ley de Costas. Hasta que tenga acceso a ellos, la Comisión no podrá evaluar los cambios que se han anunciado. En esa evaluación, la Comisión tendrá presentes las obligaciones internacionales que incumben a España en virtud del Convenio de Barcelona, así como el acervo existente en materia de ecosistemas costeros.

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([1]) Directiva 2008/56/CE (DO L 164 de 25.6.2008).
([2]) Directiva 2009/147/CE (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010) y Directiva 92/43/CEE (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([3]) Directiva 2000/60/CE (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).
([4]) Recomendación 2002/413/CE (DO L 148 de 6.6.2002).
([5]) Decisión 2009/89/CE del Consejo, de 4 de diciembre de 2008, relativa a la firma, en nombre de la Comunidad Europea, del Protocolo sobre la gestión integrada de las zonas costeras del Mediterráneo al Convenio para la Protección del Medio Marino y de la Región Costera del Mediterráneo (DO L 34 de 4.2.2009).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000618/12**
**to the Commission**
**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**
*(26 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Amendment to Spanish Coastal Law

The report on the impact of extensive urbanisation in Spain on individual rights of European citizens, on the environment and on the application of EC law, based upon petitions received — the Auken Report — approved in Parliament's last parliamentary term, gave a detailed description of the serious social and environmental consequences of urban planning pressure on coasts in Spain, and especially on the Mediterranean coast. It is certainly the case that some aspects of the Coastal Law have been applied arbitrarily and chaotically, affecting hundreds of owners of legally acquired homes, as the aforementioned report acknowledges.

Partial reform of the law could therefore be justified. However, the reform announced by the new Spanish Government Minister for Agriculture, Food and Environment envisages a complete reform of the law, leaving the coast unprotected and allowing unrestricted urbanisation. This reform, moreover, is part of a government strategy to strengthen the construction sector to help with recovery from the economic crisis.

What is the Commission's opinion of the proposed reform of the Coastal Law, which could leave the Spanish coast unprotected?

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

The Commission is concerned about the increase in environmental pressures on the Mediterranean Sea Coast which is threatening coastal ecosystems.

In order to preserve coastal resources, the EU has established several legislative instruments, including the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([1]), the Birds and Habitat Directives ([2]) and the Water Framework Directive ([3]). In 2011, the Commission adopted the Biodiversity Strategy 2020, particularly relevant for coastal areas as only 8 % of EU coastal habitats have a favourable conservation status, and only 11 % of EU coastal species are in a favourable condition.

Given the importance of coastal zones as ecological, economic and social resources, and in order to support an integrated response, the European Union has adopted the recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management ([4]) (ICZM) in 2002, and ratified the ICZM Protocol ([5]) to the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean in 2010.

The Spanish Government has not yet published the legal texts relating to the announced reform of the Coastal law. The Commission will only be in a position to assess the announced changes once the legal texts become available. The Commission's assessment will take into account the international obligations of Spain resulting from the Barcelona Convention as well as the existing *acquis* relating to coastal ecosystems.

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([1]) Directive 2008/56/EC, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010 and Directive 92/43/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.
([4]) Recommendation 2002/413/EC, OJ L 148, 6.6.2002.
([5]) 2009/89/EC: Council Decision of 4 December 2008 on the signing, on behalf of the European Community, of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, OJ L 34, 4.2.2009.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000619/12**
**à Comissão**
**Ana Gomes (S&D)**
*(19 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Privatização da REN

No quadro do Programa de Assistência Financeira UE/FMI/BCE a Portugal, o Governo português vendeu a sua participação na empresa EDP (Energias de Portugal) à Three Gorges Corporation, empresa do Estado chinês, e já anunciou a venda de 25 % do capital da REN (Rede Elétrica Nacional, S.A.) à State Grid, que é igualmente uma empresa controlada pelo Estado chinês.

Ao poder controlar as duas empresas, o Estado chinês adquire uma capacidade de acesso e de interferência num setor de tecnologia avançada e de importância estratégica para Portugal e, consequentemente, para a Europa. Assume, assim, uma posição que pode pôr em causa a autonomia estratégica da UE e, portanto, de vantagem no que respeita às necessidades e interesses energéticos da UE e às relações UE/China.

Tendo em atenção o facto de a China ser uma potência mundial cujo Governo despreza os direitos humanos básicos do seu povo, assim como a proteção do ambiente no seu próprio território, e ser obviamente guiada por interesses estratégicos e não apenas procurando retorno financeiro de curto prazo no investimento que escolhe fazer na rede de distribuição energética europeia, em vez de o fazer na rede chinesa, muito apreciaria saber se a Comissão não tem qualquer recomendação, objeção ou prevenção a fazer ao Governo de Portugal no que respeita a estas «privatizações» em favor do Partido comunista chinês, nomeadamente face às implicações para a política externa e a segurança energética da UE.

**Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão**
*(27 de abril de 2012)*

O Tratado da União Europeia define claramente o compromisso da UE de abertura ao investimento direto estrangeiro (IDE), inclusive de países terceiros. Estabelece igualmente a competência exclusiva da UE pelo IDE, no âmbito da política comercial comum, e pela supressão progressiva das restrições ao IDE. Na sua qualidade de maior fonte e destino mundial de investimento estrangeiro direto, a União Europeia é um dos grandes beneficiários de um sistema económico mundial aberto e está empenhada em garantir que os seus mercados se mantenham abertos. Esta abertura deve ser sustentada pelo esforço de cooperação das empresas estatais, a fim de melhorar o seu nível de governação e a qualidade das informações que facultam aos mercados. Qualquer empresa estrangeira que adquira uma sociedade europeia ou uma participação numa sociedade europeia tem de agir em conformidade com as regras em matéria de concorrência e de transparência aplicáveis na UE e no Estado-Membro em questão, incluindo, neste caso, as regras específicas aplicáveis ao setor da energia.

Tem vindo a verificar-se um aumento dos investimentos por parte de investidores controlados pelo Estado, como sejam fundos soberanos ou empresas públicas, mas a União Europeia congratula-se com o investimento desses investidores com fins comerciais e assinala a importância da transparência das políticas de investimento. Se esses investimentos tiverem sido motivados por objetivos não comerciais, mas políticos, poderão ser fonte de preocupações legítimas de segurança nacional. No entanto, as medidas nacionais em caso de preocupações de segurança devem ser transparentes, previsíveis e proporcionais ao problema de segurança nacional identificado e circunscrito de forma precisa, a fim de evitar a perturbação indevida do fluxo de investimento e de maneira a manter o forte empenho da UE num enquadramento de abertura ao investimento.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000619/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Gomes (S&D)**
*(19 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Privatisation of REN

Within the framework of the EU/IMF/ECB Assistance Programme to Portugal, the Portuguese Government sold its stake in the EDP (Energias de Portugal) to the Three Gorges Corporation, a state-owned Chinese company, and has just announced the sale of a 25 % stake in REN (Rede Elétrica Nacional, S.A.) to State Grid, which is also a state-owned Chinese company.

In gaining control of these two companies, the Chinese State has acquired the potential to access and control an advanced technology sector of strategic importance to Portugal and hence to Europe. It is thereby in a position which might jeopardise the European Union's strategic autonomy, and put it in an advantageous position as regards the EU's energy needs and interests, and EU-China relations.

China is a world power whose Government has no respect for its people's basic human rights, or for protecting the environment within its territory, and which is clearly guided by strategic interests, not just by the short-term financial return on the investment it has chosen to make in the European energy distribution network rather than in its domestic network. Given the above, will the Commission state whether it intends to make any recommendations, raise any objections or issue any warnings to the Portuguese Government as regards these 'privatisations' in favour of the Chinese Communist Party, particularly given the implications for the EU's foreign policy and energy security.

**Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 April 2012)*

The Treaty on the European Union sets out clearly the EU's commitment to openness towards foreign direct investment (FDI) including from third countries. It also establishes the EU's exclusive competence for FDI under the Common Commercial Policy and to progressively abolish restrictions to FDI. As the world's largest source and destination of FDI, the EU is a major beneficiary of an open world economic system and is committed to ensuring that its markets remain open. The case for openness must be sustained by engaging state controlled companies in a cooperative effort to enhance their governance standards and the quality of information they provide to markets. Any foreign company that acquires a European company or a stake in it has to act in accordance with the rules on competition and transparency applicable in the EU and the Member State in question, including in this case specific rules applicable to the energy sector.

There has been a growth of investments by government-controlled investors such as sovereign wealth funds or state-owned enterprises but the EU welcomes commercially-driven investment from these investors and notes the importance of transparent investment policies. If such investments were motivated by political rather than commercial objectives, they could be a source of legitimate national security concerns. However, measures that address national security concerns should be transparent, predictable and proportionate to the national security issue identified, and precisely circumscribed so as to avoid unduly disrupting the flow of investment and maintaing the EU's strong commitment to an open investment environment.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000620/12**
**à Comissão**
**Ana Gomes (S&D)**
*(26 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Privatização da REN

No quadro do Programa de Assistência Financeira UE/FMI a Portugal, o Governo português vendeu a sua participação na empresa EDP à Three Gorges Corporation, empresa do Estado chinês.

Uma das companhias concorrentes à privatização da portuguesa REN — Rede Elétrica Nacional — é também uma empresa estatal chinesa, a State Grid.

Tendo em atenção que, ao controlar como principal acionista a EDP e a REN, o Estado chinês adquirirá uma capacidade de acesso e de interferência num setor de tecnologia avançada e de importância estratégica, incluindo para a segurança e defesa, de Portugal e da UE, muito apreciaria saber se a Comissão não tem qualquer recomendação, objeção ou prevenção a fazer ao Governo de Portugal no que respeita a estas «privatizações».

**Resposta dada por Günther Oettinger em nome da Comissão**
*(12 de março de 2012)*

A liberdade de circulação de capitais na UE permite que os investimentos de capital estrangeiro se realizem sem entraves em toda a UE. Quando os Estados-Membros decidem vender ações em empresas estatais, cabe aos Estados-Membros avaliar as propostas e escolher o investidor. Do ponto de vista da legislação da UE relativa ao mercado interno da energia, é possível a aquisição de operadores de redes de transporte, desde que sejam respeitadas as regras em matéria de dissociação, nomeadamente o artigo 9.° das Diretivas Eletricidade e Gás ([1]). O modelo aplicável a REN, em conformidade com a legislação da UE e a legislação portuguesa, é a plena dissociação da propriedade. Nesse modelo, os acionistas que exercem direitos nos operadores de redes de transporte não podem exercer, ao mesmo tempo, direitos sobre uma empresa que exerça quaisquer atividades de produção ou de abastecimento no domínio da eletricidade ou do gás. A situação de independência efetiva entre as duas empresas chinesas em causa terá de ser avaliada em pormenor pela entidade reguladora portuguesa no contexto do procedimento de certificação previsto para a REN.

([1]) Diretiva 2009/72/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 13 de julho de 2009, que estabelece regras comuns para o mercado interno da eletricidade e que revoga a Diretiva 2003/54/CE, e Diretiva 2009/73/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 13 de julho de 2009, que estabelece regras comuns para o mercado interno do gás natural e que revoga a Diretiva 2003/55/CE, JO L 211 de 14.8.2009.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000620/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Gomes (S&D)**
*(26 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Privatisation of REN

In the framework of the EU-IMF Financial Assistance Programme for Portugal, the Portuguese Government sold its shareholding in EDP to Three Gorges Corporation, a company of the Chinese State.

One of the companies tendering for the privatisation of the Portuguese REN — Réde Electrica Nacional — is also a state-owned Chinese company, State Grid.

Given that, by taking control of EDP and REN as the majority shareholder, the Chinese State will acquire the ability to access and interfere with a sector which is technologically advanced and strategically important, not least for Portuguese and EU security and defence, would the Commission state whether it intends to make any recommendations, raise any objections or issue any warnings to the Portuguese Government as regards these 'privatisations'?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 March 2012)*

Freedom of movement of capital within the EU enables unhindered foreign capital investments across the EU. When Member States decide to sell shares in state owned companies it is up to the Member States to assess the bids and chose the investor. From the perspective of the EU internal energy market legislation, the acquisition of transmission system operators is possible, provided that the rules on unbundling, in particular Article 9 of the Electricity Directive and Gas Directives ([1]), are respected. The unbundling model applicable to REN, in accordance with EU and Portuguese law, is full ownership unbundling. In this model, shareholders exercising rights in the Transmission System Operators cannot at the same time exercise any rights over an undertaking performing any production or supply activities in the electricity or gas field. The effective independence between the two Chinese companies concerned will have to be assessed in detail by the Portuguese Regulator in the context of the certification procedure foreseen for REN.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC, and Directive 2009/73/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas and repealing Directive 2003/55/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000624/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Interventi per favorire l'utilizzo dei pagamenti elettronici

Il governo italiano, presieduto da Mario Monti, nella lotta all'evasione fiscale sta cercando di diffondere l'utilizzo di bancomat e pagamenti elettronici, facendo diminuire nella popolazione il ricorso all'utilizzo del contante, come nel caso delle pensioni superiori ai mille euro che non potranno più essere riscosse in contanti. A questa misura, però, non corrispondono incentivi alla diffusione della moneta elettronica, che addirittura ha dei costi maggiori per la popolazione.

Ad esempio, per pagare il bollo auto e il canone della televisione pubblica se si opta per il pagamento elettronico con carta di credito si spenderà una commissione superiore a quella applicata da Poste Italiane con il contante.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, si chiede quindi alla Commissione quanto segue:

quali misure intende adottare per calmierare i costi dei pagamenti elettronici ed uguagliarli in tutta Europa, portandoli sui livelli del contante, e quindi per favorire l'utilizzo di strumenti alternativi alle banconote, considerato che anche un recente studio della Banca centrale europea (BCE) ha certificato una tendenza per gli italiani all'utilizzo di denaro contante che evidenzia come gli abitanti del nostro paese fatichino ad acquisire confidenza e fiducia con i pagamenti elettronici?

**Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione**
*(13 marzo 2012)*

Nell'area dei pagamenti elettronici, la Commissione si sta attualmente impegnando a creare un quadro giuridico che stimoli la crescita, la competitività e l'innovazione, e promuova l'uso di norme e infrastrutture tecniche comuni. Tali sforzi dovrebbero contribuire alla creazione di un mercato unico dei pagamenti che sia moderno, rispettoso dei consumatori e delle imprese e che possa offrire il miglior rapporto qualità/prezzo. Sono già stati compiuti passi importanti nel cammino verso questo obiettivo, il più recente dei quali consiste nell'adozione del regolamento che fissa i requisiti tecnici e operativi per i bonifici e gli addebiti diretti in euro ([1]) e l'avvio di una consultazione pubblica sul Libro verde «Verso un mercato europeo integrato dei pagamenti tramite carte, internet e telefono mobile» ([2]).

La Commissione è del parere che i pagamenti elettronici possano offrire molti vantaggi per i consumatori, le imprese e gli Stati membri, grazie al fatto che tali operazioni posso essere registrate. L'uso dei mezzi di pagamento elettronici comporta una protezione globale dei diritti degli utenti dei servizi di pagamento in caso di errore nell'operazione e, diversamente dai contanti, in caso di frodi o furti. Se dal punto di vista di un consumatore i pagamenti con carta di credito sono in alcune situazioni più costosi da usare rispetto ai contanti, altre forme di pagamento, quali i bonifici e gli addebiti diretti, sono pienamente equiparabili. In alcuni Stati membri, è ancora più vantaggioso usare bonifici e addebiti diretti rispetto ai contanti.

([1]) COM (2010)775, il testo definitivo del regolamento sarà votato dal PE in febbraio.
([2]) COM(2011)941 definitivo.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000624/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Measures to promote the use of electronic payments

In the fight against tax evasion, the Italian Government — headed by Mario Monti — is working to increase the use of cash dispensers and of electronic payments so as to reduce the need for cash; for example, pensions worth more than EUR 1 000 will no longer be able to be drawn in cash. However, this measure is not coupled with incentives for using electronic currency, which actually costs people more.

For example, if a person to pay his or her road tax and television licence fee by electronic means, using a credit card, he will pay a higher fee than that charged by the Italian post office for cash payments.

In the light of the above, can the Commission say what steps it intends to take to contain the cost of electronic payments and harmonise it across the EU by bringing into line with the cost of cash payments, thereby promoting the use of alternatives to cash? It should be borne in mind that, among other things, a recent study by the European Central Bank (ECB) highlighted a tendency among Italians to use cash, demonstrating the extent to which they find it difficult to accept that electronic payments are reliable?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

In the area of electronic payments, the Commission concentrates its current efforts on the creation of a legal environment that stimulates growth, competitiveness, innovation and promotes the use of common standards and technical infrastructures. These efforts should contribute to the creation of a single market for payments which is modern, consumer and business-friendly, and which offers the best value for money. Several important steps have been already taken on the way toward this aim, the most recent being the adoption of Regulation establishing technical and business requirements for credit transfers and direct debits in euros ([1]) and the launch of a public consultation on a Green Paper 'Towards an integrated European market for card, Internet and mobile payments' ([2]).

The Commission is of the opinion that electronic payments may offer many advantages to consumers, businesses and Member States thanks to the registered nature of such transactions. The use of electronic payment means entails a comprehensive protection of rights of payment services users in case of any transaction error and, unlike cash, in case of fraud or theft. While from the perspective of a consumer credit card payments are in some situations more expensive to use than cash, other forms of payment, such as credit transfers and direct debits, are fully comparable. In some Member States it is even more advantageous to use credit transfers and direct debits than cash.

([1]) COM(2010) 775, the final text of the regulation will be voted by the EP in February.
([2]) COM(2011) 941 final.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000625/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Esplosione di una condotta del metano a Massa Carrara

Una condotta del metano saldata male, il gas che fuoriesce, la scintilla e poi il boato. E così il borgo di Barbaresco, nel comune di Tresana in provincia di Massa Carrara, è diventato un inferno. Fiamme alte fino a cento metri, case e fienili sventrati, auto in fiamme, una colonna di fumo sopra al cielo della Lunigiana e un cratere largo fino a 25 metri e profondo quasi 10.

Questione di secondi, poi il boato con una lingua di fuoco che ha aggredito i tecnici al lavoro in subappalto. Il bilancio è tragico: quattro feriti con ustioni gravissime in tutto il corpo, altri sei ricoverati in ospedale e poi dimessi in serata, mucche stecchite dentro le stalle saltate in aria. Cinque operai stavano lavorando per sostituire un tubo del metanodotto che serve la linea La Spezia-Parma e alcuni comuni abbarbicati tra le Alpi Apuane e il mare. Ma qualcosa è andato drammaticamente storto. Con la ruspa la squadra stava posizionando la nuova conduttura quando questa si è tranciata, cadendo a terra e provocando la scintilla che ha causato l'esplosione. In poco tempo la fuoriuscita del gas è stata letale.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se può verificare che il sistema in questione per la condotta del metano fosse stato omologato in base alla normativa europea stabilita dalla direttiva 90/396/CEE riguardante il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di apparecchi a gas;

2. e, se così non fosse, quali azioni può la Commissione intraprendere per accertare le cause e per evitare situazioni simili in futuro?

**Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(5 marzo 2012)*

Non vi è alcuna normativa UE che disciplini la sicurezza dei metanodotti.

1. La direttiva 2009/142/CE in materia di apparecchi a gas (versione codificata della direttiva 90/396/CEE) ([1]), a cui si fa riferimento nell'interrogazione scritta, si applica agli apparecchi a gas utilizzati per la cottura, il riscaldamento, la produzione di acqua calda, il raffreddamento, l'illuminazione e il lavaggio, nonché ai bruciatori ad aria soffiata e ai corpi di scambio calore attrezzati con i precitati bruciatori. Si applica anche ai «dispositivi» di sicurezza, di controllo e di regolazione e ai loro sottogruppi, diversi dai bruciatori ad aria soffiata e dai corpi di scambio calore attrezzati con i precitati bruciatori, commercializzati separatamente ad uso dei professionisti e destinati a essere incorporati in un apparecchio a gas o montati per costituire un apparecchio a gas. La direttiva esclude dal suo campo d'applicazione gli apparecchi destinati specificatamente a essere utilizzati in processi industriali eseguiti in stabilimenti industriali. Di conseguenza, i metanodotti non rientrano nell'ambito di applicazione della direttiva 2009/142/CE.

2. Le condotte sono anche espressamente escluse dall'ambito di applicazione della direttiva 96/82/CE (Seveso II) sul controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose ([2]). Dato il verificarsi di incidenti rilevanti sui gasdotti, la Commissione sta esaminando i principali pericoli di incidenti per valutare la necessità di iniziative dell'UE per affrontare tali pericoli.

([1]) GU L 330 del 16.12.2009.
([2]) GU L 10 del 14.1.1997.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000625/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Methane pipeline explosion in Massa Carrara

A poorly welded methane pipeline, leaking gas, a spark and then an explosion — and the village of Barbaresco, in Tresana, province of Massa Carrara, became an inferno. Flames shot up to nearly a hundred metres, houses and barns were gutted, cars set ablaze, a column of smoke reached up to the skies above Lunigiana and a 25-metre wide, 10-metre deep crater was formed.

All of this took place within a matter of seconds, followed by the explosion and a tongue of flame that reached the subcontractor engineers at work. The toll was tragic: four people were injured, with very serious burns all over their bodies; six others were hospitalised and later discharged, and cows were blown up instantly inside their cowsheds. Five labourers had been working to replace a section of the methane pipeline that serves the line between La Spezia and Parma and some hillside municipalities between the Apuan Alps and the sea, when something went dramatically wrong. The team had been using an excavator to position the new pipeline when it broke in two, falling to the ground and creating the spark that caused the explosion. The amount of gas that leaked in just a short time was lethal.

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

1. whether it is able to verify that the methane pipeline system in question had been approved under the EU rules laid down in Directive 90/396/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to appliances burning gaseous fuels;

2. if not, what measures can the Commission take to establish the causes of this explosion and to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

There is no EU legislation that addresses the safety of methane pipelines.

1. Directive 2009/142/EC relating to appliances burning gaseous fuels ([1]) (codified version of 90/396/EEC) referred to in the written question applies to appliances burning gaseous fuels used for cooking, heating, hot water production, refrigeration, lighting or washing as well as to forced draught burners and heating bodies to be equipped with such burners. It also applies to 'fittings' meaning safety, controlling or regulating devices and sub-assemblies, other than forced draught burners and heating bodies to be equipped with such burners, separately marketed for trade use and designed to be incorporated into an appliance burning gaseous fuel or assembled to constitute such an appliance. The directive excludes from its scope any appliances specifically designed for use in industrial processes carried out on industrial premises. Consequently, methane pipelines do not fall within the scope of Directive 2009/142/EC.

2. Pipelines are also expressly excluded from the Seveso II Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances ([2]). Given the occurrence of major pipeline accidents, the Commission is currently assessing the major-accident hazards and the potential need for EU initiatives to address those hazards.

([1]) OJ L 330, 16.12.2009.
([2]) OJ L 10, 14.1.1997.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000626/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Δράσεις για την στήριξη της νεολαίας και Ελλάδα

Η Επιτροπή χρηματοδοτεί άμεσα δράσεις για την στήριξη των νέων ανθρώπων. Μεταξύ αυτών, παρέχει 4 εκατομμύρια μέσω του πλαισίου των εγγυήσεων για την νεολαία (Youth guarantee), και 3 εκατομμύρια ευρώ για την ενίσχυση των νέων που αποφασίζουν να ιδρύσουν την δική τους επιχείρηση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Έχει αξιοποιήσει η Ελλάδα πόρους από τα συγκεκριμένα προγράμματα; Ποιο είναι το ύψος τους και ποια η θέση της χώρας σε σχέση με τον ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο;

**Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(12 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Όπως αναφέρεται στην ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής *Πρωτοβουλία «Ευκαιρίες για τους νέους»* ([1]), η Επιτροπή θα παράσχει στα κράτη μέλη τεχνική βοήθεια για τη χρήση των κονδυλίων της ΕΕ, έτσι ώστε να υποστηριχτούν τα προγράμματα μαθητείας και το επιχειρηματικό πνεύμα. Η Επιτροπή διαχειρίζεται την εν λόγω τεχνική βοήθεια και οι χώρες που θα αποτελέσουν τον στόχο της πρωτοβουλίας θα καθοριστούν ανάλογα με τις πιο επείγουσες ανάγκες.

Κατά τη διάρκεια του 2012 η Επιτροπή θα εφαρμόσει επίσης την προπαρασκευαστική δράση, την οποία πρότεινε το Κοινοβούλιο σχετικά με την «Εγγύηση για τους νέους». Η δράση αυτή έγκειται σε μια έννοια πολιτικής που έχει σκοπό να διασφαλίσει ότι οι νέοι, το αργότερο τέσσερις μήνες αφότου εγκαταλείψουν το σχολείο, είτε κατέχουν μια θέση απασχόλησης είτε συμμετέχουν σε πρόγραμμα εκπαίδευσης ή (εκ νέου) κατάρτισης. Στο πλαίσιο της εν λόγω δράσης θα υποστηριχτεί περιορισμένος αριθμός πιλοτικών μέτρων στα κράτη μέλη, έτσι ώστε να υλοποιηθεί η «Εγγύηση για τους νέους» σε τοπικό επίπεδο. Ιδίως τα κράτη μέλη και οι περιφέρειες όπου η ανεργία των νέων είναι πολύ υψηλή, όπως είναι η Ελλάδα, θα ενθαρρυνθούν να συμμετάσχουν στη δράση αυτή.

([1]) COM(2011)933 της 20ής Δεκεμβρίου 2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000626/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Action to support young people in Greece

The Commission is providing funding for immediate action to support young people, EUR 4 million being earmarked for the youth guarantee scheme and EUR 3 million for measures to support young people who decide to start up their own businesses, for example.

I would like to ask the Commission:

Has Greece utilised funding from the programmes in question? What has been the take-up of funding by Greece and what is its ranking in this respect compared to the compared to the European average?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 March 2012)*

As the Commission communication on the Youth Opportunities Initiative ([1]) states, the Commission will provide the Member States with technical assistance for the use of EU funds to support apprenticeship schemes and entrepreneurship. Such technical assistance is managed directly by the Commission and the target countries will be identified depending on the most urgent needs.

In the course of 2012 the Commission will also implement the preparatory action which Parliament has proposed on the 'Youth Guarantee', which is a policy concept to ensure that young people are either in a job, education or (re-)training within four months of leaving school. As part of this action support will be provided to a limited number of pilot measures in Member States to establish a 'Youth Guarantee' locally. In particular Member States and regions where unemployment among young people is very high, as is the case for Greece, will be encouraged to participate in the action.

([1]) COM(2011) 933 of 20 December 2011.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000627/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Αναξιοποίητοι πόροι από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για την απασχόληση των νέων στην ΕΕ και στην Ελλάδα

Στην πρόσφατη έκθεση πρωτοβουλίας της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τις ευκαιρίες για την νεολαία, τα κράτη μέλη καλούνται να αντιμετωπίσουν, μεταξύ άλλων, την ανεργία των νέων και ιδίως να βοηθήσουν τους νεοεισελθόντες στην αγορά εργασίας προκειμένου να βρουν την πρώτη τους δουλειά. Σημειώνεται ότι το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο διαθέτει ακόμα 30 δις ευρώ γι' αυτούς τους σκοπούς, πόροι που δεν έχουν ακόμα αξιοποιηθεί από τα κράτη μέλη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πόσα χρήματα έχει απορροφήσει η Ελλάδα από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο για την στήριξη της απασχόλησης των νέων ανθρώπων; Ποιος είναι ο ευρωπαϊκός μέσος όρος;

2. Για ποιο λόγο, και παρά τις επιπτώσεις της οικονομικής κρίσης στους νέους, παρατηρούνται τόσο χαμηλά ποσοστά απορρόφησης τόσο από την Ελλάδα όσο και από τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

**Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(8 Μαρτίου 2012)*

1. Η ένταξη των νέων στην αγορά εργασίας είναι θέμα ύψιστης προτεραιότητας για την Επιτροπή, λόγω του ότι η κρίση επιδείνωσε την ανεργία των νέων. Το ελληνικό επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» (2,26 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ)) παρέχει βοήθεια, μεταξύ άλλων, για την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων. Η συνολική δημόσια δαπάνη που προβλέπεται για τα ειδικά μέτρα με σκοπό την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων ανέρχεται περίπου σε 295 εκατ. ευρώ. Επιπλέον, οι νέοι (κάτω των 25 ετών) είναι ομάδα προτεραιότητας που πρέπει να επωφεληθεί από τα γενικά μέτρα προώθησης της απασχόλησης που εφαρμόζονται από την Ελληνική Δημόσια Υπηρεσία Απασχόλησης.

Σε πολλά προγράμματα του ΕΚΤ περιλαμβάνονται πρωτοβουλίες για τους νέους μεταξύ των μέτρων στο πλαίσιο ευρύτερων προτεραιοτήτων και επομένως είναι δύσκολο να δοθούν ακριβή στοιχεία για τις δαπάνες ή τη συμμετοχή των νέων. Σύμφωνα με την ετήσια έκθεση εκτέλεσης οι συμμετέχοντες κάτω των 25 ετών αντιπροσωπεύουν σχεδόν το 30 % του συνολικού αριθμού των συμμετεχόντων το 2010 (όμως μερικά σχέδια δεν αναφέρονται σε ηλικιακές ομάδες). Επιπλέον, το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) κατά τα έτη 2007-2013 υποστήριξε μια ειδική ενέργεια για την προώθηση της Επιχειρηματικότητας των Νέων στην Ελλάδα· για την ενέργεια αυτή προκηρύχθηκε διαγωνισμός με προϋπολογισμό ύψους 39,2 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ ο οποίος ολοκληρώθηκε με την έγκριση δράσεων και τη σύναψη συμβάσεων ύψους 44,11 εκατ. (εκ των οποίων 6,6 εκατ. ευρώ για πιστοποιημένες δαπάνες έχουν ήδη εκταμιευθεί). Η Επιτροπή θα υποστηρίξει τις ελληνικές αρχές στην περαιτέρω εκτέλεση αυτού του μέτρου.

2. Το ελληνικό επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα «Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού» ξεκίνησε με βραδύ ρυθμό, επίσης διότι έπρεπε να εγκριθεί κατά τέτοιο τρόπο ώστε να συμβάλλει καλύτερα στην αντιμετώπιση των επιπτώσεων της κρίσης. Ωστόσο, η εκτέλεση των προγραμμάτων του ΕΚΤ βελτιώθηκε σημαντικά το 2011.

Πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι είναι συνηθισμένο σ' αυτό το στάδιο της περιόδου προγραμματισμού το ύψος των πόρων που δεν έχουν ακόμη διατεθεί για σχέδια να αντιπροσωπεύει το 30 % περίπου της συνολικής χορήγησης του ΕΚΤ για το σύνολο της περιόδου προγραμματισμού.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000627/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Unused European Social Fund appropriations earmarked for youth employment in the EU and in Greece

In its recent own-initiative report on youth opportunities, the Commission calls on Member States to confront issues such as youth unemployment and in particular measures to help newcomers to the job market in finding their first job. The European Social Fund still has 30 billion euros earmarked for these purposes, which has not yet been utilised by the Member States.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. What has been the take-up by Greece of European Social Fund appropriations for measures to encourage youth employment? What is the European average?

2. What is the reason for such low take-up of funding by Greece and the other Member States, despite the impact of the economic crisis on young people?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

1. The integration of young people into the labour market is an issue of the highest priority for the Commission given the negative impact of the crisis on youth unemployment. The Greek Human Resources Development operational programme (EUR 2.26 billion of European Social Fund (ESF)) provides assistance *inter alia* for the promotion of youth employment. The total foreseen public expenditure for the specific measures dedicated to the promotion of youth employment stands approximately at EUR 295 million. Moreover, young people (below 25 years of age) are a priority group to benefit from the general employment promotion measures implemented by the Greek Public Employment Service.

In many ESF programmes initiatives to help young people are included in measures under wider priorities so it is difficult to give exact figures on spending or participation of young people. The Annual Implementation Report on participants below 25 years shows that they represent nearly 30 % of total participants in 2010 (but some projects do not report on age groups). In addition, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2007-2013 supported a specific operation to promote Youth Entrepreneurship in Greece, for which a call published with a budget of EUR 39.2 million was concluded with actions approved and contracted for EUR 44.11 million (of which EUR 6.6 million of certified expenditure has already been disbursed). The Commission will support the Greek authorities in increasing this measure further.

2. The Greek Human Resources Development operational programme had a slow start, also because it had to be adopted to better respond to the impact of the crisis. However, implementation of the ESF programmes has improved significantly in 2011.

It is to be noted that the amount of resources that are yet to be allocated to projects standing at around 30 % of the total ESF allocation for the whole programming period is not exceptional at this stage of the programming period.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000628/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Εγκατάσταση και αναβάθμιση πληροφοριακών συστημάτων στις υπηρεσίες του δημοσίου στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τις αρμοδιότητες που έχουν ανατεθεί στην ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα (Task Force) επιχειρείται, μεταξύ άλλων, ο περιορισμός της γραφειοκρατίας και ταυτόχρονα η βελτίωση των ελεγκτικών μηχανισμών του κράτους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Παρατηρείται βελτίωση στην Ελλάδα στα ποσοστά απορρόφησης πόρων από τα ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για την αναβάθμιση των πληροφοριακών συστημάτων του δημόσιου τομέα, τον περιορισμό της γραφειοκρατίας και την βελτίωση των ελεγκτικών μηχανισμών του κράτους;

2. Καθώς μέχρι πέρυσι η Ελλάδα βρισκόταν στην τελευταία θέση στην Ε.Ε. ως προς την παροχή ηλεκτρονικών υπηρεσιών στους πολίτες και παρουσίαζε μέτριες επιδόσεις στον τομέα της ηλεκτρονικής διακυβέρνησης, ποια είναι τα πιο πρόσφατα δεδομένα; Υπήρξε βελτίωση;

**Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(21 Μαρτίου 2012)*

1. Η Επιτροπή κρίνει ότι υπήρξε βελτίωση, όπως αποδεικνύεται από τα στοιχεία και τις ενέργειες που αναλαμβάνονται. Έως το τέλος του 2011, η απορρόφηση πόρων από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για την Ελλάδα ήταν 35 % (μέσος όρος ΕΕ: 33,5 %). Επιπλέον, οι συνολικές πληρωμές για το πρόγραμμα του ΕΤΠΑ «Ψηφιακή Σύγκλιση» ανέρχονταν σε 250 εκατ. ευρώ περίπου εκ των οποίων 79 εκατ. ευρώ δηλώθηκαν το 2010 και 104 εκατ. ευρώ το 2011.

Για την αναβάθμιση των πληροφοριακών συστημάτων του δημόσιου τομέα από το 2011 απαιτήθηκαν τα εξής:

1) Ένα εργαλείο ανοικτού πηγαίου κώδικα βασισμένο στο διαδίκτυο το οποίο αναπτύχθηκε για την τήρηση ηλεκτρονικών βιβλίων πρωτοκόλλου και για τη δημιουργία ενός συστήματος διαχείρισης υποθέσεων για τις υπηρεσίες του δημοσίου.

2) Μια πύλη πληροφόρησης και δικτύωσης, η «Startup Greece», με στόχο την υποστήριξη της επιχειρηματικότητας στην Ελλάδα.

3) Η συνεχής ανάπτυξη ενός συστήματος ηλεκτρονικής σύναψης συμβάσεων για να εξασφαλιστεί η αποτελεσματική και διαφανής σύναψη δημοσίων συμβάσεων.

2. Η ανάπτυξη της ηλεκτρονικής διακυβέρνησης στην Ελλάδα είναι ένας σημαντικός πυλώνας των διοικητικών μεταρρυθμίσεων. Έχει στόχο τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας των υπηρεσιών προς τους πολίτες. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό υλοποιούνται έργα σε τέσσερις βασικούς τομείς ηλεκτρονικής διακυβέρνησης: διαχείριση επιχειρησιακών πόρων, διαχείριση σχέσεων με τον πολίτη, ηλεκτρονικές δημόσιες συμβάσεις και διαχείριση ανθρωπίνων πόρων. Σύμφωνα με τις διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες, το ποσοστό του πληθυσμού που πραγματοποίησε ηλεκτρονικές συναλλαγές με τη δημόσια διοίκηση ανέρχεται σε 16 % (2010) (13 % το 2008· μέσος όρος ΕΕ 41 %). Το ποσοστό των πολιτών που υπέβαλαν ηλεκτρονικά έγγραφα στη δημόσια διοίκηση (π.χ. δήλωση εισοδήματος) ανέρχεται σε 7 % (2010) (5 % το 2008· μέσος όρος ΕΕ 21 %).

Πληροφορίες σχετικά με την ηλεκτρονική διακυβέρνηση και τις υπηρεσίες ΤΠΕ διατίθενται από το διαδίκτυο στη διεύθυνση http://epractice.eu. Οι τελευταίες εξελίξεις των υπηρεσιών ηλεκτρονικής διακυβέρνησης στην ΕΕ-27+ παρουσιάζονται στο διαδίκτυο στη διεύθυνση:
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/pillars/societalbenefits/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000628/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Installation and upgrading of IT systems in Greek Government departments

Under the powers granted to the Task Force for Greece, an undertaking has been made to restrict bureaucracy while at the same time improving the government monitoring mechanisms.

In view of this:

1. Has the Commission noted any improvement in Greece regarding the take-up of European Structural Fund appropriations for upgrading public sector IT systems restricting bureaucracy and improving government monitoring mechanisms?

2. Up to last year, Greece was in last place in the EU with regard to the supply of electronic services for citizens and had a modest record in the field of e-government. What are the recent data? Has there been any improvement?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(21 March 2012)*

1. The Commission considers that there has been an improvement, as evidenced from the figures and the actions undertaken. By end 2011, the Structural Funds absorption for Greece was 35 % (EU average: 33.5 %). In addition, total payments for the ERDF programme 'Digital Convergence' amounted to about EUR 250 million of which EUR 79 million was declared in 2010 and EUR 104 million in 2011.

The upgrading of public sector IT systems since 2011 has involved:

— a web-based open source tool was developed to maintain electronic protocol books and to create a case management system for public sector services;

— 'Startup Greece', an information and networking portal aimed at supporting entrepreneurship in Greece;

— ongoing development of an e-procurement system to ensure efficient and transparent public procurement.

2. The deployment of e-Government in Greece is a major pillar of the administrative reforms aiming to improve the quality of services to citizens. As part of this, projects in four key e-government areas are being implemented: Enterprise Resource Planning, Citizen Relationship Management, e-Procurement and Human Resource management. According to the available information, the percentage of the population that made electronic transactions with the public administration stands at 16 % (2010) (13 % in 2008; EU average 41 %). The percentage of citizens that submitted electronic files to the public administration (e.g. income declaration) stands at 7 % (2010) (5 % in 2008; EU average 21 %).

Information on e-Government and ICT services is online at http://epractice.eu. The latest progress of e-Government services in the EU-27+ is online at:
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/pillars/societalbenefits/index_en.htm

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000629/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Οικονομική στήριξη νέων που αναζητούν εργασία σε άλλο κράτος μέλος

Στην πρόσφατη έκθεση — πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τις ευκαιρίες για την νεολαία, η Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι κατά την περίοδο 2012-2013 θα προσφέρει οικονομική υποστήριξη σε 5 000 νέους προκειμένου να βρουν εργασία σε άλλο κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ.

1. Ποια είναι τα κριτήρια με τα οποία θα επιλεχθεί η χρηματοδότηση των νέων;

2. Αντιστοιχεί συγκεκριμένος αριθμός για κάθε κράτος μέλος;

3. Ποιο είναι το ύψος αυτής της οικονομικής υποστήριξης και από ποιους παράγοντες επηρεάζεται;

4. Η επιλογή των νέων θα πραγματοποιείται αποκλειστικά μέσω της πύλης EURES; Πώς διασφαλίζεται η αντικειμενικότητα της επιλογής;

**Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(2 Μαρτίου 2012)*

«Η πρώτη σας θέση εργασίας μέσω του EURES» είναι ένα νέο στοχοθετημένο πρόγραμμα επαγγελματικής κινητικότητας (με τη μορφή προπαρασκευαστικής δράσης), το οποίο έχει ως στόχο να βελτιώσει τις ευκαιρίες απασχόλησης για τους νέους στις ευρωπαϊκές αγορές εργασίας και να ενθαρρύνει τους εργοδότες να καλύψουν κρίσιμες ελλείψεις προσωπικού με νέους μετακινούμενους εργαζομένους. Είναι μία από τις καίριας σημασίας δράσεις της εμβληματικής πρωτοβουλίας «Νεολαία σε κίνηση» της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» ([1]) και της πρωτοβουλίας «Ευκαιρίες για τους νέους» ([2]).

Αυτό το πρόγραμμα θα παρέχει πληροφόρηση, στήριξη στην αναζήτηση εργασίας, στήριξη στην αντιστοίχιση προσφοράς και ζήτησης εργασίας και οικονομική στήριξη τόσο σε νέους ηλικίας 18-30 ετών που αναζητούν εργασία και οι οποίοι επιθυμούν να εργαστούν σε άλλο κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ όσο και σε επιχειρήσεις (ιδίως ΜΜΕ) που προσλαμβάνουν νέους ευρωπαίους μετακινούμενους εργαζόμενους και προσφέρουν προγράμματα επαγγελματικής ένταξης. Οι θέσεις εργασίας πρέπει να είναι ελάχιστης συμβατικής διάρκειας 6 μηνών. Οι νέοι και οι ΜΜΕ είναι οι τελικοί αποδέκτες της κατ' αποκοπήν χρηματοδοτικής στήριξης. Τα ποσά κυμαίνονται από 500 έως 1 200 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τη χώρα προορισμού. Αυτό αντιπροσωπεύει τη συνεισφορά στα έξοδα ταξιδίου για συνέντευξη στο εξωτερικό και/ή τη μετακίνηση σε άλλη χώρα της ΕΕ για την ανάληψη της θέσης εργασίας, καθώς και τη συνεισφορά στα έξοδα που βαρύνουν τις ΜΜΕ για το πρόγραμμα ένταξης μετακινούμενων εργαζομένων (π.χ. μαθήματα γλώσσας, κατάρτιση σε ήπιες δεξιότητες κ.λπ.).

Το πρόγραμμα αυτό αποσκοπεί στην αντιμετώπιση των ανισορροπιών της αγοράς εργασίας της ΕΕ, με τη διευκόλυνση της προσφοράς και της ζήτησης εργατικού δυναμικού. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι οι προσλήψεις δεν θα διέπονται από προκαθορισμένες εθνικές ποσοστώσεις, αλλά θα είναι το αποτέλεσμα των αναγκών και της προσφοράς των αγορών εργασίας της ΕΕ. Το πρόγραμμα θα υλοποιηθεί από ευρωπαϊκές υπηρεσίες απασχόλησης που επιλέγονται βάσει προσκλήσεων υποβολής προτάσεων. Ένα ευρύ φάσμα υπηρεσιών με προσανατολισμό τον πελάτη θα παρέχεται επιπλέον των επιγραμμικών (online) υπηρεσιών, όπως για παράδειγμα η δικτυακή πύλη EURES. Όπως συμβαίνει με άλλα προγράμματα κινητικότητας που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την Επιτροπή, οι όροι πρόσβασης για τις ομάδες στόχους θα δημοσιευτούν.

([1]) COM(2010)477 τελικό της 15.9.2010.
([2]) COM(2011)933 της 20.11.2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000629/12**
**to the Commission**
**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Financial support for young people looking for work in another Member State

In its recent initiative report on opportunities for young people, the Commission states that over the period 2012-13 it intends to provide financial assistance for 5 000 young people seeking work in another EU Member State.

1. What criteria will be used to select which young people receive this funding?

2. Is there a specific number for each Member State?

3. What is the level of this financial assistance and what factors will influence it?

4. Given that the choice of the young people involved will be made exclusively via the EURES portal, how can the objectivity of this choice be guaranteed?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

'Your first EURES job' is a new targeted job mobility scheme (in the form of a preparatory action) which aims to enhance job opportunities for young people in the European labour markets and to encourage employers to fill bottleneck vacancies with young mobile workers. It is one of the key actions of the Europe 2020 flagship initiative 'Youth on the Move' ([1]) and of the 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' ([2]).

This scheme will provide information, job search, job matching and financial support to both young jobseekers aged 18-30 willing to work in another EU Member State and businesses (SME in particular) recruiting young European mobile workers and providing them with an integration programme. Jobs must have a minimum contractual duration of 6 months. Young people and SMEs are the end-recipients of flat-rate financing support. The rates vary from 500 to 1200 EUR according to the country of destination. This represents a contribution to the costs of an interview trip abroad and/or of moving to another EU country to take up the job as well as to the costs borne by SMEs for the mobile worker's integration programme (e.g. language course, soft skills training, etc.).

This scheme is designed to address EU labour market imbalances by facilitating supply and demand of labour. This means that job placements will not be governed by pre-established country quotas but will be the result of EU labour markets' needs and vacancy offers. It will be implemented by European employment services selected through calls for proposals. A broad range of customer-oriented services will be provided in addition to online services e.g. EURES portal. As is the case with other mobility schemes co-financed by the Commission, access conditions for target groups will be made widely known.

([1]) COM(2010) 477 final of 15.9.2010.
([2]) COM(2011) 933 of 20.11.2011.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000630/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Rilancio del progetto FAST sulla fusione nucleare

La fusione nucleare è considerata una delle opzioni utili a garantire una fonte di energia di larga scala, sicura, sostenibile e inesauribile. L'Unione europea si è impegnata nella costruzione di ITER, reattore sperimentale a fusione, frutto di una collaborazione internazionale che ha coinvolto Cina, India, USA, Giappone e Corea del Sud.

ITER costituisce un passo deciso verso la dimostrazione della fattibilità scientifica e tecnologica della produzione di energia da fusione termonucleare controllata, mentre il progetto FAST nasce dalla creatività e competenza delle industrie italiane e si pone come obiettivo quello di accompagnare ITER nella sua fase operativa.

In vista del nuovo programma quadro 2014-2018, intende la Commissione destinare risorse alla realizzazione di impianti sperimentali, esistenti o in fase di costruzione come FAST, garantendo un impegno a livello europeo nel rispetto del programma quadro dell'Euratom?

**Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione**
*(27 febbraio 2012)*

Il 30 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di «regolamento del Consiglio sul programma di ricerca e formazione della Comunità europea dell'energia atomica (2014-2018) che integra il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione Orizzonte 2020» ([1]) concernente le attività di ricerca in campo nucleare (fusione e fissione) e in materia di radioprotezione. Uno degli obiettivi del programma è «avanzare verso la dimostrazione di fattibilità della fusione quale fonte di energia sfruttando impianti di fusione esistenti e futuri» (titolo I, articolo 3, paragrafo 2, lettera e)).

La Commissione sta coinvolgendo esperti esterni e le principali parti interessate nella pianificazione strategica del futuro programma di ricerca europeo sulla fusione. Nel 2011 un panel indipendente è stato incaricato di riesaminare «l'orientamento strategico del programma dell'Unione europea sulla fusione», un documento che illustra l'evoluzione futura del programma sulla fusione al fine di collaborare alla preparazione della proposta della Commissione relativa a Orizzonte 2020. Conformemente alle conclusioni del panel in questione, la Commissione avvierà un dibattito con i suoi partner internazionali sull'eventuale cooperazione in vista dell'avvio di ITER, considerando anche la gestione di JET ([2]), JT60-SA ([3]) (nell'ambito dell'accordo sull'approccio allargato con il Giappone) e eventualmente di altri impianti futuri tra cui FAST, a condizione che possa inserirsi in questa più ampia collaborazione dei dispositivi di fusione. Oggi, tuttavia, non è possibile anticipare le conclusioni di queste deliberazioni.

([1]) COM(2011)812.
([2]) http://www.ccfe.ac.uk/JET.aspx.
([3]) http://www.jt60sa.org/b/index.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000630/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Acceleration of the FAST nuclear fusion project

Nuclear fusion is considered to be one of the useful options for ensuring a large-scale, safe, sustainable and inexhaustible source of energy. The European Union is committed to the construction of ITER, the international thermonuclear experimental reactor, which is the result of international collaboration involving China, India, the USA, Japan and South Korea.

ITER is a decisive step towards demonstrating the scientific and technological feasibility of the production of energy using controlled thermonuclear fusion, while the FAST project was born from the creativity and competence of Italian industries and aims to accompany ITER in its operational phase.

In view of the new framework programme 2014-2018, does the Commission intend to allocate resources to the development of existing experimental facilities or those that are under construction, such as FAST, ensuring commitment at European level in compliance with the Euratom framework programme?

**Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

On 30 November 2011, the Commission adopted a proposal for a 'Council Regulation on the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2014-2018) complementing the Horizon 2020 proposals' ([1]) concerning research activities in nuclear energy (fusion and fission) and radiation protection. One of the objectives of this programme is to 'move towards demonstration of feasibility of fusion as a power source by exploiting existing and future fusion facilities' (Title I, Art. 3.2(e)).

The Commission is involving external experts and principal stakeholders in the strategic planning of the future European fusion research programme. An independent panel was asked, in 2011, to review the proposed 'strategic orientation of the EU fusion programme', a document outlining the future directions of the fusion programme to assist in the preparation of the Commission proposal for Horizon 2020. In agreement with the conclusions of this panel, the Commission will initiate discussions with its international partners on possible cooperation to prepare for ITER operation, which will take into consideration the exploitation of JET ([2]), JT60-SA ([3]) (under the Broader Approach Agreement with Japan) and possible future facilities, of which FAST may be one option provided it can fit into this wider collaboration of fusion devices. However, it is not possible today to anticipate the conclusions of these deliberations.

([1]) COM(2011) 812.
([2]) http://www.ccfe.ac.uk/JET.aspx.
([3]) http://www.jt60sa.org/b/index.htm

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000631/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Un nuovo Stato in Sudafrica?

Un recente appello da parte di un attivista sudafricano richiede all'Unione europea di riconoscere l'indipendenza dello Stato Afrikaner in Sudafrica.

A detta dell'attivista, ogni giorno vi sono numerosi abusi e violenze da parte del governo sudafricano nei confronti della popolazione «boera».

Il gruppo indipendentista Afrikaner propone uno Stato indipendente nella provincia di Gauteng, Sudafrica, che comprenda le città di Heidelberg, Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark, Deneysville, Sasolburg, Parys, Fochville e altre piccole città limitrofe. Inoltre, aziende e industrie situate nella provincia menzionata e operanti in diversi settori formerebbero un primo tessuto economico del neo-Stato.

Considerato quanto sopra e che:

— l'attivista ha dichiarato che il 14 aprile 2012 sarà proclamata l'indipendenza del nuovo Stato sovrano;

— il principio di autodeterminazione dei popoli è sancito dall'articolo 1 della Convenzione internazionale sui diritti civili e politici delle Nazioni Unite,

può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante riferire quale siano la strategia e la posizione dell'Unione Europea in merito?

**Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(10 aprile 2012)*

In merito alla questione degli atti di violenza nei confronti degli agricoltori boeri e del razzismo in Sud Africa, si rimanda cortesemente l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton alle interrogazioni scritte E-003506/2010, E-003505/2010 e E-005051/2011. L'AR/VP è a conoscenza della situazione riferita dall'onorevole parlamentare.

L'AR/VP ritiene che la costituzione sudafricana offra solide garanzie per combattere gli abusi dei diritti umani e per la salvaguardia dei diritti delle minoranze e sostiene quindi l'integrità territoriale del Sud Africa.

Il dialogo politico serrato con il Sud Africa, anche sui diritti umani, stabilito nell'ambito del partenariato strategico UE-Sud Africa, fornisce all'Unione la possibilità di trasmettere alle autorità sudafricane, quando ritenuto opportuno, messaggi su varie questioni che suscitano preoccupazione come quelle descritte dall'onorevole parlamentare.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000631/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — A new state in South Africa?

A recent appeal by a South African activist calls on the EU to recognise the independence of the 'Afrikaner State' in South Africa.

According to the activist, every day there are many incidents of abuse and violence by the South African government towards the Boer population.

An Afrikaner pro-independence group proposes an independent state in the province of Gauteng, South Africa, which would include the cities of Heidelberg, Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark, Deneysville, Sasolburg, Parys, Fochville and other small neighbouring towns. In addition, companies and businesses located in the aforementioned province and operating across various sectors would make up the initial economic fabric of the new 'state'.

Considering the above and that:

— the activist states that the independence of the new sovereign state will be declared on 14 April 2012;

— the principle of self-determination of peoples is sanctioned in Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of the United Nations,

can the Vice-President/High Representative report on the EU's strategy and position on this matter?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(10 April 2012)*

With regard to the issues of violence against white farmers and racism in South Africa, the Honourable Member is kindly referred to answers provided by HR/VP Ashton to Questions E-003506/2010, E-003505/2010, E-005051/2011. The HR/VP is aware of the issue referred to by the Honourable Member.

The HR/VP considers that the South African Constitution offers strong guarantees against human rights' abuses, and safeguards to minorities' rights, and therefore supports the territorial integrity of South Africa.

Close political dialogue with South Africa, including a dialogue on human rights, established under the framework of the EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership, provides the EU with the opportunity to convey messages to the South African authorities on various issues of concern such as those described by the Honourable Member whenever appropriate.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000632/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — I residenti di Camp Ashraf potrebbero essere trasferiti a Camp Liberty

Secondo le ultime notizie riportate dal Consiglio nazionale della resistenza iraniana (NCRI), il governo di Al Maliki sta equipaggiando l'area di Camp Liberty con materiale da spionaggio per intercettare e controllare i futuri residenti.

Camp Liberty era stato costruito per ospitare giovani soldati statunitensi per un breve periodo. A detta dell'esercito americano, il campo non è adatto a lunghe permanenze e potrebbe causare disordini psicologici a chi vi risiede per tanto tempo.

Inoltre, il governo iracheno intende trasferire gli abitanti di Camp Ashraf in un'area pari solo all'1,5 % del territorio di Camp Liberty. Oltre a limitare lo spazio fisico e ad installare strumenti di controllo e spionaggio, Al Maliki vuole far costruire dei muri che isolino quella parte del campo da tutto il resto. Il governo iracheno intende trasformare il nuovo campo in una vera e propria prigione per gli abitanti di Ashraf.

Al Maliki ritiene che i residenti di Camp Ashraf siano terroristi e criminali, pertanto non vuole che restino nel suo territorio. Entro aprile, a detta del leader iracheno, Camp Ashraf non esisterà più.

La signora Rajavi e l'NCRI denunciano ormai quasi quotidianamente le provocazioni di Al Maliki e la situazione di disagio in cui versano i residenti di Camp Ashraf. Un trasferimento a Camp Liberty potrebbe arrecare uno shock ai più vulnerabili.

Considerati i numerosi appelli alla comunità internazionale e le recenti azioni intraprese da Al Maliki, chiedo al Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quale sia la posizione dell'Unione europea sul trasferimento a Camp Liberty e sulla chiusura di Camp Ashraf.

**Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(7 maggio 2012)*

L'Unione europea segue attentamente la questione dei profughi di Camp Ashraf, il cui futuro continua a destare preoccupazione. Trattandosi di una questione di diritti umani, occorre che l'UE e la comunità internazionale facciano tutto il possibile per aiutare le Nazioni Unite e il governo iracheno a trovare una soluzione pacifica e legittima.

Per questo motivo l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha più volte ribadito il suo pieno sostegno al processo in corso guidato dalla Missione di assistenza delle Nazioni Unite per l'Iraq e dall'Alto Commissariato per i rifugiati, poiché è chiaro che questa è l'unica strada da seguire affinché l'evacuazione di Camp Ashraf avvenga in modo legittimo.

È essenziale che tutte le parti interessate, così come ogni singolo o gruppo che possa portare un proprio contributo alla questione, collabori pienamente e costruttivamente con le Nazioni Unite.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000632/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Residents of Camp Ashraf could be transferred to Camp Liberty

According to the latest news reports by the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), al-Maliki's government is equipping the Camp Liberty area with surveillance equipment in order to eavesdrop on and monitor future residents.

Camp Liberty was built to accommodate young American soldiers for a short period of time. According to the American army, the camp is not suitable for long stays and may cause psychological problems in those who reside there for a long time.

In addition, the Iraqi Government intends to transfer the residents of Camp Ashraf to an area equal to just 1.5 % of the area of Camp Liberty. In addition to limiting the physical space and installing monitoring and surveillance equipment, al-Maliki wants to build walls to isolate that part of the camp from the rest. The Iraqi Government intends to transform the new camp into a real prison for the residents of Ashraf.

Al-Maliki maintains that the residents of Camp Ashraf are terrorists and criminals and, as such, does not want them to remain on his territory. According to the Iraqi leader, by April, Camp Ashraf will no longer exist.

Ms Rajavi and the NCRI denounce the provocations by al-Maliki and the situation of hardship faced by the residents of Camp Ashraf almost daily. Transfer to Camp Liberty could cause shock to those who are most vulnerable.

Given the numerous appeals to the international community and the recent actions taken by al-Maliki, I ask the Vice-President/High Representative, what is the position of the European Union on the transfer to Camp Liberty and the closure of Camp Ashraf?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 May 2012)*

The EU follows the issue of the Camp Ashraf residents very closely. Their future continues to be a cause for concern. As a human rights issue, it requires the EU and the international community to do all we can to help the United Nations and the Government of Iraq to find a peaceful and orderly solution.

This is why the High Representative/Vice-President has repeatedly stressed her full support to the ongoing process led by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. It is clear that this is the only way forward to bring about an orderly evacuation of Camp Ashraf.

It is essential that all concerned parties, as well as every individual or group who can bring any influence to bear on this matter, now cooperate fully and constructively with the United Nations.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000633/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Maree nere: normativa di prevenzione e protezione contro i disastri ambientali

Al largo di Livorno il 17 dicembre 2011 la nave cargo della Grimaldi Lines ha perso in mare 34 tonnellate di catalizzatori contenenti metalli pesanti utilizzati per la lavorazione del petrolio. Ancora oggi ben 198 fusti di sostanze pericolose sono dispersi davanti alle coste toscane, con rischi non ancora ben identificati.

Le 2 300 tonnellate di olio combustibile contenute nello scafo della Costa Concordia arenatosi il 13 gennaio 2012 davanti all'isola del Giglio tengono sotto scacco un'area naturale marina protetta di interesse internazionale.

Tali vicende mostrano ancora una volta la rilevanza dell'intervento dell'Unione europea per la tutela ambientale marina. L'attuale normativa europea necessita di armonizzazione e applicazione uniforme da parte di tutti gli Stati membri, in particolare sotto il profilo della sicurezza, della dissuasione e delle potenzialità reattive di fronte alle emergenze delle «maree nere», del miglioramento dei controlli da parte delle autorità pubbliche, del rafforzamento delle potenzialità reattive ai disastri, nonché di una maggiore cooperazione internazionale.

Può la Commissione riferire sul processo di armonizzazione e sull'estensione del campo di applicazione delle principali direttive comunitarie in materia di responsabilità ambientale, in particolare della direttiva 2003/105/CE sul controllo di incidenti connessi con sostanze pericolose, della direttiva 2004/35/CE sulla prevenzione e riparazione dei danni, della direttiva 2005/35/CE (modificata dalla direttiva 2009/23/CE) sull'inquinamento dei mari provocato dalle navi, della direttiva 2008/56/CE sulla strategia marina e della direttiva 2008/99/CE sulla tutela penale dell'ambiente?

**Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(28 marzo 2012)*

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni in merito all'incidente del 17 dicembre 2011.

All'incidente della Costa Concordia avvenuto il 13 gennaio 2012 non si può applicare, allo stadio attuale, la direttiva sulla responsabilità ambientale ([1]) poiché tale evento rientra nel campo di applicazione della convenzione sull'inquinamento provocato dal carburante delle navi ([2]), relativa ai danni provocati dalla fuoriuscita o dallo scarico di carburante dalle navi e ai costi per l'adozione di misure ragionevoli di ripristino e prevenzione. Nel 2013-2014 la Commissione intende tuttavia riesaminare le disposizioni che escludono le convenzioni internazionali dal campo di applicazione della direttiva sulla responsabilità ambientale ([3]).

L'estensione del campo di applicazione dei danni provocati alle acque marine nell'ambito della direttiva sulla responsabilità ambientale è attualmente sottoposta all'iter della procedura legislativa ordinaria ([4]).

Si applicano inoltre le seguenti direttive: direttiva 2005/35/CE relativa all'inquinamento provocato dalle navi e all'introduzione di sanzioni per violazioni ([5]), quale modificata dalla direttiva 2009/123/CE ([6]), al fine di imporre sanzioni efficaci, proporzionate e dissuasive. In linea di principio il diritto penale può essere applicato in tutti gli Stati membri in caso di scarichi illeciti di sostanze inquinanti in mare, qualora ciò avvenga intenzionalmente, per imprudenza o negligenza grave. La direttiva sui reati contro l'ambiente ([7]) definisce come reati in tutti gli Stati membri gli atti quelli commessi illecitamente, per negligenza grave e che provochino o possano provocare danni rilevanti alla qualità delle acque, della fauna o della flora.

La direttiva quadro sulla strategia per l'ambiente marino ([8]) non ha una rilevanza diretta nel caso degli incidenti citati,

([1]) Direttiva 2004/35/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sulla responsabilità ambientale in materia di prevenzione e riparazione del danno ambientale, GU L 143 del 30.4.2004.
([2]) Convenzione internazionale del 23 marzo 2001 sulla responsabilità civile per i danni derivanti dall'inquinamento determinato dal carburante delle navi.
([3]) Entro aprile 2014 la Commissione deve presentare al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio una relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva sulla responsabilità ambientale (articolo 18).
([4]) Proposta della Commissione sulla sicurezza delle attività offshore di prospezione, ricerca e produzione nel settore degli idrocarburi, COM(2011)688 definitivo.
([5]) GU L 255 del 30.9.2005.
([6]) GU L 280 del 27.10.2009.
([7]) Direttiva 2008/99/CE sulla tutela penale dell'ambiente, GU L 328 del 6.12.2008.
([8]) Direttiva 2008/56/CE che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria nel campo della politica per l'ambiente marino, GU L 164 del 25.6.2008.

in quanto definisce il quadro per una strategia marina e contiene disposizioni per conseguire un buono stato ambientale delle acque entro il 2020. La proposta di una direttiva Seveso III ([9]) presentata dalla Commissione non ha l'obiettivo di ampliarne il campo di applicazione rispetto all'attuale direttiva Seveso II ([10]), che esclude il trasporto di sostanze pericolose.

([9]) Proposta della Commissione di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sul controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose, COM(2010)781 definitivo.

([10]) Direttiva 96/82/CE del Consiglio sul controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose, GU L 10 del 14.1.1997, pag. 13, modificata dalla direttiva 2003/105/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 dicembre 2003, GU L 345 del 31.12.2003.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000633/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Oil spills: rules for prevention and protection against environmental disasters

On 17 December 2011 off the coast of Livorno, a Grimaldo Lines cargo ship lost 34 tonnes of catalysts containing heavy metals used for the processing of oil. Still today, no fewer than 198 containers of dangerous substances remain dispersed off the Tuscan coast, with risks not yet well identified.The 2 300 tonnes of fuel oil held in the hull of the Costa Concordia, which ran aground on 13 January 2012 off the island of Giglio, pose a threat to a protected natural marine area of international interest.

Such events once again demonstrate the importance of intervention by the European Union to ensure the protection of the marine environment. Current European regulations require harmonisation and uniform application by all Member States, particularly in terms of safety, deterrence and response capabilities in the face of oil spill emergencies, the improvement of checks by public authorities, the strengthening of disaster response capabilities and greater international cooperation.

Can the Commission report on the harmonisation process and on the extension of the scope of the main Community directives on environmental responsibility, in particular of Directive 2003/105/EC on control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, Directive 2004/35/EC on the prevention and remedying of environmental damage, Directive 2005/35/EC (as amended by Directive 2009/23/EC) on ship-source pollution, Directive 2008/56/EC on marine strategy and Directive 2008/99/EC on the protection of the environment through criminal law?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 March 2012)*

The Commission is not aware of the incident of 17 December 2011.

As to the *Costa Concordia* incident of 13 January 2012, the Environmental Liability Directive (ELD) ([1]) is currently not applicable as this issue is covered by the Bunker Oil Convention ([2]). The latter Convention applies to damage from the escape or discharge of bunker oil from ships, covering costs of reasonable measures of reinstatement and prevention. The Commission will however review in 2013-2014 *inter alia* the application of the exclusion of international Conventions from the scope of the ELD ([3]).

The extension of the scope of marine water damage under the ELD is currently subject to the ordinary legislative procedure ([4]).

The following directives are also applicable: Directive 2005/35/EC on ship-source pollution and on the introduction of penalties for infringements ([5]) as amended by Directive 2009/123/EC ([6]) in order to impose effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions. In principle, criminal law can be imposed in all Member States for all illegal discharges of polluting substances into the sea, when committed with intent, recklessly or with serious negligence. The Environmental Crime Directive ([7]) defines such acts in all Member States as criminal offences, when committed with serious negligence, unlawfully and causing or likely to cause substantial damage to the quality of water, animals or plants.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) ([8]) is not directly relevant to the mentioned incidents as it establishes a framework for a marine strategy and provides for a good environmental status of water in 2020. The Commission Proposal for a Seveso III Directive ([9]) does not seek to extend its scope beyond that of the current Seveso II Directive ([10]) which excludes transport of dangerous substances.

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([1]) Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage, OJ L 143, 30.4.2004.
([2]) International Convention of 23 March 2001 on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage.
([3]) Commission report to the Parliament and to the Council on the application of the ELD due by April 2014 (Article 18).
([4]) Commission proposal on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities, COM(2011) 688 final.
([5]) OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.
([6]) OJ L 280, 27.10.2009.
([7]) Directive 2008/99/EC on the protection of the environment through criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.
([8]) Directive 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([9]) Commission proposal for directive of the Parliament and of the Council on control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, COM(2010) 781 final.
([10]) Council Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, OJ L 10, 14.1.1997, p. 13, as amended by Directive 2003/105/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2003, OJ L 345, 31.12.2003.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000634/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Teleriscaldamento: un monopolio da regolare e monitorare

Il teleriscaldamento è una forma di riscaldamento che consiste nella distribuzione di un fluido termovettore attraverso una rete di tubazioni isolate e interrate. Il fluido, che può essere acqua calda surriscaldata o vapore, proviene da una centrale di produzione e arriva alle utenze per poi tornare alla centrale. Quando arriva a destinazione, riscalda l'acqua dell'impianto di riscaldamento delle utenze attraverso uno scambiatore e può anche produrre acqua di uso sanitario. In pratica, lo scambiatore sostituisce la caldaia.

Tra i vantaggi principali vi sono una maggior sicurezza, maggiori benefici ambientali, risparmio energetico e la possibilità di ricorrere alle energie rinnovabili. Significativi sono gli aiuti che arrivano dalla legislazione comunitaria e dagli incentivi nazionali. Un'ulteriore crescita del teleriscaldamento è prevista nei prossimi anni, nel quadro delle politiche europee per il clima, con la valorizzazione di risorse di vario tipo, quali biomasse, rifiuti, calore di scarto di impianti industriali esistenti.

Si tratta, però, di un esemplare caso di monopolio naturale esercitato a livello locale, sia sul piano della teoria economica, sia nella valutazione da parte delle Autorità di regolazione nazionali (Antitrust o Autorità per l'energia) dei Paesi ove il servizio è maggiormente diffuso. Questo perché l'utente finale, una volta effettuato l'allacciamento, non ha, di fatto, la facoltà di cambiare fornitore e, per di più, si trova spesso a dover pagare un servizio la cui tariffa, oltre a differire da rete a rete, non sempre è calcolata o comunicata in maniera trasparente. Infatti, sono già diversi i casi di ricorsi di utenti contro l'innalzamento delle tariffe da parte degli operatori. Purtroppo, il settore sembra ricevere una scarsa regolamentazione a livello nazionale.

In considerazione di quanto sopra esposto, è necessario un successivo attento monitoraggio del settore per evitare comportamenti opportunistici da parte dei fornitori del servizio ed è, conseguentemente, necessaria una regolamentazione europea per promuovere maggiori trasparenza e protezione degli utenti.

Si chiede, quindi, alla Commissione di riferire in merito alla necessità di regolare il settore, considerando le classiche attività di produzione, trasmissione, distribuzione e consumo, per tutelare l'utente finale. Il compito potrebbe essere assegnato ad un soggetto terzo, come l'Autorità per l'energia elettrica e il gas.

**Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione**
*(5 marzo 2012)*

La Commissione è consapevole della necessità di migliorare la trasparenza delle norme per la fornitura di servizi di teleriscaldamento e di rafforzare i diritti dei consumatori, in particolare per quanto concerne chiare e precise misurazioni e fatturazioni del riscaldamento e dell'acqua calda sanitaria forniti dalle imprese di teleriscaldamento. La proposta della Commissione di una nuova direttiva sull'efficienza energetica ([1]) prevede l'obbligo per gli Stati membri di fornire maggiori informazioni sul consumo e sui prezzi tramite la misurazione e la fatturazione e di introdurre regole trasparenti in materia di ripartizione dei costi legati al consumo di calore nei condomini alimentati da sistemi di riscaldamento centralizzati.

([1]) Proposta di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sull'efficienza energetica e che abroga le direttive 2004/8/CE e 2006/32/CE, COM(2011) 370 definitivo.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000634/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* District heating: a monopoly to be regulated and monitored

District heating is a form of heating that distributes a heat transfer fluid through a network of insulated, buried pipes. The fluid, which may be superheated water or steam, is sourced from a central power station, from where it reaches the consumers before then returning. When it reaches its destination, it heats the water in the consumer's heating system by means of a heat exchanger and can also produce water for sanitary use. In practice, the heat exchanger replaces the boiler.

Among the main advantages are increased safety, greater environmental benefits, energy savings and the possibility of using renewable energy. Significant aid is received as a result of Community legislation and national incentives. The district heating industry is expected to undergo further growth in the next few years, within the framework of European policies on climate, by making use of various types of resources, such as biomass, waste and waste heat from existing industrial facilities.

It does, however, serve as an exemplary case of a natural monopoly exercised at a local level, both in terms of economic theory and in terms of the assessment by national regulatory authorities (Antitrust or the Regulatory Authority for Electricity and Gas) in countries where use of the service is most widespread. This is because, once connected, the end user is not in fact able to change supplier and, moreover, often has to pay for a service whose price, in addition to varying from network to network, is not always calculated or communicated in a transparent manner. In fact, several cases already exist of complaints from consumers about the increasing of rates by operators. Unfortunately, the sector appears to be poorly regulated at a national level.

In view of the above, subsequent careful monitoring of the sector is necessary in order to avoid opportunistic behaviour by service providers and European regulation is, therefore, necessary in order to promote greater transparency and consumer protection.

The Commission is therefore asked to report on the need to regulate the sector, with reference to traditional production, transmission, distribution and consumption activities, in order to protect the end user. The task could be assigned to a third party, such as the Regulatory Authority for Electricity and Gas.

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the need to improve the transparency of rules for the provision of district heating services and to strengthen consumers' rights, especially as regards clear and accurate metering and billing of heating and domestic hot water provided by district heating companies. The Commissions' proposal for a new Energy Efficiency Directive ([1]) includes an obligation for Member States to strengthen the provision of information on consumption and prices through metering and billing, and to introduce transparent rules on cost allocation for heat consumption in multi-apartment buildings supplied with centralised heat.

([1]) Proposal for A Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Energy Efficiency repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC, COM(2011)370 final.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000635/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Impiego di prodotti GM in Europa e finanziamenti «Horizon 2020»

1. Visto l'abbandono delle attività di sviluppo di piante GM in Europa da parte di una società chimica multinazionale in seguito all'opposizione dei consumatori, quali conclusioni trae la Commissione dal fatto che un'ampia maggioranza di consumatori europei continua a rifiutare l'impiego di colture GM negli alimenti (cfr. Eurobarometro n. 354, 2010), specialmente per quanto attiene alle politiche e al finanziamento della ricerca dell'UE?

2. I dati pubblicamente diffusi sul finanziamento delle biotecnologie nell'ambito del capitolo Alimenti e coltivazioni mostrano come il Sesto programma quadro fosse eccessivamente ambizioso e non riflettesse per nulla le aspettative dei cittadini europei. Come valuta la Commissione la distribuzione dei finanziamenti tra gli approcci biotecnologici, gli approcci che mirano a una visione olistica del sistema di coltivazione e gli approcci agro-ecologici, come quello rappresentato dall'agricoltura biologica?

3. Come intende la Commissione gestire i fondi a disposizione per la ricerca alimentare e agricola nel prossimo programma quadro «Horizon 2020» e come propone di assicurare che le esigue risorse economiche rispondano all'orientamento dei cittadini europei sul futuro degli alimenti e dell'agricoltura?

**Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione**
*(29 marzo 2012)*

1. In linea di massima le imprese private sono libere di scegliere. Sebbene la grande maggioranza dei consumatori dell'UE sia in generale contraria agli alimenti geneticamente modificati, dall'indagine Eurobarometro n. 24537 del 2010 è risultato che più del 50 % è generalmente favorevole alle biotecnologie. Di conseguenza la Commissione contempla una gamma molto più ampia di attività di ricerca sulle biotecnologie, al fine di offrire soluzioni alle sfide a carattere sociale nonché a quelle poste dalla salute dei cittadini dell'UE, dallo scarseggiare delle risorse, dall'inquinamento, dalla tutela dell'ambiente ecc.

2. L'UE ha finanziato tre ampie attività di ricerca nell'ambito del Sesto programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (6°PQ, 2002-2006) che trattano temi quali la coesistenza di piante geneticamente e non geneticamente modificate a livello di colture e di filiere di approvvigionamento e il contenimento biologico delle piante transgeniche. Questi progetti sono stati avviati a sostegno delle politiche dell'UE in materia che rispondono alle preoccupazioni dei consumatori in ordine agli organismi geneticamente modificati (OGM). L'UE ha inoltre speso più di 300 milioni di euro nella ricerca sulla biosicurezza degli OGM ([1]) e continuerà a fornire sostegno finanziario alla diversificazione delle attività di ricerca in campo agricolo e biotecnologico, mantenendo l'equilibrio tra i vari settori.

3. La ricerca sui prodotti alimentari e le aziende agricole sarà trattata in Orizzonte 2020 nell'ambito della sfida sociale «Sicurezza alimentare, agricoltura sostenibile, ricerca marina e marittima e bioeconomia». Le attività di ricerca nell'ambito della sfida suddetta riflettono molte delle aspettative contenute nella proposta di riforma della PAC sul futuro dei prodotti alimentari e dell'attività agricola, ad esempio ponendo l'accento su sistemi di coltivazione più sostenibili.

([1]) Pubblicazioni in merito sono disponibili sui siti http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/pdf/a_decade_of_eu-funded_gmo_research.pdf e http://ec.europa.eu/research/quality-of-life/gmo/. .

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000635/12**
**to the Commission**
**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Use of GM products in Europe and 'Horizon 2020' funds

1. In light of the withdrawal of GM plant development activities from Europe by a multinational chemical company as a result of consumer resistance, what consequences does the Commission draw from the fact that a large majority of consumers in the EU continue to reject the use of GM crops in food (see e.g. Eurobarometer 354, 2010), especially with regard to EU research policies and funding?

2. The publicly disclosed figures on funding for biotechnology under the food and farm section indicate that FP6 was disproportionately high and did not at all reflect the expectations of EU citizens. What is its assessment of the distribution of funds between biotechnological approaches, approaches that target a holistic farm system view and agro-ecological approaches, such as the one expressed by organic farming?

3. How does the Commission intend to manage the funds available for food and farm research in the next Framework Programme 'Horizon 2020', and how does it propose to guarantee that the scarce economic resources respond to European citizens' orientations on the future of food and farming?

**Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 March 2012)*

1. In general, private companies are free to make their own choices. Although GM foods are generally opposed by the large majority of EU consumers, the Eurobarometer survey 24537 of 2010 has shown that more than 50 % of them are generally supportive about biotechnology. In line with this level of support, the Commission covers a far broader range of research activities involving biotechnologies, intended to provide solutions for societal challenges, the health of EU citizens, dwindling resources, environmental pollution and protection, etc.

2. The EU has funded three large research activities under the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006) addressing issues such as coexistence of GM and non-GM crops, coexistence along supply chains and biological containment of transgenic plants. These projects were launched in support of relevant EU policies addressing consumer concerns in relation to GMO. The EU has also spent more than EUR 300 million on research regarding the biosafety of genetically modified organisms ([1]). The EU will continue to provide funding support for a diverse range of agricultural and biotechnological research activities, keeping a good balance between the various areas.

3. Food and farm research will be addressed in Horizon2020 as part of the societal challenge 'Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture, Marine and Maritime Research, and the Bio-Economy'. The research activities under this societal challenge will reflect upon many of the aspirations set out in the proposed CAP reform on the future of food and farming. This will include e.g. an emphasis upon more sustainable farming systems.

([1]) Relevant publications can be found under http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/pdf/a_decade_of_eu-funded_gmo_research.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/research/quality-of-life/gmo/.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000636/12**
**προς το Συμβούλιο**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Συμμετοχή ιδιωτικού τομέα στην αναδιάρθρωση του ελληνικού χρέους

Οι διαπραγματεύσεις μεταξύ της ελληνικής πλευράς και των ιδιωτών ομολογιούχων για το PSI συνεχίζονται και αρκετά hedge funds που έχουν επενδύσει σε ελληνικούς τίτλους, απειλούν ότι θα προσφύγουν σε Ευρωπαϊκά Δικαστήρια, σε περίπτωση που η Ελλάδα εισάγει Ρήτρες Συλλογικής Δράσης (Collective Action Clauses — CAC). Ένα από τα βασικά επιχειρήματα που χρησιμοποιούν, είναι η εξαίρεση από το κούρεμα του 50 % των ελληνικών ομολόγων που έχει στην κατοχή της η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα. Είναι πράγματι οξύμωρο να ζητείται σήμερα ένα κούρεμα 50 % από τους ιδιώτες επενδυτές και να εξαιρείται η ΕΚΤ, η οποία μάλιστα αν εισπράξει το 100 % της αξίας των ελληνικών ομολόγων που αγόρασε στη δευτερογενή αγορά σε τιμές μάλιστα πολύ χαμηλές, θα αποκομίσει υπεραξίες σκανδαλώδους ύψους.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

Σκοπεύει να προτείνει άμεσα την υπαγωγή και των ομολόγων που έχει η ΕΚΤ στην κατοχή της, σε ανάλογη διαδικασία, ώστε να μειωθεί το χρέος και να αφαιρεθούν τα «νομικά» επιχειρήματα όσων προτίθενται να προσφύγουν στα διεθνή δικαστήρια;

**Απάντηση**
*(2 Απριλίου 2012)*

Στις 26 Οκτωβρίου 2011, οι αρχηγοί κρατών και κυβερνήσεων της ευρωζώνης δήλωσαν ότι είναι ζωτικός ο ρόλος της συμμετοχής του ιδιωτικού τομέα στην εξασφάλιση της βιωσιμότητας του ελληνικού χρέους. Όσον αφορά τη γενική προσέγγιση ως προς τη συμμετοχή του ιδιωτικού τομέα, επιβεβαίωσαν την απόφαση της 21ης Ιουλίου 2011 σύμφωνα με την οποία η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας απαιτεί έκτακτη και μοναδική λύση. Στις 30 Ιανουαρίου 2012, οι αρχηγοί κρατών και κυβερνήσεων υπενθύμισαν ότι η συμμετοχή του ιδιωτικού τομέα στην Ελλάδα αποτελεί έκτακτη και μοναδική περίπτωση.

Η φύση και οι όροι του μηχανισμού στήριξης της οικονομικής σταθερότητας διέπονται από διεθνή συμφωνία μεταξύ ορισμένων κρατών μελών της ευρωζώνης, η οποία δεν εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής των συνθηκών της ΕΕ. Οι προϋποθέσεις εκταμίευσης ορίζονται στο Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης που επισυνάπτεται στη δανειακή σύμβαση μεταξύ των δανειστών και της Ελλάδας. Κατά συνέπεια, το Συμβούλιο δεν είναι σε θέση να σχολιάσει ή να παράσχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τους όρους του δανείου που εγκρίθηκε δυνάμει της διεθνούς συμφωνίας.

Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 130 της ΣΛΕΕ, η ΕΚΤ, κατά την άσκηση των εξουσιών της και την εκτέλεση των καθηκόντων και υποχρεώσεών της, δεν ζητάει ούτε δέχεται υποδείξεις από τα θεσμικά ή λοιπά όργανα ή οργανισμούς ή από την κυβέρνηση κράτους μέλους· τα θεσμικά και λοιπά όργανα ή οργανισμοί της Ένωσης καθώς και οι κυβερνήσεις των κρατών μελών δεν επιδιώκουν να επηρεάζουν τα μέλη των οργάνων λήψης αποφάσεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας κατά την άσκηση των καθηκόντων τους.

Δεν είναι επομένως αρμόδιο το Συμβούλιο να καθορίσει ειδική αντιμετώπιση για τα ομόλογα που έχει η ΕΚΤ στην κατοχή της, αν δε το Συμβούλιο ή άλλο θεσμικό όργανο της Ένωσης επεδίωκε να επηρεάσει τα μέλη των οργάνων λήψης αποφάσεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας κατά την άσκηση των καθηκόντων τους, μεταξύ άλλων όσον αφορά τη διαμόρφωση της στρατηγικής ή πολιτικής της σε σχέση με πράξεις αγοράς, αυτό θα αποτελούσε σαφή και άμεση παράβαση της ΣΛΕΕ.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000636/12**
**to the Council**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Participation by the private sector in restructuring the Greek debt

Negotiations between the Greek Government and private counterparts on the PSI are continuing, and several hedge funds that have invested in Greek bonds are threatening to resort to the European courts if Greece introduces Collective Action Clauses — CAC. One of the basic arguments for this threat is the exemption from the 50 % 'haircut' for the Greek bonds held by the European Central Bank. It is really perverse to request a 50 % cut in value from private investors but to exempt the ECB from this measure: if the ECB collects 100 % of the value of bonds sold on the secondary market at what will certainly be very low prices, it will make scandalous levels of gains.

Given the above:

Does the Council intend to immediately classify the bonds the ECB holds under a similar procedure, in order to reduce the debt and remove the 'legal' undertakings which have led to this threat to resort to the international courts?

**Reply**
*(2 April 2012)*

The Heads of State and Government of the euro area stated on 26 October 2011 that private sector involvement has a vital role in establishing the sustainability of Greek debt. As far as the general approach to private sector involvement is concerned, they reiterated their decision taken on 21 July 2011 that Greece requires an exceptional and unique solution. On 30 January 2012 the Heads of State and Government recalled that private sector involvement in Greece is an exceptional and unique case.

The nature and the conditions of the stability support are governed by an international agreement among certain Member States whose currency is the euro, which does not fall within the scope of the EU Treaties. The conditions for disbursement are stipulated in a memorandum of understanding attached to the loan agreement between the lenders and Greece. The Council is not therefore in a position to comment or provide information on the conditions agreed under the international agreement.

Moreover, according to Article 130 of the TFEU, the ECB, in exercising its powers and carrying out its tasks and duties, shall not seek or take instructions from Union institutions, bodies or agencies or from governments of Member States; Union institutions, bodies or agencies and the governments of Member States shall not seek to influence the members of the decision-making bodies of the ECB in the performance of their tasks.

It is therefore not within the scope of the Council's responsibilities to determine a specific treatment to be applied to holdings of bonds by the ECB, and it would be explicitly and directly contrary to the TFEU for the Council or any other Union institution to seek to influence the members of the decision-making bodies of the ECB in the performance of their tasks, including the definition of its strategy or policy with regard to its market operations.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000637/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Συμμετοχή ιδιωτικού τομέα στην αναδιάρθρωση του ελληνικού χρέους

Οι διαπραγματεύσεις μεταξύ της ελληνικής πλευράς και των ιδιωτών ομολογιούχων για το PSI συνεχίζονται και αρκετά hedge funds που έχουν επενδύσει σε ελληνικούς τίτλους, απειλούν ότι θα προσφύγουν σε Ευρωπαϊκά Δικαστήρια, σε περίπτωση που η Ελλάδα εισάγει Ρήτρες Συλλογικής Δράσης (Collective Action Clauses — CAC). Ένα από τα βασικά επιχειρήματα που χρησιμοποιούν, είναι η εξαίρεση από το κούρεμα του 50 % των ελληνικών ομολόγων που έχει στην κατοχή της η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα. Είναι πράγματι οξύμωρο να ζητείται σήμερα ένα κούρεμα 50 % από τους ιδιώτες επενδυτές και να εξαιρείται η ΕΚΤ, η οποία μάλιστα αν εισπράξει το 100 % της αξίας των ελληνικών ομολόγων που αγόρασε στη δευτερογενή αγορά σε τιμές μάλιστα πολύ χαμηλές, θα αποκομίσει υπεραξίες σκανδαλώδους ύψους.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σκοπεύει να προτείνει άμεσα την υπαγωγή και των ομολόγων που έχει η ΕΚΤ στην κατοχή της, σε ανάλογη διαδικασία, ώστε να μειωθεί το χρέος και να αφαιρεθούν τα «νομικά» επιχειρήματα όσων προτίθενται να προσφύγουν στα διεθνή δικαστήρια;

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(19 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να σχολιάσει τη διαχείριση των χαρτοφυλακίων ομολόγων της από την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ), σεβόμενη την ανεξαρτησία της ΕΚΤ όπως κατοχυρώνεται στη Συνθήκη.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000637/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Participation by the private sector in restructuring the Greek debt

Negotiations between the Greek Government and private bondholders regarding the PSI are continuing, and several hedge funds that have invested in Greek bonds are threatening to take the matter to the European courts if Greece introduces Collective Action Clauses — CAC. One of their fundamental objections is the exemption from the 50 % 'haircut' for Greek bonds held by the European Central Bank. It is totally unreasonable to expect private investors to accept losses of 50 % while exempting the ECB. If the ECB collects 100 % of the value of the Greek bonds purchased by it on the secondary market at what were certainly very low prices, it will make an outrageous profit.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend immediately to apply similar procedures with regard to the bonds held by the ECB in order to reduce the debt and remove the 'legal' objections of those envisaging proceedings before the international courts?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The European Commission is not in a position to comment on the European Central Bank (ECB)'s management of its bond portfolios, in respect of the ECB's independence as enshrined in the Treaty.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000638/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Σχέδιο Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για μεταρρύθμιση του τραπεζικού συστήματος

Στο Agence Europe στις 16.1.2012 αναφέρθηκε ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και συγκεκριμένα η Γενική Διεύθυνση Εσωτερικής Αγοράς, σχεδιάζει την εφαρμογή νέων μέτρων και μεταρρυθμίσεων που θα αφορούν την ενδυνάμωση του τραπεζικού τομέα στην ΕΕ, την επίτευξη χρηματοοικονομικής σταθερότητας και την αποφυγή τυχόν αρνητικών συνεπειών σε περιόδους στενότητας και κρίσης. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, στο άρθρο του ειδησεογραφικού πρακτορείου, γίνεται λόγος για «προετοιμασία ενός σχεδίου για την επίλυση τραπεζικών κρίσεων, το οποίο περιλαμβάνει μια σειρά μέτρων για την αποφυγή πανικού στις αγορές και οικονομικής κατάρρευσης, σε περίπτωση που μια τράπεζα πτωχεύσει».

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, αλλά και το γεγονός ότι μια τέτοια πρωτοβουλία από την πλευρά της Επιτροπής είναι και ενδιαφέρουσα και σημαντική, ειδικά στην τρέχουσα συγκυρία, όπου το ευρωπαϊκό τραπεζικό και χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα αντιμετωπίζει μια πολυεπίπεδη κρίση με άμεσα αποτελέσματα στις οικονομίες και τις κοινωνίες των κρατών μελών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα βασικά σημεία του σχεδίου που έχει προετοιμάσει η Γενική Διεύθυνση Εσωτερικής Αγοράς για τη μελλοντική διαχείριση τραπεζικών κρίσεων; Τι μπορεί να κοινοποιηθεί σήμερα από το συγκεκριμένο σχέδιο;

**Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(5 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Τον καιρό αυτό οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής ετοιμάζουν πρωτοβουλία για την ανάκαμψη και εξυγίανση των τραπεζών.

Το νέο πλαίσιο αναμένεται να έχει ευρύ πεδίο εφαρμογής. Στόχος του θα είναι να εφοδιάσει τις αρχές με ευρύ φάσμα κοινών και αποτελεσματικών εξουσιών αντιμετώπισης τραπεζικών κρίσεων σε πρώιμο στάδιο και να αποφύγει, στο μέτρο του δυνατού, τη χρήση χρημάτων των φορολογουμένων για τη διάσωση τραπεζών. Η Επιτροπή αναλύει τη σκοπιμότητα ένταξης στο πλαίσιο αυτό των εξής παραμέτρων:

— έγκαιρη παρέμβαση εποπτικών αρχών για τον προσδιορισμό και την αντιμετώπιση εξελισσομένων προβλημάτων σε τραπεζικά ιδρύματα·

— προπαρασκευαστικά μέτρα, συμπεριλαμβανομένης απαίτησης για σχέδια ανάκαμψης και εξυγίανσης («εν ζωή διαθήκες») για όλες τις τράπεζες, ώστε να διασφαλισθεί ότι οι τράπεζες έχουν προβλέψει ρεαλιστικά σχέδια και διακανονισμούς για την αντιμετώπιση χρηματοπιστωτικών πιέσεων, ενώ οι αρχές έχουν αναλύσει τον τρόπο κατά τον οποίο τα ιδρύματα θα μπορούσαν να εξυγιανθούν εάν είναι αναπόφευκτη η αφερεγγυότητα, με ελάχιστο συστημικό αντίκτυπο·

— εναρμονισμένα εργαλεία και εξουσίες διάσωσης ώστε να διασφαλίζεται ότι οι εθνικές αρχές διαθέτουν κοινή σειρά εργαλείων για να διαχειριστούν την αφερεγγυότητα των τραπεζών·

— πλαίσιο για συνεργασία και συντονισμό μεταξύ εθνικών αρχών στο έργο του σχεδιασμού και της διενέργειας της εξυγίανσης διασυνοριακών τραπεζικών ομίλων· αυτό θα περιλαμβάνει πλαίσιο για συνεργασία επίσης με τρίτες χώρες·

— χρηματοδοτικοί διακανονισμοί με στόχο τη διασφάλιση ότι το κόστος της εξυγίανσης των τραπεζών βαρύνει το ίδιο τον τραπεζικό κλάδο.

Όλες οι σχετικές πληροφορίες και έγγραφα δημόσιας διαβούλευσης έχουν αναρτηθεί στον δικτυακό τόπο της Επιτροπής, στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/crisis_management/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000638/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The European Commission's banking system reform plan

Agence Europe reported on 16.1.2012 that the European Commission, specifically the Directorate-General for the internal market, is planning to implement new measures and reforms aimed at strengthening the banking sector in the EU, achieving financial stability and avoiding negative impacts in downturn and crisis periods. More specifically, the news agency's article refers to the 'preparation of a plan to solve banking crises, consisting of a series of measures to avoid panic in the markets and economic failure when a bank becomes bankrupt'.

In view of the above points, and considering the fact that such an initiative by the Commission is both interesting and important, especially in the current situation, with the European banking and financial system facing a crisis on many fronts — a crisis which is having immediate impacts on the economies and societies of the Member States:

What are the basic points in the plan prepared by the Directorate-General for the future management of banking crises? What can it announce about this plan today?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

An initiative on Bank Recovery and Resolution is currently being prepared by the Commission services.

The new framework should have a broad scope of application. Its objective will be to equip authorities with a wide range of common and effective powers to deal with banking crises at an early stage and to avoid, as far as possible, the use of taxpayers' money to rescue banks. The Commission is analysing the feasibility that the framework includes:

— early supervisory intervention to indentify and address developing problems in banking institutions;

— preparatory measures, including a requirement for recovery and resolution plans ('living wills') for all banks to ensure that the banks have in place realistic plans and arrangements to deal with financial stress, and authorities have analysed how the institutions could be resolved if failure is inevitable with minimum systemic impact;

— harmonised resolution tools and powers to ensure that national authorities have a common toolkit to manage the failure of banks;

— a framework for cooperation and coordination between national authorities in planning for and carrying out resolution of cross-border banking groups; this will include a framework for cooperation also with third countries;

— funding arrangements which aim to ensure that the cost of bank resolution is borne by the bank sector itself.

All related information and public consultation documents can be found on the Commission's website at:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/bank/crisis_management/index_en.htm

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000639/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Αδειοδότηση χωρίς Μελέτη Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων για έργα ανάκτησης και διάθεσης αποβλήτων

Η Ελληνική Βουλή επεξεργάζεται νομοσχέδιο που ενσωματώνει, μεταξύ άλλων, τις οδηγίες 2008/99/ΕΚ και 2008/98/ΕΚ. Το άρθρο 47 του νομοσχεδίου, προβλέπει ότι «μπορεί σε εξαιρετικές περιπτώσεις όταν 1) τίθεται σε σοβαρό και προφανή κίνδυνο η δημόσια υγεία ή ασφάλεια ή 2) διακυβεύεται ουσιαστικά το γενικότερο δημόσιο συμφέρον, να εξαιρείται με απόφαση του υπουργού περιβάλλοντος και κλιματικής αλλαγής, εν όλω ή εν μέρει, ένα έργο ανάκτησης ή διάθεσης αποβλήτων» … «από τη διαδικασία περιβαλλοντικής αδειοδότησης έργων και δραστηριοτήτων». Σε αυτή την περίπτωση η αρμόδια Υπηρεσία για την περιβαλλοντική αδειοδότηση … «α) εξετάζει αν ενδείκνυται άλλη μορφή εκτίμησης των επιπτώσεων στο περιβάλλον, β) θέτει στη διάθεση του ενδιαφερομένου κοινού τις πληροφορίες που έχουν αποκτηθεί στο πλαίσιο άλλων μορφών εκτίμησης … γ) ενημερώνει αμελλητί την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή για τους λόγους που δικαιολογούν την παρεχόμενη εξαίρεση».

Δεδομένου ότι, μια τέτοια διάταξη, αν περιληφθεί στον τελικό νόμο, εισάγει εξαιρέσεις από την υποχρέωση πραγματοποίησης Μελέτης Περιβαλλοντικών Επιπτώσεων, για έργα ανάκτησης και διάθεσης αποβλήτων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι σύμφωνη με το κοινοτικό δίκαιο η αδειοδότηση έργου ανάκτησης ή διάθεσης αποβλήτων χωρίς μελέτη εκτίμησης περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων; Αν ναι, σε ποιες περιπτώσεις; Τι είδους έργα, και σε ποιες περιπτώσεις, θα μπορούσαν να εξαιρεθούν; Ποιες άλλες μορφές εκτίμησης των επιπτώσεων στο περιβάλλον υπάρχουν;

**Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(7 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 2 παράγραφος 4 της οδηγίας 2011/92/ΕΕ για την εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων ορισμένων σχεδίων δημοσίων και ιδιωτικών έργων στο περιβάλλον ([1]), τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν, σε εξαιρετικές περιπτώσεις, να εξαιρούν το σύνολο ή μέρος συγκεκριμένου έργου από τις διατάξεις της οδηγίας. Στην εν λόγω οδηγία καθορίζονται οι διαδικασίες τις οποίες οφείλουν να ακολουθούν τα κράτη μέλη και η Επιτροπή, σε περίπτωση εξαίρεσης από την εκτίμηση περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων με επίκληση των διατάξεων του άρθρου 2 παράγραφος 4.

Η Επιτροπή έχει εκδώσει έγγραφο κατευθύνσεων ([2]), για να βοηθήσει τις εθνικές αρχές στη λήψη αποφάσεων σχετικά με τον χρόνο και τον τρόπο εφαρμογής της παραγράφου 4 του άρθρου 2 της οδηγίας για την εκτίμηση των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων.

Η πείρα που έχει αποκτηθεί από την εφαρμογή δείχνει ότι γίνεται χρήση της ανωτέρω εξαίρεσης όταν υπάρχει επείγουσα και ουσιαστική ανάγκη για κάποιο έργο, κυρίως σε περιπτώσεις έκτακτης ανάγκης προστασίας των πολιτών. Στα είδη έργων που εξαιρούν τα κράτη μέλη περιλαμβάνονται κυρίως έργα προστασίας ακτών ή αποκατάστασης ζημιών σε λιμένες μετά από πλημμύρες ή θύελλες, καθώς και η κατασκευή εγκαταστάσεων διαχείρισης αποβλήτων.

Μέχρι σήμερα, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ενημερωθεί για το νομοσχέδιο. Δεδομένου ότι ο συγκεκριμένος νόμος αποσκοπεί στην ενσωμάτωση της οδηγίας 2008/98/ΕC ([3]) στο εθνικό δίκαιο, η Ελλάδα οφείλει να κοινοποιήσει τις διατάξεις του στη Επιτροπή σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 40 της ίδιας οδηγίας. Η Επιτροπή θα τις εξετάσει τότε λεπτομερώς για να κρίνει αν συμβιβάζονται με την ενωσιακή νομοθεσία.

([1]) ΕΕ L 26 της 28.1.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/eia_art2_3.pdf.
([3]) ΕΕ L 312 της 22.11.2008.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000639/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Authorisation for waste recovery and disposal project without an environmental impact assessment

The Greek Parliament is drawing up a bill to incorporate Directives 2008/99/EC and 2008/98/EC, among others. Article 47 of the bill states that 'in exceptional circumstances, where (1) a serious and clear danger to public health and safety is posed or (2) the general public interest is essentially at stake, a waste recovery and disposal project may be exempted, in whole or in part, by decision of the Minister for the Environment and Climate Change,…..from the procedure to authorise works and activities'. In this situation, the relevant department for environmental planning… '(a) shall examine whether another form of environmental impact assessment is advisable, (b) shall make available to the members of the public concerned the information it has obtained using other forms of assessment…(c) shall promptly inform the European Union of the reasons justifying the exemption in question'.

Given that such a provision, if it becomes law, introduces exemptions from the obligation to carry out environmental impact assessments for waste recovery and disposal works:

Does the Commission consider that the authorisation of waste recovery and disposal works without an environmental impact assessment complies with Community law? If so, under what circumstances? What type of project could be exempted and under what circumstances? What other environmental impact assessment procedures are available?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

Article 2(4) of Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([1]) provides that Member States may, in exceptional cases, exempt specific projects in whole, or in part, from the provisions of the directive. The directive specifies which procedures must be followed by Member States and by the Commission when an exemption from environmental impact assessment is invoked under Article 2(4).

The Commission has issued a guidance document ([2]), in order to assist national authorities in deciding when and how Article 2(4) of the EIA Directive should be applied.

On the basis of the implementation experience, it appears that this exemption is used when there is an urgent and substantial need for a project, mainly in situations of civil emergency; the types of projects exempted by Member States mainly include works for protecting coasts or rehabilitating ports following flooding or storms, as well as the construction of waste management installations.

The Commission has no information so far on the proposed bill. As this law aims at transposing Directive 2008/98/EC ([3]), Greece would have to communicate it to the Commission, in accordance with Article 40 of the directive. The Commission would then assess its compatibility with the EU legislation in detail.

([1]) OJ L26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/eia_art2_3.pdf
([3]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000640/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Furto di materiale radioattivo da una centrale nucleare egiziana

Il 19 gennaio, il quotidiano britannico *Daily Telegraph* ha riportato la notizia secondo cui è stata sottratta una cassa contenente materiale radioattivo dalla centrale nucleare di Dabaa, mentre un'altra cassa è stata invece forzata e ne è stata prelevata una parte del contenuto. La centrale, attualmente in costruzione, si trova lungo la costa nord-occidentale dell'Egitto.

Secondo il quotidiano egiziano *al-Ahram*, il governo ha allertato le autorità di sicurezza e ha chiesto l'intervento di squadre specializzate nella ricerca del materiale sottratto. Almeno dieci persone sono rimaste ferite la settimana scorsa, quando la polizia militare è intervenuta per cercare di disperdere i manifestanti e gli abitanti della zona, principalmente beduini, secondo i quali, per costruire l'impianto nucleare, è stata confiscata loro la terra. Un agente delle forze di sicurezza ha riferito che vi sono stati lanci di pietre tra la polizia e i manifestati, a cui è seguito uno scontro a fuoco dopo che i manifestanti hanno demolito un muro che circonda il sito. Secondo *al-Ahram*, il personale dell'impianto si è rifiutato di recarsi sul posto visto il peggioramento delle condizioni di sicurezza.

1. È la Commissione al corrente di tale situazione?

2. Può la Commissione offrire sostegno logistico alle autorità egiziane per rintracciare il materiale radioattivo sottratto?

3. Può la Commissione consultarsi con i funzionari dell'UE in Egitto per determinare i potenziali rischi per la sicurezza causati da tale incidente?

**Risposta data da Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione**
*(13 marzo 2012)*

La Commissione è stata informata dell'accaduto dall'Agenzia internazionale dell'energia atomica, secondo la quale, in base alle informazioni in suo possesso, l'incidente riguarda quattro sorgenti di calibrazione a bassa attività. Il tasso di radiazioni emesso da queste sorgenti di piccole dimensioni sarebbe quindi molto ridotto e non rappresenterebbe un pericolo per la sicurezza pubblica, ammesso che i cittadini vengano adeguatamente informati della situazione.

La Commissione non ha ricevuto richieste di assistenza per il caso e al momento non sta valutando azioni da intraprendere.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000640/12**
**to the Commission**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Radioactive material stolen from Egyptian nuclear power station

On 19 January, the UK's *Daily Telegraph* reported that a safe containing radioactive material at the Dabaa nuclear power plant had been seized, while another safe containing radioactive material had been broken open and part of its contents taken. The plant, which is currently under construction, is located on Egypt's North-West coast.

Egypt's *al-Ahram* newspaper reported that the government has alerted the security authorities and asked for specialised teams to help search for the stolen material. At least a dozen people were wounded last week when military police tried to disperse residents and protestors who are mainly Bedouin and claim that their land has been confiscated in order to build the nuclear plant. One security force official reported that soldiers and demonstrators hurled stones at each other, and gunfire was exchanged after protestors demolished a wall surrounding the site. *Al-Ahram* reported that staff at the plant have refused to go to the site because of the worsening security situation.

1. Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned report?

2. Is the Commission prepared to offer logistical support to help the Egyptian authorities locate the stolen radioactive contents?

3. Is the Commission prepared to consult with EU officials in Egypt in order to assess the potential security hazards posed by this incident?

**Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

The Commission was informed by the International Atomic Energy Agency that, according to their information, the incident concerns four low activity calibration sources. The dose rates from such small sources would be very low and pose little to no safety risk if the public is properly made aware of the situation.

The Commission was not requested to provide assistance on the case and is not considering taking any action at this stage.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000641/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Persecuzione dei cristiani in Corea del Nord

Si stima che in Corea del Nord vivano diverse centinaia di cristiani. Sebbene la Costituzione del paese garantisca il diritto alla libertà di pratica religiosa, i cristiani sono soggetti a misure restrittive. Chiunque violi le restrizioni religiose imposte dal governo può essere accusato di spionaggio e di attività antigovernative. Secondo la rivista «Foreign Policy», i dissidenti nordcoreani stabilitisi in Corea del Sud hanno denunciato l'esecuzione di amici o vicini di casa che erano stati trovati in possesso di una Bibbia.

Secondo il rapporto internazionale sulla libertà religiosa 2011 pubblicato dal Dipartimento di Stato degli Stati Uniti, le organizzazioni per la difesa dei diritti umani attive fuori dal paese hanno segnalato l'arresto, il pestaggio, la tortura e l'uccisione di membri di chiese clandestine a causa del loro credo religioso. Si calcola che nei campi di prigionia politica siano recluse tra le 150 000 e le 200 000 persone, molte delle quali detenute per motivi religiosi. I profughi e i dissidenti che sono stati in carcere affermano che i prigionieri detenuti a causa del loro credo religioso subiscono in genere un trattamento peggiore rispetto agli altri detenuti.

Vi sono inoltre diverse segnalazioni relative all'arresto di membri dei gruppi evangelici operanti in Cina, ai quali sono state inflitte aspre punizioni. Le autorità nordcoreane cercano attivamente di limitare le attività religiose lungo i confini con la Cina. Nel maggio 2010 un'ONG sudcoreana ha riferito che nella provincia meridionale di Pyongan 23 cristiani sono stati arrestati con l'accusa di appartenere a una chiesa clandestina. Stando a quanto riferito, tre di loro sono stati giustiziati, mentre gli altri sono stati inviati al campo di prigionia politica di Yoduk. Inoltre, nel giugno 2009 alcuni attivisti sudcoreani impegnati per la difesa dei diritti umani hanno segnalato che una donna di 33 anni è stata giustiziata pubblicamente in una città nei pressi del confine cinese dopo essere stata presumibilmente accusata di spionaggio.

1. Può la Commissione confermare se sono stati compiuti gli sforzi necessari a sostenere l'operato dei gruppi attivi per la difesa dei diritti umani impegnati a fronteggiare il dramma dei cristiani e di altre comunità religiose in Corea del Nord?

2. Quali informazioni è riuscita a ottenere la Commissione in merito alla situazione dei cristiani in Corea del Nord?

3. Al fine di sostenere i diritti dei cristiani che rischiano di essere perseguitati, è disposta la Commissione a esortare le autorità nordcoreane a consentire la legalizzazione di un numero maggiore di chiese?

4. Con riferimento ad alcuni dei casi menzionati in precedenza, per quanto concerne l'esecuzione di cittadini nordcoreani a causa del loro credo religioso, ha la Commissione cercato di stabilire un contatto con il governo nordcoreano per ottenere informazioni su queste persone?

**Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(16 marzo 2012)*

L'UE è estremamente preoccupata per la situazione dei diritti umani nella Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea (RPDC) caratterizzata, fra l'altro, da gravi e frequenti violazioni della libertà di culto. La risoluzione dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite sulla situazione dei diritti umani nella RPDC, adottata nel dicembre 2011 con un numero di voti favorevoli senza precedenti (123) e sostenuta dall'UE, affronta diverse questioni specifiche fra cui le persistenti segnalazioni di violazioni gravi e sistematiche della libertà di culto. Oltre a promuovere questo tipo di risoluzioni sin dal 2004, l'UE solleva regolarmente questioni inerenti ai diritti umani nell'ambito del suo dialogo politico con la RPDC, che continua però a respingere la sua proposta di istituire un dialogo specifico sui diritti umani.

L'accesso all'informazione nella RPDC è estremamente limitato. Il paese preclude totalmente la presenza di osservatori stranieri e rifiuta di riconoscere il mandato del relatore speciale dell'ONU sulla situazione dei diritti umani nella RPDC, di concedergli l'accesso al suo territorio o di includerlo in un qualsiasi tipo di collaborazione.

Nella dichiarazione rilasciata il 20 dicembre 2011 in seguito al decesso di Kim Jong Il, l'AR/VP ha espresso l'auspicio che la nuova leadership si adoperi per migliorare la situazione dei diritti umani nella RPDC, sottolineando che l'UE è pronta ad assistere il paese nella realizzazione di questo obiettivo.

L'UE applica attualmente una vasta gamma di misure restrittive nei confronti della RPDC, in applicazione delle risoluzioni 1718 e 1874 del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000641/12**
**to the Commission**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Persecution of Christians in North Korea

There are estimated to be many hundred Christians in North Korea. Although the country's constitution guarantees the right to practice religion freely, Christians are subject to strict measures. Anyone violating the religious restrictions imposed by the government may be accused of spying and anti-government activities. According to the periodical 'Foreign Policy', there are reports from North Korean defectors based in South Korea that friends or neighbours found with a Bible in their possession have been executed.

According to the US State Department's 2011 International Religious Freedom Report, human rights groups outside the country have provided reports that members of underground churches have been arrested, beaten, tortured and killed because of their religious beliefs. There are an estimated 150 000 to 200 000 people believed to be held in political prison camps, including many detained on religious grounds. Refugees and defectors who have been in prison have stated that prisoners held on the basis of their religious beliefs have generally been treated worse than other inmates.

It is also widely reported that persons who engage with evangelical groups operating in China have been arrested and harshly punished. The North Korean authorities are actively looking to halt religious activities on the Chinese border. In May 2010, a South Korean NGO reported that 23 Christians had been arrested for belonging to an underground church in South Pyongan Province. It is reported that three were executed and the others sent to Yoduk political prison camp. In June 2009, in addition, South Korean human rights activists reported that a 33-year-old woman had been publicly executed in a town close to the Chinese border, having allegedly been accused of spying.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether or not it has made efforts to support the work of human rights groups focusing on the plight of Christians and other religious groups inside North Korea?

2. What information has the Commission managed to obtain about the situation of Christians inside North Korea?

3. In order to support the rights of Christians who are at risk of persecution, is the Commission prepared to encourage the North Korean authorities to allow more churches to be officially registered?

4. In connection with some of the cases described above, regarding North Koreans executed because of their Christian beliefs, has the Commission made attempts to engage with the North Korean Government in order to obtain information about these specific individuals?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 March 2012)*

The EU is deeply concerned about the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), including the all pervasive and severe restrictions on the freedom of religion. In the EU-sponsored Resolution of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, adopted in December 2011 with an unprecedented level of support (123 votes in favour), one of the specific issues raised is the persistence of continuing reports of systematic widespread and grave violations of freedom of religion. Such Resolutions have been initiated by the EU since 2004. In addition, the EU regularly raises human rights concerns as part of its political dialogue with the DPRK. However, the DPRK continues to reject the EU proposal to hold a specific human rights dialogue.

Access to information in the DPRK is extremely limited. The country is entirely closed to foreign observers. It also refuses to recognise the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, to grant him access to the country or to extend any form of cooperation to him.

In the HR/VP's statement of 20 December 2011 following the death of Kim Jong Il, she expressed the hope that the new leadership will work to improve the human rights situation in the DPRK and underlined the EU readiness to assist the DPRK in the pursuit of that objective.

The EU currently applies a wide range of restrictive measures on the DPRK, in application of UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000642/12**
**alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(27 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* VP/HR — Attacchi alle chiese sull'isola di Zanzibar (Africa orientale)

Il 13 gennaio, il servizio di informazione cristiano *Compass Direct News* riferiva la notizia della distruzione di due edifici religiosi avvenuta nel mese di dicembre per opera di un gruppo di estremisti islamici sull'isola semiautonoma di Zanzibar. Il 3 dicembre, una chiesa evangelica a circa 12 km dalla città di Zanzibar è stata distrutta dalle fiamme. Secondo il pastore della chiesa, accorso alla scena, gli aggressori in fuga gridavano «non vogliamo chiese in questa zona!».

Il vescovo responsabile della chiesa, Daniel Kwilembe, ha affermato che le autorità dell'arcipelago a maggioranza musulmana non adottano in genere alcun provvedimento in risposta ai crimini [sic] contro i cristiani. Secondo il vescovo della chiesa evangelica pentecostale di Zanzibar, Fabian Obedi, «gli atti incendiari delle chiese per mano dei musulmani sono piuttosto frequenti a Zanzibar, ma il governo non reprime questo genere di distruzione dei luoghi di culto cristiani.».

Prima dell'attacco del 2 dicembre, la chiesa siloe di Kianga, anch'essa poco distante da Zanzibar, è stata distrutta da un gruppo di estremisti islamici. Gli aggressori hanno fatto incursione nel luogo di culto armati di mazze, martelli, torce e spade e l'hanno demolito in tre ore. L'arrivo della polizia non è servito a fermarli e ora i membri della chiesa non hanno un luogo in cui riunirsi.

Questi attacchi alle chiese sono gli ultimi di una lunga serie. Durante l'estate almeno tre edifici religiosi sono stati distrutti dalle fiamme in questa regione dell'Africa orientale.

Zanzibar ha una popolazione di circa 700 000 persone e si contano una sessantina di congregazioni cristiane.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza degli atti di violenza settaria contro i gruppi cristiani sull'isola di Zanzibar?

2. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante, alla luce del crescente numero di attacchi contro le chiese sull'isola di Zanzibar e sulle isole vicine, sollevare la questione presso il governo del presidente Ali Mohamed Shein, servendosi dell'assistenza dei funzionari dell'EU nella regione? Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiedere alle autorità dell'isola di aumentare la protezione dei gruppi religiosi che sono presi di mira dagli attacchi orchestrati dai fondamentalisti islamici?

3. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante fornire informazioni sulla natura dei sempre più frequenti attacchi ai cristiani? Esistono per esempio collegamenti con altri gruppi estremisti islamici, come al-Shabaab, attivo nella regione del Corno d'Africa?

4. Ritengono i funzionari dell'UE che gli attacchi contro i gruppi cristiani siano in aumento nei paesi dell'Africa orientale, come la Tanzania e il Kenya?

**Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione**
*(27 marzo 2012)*

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente (AR/VP) Catherine Ashton è a conoscenza di avvenimenti come quelli descritti nell'interrogazione. Le relazioni della delegazione UE, compresa quella sulla recente Strategia per i diritti umani in Tanzania 2011, forniscono un resoconto sulla libertà di religione e di credo in Tanzania.

L'AR/VP è pienamente consapevole della centralità della libertà di religione nell'agenda dell'Unione europea in materia di diritti umani ed è a conoscenza delle preoccupazioni del Parlamento al riguardo espresse in numerose risoluzioni. Nel 2011 l'AR/VP ha espressamente incaricato la delegazione UE di monitorare attentamente le limitazioni alla libertà di religione e di credo in linea con le recenti conclusioni del Consiglio del 21 febbraio 2011, che invitavano a formulare proposte concrete per rafforzare ulteriormente l'azione dell'UE in tal senso. Ciò consentirà una valutazione più chiara degli sviluppi in atto a livello regionale o globale e aiuterà in modo più efficace l'UE a elaborare strategie per combattere intolleranza e persecuzione.

La delegazione UE ha recentemente effettuato una missione a Zanzibar per comprenderne meglio la situazione politica e anche l'intensificarsi del radicalismo islamico, e ha incontrato i leader delle comunità mussulmane e cristiane per discutere delle tensioni locali.

La delegazione continuerà a monitorare le recenti tendenze del radicalismo islamico a Zanzibar, che pare sia legato all'influenza esercitata sui giovani da studiosi che si sono formati nel Medio Oriente in un ambiente islamico più conservativo, come quello del Wahabismo. A Zanzibar la disoccupazione giovanile, la povertà e i drastici cambiamenti dei modelli socioculturali tradizionali dovuti ai flussi turistici potrebbero indurre al radicalismo giovani «vulnerabili e arrabbiati». Non sono stati segnalati collegamenti a gruppi radicali specifici come Al-Shabaab.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000642/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Fiorello Provera (EFD)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Attacks on churches on the East African island of Zanzibar

On 13 January, the Christian news service *Compass Direct News* reported that in December Islamic radicals destroyed two church buildings on the semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar. On 3 December, an Evangelical church about 12 km outside Zanzibar town was torched and burned and, according to the church's pastor who arrived on the scene, the assailants fled shouting 'we do not want a church in this area!'

The bishop of the church, Daniel Kwilembe, said that authorities on the predominantly Muslim archipelago tend to take no action on crimes [sic] against Christians. Another bishop, Fabian Obedi of the Pentecostal Evangelical Church of Zanzibar, also noted that 'Muslims are burning our church buildings quite frequently here in Zanzibar, but the government is not speaking against this kind of destruction of our church premises.'

Prior to the attack on 2 December, the Siloam church in Kianga, which is also close to Zanzibar town, was demolished by a group of Islamic radicals. The group entered the church building with clubs, hammers, torches and swords, and tore it down in three hours. The arrival of the police did not stop them. The church's congregation was left without anywhere to attend a service.

These attacks are the latest in a string of attacks directed against churches. During the summer, at least three churches were burnt down across this region of East Africa.

Zanzibar has an estimated population of 700 000, with approximately sixty Christian congregations.

1. Is the High Representative/Vice-President aware of the sectarian violence directed against Christian groups in Zanzibar?

2. With regard to the growing number of church attacks on Zanzibar and its surroundings islands, is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to raise this issue with the government of Dr Ali Mohamed Shein, with the assistance of EU officials on the ground? Is the High Representative/Vice-President prepared to ask the Zanzibar authorities to improve the protection of church groups vulnerable to attacks orchestrated by Muslim fundamentalists?

3. Is the High Representative/Vice-President able to provide information on the nature of the increase in anti-Christian attacks? Are there, for example, any links with other radical Islamist groups such as al-Shabaab, which is active across the Horn of Africa?

4. Do EU officials believe attacks directed against Christian groups are on the increase in East African states such as Tanzania and Kenya?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 March 2012)*

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is aware of incidents of the type raised in the question. The EU Delegation reports, including the recent Tanzania Human Rights Strategy 2011, give an account of the situation of the freedom of religion and belief (FORB) in Tanzania.

The HR/VP is fully aware of the centrality of religious freedom to the human rights agenda and is conscious of the Parliament's concerns in this area as expressed in numerous resolutions. The HR/VP has explicitly instructed the EU Delegations in 2011 to monitor more closely restrictions on FORB in line with the most recent Council conclusions of 21 February 2011, which called for proposals to further strengthen the EU action in this regard. This will assist in giving clearer assessment of whether there are regional or global trends and better help the EU to formulate strategies to combat intolerance and persecution.

The EU Delegation has recently carried out a mission to Zanzibar to gain a better understanding of the political situation in Zanzibar including rise in Islamic radicalisation, and met with Muslim and Christian leaders to discuss local tensions.

The Delegation will continue to follow recent trends in Islamic radicalisation in Zanzibar, which is reportedly linked to youth becoming influenced by scholars who received their education in the Middle East in more conservative Islam, such as Wahabism. Youth unemployment and poverty in Zanzibar including drastic changes to traditional social and cultural patterns due to the flow of tourism may push 'vulnerable and angry' youth to radicalisation. No links to specific radical groups such as Al-Shabaab have been reported.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000645/12**
**do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej / Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)**
**Piotr Borys (PPE), Jolanta Emilia Hibner (PPE), Danuta Jazłowiecka (PPE), Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Paweł Zalewski (PPE), Krzysztof Lisek (PPE), Artur Zasada (PPE) oraz Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)**
*(27 stycznia 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – W sprawie wyjaśnień tragicznych wydarzeń w Kazachstanie w grudniu 2011 r.

W związku z tragicznymi wydarzeniami, jakie miały miejsce w dniach 16-18 grudnia 2011 r. w mieście Zhanazoen (Zachodni Kazachstan) zwracamy się do wiceprzewodniczącej/wysokiej przedstawiciel z prośbą o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Jakie działania może podjąć Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby przeprowadzić niezależne międzynarodowe dochodzenie w sprawie przyczyn oraz rzeczywistych wydarzeń w mieście Zhanaozen i we wsi Shepte (według oficjalnych danych zginęło co najmniej 17 osób, a według nieoficjalnych danych – ponad 80 osób)?

2. Jakie działania zamierza przedsięwziąć Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby uzyskać pełny opis przebiegu zdarzeń w mieście Zhanaozen i we wsi Szepte (obwód mangistauski), przeprowadzić śledztwo w sprawie odpowiedzialności osób winnych śmierci i zranienia ludzi, którzy brali w nich udział, a także zaginięć obywateli Kazachstanu niezależnie od ich orientacji politycznej i zajmowanego stanowiska?

3. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza zbadać zgodność z międzynarodowymi normami przyjętych przez władze Kazachstanu ustaw „nadzwyczajnych" – przede wszystkim „O bezpieczeństwie narodowym", „O telewizji" – a także zastosowania ich w praktyce w celu ograniczenia praw politycznych i obywatelskich Kazachów?

4. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza podjąć działania dyplomatyczne celem uwolnienia osób uwięzionych, jak również uznania za więźniów politycznych aresztowanych działaczy ruchu strajkowego przedsiębiorstw naftowych oraz organizacji „Front Ludowy": Natalii Sokolovej, Akzhanata Aminova, Ajzhangula Amirova, Talgata Saktaganova, Amangeldy Lukmanov, Rozy Tuletaevej, Ruslany Simbinovej?

5. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza zaapelować do rządu Kazachstanu o dokładne zbadanie napadów, gróźb oraz o zapobieżenie prześladowaniom dziennikarzy i ekip zdjęciowych kazachstańskiego portalu internetowego Stan.kz w związku z ich działalnością zawodową?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji**
*(19 marca 2012 r.)*

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca oraz podległe jej służby uważnie śledzą sytuację w Kazachstanie. Niezwłocznie po tym, jak doszło do burzliwych wydarzeń w tym kraju, rzecznik Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej wystosował oświadczenie będące wyrazem niepokoju i wzywające do natychmiastowego śledztwa w sprawie wydarzeń oraz pokojowego rozwiązania problemu strajkujących pracowników sektora naftowego. ESDZ i delegatura UE w Astanie pozostawały w stałym kontakcie z władzami Kazachstanu, nalegając, by przeprowadzono przejrzyste i obiektywne śledztwo w sprawie wydarzeń, oraz wzywając je do wypełnienia obowiązków i zobowiązań międzynarodowych, w szczególności w odniesieniu do nowych przepisów nadzwyczajnych w obszarze wolności wypowiedzi, stowarzyszeń i zgromadzeń. W dniu 2 lutego Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca spotkała się ministrem spraw zagranicznych Kazachstanu Jerżanem Kazychanowem. Podczas spotkania zwróciła się o szczegółowe informacje na temat dochodzenia oraz więzienia działaczy opozycji i dziennikarzy. Wyraziła również poważne zaniepokojenie zaistniałą sytuacją. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zaproponowała także pomoc UE w rozwiązaniu problemów społecznych i gospodarczych, jakie dotknęły pracowników sektora naftowego, w drodze trójstronnego dialogu społecznego. W odniesieniu do uwięzionego lidera niezarejestrowanej partii „Alga" Władimira Kozłowa w dniu 9 lutego UE wystosowała démarche, prosząc również o spotkanie z zatrzymanym i o informacje na temat jego stanu zdrowia. Władze Kazachstanu obiecały, że pozwolą pracownikom delegatury UE odwiedzić go w areszcie.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000645/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Piotr Borys (PPE), Jolanta Emilia Hibner (PPE), Danuta Jazłowiecka (PPE), Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE), Paweł Zalewski (PPE), Krzysztof Lisek (PPE), Artur Zasada (PPE) and Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Clarification of the tragic events in Kazakhstan in December 2011

Further to the tragic events which occurred in the town of Zhanaozen (western Kazakhstan) between 16 and 18 December 2011:

1. What action can the Vice-President/High Representative take with a view to carrying out an independent, international investigation into what really happened in Zhanaozen and the village of Shepte, and why? Official reports put the number of deaths at 17, with the unofficial figure standing at over 80.

2. What action is the Vice-President/High Representative planning to take in order to gain a full account of the events that occurred in Zhanaozen and Shepte (Mangystau Province) and to carry out an investigation in an effort to identify those responsible for the deaths and injuries amongst participants in the events, and into disappearances of Kazakh citizens, irrespective of their political beliefs and the positions held by them?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to examine whether the Kazakh authorities have complied with international standards in adopting 'extraordinary' laws — especially those concerning national security and television — and using them to restrict the political and civil rights of Kazakhs?

4. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take diplomatic action with a view to securing the release of individuals who have been imprisoned, and ensuring that detained oil company strikers and 'People's Front' activists are recognised as political prisoners? Natalia Sokolova, Akzhanat Aminov, Ajzhangul Amirova, Talgat Saktaganov, Amangeldy Lukmanov, Roza Tuletaeva and Ruslan Simbinov are among the individuals concerned.

5. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to call on the government of Kazakhstan to conduct a detailed investigation into the attacks on and threats against journalists and camera crews from the *Stan.kz* Internet portal, and to put a stop to a situation in which people are being harassed for carrying out their professional activities?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The High Representative/Vice-President and her services closely follow the situation in Kazakhstan. Immediately after the violent events, HR/VP's spokesperson published a statement expressing concerns and calling for immediate investigation of the events, and peaceful solution to the situation of the striking oil workers. EEAS and the EU Delegation in Astana have been in regular contact with the authorities pressing for a transparent and objective investigation of the events and calling on Kazakhstan to uphold its international obligations and commitments, especially regarding the new 'extraordinary' laws, in the fields of freedom of expression, association and assembly. The HR/VP met with the Kazakh FM Kazykhanov on 2 February, where she asked about the details of the investigation, imprisonment of opposition activists and a journalist, expressing serious worry about the situation. HR/VP also offered EU's help to resolve the social and economic problems faced by oil workers, through social / tripartite dialogue. On the imprisonment of the leader of the unregistered Alga party, Mr Kozlov, the EU carried out a demarche on 9 February, also asking for access to Mr Kozlov and information about his health. Kazakh authorities promised to allow the EU delegation to visit Mr Kozlov in detention.

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000646/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**Louis Grech (S&D)**
*(27 ta' Jannar 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Implimentazzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni dwar l-iskart tal-UE

Skont studju tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea ppubblikat riċentament, l-implimentazzjoni sħiħa tal-leġiżlazzjoni dwar l-iskart tal-UE tista' tiffranka EUR 72 biljun fis-sena, iżżid il-fatturat annwali tas-settur tal-ġestjoni u r-riċiklaġġ tal-iskart tal-UE bi EUR 42 biljun u toħloq 'il fuq minn 400 000 impjieg sal-2020. Barra minn hekk, l-istudju wera li l-attivitajiet illegali konnessi mal-iskart fl-Istati Membri qegħdin jirriżultaw f'opportunitajiet mitlufa ta' tkabbir ekonomiku u li spezzjonijiet nazzjonali aktar effettivi u għarfien akbar dwar il-ġestjoni tal-iskart iġibu magħhom titjib kbir.

Ir-Regolament tal-Istatistika tal-Iskart tal-Unjoni Ewropea (KE) Nru 2150/2002, li daħal fis-seħħ f'Novembru 2002, jesiġi li l-Istati Membri jipprovdu data lill-Kummissjoni Ewropea kull sentejn dwar il-ġenerazzjoni u t-trattament tal-iskart, bl-għan li jkun żgurat monitoraġġ aħjar tal-implimentazzjoni tal-politika tal-Komunità dwar il-ġestjoni tal-iskart permezz ta' data regolari, komparabbli, aġġornata u rappreżentattiva dwar il-ġenerazzjoni, ir-riċiklaġġ, l-użu mill-ġdid u r-rimi ta' skart fi kwalunkwe Stat Membru partikolari.

1. Meta kienet l-aħħar darba li Malta rrappurtat lill-Kummissjoni?

2. Il-Kummissjoni x'ikkonkludiet minn dak li bagħtet Malta?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mill-Kumissarju Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(2 ta' Marzu 2012)*

L-aħħar kontribuzzjoni ta' Malta fil-ġbir tad-dejta bbażat fuq ir-Regolament dwar l-Istatistika tal-Iskart ([1]) wasal fit-13 ta' Settembru 2010 u jkopri s-sena ta' referenza 2008.

Peress li r-Regolament jeżiġi li d-dejta titwassal 18-il xahar wara l-perjodu ta' referenza, dan ifisser li din id-dejta twasslet xahrejn u nofs tard.

Fl-4 ta' Novembru 2010 u fid-29 ta' April 2011, intbagħtu reviżjonijiet ta' dawn is-settijiet ta' dejta .

Kien hemm bżonn ta' xi kjarifika dwar id-distinzjoni bejn l-iskart tal-metall u l-vetturi mormija fis-sett ta' dejta dwar il-ġenerazzjoni tal-iskart. Madankollu, il-kwalità ġenerali tad-dejta kienet tajba.

Il-ġenerazzjoni totali tal-iskart (l-attivitajiet ekonomiċi kollha flimkien mad-djar) f'Malta fl-2004 kienet:

3 015 032 tunnellata; 2006: 2 733 875 tunnellata u fl-2008: 1 330 219 tunnellata.

Il-ġenerazzjoni tal-iskart f'Malta hija ddominata l-aktar mill-iskart minerali, b'82,5 % tal-iskart kollu ġġenerat f'Malta ġej mill-attivitajiet ta' bini u demolizzjoni fl-2008. (2006: 91 %, 2004: 93 %)

It-tnaqqis qawwi fil-ġenerazzjoni tal-iskart osservat fl-2008 kien ikkawżat mit-tnaqqis tal-iskart minerali minn attivitajiet ta' demolizzjoni.

Id-dejta hija disponibbli pubblikament fuq il-websajt tal-Eurostat — iċ-ċentru tad-Dejta dwar l-iskart ([2]).

([1]) ĠU L 332, 9.12.2002.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/waste.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000646/12**
**to the Commission**
**Louis Grech (S&D)**
*(27 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Implementation of EU waste legislation

According to a recently published European Commission study, full implementation of EU waste legislation would save EUR 72 billion a year, increase the annual turnover of the EU waste management and recycling sector by EUR 42 billion and create over 400 000 jobs by 2020. Furthermore, the study revealed that illegal waste operations in Member States are resulting in missed opportunities for economic growth and that stronger national inspections and better knowledge about waste management would bring about major improvements.

The European Union Waste Statistics Regulation (EC) No 2150/2002, which came into force in November 2002, requires all Member States to provide data to the European Commission every two years on the generation and treatment of waste, the objective being to ensure better monitoring of implementation of Community policy on waste management through regular, comparable, up-to-date and representative data on the generation, recycling, re-use and disposal of waste in any given Member State.

1. When did Malta last report to the Commission?

2. What did the Commission conclude from Malta's submissions?

**Answer given by Commissioner Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

Malta's last contribution to the data collection based on the Waste Statistics Regulation ([1]) was received on 13 September 2010, covering reference year 2008.

As the regulation requires data delivery 18 months after the reference period, the delivery was late by two and a half months.

Revisions of these datasets were sent on 4 November 2010 and 29 April 2011.

There was some clarification necessary on the distinction between metal waste and discarded vehicles in the dataset on waste generation. However, the overall quality of the data was good.

The total waste generation (all economic activities plus households) in Malta was in 2004:

3 015 032 tonnes; 2006: 2 733 875 tonnes and in 2008: 1 330 219 tonnes.

Generation of waste in Malta is strongly dominated by mineral waste, with 82,5 % of all waste generated in Malta coming from construction and demolition activities in 2008. (2006: 91 %, 2004: 93 %)

The strong decline in waste generation observed in 2008 was driven by the reduction of mineral waste from demolition activities.

The data is publicly available on the Eurostat website — Data centre on waste ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 332, 9.12.2002.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/waste.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000647/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(30 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Scatola nera nelle automobili

In molti paesi europei, soprattutto in un contesto economico di crisi, si sta diffondendo il fenomeno delle truffe nei confronti delle agenzie assicurative. Questo fenomeno incide sempre più sull'aumento delle polizze assicurative che, però, sono pagate da tutti gli utenti. A rimetterci in questo caso sono i cittadini onesti.

Esiste un congegno, tuttavia, in grado di registrare l'attività dei veicoli: una sorte di scatola nera per le automobili. Il dispositivo è composto essenzialmente da una scatolina, della grandezza di un pacchetto di sigarette o poco più, da posizionare in un posto non visibile, ad esempio nel cruscotto o nel vano motore. Questa scatola raccoglie, memorizza ed elabora i dati sulla posizione del veicolo, la sua velocità, il tempo di utilizzo e le rotte, ricevuti da alcuni sensori. Successivamente li trasferisce a un sistema di raccolta dati, presso una centrale operativa, terza rispetto alla compagnia assicurativa. La scatola è alimentata dal sistema elettrico dell'automobile ma, se la batteria si scarica, possiede un'autonomia propria. Inoltre il suo distacco dal normale sito viene segnalato in centrale, in quanto equivale a un tentativo di furto. Le assicurazioni applicano sconti fino al 15 % per le vetture che dispongono di questo apparecchio.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è al corrente della situazione allarmante sul fronte delle truffe assicurative,

2. intende imporre alle case automobilistiche l'obbligo di vendere vetture dotate della scatola nera, onde calmierare le tariffe assicurative?

**Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione**
*(28 febbraio 2012)*

In relazione al primo quesito dell'onorevole parlamentare in materia di frode nel settore delle assicurazioni, la Commissione non è a conoscenza di questa presunta pratica. Inoltre, la lotta contro la frode nel settore delle assicurazioni rientra tra le competenze degli Stati membri.

Per quanto riguarda i registratori di dati relativi ad eventi incidentali, spesso denominati scatole nere, la Commissione provvederà ad esaminare e valutare il valore aggiunto della loro installazione, in particolare sui veicoli professionali, al fine di migliorare la sicurezza stradale e tener conto del relativo impatto socioeconomico.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000647/12**
**to the Commission**
**Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* 'Black box' for cars

Insurance fraud is a growing problem in many EU countries, particularly in the current economic crisis. The insurance premiums of all policy-holders are continually increasing as a result, meaning that honest people are losing out.

However, there is a device which can record vehicle activity: a kind of 'black box' for cars. It consists primarily of a small box, more or less the size of a packet of cigarettes, which is placed somewhere out of sight, for example on the dashboard or in the engine compartment. The box collects, records and processes data received by a number of sensors, concerning the vehicle's location and speed, the duration of use and the routes taken. It then transfers this data to a collection system within an operations centre separate from the insurance company. The box is powered by the car's electrical system, but can function autonomously if the battery goes flat. The operations centre is notified if it is removed from its normal location, since this amounts to attempted theft. Insurance companies apply discounts of up to 15 % for cars fitted with such devices. In the light of the above, can the Commission say whether:

1.it is aware of the alarming situation with regard to insurance fraud?

2.it intends to require car manufacturers to sell vehicles fitted with a black box, with a view to containing insurance premiums?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 February 2012)*

In relation to the Honourable Member's first question concerning insurance fraud the Commission is not aware of this alleged practice. Moreover, the Member States are responsible for combating insurance fraud.

Concerning event data recorders, often referred to as 'black boxes', the Commission will examine and consider the added value of its installation, especially on professional vehicles, with the aim of improving road safety and taking into account its socioeconomic impact.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000649/12**
**to the Commission**
**Seán Kelly (PPE)**
*(26 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Early termination of Alternative Energy Requirement VI Power Purchase Agreements

Can the Commission confirm that it permitted the Irish Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources to allow Alternative Energy Requirement VI Power Purchase Agreement holders to terminate their contracts early without penalty and at very considerable cost to the Irish electricity consumer?

**Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 March 2012)*

In general, it is up to a Member State to decide how it designs a state aid measure which it subsequently notifies to the Commission in accordance with Article 108(3) of the Treaty. It is in principle also up to the Member State to decide how the aid is financed. The role of the Commission in the field of state aid is limited to the assessment whether the aid measure as designed and notified by the Member State is compatible with the EU internal market.

The Irish authorities notified in November 2003 the Alternative Energy Requirement scheme VI to the Commission. The Commission assessed whether the measure fulfilled the conditions laid down in the 2001 Environmental Aid Guidelines and approved the scheme by way of a decision in August 2004 ([1]).

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([1]) Case N540/2003; OJ C 162, 2.7.2005, p. 5.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000650/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Mario Mauro (PPE)**
*(30 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Risposta: Strategia europea in materia di invalidità e la legge italiana 102/2009

In merito all'interrogazione scritta E-010848/2011 e alla risposta ricevuta dalla Commissione in data 22.12.2011, si ritiene che la Commissione non abbia propriamente risposto alla domanda posta, in quanto si ritiene che la legge italiana in materia di invalidità 102/2009 violi apertamente i diritti umani, divenendo pertanto oggetto di pertinenza della Commissione.

Questa normativa, infatti, comporta molti disagi per il cittadino disabile, in quanto tutti i casi che in prima istanza vengono riconosciuti meritevoli di una prestazione economica (indennità di frequenza, assegno di invalidità, indennità di accompagnamento), o con handicap grave, vengono riconvocati a visita diretta dall'INPS, sottoponendo il cittadino disabile a una doppia visita, e sospendendo, nel tempo che intercorre fra la prima e la seconda, il contributo economico.

Si interroga pertanto la Commissione per sapere se non ritiene che questa normativa nazionale sia lesiva dei diritti e della dignità della persona disabile, riconosciuta unanimemente una risorsa con pari opportunità (relazione di Ádám Kósa (P7_TA(2011)0453) sulla mobilità e l'integrazione delle persone con disabilità).

Non ritiene altresì gravemente dannoso e oneroso il fatto che tra i due controlli effettuati dall'autorità competente venga sospeso il contributo economico, considerando che possono passare anche diversi mesi?

**Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione**
*(27 febbraio 2012)*

La Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole Parlamentare alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-010848/2011 ([1]).

La Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti delle persone con disabilità (in appresso «la Convenzione») si applica all'UE nei limiti delle competenze attestate nella Dichiarazione di cui all'allegato II della decisione 2010/48/CE del Consiglio del 26 novembre 2009 relativa alla conclusione della Convenzione. La Dichiarazione elenca gli atti comunitari con cui gli Stati membri, in conformità con i trattati UE, hanno trasferito all'Unione competenze nei settori rientranti nell'ambito della Convenzione.

La protezione sociale dei disabili e la concessione delle relative indennità sono materie principalmente di competenza degli Stati membri. In questo settore, la Commissione non ha competenza a valutare la compatibilità di una legge nazionale o di misure nazionali con la Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite.

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000650/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mario Mauro (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Response: European Disability Strategy and Italian Law 102/2009

The Commission reply of 22 December 2011 to Written Question E-010848/2011 is unsatisfactory, given that Italian Law 102/2009 on disability is clearly an infringement of human rights, and hence a matter for the Commission.

This law, in fact, makes life difficult in many ways for citizens with disabilities, as all those initially judged to be entitled to benefits (attendance allowance, disability allowance, helper allowance), or suffering from severe disabilities, are being summoned once again for a direct examination by the INPS, subjecting disabled persons to two examinations and suspending their benefits for the period between them.

Does the Commission therefore consider that this national legislation is affecting the rights and dignity of the disabled, who are universally recognised as members of society who are entitled to equal opportunities (report Ádám Kósa (P7_TA(2011)0453) on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities)?

Does it not also consider the suspension of benefits between the two medical examinations performed by the competent authority to be a particularly harsh and oppressive measure, given that the interim period may be as much as several months?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010848/2011 ([1]).

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereafter referred to as 'the Convention') applies to the EU within the limits of its competences attested by the Declaration of Competence in Annex II of Council Decision 2010/48/EC of 26 November 2009 concluding the Convention. This Declaration lists the Community acts by which the Member States under the EU Treaties have transferred competences to the Union in areas covered by the Convention.

Social protection of persons with disabilities, including the provision of disability-related allowances, is foremost a matter falling within the competence of the Member States. In this area, the Commission has no competence to make an assessment of compatibility of a national law or of national measures with the UN Convention.

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

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000652/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(30 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Morosidad del Gobierno español con las Comunidades Autónomas

El pasado mes de diciembre de 2011, el Gobierno del Reino de España decidió no pagar —no hacer efectiva la transferencia— al Gobierno Catalán y, por lo tanto, éste último no pudo pagar lo que fija la Ley a terceros. La suma, sólo por este concepto, fue de más de 1 000 millones de euros. Debido a este incumplimiento del contrato por una de las partes, esto es, del Gobierno español, el Govern de Catalunya no pudo pagar los servicios que dichos terceros prestaron dentro de los plazos establecidos en el contrato.

A esto, se añade un estudio presentado por Roubini, http://www.roubini.com/analysis/168965.php, el cual muestra que de los tres principales fondos —convergencia, suficiencia y fondos garantizados—, sólo el 61 % del total que se tenían que haber pagado en 2011, por parte del Gobierno del Reino de España a las regiones, fueron abonados a final del tercer trimestre de 2011.

Según se recoge en la Ley 22/2009, de 18 de diciembre, sobre el modelo de financiación de las Comunidades Autónomas de régimen común, por la que se regula el sistema de financiación de las Comunidades Autónomas de régimen común y Ciudades con Estatuto de Autonomía y que recoge el Acuerdo del Consejo de Política Fiscal y Financiera de las Comunidad Autónomas, de 15 de julio del año 2009.

Teniendo en cuenta la Directiva 2011/7/EU sobre morosidad y, en especial, en lo que se refiere a los considerandos 9 y 11, y a los artículos 2 y 4, y con el añadido de que el Gobierno español ya había hecho efectiva dicha transferencia otros años, y teniendo en cuenta el semestre europeo.

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión que no pagar lo que está en la Ley vulneraría dicha Directiva de morosidad 2011/7/EU?

2. Si fuera así, ¿el Gobierno español debería hacer el pago lo antes posible y, así, no incumplir la Directiva 2011/7/EU?

3. ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión hacer una recomendación al Gobierno del Reino de España para que abone lo que está establecido en los Presupuestos Generales del Estado?

4. ¿Está satisfecha la Comisión con los datos presentados anteriormente?

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000653/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(30 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Morosidad de la Administración pública

Según se recoge en la Ley orgánica aprobada en el año 2007 por los Parlamentos Catalán y Español, Estatut d'Autonomia de Catalunya y, en concreto, en su Disposición Adicional Tercera, apartado 1, donde se dice que «La inversión del Estado en Cataluña en infraestructuras, excluido el Fondo de Compensación Interterritorial, se equiparará a la participación relativa del producto interior bruto de Cataluña con relación al producto interior bruto del Estado para un periodo de siete años. Dichas inversiones podrán también utilizarse para la liberación de peajes o construcción de autovías alternativas».

El pasado mes de diciembre de 2011, el Gobierno del Reino de España decidió no pagar —no hacer efectiva la transferencia— al Gobierno Catalán y, por lo tanto, este último no pudo pagar lo que fija la ley a terceros. La suma, sólo por este concepto, fue de 759 millones de euros. Debido a este incumplimiento del contrato por una de las partes, esto es, del Gobierno español, el Govern de Catalunya no pudo pagar los servicios que estos prestaron cuando así se establecía en el contrato.

Teniendo en cuenta la Directiva 2011/7/EU sobre morosidad y, en especial, en lo que se refiere a los considerandos 9 y 11, y a los artículos 2 y 4.

1. ¿Piensa la Comisión que no pagar lo que está en la Ley vulneraría dicha Directiva de morosidad 2011/7/EU?

2. Si fuera así, ¿el Gobierno español debería hacer el pago lo antes posible y, así, no incumplir la Directiva 2011/7/EU?

**Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión**
*(19 de marzo de 2012)*

La Directiva 2000/35/CE, por la que se establecen medidas de lucha contra la morosidad en las operaciones comerciales ([1]), está en vigor y se derogará el 16 de marzo de 2013. En consecuencia, todas las preguntas relativas al incumplimiento de la nueva Directiva 2011/7/UE ([2]) se analizarán en el contexto de la Directiva aplicable en la actualidad.

La Directiva 2000/35/CE se aplica a todas las transacciones comerciales entre los poderes públicos y las empresas, y entre las empresas. Por tanto, las transacciones entre los poderes públicos (por ejemplo, el Gobierno español) no entran dentro del ámbito de aplicación de esta Directiva.

Como se ha indicado en anteriores respuestas ([3]), la Directiva 2000/35/CE no armoniza los plazos de pago, tan solo regula las consecuencias de la morosidad. La existencia de morosidad en el pago por parte de una administración pública a un proveedor por el suministro de bienes o servicios debe determinarse de acuerdo con la normativa nacional aplicable y el contrato entre la administración y el proveedor en cuestión. En caso de morosidad, y de conformidad con el artículo 3, apartado 1, de la Directiva 2000/35/CE, el proveedor podrá reclamar intereses de demora, salvo si la legislación nacional o el contrato contiene disposiciones más favorables para el acreedor.

Los poderes públicos deben dar ejemplo y respetar sus contratos. A este respecto, deberían consignar en su presupuesto los créditos para gastos y pagar a tiempo a sus acreedores. La Directiva 2011/7/UE y, lo que es más importante, la armonización del plazo de pago por parte de los poderes públicos, animarán a estos a mejorar sus sistemas de gestión.

([1]) DO L 200 de 8.8.2000, p. 35.
([2]) DO L 48 de 23.2.2011, pp. 1-10.
([3]) Respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-005655/2011, E-006025/2011, E-006107/2011, E008435/2011 y E-000060/2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000652/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Late payment by the Spanish Government to the autonomous communities

In December 2011, the Government of the Kingdom of Spain decided not to pay — i.e. not to transfer funds to — the Catalan Government, so the latter was unable to meet its legal obligations to third parties. The sum involved was in excess of EUR 1 billion. Owing to this failure by one of the parties — that is, the Spanish Government — to comply with the contract, the Government of Catalonia was unable to pay for some of the services provided for it by third parties within the periods laid down in the contract.

In addition to this, a study by Roubini, http://www.roubini.com/analysis/168965.php, shows that only 61 % of the total that the Government of the Kingdom of Spain should have sent to the regions in 2011 from the three key funds — convergence, sufficiency and guarantee — was paid in the third quarter of 2011.

This matter is governed by Law 22/2009, of 18 December, which regulates the system for funding autonomous communities that fall under the standard scheme and cities with statutes of autonomy and which incorporates the Agreement of the Fiscal and Financial Policy Council of the Autonomous Communities of 15 July 2009.

In view of Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment and, specifically, recitals 9 and 11 of the preamble and Articles 2 and 4, given that the Spanish Government had already effected this transfer in other years, and in light of the European semester,

1. Does the Commission think that non-payment of what is legally owed constitutes a breach of Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment?

2. If so, should the Spanish Government make the payment as soon as possible so as not to be in breach of Directive 2011/7/EU?

3. Has the Commission considered recommending that the Government of the Kingdom of Spain pay what is laid down in the general state budgets?

4. Is the Commission satisfied with the information previously submitted?

**Question for written answer E-000653/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Late payment by public authorities

The organic law adopted in 2007 by the Catalan Parliament and the Spanish Parliament on the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia, specifically paragraph 1 of its Third Additional Provision, states that 'State investment in infrastructure in Catalonia shall be equal to the relative share of Catalonia's gross domestic product in the gross domestic product of the State for a period of seven years. These investments may also be used for eliminating tolls or for construction of alternative expressway roads'.

In December 2011, the Government of the Kingdom of Spain decided not to pay — i.e. not to transfer funds to — the Catalan Government, so the latter was unable to meet its legal obligations to third parties. The sum involved was EUR 759 million. Owing to this failure by one of the parties — that is, the Spanish Government — to comply with the contract, the Government of Catalonia was unable to pay for some of the services provided, even though it was obligated to do so by the contract.

In view of Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment and, specifically, recitals 9 and 11 of the preamble and Articles 2 and 4,

1. Does the Commission think that non-payment of what is legally owed constitutes a breach of Directive 2011/7/EU on late payment?

2. If so, should the Spanish Government make the payment as soon as possible so as not to be in breach of Directive 2011/7/EU?

**Joint answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

Directive 2000/35/EC on combating late payment in commercial transactions ([1]) is in force and will be repealed on 16 March 2013. Therefore all questions concerning the breach of the new Directive 2011/7/EU ([2]) will be analysed against the background of the currently applicable Directive.

Directive 2000/35/EC applies to all commercial transactions between public authorities and undertaking, and between undertakings. Therefore, transactions between public authorities (e.g. Spanish Government) fall outside the scope of the directive.

As mentioned in previous correspondence ([3]), Directive 2000/35/EC does not harmonise payment periods but only regulates consequences of late payment. To determine whether a payment by a public authority to a supplier for the purchase of products or services is late, it should be examined in the light of the applicable national rules and the contract between the authority and the supplier or service provider. In case of late payment and according to Article 3(1) of Directive 2000/35/EC the supplier may claim interest for late payment, unless the national law or the contract contains more favourable provisions for the creditor.

Public authorities should lead by example and honour their contracts. Moreover, public authorities should schedule the credits for expenditure in its budget and pay its creditors on time. Directive 2011/7/EU, and most importantly the harmonisation of the payment period for public authorities, will motivate public authorities to upgrade their management systems.

([1]) OJ L 200, 8.8.2000, p. 35.
([2]) OJ L 48, 23.2.2011, p. 1-10.
([3]) Answers to Written Questions E-005655/2011, E-006025/2011, E-006107/2011, E008435/2011, E-000060/2011.

*(Dansk udgave)*

**Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000656/12**
**til Kommissionen**
**Jens Rohde (ALDE)**
*(1. februar 2012)*

*Om:* Fødevaresikkerhed

I Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten fredag d. 20/1 2012 refereres der til et nyt EU-direktiv, som vil forhindre lokale slagtere i at sælge deres produkter uden for en radius af præcis 50 kilometer fra deres virksomhed. Det kommer eksempelvis til at betyde at slagtere på Bornholm ikke må sælge kød udenfor øen, og sønderjyske slagtere ikke må sælge deres produkter uden for Sønderjylland.

I Tyskland derimod er radiusgrænsen derimod 100 kilometer, og i Frankrig er den 80 kilometer.

Kan Kommissionen be- eller afkræfte ovenstående og i bekræftende fald finder Kommissionen sådanne regler hensigtsmæssige for udviklingen og markedsføringen af egns- og specialitetsprodukter?

**Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli**
*(6. marts 2012)*

EU-lovgivningen om særlige hygiejnebestemmelser for animalske fødevarer ([1]) finder ikke anvendelse på detailvirksomheder, der leverer til andre detailvirksomheder, når der i overensstemmelse med national ret er tale om en »marginal, lokal og begrænset« ([2]) aktivitet.

Nævnte EU-lovgivning indeholder ikke nærmere bestemmelser om, inden for hvilken radius detailvirksomhederne kan operere. Det er op til medlemsstaterne at fastsætte nationale forskrifter herom. De nationale bestemmelser skal dog respektere begrebet »marginal, lokal og begrænset« og skal meddeles til Kommissionen og de øvrige medlemsstater.

Dette begreb, som er omhandlet i Kommissionens vejledning ([3]), udspringer af princippet om, at detailvirksomheder, hvis aktiviteter hovedsagelig består i at levere til den endelige forbruger, bør kunne afsætte deres produkter lokalt og derfor ikke beskæftiger sig med handel over lange afstande, som kræver mere tilsyn og overvågning, navnlig hvad angår transport- og kølekædeforhold.

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([1]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 853/2004 af 29. april 2004 om særlige hygiejnebestemmelser for animalske fødevarer (EUT L 139 af 30.4.2004).
([2]) Jf. artikel 1, stk. 5, litra b), nr. ii), i forordning (EF) nr. 853/2004.
([3]) Vejledning i gennemførelsen af visse bestemmelser i forordning (EF) nr. 853/2004 om fødevarehygiejne for animalske fødevarer (http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/guidance_doc_853-2004_da.pdf)

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000656/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jens Rohde (ALDE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Food safety

On Friday 20.1.2012, the Danish daily newspaper Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten reported that a new EU Directive will prevent local butchers from selling their produce outside a radius of precisely 50 km from their businesses. This will, for example, mean that butchers on the island of Bornholm may not sell their meat anywhere but on the island, and butchers in Southern Jutland may not sell their produce outside Southern Jutland.

In Germany, on the other hand, the radius is 100 km and in France it is 80 km.

Can the Commission either confirm or deny the above and, if it is true, does the Commission feel these rules are appropriate for the development and marketing of locally sourced and speciality products?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 March 2012)*

EU legislation laying down specific hygiene rules for products of animal origin ([1]) does not apply to retail establishments supplying to other retail establishments when this activity, in accordance with national law, is 'marginal, localised and restricted' ([2]).

The referred EU legislation does not contain detailed provisions in relation to specific distances within which retail establishments can operate. It is a competence of Member States to lay down national legislation on this subject. However, national legislation must respect the notion of 'marginal, localised and restricted' and must be notified to the Commission and other Member States.

That notion, as referred in the Commission's Guidance Document ([3]), stems from the principle that retail establishments supplying the final consumer as their main trade should be able to trade their products locally and so are not engaged in long distance trade which requires more attention and supervision in particular as regards transport and cold chain conditions.

([1]) 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 (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004).
([2]) See Article 1 (5) (b) (ii) of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.
([3]) Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin (http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/guidance_doc_853-2004_en.pdf).

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000657/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)**
*(30. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Gefahrenrelevante Eigenschaften von Abfällen und das Europäische Abfallverzeichnis

Ein Abfall gilt als gefährlicher Abfall, wenn dieser eine oder mehrere der in Anhang III der Richtlinie 2008/98/EG (Abfallrahmenrichtlinie) angeführten gefährlichen Eigenschaften aufweist. Anhang III der Abfallrahmenrichtlinie verweist auf zwei chemikalienrechtliche Richtlinien. Die chemikalienrechtlichen Regelungen wurden mittlerweile durch neue Regelungen, die REACH-Verordnung (VO (EG) Nr. 1907/2006) und die CLP-Verordnung (VO (EG) Nr. 1272/2008), ersetzt. Ferner wird das Europäische Abfallverzeichnis einer Revision unterzogen. Eine Änderung der gefahrenrelevanten Eigenschaften hat auch Auswirkungen auf das Europäische Abfallverzeichnis, das hinsichtlich der Festlegung eines Abfalls als gefährlicher Abfall verbindlich ist.

Von der Europäischen Kommission wurde eine Experten-Arbeitsgruppe einberufen, in der die Arbeiten zur Revision des Verzeichnisses und zu den gefahrenrelevanten Eigenschaften wegen diesem Zusammenhang parallel verlaufen.

Ein vom österreichischen Umweltministerium im Oktober 2011 veranstalteter Workshop hat aufgezeigt, dass bei Anwendung der neuen chemikalienrechtlichen Kriterien bei einigen Abfallströmen ein höherer Anteil an gefährlichen Abfällen zu erwarten ist, z. B. Baurestmassen, Pflanzenaschen, Aschen, Schlacken.

Neben den Anforderungen des Abfallregimes an gefährliche Abfälle (z. B. Begleitscheinpflicht bei der Übergabe gefährlicher Abfälle), könnten Konsequenzen u. a. die Anwendung des IPPC-Regimes, Seveso oder das Erfordernis einer Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung bei der Behandlung gefährlicher Abfälle sein. Daneben befürchten z. B. die Biomasseanlagen ein Imageproblem bei der Aufbringung von Pflanzenaschen als gefährlichen Abfall zu Düngezwecken auf dem Boden.

Wann wird von der Kommission ein Impact Assessment erstellt, in dem u. a. über die Auswirkungen auf die Einstufung (Anzahl der gefährlichen Abfälle) sowie auf die Abfallwirtschaft generell näher eingegangen wird? Welche Abfallströme werden betroffen sein? Führt diese Änderung zu einer Steigerung der Menge an gefährlichen Abfällen? In welchem Ausmaß betreffen diese Änderungen die Ausbringung von Asche auf landwirtschaftlich genutzten Flächen?

**Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission**
*(15. März 2012)*

Die Kommission prüft derzeit in einer Arbeitsgruppe mit Sachverständigen aus den Mitgliedstaaten eine Änderung der in Anhang III der Richtlinie 2008/98/EG ([1]) aufgeführten gefährlichen Eigenschaften sowie der Entscheidung 2000/532/EG über ein Abfallverzeichnis ([2]). Es ist zu vermerken, dass die Methode für die Bewertung der Gefährlichkeit von Abfall weitgehend der Methode entspricht, nach der die Gefährlichkeit von Stoffen (d. h. Regelwerk für Chemikalien) bestimmt wird, wie in der Erläuterung 1 in Anhang III der Richtlinie 2008/98/EG hervorgehoben wird. Da sich die Rechtsvorschriften für Chemikalien weiterentwickelt haben, ist die Definition gefährlicher Eigenschaften entsprechend anzupassen.

Es wurde eine Reihe von Abfallströmen ermittelt, die aufgrund der Überarbeitung der gefährlichen Eigenschaften möglicherweise als gefährlich eingestuft werden könnten. Diese Abfallströme werden derzeit auf ihre potenziellen wirtschaftlichen und ökologischen Auswirkungen hin analysiert. Die Analyse bezieht sich auf die Abfallströme, die im Rahmen des vom österreichischen Umweltministerium ausgerichteten Workshops ermittelt wurden, und auf einige zusätzlich von den Mitgliedstaaten vorgeschlagenen Abfallarten. Sollte es sich abzeichnen, dass infolge der vorgeschlagenen Änderungen weitere Abfallströme als gefährlich einzustufen sind, so wird die Kommission die Analyse auch auf diese Abfälle ausweiten. Die Kommission kann nicht ausschließen, dass der als gefährlich eingestufte Abfall infolge der Überarbeitung mengenmäßig variieren wird. Mögliche Auswirkungen der Änderungen auf die derzeitige Ausbringung von Asche auf landwirtschaftlich genutzte Flächen werden zur Zeit geprüft.

([1]) ABl. L 312 vom 22.11.2008.
([2]) ABl. L 226 vom 6.9.2000.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000657/12**
**to the Commission**
**Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Properties of waste which render it hazardous and the European Waste Catalogue

Waste is regarded as hazardous if it exhibits one or more of the properties listed in Annex III to Directive 2008/98/EC (Framework Directive on Waste). That Annex III refers to two directives laying down provisions on chemicals. Those provisions have since been replaced by new regulations, the REACH Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006) and the CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging) Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008). In addition, the European Waste Catalogue is undergoing revision. A change to the properties which render waste hazardous also has implications for the European Waste Catalogue, which is binding with regard to the classification of a waste as hazardous.

An expert working group has been set up by the Commission in which the work on the revision of the catalogue and that on the revision of the properties of waste which render it hazardous will run in parallel, given the link between them.

A workshop hosted by the Austrian Ministry of the Environment in October 2011 demonstrated that the application of the new criteria is likely to result in a higher percentage of waste in a number of streams, e.g. construction waste, plant ash, ashes and slag, being classified as hazardous.

In addition to the requirements laid down as part of the rules concerning hazardous waste (e.g. obligation to provide a tracking document when handing over hazardous waste), other consequences could be the application of the IPPC or SEVESO regime or the requirement to carry out an environmental impact assessment in connection with the handling of hazardous waste. In addition, biomass plants, for example, fear an image problem in connection with the spreading of plant ash (now classified as hazardous waste) as fertiliser.

When will the Commission draw up an impact assessment which examines in greater detail the implications for the classification of waste (number of types of hazardous waste) and on waste management in general? Which waste streams will be affected? Will this change lead to an increase in the volume of hazardous waste? To what extent will these changes affect the spreading of ash on farmland?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 March 2012)*

The Commission is discussing an amendment of the hazardous properties defined in Annex III to Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) and of Decision 2000/532/EC on the List of Waste ([2]) in a working group of Member State Experts. It is to be noted that the methodology for assessing the hazardousness of wastes is to a large extent analogous to the methodology applied for the assessment of the hazardousness of substances (i.e. the chemicals legislation) as highlighted in Note 1 to Annex III to Directive 2008/98/EC. Given that the chemicals legislation has evolved, the definitions of the hazardous properties have to be adapted accordingly.

A number of waste streams have been identified that could potentially become hazardous as a result of the review of the hazardous properties. For these waste streams an analysis of the potential economic and environmental effects is ongoing. The analysis is being performed for the waste streams identified during the workshop hosted by the Austrian Ministry of the Environment and some additional waste types proposed by Member States. Should other waste streams be likely to become hazardous as a result of the proposed changes, the Commission intends to extend the analysis also to these wastes. The Commission cannot rule out the possibility that the amount of wastes classified as hazardous may vary in some cases as a result of the review. Potential impacts of the changes on the ashes that are currently spread on farmland are currently being assessed.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 226, 6.9.2000.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000658/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Spyros Danellis (S&D)**
*(30 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Μέτρα που αφορούν τον κλάδο της κρουαζιέρας

Το ναυάγιο του κρουαζιερόπλοιου «Costa Concordia» έχει προκαλέσει την αναστάτωση του επιβατικού κοινού, θέτοντας ταυτόχρονα σε αμφιβολία την επάρκεια της συνθήκης ναυτικής ασφάλειας SOLAS, του Διεθνούς Ναυτιλιακού Οργανισμού. Ο ΔΝΟ έχει εκφράσει τη πρόθεσή του να επανεξετάσει την ασφάλεια της νέας γενιάς κρουαζιερόπλοιων, ενώ οι ναυτικές αρχές των κρατών μελών πρέπει και αυτές να αντλήσουν συμπεράσματα από το ναυάγιο. Την ίδια στιγμή όμως, οι αναλυτές προειδοποιούν πως ο κλάδος της κρουαζιέρας, ο οποίος τα τελευταία χρόνια αναπτύσσεται συνεχώς και παρέχει εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες θέσεις εργασίας, μπορεί να υποστεί σοβαρό πλήγμα, αφού μεταξύ άλλων διανύουμε την περίοδο των κρατήσεων.

Αξίζει να σημειωθεί πως το 95 % του παγκόσμιου στόλου κρουαζιερόπλοιων ναυπηγούνται σε ναυπηγεία της Ευρώπης τα οποία, σύμφωνα με τον κλάδο, προμηθεύονται το 99 % των υλικών από ευρωπαϊκές βιομηχανίες. Επομένως, δεδομένης της ανάγκης να συντηρηθεί η ανάπτυξη του κλάδου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σκοπεύει να συμπεριλάβει στο επικείμενο νομοθετικό πλαίσιο για τους λιμένες νέες ρυθμίσεις για τη προώθηση των επενδύσεων σε λιμενικές και παράκτιες υποδομές;

2. Προβλέπεται η ευκαιρία ευρωπαϊκής συγχρηματοδότησης επιβατικών υποδομών σε λιμένες της ΕΕ από το νέο ταμείο «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη»;

3. Πώς θα διευκολύνει τη μετάβαση σε οικονομικώς προσιτά καύσιμα, χαμηλής περιεκτικότητας σε θείο, ώστε να μην πληγούν από τα αυστηρότερα όρια θείου οι υπηρεσίες που παρέχουν η κρουαζιέρα και η ακτοπλοΐα;

4. Σε τι ενέργειες θα προβεί για την βελτίωση της κατάρτισης των ναυτικών και της ελκυστικότητας των ναυτικών επαγγελμάτων μετά και από τη σχετική της έκθεση του Μαΐου 2011.

**Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(28 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

1. Η προώθηση των επενδύσεων σε λιμενικές και παράκτιες υποδομές για τις θαλάσσιες μεταφορές θίγεται στην πρόταση της Επιτροπής για τις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές του διευρωπαϊκού δικτύου μεταφορών, της 19ης Οκτωβρίου 2011 ([1]), οι οποίες στηρίζουν, κατά περίπτωση, επαρκείς υποδομές για τους επιβάτες εντός της ζώνης του λιμένα.

2. Η διευκόλυνση «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη» ([2]) θα στηρίξει έργα κοινού ενδιαφέροντος που αποσκοπούν στην επίτευξη των στόχων που καθορίζονται στις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές για το ΔΕΔ-Μ. Τα έργα που αφορούν επιβατικές υποδομές στους λιμένες της ΕΕ θα είναι επιλέξιμα για ενωσιακή χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή, εφόσον τα έργα αυτά πληρούν τις προϋποθέσεις που καθορίζονται στο άρθρο 7 των κατευθυντήριων γραμμών της Ένωσης για την ανάπτυξη του διευρωπαϊκού δικτύου μεταφορών που προαναφέρθηκαν.

3. Η πρόταση για τη μείωση της περιεκτικότητας σε θείο των καυσίμων των πλοίων αποσκοπεί, μεταξύ άλλων, στην ευθυγράμμιση της ενωσιακής νομοθεσίας με τα συμφωνημένα διεθνή πρότυπα. Για περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση που είχε δώσει στην ερώτηση E-010162/2011 ([3]).

4. Η έκθεση της ανεξάρτητης ομάδας δράσης για την ναυτική εργασία και ανταγωνιστικότητα, η οποία δημοσιεύθηκε τον Ιούλιο του 2011 ([4]), περιλαμβάνει σειρά συστάσεων προς την Επιτροπή, τις εθνικές διοικήσεις και τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους. Η Επιτροπή προγραμματίζει διαβούλευση με τα κράτη μέλη και τους ενδιαφερόμενους φορείς σχετικά με τις επακόλουθες ενέργειες πριν από το θέρος του 2012, με στόχο να τεθούν προτεραιότητες όσον αφορά τις πρωτοβουλίες που συνέστησε η ομάδα δράσης.

([1]) Αναθεωρημένες κατευθυντήριες γραμμές της Ένωσης για την ανάπτυξη του διευρωπαϊκού δικτύου μεταφορών — Πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, COM(2011)650/2 της 19.10.2011.
([2]) Πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, COM(2011)665 τελικό της 19.10.2011.
([3]) Διαθέσιμη στη διεύθυνση http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/seafarers/doc/2011-06-09-tfmec.pdf.

Ως προς τα κανονιστικά μέτρα που συνιστά η ομάδα δράσης, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε, τον Σεπτέμβριο 2011, πρόταση οδηγίας με την οποία τροποποιείται η οδηγία σχετικά με την εκπαίδευση και την πιστοποίηση των ναυτικών (2008/106/ΕΚ ([5])), προκειμένου να ευθυγραμμιστεί με τις τροποποιήσεις του 2010 στη σύμβαση STCW ([6]), ενώ την άνοιξη του 2012 αναμένεται να υποβληθεί στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο πρόταση για τη θέση σε εφαρμογή της οδηγίας 2009/13/ΕΚ ([7]) (με την οποία ενσωματώνεται μέρος της σύμβασης για τη ναυτική εργασία στην ενωσιακή νομοθεσία).

([5]) Οδηγία 2008/106/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 19ης Νοεμβρίου 2008, για το ελάχιστο επίπεδο εκπαίδευσης των ναυτικών (αναδιατύπωση), ΕΕ L 323 της 3.12.2008, σ. 33.

([6]) COM(2011)555.

([7]) Οδηγία 2009/13/ΕΚ του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Φεβρουαρίου 2009, για την εφαρμογή της συμφωνίας που συνήψαν η Ένωση Εφοπλιστών της Ευρωπαϊκής Κοινότητας (ECSA) και η Ευρωπαϊκή Ομοσπονδία των Ενώσεων Εργαζομένων στις Μεταφορές (ETF) σχετικά με τη σύμβαση ναυτικής εργασίας του 2006 και για τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 1999/63/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 124 της 20.5.2009, σ. 30.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000658/12**
**to the Commission**
**Spyros Danellis (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Measures relating to the cruise shipping sector

The shipwreck of the *Costa Concordia* cruise vessel has triggered alarm among passengers and would-be passengers, at the same time casting doubt on the adequacy of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO)'s SOLAS convention on the Safety Of Life At Sea. The IMO has announced its intention of re-examining the safety of the new generation of cruise ships, and the maritime authorities of IMO member countries must also draw conclusions from this shipwreck. At the same time, however, analysts are warning that the cruise shipping sector, which in recent years has undergone continuous expansion and employs hundreds of thousands of people, may suffer a serious blow, not least now that we are in the middle of the booking season.

It is worth noting that 95 % of the world's cruise shipping fleet is built in European shipyards which, according to industry sources, obtain 99 % of their materials from European manufacturers. Thus, given the necessity of maintaining growth in this sector:

1. Does the Commission intend to include in the impending legislative framework for ports new provisions for the promotion of investment in port and coastal infrastructures?

2. Is any opportunity to be provided through the new 'Connecting Europe' fund for European co-financing of passenger infrastructures in EU ports?

3. How does it propose to facilitate the transition to affordable low-sulphur fuels so that the services offered by cruise vessels and coastal shipping do not suffer as a result of the imposition of stricter limits on sulphur emissions?

4. What action does it intend to take, following publication of its May 2011 report, to improve training for people in maritime employment and the attractiveness of jobs in the shipping sector?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 February 2012)*

1. The promotion of investment in port and coastal infrastructures for maritime transport is addressed in the Commission's TEN-T guidelines proposal of 19 October 2011 ([1]) supporting , where appropriate, adequate infrastructures for passengers within the port area.

2. The Connecting Europe Facility ([2]) will support projects of common interest pursuing the objectives set out in the TEN-T guidelines. Projects related to passenger infrastructures in EU ports would be eligible for Union financial aid provided that those projects fulfil the conditions established in Article 7 of the Union guidelines for the TEN-T development referred to above.

3. The proposal reducing the sulphur content of marine fuels aims, amongst others, at aligning the EU legislation to agreed international standards. For more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answer to Question E-010162/2011 ([3]).

4. The independent Task Force report on Maritime Employment and Competitiveness published in July 2011 ([4]) includes a set of recommendations addressed to the Commission, national administrations and social partners. The Commission plans to consult Member States and stakeholders on its follow-up before the summer 2012 with a view to prioritising the initiatives recommended by the Task Force.

As for the regulatory actions recommended by the Task Force, the Commission adopted in September 2011 a proposal for a directive amending the directive on training and certification of seafarers (2008/106/EC ([5])) in order to

([1]) Revised Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) — Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council, COM(2011) 650/2 of 19.10.2011.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council, COM(2011) 665 final of 19.10.2011.
([3]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/seafarers/doc/2011-06-09-tfmec.pdf
([5]) Directive 2008/106/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on the minimum level of training of seafarers (recast), OJ L 323 , 3.12.2008, p. 33.

bring it in line with the 2010 Amendments to the STCW Convention ([6]), while a proposal for enforcing Directive 2009/13/EC ([7]) (integrating part of the Maritime Labour Convention into EC law) is expected to be submitted to Parliament and Council during the spring 2012.

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([6]) COM(2011) 555.

([7]) Council Directive 2009/13/EC of 16 February 2009 implementing the Agreement concluded by the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) on the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, and amending Directive 1999/63/EC , OJ L 124 , 20.5.2009, p.30.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000659/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)**
*(30 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Propunerile privind PAC și micii fermieri

Propunerea Comisiei pentru reforma PAC prevede planuri pentru o schemă de ajutoare destinată micilor fermieri în conformitate cu care fermierii urmează să primească o plată anuală cuprinsă între 500 de euro și 1 000 de euro. Aceștia urmează să fie scutiți de obligațiile de ecologizare și să facă obiectul unor obligații de ecocondiționalitate mai puțin stringente.

Este de părere Comisia că o plată cuprinsă între 500 de euro și 1 000 de euro ar putea fi mai puțin decât ar putea pretinde altfel micii fermieri pe baza schemei alternative de plăți directe?

Ar putea crea propunerile o situație în care fermierii să fie tentați să ia mai puțini bani pentru a evita obligațiile de ecologizare și de ecocondiționalitate și, prin urmare, să devină mai săraci din punct de vedere financiar și să nu fie încurajați să întreprindă acțiuni care ar putea avea un efect pozitiv asupra mediului?

**Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei**
*(8 martie 2012)*

În ceea ce privește prima întrebare, vă rugăm să țineți cont de faptul că această schemă este facultativă. Fermierii pot decide în 2014 dacă doresc să participe sau nu, iar după unul sau mai mulți ani de participare vor avea posibilitatea să revină la schema „normală" prevăzută la titlul III al propunerii ([1]). În cazul acesta, nu vor mai avea dreptul de a participa din nou.

Cu privire la a doua întrebare, întrucât obiectivul principal al schemei este simplificarea, nu există nicio condiție suplimentară legată de valoarea sau nivelul plății în comparație cu schema „normală". În consecință, este adevărat că, teoretic, un fermier poate decide să participe la schemă, deși ar fi beneficiat de un nivel mai ridicat al plăților directe în schema „normală". De asemenea, este adevărat că, în scopul simplificării, beneficiarii schemei pentru micii fermieri vor fi scutiți de controalele privind ecologizarea și ecocondiționalitatea și vor depune o cerere simplificată.

În practică, în cadrul schemei actuale, micii fermieri pot deja să beneficieze de scutiri în ceea ce privește sancțiunile pentru nerespectarea ecocondiționalității, spre exemplu ca urmare a normelor *de minimis*.

În plus, trebuie subliniat că beneficiarii schemei pentru micii fermieri nu sunt scutiți de respectarea legislației, precum directivele și regulamentele privind mediul, și de controalele și sancțiunile aplicate în acest cadru.

În cele din urmă, pe baza evaluării impactului, pare puțin probabil ca mulți fermieri să considere că este preferabil să opteze în favoarea schemei pentru micii fermieri în loc să beneficieze de o plată directă mai ridicată decât suma forfetară pentru micii fermieri. De asemenea, fermierii care participă la schema pentru micii fermieri trebuie totuși să respecte integral legislația relevantă și, dacă doresc să întreprindă măsuri de agromediu, trebuie să respecte cerințele de bază cu privire la acestea.

([1]) Propunere de Regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului de stabilire a unor norme privind plățile directe acordate fermierilor prin scheme de sprijin în cadrul politicii agricole comune [COM(2011) 625 final/2].

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000659/12**
**to the Commission**
**Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* CAP proposals and small farmers

The Commission's proposal for the CAP reform sets out plans for a small farmers scheme under which farmers would receive an annual payment of between EUR 500 and EUR 1 000. They would be exempt from greening and would face less stringent cross-compliance obligations.

Does the Commission consider that a payment of between EUR 500 and EUR 1 000 could be less than what might otherwise be claimed by small farmers under the alternative direct payments scheme?

Could the proposals create a situation where farmers are tempted to take less money in order to avoid the greening and cross compliance obligations, and are therefore worse off financially and are not being encouraged to take action which could have a positive environmental impact?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

On the first question, please note that the scheme is voluntary. Farmers can decide in 2014 if they want to participate or not and after one or more years of participation, will have the possibility to step back to the 'normal' scheme established in Title III of the proposal ([1]). If they do, they will no longer have the right to participate again.

On the second question, as the main objective of the scheme is simplification, there is no extra condition related to the size or the level of payment compared to the 'normal' scheme. Thus indeed, in theory, a farmer may decide to enter the scheme although he would have had a higher level of direct payments in the 'normal' scheme. It is also true that for the purpose of simplification, beneficiaries of the small farmer scheme will be exempted from greening and cross compliance controls and will make a simplified application.

In practice, in the current system, small farmers may already benefit from exemptions as regards cross compliance sanctions due for instance to *de minimis* rules.

Besides, it has to be emphasised that beneficiaries of the small farmers' scheme are not exempted from abiding by the law such as the environmental directives and regulations and from controls and penalties applied in that framework.

Finally, on the basis of the Impact Assessment, it appears unlikely that many farmers will find it preferable to opt for the small farmer scheme rather than benefit from a direct payment higher than the small farmer lump-sum. Furthermore, farmers within the small farmer scheme still have to respect all relevant legislation and, if they wish to undertake agri-environment measures, they must respect the baseline requirements for these.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the common agricultural policy (COM(2011) 625 final/2).

*(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)*

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000661/12**
**Komisijai**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(2012 m. sausio 30 d.)*

*Tema:* Baltijos mokslo jungtis

Inovacijos, jų diegimas ir skatinimas yra svarbi Baltijos jūros regiono ekonomikos kryptis, regiono konkurencingumo ir gerovės augimo garantas. Mokslinių tyrimų infrastruktūra yra aktuali siekiant Baltijos jūros regioną paversti mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų regionu. Vienas iš Baltijos jūros regiono mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų sistemos trūkumų – ne pats optimaliausias mokslinių tyrimų srities bendradarbiavimas ir žinių mainai tarp viešųjų mokslinių tyrimų organizacijų, ypač universitetų, mokslinių tyrimų institutų ir pramonės.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Nutiesti Baltijos mokslų jungtį“.

Ar Komisija galėtų pateikti informaciją, kas pasiekta kuriant tinklą, kuriame dalyvauja regiono universitetai, mokslinių tyrimų institutai ir privačios kompanijos (pramonė)?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

Kiek lėšų reikia ir kiek lėšų šiuo metu skirta šiam projektui įgyvendinti?

Ar nustatytas galutinis projekto įgyvendinimo terminas?

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000663/12**
**Komisijai**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(2012 m. sausio 30 d.)*

*Tema:* Baltijos jūros regiono paslaugų sektoriaus inovacijų rėmimo strategija

Viena iš Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos prioritetinių sričių – visiškai išnaudoti regiono inovacinį ir mokslinių tyrimų potencialą.

Pabrėžiama inovacijų svarba paslaugų sektoriuje – inovacijos yra ne tik konkurencingumo šioje srityje, bet ir ekonomikos generatorius.

Baltijos jūros regione remiamų programų prioritetu turėtų būti inovacijos paslaugų sektoriuje. Jie turėtų orientuotis ne tik į tai, kad atsirastų bendras supratimas apie inovacijas paslaugų srityje, bet ir kad būtų perduodama geroji patirtis bei mechanizmai. Baltijos jūros regionas turi tarpusavyje koordinuoti veiklą, o veiksmai regiono lygiu turi skatinti ir papildyti nacionalinių institucijų ir privačiojo sektoriaus pastangas.

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokia pažanga pasiekta rengiant bendrą Baltijos jūros regiono paslaugų sektoriaus inovacijų rėmimo strategiją?

Ar numatytas šios strategijos galutinis užbaigimo terminas?

Kokios šalys dalyvaus įgyvendinant šią strategiją?

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000665/12**
**Komisijai**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(2012 m. sausio 30 d.)*

*Tema:* Baltijos jūros inovacijų ir mokslinių tyrimų fondas

Inovacijų ir mokslinių tyrimų skatinimas turi būti svarbus viso Baltijos jūros regiono mastu. Skiriant pagrindinį dėmesį mokslo tiriamųjų darbų ir inovacijų plėtrai, jų tobulinimui ir taikymui versle valstybės mastu skatinamas konkurencingumas, versle – didesnis produktyvumas, o mokslo srityje – nuolatinė pažanga. Baltijos jūros regionas

išsiskiria tiek aukštais, tiek vidutiniais valstybių narių konkurencingumo įvertinimais. Šiame regione didelis dėmesys teikiamas ūkio konkurencingumui skatinti ir didinti pasitelkiant mokslinius tyrimus ir technologijų plėtrą. Tačiau, norint skatinti inovacijas, mokslinius tyrimus, rengti naujus technologinius sprendimus, reikalingas tinkamas finansavimas.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Įsteigti Baltijos jūros inovacijų ir mokslinių tyrimų fondą“.

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokios, atsižvelgiant į konkrečius Baltijos jūros regiono privalumus, šiuo metu parengtos finansinės priemonės tarpvalstybinėms ir tarpregioninėms inovacijoms ir moksliniams tyrimams skatinti?

Ar nustatytas galutinis šio projekto užbaigimo terminas?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja šiame projekte?

**Bendras atsakymas, J. Hahn atsakymas Komisijos vardu**
*(2012 m. kovo 8 d.)*

ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategija skatinamas bendradarbiavimas mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų srityse, nustatant pagrindines sritis, kurios turi būti užtikrintos, siekiant sudaryti palankesnes sąlygas glaudesnei integracijai. „Baltijos mokslų jungtimi“ siekiama koordinuoti dideles investicijas į mokslinių tyrimų infrastruktūrą. Tai apima tokius projektus, kaip antai MAXIV (sinchrotroninės radiacijos moksliniai tyrimai), ESS (Europos neutronų (skaldant atomo branduolį) tyrimų centras), XFEL (Europos rentgeno lazerio projektas) ir PETRA III (Pozitronų-elektronų tandeminis žiedinis greitintuvas). Be to, siekiama mokslinių tyrimų infrastruktūrą padaryti prieinamesnę pramonei. Įgyvendinant iniciatyvą dalyvauja visos Baltijos jūros regiono valstybės narės. Iš Baltijos jūros regiono programos jos gavo 3,9 mln. EUR. Be šios programos Baltijos jūros regiono šalys (išskyrus Vokietiją) daugiau kaip 91 mln. EUR gavo iš Septintosios bendrosios programos (7BP) pajėgumų programos. Šios dotacijos buvo panaudotos jų mokslinių tyrimų infrastruktūrai plėtoti ir (arba) tobulinti arba pasirengimui įgyvendinti didelius infrastruktūros projektus, kaip antai ESS ir PRE-XFEL, jų terminas – 2020 m.

Be to, iniciatyva „Bendros Baltijos regiono paslaugų sektoriaus paramos strategijos parengimas“ buvo išplėsta į „Baltijos jūros regiono inovacijų grupių ir MVĮ tinklų programą“. Šiame darbe dalyvauja visos Baltijos jūros regiono valstybės narės, ir kai kuriose jų jau pradėti vykdyti bandomieji veiksmai. Kaip bendro finansavimo priemonė įsteigtas „Baltijos jūros regiono inovacijų ir mokslinių tyrimų fondas“. Kalbant apie tai, verta paminėti 7BP lėšomis ir Baltijos jūros regiono šalių finansuojamą programą BONUS. Programa, kuriai įgyvendinti skirta 100 mln. EUR, siekiama pritraukti kitų lėšų, ir užtikrinti nuolatinį regioninį mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų finansavimo šaltinį.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000661/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The Baltic Science Link

The implementation and promotion of innovation is an important direction for the economy of the Baltic Sea Region, and a guarantor of the growth of competitiveness and economic prosperity in the region. Scientific research infrastructure is relevant to our efforts to transform the Baltic Sea Region into a region of scientific research and innovation. One of the shortcomings of the scientific research and innovation system of the Baltic Sea Region is that cooperation within the realm of scientific research, and knowledge exchange between public scientific research organisations, particularly universities, science research institutes and industry, are not the best.

One of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy second pillar projects provides for: 'Building a Baltic Science Link.'

Can the Commission supply any information as to what has been achieved in setting up a network in which the Region's universities, scientific research institutes and private (industrial) companies are participating?

Which countries participate in the implementation of this project?

What funds are required, and what funds have so far been allocated, for the development of this project?

Has a deadline for the implementation of this project been set?

**Question for written answer E-000663/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* A Baltic Region service sector innovation support strategy

One of the priority areas for the Baltic Region Strategy is making full use of the Region's innovation and scientific research potential.

The importance of innovation in the service sector must be emphasised — innovation in this area does not just generate competition, but is an economic generator too.

A priority among the supported programmes in the Baltic Region should be innovation in the service sector. These should be directed not only towards achieving a common undertanding of innovation in the service sector, but also the transfer of good practice and mechanisms. The Baltic Region must coordinate activity within, and activity at a regional level should promote and supplement the efforts of both national institutions and the private sector.

I should like to ask the Commission what progress has been made in preparing a common Baltic Region Support strategy for the service sector?

Is any closing date envisaged yet for this strategy?

Which countries will participate in the implementation of this strategy?

**Question for written answer E-000665/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The Baltic Region Innovation and Scientific Research Fund

The promotion of innovation and scientific research should be important at a level that encompasses the whole Baltic region. Devoting basic attention to the development of scientific research work and innovation, to their improvement and application in commerce encourages competition at state level, enhanced productivity in commerce and steady

progress in the field of science. The Baltic Region is notable for high and medium evaluations of its competitiveness amongst member states. Great attention is paid throughout the region to the encouraging the increase of economic competitiveness through the application of scientific research and technological development. However, appripriate financing is required if we are to promote innovation and scientific research and to develop new technological solutions.

One of the main Baltic Sea region strategical secondary support projects envisages: 'The Establishment of a Baltic Region Innovation and Scientific Research Fund.'

I would like to ask the Commission, when one takes into account the concrete advantages of the Baltic Region, what financial means are currently being allocated for the promotion of inter-state and inter-regional innovation and scientific research?

Has any closing date been set for this project?

Which countries participate in this project?

**Joint answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region promotes cooperation in the fields of research and innovation, identifying key areas that need to be in place to facilitate deeper integration. The Baltic Science Link aims at coordination of major investments on research infrastructure. These include projects such as MAXIV (Synchrotron Radiation Research), ESS (European Spallation Source), XFEL (European X-Ray Laser Project) and PETRA III (Positron-Electron Tandem Ring Accelerator). It also makes research infrastructure more accessible to industry. All Baltic Sea Member States are involved in the initiative, which has received EUR 3.9 million from the Baltic Sea Region Programme. Beyond this programme, the Baltic Sea countries (excluding Germany) have also granted more than EUR 91 million from the Capacities Programme of the 7th Framework Programme (FP7). These grants were used either to develop and/or upgrade their research infrastructure, or for the preparation of major infrastructure such as ESS and PRE-XFEL projects, deadline is set for 2020.

In addition, the initiative 'Preparing a common Baltic Region Support strategy for the service sector' has now been expanded to a 'Baltic Sea Region Programme for Innovation Clusters and SME Networks'. All Baltic Sea Member States are involved in this work, through which a number of pilot actions have been launched. The 'Baltic Sea Innovation and Scientific Research Fund' has been created as a joint funding mechanism. In this context, the BONUS programme, funded by FP7 and the Baltic States, is worthy of note. The programme, being implemented with EUR 100 million, seeks to lever other funds, as a coherent regional funding source for research and innovation.

*(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)*

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000662/12**
**Komisijai**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(2012 m. sausio 30 d.)*

*Tema:* Baltijos jūros regiono inovacijų, inovacijų grupių ir mažų ir vidutinių įmonių tinklų plėtros programos parengimas

Remiantis Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio antrąja prioritetine sritimi, pagrindinis siekis yra visapusiškai išnaudoti regiono mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų potencialą.

Baltijos jūros regiono šalių bendradarbiavimas yra itin aktualus siekiant plačiu mastu diegti inovacijas. Inovacijos yra vienas iš faktorių, lemiančių šalių konkurencingumą. Suvienijusios pastangas Baltijos jūros regiono šalys gali sukurti naujus produktus, technologijas ir paslaugas bendroms rinkoms ir sėkmingiau konkuruoti globalioje ekonominėje erdvėje. Baltijos jūros regiono šalių bendradarbiavimas turėtų sustiprinti ne tik bendradarbiavimą tarp regiono šalių, jų privalumus ir kompetenciją, bet ir viso regiono pozicijas pasaulio kontekste integruojantis į naujas rinkas, pritraukiant potencialius investuotojus.

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokia pažanga pasiekta rengiant Baltijos jūros regiono inovacijos, inovacijų grupių bei mažų ir vidutinių įmonių tinklų plėtros programą? Kokios šalys dalyvauja rengiant šią programą?

**Komisijos nario J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu**
*(2012 m. kovo 28 d.)*

ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategija (ES BJRS) skatinamas bendradarbiavimas mokslinių tyrimų ir inovacijų srityse, nustatant pagrindines sritis, kurios turi būti užtikrintos, siekiant sudaryti sąlygas glaudesnei integracijai.

Per ministerijas, atsakingas už inovacijas, bei per agentūras ir regionines institucijas „Baltijos jūros regiono inovacijų grupių ir MVĮ tinklų programoje“ dalyvauja visos Baltijos jūros regiono valstybės narės (Danija, Estija, Latvija, Lenkija, Lietuva, Suomija, Švedija ir Vokietija). Programai buvo sukurta iniciatyvinė grupė, kuri priėmė veiksmų planą, kad užtikrintų programos įgyvendinimą.

Be to, Tarpvalstybinė Baltijos jūros programa 6,5 mln. eurų parėmė naują projektą „StarDust“. Per šį projektą buvo inicijuota daug bandomųjų projektų švarių technologijų, vyresnių žmonių aktyvumo, pažangesnio transporto bei mobiliųjų technologijų srityse. Įgyvendinant šiuos bandomuosius projektus įgyta patirtis bus įtraukta visu mastu įgyvendinant programą. Bendras programos tikslas – sukurti integruotą išteklių bazę, sujungiant moksliniams tyrimams palankią aplinką, grupes bei MVĮ tinklus ir Baltijos jūros regione sukuriant daug pasaulyje pirmaujančių mokslinių tyrimų bei inovacijų vystymo centrų, kad būtų pasiekta didesnė mokslo ir inovacijų kritinė masė, padidintas patrauklumas bei pasiekta konkurencinga pozicija tarptautiniu mastu.

Šiuo metu programos vadovai stengiasi užtikrinti pakankamą finansavimą programai išvystyti nuo bandomųjų projektų stadijos iki taikymo visu mastu. Taip pat vystomas išsamus dialogas su įvairiais finansavimo šaltiniais, aktyviai veikiančiais regione, ir su visomis valstybėmis narėmis.

Be to, 185 straipsnio iniciatyva BONUS yra 100 mln. eurų vertės jungtinė 8 Baltijos jūros regiono ES valstybių narių ir Komisijos programa, kuria remiami aplinkos moksliniai tyrimai Baltijos jūros baseine. Pagrindinis programos BONUS tikslas, nustatytas jos strateginėje mokslinių tyrimų darbotvarkėje – sustiprinti tvarų naudojimąsi jūros pakrantės ištekliais bei paslaugomis ir išvystyti naujoviškas duomenų tvarkymo sistemas, priemones bei technologijas. Numatoma paskelbti kvietimus teikti paraiškas, pagrindinį dėmesį skiriant inovacijoms ir ypač pabrėžiant MVĮ dalyvavimą ([1]).

([1]) Išsamią informaciją bei strateginę mokslinių tyrimų darbotvarkę galima rasti programos BONUS interneto svetainėje adresu http://www.bonusportal.org/

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000662/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Preparation of a Baltic Sea Region innovation, innovation group, and small and medium enterprise network development programme

With reference to second priority area of the second pillar of the Baltic Sea Region strategy, the main goal is the thorough utilisation of the scientific research and innovation potential of the region.

Cooperation among the states of the Baltic Sea Region is particularly relevant in terms of the drive to introduce innovation. Innovation is one of the factors that determine a country's competitiveness. By uniting their efforts the countries of the Baltic Sea Region can create new products, technologies and services for common markets and compete more successfully in the global economic space. Cooperation among the countries of the Baltic Sea Region should strengthen not only cooperation among the coutries of the region, their advantages and competence, but also the position of the whole region in a world context, as it seeks to integrate into new markets, and attracting potential investors.

I would like to ask the Commission what progress has been made in preparing a Baltic Sea Region innovation, innovation group, and small and medium enterprise network development programme? Which countries participate in the preparation of this programme?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 March 2012)*

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) promotes cooperation in the fields of research and innovation, identifying key areas that need to be in place for deeper integration.

The Baltic Sea Region Programme for Innovation Clusters and SME Networks involves all Baltic Sea Member States (DE, DK, EE, FI, LT, LV, PL, SE) in the work through the ministries responsible for innovation as well as agencies and regional authorities. A steering group for the programme has been established which has adopted a road map to ensure implementation.

In addition, the Transnational Baltic Sea Programme funded a start-up project called StarDust with EUR 6.5 Million. Through this project a number of pilot actions have been launched in the fields of clean tech, active ageing, smarter transport and mobile technology. The experience from these pilot actions will be integrated into a full scale implementation of the programme. The overall objective is to achieve an integrated resource base by linking strong research environments, clusters and SME networks — creating a number of globally leading research and innovation hubs in the BSR in order to achieve stronger critical mass, attractiveness, and a competitive international position.

The managers of the programme are now working to ensure that there is enough funding to move from the pilot stage into full scale activity. This includes a comprehensive dialogue with the different funding sources that are active in the region, as well as with all Member States.

Also, the article 185 initiative BONUS is a EUR 100 million joint action between the eight Baltic Sea EU States and the Commission which supports environmental research programmes in the Baltic Sea Basin. A key objective of BONUS, defined within their Strategic Research Agenda, is to enhance the sustainable use of coastal marine goods and services in the Baltic Sea as well as developing innovative data management systems, tools and methodologies. Calls for proposals focusing on innovation with a strong emphasis on SME involvement are anticipated ([1]).

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([1]) Full details and the Strategic Research Agenda can be found on the BONUS website: http://www.bonusportal.org/

*(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)*

**Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000664/12**
**Komisijai**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(2012 m. sausio 30 d.)*

*Tema:* Sveikatos ir gyvosios gamtos mokslų inovacijų projektai

Tarp Baltijos jūros regiono šalių esama nemažai netolygumų, apimančių sveikatos ir gyvosios gamtos mokslų inovacijas. Siekiant Baltijos jūros regioną paversti pavyzdiniu, klestinčiu sveikatos ir šiuolaikinių gyvosios gamtos mokslų žinių taikymo regionu būtina imtis priemonių skatinant ir vystant inovacijas šiose srityse, pakeliant visuomenės sveikatą į aukštesnį lygį, remiantis naujaisiais šios srities mokslo laimėjimais.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Pradėti įvairius sektorius apimančius pavyzdinius sveikatos ir gyvosios gamtos mokslų inovacijų projektus“.

Ar Komisija galėtų pateikti informaciją, kokie projektai, apimantys pavyzdinius sveikatos ir gyvosios gamtos mokslų inovacijų projektus, šiuo metu pradėti?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

**J. Hahn atsakymas Komisijos vardu**
*(2012 m. vasario 29 d.)*

Siekiant paversti Baltijos jūros regioną pavyzdiniu sveikatingumo regionu svarbu remti visuomenės sveikatą ir pasinaudoti šiuolaikiniais gyvosios gamtos mokslo pasiekimais.

„ScanBalt Health Region“ yra vienas pagrindinių Europos Sąjungos Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos projektų. Juo siekiama „pradėti įvairius sektorius apimančius pavyzdinius sveikatos ir gyvosios gamtos mokslų inovacijų projektus“. Šio projekto tikslas – skatinti pasaulyje galinčią konkuruoti žiniomis pagrįstą sveikatos ekonomiką Baltijos jūros regione ir spręsti pagrindines su sveikata susijusias visuomenės problemas. Naudojant bendrą ryšių ir koordinavimo struktūrą „ScanBalt Health Region“ projektu siekiama suvienyti bendromis idėjomis grindžiamą koordinuotą veiklą ir suburti suinteresuotuosius subjektus, susijusius su gyvosios gamtos mokslais ir biotechnologija visose Baltijos regiono šalyse.

Vykdant „ScanBalt Health Region“ projektą iki šiol buvo paskelbti du pozicijų dokumentai: „Sveikas senėjimas: nuo biologinių pagrindų iki klinikinių sprendimų“ ir „ES sanglaudos politika ir makroregionų ir regioninių grupių svarba pažangiam augimui ir pažangiai specializacijai“. Taip pat vykdomos tokios iniciatyvos kaip „HealthPort Innovation Competition“, kuria siekiama klinikines naujoves paversti komerciniais produktais ir paslaugomis. Ši iniciatyva finansuojama pagal 2007-2013 m. Baltijos jūros regiono programą.

Be to, pagal Baltijos jūros mokslo programą BONUS ([1]) remiamos visos 8 ES Baltijos jūros regiono šalys ir finansuojama ES mokslinių tyrimų septintoji bendroji programa, į kurią, be kitų sričių, įtraukta jūrų biotechnologija.

([1]) http://www.bonusportal.org

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000664/12**
**to the Commission**
**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Health and life science innovation projects

There are many disparities between the countries of the Baltic Sea region in terms of health and life science innovations.In order to turn the Baltic Sea region into a thriving model region putting health and contemporary life science knowledge into practice, we need to take steps to promote and develop innovations in these areas, taking public health to a higher level, on the basis of the latest scientific developments in this area.

One of the main projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region provides for: 'the launch of model cross-sectoral health and life science innovation projects'.

Could the Commission inform us which projects covering model health and life science innovation projects have now been launched?

Which countries are involved in the implementation of this project?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The promotion of public health and the exploitation of modern life science developments are important for the Baltic Sea Region to become a model 'Health Region'.

One flagship project of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is The ScanBalt Health Region. It corresponds to 'the launch of model cross-sectored health and life science innovation projects'. Its aim is to promote a knowledge-based globally competitive health economy in the Baltic Sea Region and to address the major societal challenges of health within the region. The ScanBalt Health Region serves as an umbrella for coordinated activities on shared ideas, using a common communication and coordination structure to bring together those involved in Life Sciences and Biotechnology in all the countries within the Baltic Sea Region.

The ScanBalt Health Region has so far published two position papers on 'Healthy ageing: from biological fundamentals to clinical solutions' and on 'EU cohesion policies and the importance of macro regions and regional clusters for smart growth and smart specialization'. It also organises initiatives like the HealthPort Innovation Competition, which aims to transform clinical inventions into commercial products and services. This initiative is co-financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013.

In addition, the Baltic Sea science programme BONUS ([1]) is a partnership supported by all eight EU Baltic Sea states funded by the Seventh EU Framework Programme for Research which addresses, amongst other themes, marine biotechnology.

([1]) http://www.bonusportal.org

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000667/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(30 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* EU wil zwarte lijst kolonisten Oost-Jeruzalem

In een intern rapport van de missieleiders van de EU in Tel Aviv en Ramallah staat dat „gewelddadige kolonisten", die zich in het door Israël bezette Oost-Jeruzalem hebben gevestigd, géén toegang tot de Europese Unie zouden mogen hebben. De EU-vertegenwoordigers dringen er bij de lidstaten op aan om de kolonisten te identificeren en een zwarte lijst op te stellen.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „EU overweegt zwarte lijst kolonisten" ([1])?

2. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat er geen sprake kan zijn van Israëlische kolonisten in Oost-Jeruzalem, omdat Oost-Jeruzalem simpelweg bij Israël hoort? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid het betreffende interne rapport naar de prullenbak te verwijzen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

**Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie**
*(26 maart 2012)*

De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van het door het geachte Parlementslid vermelde bericht.

In december 2009 hebben de EU-ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken unaniem verklaard dat nederzettingen uit hoofde van het internationaal recht illegaal zijn, vrede in de weg staan en een tweestatenoplossing onmogelijk dreigen te maken. Zij hebben er bij de Israëlische regering op aangedrongen om onmiddellijk een einde te maken aan alle nederzettingenactiviteiten in Oost-Jeruzalem en de rest van de Westelijke Jordaanoever, ook aan de natuurlijke uitbreiding daarvan, en alle sedert maart 2001 opgerichte voorposten te ontmantelen. De EU heeft de annexatie van Oost-Jeruzalem door Israël niet erkend en gelooft dat echte vrede alleen mogelijk is indien er door middel van onderhandelingen een oplossing wordt gevonden voor de status van Jeruzalem als de toekomstige hoofdstad van twee staten. De EU-ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken hebben deze standpunten in december 2010 en april 2011 bevestigd.

De interne rapporten van de EU-organen, de EU-delegaties in derde landen of de diplomatieke diensten van de lidstaten zijn niet-officiële werkdocumenten die bedoeld worden als achtergrondmateriaal voor discussies over belangrijke beleidsaangelegenheden tijdens de uitwerking van het buitenlands beleid van de EU.

([1]) http://www.depers.nl/buitenland/624531/EU-overweegt-zwarte-lijst-kolonisten.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000667/12**
**to the Commission**
**Auke Zijlstra (NI)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EU wants to blacklist east Jerusalem settlers

An internal report by the EU heads of mission in Tel Aviv and Ramallah states that 'violent settlers' residing in Israeli-occupied east Jerusalem should not be allowed access to the European Union. The EU representatives are calling on the Member States to identify such settlers and to draw up a black list.

1. Is the Commission aware of the article 'EU considers blacklisting settlers? ' ([1])

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that there can be no question of Israeli settlers in east Jerusalem for the simple reason that east Jerusalem is part of Israel? If not, why not?

3. Is the Commission prepared to relegate the internal report in question to the bin? If not, why not?

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

The Commission is not aware of the article referred to by the Honourable Member.

EU Foreign Ministers unanimously stated in December 2009 that settlements are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and threaten to make a two-state solution impossible. They urged the Government of Israel to immediately end all settlement activities, in East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank and including natural growth, and to dismantle all outposts erected since March 2001.The EU has not recognised the annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel and believes that, if there is to be a genuine peace, a way must be found through negotiations to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of two states. EU Foreign Ministers confirmed these positions in December 2010 and April 2011.

Internal reports prepared by EU bodies, by EU Delegations in third countries or by diplomatic services of Member States are working documents of a non-official character that aim at informing discussion on important policy issues during the elaboration of EU foreign policy.

([1]) http://www.depers.nl/buitenland/624531/EU-overweegt-zwarte-lijst-kolonisten.html

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000668/12**
**adresată Comisiei (Vice-președinte/Înaltul Reprezentant)**
**Elena Băsescu (PPE)**
*(30 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* VP/HR — Prioritățile de politică externă ale Președinției daneze

Cum se încadrează Parteneriatul Estic în cele 4 priorități anunțate recent de către Președinția daneză?

Care sunt direcțiile de aprofundare a dialogului politic și economic cu aceste state partenere?

Cum vedeți asigurarea coerenței cu inițiativele promovate în domeniu de către Președinția poloneză?

**Răspuns dat de dna Ashton în numele Comisiei**
*(31 mai 2012)*

Recenta reuniune la nivel înalt de la Varșovia privind Parteneriatul estic a consolidat abordarea bazată pe stimulente adoptată față de partenerii estici, care a fost propusă în comunicarea comună „Un răspuns nou în contextul schimbărilor din țările vecine” ([1]) și aprobată de către președinție în cadrul priorității „O Europă sigură”. În cadrul reuniunii la nivel înalt s-a decis consolidarea cooperării cu partenerii în numeroase domenii, inclusiv în cel al eficienței energetice, care este un element indispensabil al activităților președinției înscrise în prioritatea „O Europă ecologică”.

Parteneriatul estic oferă obiective ambițioase și instrumente precise pentru a le realiza. Este promovată asocierea politică cu cinci țări din Europa de Est prin încheierea unor acorduri de asociere. Integrarea economică avansează cu ajutorul negocierilor privind instituirea unor acorduri de liber schimb aprofundate și cuprinzătoare cu parteneri relevanți. Au fost finalizate negocierile privind un acord de asociere cu Ucraina, inclusiv un acord de liber schimb aprofundat și cuprinzător, și preconizăm că documentul va fi în curând aprobat. Negocierile privind acordurile de asociere cu Georgia și Republica Moldova sunt în stadiu avansat, iar negocierile privind acorduri de liber schimb aprofundate și cuprinzătoare cu ambele țări vor fi lansate în curând. Negocierile cu Armenia și Azerbaidjan privind acordurile de asociere se desfășoară fără probleme și sperăm să putem lansa în 2012 discuții cu Armenia privind un acord de liber schimb aprofundat și cuprinzător.

Președinția poloneză a Consiliului UE a contribuit la punerea în aplicare a Parteneriatului estic și prin oferirea unui impuls suplimentar în sensul dezvoltării cooperării sectoriale. Pentru a raționaliza punerea în aplicare a Parteneriatului estic, Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele și Comisia vor propune în curând o foaie de parcurs privind Parteneriatul estic, menită să includă obiectivele, instrumentele, acțiunile și monitorizarea punerii în aplicare a acestora până la următoarea reuniune la nivel înalt privind Parteneriatul estic din 2013.

([1]) COM(2011) 303 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000668/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Elena Băsescu (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Foreign policy priorities of the Danish Presidency

How does the Eastern Partnership fall into the four priorities recently announced by the Danish Presidency?

What are the possible means of deepening political and economic dialogue with the partner states?

Can the Vice-President/High Representative state how it is envisaged to ensure coherence with the initiatives promoted in this field by the Polish Presidency?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(31 May 2012)*

The recent Eastern Partnership (EaP) Summit in Warsaw enhanced the incentives-based approach towards Eastern partners which has been proposed in the Joint Communication 'A new Response to a Changing Neighbourhood' ([1]) and endorsed by the Presidency under the priority 'A safe Europe'. The Summit has decided to strengthen cooperation with partners in many areas including energy efficiency which is an indispensable element of Presidency's activities towards 'A green Europe'.

The EaP offers ambitious goals and precise tools to achieve them. Political association with five Eastern European countries is promoted through the conclusion of Association Agreements (AA). Economic integration is being advanced through negotiations on the establishment of Deep & Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA) with relevant partners. Negotiations on an AA with Ukraine, including a DCFTA, have been finalised, and we expect the document soon to be initialled. Negotiations on AAs with Georgia and the Republic of Moldova are well advanced, and negotiations on a DCFTA with both countries will be launched shortly. Negotiations with Armenia and Azerbaijan on AAs are proceeding well and we hope to be able to launch DCFTA talks with Armenia in 2012.

The Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU contributed to the implementation of the EaP, also through giving additional momentum to the development of sector cooperation. In order to streamline the implementation of the EaP, the High Representative/Vice-President and Commission will soon propose an EaP road map which intends to list the objectives, instruments, actions and monitor their implementation until the next EaP Summit in 2013.

([1]) COM(2011) 303 final.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000669/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**
*(30. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Sicherheitsbestimmungen Kreuzfahrttourismus

Der Kreuzfahrttourismus ist ein Milliardengeschäft mit seit Jahren steil ansteigenden Wachstumskurven. Immer wieder gab es Unglücke auf Kreuzfahrtschiffen, die meisten gingen glimpflich aus. Je größer die Schiffe sind, umso mehr Todesopfer kann ein Fehler fordern. Beim jüngsten Unglück der Costa Concordia berichteten Augenzeugen davon, dass die Rettungsmaßnahmen chaotisch verliefen und die Besatzung nicht dafür ausgebildet wirkte.

1. Welche Sicherheitsbestimmungen gelten innerhalb der EU für die Schifffahrt bzw. den Kreuzfahrttourismus?

2. Wer kontrolliert die Einhaltung der Bestimmungen?

3. Ist angesichts der jüngsten Katastrophe eine Überarbeitung der Sicherheitsbestimmungen geplant?

**Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission**
*(22. Februar 2012)*

1. Im Verlauf der letzten Jahre hat die Europäische Union ihre Rechtsvorschriften für die Sicherheit des Seeverkehrs kontinuierlich weiterentwickelt und damit einen hohen Qualitätsstandard in der Schifffahrt gefördert.

Vorschriften in Bezug auf die Sicherheit von Fahrgastschiffen sind in vier Richtlinien ([1]) bezüglich der Bau- und Betriebsnormen und eine (spätestens ab dem 31. Dezember 2012 geltende) Verordnung ([2]) zur Haftung der Beförderer und zur Entschädigung von Fahrgästen bei Unfällen festgelegt. Darüber hinaus existiert eine große Zahl von EU-Rechtsinstrumenten, die alle Arten von Schiffen und deren Betrieb abdecken, beispielsweise Rechtsvorschriften zur Hafenstaatkontrolle, zu Klassifikationsgesellschaften, zur Qualifikation und Ausbildung von Seeleuten, zum Internationalen Sicherheitsmanagementcode usw.

2. Die Anwendung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften zur Sicherheit des Seeverkehrs liegt hauptsächlich in der Verantwortung der Mitgliedstaaten und wird durch Überprüfungen und Inspektionen der zuständigen nationalen Behörden durchgesetzt. Die Kommission überwacht die Umsetzung der EU-Vorschriften in nationales Recht ebenso wie deren praktische Anwendung und wird dabei von der Europäischen Agentur für die Sicherheit des Seeverkehrs (EMSA) unterstützt. Insbesondere hat die Kommission die EMSA damit beauftragt, Inspektionen in den Mitgliedstaaten durchzuführen, um die Einhaltung der einschlägigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften zu überprüfen. Im Anschluss an diese Inspektionen trifft die Kommission geeignete Folgemaßnahmen, einschließlich der Einleitung von Vertragsverletzungsverfahren.

3. Die Kommission hat bereits eine umfassende Überprüfung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften zur Sicherheit von Fahrgastschiffen angekündigt, bei der die Lehren aus dem Schiffsunglück der Costa Concordia gegebenenfalls berücksichtigt werden.

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([1]) Richtlinie 2009/45/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 6. Mai 2009 über Sicherheitsvorschriften und -normen für Fahrgastschiffe; Richtlinie 2003/25/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 14. April 2003 über besondere Stabilitätsanforderungen für Ro-Ro-Fahrgastschiffe; Richtlinie 1999/35/EG des Rates vom 29. April 1999 über ein System verbindlicher Überprüfungen im Hinblick auf den sicheren Betrieb von Ro-Ro-Fahrgastschiffen und Fahrgast-Hochgeschwindigkeitsfahrzeugen im Linienverkehr; Richtlinie 98/41/EG des Rates vom 18. Juni 1998 über die Registrierung der an Bord von Fahrgastschiffen im Verkehr nach oder von einem Hafen eines Mitgliedstaats der Gemeinschaft befindlichen Personen.

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 392/2009 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. April 2009 über die Unfallhaftung von Beförderern von Reisenden auf See.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000669/12**
**to the Commission**
**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Security provisions for cruise ships

Cruise tourism is a multi-billion euro business which has long had a steeply increasing growth curve. Time and again there have been accidents on cruise ships, although the majority had minor consequences. The larger the ships are, the more fatalities may result from a mistake. During the most recent accident, involving the *Costa Concordia*, witnesses reported that the rescue operation was chaotic and that the crew were not trained for such an eventuality.

1. What security provisions are in effect within the EU for shipping or cruise tourism?

2. Who monitors compliance with the provisions?

3. Is a revision of the security provisions planned in light of the most recent catastrophe?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

1. Over the past years, the European Union has continuously developed its maritime safety legislation, promoting high-quality shipping.

More particularly, in the area of passenger ships safety there are four directives ([1]) dealing with construction and operational standards and one Regulation ([2]) (which shall enter into force no later than 31 December 2012) dealing with carriers liability and compensation and compensation of passengers in the event of accidents. Furthermore, there is a big number of EU instruments covering all types of ships and their operation, such as the legislation applicable to Port State Control, Classification societies, qualifications and training of seafarers, the International Safety Management Code, etc.

2. The implementation of EU maritime safety legislation is the prime responsibility of Member States and is enforced through surveys and inspections by national competent authorities. Furthermore, the Commission monitors closely the transposition of the EU rules in the national legislation as well as its implementation in practice with the assistance of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). More specifically, the Commission has assigned to EMSA the task of conducting inspection visits to the Member States in order to check the compliance with the relevant EU legislation. Appropriate follow-up actions, including infringement procedures, are taken by the Commission further to these inspections.

3. The Commission has already announced a comprehensive revision of the EU passenger ship safety legislation and the lessons learned from the recent accident of *Costa Concordia* will be taken into account, as appropriate.

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([1]) Directive 2009/45/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on safety rules and standards for passenger ships; Directive 2003/25/EC of the EP and the Council, of 14.4.2003 on safety rules, standards and stability requirements for ro-ro passenger ships; Directive 1999/35/EC of 29.4.1999 on a system of mandatory surveys for the safe operation of regular ro-ro ferry and high-speed passenger craft services; Directive 98/41/EC of 18.6.1998 on the registration of persons sailing on board passenger ships operating to or from ports of the Member States of the Community.

([2]) Regulation (EC) 392/2009 on the liability of carriers of passengers by sea in the event of accidents.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000670/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**
*(30. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Berufsanerkennung

Medienberichten zufolge bemüht sich nur jeder dritte Zuwanderer darum, im Rahmen eines Anerkennungsverfahrens die im Herkunftsland erworbenen Qualifikationen im europäischen Gastland verwenden zu können. Nicht nur für Drittstaatenangehörige, sondern auch für EU-Bürger, die in einem anderen EU-Staat arbeiten, scheint es in diesem Zusammenhang noch Probleme zu geben.

1. Gibt es Zahlen, wie viel Prozent der Zuwanderer Anerkennungsverfahren durchführen lassen?

2. Gibt es auf EU-Ebene Studien betreffend der Hintergründe für mangelnde Antragstellungen von qualifizierten Zuwanderern?

3. Welche Probleme hinsichtlich Berufsanerkennung zwischen EU-Staaten sind noch offen?

4. Wie sehen die weiteren Strategien hinsichtlich Berufsanerkennungen aus?

**Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission**
*(29. Februar 2012)*

1. Der Kommission liegen keine Angaben dazu vor, wie hoch der Prozentsatz an Zuwanderern ist, die einen Antrag auf Anerkennung ihrer Berufsqualifikationen stellen. Allerdings ist eine solche Anerkennung nur dann erforderlich, wenn der Berufsangehörige einen reglementierten Beruf in dem Aufnahmemitgliedstaat ausüben möchte. Für alle anderen Berufe kann der Zuwanderer ohne jedwede Formalitäten hinsichtlich seiner Qualifikationen seine Berufstätigkeit aufnehmen. Es ist daher normal, dass nicht alle Zuwanderer die Anerkennung ihrer beruflichen Qualifikationen beantragen. 93,6 % der Antragsteller zwischen 2007 und 2010 (105 000 Berufsangehörige) erhielten einen positiven Anerkennungsbescheid ([1]).

2. Der Kommission sind keine Studien über die mangelnde Antragstellung von qualifizierten Zuwanderern auf Berufsanerkennung bekannt.

3. Im Zuge der Bewertung der Richtlinie über Berufsqualifikationen und der anschließenden öffentlichen Konsultationen wurden Schwierigkeiten in folgenden Bereichen festgestellt: Zugang zu Informationen für Bürger, Effizienz der Anerkennungsverfahren, Funktionsweise des Systems der automatischen Anerkennung, Vorschriften über die Niederlassung und vorübergehende Mobilität, Geltungsbereich der Richtlinie, Schutz von Patienten sowie mangelhafte Transparenz und Rechtfertigung von Qualifikationsanforderungen in reglementierten Berufen.

4. Am 19. Dezember 2011 hat die Europäische Kommission einen Gesetzgebungsvorschlag ([2]) angenommen, mit dem die oben genannten Aspekte angegangen werden sollen. Vorgesehen sind die Einführung Europäischer Berufsausweise und von E-Government-Diensten, eine gegenseitige Evaluierung der reglementierten Berufe usw. Wegen der Relevanz des Vorschlags für das Wachstum wurde im Jahreswachstumsbericht 2012 vorgeschlagen, ihn im Eilverfahren anzunehmen. Somit ersucht die Europäische Kommission das Parlament und den Rat, auf eine Einigung über diesen Vorschlag bis Ende 2012 hinzuarbeiten.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.home
([2]) KOM(2011)883 endg.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000670/12**
**to the Commission**
**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Recognition of professional qualifications

According to media reports, only every third immigrant attempts to use qualifications acquired in their country of origin in their European host country, on the basis of a recognition procedure. Both third-country nationals and EU citizens working in another EU country still seem to encounter problems in this area.

1. Are figures which indicate what percentage of immigrants ask for recognition procedures to be carried out?

2. Have studies been conducted at EU level to determine why immigrants with appropriate qualifications do not ask for recognition procedures to be carried out?

3. What problems concerning the recognition of diplomas between EU countries have still to be resolved?

4. What other approaches could be taken to the issue of recognition of qualifications?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

1. The Commission has no data on the percentage of migrant professionals actually requesting the recognition of their professional qualifications. However, such recognition is needed only if the professional wishes to carry out a regulated profession in the host Member State. For all other professions, the professional can start working without any formalities related to his qualifications. It is therefore normal that not all migrant professionals request the recognition of their qualifications. 93.6 % of those who did it between 2007 and 2010 (105 000 professionals) received a positive recognition decision ([1]).

2. The Commission is not aware of any study on the lack of recognition requests from qualified migrant professionals.

3. The evaluation of the Professional Qualifications Directive and the subsequent public consultations highlighted difficulties in the following fields: access to information for citizens, efficiency of recognition procedures, functioning of the automatic recognition system, rules on the establishment and temporary mobility, scope of the directive, protection of patients and the lack of transparency and justification of qualifications requirements in regulated professions.

4. On 19 December 2011, the European Commission adopted a legislative proposal ([2]) aiming to address the abovementioned issues, notably through the introduction of European Professional Cards and e-government facilities, a mutual evaluation of regulated professions, etc. Given the relevance of the proposal for growth, the Annual Growth Survey 2012 proposed that it should be fast-tracked, and the European Commission would encourage the co-legislators to work towards agreement on this proposal by the end of 2012.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.home
([2]) COM(2011) 883 final.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000672/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**
*(30. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Facebook — digitales Vergessen

Beiträge aus längst vergangenen Jahren, peinliche Fotos etc. sollen nach den Plänen von Facebook künftig mit einem Mausklick anzeigbar werden. Die Initiative „Europe versus Facebook" fordert eine Art digitales Vergessen, wonach alte Statusmeldungen im Facebook automatisch nach einer gewissen Zeit gelöscht werden.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu dieser Forderung?

2. Welche Pläne laufen auf EU-Ebene hinsichtlich des digitalen Vergessens für Facebook?

3. Welche Pläne laufen auf EU-Ebene hinsichtlich des digitalen Vergessens generell im Internet?

4. Was wird auf EU-Ebene unternommen, um den Schutz der Privatsphäre in der digitalen Welt zu verbessern?

**Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission**
*(19. März 2012)*

Gemäß den EU-Datenschutzvorschriften ist die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten nur zulässig, wenn sie zu einem bestimmten rechtmäßigen Zweck geschieht. Die Richtlinie 95/46/EG ([1]) bestimmt, wann eine Verarbeitung zulässig ist, und nennt u. a. folgende Voraussetzungen: die Einwilligung des von der Verarbeitung Betroffenen, gesetzliche oder vertragliche Verpflichtungen, lebenswichtige Interessen des Betroffenen, Aufgaben, die im öffentlichen Interesse liegen und in bestimmten Fällen Aufgaben, die der für die Verarbeitung Verantwortliche in Ausübung öffentlicher Gewalt wahrnimmt. Die Daten müssen nach Treu und Glauben und rechtmäßig verarbeitet werden, dürfen nicht über das Notwendige hinausgehen und dürfen nicht länger als es für die Realisierung der Zwecke, für die sie erhoben wurden, erforderlich ist, aufbewahrt werden. Personen haben das Recht, die Löschung von sie betreffenden Daten zu fordern, wenn deren Verarbeitung nicht der Richtlinie entspricht, und die Datenschutzbehörden müssen befugt sein, die Löschung solcher Daten anzuordnen.

Ein Soziales Netzwerk müsste zwingende rechtliche Gründe dafür geltend machen, dass es die personenbezogenen Daten von Nutzern, die die Löschung sie betreffender Daten fordern, weiterhin verarbeitet. Der Kommission kommt zwar die Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge zu, doch ist es Aufgabe der nationalen Aufsichtsbehörden für Datenschutz, die einzelstaatlichen Bestimmungen zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie zu überwachen und ihre Anwendung sicherzustellen.

Am 25. Januar 2012 nahm die Kommission ihre Vorschläge für die EU-Datenschutzreform an und übermittelte sie dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat. Die vorgeschlagene Verordnung zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr ([2]) würde die Rechte der von der Verarbeitung Betroffenen klären und die dafür Verantwortlichen in Bezug auf die Löschung von ohne einen rechtmäßigen Grund gespeicherten Daten stärker in die Pflicht nehmen, indem ausdrücklich ein „Recht auf Vergessenwerden" eingeführt wird.

([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]) KOM(2012)11 endg. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011PC0470:DE:NOT

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000672/12**
**to the Commission**
**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Facebook — digital oblivion

If Facebook has its way, contributions from many years ago, embarrassing photos, etc. will in future be displayable at the click of a mouse. The 'Europe versus Facebook' initiative is calling for a system of digital oblivion, whereby old status messages on Facebook are automatically deleted after a certain time.

1. What view does the Commission take of this call?

2. What plans are being made at EU level with regard to digital oblivion for Facebook?

3. What plans are being made at EU level with regard to digital oblivion on the Internet in general?

4. What action is being taken at EU level to improve the protection of privacy in the digital world?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

EU data protection legislation provides that the processing of personal data is only legitimate when a specific legal ground is given for this. Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) determines several legal grounds, including consent of the data subject, legal or contractual obligations, vital interests of the data subject, public interest and legitimate interests of the data controller under certain conditions. Data must be processed fairly and lawfully, must not exceed what is needed and must not be kept longer than necessary for the purpose for which it was collected. Individuals have the right to demand that data relating to them is erased when its processing does not comply with the directive; and data protection authorities must have the power to order the erasure of such data.

A social network would need compelling legal grounds to justify the continuation of processing of personal data of users who have requested the deletion of personal data relating to them. Notwithstanding the Commission's role as guardian of the treaties, it is the responsibility of the national supervisory authorities for data protection to monitor and enforce the national provisions transposing the directive.

On 25 January 2012, the Commission adopted its proposals for the EU data protection Reform and submitted them to the European Parliament and to the Council. The proposed regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data ([2]) would clarify and strengthen the rights of data subjects and the obligations of controllers with regard to the erasure of data being kept without a legal ground by establishing an explicit 'right to be forgotten'.

([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, pp. 31-50.
([2]) COM(2012) 11 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0011:EN:NOT

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000674/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* WIFI on trains

Could the Commission indicate what percentage of train services within the EU offer a WIFI Internet service?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(23 February 2012)*

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that it has no jurisdiction to deal with the question asked, which is related solely to the commercial policy of the railway undertaking in question.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000676/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Use of bicycle helmets

Can the Commission state whether there any plans to make the wearing of bicycle helmets mandatory for all cyclists?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

The Commission would point out that this question is exactly the same as the Honourable Member's previous Written Question E-010380/2010 and would therefore refer the Honourable Member to the corresponding answer already given ([1]) which is still relevant at this stage. Taking into account the subsidiarity principle, the Commission considers that this is best regulated at national level.

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000677/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Bus safety equipment

Can the Commission outline in which Member States it is a legal requirement that safety belts must be worn by passengers on buses? Are there any plans at present to make the wearing of safety belts on buses mandatory throughout Europe?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

Already today all occupants of buses and coaches in the European Union must use the safety belts when they are available, according to the provisions of Directive 2003/20/EC ([1]).

Concerning the requirements applying to vehicles, Directive 2005/40/EC ([2]) makes compulsory the fitting of safety belts in new vehicles of categories M2 and M3 constructed for the carriage of seated passengers (coaches) and registered as from 20 October 2007.

There is no obligation in European legislation to fit safety belts in vehicles of categories M2 and M3 constructed with areas for standing passengers, which is the case of most buses used in urban public transport.

([1]) Directive 2003/20/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 April 2003 amending Council Directive 91/671/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to compulsory use of safety belts in vehicles of less than 3.5 tonnes, OJ L 115, 9.5.2003, p. 63-67.

([2]) Directive 2005/40/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 amending Council Directive 77/541/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to safety belts and restraint systems of motor vehicles, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 146-148.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000678/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* First aid kits in cars

Can the Commission state which Member States currently require cars to be fitted with first aid kits? Are there any plans to make these inexpensive yet potentially very important pieces of equipment mandatory in all cars in Europe?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

The Honourable Member is invited to consult the Commission webpage ([1]) which provides an overview — on the basis of the information provided by Member States — on the safety equipment required by Member States. According to this information, first aid kits are required by Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia.

The Commission does not have plans to propose legislation making first aid kits in cars mandatory. Taking into account the subsidiarity principle, the Commission considers that this is best regulated at national level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/going_abroad/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000679/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Fire extinguishers in cars

Can the Commission say which Member States currently require cars to be fitted with a fire extinguisher? Does the Commission have any plans to make these inexpensive yet potentially life-saving pieces of equipment mandatory in all cars in the EU?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

The Honourable Member is invited to consult the Commission webpage ([1]) which provides an overview — on the basis of the information provided by Member States — on the safety equipment required by Member States. According to this information, fire extinguishers are required by Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

The Commission does not have plans to propose legislation making fire extinguishers in cars mandatory. Taking into account the subsidiarity principle, the Commission considers that this is best regulated at national level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/going_abroad/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000680/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Roadside warning triangles

Can the Commission indicate which Member States legally require the use of a roadside reflective triangle in a breakdown situation? Is the Commission aware of the danger posed by these triangles in situations where they can be blown across the road in front of oncoming traffic and cause accidents? Is the Commission aware of the new magnetic, LED-lit triangles which stick to the broken-down vehicle, thus removing the danger of them blowing away? Does the Commission have any plans to make these new magnetic triangles mandatory in all Member States?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

The Honourable Member is invited to consult the Commission webpage ([1]) which provides an overview — on the basis of the information provided by Member States — on the safety equipment required by Member States. According to this information, roadside warning triangles are required in all Member States, except in Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom.

The Commission understood that triangles are used to provide for an advance warning of broken-down vehicles which is not provided for with triangles that stick to vehicles as proposed by the Honourable Member.

The Commission does not have plans to propose legislation making warning triangles mandatory at European level. Taking into account the subsidiarity principle, the Commission considers that this is best regulated at national level.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/going_abroad/index_en.htm

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000681/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Ameaça de despedimentos no Grupo Salvador Caetano

Tomei conhecimento de que o Grupo Salvador Caetano (SGPS), S.A., uma empresa em Vila Nova de Gaia, Norte de Portugal, está a pressionar trabalhadores para rescindirem os seus contratos de trabalho para com a empresa, bem como a proceder à não renovação de contratos a termo.

O grupo alega dificuldades financeiras que contrastam com os números que a própria empresa disponibiliza ao público: no período entre 2007 e 2010, a Salvador Caetano teve um aumento de vendas superior a 1300 veículos. Contudo, durante esse mesmo período, reduziu em 428 o número de trabalhadores.

Desde 2008 que esta empresa já dispensou cerca de 16 % dos seus trabalhadores e tem a intenção de continuar com os despedimentos. Tudo isto acontece numa altura em que a mesma empresa anuncia investimentos na Ásia, nomeadamente na China, com uma fábrica de Autocarros e com a comercialização de uma marca chinesa de automóveis em Portugal.

O Grupo Salvador Caetano, desde 2007, já recebeu em apoios do QREN mais de 3,8 milhões de euros, sendo que a contrapartida desta ajuda de fundos comunitários e nacionais é a total desresponsabilização social para com os seus trabalhadores e para com o desenvolvimento social e económico em Portugal.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. Que medidas pensa tomar, tendo em conta a gravidade económica e social em Portugal, com especial incidência no Norte, onde o desemprego não cessa de aumentar?

2. Considera a Comissão a atribuição de apoios do QREN compatível com uma prática de deslocalização que põe em causa direitos dos trabalhadores, nomeadamente o direito ao trabalho?

**Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão**
*(19 de março de 2012)*

1. Em conformidade com o princípio da subsidiariedade, a política de emprego, incluindo as medidas destinadas a lutar contra o desemprego, é da competência dos Estados-Membros. No entanto, o Memorando de Entendimento assinado pelo Governo português prevê reformas estruturais para melhorar as condições sociais e a taxa de emprego em todo o país, a médio e longo prazo, o que significa que todas as regiões são abrangidas pelas reformas. Portugal recebeu igualmente apoio financeiro da União Europeia e do Fundo Monetário Internacional para combater a crise económica.

2. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, algumas empresas associadas do grupo Salvador Caetano beneficiaram de apoio financeiro no valor de 865 356,02 euros durante o período de programação atual. Este financiamento teve como objetivo a realização de ações de formação para desenvolver o potencial dos trabalhadores. Quanto à questão do reembolso eventual do apoio, o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 dispõe no artigo 57.°, n.° 1, que a participação dos fundos só fique definitivamente afetada a uma operação se, no prazo de cinco anos a contar da conclusão da operação, ou de três anos a contar da conclusão da operação nos Estados-Membros que tenham optado por reduzir este prazo para a manutenção de um investimento ou de empregos criados por PME, a operação não sofrer qualquer alteração substancial que afete a sua natureza ou as suas condições de execução ou proporcione uma vantagem indevida a uma empresa ou a um organismo público e resulte quer de uma mudança na natureza da propriedade de uma infraestrutura, quer da cessação de uma atividade produtiva. Cabe aos Estados-Membros assegurar que esta regra é respeitada e que a Comissão acompanhará a evolução dos acontecimentos, juntamente com as autoridades nacionais responsáveis nesta matéria.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000681/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Threat of redundancies in the Salvador Caetano Group

I have become aware that the Salvador Caetano Group (SGPS) S.A., a company in Vila Nova de Gaia, Northern Portugal, is pressurising workers to rescind their work contracts with the company, as well as not to renew their fixed contracts.

The group claims financial difficulties which contrast with the figures that the company itself has made available to the public: in the period between 2007 and 2010, Salvador Caetano saw sales increase by more than 1300 vehicles. Nevertheless, during that same period it reduced the number of workers by 428.

Since 2008, this company has dismissed around 16 % of its workforce and intends to continue with these sackings. All of this comes at a time when the company itself has announced investments in Asia, notably in China, with a bus-making factory and a project to market a Chinese make of car in Portugal.

The Salvador Caetano Group has already received more than EUR 3.8 million in support from the NSRF since 2007. The pay-off for this support from Community and national funds has been a complete social disregard for its workers and for social and economic development in Portugal.

Can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What measures will it take, bearing in mind the serious economic and social situation in Portugal, especially in the North, where unemployment is constantly rising?

2. Does the Commission consider NSRF support compatible with a practice of relocation that directly conflicts with workers' rights, notably the right to a job?

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

1. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, employment policy, including measures to combat unemployment, is a Member State competence. However, the memorandum of understanding signed by the Portuguese Government provides for structural reforms to improve social conditions and the employment rate across the country in the medium-to-long term, which means that all regions are covered by the reforms. Portugal has also received financial support to tackle the economic crisis from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund.

2. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, some affiliated companies of the Salvador Caetano Group have received financial support amounting to EUR 865 356.02 during the current programming period. The funding concerned training activities which aim to enhance the employees' potential. Concerning the issue of possible repayment of the support, Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, Article 57(1), sets out that an operation can retain the contribution from the Funds only if that operation does not, within five years from the completion of the operation or three years from the completion in Member States which have exercised the option of reducing that time limit for the maintenance of an investment or jobs created by SMEs, undergo a substantial modification for example affecting the nature of the operation or its implementation conditions and resulting for example from the cessation of a productive activity. It is up to the Member States to ensure that this rule is respected and the Commission will monitor the developments together with the responsible national authorities in this respect.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000682/12**
**à Comissão**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Despedimento coletivo na empresa Panrico

Recentemente, a empresa Panrico — Produtos Alimentares, S.A., a funcionar na região de Lisboa e em Vila Nova de Gaia, e que foi recentemente adquirida pela empresa gestora de investimentos Oaktree, comunicou aos trabalhadores a realização de um despedimento coletivo, envolvendo 47 trabalhadores.

Esta empresa, que emprega quase 7 000 trabalhadores, alega que a diminuição de vendas e o aumento dos custos das matérias-primas são os fatores determinantes para este despedimento coletivo. No entanto este despedimento incide especialmente sobre os trabalhadores que aderiram à Greve Geral de 24 de novembro de 2011 e que não aceitaram ter apenas 20 minutos de pausa para o almoço. Este despedimento coletivo abrange uma dirigente sindical, uma ex-dirigente sindical e trabalhadores com tempo de trabalho na empresa entre 10 a 20 anos, ignorando, assim, os aspetos legais da pirâmide de antiguidade e de categorias na empresa e discriminando de forma inaceitável membros das organizações representativas dos trabalhadores.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe do seguinte:

1. A referida empresa recebeu quaisquer fundos comunitários em Portugal ou Espanha?

2. Tem a Comissão conhecimento desta prática de discriminação em relação a representantes dos trabalhadores e qual a avaliação que faz?

**Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão**
*(12 de março de 2012)*

1. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a empresa Panrico — Produtos Alimentares, Lda. recebeu um apoio financeiro do Fundo Social Europeu no valor de 246 363 euros em Portugal, durante os períodos de programação atual e anterior, e de 8 487,55 euros em Espanha, durante o período de programação atual.

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de quaisquer planos para despedir trabalhadores. Gostaria, porém, de salientar que as questões jurídicas relacionadas com os despedimentos são da responsabilidade dos tribunais nacionais e devem ser tratadas a esse nível.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000682/12**
**to the Commission**
**Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Collective redundancy in the Panrico company

Recently, the company Panrico — Food Products S.A., working in the Lisbon region and in Vila Nova de Gaia, which was recently acquired by the Oaktree investment management company, told its workers that it would be carrying out a collective redundancy involving 47 workers.

This company, which employs nearly 7 000 workers, claims that the reduction in sales and increase in the costs of raw materials are the determining factors behind this collective redundancy. Nonetheless, this dismissal falls particularly badly on those workers who took part in the general strike on 24 November 2011 and who would not accept just a 20-minute lunch-break. It affects, amongst others, a trade union leader, an ex-trade union leader and workers who have been in the company for 10 to 20 years. It thus disregards the legal aspects of age hierarchy and of categories in the company and discriminates in an unacceptable manner against members of workers' organisations.

Can the Commission provide the following information:

1. Did the aforementioned company receive Community funds in Portugal or Spain?

2. Is the Commission aware of this practice of discrimination against workers' representatives and how does it assess the situation?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 March 2012)*

1. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, the company Panrico — Produtos Alimentares Lda received financial support from the European Social Fund amounting to EUR 246 363 in Portugal during the current and previous programming periods and EUR 8 487.55 in Spain during the current programming period.

2. The Commission is not aware of any plans of the company to dismiss workers. However, it would point out that legal issues relating to lay-offs are the responsibility of the national courts and should be dealt with at that level.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000683/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(30 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Cazuri de tuberculoză rezistentă la antibiotice

State precum India, China sau Rusia au anunțat că se confruntă cu cazuri de tuberculoză în care tratamentul cu antibiotice nu are efect. Având în vedere faptul că tuberculoza face parte dintre bolile infecțioase ușor transmisibile, Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă are în vedere măsuri preventive pentru a împiedica răspândirea acestei bacterii care a suferit mutații în statele membre ale UE, eventual după modelul măsurilor restrictive impuse de state ca Australia sau Canada.

**Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei**
*(6 martie 2012)*

Comisia are cunoștință de cazurile raportate recent de tuberculoză rezistentă la medicamente în India. Aceste cazuri au fost definite de Organizația Mondială a Sănătății drept tuberculoză ultrarezistentă la medicamente, o formă gravă de tuberculoză rezistentă la medicamente. Aceasta este o preocupare majoră în domeniul sănătății publice, 1 450 de cazuri de boală multirezistentă și 66 de cazuri de boală ultrarezistentă la medicamente fiind raportate în 2009 în Uniunea Europeană, precum și în țările din Spațiul Economic European ([1]).

Au fost concepute o serie de măsuri pentru a reduce povara reprezentată de tuberculoza rezistentă la medicamente și riscul răspândirii sale în UE. La cererea Comisiei, Centrul European de prevenire și control al bolilor (ECDC) a elaborat în 2007 un plan-cadru de acțiune pentru combaterea tuberculozei în UE ([2]), ([3]), care abordează în special problema tuberculozei rezistente la medicamente, precum și probleme conexe (de exemplu, supravegherea, realizarea de teste privind sensibilitatea la medicamente și îngrijirea pacienților).

În plus, în cadrul celui de-al șaptelea program-cadru pentru cercetare și dezvoltare tehnologică, Comisia sprijină proiecte privind dezvoltarea de tratamente noi și studierea, gestionarea clinică și diagnosticarea tuberculozei rezistente la medicamente. Parteneriatul dintre țările europene și țările în curs de dezvoltare privind testele clinice (*European and* Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership) contribuie, de asemenea, la acest efort, susținând studiile clinice privind noi medicamente și vaccinuri.

În cele din urmă, Comisia a adoptat în 2011 o comunicare privind prevenirea și controlul infecțiilor rezistente la medicamente ([4]), care este în prezent pusă în aplicare.

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([1]) ECDC Epidemiological Annual Report 2011: http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1111_SUR_Annual_Epidemiological_Report_on_Communicable_Diseases_in_Europe.pdf
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/0803_SPR_TB_Action_plan.pdf
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/101111_SPR_Progressing_towards_TB_elimination.pdf
([4]) Comunicare a Comisiei către Parlamentul European și Consiliu — Plan de acțiune împotriva amenințărilor tot mai mari reprezentate de Rezistența la antimicrobiene, COM (2011) 748 final din 15.11.2011: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_ro.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000683/12**
**to the Commission**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Cases of antibiotic-resistant tuberculosis

Countries including India, China and Russia have announced that they are now facing tuberculosis cases in which antibiotic treatment has no effect. Given the fact that tuberculosis is one of the most easily transmitted infectious diseases, can the Commission indicate whether it envisages preventive measures to stop the spread of bacteria which have undergone mutations in the Member States, possibly modelled on the restrictive measures imposed by countries like Australia or Canada?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 March 2012)*

The Commission is aware of recently reported cases of drug-resistant tuberculosis in India. These cases have been defined by the World Health Organisation as extensively drug-resistant TB, a severe form of drug resistant tuberculosis. The latter is a particular public health concern with 1 450 multi-drug resistant and 66 extensively drug-resistant cases reported in 2009 in the European Union and European Economic Area countries ([1]).

A number of actions have been developed to reduce the burden of drug resistant tuberculosis and the risk of its spread in the EU. At the request of the Commission, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) developed in 2007 an EU Framework Action Plan to Fight Tuberculosis ([2]) ([3]), which addresses in particular the issue of drug-resistant tuberculosis and related challenges (such as surveillance, drug-sensitivity testing and care of patients).

Furthermore, under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, the Commission supports projects on the development of new treatments and the study, clinical management and diagnostic of drug-resistant tuberculosis. The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership contributes also to this effort by supporting clinical trials on new drugs and vaccines.

Finally, the Commission adopted in 2011 a communication on the prevention and control of drug resistant infections ([4]) which is now being implemented.

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([1]) ECDC Epidemiological Annual Report 2011: http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/1111_SUR_Annual_Epidemiological_Report_on_Communicable_Diseases_in_Europe.pdf
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/0803_SPR_TB_Action_plan.pdf
([3]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/101111_SPR_Progressing_towards_TB_elimination.pdf
([4]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council — Action Plan against the rising threats from AMR, COM(2011) 748 final of 15.11.2011. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_en.pdf

*(Leagan Gaeilge)*

**Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-000686/12**
**chuig an gCoimisiún**
**Liam Aylward (ALDE)**
*(30 Eanáir 2012)*

*Ábhar:* Cleachtais Frithiomaíocha i dTionscal Ceoil na hEorpa

Foilsíodh staidéar measúnaithe le déanaí don chlár 'An Eoraip Chruthaitheach' a deir go dtéann na cuspóirí sonracha chun tacú le hearnálacha cultúrtha agus cruthaitheacha na hEorpa feidhmiú go trasnáisiúnta i ngleic le dúshlán an domhandaithe agus an t-athrú digiteach. Nuair a spreagtar cúrsaíocht thrasnáisiúnta i gcás saothar cultúrtha agus cruthaitheach agus nuair a chuirtear oibreoirí cultúrtha agus cruthaitheacha chun cinn, téitear i ngleic le fadhb na hilroinnte, arb é is cúis le cúrsaíocht theoranta saothar agus ealaíontóirí agus rogha theoranta do thomhaltóirí. Bíonn tionchar ag na gnéithe sin ar an éagsúlacht chultúrtha agus teanga agus ar chumas iomaíoch na hearnála, mar atá sonraithe sna cuspóirí ginearálta.

— An bhfuil an Coimisiún ar an eolas maidir leis an togra atá ann go ndéanfadh Universal táthcheangal ar ENI Publishing agus Sony ATV ar EMI Recording? Cad í barúil an Choimisiúin maidir leis an togra um tháthcheangal sin?

— Cé na bearta atá i bhfeidhm ag an gCoimisiún chun a chinntiú go mbíonn margadh oscailte cothrom ann do na soláthraithe ceoil ar fad?

— An bhfuil sé i gceist ag an gCoimisiún beartas nua ar bith a chur i bhfeidhm chun cleachtais frithiomaíocha i dTionscal Ceoil na hEorpa a chosc?

— An bhfuil bearta eile ar intinn ag an gCoimisiún chun a chinntiú go bhfuil sé ar chumas soláthraithe beaga ceoil a bheith iomaíoch ar mhargaí na hEorpa agus an domhain?

**Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Almunia thar ceann an Choimisiúin**
*(13 Márta 2012)*

Is eol don Choimisiún go bhfuiltear ag beartú EMI a dhíol, agus go bhfuil comhaontú ann a rannóg ceoil thaifeadta a dhíol le Universal Music Group, agus go bhfuil comhaontú eile ann rannóg foilsithe ceoil EMI a dhíol le grúpa infheisteoirí, lena n-áirítear Sony Corporation of America. Tugadh fógra don Choimisiún an 17 Feabhra 2012 maidir le ceann de na hidirbhearta sin, eadhon go bhfuil sé beartaithe ag Universal gnó ceoil thaifeadta EMI a fháil mar éadáil. Tugadh fógra don Choimisiún an 27 Feabhra 2012 maidir leis an idirbheart eile, eadhon go bhfuil sé beartaithe ag Sony Corporation of America agus an Mubadala Development Company smacht comhpháirteach a fháil ar ghnó foilsithe ceoil EMI.

Tá an Coimisiún i mbun iniúchtaí margaidh faoi láthair i dtaobh an dá idirbheart sin chun an tionchar is dealraitheach a bheidh acu ar mhargaí éagsúla ceoil an AE a mheas.

Tugtar de chumhacht don Choimisiún sa Chonradh iomaíocht neamhshaofa a áirithiú sa mhargadh inmheánach. Cuirtear toirmeasc sa Chonradh ar chomhaontuithe sriantacha agus ar chuideachtaí mí-úsáid a bhaint as a gceannasacht. Tá feidhm ag na forálacha ginearálta sin maidir leis na margaí atá ábhartha i gcás soláthróirí ceoil ([1]). Níl aon ghearán foirmiúil faighte ag an gCoimisiún maidir le hiompraíocht mhargaidh na ngníomhairí san earnáil áirithe seo, ach tá sé ag leanúint de ghrinnfhaireachán a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí sa mhargadh.

Leanfaidh an Coimisiún de na rialacha iomaíochta atá ann cheana a fhorfheidhmiú go stóinsithe.

Faoi láthair, tá an Coimisiún ag obair ar thogra le haghaidh na Treorach maidir le bainistiú ar chearta comhchoiteanna a beartaíodh sa Chlár Digiteach don Eoraip. Is é is aidhm don Treoir feabhas a chur ar thrédhearcacht agus ar rialachas na gcumann bailithe dleachtanna agus ceadúnú ilchríochach saothar ceoil ar líne a éascú do gach soláthróir ceoil. Tá sé beartaithe go nglacfaidh an Coimisiún an Treoir in earrach na bliana seo.

([1]) Mar shampla, féach cás 38698/CISAC; cinneadh C(2008) 3435 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000686/12**
**to the Commission**
**Liam Aylward (ALDE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Anti-competitive practices in the European music industry

A recent impact assessment for the 'Creative Europe' programme stated that the specific objectives of supporting Europe's cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally help combat the challenge of globalisation and digital shift. The encouragement of transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and the promotion of cultural and creative operators address the problem of fragmentation, which results in limited circulation of works and artists and limited choice for consumers. These have consequences for cultural and linguistic diversity and the competitiveness of the sector, as detailed in the general objectives.

— Is the Commission aware of the proposal that Universal would take over EMI Publishing and that Sony ATV would take over EMI Recording? What is the Commission's opinion on that takeover proposal?

— What measures has the Commission in place to ensure that there is an open and fair market for all music providers?

— Does the Commission intend to implement new measures to prevent anti-competitive practices in the European music industry?

— Does the Commission intend to introduce other measures to ensure that small music providers have the potential to be competitive in the European and global markets?

**Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the proposed sale of EMI, with an agreement for the sale of its recorded music division to Universal Music Group, and another for the sale of EMI's music publishing division to a group of investors, including Sony Corporation of America. One of these transactions, the proposed acquisition by Universal of EMI's recorded music business, was notified to the Commission on 17 February 2012. The other transaction, the proposed acquisition of joint control over EMI's music publishing business by Sony Corporation of America and the Mubadala Development Company was notified to the Commission on 27 February 2012.

The Commission is currently conducting market investigations into both transactions in order to assess their likely impact on the various EU music markets concerned.

The Commission is empowered by the Treaty to ensure undistorted competition in the internal market. The Treaty prohibits restrictive agreements as well as abuses by companies in a dominant position. These general prohibitions apply to the markets relevant for music providers ([1]). The Commission has received no formal complaints on market behaviour of players in this sector, but continues to closely monitor developments in the market.

The Commission will continue robust enforcement of the existing competition rules.

The Commission is currently working on a proposal for the directive on collective rights management envisaged in the Digital Agenda for Europe. The aim of the directive is to improve transparency and governance of collecting societies and to facilitate multi-territorial licensing of online musical works for all music providers. The adoption of the directive by the Commission is planned for spring this year.

([1]) See for example Case 38698/CISAC; Decision C(2008)3435 final.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000688/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(31 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Situación de la industria naval gallega

La Comisión Europea, a través del Comisario de Competencia, Joaquín Almunia, respondió en referencia a la pregunta E-007729/2011, que la Comisión «incoó una investigación exhaustiva dirigida a comprobar la compatibilidad del sistema español de arrendamiento financiero para la compra de buques con las reglas comunitarias en materia de ayudas estatales», y afirmó «que la Comisión es consciente de las implicaciones sociales de este asunto, pero debe tener también en cuenta las repercusiones de las medidas estudiadas en la competencia y en otras empresas».

En la Unión Europa, están primando cada vez más los intereses financieros y las normas de competencia en lugar de los intereses sociales y de cohesión territorial, social y económica. La industria naval está padeciendo esas consecuencias, pues en lugar de ser apoyada como un sector estratégico en Europa, encuentra limitaciones constantes. En especial la industria naval gallega ha sufrido, desde las últimas dos décadas, evidentes marginaciones pese a capacidad competitiva, su alto nivel de tecnificación, cualificación de mano de obra, especialización y adaptación de la producción a nuevas situaciones. El contexto de actual crisis que afecta a los sectores productivos ha afectado enormemente a la industria naval y su viabilidad está condicionada a la financiación. En el momento actual, el sector naval gallego, se encuentra en un compás de espera, pendiente de la respuesta de la Comisión Europea a la posición enviada por el Gobierno español.

— ¿Puede informar la Comisión de la situación actual del procedimiento del expediente de investigación sobre el régimen fiscal aplicable al sistema de arrendamiento español («tax lease»)?

— ¿Cuándo va a responder la Comisión al examen de esta investigación?

— ¿Considera la Comisión que va a poder encontrar una solución justa para los intereses de un sector productivo como el sector naval de Galicia, con el fin de que pueda contar con un sistema financiero que lo apoye para garantizar su continuidad, viabilidad y futuro?

**Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión**
*(19 de marzo de 2012)*

La Decisión de la Comisión del 29 de junio de 2011 por la que se incoaba el procedimiento de investigación formal de conformidad con el artículo 108, apartado 2, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE), fue publicada en el Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea el 21 de septiembre de 2011 ([1]), invitando a las terceras partes interesadas a presentar sus observaciones sobre el sistema de arrendamiento fiscal español. La Comisión recibió comentarios de más de 40 partes interesadas, incluidas empresas financieras, compañías de transporte marítimo y astilleros, así como de autoridades públicas y organismos, tanto de dentro, como de fuera de España.

Las observaciones presentadas por España y por las terceras partes, están siendo analizadas y se tendrán en cuenta en la decisión final, que la Comisión tiene previsto adoptar en los próximos meses.

La Comisión procederá a la evaluación del sistema a la luz de las normas en materia de ayudas estatales establecidas por el Tratado. En este contexto, se contrastarán los efectos esperados del sistema de arrendamiento fiscal en la competencia, el comercio y las demás empresas dentro de la UE con la consecución de objetivos de interés común recogidos en las normas existentes sobre la compatibilidad de las ayudas estatales, cuando el sistema persiga dichos objetivos. Sin embargo, teniendo en cuenta que el procedimiento de investigación formal está en curso, la Comisión no puede dar ninguna indicación, en este momento, en cuanto a su resultado.

([1]) DO C 276 de 21.9.2011, p. 5.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000688/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Situation of Galicia's shipping industry

The European Commission has responded, through the Commissioner for Competition, Joaquín Almunia, to Question E-007729/2011 that the Commission has launched a detailed investigation intended to verify the compatibility of the Spanish system of financial leasing for the purchase of boats with Union rules on state aid, and that the Commission is aware of the social implications of this issue, but should also bear in mind the repercussions that these measures have on competition and on other companies.

In the European Union, financial interests and competition rules are increasingly taking precedence over the interests of society, and of territorial, social and economic cohesion. The shipping industry is suffering these consequences, since, instead of being supported as a strategic sector in Europe, it is facing constant constraints. In particular, Galicia's shipping industry has been clearly marginalised over the past two decades, even though it is competitive, technically advanced, has a skilled workforce, is highly specialised and has adapted its production to new developments. The crisis currently affecting productive sectors has hit the shipping industry hard, and its viability is dependent on finance. At the moment, Galicia's shipping sector is at a standstill, awaiting the Commission's response to the Spanish Government's position.

— Can the Commission provide information about the current status of the investigation on the tax regime applied to the Spanish tax lease system?

— When will the Commission respond to this investigation?

— Does the Commission believe it will be able to find a solution fair to the interests of a productive sector such as Galicia's shipping sector, providing it with a financial system that supports it in order to ensure its continuity, viability and future?

**Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The Commission's decision of 29 June 2011 opening the formal investigation procedure pursuant to Article 108(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) was published in the Official Journal of the EU on 21 September 2011 ([1]) with a call to all interested third parties to comment on the Spanish tax lease system. The Commission received comments from more than 40 interested parties, including financial companies, shipping companies and shipyards, as well as public authorities and bodies, both from within and outside Spain.

Observations submitted by Spain and by third parties are currently being analysed. They will be taken into account in the final decision, which the Commission intends to adopt in the coming months.

The Commission will proceed with the assessment of the scheme in the light of the state aid rules established by the Treaty. In this context, it will balance the expected effects of the scheme on competition, trade and on other companies within the EU against the achievement of objectives of common interest enshrined in the existing rules on compatibility of state aid — where such objectives are targeted by the scheme. However, considering the formal investigation procedure is ongoing, the Commission cannot give any indication at this stage as regards its outcome.

([1]) OJ C 276, 21.9.2011, p. 5.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000689/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(30 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Investigación de la Comisión sobre el proyecto de línea eléctrica Peñalba-Isona

En su contestación del pasado 28 de octubre de 2011 a las preguntas E-008394/11, E-008437/11 y E-008396/11, la Comisión Europea declaró que había puesto en marcha una investigación EU PILOT para comprobar si el proyecto de construcción de la línea de muy alta tensión Peñalba-Isona, que plantea graves afecciones potenciales en su recorrido por Aragón, cumple la legislación de la Unión Europea, especialmente la Directiva 85/337/CEE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, la Directiva 2009/147/CE relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres, y la Directiva 92/43/CEE, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres.

— ¿Con qué fecha solicitó la Comisión al Gobierno español sus observaciones sobre este caso y con qué plazo para recibir respuesta?

— ¿Ha recibido la Comisión dicha respuesta?

— ¿Qué valoración hace de la misma?

— ¿Qué medidas va a tomar la Comisión a raíz de todo lo expuesto anteriormente?

**Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión**
*(7 de marzo de 2012)*

El proyecto de línea eléctrica Peñalba-Isona ha sido objeto de una investigación por parte de la Comisión. Este asunto fue incoado a raíz de las preguntas escritas E-8394/11, E-8396/11 y E-8437/11, formuladas por el Sr. Tremosa i Balcells ([1]).

Asimismo, la Comisión recibió varias denuncias sobre este proyecto.

En el marco de esta investigación, las autoridades españolas han informado a la Comisión de que se está llevando a cabo una evaluación de impacto ambiental completa con arreglo a la Directiva 85/337/CEE del Consejo, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, tal como ha sido modificada ([2]). Este procedimiento comprende el análisis de las posibles repercusiones del proyecto en los valores naturales protegidos por la Directiva 92/43/CE, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres ([3]), y por la Directiva 2009/147/CE, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres ([4]).

Teniendo en cuenta que están en curso los procedimientos medioambientales pertinentes, por el momento la Comisión no puede determinar si este proyecto infringe la normativa de la Unión en materia de medio ambiente.

Por carta de 15 de diciembre de 2011 se informó a los denunciantes de la intención de la Comisión de cerrar su investigación.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=ES.
([2]) DO L 175 de 5.7.1985.
([3]) DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.
([4]) DO L 20 de 26.1.2010.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000689/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Commission investigation into the Peñalba-Isona power line project

In its 28 October 2011 answer to Questions E-008394/11, E-008437/11 and E-008396/11, the European Commission stated that it had launched an EU PILOT investigation to ascertain whether the very high-voltage Peñalba-Isona line, whose route through Aragón could cause serious harm, complies with European Union legislation, in particular Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, and Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

— On what date did the Commission request the Spanish Government's views on this case and with what deadline for a response?

— Has the Commission received this response?

— What is its evaluation of this response?

— What further measures will the Commission take?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

The Peñalba-Isona power line project has been subject to an investigation by the Commission. This case was opened pursuant to joint Written Questions E-8394/11, E-8396/11 and E-8437/11 by Mr Tremosa i Balcells ([1]).

Several complaints on this project were also lodged with the Commission.

In the framework of this investigation the Spanish authorities have informed the Commission that a full environmental impact assessment, under Council Directive 85/337/EEC, as modified, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([2]) is currently underway. This procedure covers the likely effects of the project on natural values protected by Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora ([3]) and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds ([4]).

Since the appropriate environmental procedures are being followed, the Commission is unable to identify, at this stage, a breach of EU environmental legislation in the case of this project.

The complainants have been informed of the intention of the Commission to close its investigation by letter of 15 December 2011.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.
([2]) OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.
([3]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([4]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000693/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Cardiovascular disease

Can the Commission indicate how it plans to deal with the issue of cardiovascular disease in Europe?

Given that recent studies have shown that this problem has a greater incidence rate in females compared with males, will the Commission devise different strategies for combating the problem in relation to females?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

Cardiovascular diseases are the major cause of mortality in women and in men. Gender is known to be a specific risk factor. The Commission addresses the major causes of cardiovascular diseases through its strategies on nutrition, physical activity and tobacco.

In addition, the Commission has been financing projects under the Health Programme specifically dealing with cardiovascular diseases, prevention and management, such as EuroHeart I and II, European Hospital Benchmarking by Outcomes in acute coronary syndrome Processes (EURHOBOP), and Safe Implementation of Treatment in Stroke (SITS EAST). Information on the project is available on the Commission's website ([1]).

To address common issues related to major chronic diseases, the Commission has launched a reflection process on chronic diseases with Member States, based on the 2010 Council conclusions on 'Innovative approaches for chronic diseases in public health and healthcare systems' ([2]). This process — while not disease specific — should help identify those areas where there are gaps and added value for further action at EU level and in cooperation between Member States to address the challenge.

This process will draw on the political declaration of the high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases ([3]) that highlights cardiovascular diseases, in which the EU was actively involved.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/118282.pdf
([3]) http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A%2F66 %2FL.1&Lang=E

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000694/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Common fisheries policy

Can the Commission indicate the models that it will use to implement the proposals on decentralisation of the common fisheries policy? Is the Commission aware of the Parliament legal advice in respect of same?

**Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 March 2012)*

The reform of the common fisheries policy aims at strengthening the governance aspect through a regionalised approach, to better adapt the policy to the specificities of the different sea-basins in the EU.

The proposal of the Commission foresees that multiannual plans for the conservation of fish stocks may empower the Member States of a sea basin to set commonly agreed national measures to make the plan operational. The involvement of fishermen, other stakeholders as well as Advisory Councils will be necessary to design the measures that can best achieve the objectives of the multiannual plan at sea basin level.

The same would be done with a framework technical measures regulation which is to be decided in the ordinary legislative procedure and implementing measures then need to be decided by the Member States of a seabasin after designing them in cooperation with Advisory Councils and stakeholders.

Under both multiannual plans and framework technical measures regulations, research institutes in the Member States should support stakeholders as necessary.

The Commission is aware that the Legal Service of the European Parliament has provided an opinion on the regionalisation aspect of the reform of the common fisheries policy, but at this stage, the Commission has not been given access to this opinion.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000695/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Common fisheries policy

Can the Commission indicate the proposals that it will use in the common fisheries policy to increase biodiversity in oceanic habitats and also improve seafloor integrity?

**Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 February 2012)*

The Commission's proposal for the reform of the common fisheries policy is centred on reducing the impact of fishing by a number of mechanisms: fixing maximum sustainable yield targets for long-term plans, retargeting the use of structural funds away from subsidising fishing activities and towards restructuring of the fishing fleets, and introducing transferable fishing concessions as an market-based instrument for reducing overcapacity. Furthermore, the Commission proposes the gradual introduction of an obligation that all fish caught should be landed, and counted against quotas where they apply, i.e. a discard ban.

It is also intended to help fishermen develop and introduce more selective fishing and lower-impact gear, so that impacts on unwanted species and on the seabed are reduced.

Taken together, these measures will reduce the impact of fishing on targeted fish stocks, on other species in the marine environment, and on the integrity of the seafloor itself. This will reduce the effect of human activities on the biodiversity of the marine habitat while ensuring the long-term viability of the EU fishing fleet.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000697/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Funding lines for tourism

Can the Commission indicate any possible funding lines for a town or village that wants to start up an annual festival which aims to incorporate the local heritage, with a view to increasing tourism in the local area?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The Commission gives much importance to the role of cultural heritage in view of differentiating the tourism offer, also knowing that the cultural tourism sector has been performing relatively well in the recent crisis period. In its last communication on tourism ([1]), differentiating the tourism offer capitalising on the European rich culture, traditions and heritage, has been identified as a priority for the European tourism policy in order to allow a sustainable and competitive growth of the tourism industry.

The Commission therefore actively supports and promotes transnational cultural tourism products through calls ([2]) for pan-European project proposals or the organisation of European added-value events, such as the fair 'Carrefours d'Europe' on cultural tourism, having a transnational dimension and going beyond the valorisation of pure local heritage.

European festivals that build on local heritage certainly contribute to highlighting the great richness of our cultural diversity and foster sustainable growth of destinations, increasing tourism flows and facilitating job creation and new income sources for the local communities. In this regard, appropriate funding can be used by local communities under the European Regional Development Fund or within the framework of the Culture Programme ([3]).

Cultural operators who wish to apply for funding are well advised to get in touch with the Culture contact point ([4]) or the relevant Structural Funds Managing Authority ([5]) in their country, in order to obtain more information and assistance.

([1]) 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' (COM(2010) 0352).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm
([3]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/programme/documents/2010/may/EN.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/annexes-culture/your-contact-in-your-country_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/manage/authority/authority_en.cfm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000698/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Obesity in Europe

Can the Commission indicate how it plans to deal with the issue of obesity in Europe, especially in relation to young children and teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

The strategy for Europe on nutrition, overweight and obesity-related health issues ([1]) outlines the Commission's strategic approach for the period 2007-2013. In this strategy, children have been identified as one of the priority groups. The document highlights the importance of education on nutrition and physical activity, instilling a preference for healthy behaviours and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

A Progress Report of December 2010 ([2]) summarises actions for children, such as specific education campaigns and the School Fruit Scheme.

The European EPODE Network, co-funded by the Health programme, is a network of European Mayors which puts prevention of childhood obesity at the heart of cities. This network now involves 331 cities in four EU Member States and brings concrete positive results ([3]).

Many stakeholders contribute through their activities in the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. One example is the EU Pledge commitment by the food industry for responsible advertising of food and beverages to children under the age of 12 ([4]). The strategy will be evaluated later this year and the Commission would welcome the Parliament's support to this work.

The EU Youth Strategy ([5]), under the open method of coordination with Member States, encourages 'healthy lifestyles for young people via physical education, education on nutrition, physical activity and collaboration between schools, youth workers, health professionals and sporting organisations'.

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([1]) COM(2007) 279 final, 30.5.2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/implementation_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMe0810291
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0200:FIN:EN:PDF

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000702/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Shale gas exploration and production activities

Does the Commission plan to produce a certified list of known compounds will be used in any future shale gas exploitation in relation to the fracking process?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

The Commission currently does not plan to produce such a list. Given the novelty of shale gas practices in Europe and the still limited knowledge and experience with shale gas projects in the EU, the Commission's priority is to collect the information necessary to ensure that the European legislative framework guarantees an appropriate level of protection to the environment and human health when exploring and producing shale gas. It will examine i.a. Chemical Safety Reports of the registration dossiers for a set of chemical substances generally associated with hydraulic fracturing to determine if the exposure scenarios included in such reports could be considered adequate for shale gas operations.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000703/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE) e Giovanni La Via (PPE)**
*(30 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Esercizio EBA

La recente decisione dell'EBA di imporre alle banche dei buffer di capitale a copertura dei titoli di Stato detenuti in portafoglio, valutandoli a prezzo di mercato, senza prima attendere l'implementazione di altre misure (quali il rafforzamento del Fondo salva Stati), si è rivelata errata nella tempistica ed ha contribuito ad acuire le tensioni invece di mitigarle. Infatti, il vero rischio che stanno affrontando le diverse economie è una forte riduzione del credito erogato all'economia, alle famiglie e alle imprese. È importante notare che la raccomandazione EBA costituisce di fatto una modifica delle regole di vigilanza attualmente vigenti, visto che, ad esempio, vengono rimossi dei filtri prudenziali. La misura adottata, quindi, non è una «raccomandazione» che è volta a «istituire prassi di vigilanza uniformi, efficienti ed efficaci e ad assicurare l'applicazione comune, uniforme e coerente del diritto dell'Unione» (vedasi l'articolo 16 del regolamento EBA), ma deve essere riqualificata, secondo un principio di prevalenza della sostanza sulla forma, in una «decisione» ai sensi dell'articolo 18, in considerazione della eccezionalità delle misure adottate per rispondere a situazioni di emergenza, come peraltro riconosciuto nei considerando della stessa raccomandazione EBA. In questo modo si è «aggirato» un importante vincolo previsto nell'iter di emanazione degli atti normativi, cioè la preventiva analisi di impatto della regolamentazione, che permette di valutare costi e benefici derivanti dall'introduzione di nuove normative.

In ragione di ciò, come intende la Commissione intervenire in merito? Non ritiene, inoltre, opportuno un differimento della data ora prevista per l'attuazione dell'esercizio dell'EBA, tenuto conto del peggioramento delle prospettive di crescita di molte economie e del fatto che i rischi di recessione si fanno sempre più concreti?

**Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione**
*(12 marzo 2012)*

L'accordo sulla ricapitalizzazione delle banche costituisce un elemento importante delle misure concordate dal Consiglio europeo del 26 ottobre 2011. L'obiettivo è di rafforzare la fiducia dei mercati nei confronti del settore bancario.

L'Autorità bancaria europea (ABE) è stata incaricata di coordinarne l'attuazione e di garantire che i piani di aumento di capitale delle banche non conducano a un'eccessiva o inopportuna riduzione dell'effetto leva. A tal fine la raccomandazione dell'ABE dell'8 dicembre 2011 vieta esplicitamente gli interventi finalizzati alla riduzione degli attivi delle banche. I primi riscontri dell'ABE evidenziano che i provvedimenti proposti dalle banche hanno essenzialmente un impatto diretto sul capitale, come dividendi non distribuiti ed emissioni di capitale nei mercati.

Le autorità nazionali di vigilanza, coordinate dall'ABE, stanno valutando i piani presentati. La Commissione parte dal presupposto che tale valutazione presterà particolare attenzione al potenziale impatto negativo sul flusso di credito verso l'economia reale.

La raccomandazione dell'ABE rivolta alle autorità di vigilanza nazionali si basa sull'articolo 16 del regolamento che istituisce l'ABE. Si tratta di uno strumento non vincolante, del quale però i destinatari sono tenuti a motivare l'eventuale mancato rispetto. Le autorità di vigilanza non sono pertanto tenute ad attenersi alla raccomandazione e quest'ultima non ha effetti giuridici diretti sulle banche. Considerato che l'ABE ha agito in conformità con il suo mandato e nel pieno rispetto della legge applicabile, la Commissione non ritiene necessario esprimersi in merito all'opportunità o meno che l'ABE intraprendesse altre azioni. L'ABE non ha agito nel quadro delle situazioni di cui all'articolo 18 del regolamento che istituisce l'autorità, ma, anche se l'avesse fatto, la sua azione non avrebbe richiesto una valutazione d'impatto.

La Commissione accoglie con favore il fatto che l'ABE intraprenda quanto in suo potere per garantire la convergenza delle prassi di vigilanza e la coerenza nell'applicazione del diritto dell'UE.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000703/12**
**to the Commission**
**Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE) and Giovanni La Via (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Operation of EBA

The recent decision by the European Banking Authority (EBA) to impose capital buffers on banks to cover the State bonds held in their portfolios, valuing them at market price, without first waiting for the implementation of other measures (such as the reinforcement of the State rescue funds), proved untimely and helped to exacerbate tensions rather than to mitigate them. In fact, the real risk that the various economies are facing is of a sharp reduction in loans extended to the economy, families and businesses. It is important to note that the EBA recommendation constitutes in fact a change in the supervision rules currently in force, since, for example, it removes prudential filters. The adopted measure is not, therefore, a 'recommendation' that aims at 'establishing consistent, efficient and effective supervisory practices […] and [at] ensuring the common, uniform and consistent application of Union law' (see Article 16 of the EBA Regulation), but must be upgraded, according to a principle of substance over form, to a 'decision' under Article 18, given the exceptional nature of the measures taken to respond to emergency situations, as is moreover recognised in the recitals to said EBA recommendation. In this way, it 'bypassed' an important constraint provided for in the legislation enactment procedure, i.e. the prior analysis of the impact of regulation, under which the costs and benefits of introducing new regulations are assessed.

How will the Commission react to this? Moreover, does the Commission not think that the date currently scheduled for the implementation of the EBA operation should be postponed, taking into account the worsening growth prospects of many economies and the fact that the risks of recession are becoming ever more tangible?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 March 2012)*

The agreement on the recapitalisation of banks is an important element of the measures agreed by the European Council on 26 October 2011. The aim is to enhance the market confidence in the banking sector.

The European Banking Authority (EBA) was requested to coordinate the implementation, and to ensure that bank plans to strengthen capital do not lead to excessive or inappropriate deleveraging. To this end, the EBA recommendation of 8 December 2011 explicitly prohibits actions aimed at a reduction of bank assets. Preliminary results disclosed by EBA show that the actions proposed by the banks predominantly focus on direct capital measures, i.e. retention of dividends and capital emissions on the market.

National supervisors, coordinated by EBA, are currently evaluating the submitted plans. The Commission is confident that this examination will pay particular attention to the potential negative impact on the credit flow to the real economy.

The EBA recommendation addressed to national supervisors is based on Article 16 of the EBA regulation. It is non-binding, but addressees are subject to a comply-or-explain obligation. Hence, supervisors are not required to follow the recommendation, and it does not impose any direct legal effects on banks. Since EBA has acted in accordance with its mandate and in full respect of the applicable law, the Commission does not consider it necessary to comment on whether EBA could have taken other action. EBA did not act under Article 18 of the EBA-Regulation, but even if it had, its action would not have required any impact assessment.

The Commission welcomes that EBA makes use of its powers in order to ensure convergent supervisory practices and consistent application of EC law.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000704/12**
**aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)**
**Peter van Dalen (ECR)**
*(30 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* VP/HR — EU-Vertegenwoordiging in Noord-Irak

Het door de Koerden bestuurde Noord-Irak heeft lange tijd een relatieve veiligheid genoten in vergelijking met de rest van het land. Als gevolg hiervan zijn veel mensen die behoren tot onderdrukte en vervolgde gemeenschappen naar Noord-Irak gevlucht. Bijvoorbeeld ook mensen behorende tot Chaldese, Assyrische en andere eeuwenoude christelijke gemeenschappen. Onlangs is de veiligheidssituatie in Noord-Irak echter verslechterd en zijn er meer aanslagen te betreuren. Ook de christelijke gemeenschappen zijn in toenemende mate doelwit van aanslagen.

Dankzij de relatieve veiligheid van de afgelopen jaren heeft Noord-Irak zich ook economisch goed kunnen ontwikkelen. De groeiende bevolking en economische ontwikkeling maken de regio een interessante handelspartner voor de EU.

1. Is de VP/HR het met mij eens dat om bovengenoemde redenen, namelijk de situatie van de minderheden en de economische kansen, het een goed idee is een EU-vertegenwoordiging te openen in Noord-Irak?

2. Is de VP/HR het met mij eens dat een dergelijke vertegenwoordiging zou kunnen bijdragen aan de stabilisering van de veiligheidssituatie en de ontwikkeling van de regionale economie en de handelsbetrekkingen met de EU?

3. Is de VP/HR het met mij eens dat een dergelijke vertegenwoordiging de EU meer zichtbaarheid kan geven in Irak, temeer daar de EU-vertegenwoordiging in Bagdad als gevolg van de veiligheidssituatie onderbemand is en maar weinig bewegingsruimte heeft?

**Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie**
*(27 april 2012)*

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter (HV/VV) is op de hoogte van de situatie in de Koerdische regio (minderheden, economische ontwikkeling) en onderkent het belang van EU-activiteiten aldaar. Gelet op de huidige budgettaire beperkingen geeft de HV/VV — waar en wanneer er middelen beschikbaar zijn — prioriteit aan het openen van bureaus of delegaties in de hoofdsteden van derde landen waar de EU nog niet is vertegenwoordigd.

De HV/VV wijst het geachte Parlementslid erop dat er momenteel naar wordt gestreefd om — binnen de grenzen van de geringe budgettaire mogelijkheden — de aanwezigheid van de EU in Irak te versterken door het personeel op de EU-delegatie in Bagdad uit te breiden en voor een nieuwe behuizing te zorgen. Met deze dubbele aanpak zal de Europese dienst voor extern optreden de zichtbaarheid van de EU in Irak vergroten.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000704/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Peter van Dalen (ECR)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — EU mission in northern Iraq

Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq has long enjoyed relative safety compared with the rest of the country. As a result, many members of oppressed and persecuted communities have fled to northern Iraq, including, for example, members of the Chaldean, Assyrian and other centuries-old Christian communities. However, the security situation in northern Iraq has recently deteriorated and, regrettably, there have been more attacks. The Christian communities are also increasingly the target of such attacks.

The relative safety of the past few years has also allowed northern Iraq to develop economically. The growing population and economic development are making the region an attractive trading partner for the EU.

1. Does the VP/HR agree with me that, for the above reasons, i.e. the position of minorities and the economic opportunities, it would be a good idea for the EU to open a mission in northern Iraq?

2. Does the VP/HR agree with me that such a mission would be able to contribute to stabilising the security situation and developing the regional economy and trade relations with the EU?

3. Does the VP/HR agree with me that such a mission would raise the EU's profile in Iraq, all the more since the EU mission in Baghdad is understaffed because of the security situation and has little freedom of movement?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 April 2012)*

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is aware of the specificities of Kurdistan Region (minorities, economic development) and agrees on the importance of EU activity there. Given the current budget constraints, the priority of the HR/VP, where and when resources are available, is to open offices or Delegations in capitals in third countries where there is no EU presence for the moment.

The HR/VP would like to inform the Honourable Member that the current objective is to reinforce the EU presence in Iraq, within the limits of tight budgetary constraints, both in terms of increasing the staff in the EU Delegation in Baghdad and of establishing new premises for the location of those staff. The European External Action Service is working on these two lines of action that will contribute to raising the EU's profile in Iraq.

*(Leagan Gaeilge)*

**Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-000706/12**
**chuig an gCoimisiún**
**Liam Aylward (ALDE), Brian Crowley (ALDE) agus Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)**
*(30 Eanáir 2012)*

*Ábhar:* An Treoir um Shulfar Muirí

Is é cion sulfair breosla leachtaigh ar bith a shocraíonn, go bunúsach, leibhéil na n-astaíochtaí $SO_2$ a bhíonn i gceist le dóchán an bhreosla, chomh maith le ceapadh ábhar cáithníneach (PM) tánaisteach. Déanann Treoir 1999/32/CE, arna leasú, cion sulfair na mbreoslaí atá in úsáid ag an earnáil iompair mhuirí a rialú agus rialacha áirithe, ar ar socraíodh faoin Eagraíocht Mhuirí Idirnáisiúnta (IMO), a thrasuí i ndlí na hEorpa. Faoin Treoir, tá rialacha níos déine i gceist maidir le cion sulfair breoslaí muirí a bhíonn in úsáid i gceantair atá faoi chaomhnú comhshaoil, is é sin na limistéir um smachtú astaíochtaí sulfair (*Sulphur Emission Control Areas* (*SECAs*)).

1. An bhfuil a fhios ag an gCoimisiún go bhfuil an cion sulfair de 0.1 % atá i bhfeidhm do bhreosla muirí níos déine fós ná moladh 0.5 % an IMO?

2. An bhfuil plean ar bith ag an gCoimisiún athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an riachtanas 0.1 % do shulfar i mbreosla muirí faoi Threoir 1999/32/CE?

3. Cad iad na bearta atá i bhfeidhm chun a chinntiú nach gcuireann bearta na Treorach isteach ar fheidhmiú eagraíochtaí muirí agus gnóthas muirí den chineál sin?

4. An bhfuil sé i gceist ag an gCoimisiúin leathnú a dhéanamh ar na limistéir um smachtú astaíochtaí sulfair (*Sulphur Emission Control Areas* (*SECAs*)) chun go mbeadh ceantair eile mhuirí clúdaithe fúthu?

**Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Potočnik thar ceann an Choimisiúin**
*(12 Márta 2012)*

1. Éilíonn cinneadh 2008 an IMO go ndófadh longa a ghabhann trí limistéir um smachtú astaíochtaí sulfair (SECAnna) breosla ina bhfuil cion sulfair de 0.1 % ón 1 Eanáir 2015, agus tá sé socraithe gur 0.5 % a bheidh ann mar chaighdeán domhanda faoi 2020 nó faoi 2025, ag brath ar infhaighteacht breosla ar scála domhanda. Chuirfeadh togra an Choimisiúin comhaontú na bliana 2008 den IMO chun feidhme (lena n-áirítear an teorainn 0.1 %) i ndlí an AE. Dála an ama atá caite, rinne an Coimisiún cinneadh chomh maith an nasc a chothú idir longa paisinéirí agus teorainneacha SECA (i.e. cion sulfair de 0.1 %), cé go bhfuil an sprioc do na teorainneacha sin cúig bliana níos déanaí ná mar atá leagtha amach i bhfráma ama SECA (i.e. 2020).

2. Rinne an Coimisiún measúnú ar thionchair gheilleagracha, shóisialta agus chomhshaoil fhorálacha sulfair an IMO lena n-áirítear an caighdeán 0.1 % agus na hionchais á meas maidir le caighdeáin an IMO a thrasuí i reachtaíocht an AE. Rinneadh measúnú go háirithe ar na costais agus na buntáistí don tsochaí uile mar aon le measúnú ar an tionchar réigiúnach ar thionscail na loingseoireachta gearrthurais. Tá an Measúnú Tionchair agus staidéir ábhartha eile ar fáil ar shuíomh gréasáin an Choimisiúin ([1]).

3. D'eisigh an Coimisiún achoimre ([2]) ar bhearta gearrthéarmacha, ar bhearta meántéarmacha agus ar bhearta fadtéarmacha dar teideal 'Bosca Uirlisí don Iompar Uisce Inmharthana' chun cuidiú leis an tionscal an reachtaíocht a chomhlíonadh. Sa ghearrthéarma, neartaigh an Coimisiún an ghné comhshaoil i gclár an ghréasáin iompair thras-Eorpaigh agus i gclár Marco Polo, chun tacaíocht a thabhairt d'úsáid na dteicneolaíochtaí glana. Sa mheántéarma agus san fhadtéarma, tá sé i gceist bearta a dhéanamh chun úsáid na teicneolaíochta loinge glaise agus breoslaí malartacha a chur chun cinn agus chun bonneagar glas iompair a fhorbairt.

4. Níl moltaí déanta ag an gCoimisiún maidir le tuilleadh SECAnna a shainiú san Eoraip toisc gur faoin IMO atá sé cinntí den sórt sin a dhéanamh, agus toisc gurb iad na tíortha lena mbaineann nach mór moltaí a dhéanamh.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/ships_proposal.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/ships_review.htm
([2]) SEC(2011) 1052 final an 16 Meán Fómhair 2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000706/12**
**to the Commission**
**Liam Aylward (ALDE), Brian Crowley (ALDE) and Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* The directive on Marine Sulphur

The sulphur content of liquid fuels basically decides the level of $SO_2$ emission associated with the burning of fuel, as well as the creation of secondary particulate matter (PM). Directive 1999/32/EC, as amended, regulates the sulphur content of fuels used by the marine transport sector, and transposes certain rules into European law that were decided under the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Under the directive, there are stricter rules in relation to the sulphur content of marine fuels used in areas that are under environmental conservation, that is to say, Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECAs).

1. Does the Commission know that the sulphur content of 0.1 % in effect for marine fuels is even stricter than the 0.5 % recommendation of the IMO?

2. Does the Commission have any plan to review the 0.1 % requirement for sulphur in marine fuels under Directive 1999/32/EC?

3. What measures are in place to ensure that the directive's measures do not adversely affect the functioning of marine organisations and marine businesses of that kind?

4. Does the Commission intend to expand the Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECAs) in order for other marine areas to be covered by them?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(12 March 2012)*

1. The 2008 IMO decision requires ships sailing in SECAs to burn 0.1 % sulphur fuel from 1 January 2015, while the global standard has been established at 0.5 % in 2020 or 2025, depending on fuel availability on a global scale. The 2011 Commission proposal would implement the IMO agreement of 2008 (including the 0.1 % limit) into EC law. As in the past, the Commission also decided to maintain the link between passenger ships and SECA limits (i.e. 0.1 % sulphur content), albeit five years later than the SECA time frame (i.e. 2020).

2. The Commission has assessed the economic, social and environmental impacts of the IMO sulphur provisions including the 0.1 % standard when assessing the prospects for transposition of IMO's standards into EU legislation. In particular the costs and benefits for society as a whole and regional impact on the short sea shipping industry were assessed. The Impact Assessment and related studies are available at the Commissions website ([1]).

3. The Commission issued an outline ([2]) of short, medium, and long-term measures called the 'Sustainable Waterborne Transport Toolbox' to assist industry to comply with the legislation. At short term, the Commission had strengthened the environmental component of the Marco Polo and trans-European transport networks programmes, in order to support the use of clean technologies. At medium to long term, measures are contemplated to promote the use of green ship technology, alternative fuels, the development of adequate green transport infrastructure.

4. The Commission has not proposed the formal designation of additional SECAs in Europe as such decisions are for the IMO, and proposals must be made by the concerned countries.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/ships_proposal.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/transport/ships_review.htm
([2]) COM(2011) 1052 final of 16 September 2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000707/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Legal assistance

Could the Commission please outline if there is any funding available at EU level to provide legal assistance in a domestic parliamentary investigation?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

The Honourable Member should be aware that there is no funding available at EU level to provide legal assistance in a domestic parliamentary investigation.

The currently ongoing call for proposals for action grants under the Criminal Justice Programme (deadline: 20 March 2012) can provide funding for projects that cover access to legal advice and access to legal aid in the framework of criminal procedures.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000708/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Charles Tannock (ECR)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Attacking and kidnapping of EU nationals in the Afar region of Ethiopia

The Vice-President/High Representative will be aware of the reports from the remote Afar region of Northern Ethiopia, near the country's border with Eritrea, where EU tourists from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary and Italy were attacked by gunmen; according to Ethiopian officials, the perpetrators allegedly came from Eritrea. It is also understood that several individuals of undetermined nationality were kidnapped and in all probability taken to the Eritrean interior. This attack, purportedly by Eritrean rebels armed and trained by President Afwerki's regime, was carried out allegedly in retaliation for recent UN sanctions against Eritrea for its reported supply of arms to Al Shabab militants in Somalia. If these allegations are proved correct, it would confirm that Eritrea has a total disrespect for international law and human rights.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative outline what support and coordination between Member State representatives is being provided by the small EEAS delegation in Asmara to seek the freedom of the individuals kidnapped, and, if the allegations are proven, whether in the light of this hostile act by the Afwerki regime she will propose that increased international sanctions against the Eritrean Government, including those imposed by the EU, such as under Article 96 of the Cotonou agreement, be commenced?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(17 April 2012)*

Fortunately, the release of the two kidnapped German tourists has by now been confirmed and they are reportedly in good physical conditions. The EU Delegation in Ethiopia has been in close contact with the relevant EU Member States embassies in Addis Ababa. The High Representative/Vice-President remains concerned about the fate of the two kidnapped Ethiopians citizens that were kidnapped together with the two German citizens. Five European citizens are confirmed dead (two German, two Hungarians and one Austrian citizen), and three were injured, in the attack. Erta Ale is visited by many tourists often as part of an established tour circuit. Many embassies of EU Member States have been issuing travel warnings for this part of Ethiopia as this is not the first incident in the region. The EU appeals for calm on all sides, the investigation into the incident needs to continue to bring those responsible to justice.

*(Svensk version)*

**Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-000710/12**
**till kommissionen**
**Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(3 februari 2012)*

*Angående:* Martin Schibbye och Johan Persson, svenska journalister fängslade i Etiopien

Martin Karl Schibbye och Johan Persson är journalister och svenska medborgare.

De greps den 1 juli 2011 i Etiopien, misstänkta för terrorbrott efter att från Somalia ha tagit sig in i området Ogaden med gerillan Ogadens nationella befrielsefront (ONLF).

De vistades i området för att rapportera om oljeföretaget Lundin Petroleums verksamhet i regionen.

Den 21 december 2011 fann en etiopisk domstolen dem skyldiga till att olagligen ha tagit sig in i Etiopien samt till främjande av terrorism för sitt samröre med ONLF-gerillan.

Rättegången och domen har väckt reaktioner från Sverige, EU och USA och föranlett kritik från organisationer som Reportrar utan gränser och Human Rights Watch. Medier, inkluderande CNN, BBC, India Times och Al Jazeera, har fördömt rättsprocessen.

Den 27 december 2011 dömdes de båda till 11 års fängelse.

EU ger 674 miljoner euro i stöd till Etiopien under perioden 2008-2013. Stödet är kopplat till målsättningar om mänskliga rättigheter.

Överväger kommissionen att villkora hela eller delar av EU:s bistånd med att Etiopien respekterar principerna om mänskliga rättigheter, mediefrihet och rätten till en rättvis rättegång, och därmed släpper Schibbye och Persson fria?

**Svar från den höga representanten och vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar**
*(1 mars 2012)*

Europeiska unionen anser att dess stöd till Etiopien har gett mycket goda resultat. Tack vare EU-stödet är Etiopien, som är ett av världens fattigaste länder, åter i stånd att uppfylla millennieutvecklingsmålen senast 2015, särskilt rörande extrem fattigdom, hungersnöd och grundläggande skolutbildning för alla. Torkan på Afrikas horn under 2011 betonade behovet av ett fortsatt EU-stöd till Etiopien.

Demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter är väsentliga beståndsdelar i det partnerskap som ingåtts mellan EU och Etiopien. Även om EU har en stark önskan om att fortsätta partnerskapet i syfte att göra framsteg på områdena livsmedelstrygghet, fattigdomsbekämpning, ekonomisk utveckling och fred och säkerhet i regionen, är man oroad över respekten för de medborgerliga och politiska rättigheterna och de grundläggande mänskliga rättigheterna i Etiopien.

De positiva resultaten hittills bekräftar att partnerskapet är en effektiv lösning för är tillhandahålla stöd till Etiopien. Dessutom fungerar denna lösning som en plattform som gör det möjligt för EU att som partner diskutera mänskliga rättigheter, demokratiska principer, god förvaltning och rättssäkerhet. På så sätt kan EU till fullo utnyttja den pågående dialogen med Etiopiens regering för att ta upp problem rörande både medborgerliga, politiska och mänskliga rättigheter.

EU följer nära ärendet med de två svenska journalister som har dömts enligt Etiopiens terroristlagstiftning av en domstol i Addis Abeba. Den rättsliga processen är nu avslutad och Martin Schibbye och Johan Persson har accepterat domen. Frågan om Martin Schibbyes och Johan Perssons framtid bör därför avgöras inom ramen för etiopisk rätt. EU fortsätter att följa situationen och står i nära förbindelse med de svenska myndigheterna.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000710/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(3 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Martin Schibbye and Johan Persson, Swedish journalists imprisoned in Ethiopia

Martin Karl Schibbye and Johan Persson are journalists and Swedish nationals.

They were arrested in Ethiopia on 1 July on suspicion of terrorist offences after entering the Ogaden region from Somalia with guerrillas from the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).

They were present in the area to report on the activities in the region of the Lundin Petroleum oil company.

On 21 December 2011, an Ethiopian court found them guilty of entering Ethiopia illegally and promoting terrorism on account of their involvement with ONLF guerrillas.

The trial and judgment elicited reactions from Sweden, the EU and the USA and brought criticism from organisations such as Reporters Without Borders and Human Rights Watch. Media outlets, including CNN, the BBC, India Times and Al Jazeera have condemned the legal process.

On 27 December 2011 they were both sentenced to 11 years in prison.

Over the period from 2008-2013, the EU is providing EUR 674 million in aid to Ethiopia. The aid is linked to meeting targets on human rights.

Is the Commission considering making EU aid conditional, in whole or in part, on Ethiopia respecting the principles of human rights, media freedom and the right to a fair trial, thereby leading to the release of Mr Schibbye and Mr Persson?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(1 March 2012)*

The EU believes that EU aid to Ethiopia has yielded very good results. With EU aid, Ethiopia, one of the poorest countries in the world, is on track to meet most of the MDGs by 2015, particularly with regard to extreme poverty and hunger, and universal primary education. The 2011 drought in the Horn of Africa only underlined the need for the EU's continued assistance to Ethiopia.

Democracy and human rights are essential elements of a partnership that both Ethiopia and the EU have subscribed to. While the EU has a strong desire to remain partners to make progress in the areas of food security, poverty reduction, and economic development as well as to peace and security in the region, there are concerns regarding civil and political rights as well as the respect for fundamental human rights in Ethiopia.

The positive results achieved so far confirm the effectiveness of the partnership approach in delivering assistance to Ethiopia. This also provides the basis on which the EU can speak as a partner regarding human rights, democratic principles, good governance and the rule of law, allowing the EU to make full use of the ongoing dialogue with the government to address concerns regarding civil, political as well as human rights in Ethiopia.

The EU is following closely the case of two Swedish journalists convicted under the Ethiopian Anti-Terrorism Proclamation by a court in Addis Ababa. The legal process is now closed and Mr Schibbye and Mr Persson accepted the verdict. The future of Mr Schibbye and Mr Persson should therefore be settled within the framework of Ethiopian law. The EU continues to follow the situation and is in close contact with the Swedish authorities.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000711/12**
**do Komisji**
**Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)**
*(30 stycznia 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Odmowa rejestracji białoruskiej partii

20 stycznia Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości Republiki Białorusi odmówiło rejestracji partii „Białoruska Chrześcijańska Demokracja". Szef resortu oświadczył, że w dokumentach złożonych w celu rejestracji dopatrzono się szeregu nieprawidłowości.

Pragnę zaznaczyć, że ministerstwo konsekwentnie, już po raz czwarty, odmawia zarejestrowania partii, a odwołania do Sądu Najwyższego od decyzji resortu są oddalane.

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać, czy Komisja jest w posiadaniu dodatkowych informacji o prawdziwych powodach odmowy rejestracji partii „Białoruska Chrześcijańska Demokracja" i ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w tej sprawie?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton**
**w imieniu Komisji**
*(24 kwietnia 2012 r.)*

Komisja Europejska oraz Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wiedzą, że władze Białorusi wielokrotnie odmówiły zarejestrowania partii „Białoruska Chrześcijańska Demokracja". Według dostępnych informacji ostatni wniosek o rejestrację został odrzucony w dniu 19 stycznia 2012 r. z powodu rzekomych nieprawidłowości w złożonych przez partię dokumentach statutowych oraz wykazach założycieli.

UE wielokrotnie wzywała Białoruś do ułatwiania rejestracji organizacji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i partii politycznych oraz do zmiany kodeksu karnego w celu zniesienia lub złagodzenia przepisów dotyczących kar za niezarejestrowaną działalność.

Pragnę zapewnić Szanownego Pana Posła, że UE nie będzie szczędziła dalszych wysiłków na rzecz pluralistycznej i demokratycznej Białorusi.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000711/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Refusal to register a Belarusian party

On 20 January, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Belarus refused to register the 'Belarusian Christian Democracy' party. The head of the Ministry stated that there had been a series of irregularities in the documents submitted with the registration application.

I would like to point out that the Ministry has consistently refused to register the party — this is now the fourth time — but appeals to the Supreme Court have been dismissed.

Does the Commission have any additional information about the real reasons for the authorities' refusal to register the 'Belarusian Christian Democracy' party, and does it intend to intervene in this case?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton**
**on behalf of the Commission**
*(24 April 2012)*

The Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President are aware of the repeated refusal by the Belarusian authorities to register the Belarusian Christian Democracy party. According to the information available, the application was last rejected on 19 January 2012 because of alleged flaws in the founding documents and the lists of founders that the party had filed.

The EU has repeatedly called on Belarus to facilitate the registration of civil society organisations and political parties and amend the criminal code to abolish or alleviate the provisions relating to the penalisation of unregistered activities.

The Honourable Member may rest assured that the EU will spare no effort to continue working for a pluralist and democratic Belarus.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000712/12**
**do Komisji**
**Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)**
*(30 stycznia 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Konfiskata nakładu białoruskiej gazety

Jak potwierdzają ostanie wydarzenia, na Białorusi nadal ograniczana jest wolność prasy i środków masowego przekazu. 14 stycznia białoruska milicja skonfiskowała cały nakład niezależnej gazety „Kurier Witebski". Powodem tej interwencji funkcjonariuszy milicji było najprawdopodobniej opublikowanie przez gazetę artykułu o więźniu politycznym – Alesiu Bialackim.

Projekt Partnerstwa Wschodniego nakłada na Unię Europejską obowiązek monitorowania przestrzegania praw człowieka na Białorusi. W związku z tym pragnę zapytać Komisję, czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie skonfiskowania nakładu gazety „Kurier Witebski" i wyrazić zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec szykanowania prasy i niezależnych dziennikarzy na Białorusi?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Fülego w imieniu Komisji**
*(1 marca 2012 r.)*

UE wielokrotnie potępiała ciągłe prześladowanie społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, opozycji politycznej i niezależnych mediów na Białorusi, które ma miejsce od czasu wyborów prezydenckich w grudniu 2010 r. Szykanowanie niezależnych mediów, w tym gazety „Kurier Witebski", jest kluczowym elementem tych trwających represji.

Zgodnie z informacjami posiadanymi przez Komisję, wydanie „Kuriera Witebskiego", który jest zarejestrowany w Rosji i drukowany w Smoleńsku w nakładzie 10 000 egzemplarzy, zostało skonfiskowane w dniu 14 stycznia 2012 r. Przypuszcza się, iż podobna konfiskata nakładu tej gazety miała miejsce w kwietniu 2010 r.

UE będzie nadal zdecydowanie potępiać represyjną politykę władz białoruskich, w tym ich ingerencje w niezależne media. UE przyjęła szereg środków ograniczających wobec osób, które są odpowiedzialne za wspomniane ciągłe prześladowanie, a także będzie w dalszym ciągu zapewniać wsparcie zarówno dla organizacji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, jaki i niezależnych mediów w celu wspierania ich działalności.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000712/12**
**to the Commission**
**Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Confiscation of an edition of a Belarusian newspaper

As recent events confirm, press and media freedom in Belarus continues to be restricted. On 14 January Belarusian police confiscated an entire print-run of the *Kurier Vitebski* independent newspaper. The most likely reason for the police intervention was the newspaper's publication of an article about the political prisoner Ales Bialiatski.

The EU is obliged under the Eastern Partnership project to monitor respect for human rights in Belarus. Does the Commission therefore intend to intervene in the matter of the confiscation of an edition of the *Kurier Vitebski* newspaper and take a firm stand against persecution of the press and independent journalists in Belarus?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(1 March 2012)*

The EU has repeatedly condemned the continued crackdown on civil society, the political opposition and the independent media in Belarus which has taken place since the Presidential elections in December 2010. The treatment of the independent media, including the Kurier Vitebski, has been a key part of this ongoing repression.

According to the Commission's information, an issue of the Kurier Vitebski, which is registered in Russia and printed in Smolensk in batches of 10 000 copies, was confiscated on 14 January 2012. A similar confiscation of an issue of the newspaper reportedly happened in April 2010.

The EU will continue to strongly condemn the repressive policies of the Belarusian authorities, including their interference with the independent media. The EU has adopted a range of restrictive measures towards those responsible for this ongoing crackdown, and will also continue to provide assistance to both civil society organisations and the independent media to support their work.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000714/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Νομοσχέδιο για το περιβάλλον και αντιρρήσεις των περιβαλλοντικών οργανώσεων

Η Ελληνική Βουλή επεξεργάζεται νομοσχέδιο που ενσωματώνει, μεταξύ άλλων, τις οδηγίες 2008/99 και 2008/98. Σε σχετικό με το νομοσχέδιο δελτίο τύπου που εξέδωσαν στις 19/1/2012 οι οικολογικές οργανώσεις Οικολογική Εταιρεία Ανακύκλωσης, Greenpeace, Δίκτυο Μεσόγειος SOS και WWF Ελλάς, τονίζουν ότι το σχέδιο νόμου «αποτελεί κατάφωρη εκτροπή από τους στόχους της Οδηγίας 2008/98». Πιο συγκεκριμένα οι οργανώσεις αναφέρονται στο άρθρο 27, το οποίο ενσωματώνει το άρθρο 11 της οδηγίας, τονίζοντας ότι ενώ η οδηγία σαφώς αναφέρει «… έως το 2015 χωριστή συλλογή καθιερώνεται τουλάχιστον για τα ακόλουθα: χαρτί, μέταλλο, πλαστικό γυαλί.» και ότι «Έως το 2020 η προετοιμασία για την επαναχρησιμοποίηση και την ανακύκλωση των υλικών αποβλήτων, όπως τουλάχιστον το χαρτί, το μέταλλο, το πλαστικό και το γυαλί από τα νοικοκυριά … πρέπει να αυξηθεί κατ' τουλάχιστον στο 50 % ως προς το συνολικό βάρος», το νομοσχέδιο προβλέπει ότι «Έως το 2015, ενθαρρύνεται, η χωριστή συλλογή χαρτιού, μετάλλου, πλαστικού και γυαλιού». Οι οικολογικές οργανώσεις εύλογα θεωρούν ότι «δεν θα είναι υποχρεωτική η χωριστή συλλογή και θα μπορούν τότε οι στόχοι να επιτευχθούν σε μονάδες σύμμεικτης διαχείρισης».. «αυτή η "παράλειψη" αλλάζει τελείως το νόημα και το περιεχόμενο όλης της Οδηγίας και αντί να πάμε σαν χώρα υποχρεωτικά για χωριστή συλλογή στην πηγή, του χαρτιού, μετάλλου, πλαστικού και γυαλιού μέχρι το 2015, για άλλη μια φορά απλώς "ενθαρρύνουμε" (δηλαδή μπλοκάρουμε) τη χωριστή συλλογή. Έτσι ανοίγει ουσιαστικά ο δρόμος για σύμμεικτη διαχείριση αποβλήτων σε πολύ ακριβότερες μονάδες και εργοστάσια».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: πώς σχολιάζει τα παραπάνω; Τι άμεσα μέτρα θα λάβει έτσι ώστε να εφαρμοστεί επιτέλους η χωριστή συλλογή των ανακυκλώσιμων υλικών, που απαιτείται από την οδηγία;

**Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(14 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Στις 15 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, η Ελλάδα κοινοποίησε στην Επιτροπή τα εθνικά μέτρα μεταφοράς της οδηγίας 2008/98/ΕΚ για τα απόβλητα ([1]) (οδηγία πλαίσιο για τα απόβλητα) στην ελληνική νομοθεσία.

Η Επιτροπή θα ελέγξει πλέον τη συμμόρφωση των μέτρων με τις διατάξεις της οδηγίας. Σε περίπτωση που διαπιστωθεί τυχόν μη συμμόρφωση, η Επιτροπή θα προχωρήσει στις αναγκαίες ενέργειες (περιλαμβανομένων δικαστικών μέτρων κατά περίπτωση) ώστε να διασφαλίσει την ορθή μεταφορά των μέτρων).

([1]) ΕΕ L 312 της 22.11.2008.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000714/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Environment bill and objections by environmental organisations

The Greek Parliament is currently drafting a bill to transpose a number of instruments, including Directives 2008/99/EC and 2008/98/EC. In a press release issued in this connection on 19 January 2012, the ecological organisations, *Οικολογική Εταιρεία Ανακύκλωσης* (ecological recycling association), Greenpeace, Mediterranean SOS Network and WWF Greece are stressing that the bill 'flagrantly deviates from the aims of Directive 2008/98/EC'. Specifically, the organisations refer to Article 27, which transposes Article 11 of the directive, stressing that, although the directive clearly states '…by 2015 separate collection shall be set up for at least the following: paper, metal, plastic and glass', and that 'by 2020, the preparing for re-use and the recycling of waste materials such as at least paper, metal, plastic and glass from households…shall be increased to a minimum of overall 50 % by weight', the new bill states that 'by 2015, the separate collection of paper, metal, plastic and glass shall be promoted'. The ecological organisations justifiably consider that 'separate collections will not be mandatory and this means that the targets may be met in mixed management units' 'this "omission" changes the meaning and content of the entire Directive and, instead of making separate collection of paper, metal, plastic and glass mandatory at source by 2015, once again it will simply be "promoted" (i.e. blocked). Essentially, this opens the way for mixed management of waste in much more expensive units and installations.'

In view of this:

What view does the Commission take of the above? What immediate measures will it take to implement fully the separate collection of recyclable materials as required under the directive?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 March 2012)*

On 15 February 2012, Greece notified to the Commission its national measure transposing Directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([1]) (Waste Framework Directive) into Greek legislation.

The Commission will now check its compliance with the provisions of the directive. Should any non-compliance be identified, the Commission will take the necessary steps (including legal measures where appropriate) to ensure its correct transposition.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

*(Svensk version)*

**Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000715/12**
**till kommissionen**
**Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 januari 2012)*

*Angående:* Miljövänliga resor

Skilda administrativa regler och momsregler skapar idag hinder för företag som arrangerar resor med turistbuss. Turistbussar måste betala olika momssatser och avgifter för att passera gränser inom EU.

Organisationen Sveriges Bussresearrangörer ger exempel på krav:

Belgien: 6 % moms och en ”Carnet” över alla passagerare.

Bulgarien: 22 % moms.

Danmark: registrering hos skatteverket och en vägskatt per person och kilometer.

Tyskland: 19 % moms och särskilt tillstånd för varje enskild buss från ”Finanzamt”, som ska sökas flera månader i förväg.

Frankrike: 5,5 % moms och bussresearrangören skall registrera sig hos franska skatteverket i förväg.

Polen: 8 % moms med ett komplicerat förfarande som leder till stora svårigheter.

Österrike: moms och att bussföretagen registrerar sig för en box hos ett webbaserat företag. Via boxen tar man betalt för körda km i landet.

Bussresor är miljövänligare än bilresor och flygresor. Fler bussresor och färre flygresor skulle bidra till EU:s klimatmål.

Avser kommissionen vidta åtgärder för att bussresor mellan olika länder inte ska missgynnas jämfört med andra trafikslag som flyg och personbil?

**Svar från Algirdas Šemeta på kommissionens vägnar**
*(16 mars 2012)*

Kommissionen är medveten om de problem som påtalats av företag verksamma inom persontransporter. I meddelandet om mervärdesskattens framtid ([1]) noterar kommissionen att de nuvarande komplicerade reglerna för internationella persontransporter i EU ökar företagens kostnader för efterlevnad, ökar risken för skatteflykt och kan leda till snedvridning av konkurrensen. Detta beror på att många medlemsstater tillämpar olika typer av undantag för dessa transporttjänster i enlighet med tillfälligt beviljade avvikelser.

I syfte att uppnå en väl fungerande inre marknad i EU kommer kommissionen att noga granska inte bara det nuvarande systemet för mervärdesskatt, utan även åtaganden enligt internationella avtal som EU och medlemsstaterna gjort för att införa lämpliga mervärdesskatteregler som innebär icke-diskriminerande behandling av persontransporter, oberoende av transportsätt.

Kommissionen har också alltid varit positivt inställd till kollektiva persontransporter och erkänner busstransporternas viktiga roll i transportsektorn. Därför har kommissionen redan vidtagit åtgärder för att se till att internationella bussresor inte missgynnas jämfört med andra transportsätt. I detta syfte har Europeiska unionen satt i kraft en heltäckande uppsättning regler som på ett effektivt sätt hanterar de relevanta frågorna. Förordning (EG) nr 1073/2009 ([2]) trädde i kraft 2009. När det gäller passagerares rättigheter har EU antagit regler som ger busspassagerare samma villkor som personer som använder andra transportsätt (förordning (EU) nr 181/2011 ([3])). Regelverket fungerar väl och leder till att färre tvister rapporteras till kommissionen, och utan att underskatta frågans betydelse verkar sektorn således fungera utan större problem.

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([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/key_documents/communications/com_2011_851_en.pdf

([2]) Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EG) nr 1073/2009 av den 21 oktober 2009 om gemensamma regler för tillträde till den internationella marknaden för persontransporter med buss och om ändring av förordning (EG) nr 561/2006 (Text av betydelse för EES) (EUT L 300, 14.11.2009, s. 88).

([3]) Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EU) nr 181/2011 av den 16 februari 2011 om passagerares rättigheter vid busstransport och om ändring av förordning (EG) nr 2006/2004 Text av betydelse för EES (EUT L 55, 28.2.2011, s. 1).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000715/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Environmentally friendly travel

Differing administrative and VAT regulations are currently putting obstacles in the way of companies who organise coach travel. Coaches have to pay different VAT rates and fees to cross borders within the EU.

The Swedish National Coach Organisation provides examples of the requirements:

— Belgium: 6 % VAT and a 'carnet' covering all passengers;

— Bulgaria: 22 % VAT;

— Denmark: registration with the Danish tax authority and a road tax per person and kilometre;

— Germany: 19 % VAT and a specific permit which has to be obtained from the German tax office (Finanzamt) several months in advance for each individual coach;

— France: 5.5 % VAT and coach operators must register with the French tax authority in advance;

— Poland: 8 % VAT coupled with a complicated procedure which causes immense difficulties;

— Austria: VAT and the coach operator has to register with a web-based company to install a box which is then used to calculate payment for the distance travelled in kilometres.

Coach travel is more environmentally friendly than car or air travel. More coach travel and less air travel would help the EU meet its climate targets.

Does the Commission intend to take measures to ensure that international coach travel is not disadvantaged compared with other modes of transport such as aeroplanes and passenger cars?

**Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 March 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the concerns expressed by companies involved in passenger transport. In its communication on the future of VAT ([1]), the Commission notes that the complexity of the current rules applicable to international passenger transport in the EU increases the compliance costs of businesses, the risk of tax evasion and may result in distortion of competition. This is due to the application of different exemptions for those transport services in many Member States following their transitional derogations.

With a view to attaining the proper functioning of the EU internal market, the Commission will closely scrutinise not only the current VAT framework, but also the commitments contained in international agreements undertaken by the EU and Member States in order to establish appropriate VAT arrangements leading to the non-discriminatory treatment of passenger transport operators, independent of the mode of transport.

The Commission has also always been supportive of collective passenger transport, recognising the significant role of bus and coach transport in the transport sector and has already taken measures to ensure that international coach travel is not disadvantaged compared to other modes of transport. To this end, the European Union has put into force a comprehensive set of rules that effectively deal with the various issues involved. In 2009, Regulation 1073/2009 ([2]) entered into force. Moreover in the field of passenger rights the EU has adopted rules that bring the users of buses and coaches into equal footing with those using other transport modes (Regulation 181/2011 ([3])). The legal framework is performing well, resulting in fewer cases of disputes being reported to the Commission, and therefore without underestimating the importance of the issue mentioned, the sector seems to be functioning without significant problems.

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([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/vat/key_documents/communications/com_2011_851_en.pdf

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1073/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international market for coach and bus services, and amending Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, pp. 88-105.

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, pp. 1-12.

*(Svensk version)*

**Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-000716/12**
**till kommissionen**
**Anna Hedh (S&D)**
*(30 januari 2012)*

*Angående:* Tvångssterilisering av transsexuella i Sverige

Medlemmar i den svenska regeringen meddelade i förra veckan att regeringen inte kommer att försöka upphäva det befintliga kravet att transsexuella ska låta sig steriliseras innan staten erkänner deras kön.

EU:s kommissionär för mänskliga rättigheter har konstaterat att denna och andra påtvingade medicinska behandlingar är att betrakta som förnedrande behandling i strid mot rätten till värdighet och fysisk integritet, som finns inskriven i Europakonventionen och EU:s stadga om de grundläggande rättigheterna.

— Vilka åtgärder planerar kommissionen mot tvångssteriliseringen av transsexuella i EU?

— Har kommissionen redan genomfört eller avser den genomföra studier om medlemsstaternas praxis och lagstiftning om könsbyte och i synnerhet tvångssterilisering som ett rättsligt krav för att erkänna en människas könsidentitet?

— Känner kommissionen till i vilka medlemsstater som sterilisering är ett krav enligt lagen för att en människas nya kön ska erkännas?

**Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar**
*(29 februari 2012)*

Kommissionen håller med om att det är viktigt att stödja främjandet av jämställdhet och transpersoners rättigheter. Kommissionen är medveten om att det rättsliga erkännande och de rättigheter som transpersoner har ofta beror på specifika medicinska eller psykologiska krav.

I vår Strategi för jämställdhet 2010-2015 ([1]) ingår en undersökning av specifika könsdiskrimineringsfrågor som rör könsidentitet.

Kommissionen satte år 2011 igång studien *Discrimination against trans and intersex people on the grounds of sex, gender identity and gender expression*. I studien undersöks bland annat medikaliseringen och patologiseringen av transidentiteter och intersexuella kroppar och ger en översikt av dagens situation i medlemsstaterna. Resultaten av studien väntas föreligga första kvartalet 2012. När studien slutligen är färdig kommer kommissionen att undersöka lämpliga uppföljningsåtgärder.

([1]) KOM(2010) 491.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000716/12**
**to the Commission**
**Anna Hedh (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Forced sterilisations for transgender persons in Sweden

Members of the Swedish government announced last week that it would not seek to repeal current requirements for transgender people to be sterilised before the state recognises their gender.

The European Commissioner for Human Rights has concluded that this and other compulsory medical treatments amount to degrading treatment, in breach of the right to dignity and physical integrity, enshrined in both the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights.

— What is the Commission doing to address the forced sterilisation of transgender persons in the EU?

— Has the Commission conducted studies, or does it intend to do so, into the Member States' practices and legislation on gender reassignment and in particular into forced sterilisation as a legal requirement in order to recognise a person's gender identity?

— Is the Commission aware of which Member States legally require sterilisation in order to recognise a person's new gender?

**Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The Commission recognises the importance of supporting the promotion of equality and the rights of transgender people. It is aware that the legal recognition and the rights that are afforded to trans community are often depending on specific medical or psychological requirements.

The strategy on Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 ([1]) foresees to study the specific issues pertaining to sex discrimination in relation to gender identity.

The Commission launched in 2011 a study on 'Discrimination against trans and intersex people on the grounds of sex, gender identity and gender expression'. The research explores, among other things, the medicalisation and pathologisation of trans identities and intersex bodies, providing an overview of the current situation in the Member States. The results of the study are expected in the first quarter of 2012. Once the final outcome of the study is ready, the Commission will look at the appropriate follow-up.

([1]) COM(2010) 491.

*(Deutsche Fassung)*

**Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000717/12**
**an die Kommission**
**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**
*(30. Januar 2012)*

*Betrifft:* Menschenrechtsverletzungen in Pakistan und EU-Förderung

In Pakistan kommt es regelmäßig zu Menschenrechtsverletzungen und zur Verfolgung religiöser Minderheiten. Laut „Asian Human Rights Commission" wurden 161 Personen im Jahr 2011 auf der Grundlage der Blasphemiegesetze angeklagt und neun Personen auf deren Grundlage ermordet. Diese Gesetze sowie die gesamte pakistanische Verfassung stellen ein Regelwerk diskriminierender Bestimmungen dar: Beispielsweise haben religiöse und ethnische Minderheiten häufig keinen Zugang zu Bildung und Verwaltungsposten.

1. Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission ergriffen, um Menschenrechtsverletzungen und der Verfolgung religiös Andersdenkender in Pakistan entgegenzuwirken?

2. Ist die Vergabe der Fördergelder aus dem Finanzierungsinstrument für die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (DCI) und dem ECHO-Programm an konkrete Bedingungen für Pakistan bezüglich des Minderheitenschutzes gebunden?

3. Bei der Verteilung internationaler Hilfsgelder für die Opfer der Flutkatastrophen im Sommer 2010 sowie im Sommer 2011 sollen Angehörige religiöser Minderheiten von der Hilfe ausgeschlossen worden sein. Hat die Kommission die finanzielle Unterstützung der EU vor dem Hintergrund dieses Vorwurfes ex post überprüft?

**Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission**
*(7. Mai 2012)*

1. Die EU beobachtet die Situation der religiösen Minderheiten in Pakistan sehr aufmerksam und ist sich deren schwieriger Lage sehr wohl bewusst. Die Religionsfreiheit ist in der pakistanischen Verfassung verankert, nach der der Staat auch die Rechte der Minderheiten schützen muss. Was die Rechte religiöser Minderheiten betrifft, nützt die EU kontinuierlich ihren politischen Dialog mit Pakistan, um Menschenrechtsfragen zur Sprache zu bringen, und hat eine Reihe von diplomatischen Demarchen unternommen. Der Menschenrechtsdialog im Rahmen des Kooperationsabkommens mit Pakistan ermöglicht einen regelmäßigen politischen Dialog über Staatsführung und Menschenrechte. Mit dem Maßnahmenplan, der vor kurzem mit Pakistan vereinbart wurde, wird dieser Dialog noch vertieft. Die EU hat dabei auf der Achtung der individuellen Rechte und der Minderheitenrechte bestanden. Wir werden uns auch weiterhin auf die Notwendigkeit konzentrieren, das Recht auf Religionsfreiheit eines jeden Menschen in Pakistan oder andernorts zu schützen.

2. Die Förderung von Maßnahmen durch das Finanzierungsinstrument für die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (DCI) ist grundsätzlich nicht an den Minderheitenschutz gebunden, da die Menschenrechtsfrage bei allen Kooperationsmaßnahmen berücksichtigt wird. Das Budget der Europäischen Initiative für Demokratie und Menschenrechte beträgt für Pakistan jährlich 900 000 EUR.

Die humanitäre Hilfe der Kommission beruht auf der Wahrung der Grundsätze Menschlichkeit, Unparteilichkeit, Neutralität und Unabhängigkeit. In das Projektzyklusmanagement wurde eine Reihe von Kontrollverfahren integriert, um sicherzustellen, dass die Mittel nach diesen humanitären Grundsätzen sowie nach dem Grundsatz der Unparteilichkeit und ohne Diskriminierung eingesetzt werden.

3. Die EU hat dem Problem, dass Minderheiten möglicherweise von Hilfsmaßnahmen ausgeschlossen werden, bei der Unterstützung der Flutopfer von Anfang an Rechnung getragen. Nach den Überschwemmungen ersuchte die pakistanische Regierung die EU um einen Beitrag zum staatlichen Entschädigungsfond für Flutopfer. Einer der Gründe, warum die EU diesen nicht unterstützt hat, war, dass nicht klar genug hervorging, ob bei der Auswahl der Begünstigten auch niemand ausgeschlossen werde.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000717/12**
**to the Commission**
**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Human rights violations in Pakistan and EU funding

Human rights violations and the persecution of religious minorities are frequent occurrences in Pakistan. In 2011, according to the Asian Human Rights Commission, 161 people were charged and nine people murdered under the blasphemy laws. These laws as well as the entire Pakistani constitution represent a set of discriminatory regulations. For example, religious and ethnic minorities often have no access to education and administrative posts.

1. What action has the Commission taken to combat human rights violations and the persecution of religious dissidents in Pakistan?

2. Is the awarding of funding from the Financial Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI) and the ECHO program bound to specific conditions for Pakistan with regard to the protection of minorities?

3. During the distribution of international aid money for the victims of the flood disasters in the summer of 2010 and the summer of 2011, members of religious minorities are said to have been excluded from the aid. Did the Commission subsequently review the financial support of the EU against the backdrop of this accusation?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 May 2012)*

1. The EU follows closely the situation of religious minorities in Pakistan and is well aware of their vulnerable situation. It should be noted that Pakistan's constitution provides for freedom of religion and requires the state to safeguard the rights of minorities. Regarding the rights of religious minorities, the EU consistently uses its political dialogue with Pakistan to raise human rights issues, and has undertaken a number of diplomatic démarches. The human rights dialogue under the cooperation agreement with Pakistan allows for regular political dialogue on governance and human rights. This dialogue will be intensified following a recently agreed Engagement Plan with Pakistan. The EU has insisted that individual and minority rights be respected. We will continue to focus on the need to fully protect every individual's right to religious freedom in Pakistan or elsewhere.

2. There is no general conditioning of DCI activities to protection of minorities as human rights are mainstreamed across all cooperation activities. The budget from the European initiative for democracy and human rights for Pakistan is EUR 900 000 annually.

As for the provision of humanitarian aid by the Commission, it is based on compliance with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. A number of control mechanisms have been integrated throughout the project cycle management to ensure that the implementation of the funds is carried out in respect of these humanitarian principles and on an impartial and non-discriminatory basis.

3. The EU did take the problem of potential exclusion of minorities from aid delivery into account from the beginning of the flood response. After the floods, the EU was approached by the Government of Pakistan to contribute to the Government's Citizen Damage Compensation Fund. One of the reasons for the EU not to contribute was that it was not sufficiently clear that the mechanisms for choosing the beneficiaries were non-exclusive.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000718/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)**
*(30 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Urgente richiesta di divieto di caccia degli uccelli migratori tortora selvatica (Streptopelia turtur) e marzaiola (Anas querquedula)

La Convenzione internazionale di Washington ha come obiettivo quello di proteggere le specie minacciate di flora e di fauna mediante il controllo del commercio internazionale degli esemplari di tali specie.

Il regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 relativo alla protezione di specie della flora e della fauna selvatiche mediante il controllo del loro commercio, prevede (articolo 3) che nell'allegato A vi siano comprese le specie che figurano nell'appendice I della Convenzione di Washington e qualsiasi specie in via di estinzione ovvero talmente rara che qualsiasi volume di scambi potrebbe metterne in pericolo la sopravvivenza.

Il regolamento (CE) n. 407/2009 che modifica il succitato regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 inserisce nell'allegato A le specie di uccelli migratori tortora selvatica (Streptopelia turtur) e marzaiola (Anas querquedula) dandone perciò massima tutela.

La direttiva 2009/147/CE, prevede (articolo 7, comma 4), che l'attività venatoria rispetti i principi di una saggia utilizzazione e di una regolazione ecologicamente equilibrata e sia compatibile con la stessa direttiva. Pur vietando la commercializzazione di queste specie (Allegato III, articolo 6), essa annovera nell'allegato II/A (specie cacciabili in tutta l'Unione europea) la marzaiola (Anas querquedula), mentre nell'allegato II/B (specie cacciabili in alcuni stati dell'Unione europea) la tortora selvatica (Streptopelia turtur).

È evidente che se dette specie risentono negativamente del commercio internazionale con ogni probabilità risentono negativamente anche della caccia esercitata nei loro confronti in tutta Europa.

Alla luce dell'elevatissimo grado di tutela assicurato dalla Convenzione di Washington, ovvero dal regolamento (CE) n. 338/97, alle specie tortora selvatica (Streptopelia turtur) e marzaiola (Anas querquedula), ritiene la Commissione che sia assolutamente necessario, coerente ed urgente togliere queste specie dall'allegato II della direttiva 2009/147/CE, per renderle non cacciabili al fine di assicurarne un elevato grado di tutela come previsto dal regolamento (CEE) n. 338/87?

**Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione**
*(7 marzo 2012)*

L'onorevole parlamentare ha ragione di affermare che nell'UE si possono cacciare la marzaiola (Anas querquedula) e la tortora selvatica (Streptopelia turtur), la prima in tutti gli Stati membri e la seconda soltanto in alcuni Stati membri, poiché tali specie sono contenute, rispettivamente, nell'elenco di cui all'allegato II/A e in quello di cui all'allegato II/B della direttiva 2009/147/CE del Consiglio ([1]) (direttiva «Uccelli»).

Le specie in questione non figurano nelle appendici alla convenzione sul commercio internazionale delle specie di flora e di fauna selvatiche minacciate di estinzione (CITES). Sono tuttavia contenute nell'allegato A del regolamento n. 338/97del Consiglio ([2]). L'inclusione è volta a rafforzare la tutela concessa a tali specie, in quanto garantisce che non possano essere oggetto di scambi a fini commerciali né all'interno, né al di fuori dell'UE.

La Commissione attualmente non prevede una revisione degli allegati della direttiva «Uccelli». Tuttavia, in cooperazione con gli Stati membri, ha avviato un esercizio di monitoraggio più rigoroso della situazione e delle tendenze degli uccelli selvatici europei utilizzando le relazioni di cui all'articolo 12 della direttiva «Uccelli» ed elaborando una «lista rossa» europea per gli uccelli. I risultati sono attesi per l'inizio del 2015.

([1]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.
([2]) GU L 61 del 3.3.1997.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000718/12**
**to the Commission**
**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Urgent call for a ban on the hunting of the migratory birds the European turtle dove (Streptopelia turtur) and the garganey (Anas querquedula)

The international Washington Convention aims to protect endangered species of flora and fauna by regulating international trade in specimens of these species.

Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein provides (Article 3) that the species listed in Appendix I of the Washington Convention shall be included in Annex A of the regulation, as shall any species threatened with extinction or so rare that any level of trade would imperil its survival.

Regulation (EC) No 407/2009 amending the aforementioned Regulation (EC) No 338/97 adds the following species of wild migratory birds, the European turtle dove (Streptopelia turtur) and the garganey (Anas querquedula), to Annex A, thereby affording them maximum protection.

Directive 2009/147/EC provides (Article 7(4)) that the practice of hunting shall comply with the principles of wise use and of ecologically balanced control of the species, and be compatible with the directive. Although marketing of these species is prohibited (Annex III, Article 6), the garganey (Anas querquedula) is listed under Part A of Annex II (species that may be hunted throughout the European Union), while the European turtle dove (Streptopelia turtur) appears under Part B of Annex II (species that may be hunted in some States of the European Union).

Clearly, if these species are adversely affected by international trade, it is more than likely that they will also be negatively affected by being hunted throughout Europe.

The European turtle dove (Streptopelia turtur) and the garganey (Anas querquedula) receive a very high level of protection under the Washington Convention and under Regulation (EC) No 338/97. In light of this, does the Commission believe that it is absolutely necessary, a matter of urgency and entirely coherent for these species to be removed from Annex II of Directive 2009/147/EC, making them species that may not be hunted, to ensure they enjoy a high level of protection as provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 338/87?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

The Honourable Member of Parliament is correct when saying that the Garganey (*Anas querquedula*) and the Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*) may be hunted in the EU, the first one in all Member States and the second one in some Member States only, as they are respectively listed in Annex II.A and II.B of the directive 2009/147/EC ([1]) ('Birds Directive').

Those species are not included in the Appendices to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). They are however included in Annex A to Council Regulation 338/97 ([2]). This inclusion aims at reinforcing the EU protection afforded to those species, as it ensures that they can not be traded for commercial purposes within as well as outside the EU.

The Commission does not at present envisage a revision of the annexes of the Birds Directive. The Commission together with Member States has nevertheless embarked on an exercise of monitoring more closely the status and trends of European wild birds through the reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and the establishment of a European red list for birds. The results are expected in early 2015.

([1]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([2]) OJ L 61, 3.3.1997.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000719/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nigel Farage (EFD)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Ante Gotovina

Prior to 20 January 2012, did any person acting on behalf of the European Union or any of its institutions, whether as servant or agent, speak to, write to or otherwise communicate in any manner whatsoever with Ante Gotovina, a person convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and sentenced to 24 years' imprisonment?

If they answer is yes, what was the purpose of such contact or communication and what was the subject and substance of it?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 March 2012)*

The Commission is not aware of any contacts by any person, acting on behalf of the EU or any of its institutions, with Ante Gotovina.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000720/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)**
*(31 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Cooperare protecție rețele informatice

În plină expansiune a spațiului cibernetic, există riscul unor atacuri împotriva sistemelor informatice, cu precădere cele aparținând administrațiilor locale și regionale și structurilor responsabile cu diferite servicii publice (apă, energie electrică și termică, transport în comun etc.). Ca atare, este importantă cooperarea între rețelele urbane din aceleași zone sau din regiuni diferite, precum și cea dintre aceste rețele publice și societățile comerciale ce activează la nivel local, regional, național sau transfrontalier, pentru prevenirea și combaterea unor infracțiuni de acest gen.

1. Cum intenționează Comisia să sprijine eforturile autorităților locale, regionale și naționale, dar și proiectele de cooperare transfrontalieră pentru combaterea criminalității informatice și o protecție adecvată a nodurilor rețelelor informatice?

2. Intenționează Comisia să elaboreze un plan de acțiune pentru combaterea criminalității informatice, care să vizeze aceste rețele, dar și protecția rețelelor de transport feroviar și regional și transportul feroviar de mare viteză, aflat în plin proces de extindere?

**Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei**
*(13 martie 2012)*

Pentru combaterea criminalității informatice, în special a atacurilor împotriva sistemelor informatice de importanță majoră, sunt necesare eforturi comune ale tuturor părților interesate (publice și private). În septembrie 2010, Comisia a înaintat o propunere de directivă ([1]) privind atacurile împotriva sistemelor informatice, care în prezent face obiectul dezbaterilor în cadrul Parlamentului European și al Consiliului.

Comisia a analizat fezabilitatea instituirii unui centru european de combatere a criminalității informatice. Centrul ar reuni informațiile cu privire la criminalitatea informatică, asigurând un răspuns coordonat și furnizând statelor membre o expertiză europeană comună în materie de combatere a acestui fenomen.

În al treilea trimestru al anului 2012, Comisia intenționează să propună o strategie europeană cuprinzătoare pentru securitatea internetului, în scopul asigurării unei protecții sporite a rețelelor și a sistemelor informatice împotriva atacurilor și a perturbărilor. De asemenea, strategia ar aborda, *inter alia*, securitatea sistemelor de control industrial și a rețelelor inteligente.

Posibilitățile de a include aspectele informatice în domeniul de aplicare a legislației europene privind identificarea și desemnarea infrastructurilor critice europene vor fi analizate ulterior, în cursul acestui an ([2]).

([1]) COM (2010) 517 final.
([2]) Revizuirea Directivei 2008/114/CE a Consiliului din 8 decembrie 2008.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000720/12**
**to the Commission**
**Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Cooperation for protecting IT networks

In view of the continuous growth of cyberspace, there is a risk of attack against IT systems, particularly those of local and regional authorities and of suppliers providing various public services (water, electricity, gas, public transport, etc.). Thus, cooperation among urban networks within the same area or different areas is of great importance, as well as cooperation between those public networks and those of companies which function on different levels (locally, regionally, nationally or across borders), in order to prevent and tackle this type of crime.

1. How does the Commission intend to support the efforts of local, regional and national authorities, as well as cross-border cooperation projects for tackling IT crime and ensuring an appropriate protection of IT networks?

2. Does the Commission intend to draw up an action plan in order to tackle IT crime against these networks and to protect rail and regional transport systems, including the high-speed rail network which is now in process of expansion?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

In order to tackle cybercrime, especially attacks against critical IT systems, effectively, joint efforts of all stakeholders — public and private — are necessary. The Commission has tabled a proposal for a directive ([1]) on attacks against information systems in September 2010, which is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and the Council.

The Commission has looked into the feasibility of establishing a European Cybercrime Centre. The Centre would broaden the information picture on cybercrime, ensuring a coordinated response and providing Member States with pooled European cybercrime expertise.

The Commission intends to propose, in the third quarter of 2012 a comprehensive European Strategy for Internet Security to ensure a stronger protection of IT networks and systems against attacks and disruptions. The strategy would also address, *inter alia*, the security of Industrial Control Systems and Smart grids.

Possibilities to include IT under the scope of European legislation on the identification and designation of European Critical Infrastructure will be analysed later this year ([2]).

([1]) COM(2010) 517 final.
([2]) Review of Council Directive 2008/114/EC of 8 December 2008.

*(Dansk udgave)*

**Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000721/12**
**til Kommissionen**
**Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)**
*(31. januar 2012)*

*Om:* Afstandskrav ved salg af animalske produkter fra detailhandelsvirksomheder

Forordning (EF) Nr. 853/2004 beskæftiger sig bl.a. med salg af visse animalske produkter fra visse detailandelsvirksomheders til andre detailvirksomheder.

Danmark har hidtil haft én region, således at enhver detailhandelsvirksomhed kan sælge animalske produkter i hele landet. Regeringen har nu valgt en mere stringent tolkning af ovennævnte forordning, idet man har indført et krav om, at animalske produkter ikke sælges udenfor en radius af 50 km.

Det oplyses desuden, at Tyskland og Frankrig har implementeret en mere lempelig grænse.

— Kan Kommissionen oplyse, om Danmark er forpligtet til at indføre en så stringent grænse, eller om det står landet frit at indføre mere lempelige grænser?

— Kan Kommissionen levere en samlet oversigt over samtlige EU- og EØS-landes gennemførelse af ovennævnte afstandskrav?

**Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli**
*(6. marts 2012)*

Kommissionen henviser det ærede medlem til sit svar på skriftlig forespørgsel E-000656/2012 ([1]).

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000721/12**
**to the Commission**
**Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Distance requirement applying to the sale of animal products between retail establishments

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 is concerned among other things with the sale of certain animal products by certain retail establishments to other retail establishments.

Until now, Denmark has been regarded a single region, so that each retail establishment can sell animal products throughout the country. The Danish government has now opted to apply a stricter interpretation of the abovementioned regulation and has introduced a requirement stating that animal products may not be sold beyond a radius of 50 km.

We have been informed that Germany and France have implemented more relaxed limits.

— Can the Commission state whether Denmark is obliged to introduce such a strict limit or whether a Member State is free to impose more relaxed limits?

— Can the Commission provide an overview of the implementation by all EU and EEA Member States of the abovementioned distance requirement?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 March 2012)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000656/2012 ([1]).

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000722/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Grants for emerging artists

Can the Commission indicate if there is funding available for artists newly establishing themselves or for the collaboration of artists with a view to creating artistic projects linking different European countries?

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

The EU Culture Programme provides co-funding opportunities for eligible transnational artistic and cultural projects. Grants are awarded further to calls for proposals and a competitive selection process. However, there is no specific support instrument targeting emerging artists. Further information about the Culture Programme is available on its website (http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/culture-programme-(2007-2013)_en.htm) as well as from the Cultural Contact Points established by the Programme in all participating countries. The Cultural Contact Point for Ireland can be contacted at http://www.ccp.ie/

Within the framework of this programme, EU Prizes for culture in the fields of literature, popular music, architecture and cultural heritage are awarded, including for emerging artists.

More information about the EU Prizes for culture is available at http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/prizes/prizes_en.htm

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000723/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* Richtsnoeren inzake mensenrechten voor industriesectoren

In 2012 zal de Europese Commissie met bedrijven en andere belanghebbenden samenwerken om richtsnoeren inzake mensenrechten te ontwikkelen voor drie industriesectoren, op basis van de VN-richtsnoeren voor het bedrijfsleven en de mensenrechten. Begin dit jaar zal worden beslist op welke sectoren de focus zal liggen, zoals vermeld op de website van DG Ondernemingen ([1]).

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat er goede redenen zijn om te focussen op de olie-industrie en andere winningsindustrieën, gezien het effect dat de activiteiten van deze industrieën hebben op de mensenrechten van de omwonenden en op het milieu?

2. Zal de Commissie de olie-industrie en andere winningsindustrieën opnemen in de sectoren waarop de focus zal liggen?

3. Indien nee, waarom niet?

**Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie**
*(22 februari 2012)*

Het directoraat-generaal Ondernemingen en Industrie van de Commissie zal waarschijnlijk in februari 2012 kunnen bekendmaken welke sectoren zijn geselecteerd om op basis van de VN-richtsnoeren voor het bedrijfsleven en de mensenrechten richtsnoeren inzake mensenrechten te ontwikkelen.

Het besluit zal worden gebaseerd op een grondige analyse aan de hand van objectieve criteria, die namens de Commissie wordt verricht door twee gespecialiseerde organisaties (SHIFT en het Institute for Human Rights and Business). De bij die analyse gehanteerde criteria zijn publiek gemaakt ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/human-rights/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.ihrb.org/news/2012/new_project_to_develop_business_and_human_rights_guides_for_three_european_business_sectors.html

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000723/12**
**to the Commission**
**Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Human rights guidance for industrial sectors

In 2012 the European Commission will work with businesses and other stakeholders to develop human rights guidance for three industrial sectors, based on the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights. A decision regarding which sectors to focus on will be taken early this year, as is stated on the DG Enterprise website ([1]).

1. Does the Commission agree that there are good reasons to focus on the oil industry and other extractive industries, given the impact these industries' operations have on the human rights of those living nearby and on the environment?

2. Can the Commission state whether the oil industry and other extractive industries will be included in the sectors it intends to focus on?

3. If not, why not?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

The Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry expects to make an announcement in February 2012 regarding the sectors selected for the development of human rights guidance based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

The decision will be based on a rigorous analysis using objective criteria, carried out for the Commission by two specialist organisations (SHIFT, and the Institute for Human Rights and Business). The criteria used in this analysis have been made publicly available ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/human-rights/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.ihrb.org/news/2012/new_project_to_develop_business_and_human_rights_guides_for_three_european_business_sectors.html

*(Verżjoni Maltija)*

**Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000724/12**
**lill-Kummissjoni**
**Simon Busuttil (PPE)**
*(31 ta' Jannar 2012)*

*Suġġett:* Logħob tal-Azzard Onlajn

Il-Belġju implementa liġi ġdida dwar il-logħob tal-azzard onlajn li timponi ċerti restrizzjonijiet li jipprojbixxu l-biċċa l-kbira tal-kumpanniji tal-logħob tal-azzard onlajn li joperaw minn Stat Membru ieħor tal-UE milli jiksbu liċenzja sabiex legalment ikunu jistgħu jipprovdu servizzi ta' logħob tal-azzard fil-Belġju.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkonferma jekk il-liġi l-ġdida Belġjana dwar il-logħob tal-azzard onlajn tinsabx konformi mal-liġi tal-UE, b'mod partikolari mad-dispożizzjonijiet tat-Trattat li jiggarantixxu d-dritt ta' stabbiliment u jipprojbixxu restrizzjonijiet fuq il-libertà ta' provvista ta' servizzi fi ħdan l-Unjoni?

2. Il-Kummissjoni diġà għarrfet lill-Gvern Belġjan b'xi oġġezzjonijiet li jista' jkollha fir-rigward tal-liġi Belġjana l-ġdida dwar il-logħob tal-azzard onlajn?

3. Fir-Riżoluzzjoni tiegħu tal-15 ta' Novembru 2011 il-Parlament talab lill-Kummissjoni sabiex "tkompli bl-investigazzjoni tagħha dwar inkonsistenzi possibbli fil-leġiżlazzjoni dwar il-logħob tal-azzard tal-Istati Membri (offlajn u onlajn) mat-TFUE u — fejn meħtieġ — issegwi dawk il-proċeduri ta' ksur li huma pendenti mill-2008". Il-Kummissjoni se tieħu passi legali jekk jinstab li l-liġi Belġjana dwar il-logħob tal-azzard onlajn ma tkunx konsistenti mal-liġi tal-UE?

**Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni**
*(2 ta' Marzu 2012)*

1-2. Fi ħdan il-proċedura ta' notifika skont id-Direttiva 98/34/KE, il-Kummissjoni qajmet tħassib dwar il-konsistenza ta' ċerti dispożizzjonijiet tal-abbozz tal-liġi li jemenda l-Att tas-7 ta' Mejju 1999 dwar il-Logħob tal-Azzard mal-liġi tal-UE. L-osservazzjonijiet tal-Kummissjoni ta' Ġunju 2009 kienu f'forma ta' opinjoni dettaljata u kummenti skont l-Artikoli 9.2 u 8.2, rispettivament, tad-Direttiva. Il-Belġju wieġeb għall-opinjoni dettaljata u l-kummenti f'Lulju 2009. Il-Kummissjoni nnotat b'attenzjoni t-tweġiba tal-awtoritajiet Belġjani u sussegwentement sostniet il-pożizzjoni tagħha hekk kif spjegata fl-osservazzjonijiet tagħha ta' Ġunju 2009. Il-Kummissjoni fakkret ukoll lill-awtoritajiet Belġjani li kellhom jinnotifikaw it-test kmieni kemm jista' jkun hekk kif jiġi adottat, kif ukoll kwalunkwe miżura ta' implimentazzjoni fil-futur, skont l-Artikolu 8(3) tad-Direttiva 98/34/KE. Il-Kummissjoni sussegwentement irċeviet it-test finali tal-liġi adottata.

3. Fil-qafas tal-proċedura ta' notifika msemmija hawn fuq, il-Kummissjoni żammet id-dritt li tibda proċedimenti ta' ksur, jekk il-miżuri adottati finalment jiġu kkunsidrati li huma kontra l-liġi tal-UE. Minn meta ġiet adottata l-liġi konċernata, il-Kummissjoni żammet kuntatt regolari mal-awtoritajiet Belġjani. Jidher li għadd ta' digrieti ta' implimentazzjoni għad iridu jiġu adottati sabiex is-sistema l-ġdida topera bis-sħiħ. Il-Kummissjoni, filwaqt li tqis it-talba tal-Parlament Ewropew li għaliha rrefera l-Onorevoli Membru b'mod serju ħafna, ser tkompli d-djalogu mal-awtoritajiet Belġjani sabiex tikkonkludi jekk, b'mod partikolari abbażi tad-digrieti ta' implimentazzjoni, jidhirx meħtieġ jew le, li jinfetħu proċedimenti formali ta' ksur fir-rigward tal-qafas legali Belġjan għal-logħob tal-azzard onlajn.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000724/12**
**to the Commission**
**Simon Busuttil (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Online gambling

Belgium has implemented a new online gambling law that imposes certain restrictions prohibiting most online gambling companies operating from other EU Member States from obtaining a licence to legally provide gambling services in Belgium.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether the new Belgian online gambling law is in conformity with EC law, in particular with the Treaty provisions guaranteeing the right of establishment and prohibiting restrictions on the freedom to provide services within the Union?

2. Has the Commission already notified the Belgian Government of any objections it may have to the new Belgian online gambling law?

3. In its resolution of 15 November 2011 Parliament called on the Commission 'to continue its investigation of the possible inconsistencies of Member States gambling legislation (offline and online) with the TFEU and — if necessary — to pursue those infringement proceedings that have been pending since 2008'. Will the Commission be instituting infringement proceedings if it is found that the Belgian online gambling law is not consistent with EC law?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

1-2. Within the notification procedure under Directive 98/34/EC, the Commission raised concerns about compliance with EC law of certain provisions of the draft law amending the Act of 7 May 1999 on Games of Chance. The Commission's observations, dated June 2009, took the form of a detailed opinion and comments pursuant to Articles 9.2 and 8.2, respectively, of the directive. Belgium responded to the detailed opinion and comments in July 2009. The Commission took careful note of the response of the Belgian authorities and subsequently reiterated its position as outlined in its observations of June 2009. The Commission also reminded the Belgian authorities that they had to notify the text as soon as it was adopted as well as any future implementing measures, in accordance with Article 8 paragraph 3 of Directive 98/34/EC. The Commission subsequently received the final text of the adopted law.

3. In the framework of the aforementioned notification procedure the Commission reserved the right to initiate infringement proceedings, should the measures finally adopted be considered to be in breach of EC law. Since the adoption of the law at issue, the Commission has been in regular contact with the Belgian authorities. It appeared that a number of implementing decrees still need to be adopted in order to make the new system fully operational. The Commission, taking the call of the European Parliament to which the Honourable Member refers very seriously, will continue the dialogue with the Belgian authorities in order to conclude on whether or not, in particular on the basis of the implementing decrees, it appears necessary to open formal infringement proceedings in relation to the Belgian legal framework for online gambling.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000725/12**
**à Comissão**
**Carlos Coelho (PPE)**
*(31 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* SIS II — Direito de acesso, retificação e eliminação dos dados

Qualquer pessoa tem o direito de aceder aos dados que lhe digam respeito, inseridos no SIS, podendo exigir a sua retificação e eliminação, em caso de erro. Esse direito pode ser invocado em qualquer Estado-Membro de Schengen e é exercido em conformidade com o direito nacional do Estado-Membro em que esse direito é invocado, independentemente de qual tenha sido o Estado que inseriu a indicação.

Este deveria ter sido o direito exercido por uma albanesa que, devido à existência de uma indicação no SIS, no âmbito do art.° 96.°, inserida indevidamente com base num erro de identidade, se viu retida no aeroporto de Bruxelas durante uma semana, acabando por ser reembarcada de volta para a Albânia com a indicação de que deveria entrar em contacto com a Embaixada Grega (país que inseriu a indicação) de forma a poder retificar a situação.

Quando uma situação deste tipo acontece em Portugal, a Comissão Nacional para a Proteção de Dados acompanha o pedido desde o início, faz as diligências necessárias junto do Gabinete Sirene e dá resposta diretamente aos titulares. Sendo que mais de 50 % dos pedidos de eliminação de dados recebidos resultaram em efetivas eliminações do SIS, pois ficou demonstrado que os dados tinham sido inseridos ilicitamente.

Gostaria que a Comissão me informasse sobre:

1. Como é que podem existir diferenças tão grandes entre Estados-Membros em relação ao exercício do direito de acesso, retificação e eliminação de dados, pondo em causa a possibilidade de intervenção imediata para sanar quaisquer ilegalidades e acabando por minar a eficácia da defesa dos direitos das pessoas?

2. Se tem acesso a dados estatísticos relativos ao número de pedidos, resultados dos pedidos, tipo de indicação, tipo de respostas, de forma a poder ter uma visão global do que se passa e detetar eventuais fragilidades que possam pôr em causa o exercício deste direito por parte das pessoas?

3. Espera que a entrada em funcionamento do SIS II possa de alguma forma contribuir para melhorar a situação e ajudar a sanar as fragilidades atualmente existentes?

**Resposta dada por Cecilia Malmström em nome da Comissão**
*(20 de março de 2012)*

A Convenção de Schengen inclui um regime completo de proteção de dados relativos a indicações inseridas no Sistema de Informação de Schengen (SIS). O princípio subjacente é o de que cabe ao direito do Estado-Membro autor da indicação regular questões de proteção de dados, a menos que a Convenção preveja regras mais estritas. A autoridade de controlo comum é responsável pela supervisão da função de apoio técnico do SIS, análise de quaisquer dificuldades de aplicação ou interpretação que possam surgir durante o funcionamento do SIS e elaboração de propostas harmonizadas, de forma a criar uma abordagem comum para os problemas.

O Secretariado-Geral do Conselho da União Europeia é instância apropriada para resolver as práticas divergentes nos Estados-Membros e deve estar em posição de fornecer as estatísticas solicitadas.

O Regulamento SIS II ([1]) e a Decisão ([2]) incluem disposições sobre vias de recurso, a responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros e as sanções que devem estar previstas no direito nacional. Estas disposições serão aplicáveis a partir da data de entrada em funcionamento do SIS II. A Comissão assegurará a sua correta aplicação, nos termos do artigo 258.° do TFUE. Tal como para a Decisão SIS II, a Comissão pode exercer este poder a partir de 1 de dezembro de 2014, tendo em conta o artigo 10.° do Protocolo (n.° 36) relativo às disposições transitórias.

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([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1987/2006 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 20 de dezembro de 2006, relativo ao estabelecimento, ao funcionamento e à utilização do Sistema de Informação de Schengen de segunda geração (SIS II), JO L 381 de 28.12.2006, p. 4.

([2]) Decisão 2007/533/JAI do Conselho, de 12 de junho de 2007, relativa ao estabelecimento, ao funcionamento e à utilização do Sistema de Informação Schengen de segunda geração (SIS II), JO L 205 de 7.8.2007, p. 63;.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000725/12**
**to the Commission**
**Carlos Coelho (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* SIS II — Right of access, correction and deletion of data

Any person has the right to access SIS data relating to him or her and may have them corrected or deleted should they be incorrect. This right can be invoked in any Schengen Member State and is exercised in accordance with the law of the Member State in which it is invoked, no matter what country issued the original alert.

This was the right that should have been exercised by an Albanian woman who, because of a false Article 96 SIS alert — resulting from mistaken identity — was detained at Brussels airport for a week and then put on a flight back to Albania with a recommendation to contact the Greek Embassy (Greece being the country that issued the alert) in order to rectify the situation.

When a case of this kind occurs in Portugal, the National Commission for Data Protection keeps track of the request from the outset, makes the necessary representations to the SIRENE Bureau and replies directly to right holders. More than 50 % of the data deletion requests received have resulted in deletions from the SIS, since the data were found to have been entered unlawfully.

1. How can there be such considerable differences between Member States as regards the exercise of the right of access, correction and deletion of data, bearing in mind that this situation jeopardises the possibility of immediate action to remedy any illegalities and may ultimately undermine effective protection of human rights?

2. Does the Commission have access to statistical data on the number of requests and their outcome and the types of alerts and responses, serving to provide a complete overview of what is happening and to identify any shortcomings that might impede the exercise of this right?

3. Does it expect that the entry into operation of SIS II will in any way help to improve the situation and eliminate existing shortcomings?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(20 March 2012)*

The Schengen Convention contains comprehensive data protection provisions on alerts entered into the Schengen Information System (SIS). The underlying principle is that the law of the Member State issuing the alert governs the data protection matters, unless the Convention provides stricter rules. The Joint Supervisory Authority is responsible for supervising the technical support function of the SIS, for examining any difficulties of application or interpretation that may arise during the operation of the SIS and for elaborating harmonised proposals in order to provide a common approach to problems.

The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union is the appropriate body to address diverging practices in Member States and should be in a position to provide the requested statistics.

The SIS II Regulation ([1]) and Decision ([2]) contain provisions on remedies, on the liability of Member States and on the sanctions which have to be provided for under national law. These provisions will apply from the entry into operation of the SIS II Regulation. The Commission will see to their correct application pursuant to Article 258 TFEU. As to the SIS II Decision, the Commission can exercise this power from 1 December 2014, in view of Article 10 of Protocol (No 36) on transitional provisions.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1987/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II), OJ L 381, 28.12.2006, p. 4.

([2]) Council Decision 2007/533/JHA of 12 June 2007 on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II), OJ L 205, 7.8.2007, p. 63.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000726/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Adult education programmes

Can the Commission state what funding, if any, could be allocated to an individual delivering adult education courses in the west of Ireland?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

Grundtvig is a sub-programme of the European Lifelong Learning Programme. It funds adult education projects and offers a range of grants to organisations and individuals working in the adult education sector.

Under the Grundtvig sub-programme, individuals can apply for grants for staff mobility to attend courses, conferences, study visits, job shadowing or to go on teaching assignments in another European country. Organisations can apply for centralised funding for larger scale projects (specifically, Multilateral Projects, Networks and Accompanying Measures), or for decentralised small scale projects (Learning Partnerships, Senior Volunteering Projects or Workshops).

Information on funding available for the larger, centralised projects is available from the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency:

Education Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency, Avenue du Bourget 1, BOUR/BOU2*, BE-1140 Brussels E-mail: EACEA-LLPGRUNDTVIG@ec.europa.eu, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/grundtvig/grundtvig_en.php.

Specific information for Ireland on available funding, application procedures and dates for individual grants and small scale projects is available from the Irish Grundtvig National Agency:

Léargas the Exchange Bureau (Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig, study visits) 189, Parnell Street IE-Dublin 1, Tel. (353) 1 8731411; Fax (353) 1 8731316; E-mail: lifelonglearning@leargas.ie, http://www.llp.ie.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000727/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* Natuurherstel in de Westerschelde

Op 20 januari 2012 heeft staatssecretaris Bleker aan Commissaris Potočnik een brief gestuurd ter onderbouwing van de voorgestelde herstelmaatregelen in de Westerschelde.

1. Is de Commissie op grond van deze brief nog steeds van mening dat de door de Nederlandse overheid voorgestelde maatregelen niet in overeenstemming zijn met de ecologische vereisten rond de Westerschelde, noch adequaat zijn om een verslechtering van de toestand aldaar een halt toe te roepen?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat de plannen van de Nederlandse overheid gericht zijn op het vertragen van maatregelen? En is de Commissie van mening dat de staatssecretaris zoveel slagen om de arm houdt wat betreft de eventuele uitvoering van de zogenaamde fase 3 dat het halen van de vereiste doelstellingen zeer onzeker is?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat het ecologisch belang van de Westerschelde en de kans op onherstelbare schade aan dit waardevolle gebied een start op zeer korte termijn van wetenschappelijk overtuigende maatregelen vereisen?

4. In antwoord op vraag E-010075/2011 geeft de Commissaris aan dat: „… Nederland, sinds het gebied op 23 december 2009 als speciale beschermingszone is aangewezen, ook de nodige beheers- en herstelmaatregelen moet nemen. De Commissie beschikt niet over bewijsmateriaal waaruit blijkt dat dergelijke maatregelen zijn genomen. Indien op korte termijn geen wetenschappelijk overtuigende maatregelen worden vastgesteld en uitgevoerd, bestaat de mogelijkheid dat de Commissie rechtsmiddelen zal moeten inzetten."

5. Wanneer is de „korte termijn" afgelopen? Wanneer zal de Commissie overgaan tot het inzetten van rechtsmiddelen als de Commissie geen bewijsmateriaal verkrijgt van de nodige beheers- en herstelmaatregelen?

**Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie**
*(29 februari 2012)*

De Commissie is de maatregelen waartoe de Nederlandse autoriteiten in juni 2011 hebben besloten, met inbegrip van de door dr. Bleker in zijn brief van 20 januari 2012 aangevoerde elementen, nog aan het beoordelen.

Het is niet aan de Commissie om te beoordelen wat de bedoelingen achter de plannen van de Nederlandse regering zijn.

De Commissie beoordeelt of de door de Nederlandse regering aangekondigde maatregelen adequate stappen zijn om de verslechtering van het Westerschelde-estuarium een halt toe te roepen.

De Commissie en Nederland zijn het erover eens dat er dringend doeltreffende maatregelen moeten worden genomen om verdere achteruitgang van het estuarium een halt toe te roepen en onherstelbare schade te voorkomen. Dit houdt in dat de maatregelen voldoende wetenschappelijk bewezen moeten zijn en er geen grote onzekerheden met betrekking tot de verwachte resultaten ervan mogen heersen.

De verslechtering van het estuarium een halt toeroepen, is slechts de eerste stap van een lang proces. Nederland moet ook de nodige herstelmaatregelen nemen die beantwoorden aan de ecologische vereisten van het gebied. Zulke maatregelen hadden al moeten zijn vastgesteld sinds 2009, toen het gebied de status van een speciale beschermingszone kreeg. De Commissie verwacht van Nederland dat het tegen eind 2012 zulke maatregelen neemt, bijvoorbeeld in de context van de goedkeuring van een beheerplan voor het Natura 2000-gebied „Westerschelde & Saeftinghe".

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000727/12**
**to the Commission**
**Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Restoration of the natural environment in the Western Scheldt

On 20 January 2012, State Secretary Bleker sent a letter to Commissioner Potočnik supporting the proposed remediation measures in the Western Scheldt.

1. Does the Commission still believe, having read this letter, that the measures proposed by the Dutch Government do not satisfy the environmental requirements for the Western Scheldt and are insufficient to halt the deterioration of the situation there?

2. Does the Commission believe that the Dutch Government's plans are aimed at delaying the measures? Does the Commission believe that the state secretary is being too non-committal with regard to the possible implementation of the so-called phase 3, making the achievement of the required targets extremely uncertain?

3. Does the Commission believe that the environmental importance of the Western Scheldt and the risk of irreparable damage to this valuable area require the launching within a very short period of scientifically justified measures?

4. In response to Question E-010075/2011, the Commission indicated that: '… Since the area was designated, on 23 December 2009, as a special area of conservation, the Netherlands must also take the necessary management and remediation measures. The Commission does not have any evidence that such measures have been taken. If no scientifically justified measures are identified and implemented within a short period the Commission may resort to legal action'.

5. When did the 'short period' end? When will the Commission launch legal action if the Commission obtains no evidence of the necessary management or remediation measures?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The Commission's assessment of the measures decided by the Dutch authorities in June 2011, including the elements supplied in Dr Blekker's letter of 20 January 2012, is still ongoing.

The Commission is not in a position to assess the intentions behind the Dutch Government's plans.

The Commission's assessment will relate to whether the reasons announced by the Dutch Government are appropriate steps to halt the ongoing deterioration of the Western Scheldt estuary.

The Commission and the Netherlands agree that effective measures are urgently needed to halt the ongoing deterioration and avoid irreparable damage to the estuary. This implies that the measures must be scientifically well established and without remaining major uncertainties as regards their expected results.

Halting the deterioration of the estuary is only the first step in a long process. The Netherlands must also take the necessary restoration measures that correspond to the ecological requirements of the site. Such measures should have been established since 2009 when the site was designated as a special area of conservation. The Commission expects the Netherlands to establish such measures by the end of 2012, for example in the context of the adoption of a management plan for the Natura 2000 site 'Weterschelde & Saeftinghe'.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000728/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(31 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Red Natura 2000

En virtud de la Directiva 1992/43/CEE, los Estados miembros deben determinar los hábitats de especies que figuran en el Anexo II, a la vez que garantizar el mantenimiento o, en su caso, el restablecimiento, en un estado de conservación favorable, de los tipos de hábitats naturales y de los hábitats de las especies de que se trate en su área de distribución natural.

Teniendo en cuenta el artículo 192.4 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea —en su versión consolidada publicada en el Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea de 30 de marzo de 2010— que dice:

«Sin perjuicio de determinadas medidas adoptadas por la Unión, los Estados miembros tendrán a su cargo la financiación y la ejecución de la política en materia de medio ambiente.»

Visto el artículo 8 de la Directiva Hábitats 1992/43/CEE, en particular los puntos 8.2 y 8.3, que dicen:

«2. De acuerdo con cada uno de los Estados miembros de que se trate, la Comisión determinará, para los lugares de importancia comunitaria para los que se solicite cofinanciación, las medidas indispensables para el mantenimiento o el restablecimiento en un estado de conservación favorable de los tipos de hábitats naturales prioritarios y especies prioritarias en los lugares afectados, así como los costes totales que se deriven de dichas medidas».

«3. La Comisión, de acuerdo con el Estado miembro de que se trate, evaluará la financiación necesaria, incluida la cofinanciación, para la aplicación de las medidas contempladas en el apartado 2, teniendo en cuenta, entre otras cosas, la concentración en el territorio del Estado miembro de hábitats naturales prioritarios y/o especies prioritarias y las cargas que impliquen, para cada Estado miembro, las medidas que se requieran»,

1. ¿Puede la Comisión indicar en cuantos espacios de la Red Natura 2000 situados en el Reino de España ha evaluado la financiación necesaria, incluida la cofinanciación de acuerdo con los artículos anteriormente citados?

2. En el caso que dichas evaluaciones se hayan realizado, ¿puede la Comisión aportar los datos relativos a las mismas y, en particular, el importe de la financiación necesaria en cada caso evaluado?

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000730/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(31 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Cofinanciación de la Red Natura 2000

La Directiva Hábitats 1992/43/CEE, de conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres, crea una red ecológica europea de zonas especiales de conservación, denominada «Red Natura 2000». En virtud de ella, los Estados miembros deben determinar los hábitats de especies que figuran en el Anexo II, a la vez que garantizar el mantenimiento o, en su caso, el restablecimiento, en un estado de conservación favorable, de los tipos de hábitats naturales y de los hábitats de las especies de que se trate en su área de distribución natural.

Visto el artículo 8 de la Directiva Hábitats 1992/43/CEE, en particular los puntos 8.2 y 8.3,

1. ¿Puede indicar la Comisión qué espacios españoles de la Red Natura 2000 han solicitado cofinanciación con arreglo a las previsiones del artículo 8 de la Directiva Hábitats?

2. ¿Cuántos de ellos la han obtenido?

3. Y, en tal caso, ¿cúal ha sido el período temporal e importe de dicha cofinanciación?

**Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión**
*(7 de marzo de 2012)*

España no ha declarado zonas especiales de conservación a la mayoría de sus lugares de interés comunitario ni ha proporcionado a la Comisión un desglose detallado de la financiación necesaria para sus diferentes lugares de la red Natura 2000.

Cada uno de los instrumentos de la UE pertinentes, como los programas de cohesión, los programas agrícolas y de investigación y el programa LIFE+, ofrece posibilidades de cofinanciación de la red Natura 2000 por parte de la UE. La Comisión ha instado a los Estados miembros a tomar en consideración las necesidades de esta red al establecer sus programas para estos fondos y ha publicado directrices detalladas ([1]) sobre la forma en que los fondos pueden emplearse en apoyo de la misma. De cara al próximo marco financiero plurianual, la Comisión ha pedido a los Estados miembros que elaboren marcos de acción prioritaria, previstos en el artículo 8 de la Directiva 92/43/CEE ([2]), Directiva sobre hábitats, a fin de establecer prioridades y proporcionar un enfoque estratégico para una mayor utilización de los diferentes fondos sectoriales de la UE.

Dado que estos fondos de la UE son gestionados a través de las autoridades competentes de los Estados miembros, la Comisión no dispone de detalles específicos relativos a los distintos lugares para los diferentes fondos. Sin embargo, en relación con la utilización de los fondos en el marco del programa de la UE LIFE/LIFE+, la Comisión mantiene una base de datos de todos los proyectos ([3]). Desde 1992, se han cofinanciado en España 217 proyectos LIFE-Naturaleza (casi todos ellos relativos a lugares de la red Natura 2000) que representan una inversión total de aproximadamente 346 millones de euros, de los que 192 millones han sido aportados por el programa LIFE. Un instrumento de información geográfica ([4]) permite visualizar cada lugar de la red Natura 2000, con información detallada que indica, por ejemplo, si se ha desarrollado en él algún proyecto LIFE-Naturaleza.

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([1]) «Financiación de la red Natura 2000 — manual de orientación»: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm#guidancehandbook
([2]) DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm
([4]) http://nature.eea.europa.eu/map/N2KGisViewer.html# (nota: para visualizar los proyectos LIFE, ha de activarse el nivel LIFE; la transferencia de datos de proyectos LIFE a este visor aún no se ha finalizado completamente).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000728/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Natura 2000 network

Under Directive 1992/43/EEC, Member States should determine the habitats of the species listed in Annex II while ensuring that natural habitats and species habitats are maintained or, where necessary, restored to a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Article 192(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in its consolidated version as published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* on 30 March 2010 states:

'Without prejudice to certain measures adopted by the Union, the Member States shall finance and implement the environment policy'.

Article 8 of the Habitats Directive 1992/43/EEC, specifically paragraphs 2 and 3, states:

'2. In agreement with each of the Member States concerned, the Commission shall identify, for sites of Community importance for which co-financing is sought, those measures essential for the maintenance or re-establishment at a favourable conservation status of the priority natural habitat types and priority species on the sites concerned, as well as the total costs arising from those measures.

3. The Commission, in agreement with the Member States concerned, shall assess the financing, including co-financing, required for the operation of the measures referred to in paragraph 2, taking into account, amongst other things, the concentration on the Member State's territory of priority natural habitat types and the relative burdens which the required measures entail.'

1. For how many Natura 2000 areas located in the Kingdom of Spain has the Commission assessed the required financing, including co-financing, in accordance with the above article?

2. If such assessments have been carried out, can the Commission supply the relevant details and, most importantly, the amount of financing required in each case?

**Question for written answer E-000730/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Co-funding of the Natura 2000 network

The Habitats Directive 1992/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, created a European ecological network of special conservation areas known as the 'Natura 2000 network'. Under it, Member States are to determine the habitats of species listed in Annex II, while ensuring the maintenance or, where appropriate, the restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of natural habitat types and habitats of the species concerned in their natural range.

Bearing in mind Article 8 of the Habitats Directive 1992/43/EEC, in particular paragraphs 2 and 3,

1. Can the Commission indicate whether the Spanish areas in the Natura 2000 network have applied for co-funding in accordance with Article 8 of the Habitats Directive?

2. How many of them have received it?

3. For areas which have received co-funding, what was the timeframe and amount of this co-funding?

**Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

Spain has not designated the majority of its Sites of Community Importance as Special Areas of Conservation nor has it provided the Commission with a detailed breakdown of required financing for its different Natura 2000 sites.

Possibilities of EU co-financing of Natura 2000 are provided in each of the relevant EU policy instruments, including cohesion, agriculture and research as well as the LIFE+ Programme. The Commission has encouraged Member States to give due consideration to the needs of Natura 2000 when establishing their programmes for these funds and has published detailed guidelines ([1]) on how the funds can be used to support the Natura 2000 network. With a view to the next Multiannual Financial Framework the Commission is asking Member States to develop prioritised action frameworks, foreseen in Article 8 of Directive 92/43/EEC ([2]), the Habitats Directive, to identify priorities and provide a strategic approach for greater use of the different EU sectoral funds.

As these EU funds are managed via the relevant competent authorities in the Member States the Commission does not have site specific details for the different funds. However, in relation to the use of funds under the EU LIFE/LIFE+ Programme, the Commission maintains a database of all projects ([3]). Since 1992, 217 LIFE Nature projects (nearly all targeting Natura 2000 sites) have been co-financed in Spain, representing a total investment of some EUR 346 million of which LIFE contributed EUR 192 million. A geographical information tool ([4]) allows each Natura 2000 site to be visualised together with detailed information, including whether a LIFE nature project has operated there.

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([1]) 'Financing Natura 2000 — Guidance Handbook': http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm#guidancehandbook
([2]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm
([4]) http://nature.eea.europa.eu/map/N2KGisViewer.html# (Note: to visualise the LIFE projects the LIFE layer has to be activated; the transfer of LIFE data to this viewer is not yet fully finalised.)

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000735/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(31 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Justificación de los importes de financiación Segarra-Garrigues

El 31 de octubre de 2011 se formuló una pregunta parlamentaria a la Comisión sobre la financiación, con fondos comunitarios, del proyecto de regadío del Canal Segarra-Garrigues, especialmente porque este proyecto se ha visto afectado considerablemente por la implantación de la «Red Natura 2000» (Directiva Hábitats 1992/43/CEE), resultando de ella una reducción de la zona regable, que queda a solo un 40 % de la prevista. Se preguntaba si tenía lógica una financiación comunitaria de un proyecto económico que se había recortado considerablemente por razones ambientales.

En su respuesta, de fecha 14 de diciembre de 2011, la Comisión manifiesta que durante el período de programación 2000-2006, la región de Cataluña recibió casi 6 millones de euros —2,37 millones correspondientes al FEOGA— para dicho proyecto. Asimismo, indica que desde el 2007 no se ha financiado en nada.

A la vista de lo anterior,

1. ¿Se ha auditado por la Comisión si los anteriores importes, o parte de los mismos, han correspondido a la ejecución efectiva de los conceptos por los cuales se financió el proyecto?

2. ¿Cuál ha sido el resultado de la auditoría arriba mencionada?

3. ¿Ha habido algún concepto o importe que finalmente se haya visto alterado por la aplicación de la «Red Natura 2000»?

4. ¿Cuál ha sido la decisión tomada al respecto?

**Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión**
*(29 de febrero de 2012)*

Los servicios de la Comisión desean informar a Su Señoría de que el programa de desarrollo rural «Mejora de estructuras» ha sido auditado en varias ocasiones por muestreo. Sin embargo, el proyecto mencionado «Regadío del canal Segarra-Garrigues» no formaba parte de la muestra. La evaluación llevada a cabo para seleccionar las muestras de proyectos a efectos de la auditoría del programa correspondiente no reveló que existiera ningún riesgo especial en relación con el proyecto aludido.

Las auditorías de los servicios de la Comisión se centran en el sistema de gestión y control del programa y se dirigen a detectar deficiencias de ese sistema. Los controles por muestreo se efectúan mediante pruebas de recorrido.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000735/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Justification and purpose of funding for Segarra Garrigues

On 31 October 2011, the Commission was asked a parliamentary question regarding the funding from Community funds of the Segarra-Garrigues canal irrigation project, particularly in view of the fact that this project has been considerably affected by the creation of the 'Natura 2000 network' (Habitats Directive 1992/43/EEC), resulting in the irrigable area being cut to just 40 % of what had been anticipated. The Commission was asked whether it was logical to use Community funds for an economic project that had been considerably cut back on environmental grounds.

In its response of 14 December 2011, the Commission stated that, during the 2000-2006 programming period, the Catalonia Region received nearly EUR 6 million — EUR 2.37 million under the EAGGF — for said project. It also stated that it had not granted any funding since 2007.

In light of the above,

1. Has the Commission audited the aforementioned sums, or parts of them, to check that they do indeed correspond to the headings under which funding was granted?

2. What was the outcome of the aforementioned audit?

3. Were any of the headings or sums altered in the end due to the implementation of the Natura 2000 network?

4. What decisions have been taken on the matter?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The Commission services would like to inform the Honourable Member that the rural development programme 'Mejora de Estructuras' has been audited several times on a sample basis. However, the mentioned project 'Segarra-Garrigues irrigation' was not part of the sample. The assessment carried out in order to select the samples of projects to audit the Programme under subject did not bring to light an indication that there was a particular risk regarding the mentioned project.

The Commission services' audits focus on the management and control system of the programme and they are designed to detect weaknesses in this management and control system. The sample checks are executed as walk through tests of the management and control system.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000736/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nicole Sinclaire (NI)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EurActiv

Can the Commission provide information on any subsidies, grants or sponsorship accorded to the company EurActiv during the last five years?

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

The EurActiv Network ([1]) received a total amount of EUR 8 650 from the European Commission during the last five years. This corresponds to EUR 4 750 and EUR 1 400 to EurActiv.fr in 2009 and 2010 respectively. In addition, EurActiv.com was paid an amount of EUR 2 500 for advertising services linked to the event 'Policies and economics of European energy security', which was held in Amsterdam in 2010.

For further details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its online database 'Financial Transparency System' ([2]) comprising the names of the beneficiaries of grants and other forms of support, awarded by the Commission every year.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/crosslingual.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000737/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Kriton Arsenis (S&D)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις του PFOA στην ανθρώπινη υγεία

Μελέτες συνδέουν το υπερφθορο-οκτανοϊκό οξύ (PFOA), με μείωση της γονιμότητας, χαμηλό βάρος γέννησης, αυξημένα επίπεδα χοληστερόλης, αυξημένο κίνδυνο εκδήλωσης αρθρίτιδας, αλλαγές στα επίπεδα των θυροειδικών ορμονών και, τέλος, καρκίνο του προστάτη. Λόγω της τοξικότητας του, η Υπηρεσία Προστασίας Περιβάλλοντος των ΗΠΑ (EPA) κατέταξε το PFOA στις πιθανώς καρκινογόνες για τον άνθρωπο ουσίες με απαγόρευση της χρήσης του έως το 2015. Σε έκθεση που συντάχθηκε το 2010 για λογαριασμό της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής αναφέρεται ότι το PFOA δεν πληρεί τα κριτήρια σύμφωνα με το Παράρτημα XIII του REACH για ανθεκτική, βιοσυσσωρεύσιμη και τοξική ουσία (ΑΒΤ) ή για άκρως ανθεκτική και άκρως βιοσυσσωρεύσιμη ουσία (αΑαΒ). Ωστόσο, στην ίδια έκθεση τονίζεται ότι υπάρχει επιστημονική διχογνωμία και αβεβαιότητα σχετικά με τις επιπτώσεις της στην ανθρώπινη υγεία και το περιβάλλον. Την ίδια στιγμή, πληθώρα μελετών καταδεικνύει ότι το PFOA έχει ιδιότητες ορμονικού διαταράκτη, είναι τοξικό, ανθεκτικό, ευρέως διαδεδομένο στο περιβάλλον και βιοσσυσωρεύεται στην άγρια πανίδα και τους ανθρώπους, όπου παραμένει για μεγάλο χρονικό διάστημα χωρίς να μεταβολίζεται. Υπό το φως της αρχής της προφύλαξης η Επιτροπή οφείλει να ακολουθήσει το παράδειγμα της EPA και να λάβει χωρίς καθυστέρηση τα απαραίτητα μέτρα ώστε να διασφαλίσει υψηλό επίπεδο προστασίας των πολιτών και του περιβάλλοντος από τις δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις της χρήσης του PFOA.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Προτίθεται να συμπεριλάβει το PFOA στην υποψήφια λίστα του REACH ως ουσία που προκαλεί πολύ μεγάλη ανησυχία λόγω των αποδεδειγμένα ανθεκτικών, βιοσυσσωρεύσιμων και τοξικών της ιδιοτήτων και εφόσον ανταποκρίνεται στα κριτήρια του Άρθρου 57 στοιχείο στ);

2. Εξετάζει το ενδεχόμενο απαγόρευσης και αντικατάστασης της ουσίας PFOA με ασφαλέστερες εναλλακτικές ουσίες;

**Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(8 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2010 η Νορβηγία υπέβαλε φάκελο για την εναρμονισμένη ταξινόμηση και επισήμανση του υπερφθοροοκτανοϊκού οξέος (PFOA) και των αλάτων του, σύμφωνα με τον κανονισμό CLP ([1]). Η επιτροπή αξιολόγησης κινδύνων (RAC) του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Χημικών Προϊόντων εξέδωσε γνώμη σχετικά με τον φάκελο αυτό τον Δεκέμβριο του 2011, με την οποία συμφώνησε να ταξινομηθεί το PFOA, μεταξύ άλλων, ως καρκινογόνο της κατηγορίας 2 και ως τοξικό για την αναπαραγωγή της κατηγορίας 1Β. Η Επιτροπή θα αξιολογήσει την γνώμη αυτή και, εάν το κρίνει σκόπιμο, θα προτείνει να περιληφθεί η εν λόγω ταξινόμηση στο παράρτημα VI του κανονισμού CLP, κάτι που θα την κατασταστήσει νομικά δεσμευτική στην ΕΕ.

Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή πληροφορήθηκε ότι η Γερμανία και η Νορβηγία προετοιμάζουν ανάλυση των καταλληλότερων εναλλακτικών επιλογών για τη διαχείριση του κινδύνου που συνεπάγονται το PFOA και τα άλατά του, έτσι ώστε να καταχωριστούν ενδεχομένως οι ουσίες αυτές στον κατάλογο των υποψήφιων ουσιών σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 59 του κανονισμού REACH ([2]), με βάση τις επικίνδυνες ιδιότητές τους, σύμφωνα είτε με το συμπέρασμα της επιτροπής αξιολόγησης κινδύνων σχετικά με την ταξινόμηση και/ή, κατά περίπτωση, την ανθεκτικότητα, βιοσυσσώρευση και τοξικό δυναμικό των ουσιών αυτών βάσει των κριτηρίων του άρθρου 57 στοιχεία δ) ή στ) του REACH.

Στο πλαίσιο μια άλλης εναλλακτικής επιλογής για τη διαχείριση του κινδύνου, σύμφωνα με την προαναφερθείσα ανάλυση, εξετάζονται οι πιθανοί περιορισμοί ορισμένων χρήσεων του PFOA. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 69 παράγραφος 4 του κανονισμού REACH, εάν ένα κράτος μέλος θεωρεί ότι οι κίνδυνοι για την ανθρώπινη υγεία και το περιβάλλον δεν ελέγχονται επαρκώς και πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστούν στο επίπεδο της Ένωσης, πρέπει να συντάξει φάκελο επιβολής περιορισμών που να περιλαμβάνει πληροφορίες σχετικά με εναλλακτικές ουσίες και τεχνικές.

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([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1272/2008 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Δεκεμβρίου 2008, για την ταξινόμηση, την επισήμανση και τη συσκευασία των ουσιών και των μειγμάτων, την τροποποίηση και την κατάργηση των οδηγιών 67/548/ΕΟΚ και 1999/45/ΕΚ και την τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1907/2006 (ΕΕ L 353 της 31.12.2008, σ. 1).

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1907/2006 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 18ης Δεκεμβρίου 2006, για την καταχώριση, την αξιολόγηση, την αδειοδότηση και τους περιορισμούς των χημικών προϊόντων (REACH) και για την ίδρυση του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Χημικών Προϊόντων καθώς και για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 1999/45/ΕΚ και για την κατάργηση του κανονισμού (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 793/93 του Συμβουλίου και του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1488/94 της Επιτροπής καθώς και της οδηγίας 76/769/ΕΟΚ του Συμβουλίου και των οδηγιών της Επιτροπής 91/155/ΕΟΚ, 93/67/ΕΟΚ, 93/105/ΕΚ και 2000/21/ΕΚ (ΕΕ L 396 της 30.12.2006, σ. 1).

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000737/12**
**to the Commission**
**Kriton Arsenis (S&D)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Adverse impacts of the PFOA on human health

Studies have linked perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) with a reduction in fertility, low birth weight, increased cholesterol levels, increased risk of arthritis, changes in thyroid hormone levels and, finally, prostate cancer. Due to its toxicity, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has classified PFOA among substances that are possibly carcinogenic for humans and has banned its use until 2015. In a report drawn up in 2010 on the European Commission's behalf, it is stated that PFOA does not meet the criteria under Annex XIII of the REACH regulation for persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBT) or for very persistent and bioaccumulative substances (vPvB). However, the same report emphasises that there are scientific differences of opinion and uncertainty surrounding its effects on human health and the environment. Simultaneously, a raft of studies show that PFOA has hormone-disturbing qualities, is toxic, persistent, directly spread into the environment and bioaccumulates in wild animals and humans, where it stays for a long time without changing. In view of the precautionary principle, the Commission should follow the EPA's example and immediately take the appropriate measures to ensure a high level of protection of its citizens and the environment from the adverse effects of the use of PFOA.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission intend to include PFOA in the REACH list as a substance causing serious concern due to its proven persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic qualities that meet the criteria of Article 57(f)?

2. Is it envisaging a potential ban and replacement of PFOA with alternative, safer substances?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

In December 2010 Norway submitted a dossier for a harmonised classification and labelling for Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and its salts, in accordance with the CLP Regulation ([1]). The Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) of the European Chemicals Agency adopted its opinion on the dossier in December 2011 by which it agreed to classify PFOA i.a. as carcinogenic Category c and toxic to reproduction Category cB. The Commission will evaluate the opinion and, if appropriate, will propose to include the classification into Annex VI of the CLP Regulation, which would make it legally binding in the EU.

Moreover, the Commission has been informed that Germany and Norway are preparing an analysis of the most appropriate risk management options on PFOA and its salts for a possible inclusion of these substances in the candidate list in accordance with Article 59 of REACH Regulation ([2]), on the basis of their hazardous properties, following either the conclusion of RAC on the classification and/or, if applicable, their persistency, bioaccumulation and toxic potential in accordance with the criteria under Article 57(d) or (f) of REACH.

Another risk management option under their analysis considers potential restrictions for some uses of PFOA. In accordance with Article 69 (4) of REACH, if a Member State considers that risks to human health or the environment are not adequately controlled and need to be addressed on a Union wide basis, it has to prepare a restriction dossier, which should include information on alternative substances and techniques.

([1]) Regulation (EC) 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, amending and repealing Directives 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC, and amending Regulation (EC) N 1907/2006 (OJ L 353, 31.12.2008, p. 1).

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000738/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Kosovo

The Republic of Kosovo, Europe's newest state, has existed for less than three years and is already in the process of changing its constitution. A committee within the Kosovar Parliament is currently working solely to propose changes to the Kosovar constitution.

One of those changes seeks to enable future presidents to be elected via direct suffrage, rather than being chosen by parliament as is the case at present. While such a change is welcome, it comes with a concerning caveat: namely the proposal to not allow any future president to hold dual citizenship. The committee argues that this is because the 'majority of European countries do not allow candidates holding dual citizenship'.

Kosovo's ambition of joining the European Union is well-known, and on 5 December 2011 the European Council welcomed the High Representative's intention to launch a visa dialogue towards the end of the year, provided that all the necessary conditions are effectively fulfilled ([1]). Pre-accession funds have already been allocated to Pristina with a view to achieving this aim.

In addition to a diaspora of more than 600 000 people across the EU, Kosovo is home to an estimated population of more than 1.7 million; this includes people of many different ethnicities, many of whom hold dual citizenship. If this proposal is passed, millions of citizens would potentially be unable to stand for president.

What steps will the High Representative take, as a matter of urgency, to explain to the Kosovar Government that making any potential head of state subject to such a condition would seriously restrict the establishment of true democracy in a newly independent state with aspirations to join the EU?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 March 2012)*

Since the elections in 2009 the EU is supporting Kosovo ([2]) with experts to reform the electoral system. Moreover, in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) Dialogue meeting on Justice, Freedom and Security, the EU is encouraging the Government, the Assembly and political parties to align the electoral legislation with EU standards so as to guarantee the enforcement of fundamental rights, simplify the electoral process and limit the fraud opportunities.

Two working groups (on general and presidential elections) have been established to draft new electoral legal acts and submit them to the Assembly. EU representatives participate in these Working Groups until they submit their proposal to the Assembly by mid-April and 20 March 2012, respectively. It is likely that both elections will be organised in 2013.

As regards the presidential elections, amendments to the Constitution are needed. One of the pending issues is the proposal to oblige the president-elect with dual citizenship to abandon the non-Kosovo citizenship. It would represent a discrimination against citizens with double-citizenship, which would affect a large number of citizens including members of the minorities. This would disregard fundamental-rights-related provisions from the Constitution and create further obstacles to integrate all communities living on the territory of Kosovo.

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([1]) Council conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process, 3132nd General Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 5 December 2011 (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/126577.pdf).

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

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000739/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(30 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Χαρτονομίσματα 500 και 200 Ευρώ

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, το Δεκέμβριο του 2010, το 34,3 % του ευρώ σε κυκλοφορία αποτελείτο από χαρτονομίσματα των 500 ευρώ και το 4,3 % από χαρτονομίσματα των 200 ευρώ. Αυτή η αναλογία αυξάνεται υπέρ των μεγαλύτερων χαρτονομισμάτων.

Αστυνομικές πηγές αναφέρουν ότι όλο και μεγαλύτερο μέρος του μαύρου χρήματος διακινείται σε μεγάλα χαρτονομίσματα. Η πραγματική και νόμιμη οικονομία πλήττεται από την ύπαρξη μεγάλων χαρτονομισμάτων τα οποία η πλειοψηφία των πολιτών δεν κατέχει.

Εφόσον οι νόμιμες συναλλαγές πραγματοποιούνται για λόγους ασφαλείας μέσω του τραπεζικού συστήματος θεωρώ ότι εκλείπει η ανάγκη ύπαρξης μεγάλων χαρτονομισμάτων.

Παρεμπιπτόντως είναι σαφές ότι η κατάργησή τους, εντός ευλόγου χρονικού ορίζοντα θα έδινε νέα δυναμική στη πραγματική και νόμιμη οικονομία στην Ευρωζώνη, ξορκίζοντας τις Κασσάνδρες περί τέλους του ευρώ.

Σημειώνεται ότι για το λόγο της ενίσχυσης της πραγματικής οικονομίας σταμάτησε η κυκλοφορία των χαρτονομισμάτων που υπερβαίνουν τα 100 δολάρια στις ΗΠΑ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει τί ποσοστό των χαρτονομισμάτων 500 και 200 ευρώ κυκλοφορούν στην παραοικονομία;

2. Υπάρχει διαχρονική έρευνα σε σχέση με τα κόστη και τα οφέλη από την ύπαρξη αυτών των χαρτονομισμάτων;

3. Σκοπεύει να δραστηριοποιηθεί σχετικά με το θέμα;

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(19 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Σύμφωνα με τη Συνθήκη, η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ) έχει το αποκλειστικό δικαίωμα να επιτρέπει την έκδοση και να προσδιορίζει την ονομαστική αξία των τραπεζογραμματίων ευρώ. Η ΕΚΤ δημοσιεύει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τα τραπεζογραμμάτια σε κυκλοφορία.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000739/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EUR 500 and EUR 200 banknotes

According to data from the European Central Bank, in December 2010, 34.3 % of euros in circulation consisted of EUR 500 banknotes and 4.3 % of EUR 200 banknotes. This proportion increases for higher denominations.

Police sources state that an increasing proportion of the black market is using high denominations, which are undermining the real, legal economy and which the majority of citizens never possesses.

Since legal financial transactions are carried out within the banking system, for security reasons, I think there is no need for large banknotes to exist.

Therefore, it is clear that their abolition, within a reasonable timeframe would give the real, legal economy in the Eurozone a boost and silence the doomsayers predicting the end of the euro.

It appears that, in order to support the real economy, the circulation of banknotes above the value of USD 100 has ended in the USA.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission know how many EUR 500 and EUR 200 banknotes are in circulation in the black economy?

2. Is long-term research being carried out into the costs and benefits of the existence of these banknotes?

3. Does it intend to take action on this issue?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

According to the Treaty, the European Central Bank (ECB) has the exclusive right to authorise the issue and determine the denomination of euro banknotes. Statistics on banknotes in circulation are published by the ECB.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000740/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)**
*(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Διαφοροποίηση επιτοκίων και διεύρυνση των ανισορροπιών

Σύμφωνα με δημοσίευμα στον ιστότοπο του Bloomberg ([1]) στις 28.11.2011, η Αμερικανική Κεντρική Τράπεζα (FED) παρείχε μυστικώς 1,2 τρις δολλάρια το Δεκέμβριο του 2008 σε αμερικανικές τράπεζες με «επιτόκια χαμηλότερα από αυτά της αγοράς». Παράλληλα, αναφέρει ότι 6 μεγάλες τράπεζες (JP Morgan, Bank of America, Citigroup Inc., Wells Fargo & Co., Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley) που έλαβαν 160 δις δολλάρια στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος «Troubled Asset Relief Program» που ψηφίστηκε το 2008, δανείστηκαν και 460 δις από τη FED. Το δημοσίευμα συνεχίζει: «Οι 6 αυτές τράπεζες αντιπροσώπευαν το 63 % του μέσου καθημερινού χρέους προς την Κεντρική Τράπεζα». Ωστόσο, σε ένα άλλο δημοσίευμα ([2]) της εφημερίδας USA TODAY, στις 28.10.2011, τονίζεται πως οι τράπεζες αυτές είχαν συνολική έκθεση στα ομόλογα 5 υπερχρεωμένων ευρωπαϊκών οικονομιών (Ελλάδας, Πορτογαλίας, Ιρλανδίας, Ιταλίας και Ισπανίας) αξίας 52,2 δις δολάρια όπως και ότι είχαν προσπαθήσει να μειώσουν την έκθεση τους με την αγορά ασφαλίστρων.

Έχοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια η δική της πληροφόρηση σχετικά; Θεωρεί ότι τέτοιες κινήσεις εντείνουν την αβεβαιότητα και τις ασυμμετρίες στο πλαίσιο της παγκόσμιας οικονομίας;

2. Πως κρίνει το γεγονός ότι χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα, ενώ προμηθεύονται δανειακά κεφάλαια με πολύ χαμηλά επιτόκια, στη συνέχεια δανείζουν τις ευρωπαϊκές κυβερνήσεις με πολλαπλασίως υψηλότερα επιτόκια;

3. Σε τι βαθμό πιστεύει πως η προσπάθεια των παραπάνω τραπεζών για αγορά ασφαλίστρων επηρέασε, και επηρεάζει, τις προσπάθειες των υπερχρεωμένων εθνικών κυβερνήσεων στην ΕΕ για ομαλή διαχείριση και εξυπηρέτηση του χρέους τους;

4. Τι ενέργειες κάνει για να προφυλαχθεί έναντι πολιτικών που ευνοούν τη διεύρυνση ανισορροπιών στο παγκόσμιο οικονομικό σύστημα;

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(14 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η Αμερικανική Ομοσπονδιακή Τράπεζα (FED) και άλλες μεγάλες διεθνείς κεντρικές τράπεζες, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ΕΚΤ, προσέφεραν στήριξη ρευστότητας προς τις εμπορικές τράπεζες, ιδίως το 2008 και το 2009. Αυτό θεωρήθηκε αναγκαίο για την αντιμετώπιση των δυνητικώς καταστρεπτικών συνεπειών μιας πρακτικώς αδρανούς διατραπεζικής αγοράς χρήματος και του αποκλεισμού των λοιπών προσβάσεων των χρηματοπιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων σε εξωτερική χρηματοδότηση. Οι τίτλοι του δημοσίου αντιπροσωπεύουν θεμιτό και σημαντικό τμήμα του ενεργητικού των ευρωπαϊκών και παγκόσμιων εμπορικών τραπεζών. Η διαθεσιμότητα μέσων διαχείρισης αυτών των σημαντικών πιστωτικών ανοιγμάτων των τραπεζών αποτελεί παράμετρο ζωτικής σημασίας τόσο για τη σταθερότητα και τη λειτουργία του ίδιου του τραπεζικού τομέα όσο και για τη ρευστότητα και τη λειτουργία των αντίστοιχων αγορών κρατικών χρεογράφων.

Η Επιτροπή συμμετέχει ενεργώς στο πλαίσιο της G20 για ισχυρή, βιώσιμη και ισόρροπη ανάπτυξη με σκοπό τη μείωση των παγκόσμιων μακροοικονομικών ανισορροπιών. Οι ηγέτες της G20 ενέκριναν στις Κάννες ένα φιλόδοξο σχέδιο δράσης για την αντιμετώπιση των προκλήσεων από την τρέχουσα οικονομική επιβράδυνση και για την επανεξισορρόπηση της παγκόσμιας ανάπτυξης μεσοπρόθεσμα. Τα μέλη της G20, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Κίνας και των ΗΠΑ, δεσμεύτηκαν να αναλάβουν συγκεκριμένες δράσεις για τη μείωση των μεγάλων ανισορροπιών τους. Στο πλαίσιο της μεξικανικής προεδρίας της G20, τα μέλη της G20 θα παρακολουθούν προσεκτικά την εφαρμογή των ειδικών για κάθε χώρα δεσμεύσεων που αναλήφθηκαν στη Σύνοδο Κορυφής των Καννών και θα ασκήσουν αμοιβαία πίεση για να εξασφαλιστεί η επίτευξη πραγματικής προόδου.

([1]) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-28/secret-fed-loans-undisclosed-to-congress-gave-banks-13-billion-in-income.html
([2]) http://www.usatoday.com/money/world/story/2011-10-27/eurozone-crisis-deal/50963370/1.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000740/12**
**to the Commission**
**Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)**
*(2 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Differentiation of rates of interest and increasing imbalances

According to reports on the Bloomberg website on 28.11.2011 ([1]), the American Central Bank (FED) secretly supplied American banks with USD 1.2 trillion at 'lower-than-market interest rates' in December 2008. The website also states that six large banks (JP Morgan, Bank of America, Citigroup Inc., Wells Fargo & Co., Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley), which were given USD 160 billion as part of the Troubled Asset Relief Program passed in 2008, borrowed another USD 460 billion from the FED. The report continues: 'The six banks accounted for 63 percent of the average daily debt to the Fed'. However, another report in the newspaper USA TODAY on 28.11.2011 ([2]) emphasises that these banks had exposure in bonds of five hyper-indebted European economies (Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Italy and Spain) worth USD 52.2 billion but that they had tried to reduce their exposure by buying insurance.

In view of this:

1. What does the Commission know about the matter? Does it consider that such actions increase the uncertainties and imbalances in the global economy?

2. What does it think about the fact that financial institutions, while accepting loan capital at very low interest rates, then made loans to European governments at hugely higher rates?

3. To what extent does it believe that the attempt by the above banks to buy insurance affected, and continues to affect, efforts by the hyper-indebted national governments of the EU to ensure the smooth management and servicing of their debts?

4. What measures is it taking to be protected against policies that promote increasing imbalances in the global economic system?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 March 2012)*

The US Federal Reserve and other major international central banks, including the ECB, provided liquidity support to commercial banks in particular in 2008 and 2009. This was deemed necessary to fight the possibly devastating consequences of a quasi halted interbank money market and other access of financial institutions to external funding. Government securities are a legitimate and important part on the asset side of European and global commercial banks. The availability of means to manage these important credit exposures of banks is a crucial feature both for the stability and functioning of the banking sector itself and the liquidity and operation of the corresponding markets for government securities.

The Commission participates actively in the G20 Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth that aims at reducing global macroeconomic imbalances. G20 Leaders adopted in Cannes an ambitious Action Plan to address the challenges from the current economic slowdown and to rebalance global growth over the medium term. G20 Members, including China and the US, committed to take specific actions to reduce their large imbalances. Under the Mexican G20 Presidency, G20 members will carefully monitor the implementation of country-specific commitments taken at the Cannes Summit and exert peer pressure to ensure that real progress is made.

([1]) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-28/secret-fed-loans-undisclosed-to-congress-gave-banks-13-billion-in-income.html
([2]) http://www.usatoday.com/money/world/story/2011-10-27/eurozone-crisis-deal/50963370/1.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000741/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)**
*(30 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Fortalecimiento de las redes de seguridad para la estabilidad financiera

La Directora Gerente del Fondo Monetario Internacional, Christine Lagarde, afirmó que la crisis de la zona euro es hasta cierto punto una crisis de «integración deficiente» y que su tratamiento requiere «crecimiento más vigoroso, cortafuegos más amplios e integración más profunda». Sobre el segundo aspecto, relativo al fortalecimiento de las redes de seguridad financiera, sostuvo que «sería de gran ayuda aumentar sustancialmente los recursos reales que están actualmente disponibles incorporando el Fondo Europeo de Estabilidad Financiera en el Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilidad (MEDE)». Este planteamiento coincide, según informaciones, con las posiciones del primer ministro italiano, Mario Monti, y del presidente del Banco Central Europeo, Mario Draghi, a favor de que se duplique el volumen del MEDE hasta alcanzar el billón de euros.

Por otra parte, Lagarde subrayó la necesidad de incrementar la capacidad de financiación del FMI para asegurar la estabilidad financiera mundial, situando en 500 000 millones de dólares en recursos adicionales a dotar.

— ¿Comparte la Comisión este diagnóstico?

— ¿Cree necesario el fortalecimiento planteado de las redes de seguridad a nivel europeo y mundial para garantizar la estabilidad financiera?

— ¿Va a promover alguna medida para aumentar estas dotaciones?

**Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión**
*(6 de marzo de 2012)*

La Comisión coincide en que es necesario considerar la posibilidad de seguir fortaleciendo los cortafuegos europeos. Los jefes de Estado o de Gobierno de la zona del euro han alcanzado un acuerdo sobre el Tratado del Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilidad (MEDE), que se firmó el 2 de febrero de 2012. Se acordó que la capacidad de préstamo acumulada inicial de la FEEF ([1])/MEDE será de 500 000 millones de euros, pero que su idoneidad sería revisada en marzo de 2012.

Asimismo, la Comisión es partidaria de un aumento sustancial de la capacidad de préstamo del Fondo Monetario Internacional.

([1]) Facilidad Europea de Estabilidad Financiera.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000741/12**
**to the Commission**
**Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Strengthening safety nets for financial stability

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, stated that the euro area crisis is, to a certain extent, a crisis of 'incomplete integration' and that addressing it requires 'stronger growth, larger firewalls, and deeper integration.' In regard to the second aspect, related to strengthening financial safety nets, she stated that, 'Adding substantial real resources to what is currently available by folding the EFSF into the ESM […] would help greatly.' This suggestion reportedly coincides with the positions of Italy's Prime Minister, Mario Monti, and of the European Central Bank's President, Mario Draghi, who favour doubling the volume of the ESM to EUR 1 billion.

In addition, Ms Lagarde underscored the need to increase the IMF's lending resources in order to ensure global financial stability, referring to USD 500 billion in additional lending.

— Does the Commission agree with this diagnosis?

— Does the Commission believe that the suggested strengthening of safety nets at European and global levels is necessary to ensure financial stability?

— Is the Commission going to promote any measures to increase these sums?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 March 2012)*

The Commission agrees that there is a need for considering a further strengthening of the European firewalls. The Euro area Heads of State and Governments have reached an agreement on the European Stabilisation Mechanism (ESM) Treaty that was signed on 2 February 2012. It was agreed that the initial EFSF ([1])/ESM cumulative lending capacity would be EUR 500 billion but that the adequacy of this cumulative lending capacity would be reviewed in March 2012.

The Commission is also in favour of a substantial increase in the lending capacity of the International Monetary Fund.

([1]) The European Financial Stability Facility.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000742/12**
**alla Commissione**
**Mario Borghezio (EFD)**
*(30 gennaio 2012)*

*Oggetto:* Tracciabilità nell'etichettatura dei prodotti di panificazione

In Italia una percentuale molto elevata di pane congelato proveniente dalla Romania risulta essere venduto con una generica erronea indicazione di pane «sfornato e confezionato in questo punto vendita».

In realtà in molti casi si tratta di pane prodotto in Romania presso forni semi-artigianali che non offrono garanzie di qualità, a cominciare dai procedimenti di cottura, posto che, per esempio, risulterebbero utilizzati nei forni addirittura materiali impropri come pneumatici, scarti di bare, residui di traslochi e materiali provenienti da demolizioni di impianti industriali.

— Intende la Commissione intervenire urgentemente, a tutela dell'interesse diffuso dei consumatori, affinché sia resa obbligatoria un'etichettatura dei prodotti di panificazione tale da consentire un'effettiva tracciabilità del prodotto?

**Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione**
*(13 febbraio 2012)*

Nell'ambito del quadro giuridico dell'UE per l'etichettatura dei prodotti alimentari ([1]), l'indicazione dell'origine dei prodotti alimentari non è un'informazione obbligatoria, a meno che la sua omissione possa trarre in inganno l'acquirente. Inoltre, è richiesto che l'etichettatura e i metodi utilizzati non siano tali da fuorviare l'acquirente in modo essenziale, particolarmente per quanto riguarda le caratteristiche dell'alimento e, segnatamente, la sua vera natura e identità. La valutazione della natura fuorviante delle etichette di prodotti alimentari va effettuata caso per caso, tenendo conto di tutte le informazioni fornite sull'alimento in questione. Gli organismi responsabili di tale valutazione sono le autorità competenti degli Stati membri in cui il prodotto alimentare è commercializzato.

La Commissione non intende proporre prescrizioni specifiche sulla designazione di origine per i prodotti di panificazione. Peraltro, qualsiasi dichiarazione volontaria che può essere ritenuta come un'indicazione dell'origine dovrà, a decorrere dal 13 dicembre 2014, soddisfare le nuove norme fissate nel regolamento UE relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori ([2]). In base a tali norme, il paese di origine degli alimenti trasformati ottenuti non completamente in un unico paese corrisponde al paese in cui è avvenuta la trasformazione sostanziale dell'alimento. Se l'ingrediente principale ha origine da un luogo diverso, il paese di origine o luogo di provenienza di tale ingrediente dovrà essere anch'esso indicato. Questa disposizione è intesa a impedire che il consumatore sia fuorviato da indicazioni di origine volutamente ingannevoli.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000.

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000742/12**
**to the Commission**
**Mario Borghezio (EFD)**
*(30 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Traceability in labelling breadmaking products

In Italy, a very high percentage of frozen bread from Romania is being sold bearing an incorrect generic label stating it has been 'baked and packaged in-store'.

In actual fact, this bread is often produced in Romania in small-scale ovens which offer no guarantee of quality, beginning with the cooking process where, for example, unsuitable materials such as tyres, waste containers, removal waste and materials recovered from the demolition of industrial facilities may even be used as fuel.

— Will the Commission intervene, as a matter of urgency and to protect the prevailing interests of consumers, to make it mandatory for breadmaking products to be labelled in such a way that they can be traced properly?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 February 2012)*

Under the EU legal framework for food labelling ([1]), the indication of origin of foods is not mandatory information, unless its omission could mislead the purchaser. In addition, it is required that the labelling and methods used must not be such as could mislead the purchaser to a material degree, particularly as to the characteristics of the food and, in particular, as to *inter alia* its true nature and its identity. The evaluation of the misleading character of food labels is to be carried out on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all information provided on the food. The responsible bodies for such assessment are the competent authorities of the Member States where the food is marketed.

The Commission does not intend to propose specific requirements on origin designation for bakery products. However, any voluntary statement that can be considered as an indication of origin should, from 13 December 2014, comply with the new rules established in EU Regulation on food information to consumers ([2]). According to them, the country of origin of processed foods not wholly obtained in one single country corresponds to the country of the last substantial transformation of the food. If its primary ingredient originates from a different place, the country of origin or place of provenance of this ingredient should be also provided. This requirement is meant to prevent consumer being misled by deceptive voluntary indications of origin.

([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.

([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.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000743/12**
**al Consejo**
**Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)**
*(31 de enero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Fortalecimiento de las redes de seguridad para la estabilidad financiera

La Directora Gerente del Fondo Monetario Internacional, Christine Lagarde, afirmó que la crisis de la zona euro es hasta cierto punto una crisis de «integración deficiente» y que su tratamiento requiere «crecimiento más vigoroso, cortafuegos más amplios e integración más profunda». Sobre el segundo aspecto, relativo al fortalecimiento de las redes de seguridad financiera, sostuvo que «sería de gran ayuda aumentar sustancialmente los recursos reales que están actualmente disponibles incorporando el Fondo Europeo de Estabilidad Financiera en el Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilidad (MEDE)». Este planteamiento coincide, según informaciones, con las posiciones del primer ministro italiano, Mario Monti, y del presidente del Banco Central Europeo, Mario Draghi, a favor de que se duplique el volumen del MEDE hasta alcanzar el billón de euros.

Por otra parte, Lagarde subrayó la necesidad de incrementar la capacidad de financiación del FMI para asegurar la estabilidad financiera mundial, situando en 500 000 millones de dólares en recursos adicionales a dotar.

— ¿Comparte el Consejo este diagnóstico?

— ¿Cree necesario el fortalecimiento planteado de las redes de seguridad a nivel europeo y mundial para garantizar la estabilidad financiera?

— ¿Va a promover alguna medida para aumentar estas dotaciones?

**Respuesta**
*(12 de abril de 2012)*

Los mecanismos que proporcionan apoyo a la estabilidad de los Estados miembros de la zona del euro (la FEEF, actualmente operativa, y el futuro MEDE ([1])) han sido establecidos por los Estados miembros de la zona del euro fuera del ámbito de aplicación del Tratado de la UE y del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE. Por consiguiente, no corresponde al Consejo debatir sobre la adecuación de los recursos de ambos mecanismos. Por tal motivo, el Consejo tampoco ha debatido acerca de la declaración de la Directora Gerente del Fondo Monetario Internacional.

El 9 de diciembre de 2011, los Jefes de Estado o de Gobierno de la zona del euro decidieron revaluar la adecuación del límite máximo global del volumen de préstamo de la Facilidad Europea de Estabilización Financiera (FEEF)/Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilidad (MEDE), actualmente fijado en 500 000 millones de euros.

Por lo que respecta al refuerzo del FMI, los Estados miembros de la zona del euro se comprometieron, en diciembre de 2011, a facilitar 150 000 millones de recursos adicionales como parte de un esfuerzo internacional más amplio orientado a mejorar la adecuación de los recursos del FMI. Algunos de los Estados miembros que no forman parte de la zona del euro han manifestado asimismo su voluntad de tomar parte en el proceso de refuerzo de los recursos del FMI. El refuerzo del FMI fue destacado por la Unión Europea como uno de sus mensajes centrales en la reunión del G-20 de los pasados días 24 a 26 de febrero.

([1]) El Tratado Constitutivo del Mecanismo Europeo de Estabilidad fue firmado por los Estados miembros de la zona del euro el 2.2.2012.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000743/12**
**to the Council**
**Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Strengthening safety nets for financial stability

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, stated that the euro area crisis is, to a certain extent, a crisis of 'incomplete integration' and that addressing it requires 'stronger growth, larger firewalls, and deeper integration.' In regard to the second aspect, related to strengthening financial safety nets, she stated that, 'Adding substantial real resources to what is currently available by folding the EFSF into the ESM […] would help greatly.' This suggestion reportedly coincides with the positions of Italy's Prime Minister, Mario Monti, and of the European Central Bank's President, Mario Draghi, who favour doubling the volume of the ESM to EUR 1 billion.

In addition, Ms Lagarde underscored the need to increase the IMF's lending resources in order to ensure global financial stability, referring to USD 500 billion in additional lending resources.

— Does the Council agree with this diagnosis?

— Does the Council believe that the suggested strengthening of safety nets at European and global levels is necessary to ensure financial stability?

— Is the Council going to promote any measures to increase these sums?

**Reply**
*(12 April 2012)*

The mechanisms providing stability support to euro area Member States (the currently operational EFSF and the future ESM ([1])) have been established by the euro area Member States outside the scope of the EU Treaty and the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. Therefore, it is not for the Council to discuss the adequacy of their resources. For this reason, the Council has not discussed the statement of the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund either.

On 9 December 2011, the Heads of State or Government of the euro area decided to reassess the adequacy of the overall ceiling of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF)/European Stability Mechanism (ESM) lending volume, currently set at EUR 500 billion.

As for the strengthening of the IMF, the euro area Member States undertook, in December 2011, to provide EUR 150 billion of additional resources as part of a broader international effort to improve the adequacy of IMF resources. Some non-euro area Member States too indicated their willingness to take part in the process of reinforcing IMF resources. Reinforcement of IMF resources was highlighted by the EU as one of its central messages at the G20 meetings on 24-26 February.

([1]) The Treaty establishing the European Stability Mechanism was signed by the euro area Member States on 2.2.2012.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000745/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* Nieuwe Negationismewet in Frankrijk

In Frankrijk heeft de Assemblée nationale in eerste lezing een wet goedgekeurd die het ontkennen en/of minimaliseren van de genocide door de Turken op de Armeniërs tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog verbiedt en bestraft met hoge boetes en gevangenisstraffen. De wet moet nog door de Senaat, maar algemeen wordt aangenomen dat hij ook daar zal worden goedgekeurd.

Heel wat Franse media en vooraanstaande schrijvers, journalisten en intellectuelen hebben geprotesteerd tegen deze politieke besluitvorming omdat ze de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de vrijheid van historisch onderzoek aan banden legt.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de zich aandienende nieuwe restrictieve wetgeving in Frankrijk?

2. Meent de Commissie niet dat dergelijke wetgeving indruist tegen de bepalingen van het Europees Verdrag voor de Rechten van de Mens dat de vrijheid van meningsuiting expliciet vermeldt?

3. Zal de Commissie deze zaak bij de Franse regering aankaarten?

**Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie**
*(6 maart 2012)*

Vrijheid van meningsuiting is een van de belangrijkste pijlers van onze democratische samenlevingen en is verankerd in het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie en het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens. Volgens artikel 51, lid 1, van het Handvest van de grondrechten zijn de bepalingen ervan uitsluitend tot de lidstaten gericht wanneer zij het recht van de Unie ten uitvoer brengen.

De Commissie wijst erop dat Kaderbesluit 2008/913/JBZ van de Raad lidstaten noch verplicht, noch belet om een specifieke historische gebeurtenis als „genocide" te erkennen. Deze wetgeving bestraft de opzettelijke gedragingen van „publiekelijk vergoelijken, ontkennen of verregaand bagatelliseren van het misdrijf genocide, misdrijven tegen de menselijkheid en oorlogsmisdrijven in de zin van de artikelen 6, 7 en 8 van het Statuut van het Internationaal Strafhof", alsook „de in artikel 6 van het Handvest van het Internationale Militaire Tribunaal, gehecht aan het Verdrag van Londen van 8 augustus 1945, omschreven misdrijven", gericht tegen een groep personen, of een lid van die groep, die op basis van ras, huidskleur, godsdienst, afstamming, dan wel nationale of etnische afkomst wordt gedefinieerd, indien de gedraging van dien aard is dat zij het geweld of de haat tegen een dergelijke groep of een lid van een dergelijke groep dreigt aan te wakkeren ([1]). Het is bijgevolg aan de betrokken lidstaat om te garanderen dat wordt voldaan aan de verplichtingen met betrekking tot de grondrechten, overeenkomstig internationale overeenkomsten en hun nationale wetgeving.

([1]) Artikel 1, lid 1, onder c) en d) van het Kaderbesluit 2008/913/JBZ van de Raad van 28 november 2008 betreffende de bestrijding van bepaalde vormen en uitingen van racisme en vreemdelingenhaat door middel van het strafrecht, PB L 328 van 6.12.2008.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000745/12**
**to the Commission**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* New genocide denial law in France

The French National Assembly has passed at first reading a law which makes it illegal and punishable by heavy fines and prison sentences to deny and/or minimise the Armenian genocide committed by the Turks during the First World War. The law still needs to go to the Senate but it is generally assumed that it will be approved.

Many French media outlets and prominent writers, journalists and intellectuals have protested against this political decision because it curbs freedom of expression and freedom of historical research.

1. Is the Commission aware of the emerging new restrictive legislation in France?

2. Is it not the Commission's opinion that such legislation contravenes the European Convention on Human Rights, which provides the right to freedom of expression?

3. Will the Commission raise this issue with the French Government?

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

Freedom of expression 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. According to Article 51(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

The Commission notes in that Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA does neither oblige nor prevent Member States from recognising any particular historical event as 'genocide'. This legislation penalises the intentional conduct of 'publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court', as well as 'the crimes defined in Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal appended to the London Agreement of 8 August 1945', directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group ([1]). Hence, it is for the Member State concerned to ensure that its obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected.

([1]) Articles 1(1)(c) and (d) of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000747/12**
**aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* VP/HR — Mensenrechten op Cuba

Blijkens krantenberichten (De Morgen, zaterdag 21 januari 2012) is de 31-jarige Cubaanse mensenrechtenactivist Wilmar Villar op donderdag 19 januari jl. in een ziekenhuis van Santiago de Cuba overleden na een hongerstaking van 50 dagen.

Villar, lid van de dissidentenbeweging „Unión Patriótica Cubana" werd vorig jaar gearresteerd en wegens „ongehoorzaamheid en verzet" tot vier jaar cel veroordeeld na een protestmanifestatie in de stad Contramaeste.

Volgens zijn echtgenote Maritza Pelegrino zou Villar ziek geworden zijn ten gevolge de „onmenselijke behandeling door de autoriteiten". Zo werd de dissident lange tijd elke medische behandeling geweigerd.

Wilmar Villar is niet de eerste Cubaanse mensenrechtenactivist die overlijdt na een hongerstaking. In februari 2010 stierf ook de 42-jarige Orlando Zapata Tamayo in een Cubaanse cel na soortgelijk protest tegen het regime.

1. Had de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger kennis van de zaak-Villar? Heeft de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger deze zaak opgevolgd en aangekaart bij de Cubaanse autoriteiten?

2. Zal de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger een officieel onderzoek eisen naar de precieze omstandigheden van het overlijden van Wilmar Villar?

3. Heeft de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger kennis van andere gevallen van hongerstakers die door het Cubaanse regime gevangen worden gehouden? Welke diplomatieke actie wordt hier concreet over genomen?

4. Wat is de concrete houding van de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger meer in het algemeen t.a.v. de mensenrechtensituatie op Cuba?

**Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie**
*(14 juni 2012)*

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van het overlijden van de heer Villar Mendoza en volgt deze zaak nauwlettend. De kwestie werd met de Cubaanse autoriteiten besproken.

De EU-delegatie in Havana ziet, samen met de EU-missiehoofden, toe op de mensenrechtensituatie op Cuba. De EU heeft nog niet besloten of zij zal verzoeken om een officieel onderzoek naar deze zaak.

Op het ogenblik dat dit antwoord wordt opgesteld, heeft de EDEO geen weet van andere bevestigde gevallen van hongerstakingen, maar deze situatie kan op elk moment veranderen. Deze en andere vragen worden in het kader van de in 2008 opnieuw opgestarte politieke dialoog met de Cubaanse autoriteiten besproken.

Mensenrechten en fundamentele vrijheden staan centraal in de betrekkingen van de EU met derde landen, waaronder Cuba. De EU heeft herhaaldelijk benadrukt dat het voor de Cubaanse autoriteiten van groot belang is dat zij vooruitgang blijven boeken om op termijn alle politieke en burgerrechten van de Cubaanse bevolking, met inbegrip van de vrijheid van meningsuiting, volledig te eerbiedigen.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000747/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Human rights in Cuba

According to newspaper reports (De Morgen, Saturday, 21 January 2012), the 31-year-old Cuban human rights activist Wilmar Villar died in a Santiago de Cuba hospital on Thursday, 19 January after a 50-day hunger strike.

Villar, a member of the dissident movement, 'Unión Patriótica Cubana', was arrested last year and sentenced to four years in prison for 'disobedience and resistance' following a protest rally in the town of Contramaeste.

According to his wife Maritza Pelegrino, Villar became ill as a result of 'inhuman treatment by the authorities', including being denied all medical treatment for a long period.

Wilmar Villar is not the first Cuban human rights activist to die after a hunger strike. In February 2010, 42-year-old Orlando Zapata Tamayo died in a Cuban prison following a similar protest against the regime.

1. Did the High Representative know about Villar's case? Has the High Representative followed this case and raised this issue with the Cuban authorities?

2. Will the High Representative request an official investigation into the precise circumstances of Wilmar Villar's death?

3. Does the High Representative know of other hunger strikers in the prisons of the Cuban regime? What concrete diplomatic action is being taken in this connection?

4. What exactly is the High Representative's attitude with regard to the human rights situation on Cuba in general?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 June 2012)*

The HR/VP is aware of the death of Mr Villar Mendoza and followed closely this case. The matter was discussed with the Cuban authorities.

The EU delegation in Havana, together with the EU Heads of Mission, monitors the human rights' situation in Cuba. The EU has not taken any decision to request an official investigation on this case.

To the EEAS knowledge, there are no other confirmed cases of hunger strikes at the moment this reply was prepared, however the situation could change from one moment to the other. This and other questions are discussed with the Cuban authorities in the context of the political dialogue relaunched in 2008.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are at the core of EU relations with third countries, including Cuba. The EU has reiterated on several occasions the importance for the Cuban authorities to continue to make progress towards full respect of all political and civil rights for the Cuban people, including freedom of expression.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000748/12**
**aan de Raad**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* Pensioenleeftijd en vervroegd pensioen Europese ambtenaren

Welk systeem van loonindexering hanteert men voor de Europese ambtenaren in de Raad? Hoeveel bedroeg de loonindexering in 2008, 2009, 2010 en 2011?

Wat is de officiële verplichte pensioenleeftijd voor Europese ambtenaren in de Raad?

Welke systemen van vervroegde pensionering bestaan er eventueel?

Hoeveel Europese ambtenaren in de Raad gingen in de periode 2000-2012 op deze wijze vervroegd met pensioen, en op welke leeftijden?

Kan men als Europees ambtenaar vervroegd met pensioen gaan zonder of met slechts een beperkt verlies van pensioenrechten?

Zo ja, kan de Raad mij meedelen hoeveel ambtenaren in de Raad zonder of slechts met een beperkt verlies van pensioenrechten vervroegd met pensioen zijn gegaan sinds 2000?

**Antwoord**
*(2 april 2012)*

Het loonindexeringssysteem is gelijk voor alle EU-ambtenaren in alle instellingen. De methode daarvoor (zie artikelen 64 en 65 van het Statuut en de uitvoeringsbepalingen in Bijlage XI bij het Statuut) is gebaseerd op statistische indicatoren ([1]) die zijn vastgesteld aan de hand van gegevens van acht lidstaten: België, Duitsland, Spanje, Frankrijk, Italië, Luxemburg, Nederland en het Verenigd Koninkrijk. De cijfers voor de loonindexering waren in 2008, 2009, 2010 en 2011 respectievelijk:

01/07/2008: + 3,0 % (Verordening nr. 1323/2008 van de Raad ([2]))

01/07/2009: + 3,7 % (Verordeningen (EG) nr. 1296/2009 ([3]) en nr. 1190/2010 ([4]) van de Raad);

01/07/2010: + 0,1 % (Verordening nr. 1239/2010 van de Raad ([5]));

01/07/2011 geen aanpassing (Besluit 2011/866/EU van de Raad ([6]))

De verplichte pensioenleeftijd is 65 jaar maar een ambtenaar kan met 63 jaar met pensioen gaan. Vervroegd pensioen is mogelijk vanaf 55 jaar, waarbij het pensioen wordt verminderd met 3,5 % voor ieder jaar voorafgaande aan het jaar waarin de ambtenaar recht zou hebben verkregen op een ouderdomspensioen (zie de artikelen 52 en 77 van het Statuut, en de artikelen 9 en 9 bis van Bijlage VIII en de artikelen 22 en 23 van Bijlage XIII bij het Statuut). Tussen 2000 en 2012 zijn 148 ambtenaren bij de Raad op vervroegd pensioen met pensioenvermindering gegaan, en wel op de volgende leeftijden:

50 jaar: 2

51 jaar: 7

52 jaar: 3

53 jaar: 7

([1]) De indexering is gebaseerd op: ontwikkelingen in de kosten van het levensonderhoud in Brussel, in de kosten van het levensonderhoud buiten Brussel en in de koopkracht van de bezoldigingen van de nationale ambtenaren in de centrale overheidsdiensten.
([2]) PB L 345 van 23.12.2008, blz. 10.
([3]) PB L 348 van 29.12.2009, blz. 10.
([4]) PB L 333 van 17.12.2010, blz. 1.
([5]) PB L 338 van 22.12.2010, blz. 1.
([6]) PB L 341 van 22.12.2011, blz. 54.

54 jaar: 3

55 jaar: 19

56 jaar: 13

57 jaar: 19

58 jaar: 25

59 jaar: 50

Totaal: 148

Een ambtenaar kan ook vervroegd met pensioen gaan zonder pensioenvermindering volgens de regels die zijn vastgelegd in artikel 9, lid 2, van Bijlage VIII bij het Statuut en in de laatste alinea van artikel 50 (pensioen in het belang van de dienst) van het Statuut. Sedert 2004 zijn 68 Raadsambtenaren zonder pensioenvermindering met pensioen gegaan.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000748/12**
**to the Council**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Retirement age and early retirement of European civil servants

What system of wage indexation to European civil servants in the Council? What was the amount of wage indexation in 2008, 2009, 2010 en 2011?

What is the official mandatory retirement age for European civil servants in the Council?

Do arrangements exist for early retirement, and if so what are they?

How many of the Council's European civil servants took early retirement in this way between 2000 and 2012, and at what ages?

Can a European civil servant take early retirement with no or limited loss of pension rights?

If so, can the Council inform me how many civil servants in the Council have taken early retirement since 2000 with no or limited loss of pension rights?

**Reply**
*(2 April 2012)*

The system of wage indexation is the same for all EU civil servants in all institutions. The corresponding method (see Articles 64 and 65 of the Staff Regulations and the implementing rules laid down in Annex XI to the Staff Regulations) is based on statistical indicators ([1]) established on the basis of data drawn from eight Member States: Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The figures for wage indexation in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 were the following:

1.7.2008: + 3.0 % (Council Regulation No 1323/2008 ([2]));

1.7.2009: + 3.7 % (Council Regulations No 1296/2009 ([3]) and 1190/2010 ([4]));

1.7.2010: + 0.1 % (Council Regulation No 1239/2010 ([5]));

1.7.2011 no adjustment (Council Decision 2011/866/EU ([6])).

The mandatory retirement age is 65 years and a civil servant may retire as of 63 years of age. Early retirement is possible as of age 55, with a reduction in pension of 3.5 % for every year before that at which an official would become entitled to a retirement pension (see Articles 52 and 77 of the Staff Regulations, as well as Articles 9 and 9bis of Annex VIII and Articles 22 and 23 of Annex XIII to the Staff Regulations). Between 2000 and 2012, 148 Council officials took early retirement with a reduced pension, at the following ages:

50 years: 2

51 years: 7

52 years: 3

53 years: 7

54 years: 3

([1]) The indexation is based on: changes in the cost of living in Brussels, changes in the cost of living outside Brussels, and changes in the purchasing power of salaries of national civil servants in central government.
([2]) OJ L 345, 23.12.2008, p. 10.
([3]) OJ L 348, 29.12.2009, p. 10.
([4]) OJ L 333, 17.12.2010, p. 1.
([5]) OJ L 338, 22.12.2010, p. 1.
([6]) OJ L 341, 22.12.2011, p. 54.

55 years: 19

56 years: 13

57 years: 19

58 years: 25

59 years: 50

Total: 148

An official can also take early retirement without a reduction in pension under the rules provided for in Article 9 § 2 of Annex VIII to the Staff Regulations and in the last paragraph of Article 50 (retirement in the interest of the service) to the Staff Regulations. Since 2004, 68 Council officials have taken retirement without a reduction in pension.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000749/12**
**aan de Commissie**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* Betrekkingen tussen Turkije en Hamas

Na het bezoek van Ismail Haniyeh, leider van de Palestijnse terreurorganisatie Hamas, aan de Turkse eerste minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in het begin van januari in Istanbul zijn de banden tussen Hamas en Turkije nog verstevigd. Zo bestempelde Erdogan onder meer Hamas als een „legitieme bevrijdingsbeweging".

— Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de verklaringen van de Turkse eerste minister?

— Is Hamas volgens de Commissie een „legitieme bevrijdingsbeweging"?

— Stroken deze verklaringen en het daarmee samenhangende Turkse buitenlands beleid met het acquis communautaire inzake buitenlandse aangelegenheden? Zo neen, wat zijn de gevolgen van deze verklaringen voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen? Hoe zal de Commissie op dit alles reageren?

**Antwoord van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie**
*(16 maart 2012)*

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de verklaringen van de Turkse premier tijdens het recente bezoek van dhr. Haniyeh aan Turkije.

Turkije blijft actief in de ruimere regio en is nog steeds een belangrijke regionale speler in het Midden-Oosten. Turkije steunt het standpunt en de inspanningen van de EU inzake het vredesproces in het Midden-Oosten. Turkije wil verzoening tussen Fatah en Hamas en nationale eenheid onder het Palestijnse volk blijven aanmoedigen.

Verordening (EG) nr. 2580/2001 van de Raad van 27 december 2001 inzake specifieke beperkende maatregelen tegen bepaalde personen en entiteiten met het oog op de strijd tegen het terrorisme ([1]) is van toepassing op Hamas.

([1]) PB L 344 van 28.12.2001.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000749/12**
**to the Commission**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Relations between Turkey and Hamas

Following the visit by Ismail Haniyeh, leader of the Palestinian terrorist organisation, Hamas, to the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in Istanbul in early January, the links between Hamas and Turkey have become even stronger. Erdoğan described Hamas, for example, as a 'legitimate freedom movement'.

— Is the Commission aware of the statements made by the Turkish Prime Minister?

— Does the Commission regard Hamas as a 'legitimate freedom movement'?

— Are these statements and the related Turkish foreign policy in keeping with the *acquis communautaire* concerning foreign affairs? If not, what are the implications of these statements for the accession negotiations? What will be the Commission's reaction to all this?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 March 2012)*

The Commission is aware of the statements made by the Turkish Prime Minister during the recent visit of Mr Haniyeh to Turkey.

Turkey continues to be active in its wider neighbourhood, and remains an important regional player in the Middle East. Turkey supports the EU position and the EU efforts on the Middle East Peace Process. Turkey sees a continuing role for itself in encouraging Fatah/Hamas reconciliation and national unity among Palestinians.

Hamas is subject to Council Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001 of 27 December 2001 on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 344, 28.12.2001.

*(Nederlandse versie)*

**Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000750/12**
**aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 januari 2012)*

*Betreft:* VP/HR — Betrekkingen tussen Turkije en Hamas

Na het bezoek van Ismail Haniyeh, leider van de Palestijnse terreurorganisatie Hamas, aan de Turkse eerste minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in het begin van januari in Istanbul zijn de banden tussen Hamas en Turkije nog verstevigd. Zo bestempelde Erdogan onder meer Hamas als een „legitieme bevrijdingsbeweging".

— Is de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger op de hoogte van de verklaringen van de Turkse eerste minister?

— Is Hamas volgens de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger een „legitieme bevrijdingsbeweging"?

— Heeft de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger deze kwestie aangekaart of is zij dit van plan te doen en op welke wijze?

**Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie**
*(20 maart 2012)*

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is op de hoogte van de verklaringen van de Turkse eerste minister tijdens het recente bezoek van Haniyeh aan Turkije.

Turkije blijft een belangrijke regionale macht in het Midden-Oosten. Turkije steunt het standpunt en de inspanningen van de EU inzake het vredesproces in het Midden-Oosten. Turkije wil verzoening tussen Fatah en Hamas en nationale eenheid blijven aanmoedigen.

Verordening (EU) nr. 2580/2001 ([1]) (ook wel de Europese terrorismelijst genoemd) is van toepassing op Hamas.

([1]) PB L 344 van 28.12.2001.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000750/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Frank Vanhecke (EFD)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Relations between Turkey and Hamas

Following the visit by Ismail Haniyeh, leader of the Palestinian terrorist organisation, Hamas, to the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in Istanbul in early January, the links between Hamas and Turkey have become even stronger. Erdoğan described Hamas, for example, as a 'legitimate freedom movement'.

— Is the High Representative aware of the statements made by the Turkish Prime Minister?

— Does the High Representative regard Hamas as a 'legitimate freedom movement'?

— Has the High Representative addressed this issue or does she intend to do so and in which manner?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is aware of the statements made by the Turkish Prime Minister during the recent visit of Haniyeh to Turkey.

Turkey remains an important regional player in the Middle East. Turkey supports the EU position and the EU efforts on the MEPP. Turkey sees a continuing role for itself in encouraging Fatah/Hamas reconciliation and national unity.

Hamas is subject to EU Regulation No 2580/2001 ([1]) (known as EU 'terrorist list').

([1]) OJ L 344, 28.12.2001.

*(Versão portuguesa)*

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000751/12**
**à Comissão**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(31 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Articulação do FEDER com o Quadro Estratégico Comum

A Comissão Europeia apresentou, em 6 de outubro de 2011, a proposta de regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 6 de outubro de 2011, que estabelece disposições comuns relativas ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, ao Fundo Social Europeu e ao Fundo de Coesão, ao Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural e ao Fundo Europeu para os Assuntos Marítimos e as Pescas, abrangidos pelo Quadro Estratégico Comum, e que estabelece disposições gerais relativas ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, ao Fundo Social Europeu e ao Fundo de Coesão, e que revoga o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 (COM(2011)0615) e a proposta de regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 6 de outubro de 2011, que estabelece disposições específicas relativas ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional e ao objetivo de Investimento no Crescimento e no Emprego e que revoga o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1080/2006 (COM(2011)0614);

A proposta legislativa sobre o Quadro Estratégico Comum identifica os vários tipos de ação, os objetivos temáticos e as prioridades de investimento para o próximo período de programação de 2014 a 2020, e é necessário definir, de forma clara e objetiva, qual a relação e a hierarquia entre eles;

No âmbito da proposta de regulamento FEDER, é importante determinar e articular, no âmbito de financiamento do FEDER no que respeita, nomeadamente, aos objetivos temáticos inscritos no Quadro Estratégico Comum, os quais devem ser traduzidos em prioridades específicas relacionadas com cada fundo estrutural.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como definir melhor qual a relação e a hierarquia entre os vários tipos de ação, os objetivos temáticos e as prioridades de investimento, considerando que, numa ótica de segurança jurídica e de eficiência económica, tal deve ser uma preocupação a ter em conta?

2. Qual o procedimento a seguir para a definição das prioridades específicas, no âmbito de cada fundo e, nomeadamente, do FEDER, correspondentes aos vários objetivos temáticos identificados na proposta de Quadro Estratégico Comum?

**Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000752/12**
**à Comissão**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(31 de janeiro de 2012)*

*Assunto:* Contratos de parceria e programas operacionais no âmbito da proposta de Quadro Estratégico Comum dos fundos estruturais para o período de programação 2014/2020

A Comissão Europeia apresentou, em 6 de outubro de 2011, a proposta de regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 6 de outubro de 2011, que estabelece disposições comuns relativas ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, ao Fundo Social Europeu e ao Fundo de Coesão, ao Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural e ao Fundo Europeu para os Assuntos Marítimos e as Pescas, abrangidos pelo Quadro Estratégico Comum, e que estabelece disposições gerais relativas ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, ao Fundo Social Europeu e ao Fundo de Coesão, e que revoga o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1083/2006 (COM(2011)0615) e a proposta de regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 6 de outubro de 2011, que estabelece disposições específicas relativas ao Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional e ao objetivo de Investimento no Crescimento e no Emprego e que revoga o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1080/2006 (COM(2011)0614).

Os contratos de parceria deverão, no próximo período financeiro 2014/2020, prosseguir os objetivos da Estratégia UE 2020 e ser orientados por uma abordagem integrada baseada no Quadro Estratégico Comum, através de uma seleção dos objetivos temáticos aí consagrados, da indicação das áreas prioritárias e dos meios para a sua efetiva execução.

Os programas operacionais deverão definir a estratégia programática e estipular o plano financeiro, no âmbito da política regional, através da instituição de eixos prioritários a nível nacional e da determinação dos meios a utilizar para a execução dessa estratégia, visando contribuir, assim, para a realização dos objetivos da Estratégia UE 2020.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Até que ponto deve o regulamento relativo ao Quadro Estratégico Comum determinar, para o próximo período, o conteúdo dos contratos de parceria e, consequentemente, dos programas operacionais?

2. Uma vez que o conteúdo dos contratos de parceria e dos programas operacionais dos Estados-membros ainda estão por definir, até onde pode a proposta de Quadro Estratégico Comum vir a definir um quadro único, coerente e estável para o futuro e, ao mesmo tempo, garantir maior segurança jurídica e melhor eficiência económica face ao período de programação atual?

**Resposta conjunta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão**
*(16 de março de 2012)*

1. A proposta da Comissão define um quadro lógico para a programação estratégica da UE, nacional e regional. A programação estratégica será apoiada por onze objetivos temáticos derivados da estratégia Europa 2020, que são comuns a todos os fundos dos cinco Quadros Estratégicos Comuns (QEC), tal como previsto no artigo 9.° do projeto de regulamento que estabelece disposições comuns. Cada fundo contribui para esses objetivos temáticos sob a forma de prioridades pormenorizadas nos regulamentos específicos do fundo.

2. O regulamento que estabelece disposições comuns deve ser complementado por um QEC. Isto permitirá identificar as ações-chave relativas aos fundos QEC que contribuam para as prioridades enunciadas na regulamentação específica dos fundos, a fim de prestar uma orientação estratégica clara para contratos e programas de parceria. O QEC deverá facilitar a coordenação setorial e territorial das intervenções da UE no âmbito dos fundos QEC, bem como com outras políticas e instrumentos relevantes da UE.

3. Os programas devem fixar objetivos e ações específicos que sejam adequados no contexto nacional e regional e que contribuam para as prioridades e os objetivos temáticos estabelecidos no regulamento. As ações previstas pelo Estado-Membro no âmbito dos programas devem ter igualmente em conta as principais ações estabelecidas no QEC. Os contratos e programas de parceria devem procurar maximizar a coordenação e as sinergias entre os fundos, bem como entre estas e outras políticas e instrumentos relevantes da UE.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000751/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Dovetailing the ERDF into the Common Strategic Framework

On 6 October 2011 the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund covered by the Common Strategic Framework and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (COM(2011) 0615), and a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific provisions concerning the European Regional Development Fund and the Investment in growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (COM(2011) 0614).

The legislative proposal on the Common Strategic Framework identifies the types of action, the thematic goals, and the investment priorities to be pursued in the next programming period (2014-2020), and these need to be organised on the basis of a clearly and objectively defined relationship and order of ranking.

As far as the proposed ERDF regulation is concerned, it is important to determine how ERDF funding should be geared to the thematic goals set out in the Common Strategic Framework, which should be translated into specific priorities for each structural fund.

1. What is the best way to define the relationship and the hierarchy by which the types of action, the thematic goals, and the investment priorities should be governed, given that legal certainty and economic efficiency imply a need to take that point into account?

2. What procedure should be employed to define the specific priorities under each fund, including the ERDF, corresponding to the thematic goals charted in the Common Strategic Framework proposal?

**Question for written answer E-000752/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Partnership contracts and operational programmes within the proposed Common Strategic Framework for the Structural Funds in the 2014-2020 programming period

On 6 October 2011 the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund covered by the Common Strategic Framework and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (COM(2011)0615), and a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific provisions concerning the European Regional Development Fund and the Investment in growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (COM(2011)0614).

During the next financial period (2014-2020), partnership contracts should pursue the goals of the EU 2020 strategy and be guided by an integrated approach based on the Common Strategic Framework, to that end selecting thematic objectives and identifying priority areas and the means for their effective implementation.

Operational programmes should constitute the programme-based element of the strategy and lay down the financial plan for regional policy by establishing of national priorities and identifying the means of implementation, their object thus being to help attain the goals of the EU 2020 strategy.

1. As far as the next period is concerned, to what extent should, the regulation relating to the Common Strategic Framework lay down the substance of partnership contracts and hence operational programmes?

2. Given that the substance of the Member States' partnership contracts and operational programmes has still to be determined, to what extent can the Common Strategic Framework proposal define a stable, coherent single

framework for the future while providing greater legal certainty and economic efficiency compared with the current programming period?

**Joint answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 March 2012)*

1. The Commission proposal defines a logical framework for strategic programming at EU, national and regional level. Strategic programming shall be underpinned by eleven thematic objectives derived from the Europe 2020 strategy, which are common to all five Common Strategic Framework (CSF) Funds, as set out in Article 9 of the draft Common Provisions Regulation. Each fund contributes to these thematic objectives in the form of detailed priorities in the fund specific regulations.

2. The Common Provisions Regulation shall be complemented by a CSF. This will identify key actions for the CSF Funds which contribute to the priorities set out in the fund specific regulations, in order to provide clear strategic direction to partnership contracts and programmes. The CSF should facilitate sectoral and territorial coordination of EU interventions under the CSF Funds, and with other relevant EU policies and instruments.

3. Programmes shall set out specific objectives and actions that are appropriate in the national and regional context and which contribute to thematic objectives and priorities established in the regulations. The actions planned by the Member State within programmes shall also take into account the key actions set out in the CSF. Partnership contracts and programmes should seek to maximise coordination and synergies between the funds, and with other relevant EU policies and instruments.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000753/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Ενδεχόμενη μόλυνση στη Βόρεια Θάλασσα

Τα παράκτια και ανοικτής θαλάσσης αιολικά πάρκα στη Βόρεια Θάλασσα και τη Βαλτική θα μπορούσαν να αποδειχθούν σοβαρός κίνδυνος για τα θαλάσσια οικοσυστήματα, σύμφωνα με τον ειδικό σε θέματα τοξικότητας υλικών όσον αφορά το περιβάλλον, Ρολφ Σνάιντερ, που διεξάγει έρευνες για την Υπηρεσία Αντικατάστασης Πρώτων Υλών (FNR). Τα συνθετικά και ορυκτά έλαια, που χρησιμοποιούνται για τη λίπανση των περιστρεφόμενων πτερύγων και για τη συντήρηση των υδραυλικών τμημάτων τους, αποδομούνται πολύ δύσκολα σε συνθήκες φυσικού περιβάλλοντος. Σε περίπτωση βλάβης μιας αιολικής γεννήτριας, έως 1 000 λίτρα αυτών των υλικών είναι δυνατόν να διαρρεύσουν στη θάλασσα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Γνωρίζει κατά πόσο αυτός ο κίνδυνος είναι υπαρκτός και υπάρχει κάποια σύσταση για τα πρότυπα ασφαλείας του φυσικού περιβάλλοντος;

**Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(15 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η ερευνητική εργασία που αναφέρεται από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος πραγματεύεται την ανάπτυξη βιο-λιπαντικών για ανεμογεννήτριες. Οι πληροφορίες που διαθέτει η Επιτροπή δεν αρκούν για να είναι η τελευταία σε θέση να εκτιμήσει την έκταση του κινδύνου απόρριψης λιπαντικών από ανεμογεννήτριες στη θάλασσα. Εντός των ανεμογεννητριών υπάρχουν διατάξεις με προορισμό να εντοπίζουν τυχόν διαρροές λιπαντικών. Υπάρχει ισχύουσα νομοθεσία της ΕΕ, όπως η οδηγία πλαίσιο για τη θαλάσσια στρατηγική (2008/56/ΕΚ) και η οδηγία περί αστικής ευθύνης (2004/35/ΕΚ ([1])) η οποία υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να λαμβάνουν μέτρα κατά των πιέσεων που απειλούν το θαλάσσιο περιβάλλον και αποδίδει αστικές ευθύνες όταν συμβαίνει περιβαλλοντική ζημία. Εμπίπτει στην ευθύνη των επιμέρους κρατών μελών, ωστόσο, στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας αδειοδότησης, να εκτιμήσουν τους κινδύνους και να λάβουν τα κατάλληλα μέτρα, εάν κριθεί αναγκαίο.

([1]) ΕΕ L 143 της 30.4.2004.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000753/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Potential pollution of the North Sea

The on-shore and off-shore wind farms in the North Sea and the Baltic could be posing a serious risk to marine ecosystems, according to the expert on toxic chemicals in the environment, Rolf Schneider, who is carrying out research for the German Agency for Renewable Resources (FNR). The synthetic and mineral oils used to lubricate the turbine blades and to maintain their hydraulic units degrade very slowly in the natural environment. If a wind turbine is damaged, up to 1 000 litres of oil can escape into the sea.

In view of this:

Is the Commission aware of the extent of this danger and what, if anything, can it recommend concerning safety standards to protect the natural environment?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(15 March 2012)*

The research quoted by the Honourable Member deals with the development of bio-lubricants for wind mills. The information the Commission has is not sufficient to be able to assess the extent of the danger of discharging lubricants from windmills to the sea. Within windmills there are devices intended to capture possible leakages of lubricants. There is EU legislation in place, such as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC) and the Liability Directive (2004/35/EC ([1])) which obliges Member States to take measures against pressures which threaten the marine environment and which assigns the liability when there is environmental damage. It is the responsibility of individual Member States in the process of licensing, however, to assess the risks and to take proper measures if considered necessary.

([1]) OJ L 143, 30.4.2004.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000754/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Παρέμβαση για ανάπτυξη

Μετά και τα νέα στοιχεία, που φέρουν τις χώρες που έχουν λάβει σκληρά μέτρα λιτότητας να μη μπορούν να βγουν από το φαύλο κύκλο της επιβράδυνσης, γίνεται ευρέως κατανοητό ότι η Ευρώπη δεν μπορεί να υπερνικήσει τη κρίση έτσι, αλλά χρειάζονται αναπτυξιακές πρωτοβουλίες στο πρότυπο του New Deal.

Γίνεται κατανοητό ότι, με τις δύσκολες συνθήκες τις οποίες βιώνουν οι οικονομίες στη Νότια Ευρώπη, επιβάλλονται συνταγές off the textbook.

Το βιώσιμο ισοζύγιο πληρωμών περιλαμβάνεται ως απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση στο άρθρο 119 (3) της Συνθήκης για τη Λειτουργία της ΕΕ, όμως δε φαίνεται δυνατή η ύπαρξη βιώσιμου ισοζυγίου πληρωμών στο ορατό μέλλον, τουλάχιστον για την Ελλάδα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Υπάρχουν σκέψεις για κεντρική παρέμβαση στην αγορά με τη προώθηση μεγάλων έργων, ώστε να μπορέσει να υπάρξει ρευστότητα στην αγορά;

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

Η Επιτροπή παρουσιάζει τις πολιτικές προτεραιότητες της ΕΕ στην Ετήσια Επισκόπηση της Ανάπτυξης (ΕΕΑ). Οι προτεραιότητες για το 2012 καθορίστηκαν ακριβώς με σκοπό να βοηθήσουν την Ευρώπη να εξέλθει από την κρίση και να τονωθεί το αναπτυξιακό της δυναμικό.

Η Επιτροπή υπέδειξε τον τρόπο κατά τον οποίο μπορεί να τονωθεί η οικονομική μεγέθυνση σε μια στιγμή όπου είναι αυστηρά περιορισμένα τα περιθώρια για μακροοικονομικά μέτρα τόνωσης — ιδίως φορολογικά κίνητρα. Δεδομένης της κρίσης εμπιστοσύνης όσον αφορά τη βιωσιμότητα του δημόσιου χρέους σε ορισμένες χώρες της ευρωζώνης, η διαφοροποιημένη και προσανατολισμένη στην ανάπτυξη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση αποτελεί αναγκαιότητα. Η Επιτροπή έδωσε έμφαση στον προσανατολισμό της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης στην ανάπτυξη, επισημαίνοντας την ανάγκη να διαφυλαχθούν οι προσανατολισμένες στην ανάπτυξη δαπάνες (π.χ. για παιδεία, έρευνα, καινοτομία, ενέργεια) και περιγράφοντας τον τρόπο κατά τον οποίο τα φορολογικά έσοδα μπορούν να συμβάλουν περισσότερο στην ανάπτυξη και να παράγονται κατά τον λιγότερο επιβλαβή τρόπο.

Η ΕΕΑ περιέχει προτάσεις για τη στήριξη της ανάπτυξης με διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις. Πεδία που χρειάζονταν επείγουσα παρέμβαση είχαν ήδη εντοπιστεί το 2011, και τα επιμέρους κράτη μέλη έγιναν αποδέκτες σύστασης του Συμβουλίου για την ανάληψη δράσης. Τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να επιταχύνουν τις μεταρρυθμίσεις. Για την ίδια την ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή προσδιόρισε μοχλούς ανάπτυξης σε τομείς όπως η εμβάθυνση της εσωτερικής αγοράς, ιδίως στον τομέα των υπηρεσιών, η άρση των εμποδίων για την εσωτερική ψηφιακή αγορά, η αξιοποίηση του δυναμικού του εξωτερικού εμπορίου και η άντληση του μέγιστου οφέλους από τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ. Υπό το πρίσμα αυτό, μια πρωτοβουλία για ομόλογα έργων στοχεύει στη διευκόλυνση ιδιωτικών επενδύσεων σε μείζονα έργα υποδομής, με ένα προτεινόμενο πιλοτικό σχέδιο που θα ξεκινήσει το 2012/2013, στο πλαίσιο του οποίου θα δεσμευθεί ποσό 230 εκατ. ευρώ από τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ για τη στήριξη επενδύσεων αξίας έως 3,5 δις ευρώ.

Η ΕΕΑ περιλαμβάνει επίσης κατάλογο εκκρεμουσών ή μελλοντικών προτάσεων της Επιτροπής με υψηλό αναπτυξιακό αντίκτυπο, για τις οποίες θα επιταχυνθεί η νομοθετική διαδικασία.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000754/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Action to promote growth

In the light of fresh evidence showing that countries that have taken harsh austerity measures are unable to escape the vicious circle of recession, it is widely accepted that Europe cannot overcome the crisis this way, but needs initiatives to stimulate growth along the lines of the New Deal.

It is clear that, under the difficult circumstances faced by the economies in southern Europe, we need unconventional solutions.

A sustainable balance of payments is a necessary requirement under Article 119(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. However this does not seem possible in the foreseeable future, at least not in Greece.

In view of this:

Is the Commission envisaging central intervention so as to promote major projects and encourage liquidity on the market?

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

The Commission presents the policy priorities for the EU in its Annual Growth Survey (AGS). The priorities for 2012 were set precisely to help move Europe out of the crisis and bolster growth potential.

The Commission indicated how growth can be stimulated at a time when the scope for macroeconomic stimulus — in particular fiscal stimulus — is severely constrained. In view of the crisis of confidence regarding the sustainability of public debt in a number of euro area countries, differentiated and growth-friendly fiscal consolidation is a necessity. The Commission emphasised the growth-friendliness of fiscal consolidation, pointing out the need to preserve growth-friendly expenditure (e.g. on education, research, innovation, energy) and outlining how tax revenues can be more growth-friendly and generated in the least harmful way.

The AGS contains proposals to support growth by structural reforms. Urgent areas were already identified in 2011 and individual Member States received a recommendation for action by the Council. Member States need to speed up reform. For the EU as such, the Commission identified growth levers in areas such as deepening of the internal market, in particular in services, removing obstacles for the internal digital market, using the potential of external trade and making the most of the EU budget. In this context, a project bonds initiative aims to facilitate private investment in major infrastructure projects, with a proposed pilot project to be launched in 2012/2013 committing EUR 230 million from the EU budget to support investments worth up to EUR 3.5 billion.

The AGS also includes a list of pending or future Commission proposals with high growth impact for which the legislative process will be accelerated.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000756/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Επανεμφάνιση ελονοσίας στην Ελλάδα

Στο νομό Λακωνίας πληθαίνουν τα κρούσματα ελονοσίας. Σύμφωνα με τον έλληνα Υφυπουργό Υγείας, τα περιστατικά είναι αυξανόμενα και η έξαρση της νόσου οφείλεται στη μαζική άφιξη αλλοδαπών, κυρίως από το Μπαγκλαντές. Επίσης σύμφωνα με το Κέντρο Ελέγχου και Πρόληψης Νοσημάτων, πολλοί παράγοντες που συνυπάρχουν στη χώρα μας στην παρούσα περίοδο παίζουν σημαντικό ρόλο στην αξιολόγηση κινδύνου της κατάστασης, μεταξύ των οποίων και το γεγονός ότι η Ελλάδα αποτελεί τόπο διαμονής και εργασίας μεταναστών από χώρες στις οποίες ενδημεί η νόσος.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Έχει γνώση του μεγέθους του προβλήματος της επανεμφάνισης της ελονοσίας στην Ελλάδα;

— Υπάρχει σχέδιο δράσης το οποίο συστήνεται στις ελληνικές αρχές για την αντιμετώπιση του;

**Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(1 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Πρόληψης και Ελέγχου Νόσων (ΕΚΠΕΝ) και η Παγκόσμια Οργάνωση Υγείας (ΠΟΥ) έχουν συνεργαστεί στενά με τις ελληνικές αρχές δημόσιας υγείας όσον αφορά τον τρόπο αντιμετώπισης των κρουσμάτων ελονοσίας στη χώρα. Πραγματοποιήθηκαν δύο αποστολές αξιολόγησης με σκοπό την παρακολούθηση της κατάστασης και την παρουσίαση στις ελληνικές αρχές εναλλακτικών λύσεων για την πρόληψη και τον έλεγχο της εξάπλωσης της νόσου. Τα αποτελέσματα διατίθενται στην ακόλουθη διεύθυνση:
http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=759

Η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να παρακολουθεί προσεκτικά την κατάσταση στην Ελλάδα, δεδομένου ότι η ελονοσία είναι μία από τις μεταδοτικές ασθένειες για τις οποίες προβλέπεται εποπτεία της ΕΕ.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000756/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Reappearance of malaria in Greece

The number of malaria cases is increasing in the Lakonia prefecture. This has been confirmed by the Greek Ministry for Health, which ascribes the spread of the disease to wholesale immigration, mainly from Bangladesh. The Centre for the Control and Prevention of Disease has also indicated that this risk of contracting the disease in Greece is currently being aggravated by a large number of different factors, including the presence of immigrants from countries where the disease is endemic, who are living and working in Greece.

In view of this:

— Is the Commission aware of the scale of the problem caused by the reappearance of malaria in Greece?

— Can it recommend a plan of action to the Greek authorities to address this problem?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(1 March 2012)*

The Commission, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have worked closely together with the Greek public health authorities on how to address the malaria cases in the country. Two assessment missions have been undertaken to follow up the situation and to provide the Greek health authorities with options for preventing and controlling the spread of the disease. Results are available at: http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=759

The Commission continues to monitor the situation in Greece closely since malaria is one of the communicable diseases that are covered by EU surveillance.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000757/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Νέοι και αναζήτηση εργασίας

Περίπου εκατό χιλιάδες ευρωπαϊκά βιογραφικά συμπληρώθηκαν το 2011 από νέους έλληνες που αναζήτησαν μία καλύτερη τύχη εκτός Ελλάδας.

Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία του Ευρωπαϊκού Κέντρου για την Ανάπτυξη της Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης (Cedefop) και της Ευρωπαϊκής Πύλης Europass αναφορικά με τον αριθμό συμπλήρωσης ευρωπαϊκών βιογραφικών από έλληνες πολίτες, το 2011 συμπληρώθηκαν διαδικτυακά από έλληνες πολίτες 95 732 ευρωπαϊκά βιογραφικά.

Ο αριθμός αυτός καθιστά τη χώρα μας, αναλογικά με τον πληθυσμό της, από τις πρώτες στην ΕΕ στη συμπλήρωση των εν λόγω εντύπων (μετά την Πορτογαλία, την Ιταλία και τη Ρουμανία). Ο αντίστοιχος αριθμός για το 2010 ανήλθε στα 53 043 ενώ για το 2009 στα 36 269 βιογραφικά.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— με ποιο τρόπο μπορούν να βρεθούν οι πόροι που χρειάζεται να διοχετευθούν για τη στήριξη της εργασίας των νέων και την επιτάχυνση της ένταξης στην αγορά εργασίας εκείνων που μόλις ολοκλήρωσαν τις σπουδές τους;

**Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(8 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η ένταξη των νέων στην αγορά εργασίας είναι ένα θέμα ύψιστης προτεραιότητας για την Επιτροπή, λόγω των τρεχουσών συνθηκών της αυξανόμενης ανεργίας των νέων. Αυτό τονίστηκε με την ανακοίνωση της πρωτοβουλίας για την παροχή ευκαιριών στους νέους της 12ης Δεκεμβρίου 2011 και με την πρωτοβουλία που ανέλαβε ο Πρόεδρος Barroso κατά το τελευταίο Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο στις 30 Ιανουαρίου 2012.

Με βάση αυτή την πρόσφατη πρωτοβουλία, η Επιτροπή αναλαμβάνει τη δέσμευση να συνεργαστεί εντατικά με τα κράτη μέλη με σκοπό την ενίσχυση των μέτρων για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας των νέων.

Τα συγχρηματοδοτούμενα από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα «Ανάπτυξη των Ανθρώπινων Πόρων» και «Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση», για τα οποία το ΕΚΤ συνεισφέρει 3,7 δισ. ευρώ, προβλέπουν την παροχή βοήθειας, μεταξύ άλλων, για την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων μέσω μέτρων εκπαίδευσης και επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης, συστημάτων μαθητείας και επιδοτήσεων για την απασχόληση.

Κατά κανόνα, η υιοθέτηση μέτρων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το ΕΚΤ έχει αυξηθεί από το 2011 και προβλέπονται πόροι που προορίζονται για βοήθεια στους νέους. Όμως, συγκεκριμένες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα ποσά που έχουν διατεθεί στο πλαίσιο του ΕΚΤ στην Ελλάδα για την προώθηση της απασχόλησης των νέων παρέχονται μόνον από την ΕΥΣΕΚΤ ([1]), την ειδική υπηρεσία συντονισμού και παρακολούθησης των δράσεων του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου στην Ελλάδα.

([1]) Κοραή 4, 10564 Αθήνα· τηλ. +30 210 5271400· φαξ +30 210 5271420· δικτυακός τόπος: www.esfhellas.gr; δ/νση ηλ. ταχυδρομείου: eysekt@mou.gr.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000757/12**
**to the Commission**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Young jobseekers

In 2011, around one hundred thousand European CVs were completed by young Greeks seeking better opportunities outside Greece.

According to data from the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the European Europass portal, referring to the number of European CVs completed by Greek citizens, Greek citizens completed 92 732 European CVs online in 2011.

This number makes Greece, taking account of its population size, one of the EU Member States in which the largest number of such forms have been completed (after Portugal, Italy and Romania). This compares with 53 043 in 2010 and 36 269 in 2009.

In view of this:

Can the Commission say how the necessary resources can be found to promote the employment of young people and to accelerate the entry into the workforce of young people who have just completed their studies?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(8 March 2012)*

The integration of young people into the labour market is an issue of the highest priority for the Commission given the current circumstances of rising youth unemployment. This was emphasised by the Youth Opportunity Initiative Communication of 12 December 2011 and the initiative taken by President Barroso at the last European Council on 30 January 2012.

Building on this recent initiative, the Commission is committed to work intensively with the Member States to reinforce measures to tackle youth unemployment.

The European Social Fund (ESF) co-funded operational programmes of 'Human Resources Development' and 'Education and Lifelong Learning', to which the ESF contributes EUR 3.7 billion, provide assistance *inter alia* to the promotion of youth employment through education and vocational training measures, apprenticeship schemes and *employment subsidies*.

In general, the uptake of measures co-financed with the ESF has increased since 2011 and this includes resources aimed at helping young people. However, concrete information on the amounts already spent under the ESF in Greece to promote youth employment can only be obtained by contacting EYSEKT ([1]), the coordination and monitoring authority for ESF actions in Greece.

([1]) 4 Korai Street, 10564 Athens; tel. +30 210-5271400; fax +30 210-5271420; website: www.esfhellas.gr; email: eysekt@mou.gr.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000758/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Αντιμετώπιση της παιδικής πορνογραφίας

Δόθηκαν στη δημοσιότητα τα ονόματα των εννέα ατόμων που συνελήφθησαν για συμμετοχή σε κύκλωμα διακίνησης υλικού παιδικής πορνογραφίας, στο πλαίσιο πανευρωπαϊκής αστυνομικής επιχείρησης με την κωδική ονομασία «IKARUS». Ανάμεσά τους υψηλόβαθμοι διπλωμάτες, ανώτατοι αξιωματικοί του στρατού, επιχειρηματίες, οδηγοί σχολικών λεωφορείων και άλλοι.

Στο πλαίσιο της επιχείρησης «IKARUS», στην Ελλάδα συνελήφθησαν εννέα άτομα, για άλλα πέντε σχηματίστηκαν δικογραφίες ενώ εκατοντάδες άλλοι παιδόφιλοι συνελήφθησαν στις υπόλοιπες χώρες της Ευρώπης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— γίνονται συντονισμένες και ουσιαστικές προσπάθειες για την καταπολέμηση της παιδικής πορνογραφίας και παιδοφιλίας στην ΕΕ;

**Απάντηση της κας Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(13 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η επιχείρηση «Icarus» αποτελεί καθαυτή απόδειξη επιτυχούς, συντονισμένης και ουσιαστικής προσπάθειας για την καταπολέμηση της σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης παιδιών και της παιδικής πορνογραφίας σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Η επιχείρηση αυτή, η οποία συντονίστηκε και υποστηρίχτηκε από την Ευρωπόλ, κατέληξε σε 112 συλλήψεις σε 22 χώρες, μέχρι τώρα, και είναι μία μόνον από τις πολλές επιχειρήσεις σε αυτόν τον τομέα στις οποίες συμμετέχει η Ευρωπόλ.

Η οδηγία 2011/92/ΕΕ ([1]) θα διευκολύνει περαιτέρω τον συντονισμό των φορέων που συμμετέχουν στην καταπολέμηση της σεξουαλικής κακοποίησης και εκμετάλλευσης των παιδιών. Προβλέπει την προσέγγιση των ορισμών 20 εγκλημάτων, που καλύπτουν και νέα εγκλήματα, όπως η προσέγγιση παιδιών για αθέμιτους σκοπούς ή η κακοποίηση με εικονοκλήσεις μέσω κάμερας web χωρίς φυσική επαφή, και καθορίζει ελάχιστα επίπεδα για να διευκολύνει την έρευνα και την άσκηση ποινικής δίωξης, επεκτείνει τον νόμο του ορίου ηλικίας για τις πλέον αξιόποινες πράξεις πέραν της ενηλικίωσης του θύματος, αίρει τους κανόνες εμπιστευτικότητας που εμποδίζουν ορισμένους επαγγελματίες με βασικό αντικείμενο εργασίας την ενασχόληση με παιδιά να υποβάλουν αναφορά και ενθαρρύνει την αναφορά υποψίας κακοποίησης. Η έρευνα και η άσκηση ποινικής δίωξης για όλα τα αξιόποινα εγκλήματα δεν εξαρτώνται από την υποβολή μήνυσης ή καταγγελίας από το θύμα και θα μπορούν να συνεχίζονται ακόμη και εάν το πρόσωπο αυτό αποσύρει την κατάθεσή του. Πρέπει να τίθενται στη διάθεση ανακριτών και εισαγγελέων αποτελεσματικά ερευνητικά εργαλεία και τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να συστήνουν ερευνητικές μονάδες για να ταυτοποιούν τα θύματα, ιδίως μέσω ανάλυσης υλικού παιδικής πορνογραφίας.

Εξάλλου, το πρόγραμμα «Ασφαλέστερο Διαδίκτυο» υποστηρίζει την ανάπτυξη εργαλείων ΤΠ και βάσεων δεδομένων που επιτρέπουν τις υπηρεσίες επιβολής του νόμου να διεξάγουν αποτελεσματικότερα τις έρευνες σε υποθέσεις σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης παιδιών, να συνεργάζονται καλύτερα διεθνώς και να έχουν καλύτερη πρόσβαση σε αποδεικτικά στοιχεία σε διεθνή βάση. Οι εξελίξεις αυτές θα βοηθήσουν να ενισχυθεί περαιτέρω συντονισμός σε ενωσιακό επίπεδο και να βελτιωθεί η αντιμετώπιση αυτών των εγκλημάτων σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη.

([1]) Οδηγία 2011/92/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με την καταπολέμηση της σεξουαλικής κακοποίησης και της σεξουαλικής εκμετάλλευσης παιδιών και της παιδικής πορνογραφίας και την αντικατάσταση της απόφασης πλαίσιο 2004/68/ΔΕΥ του Συμβουλίου, ΕΕ L 335 της 17.12.2011, σ. 1-14.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000758/12**
**to the Commission**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Combating child pornography

The names of nine persons arrested as part of a network trafficking child pornography material have been disclosed as part of a European-wide police operation codenamed 'IKARUS'. Among them are high-level diplomats, high-ranking army officers, businessmen, school bus drivers, etc.

As part of operation IKARUS, in Greece nine people have been arrested, another five have had charges laid against them and hundreds of other paedophiles have been arrested in other European countries.

I would like to ask the Commission:

— Are coordinated and substantial efforts being made to combat child pornography and paedophilia in the EU?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

Operation 'Icarus' in itself is evidence of a successful, coordinated and substantial effort to combat child sexual exploitation and child pornography at EU level. This operation, coordinated and supported by Europol, has resulted in 112 arrests across 22 countries so far and is just one of several operations in this area that Europol has been involved in.

Directive 2011/92/EU ([1]) will further facilitate the coordination of actors in the fight against child sexual abuse and exploitation. It approximates the definition of 20 offences, covering also new ones such as online grooming or webcam abuse, and sets minimum levels for criminal penalties. To facilitate investigation and prosecution, it extends the statute of limitation for most offences until after the victim has reached adulthood, removes confidentiality obstacles to reporting by professionals whose main duty involves working with children, and encourages reporting suspected abuse. Investigation and prosecution for all offences will not depend on reports or accusations by the victim, nor will they be stopped by a withdrawal of statements. Effective investigative tools are to be made available to investigators and prosecutors, and Member States must set up investigative units to identify victims, in particular by analysing child pornography.

In addition, the Safer Internet programme is supporting the development of IT tools and databases that allow law enforcement to conduct investigations of child sexual abuse more effectively, to cooperate better internationally and to get better access to evidence material on a transnational basis. These developments should serve to further enhance coordination at EU level and to improve the response to these crimes across all Member States.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council 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, 1-14.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000759/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Επιχειρησιακές συμβάσεις

Οι επιχειρησιακές συμβάσεις, οι ελαστικές μορφές εργασίας, η αδήλωτη εργασία και οι μειώσεις των αμοιβών, σε μεγάλη κλίμακα επιχειρήσεων, είναι τα κύρια στοιχεία που κατέγραψε το Σώμα Επιθεωρητών Εργασίας, την τελευταία διετία στη χώρα μας.

Συγκεκριμένα, η εφαρμογή των Επιχειρησιακών Συλλογικών Συμβάσεων Εργασίας, που υπογράφουν οι εργοδότες με επιχειρησιακά σωματεία ή ενώσεις εργαζομένων, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 37 του ν. 4024/2011, εμφανίζεται να έχει μεγαλύτερη δυναμική από τις Ειδικές Επιχειρησιακές Συμβάσεις που υπογράφονται με τα κλαδικά σωματεία.

Μόνο κατά το δίμηνο Δεκεμβρίου του 2011 και Ιανουαρίου του 2012, συμφωνήθηκαν 52 επιχειρησιακές συμβάσεις εργασίας, οι οποίες αφορούσαν συνολικά 17 531 εργαζομένους. Αντίθετα στο δεκάμηνο του 2011, συμφωνήθηκαν 12 Ειδικές Επιχειρησιακές Συμβάσεις, οι οποίες αφορούσαν συνολικά 3 550 εργαζομένους.

Με την εφαρμογή των επιχειρησιακών συμβάσεων, συμφωνήθηκαν μειώσεις αποδοχών που κυμαίνονταν από 5 % έως 25 %.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή τι σημαίνει αυτό για την ανάπτυξη των επιχειρήσεων και με ποιο τρόπο βοηθάει η συγκεκριμένη μείωση την οικονομική κατάσταση στην Ελλάδα.

**Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(4 Απριλίου 2012)*

Έχουν ληφθεί μέτρα για να καταστεί σε μεγαλύτερο βαθμό δυνατός ο καθορισμός των μισθών στο επίπεδο της επιχείρησης. Ο στόχος είναι να εξασφαλιστεί ότι οι εξελίξεις στους μισθούς και στην παραγωγικότητα θα ευθυγραμμίζονται μεταξύ τους και, ως εκ τούτου, δεν θα θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την απασχόληση, ιδίως καθώς η διαπραγμάτευση μισθών σε πιο κεντρικό επίπεδο (π.χ., σε επίπεδο τομέα ή επαγγέλματος) θα μπορούσε να οδηγήσει σε επίπεδα μισθών που δεν συμβιβάζονται με την ανταγωνιστικότητα ορισμένων επιχειρήσεων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των νεοϊδρυομένων, και να θέσει ως εκ τούτου σε κίνδυνο τις προσφερόμενες από τις επιχειρήσεις αυτές δυνατότητες απασχόλησης. Παρόλο που ο βαθμός συγκέντρωσης ή αποκέντρωσης κατά τη διαπραγμάτευση των μισθών δεν αποτελεί τον μοναδικό παράγοντα προσδιορισμού της ανταγωνιστικότητας ή ορισμού του πλαισίου των εργασιακών σχέσεων, η παροχή ευρύτερων δυνατοτήτων ρύθμισης των μισθών στο επίπεδο της επιχείρησης αναμένεται ότι θα βοηθήσει την ανταγωνιστικότητα περισσοτέρων επιχειρήσεων και θα βελτιώσει τις προοπτικές απασχόλησης στις επιχειρήσεις αυτές και, ως εκ τούτου, θα βοηθήσει την οικονομία στο σύνολό της: μια πιο αποκεντρωμένη μέθοδος διαμόρφωσης των μισθών πρέπει να αντανακλάται σε μια πιο διαφοροποιημένη μισθολογική συμπεριφορά, καθώς ο αριθμός των συλλογικών συμβάσεων είναι μεγαλύτερος. Παρά ταύτα, θα πρέπει να παραμένει ανοιχτή η δυνατότητα να συνάπτονται συμφωνίες σε πιο κεντρικό επίπεδο, εφόσον το επιθυμούν οι κοινωνικοί εταίροι.

Τα δεδομένα της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας εμφανίζουν τεράστιες αυξήσεις της ανεργίας, με περιορισμένη αναπροσαρμογή των μισθών. Τα στοιχεία αυτά δείχνουν ότι δεν έχει ακόμη πραγματοποιηθεί η προσαρμογή στην αγορά εργασίας. Ταυτόχρονα, το μεγάλο εξωτερικό έλλειμμα υποδηλώνει την ύπαρξη μη βιώσιμων δομών και εγείρει προκλήσεις και όσον αφορά την αγορά εργασίας. Για τον λόγο αυτό, αλλά και συνολικά, η Ελλάδα μπορεί να αναπτυχθεί σε βιώσιμη βάση μόνο αν βελτιωθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα και αν οι καθαρές εξαγωγές σημειώσουν πολύ σημαντική αύξηση. Αυτό συνεπάγεται ισχυρότερες εξαγωγές και χαμηλότερες εισαγωγές, γεγονός που αντικατοπτρίζει την πτώση των εισοδημάτων. Ειδικότερα, οι χαμηλότεροι μισθοί, στους οποίους αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, μπορούν να φέρουν τις εν λόγω επιχειρήσεις σε καλύτερη θέση, ώστε να ανταγωνίζονται τους ξένους ανταγωνιστές τους (τόσο στις ελληνικές όσο και στις ξένες αγορές) βοηθώντας έτσι το αναπτυξιακό δυναμικό της οικονομίας στο σύνολό της.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000759/12**
**to the Commission**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Enterprise-level agreements

Enterprise-level agreements, flexible forms of work, undeclared employment and pay cuts, all taking place on a large scale and at enterprise level, are the principal developments recorded by the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate over the last two years in Greece.

Specifically, the implementation of enterprise-level collective employment agreements signed by employers with business associations or trade unions (under Article 37 of Law 4024/2011) appears to outweigh specific operating contracts signed with the sectoral associations.

In the two months of December 2011 and January 2012 alone, 52 enterprise-level employment agreements have been concluded, affecting 17 531 employees in total, compared with 12 specific operating contracts affecting 3 550 employees in the previous ten months of 2011.

The implementation of enterprise-level agreements has entailed pay-cuts of between 5 % and 25 %.

Can the Commission say what this means for business development? How do these pay cuts help the economic situation in Greece?

**Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission**
*(4 April 2012)*

Measures have been adopted to allow more wage setting at the firm level. The objective is to ensure that wage and productivity developments are aligned and thereby do not jeopardise employment, notably as a more centralised wage bargaining (e.g., at the sector or occupation level) could lead to wage levels incompatible with the competitiveness of some firms, including new ones, and hence jeopardise the employment potential that they offer. While the degree of (de)centralisation of wage bargaining is not the only factor determining competitiveness or defining the industrial relations context, allowing more wage setting at the firm level is expected to the help the competitiveness of more firms and improve employment prospects in those firms and hence in the economy as a whole: a more decentralised wage formation should be reflected in more diverse wage behaviour as the number of collective agreements is larger. Nevertheless, possibilities of agreements at a more centralised level continue to be possible, should social partners wish so.

The Greek labour market data show tremendous increases in unemployment, with limited wage adjustment. These facts point that adjustment in labour market has not taken place yet. At the same time, the large external deficit points to unsustainable patterns and raises challenges for the labour market too. Therefore and overall, Greece can only grow on a sustainable basis if competitiveness improves and net exports increase very substantially. That means stronger exports and lower imports reflecting falling incomes. In particular, the lower wages that the Honourable Member of the Parliament mentions can better place those firms to compete with foreign competitors (both in Greek and in foreign markets) and thereby help the growth potential of the economy as a whole.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000760/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Βία στη Συρία

Ένας στρατηγός των υπηρεσιών πληροφοριών του στρατού της Συρίας σκοτώθηκε σήμερα από στρατιώτες που αρνήθηκαν να υπακούσουν στις διαταγές να πυροβολήσουν εναντίον αμάχων στη Χάμα, όπως ανακοίνωσαν ακτιβιστές.

Ένας στρατηγός των υπηρεσιών πληροφοριών του στρατού, ο Άντελ Μουστάφα, σκοτώθηκε από στρατιώτες που αρνήθηκαν να υπακούσουν στις διαταγές και να πυροβολήσουν εναντίον αμάχων στη συνοικία Μπαμπ Κέμπλι, όπως αναφέρει ανακοίνωση των Τοπικών Επιτροπών Συντονισμού.

Στο μεταξύ, συγκρούσεις σημειώθηκαν μεταξύ φοιτητών και των Σαμπίχα, των φιλοκυβερνητικών πολιτοφυλάκων, στη Σχολή Επιστημών στο Χαλέπι κατά τη διάρκεια διαδήλωσης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— έχουν δρομολογηθεί ενέργειες για να εκτονωθεί η κρίση στη Συρία;

**Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(7 Μαΐου 2012)*

Η ΕΕ συστηματικά καταδικάζει με τον πιο κατηγορηματικό τρόπο τη συνεχιζόμενη βίαια καταπίεση του συριακού πληθυσμού από το καθεστώς. Επανειλημμένα έχει ζητήσει την άμεση παύση των βιαιοπραγιών και έχει καλέσει τον Bashar Al-Assad να παραιτηθεί.

Ως αντίδραση στις διαδεδομένες παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων από το καθεστώς, η ΕΕ έλαβε τον Μάιο του 2011 στοχευμένα περιοριστικά μέτρα κατά του συριακού καθεστώτος, τα οποία μέχρι στιγμής έχουν παραταθεί 13 φορές. Μεταξύ των πλέον πρόσφατων κυρώσεων που εγκρίθηκαν στις 27 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, περιλαμβάνεται η επιβολή στην Κεντρική Τράπεζα της Συρίας του παγώματος των περιουσιακών στοιχείων, καθώς και η απαγόρευση των συναλλαγών χρυσού και άλλων πολύτιμων μετάλλων και των αεροπορικών μεταφορών εμπορευμάτων που εκτελούνται από Σύριους μεταφορείς.

Η ΕΕ επανειλημμένα, και για τελευταία φορά στα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων της 27ης Φεβρουαρίου 2012, επιβεβαίωσε την αποφασιστικότητά της να συνεχίσει την τρέχουσα πολιτική της όσον αφορά την επιβολή στοχευμένων κυρώσεων κατά του συριακού καθεστώτος και των υποστηρικτών του, μέχρι να δοθεί τέλος στην απαράδεκτη βία και να υπάρξει αποφασιστική πρόοδος προς μια πραγματική, ειρηνική και δημοκρατική μετάβαση που θα σέβεται τα έννομα αιτήματα του συριακού λαού.

Η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσει να πιέζει για την ανάληψη έντονης δράσης εκ μέρους των Ηνωμένων Εθνών (ΗΕ), ώστε να αυξηθούν οι διεθνείς πιέσεις που ασκούνται στον Bashar Al-Assad και στο καθεστώς του, και καλεί όλα τα μέλη του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας να αναλάβουν τις ευθύνες τους σε σχέση με την κατάσταση στη Συρία. Η ΕΕ χαιρετίζει τη σημαντική απόφαση του Συνδέσμου των Αραβικών Κρατών να επιβάλει κυρώσεις στο συριακό καθεστώς και να ζητήσει τη στήριξη των ΗΕ. Η ΕΕ υποστηρίζει πλήρως τις προσπάθειες του Kofi Annan, κοινού ειδικού απεσταλμένου των ΗΕ και του Συνδέσμου των Αραβικών Κρατών, για τη διευθέτηση της συριακής κρίσης. Η ΕΕ διαδραμάτισε θετικό ρόλο στη διάσκεψη των Φίλων του Λαού της Συρίας, που συναντήθηκαν τον προηγούμενο μήνα στην Τύνιδα, με στόχο την επίτευξη διεθνούς συναίνεσης για την συριακή κρίση.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000760/12**
**to the Commission**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(3 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Violence in Syria

According to the Local Coordination Committees, a military intelligence brigadier, Adel Mustafa, has been killed by soldiers who refused his orders to shoot at civilians in the Bab Qibli area of Hama.

Meanwhile there have been clashes between students and the shabiha, a pro-government militia, at the Faculty of Sciences in Aleppo during a demonstration.

Will the Commission say:

Are measures under way to defuse the crisis in Syria?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 May 2012)*

The EU has consistently condemned in the strongest terms the ongoing brutal repression led by the Syrian regime against its population. It has repeatedly called for an immediate end to violence and on Bashar Al-Assad to step down.

In response to the regime's widespread violations of human rights, the EU introduced targeted restrictive measures against the Syrian regime in May 2011, which have been extended 13 times by now. The latest sanctions adopted on 27 February 2012 include the imposition of an asset freeze on the Syrian Central Bank, as well as a ban on transactions of gold and other precious metals and cargo flights operated by Syrian carriers.

The EU repeatedly — and most recently in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 27 February 2012 — affirmed its determination to pursue its current policy of imposing targeted sanctions against the Syrian regime and those supporting it, until there is an end to the unacceptable violence and decisive progress towards a genuine, peaceful and democratic transition addressing the legitimate demands of the Syrian people.

The EU will continue to push for strong United Nations (UN) action to increase international pressure on Bashar Al-Assad and his regime and urges all members of the Security Council to assume their responsibilities in relation to the situation in Syria. It welcomes the League of Arab States' significant decision to impose sanctions on the Syrian regime and to seek UN support. The EU fully supports the efforts of the joint UN and League of Arab states Special Envoy, Kofi Annan, to seek a settlement to the Syrian crisis. The EU took an active role in the Friends of the Syrian People conference, which met last month in Tunis and aimed at building an international consensus on the Syrian crisis.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000762/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Επιστημονικές έρευνες στην ΕΕ

Χιλιανοί ερευνητές ανακοίνωσαν ενθαρρυντικά αποτελέσματα από ένα υπό δοκιμή νέο εμβόλιο κατά της παιδικής μηνιγγίτιδας, γεγονός που θα μπορούσε να μειώσει τα περιστατικά θανάτων. Το σημερινό εμβόλιο προστατεύει μόνο από μερικά είδη βακτηρίων που προκαλούν τη θανατηφόρα νόσο.

Οι επιστήμονες του Πανεπιστημίου της Χιλής, με επικεφαλής την καθηγήτρια Μαρία-Έλενα Σαντολάγια, που δημοσίευσαν τη σχετική μελέτη στο έγκριτο ιατρικό περιοδικό «The Lancet», σύμφωνα με το BBC, ανέφεραν ότι, σύμφωνα με όλες τις ενδείξεις, το νέο εμβόλιο είναι αποτελεσματικό κατά του τύπου B της μηνιγγίτιδας, η οποία, σε όλες τις μορφές της, προκαλεί χιλιάδες θανάτους κάθε χρόνο κυρίως στα παιδιά κάτω των πέντε ετών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν παρόμοιες μελέτες γίνονται και στην Ευρώπη με τη χρηματοδότηση της ΕΕ;

**Απάντηση της κας Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(6 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου αναφέρεται σε μια σημαντική κλινική μελέτη για το νέο εμβόλιο κατά της μηνιγγίτιδας τύπου B, η οποία δημοσιεύθηκε πρόσφατα στο επιστημονικό περιοδικό «The Lancet». Επιστήμονες από το Πανεπιστήμιο της Χιλής ανακοίνωσαν μια κλινική δοκιμή του προς έγκριση εμβολίου 4CmenB σε 1 600 εφήβους. Η δοκιμή επιβεβαίωσε προηγούμενες κλινικές μελέτες, σύμφωνα με τις οποίες το εμβόλιο 4CmenB προστατεύει τα μικρά παιδιά και τους ενήλικες από τη μηνιγγίτιδα τύπου B.

Το εμβόλιο 4CmenB αναπτύχθηκε από τη φαρμακευτική εταιρία Novartis, η οποία κατέθεσε πρόσφατα αίτηση στον Ευρωπαϊκό Οργανισμό Φαρμάκων για άδεια κυκλοφορίας. Η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ για τα φάρμακα ([1]) ορίζει ότι η ποιότητα, η ασφάλεια και η αποτελεσματικότητα ενός φαρμάκου αξιολογούνται πριν από την έκδοση της άδειας κυκλοφορίας. Η αίτηση αξιολογείται. Εάν η γνώμη του Οργανισμού είναι θετική και η Επιτροπή χορηγήσει άδεια κυκλοφορίας, το νέο εμβόλιο θα μπορεί να διατεθεί στην αγορά.

Η ανάπτυξη του εμβολίου 4CmenB πραγματοποιήθηκε στο μεγαλύτερο μέρος της εντός της εταιρείας Novartis. Ωστόσο, η ευρωπαϊκή χρηματοδότηση της έρευνας από το 6ο Πρόγραμμα Πλαίσιο για την Έρευνα και την Ανάπτυξη (6ο ΠΠ, 2002-2006) στήριξε έμμεσα την εν λόγω προσπάθεια στα πρώτα, ουσιαστικά βήματά της. Παρασχέθηκε συνολική συνεισφορά της ΕΕ ύψους 2,3 εκατ. ευρώ στο έργο συνεργατικής έρευνας «BacAbs» ([2]) (Αξιολόγηση των διαρθρωτικών απαιτήσεων των βακτηριοκτόνων συμβάντων μέσω συμπληρωμάτων: προς μια παγκόσμια προσέγγιση για την επιλογή νέων προς έγκριση εμβολίων). Στο εν λόγω έργο, στο οποίο συμμετείχαν εννέα εταίροι, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Novartis, χρησιμοποιήθηκε ως μοντέλο το έργο ανάπτυξης του εμβολίου 4CmenB προκειμένου να διερευνηθεί ποιες μοριακές ιδιότητες των βακτηριακών επιφανειακών πρωτεϊνών είναι οι πλέον κατάλληλες για την ανάπτυξη του εμβολίου.

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([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 726 /2004 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 31ης Μαρτίου 2004, για τη θέσπιση κοινοτικών διαδικασιών χορήγησης άδειας και εποπτείας όσον αφορά τα φάρμακα που προορίζονται για ανθρώπινη και για κτηνιατρική χρήση και για τη σύσταση Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Φαρμάκων, ΕΕ L 136 της 30.4.2004, όπως τροποποιήθηκε και οδηγία 2001/83/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 6ης Νοεμβρίου 2001, περί κοινοτικού κώδικος για τα φάρμακα που προορίζονται για ανθρώπινη χρήση, ΕΕ L 311 της 28.11.2001, όπως τροποποιήθηκε.

([2]) http://www.bacabs.org/.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000762/12**
**to the Commission**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Scientific research in the EU

Chilean researchers have released encouraging results regarding a new vaccination now being tested which could reduce the number of deaths from childhood meningitis. The current vaccine only protects against certain types of bacteria that cause this fatal disease.

According to the BBC, scientists at the University of Chile, headed by Professor Maria Elena Santolaya, who have published the relevant study in the distinguished journal *The Lancet*, indicate that, on the basis of all evidence, the new vaccine is effective against type-B meningitis, which in all its forms kills thousands of people every year, mainly children under five.

Are similar studies being carried out in Europe with EU funding?

**Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 March 2012)*

The Honourable Member highlights an important clinical study on a new vaccine against type-B meningitis, recently reported in the scientific journal The Lancet. Scientists from the University of Chile reported on a clinical trial of the 4CmenB vaccine candidate among 1 600 teenagers. The trial confirmed previous clinical studies, which had indicated that 4CmenB is protective against type-B meningitis in young children and adults.

The 4CmenB vaccine was developed by the pharmaceutical company Novartis, which recently filed an application to the European Medicines Agency for the marketing authorisation of the vaccine. The EU pharmaceutical legislation ([1]) requires that quality, safety and efficacy of a medicinal product are evaluated before the marketing authorisation is granted. The application is under evaluation. If the opinion of the Agency is favourable and a marketing authorisation is granted by the Commission, the new vaccine could become available on the market.

Development of the 4CmenB vaccine was in vast majority done internally by Novartis. However, European research funding from the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6, 2002-2006) indirectly supported this endeavour in its very initial, basic steps. A total EU contribution of EUR 2.3 million was provided to the collaborative research project 'BacAbs' ([2]) (Assessment of structural requirements in complement-mediated bactericidal events: towards a global approach to the selection of new vaccine candidates). This project, which comprised nine partners, including Novartis, used the 4CmenB vaccine development project as a model to discover which molecular properties of bacterial surface proteins are most relevant for vaccine development.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended and Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

([2]) http://www.bacabs.org/.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000764/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Kriton Arsenis (S&D)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Ανεπαρκείς οι τράπεζες σπόρων για τη διατήρηση των απειλούμενων φυτών

Πρόσφατη ευρωπαϊκή έρευνα (Godefroid *et al.*, 2011) καταδεικνύει τις ελλείψεις των συλλογών στις τράπεζες σπόρων με αποτέλεσμα την ανεπιτυχή διατήρηση των ευρωπαϊκών απειλούμενων φυτικών ειδών. Η έρευνα αποκαλύπτει τη φτωχή αντιπροσώπευση των απειλούμενων ειδών στις συλλογές, παρά το γεγονός ότι το 70 % της ευρωπαϊκής χλωρίδας είναι αποθηκευμένο στις τράπεζες σπόρων. Συγκεκριμένα, μόνο το 27 % των ταξινομικών ομάδων (taxa) του χλωριδικού κατάλογου απειλούμενων ειδών και το 44 % των ταξινομικών ομάδων του Παραρτήματος II της Οδηγίας 92/43/ΕΟΚ είναι αποθηκευμένα σε τράπεζες σπόρων. Την ίδια στιγμή υποεκπροσωπούνται ταξινομικές ομάδες που διατρέχουν το μεγαλύτερο κίνδυνο εξαφάνισης όπως τα πτεριδόφυτα (Pteridophytes) και τα ορχιδεοειδή (Orchidaceae). Η έρευνα τονίζει επίσης, ότι τουλάχιστον τα δύο τρίτα των αποθηκευμένων απειλούμενων ειδών παρουσιάζουν χαμηλή γενετική ποικιλότητα. Επιπλέον, ένας δυσανάλογα υψηλός αριθμός ειδών προέρχεται κυρίως από τη Δυτική Μεσόγειο και τις περιοχές του Ατλαντικού, ενώ άλλες περιοχές με υψηλή φυτική ποικιλότητα, όπως η Ανατολική Μεσόγειος, εκπροσωπούνται με μικρό αριθμό ειδών στα ορχιδεοειδή. Δεδομένης της σημασίας των τραπεζών σπόρων για τη διατήρηση των απειλούμενων φυτικών ειδών στον ευρωπαϊκό χώρο, η Επιτροπή καλείται να υποστηρίξει την ερευνητική προσπάθεια για την ex situ διατήρηση στις τράπεζες σπόρων.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε οι τράπεζες σπόρων να εξασφαλίζουν την επιτυχή ex situ διατήρηση των απειλούμενων ειδών σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη;

2. Σκοπεύει να υποστηρίξει την περαιτέρω έρευνα για την ex situ διατήρηση στις τράπεζες σπόρων;

3. Υπάρχει μέριμνα για την αποτροπή της χρήσης του γενετικού υλικού των τραπεζών σπόρων για άλλους σκοπούς πέρα από τη διατήρηση των ειδών, όπως η βιοπειρατεία;

**Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(2 Απριλίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει τις τράπεζες γονιδίων και άλλους συλλέκτες μέσω:

α: του κοινοτικού προγράμματος για τη διατήρηση, τον χαρακτηρισμό, τη συλλογή και τη χρησιμοποίηση των γενετικών πόρων στη γεωργία, το οποίο θεσπίστηκε με τον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 870/2004·

β: της πολιτικής για την αγροτική ανάπτυξη, η οποία υποστηρίζει τη διατήρηση των γενετικών πόρων στη γεωργία·

γ: του 7ου προγράμματος πλαισίου για την έρευνα (7ο ΠΠ) που αποσκοπεί στην υποστήριξη της διατήρησης και της αειφόρου χρήσης των γενετικών πόρων, ιδίως στους τομείς της γεωργίας και της δασοκομίας. Στην πρόταση της Επιτροπής Horizon 2020 προτείνεται η συνέχιση των προσπαθειών για την προώθηση της βιοποικιλότητας σε διάφορα επίπεδα·

δ: της συμμετοχής στη Διεθνή Συνθήκη σχετικά με τους Φυτικούς Γενετικούς Πόρους για τον Επισιτισμό και τη Γεωργία με το πολυμερές σύστημά της σημαντικών επισιτιστικών καλλιεργειών.

Στο πλαίσιο προετοιμασίας της από πλευράς ΕΕ θέσης σε εφαρμογή του πρωτοκόλλου της Nagoya σχετικά με την πρόσβαση στους γενετικούς πόρους και τη δίκαιη και ισότιμη συμμετοχή στα οφέλη που προκύπτουν από τη χρησιμοποίησή τους, η Επιτροπή μελετά τρόπους να βοηθήσει τους δημόσιους κήπους, τις τράπεζες γονιδίων και άλλες συλλογές ώστε να τεκμηριώνουν σωστά τους γενετικούς πόρους και να διευκολύνει τα νέα αποκτήματα, τα οποία συμβάλλουν στις προσπάθειες ex situ διατήρησης.

Η Επιτροπή μελετά επίσης τρόπους, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των νομικών και οικονομικών επιπτώσεών τους, της αποδοτικότητας και της αποτελεσματικότητάς τους, για την αποφυγή καταστάσεων οι οποίες έχουν χαρακτηριστεί ως «βιοπειρατεία».

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000764/12**
**to the Commission**
**Kriton Arsenis (S&D)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Seed banks insufficient to guarantee the conservation of endangered plants

According to a recent European study (Godefroid et al., 2011), the inadequacy of seed bank resources means that endangered European plant species are not being successfully conserved. The research reveals low stocks of endangered species in collections, despite the fact that 70 % of European flora is stored in seed banks. Specifically, only 27 % of the taxonomic groups (taxa) of the flora list of endangered species and 44 % of the taxa listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC are stored in seed banks. In addition, taxa at major risk of extinction, such as ferns (Pteridophytes) and orchids (Orchidaceae), are under-represented. The research also shows that at least two-thirds of the endangered species in storage display a low level of genetic variation. Moreover, a disproportionate number of species come mainly from the western Mediterranean and Atlantic regions, while other regions with a high level of plant biodiversity, such as the eastern Mediterranean, are represented by a small number of orchids. Given the significance of seed banks for the conservation of endangered plant species in the European area, the Commission is being called on to support research bodies in their effort to ensure *ex situ* conservation in seed banks.

In view of this:

1. What measures are being envisaged by the Commission to ensure that seed banks are able to guarantee the successful *ex situ* conservation of endangered species in all Member States?

2. Does it intend to support further research for *ex situ* conservation in seed banks?

3. Is it taking care to prevent the use of genetic material from seed banks for purposes other than the conservation of species, such as biopiracy?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 April 2012)*

The Commission supports gene banks and other collectors through:

a) the Community programme on the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture established by Council Regulation (EC) No 870/2004;

b) the Rural Development Policy which supports the conservation of genetic resources in agriculture;

c) the Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7) to support the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources in particular in agriculture and forestry. The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 proposes continuing efforts to promote biodiversity at various levels;

d) participation in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture with its multilateral system of important food crops.

In the context of preparing EU implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, the Commission is studying ways to help public gardens, gene banks and other collections to properly document genetic resources and to facilitate new acquisitions which contribute to ex situ conservation efforts.

The Commission is also studying ways, including their legal and economic impacts, efficiency and effectiveness, to prevent situations that have been characterised as 'biopiracy'.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000765/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Funding of a youth club and youth cafe

Could the Commission outline what funding, if any, is available for the setting-up and development of a youth club and youth cafe, where such a facility would act as a safe, dedicated, quality meeting space for young people aged 10 to 25?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 March 2012)*

The Commission does not see a possibility for specifically supporting the setting-up and development of a youth club or youth café through European funding.

Nevertheless, the promoters of this initiative may be invited to examine to which extent funding possibilities under the Youth in Action programme (2007-2013) could support activities to be developed in the context of such a club or café. Sub-Action 1.2 (Support for young people's initiatives) of the programme may be of interest in this context; it supports projects with a European dimension where young people participate actively and directly in activities of their own devising in which they play the key roles, in order to develop their initiative, creativity and sense of enterprise. Another funding possibility which may be examined falls under Action 2 (European Voluntary Service) of the programme, which aims at developing solidarity and promotes active citizenship and mutual understanding among young people through volunteering. Relevant information can be found in the Youth in Action programme guide which is published on the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/programme-guide_en.htm

Further information about the Youth in Action programme in Ireland can also be obtained from the Irish National Agency for the Programme, 'Léargas — the Exchange Bureau' at the following web address:
http://www.leargas.ie/programme_main.php?prog_code=7777

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000766/12**
**to the Commission**
**Derek Vaughan (S&D)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Interruption of Interreg payments

I understand that payments to the UK under the Interreg IV(a) and (b) programmes have been suspended pending the outcome of additional audit checks of the First Level Control system. I am interested to know the findings of the audit checks and the decision of the Interruption Committee.

Can the Commission reassure me that this situation can be resolved rapidly with the UK authorities, in order to prevent successful projects being penalised and the loss of good project partners who contribute significantly to the smooth operation of this programme across the UK?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(23 February 2012)*

Payments to the United Kingdom (UK) have not been suspended. With regard to the Interreg IV B 'North Sea Region' programme, payment claims from the programme currently do not include expenditure from UK partners. For the Interreg IV A 'Two Seas' programme, the payment deadline for processing payments incurred by UK partners has been interrupted. In both cases, Commission audits have identified that the management and control systems in the UK require substantial improvement.

The UK authorities are working on action plans to address these weaknesses, and the Commission is assisting with this work. The Commission is currently assessing the outcome of the North Sea Region action plan and awaits the submission of the work being carried out on the Two Seas programme.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000767/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Ενδεχόμενη πτώχευση ιδιωτικών εταιρειών ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας

Στην Ελλάδα, δυο πάροχοι ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας, (Energa & Hellas Power), που εξυπηρετούν περίπου 200 000 καταναλωτές, βρίσκονται στο χείλος της πτώχευσης και οφείλουν εκατ ευρώ, τόσο στον Διαχειριστή Ελληνικού Συστήματος Μεταφοράς Ηλεκτρικής Ενέργειας (ΔΕΣΜΗΕ) όσο και στην εταιρεία ΔΕΗ, που αποτελεί την μεγαλύτερη παραγωγό ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας στην Ελλάδα. Η οικονομική κατάσταση των δύο εταιρειών δεν άλλαξε ούτε με την πρόσφατη μεταβίβασή τους σε ρωσοαραβικό επενδυτικό σχήμα, το World Wide Energy, το οποίο, παρόλο που δεσμεύτηκε να εξοφλήσει τα χρέη των δύο παρόχων, δεν έχει προβεί σε καμία τέτοια ενέργεια. Σύμφωνα με την νομοθεσία, σε περίπτωση πτώχευσης των δύο εταιρειών, οι ανάγκες των καταναλωτών θα καλυφθούν από την εταιρεία ΔΕΗ ενώ τα ποσοστά τους στο μετοχικό κεφάλαιο καθώς και τα χρέη τους προς τον ΔΕΣΜΗΕ θα καλυφθούν από τις υπόλοιπες εταιρείες, με το μεγαλύτερο βάρος να πέφτει και πάλι στη ΕΗ.

Οι εισαγγελικές αρχές διερευνούν την υπόθεση με βάση τη νομοθεσία για το ξέπλυμα μαύρου χρήματος. Επιπρόσθετα, ερωτηματικά προκύπτουν σχετικά με τα ποσά που οι δύο αυτές εταιρείες έχουν παρακρατήσει από τους καταναλωτές τους, εφαρμόζοντας το άρθρο 53 του νόμου 4021/2011, που προβλέπει ότι το Έκτακτο Ειδικό Τέλος Ηλεκτροδοτούμενων Δομημένων Επιφανειών (ΕΕΤΗΔΕ) θα πληρώνεται από τους φορολογούμενους μέσω των λογαριασμών ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος. Κατόπιν των παραπάνω και με δεδομένη την ανακοίνωση των δύο εταιρειών (23/01/12) στην οποία αναφέρονται σε απαιτήσεις ύψους 340 εκ. ευρώ και την οποία «έχουν καταθέσει από τις αρχές της λειτουργίας της αγοράς στη Ρυθμιστική Αγορά Ενέργειας (ΡΑΕ) και στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή Ενέργειας και Ανταγωνισμού», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1) Πόσες είναι οι οφειλές των δύο εταιρειών προς το Δημόσιο, τον ΔΕΣΜΗΕ και τη ΔΕΗ; Θεωρεί ότι ο ΔΕΣΜΗΕ και η ελληνική ΡΑΕ, έχουν ευθύνες για αυτή την κατάσταση; Θα μπορούσαν να είχαν προβεί σε προληπτικά μέτρα, ούτως ώστε να μην οδηγηθεί η αγορά σε αυτό το σημείο; Πώς σχολιάζει τις καταγγελίες που έχει λάβει από τους ανωτέρω δύο παρόχους για ρυθμιστικές παρατυπίες και στρεβλώσεις της ελληνικής αγοράς;

2) Μπορεί να βεβαιώσει ότι έχουν εισπραχθεί οι οφειλές ΦΠΑ των εν λόγω εταιρειών από το ελληνικό δημόσιο; Όσον αφορά το Έκτακτο Ειδικό Τέλος Ηλεκτροδοτούμενων Δομημένων Επιφανειών και επειδή μέχρι σήμερα σύμφωνα με δημοσιογραφικές πληροφορίες έχουν εισπραχθεί από αυτές τις εταιρείες ποσά ύψους 100 εκ. ευρώ, μπορεί να με πληροφορήσει εάν έχουν αποδοθεί τα ποσά αυτά από τις ιδιωτικές εταιρείες στο ελληνικό δημόσιο;

**Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(7 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει τυχόν πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα επίπεδα χρέους που έχουν συγκεντρώσει οι δύο προμηθευτές ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος (Energa και Hellas Power) ή για το κατά πόσον οι εταιρείες έχουν εμβάσει προς την ελληνική κυβέρνηση το έκτακτο ειδικό τέλος επί της ακινήτου περιουσίας, το οποίο εισέπραξαν βάσει του άρθρου 53 του Νόμου 4021/2011.

Οι εταιρείες Energa και Hellas Power έχουν διαγραφεί από το μητρώο συμμετεχόντων του Ανεξαρτήτου Διαχειριστή Μεταφοράς Ηλεκτρικής Ενέργειας της Ελλάδας (ΑΔΜΗΕ), επειδή αντιμετωπίζουν προβλήματα στην εκπλήρωση των υποχρεώσεών τους προς τον ΑΔΜΗΕ. Η ελληνική Ρυθμιστική Αρχή Ενέργειας (ΡΑΕ) διερευνά σε βάθος την κατάσταση και η Επιτροπή αντιλαμβάνεται ότι η ΡΑΕ θα λάβει κάθε αναγκαίο μέτρο που συνάδει με τον Νόμο 4001/2011, εάν πράγματι χρειαστούν τέτοια μέτρα.

Στο μεταξύ, και προκειμένου να υπάρξει εγγύηση για μη διακοπή της παροχής ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος, οι πελάτες της Energa και της Hellas Power αυτομάτως μεταφέρθηκαν στον αποκαλούμενο ύστατο προμηθευτή (ΥΠ), ο οποίος επί του παρόντος είναι η Δημόσια Επιχείρηση Ηλεκτρισμού (ΔΕΗ). Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 57 του Νόμου 4001/2011, η παροχή ρεύματος από τον ΥΠ περιορίζεται σε τρεις μήνες, ώστε να δοθεί στους πελάτες επαρκής χρόνος διαπραγμάτευσης νέου συμβολαίου με τον προμηθευτή της επιλογής τους.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000767/12**
**to the Commission**
**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**
*(2 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Possible bankruptcy of private electricity companies

In Greece, two electricity suppliers (Energa and Hellas Power), serving in total 200 000 customers, are on the brink of bankruptcy and owe millions of euros to both the Hellenic transmission system operator (DESMIE) and the Public Power Corporation (DEI), which is the largest electricity supplier in Greece. The economic situation of the two companies has not changed even with their recent transfer to the Russian-Arab Worldwide Energy Ltd, which, despite the fact that it undertook to meet the debts of the two companies, has yet to do so. Under Greek law, if the two companies become bankrupt, consumer requirements will be met by the DEI, while their percentage of the share capital, together with their debts to the DESMIE, will be covered by the remaining companies, with the largest burden falling again on the DEI.

The public prosecutor's office is currently investigating the case in the light of legislation concerning money laundering. Furthermore, questions are being asked about the amounts that the two companies have withheld from their customers under Article 53 of Law 4021/2011, which states that an emergency tax (EETIDE) will be charged to taxpayers on their electricity bills. By virtue of the above and given the communication from the two companies (23/01/12) referring to demands for EUR 340 million 'forwarded by the authorities in charge of market operations to the (RAE) and to the European Commission (Energy and Competition DGs),' I would like to ask the Commission:

1. What are the debts of the two companies to the Greek Government, the DESMIE and the DEI? Does the Commission consider that the DESMIE and RAE are responsible for this situation? Could they have taken preventive measures to save the market from such a situation? How does it view the two companies' allegations regarding irregularities and distortions of the Greek market?

2. Can it confirm that the two companies' VAT debts have been collected by the Greek Government? According to media reports, to date these companies have received a total of EUR 100 million in EETIDE payments — can the Commission inform us whether this amount has been paid to the Greek Government by these private companies?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

The Commission does not have any information on the levels of debt acquired by the two electricity suppliers (Energa and Hellas Power) or on whether the companies have forwarded the temporary special levy on immovable property collected by them under Article 53 of Law 4021/2011 to the Greek Government.

Energa and Hellas Power have been deleted from the Participants Register of the Independent Transmission System Operator of Greece (ADMIE) as they are facing problems in fulfilling their obligations vis-à-vis ADMIE. The Greek Regulatory Authority for Energy (RAE) is investigating the situation in-depth and it is the Commission's understanding that RAE will take any necessary steps in line with Law 4001/2011, if such steps are needed.

In the meantime, and in order to guarantee uninterrupted supply of electricity, the customers of Energa and Hellas Power have been automatically moved to the so called Supplier of Last Resort (SLR), which is for the time being the Public Power Corporation (DEI). According to Article 57 of Law 4001/2011, the supply by the SLR is limited to three months in order to give the customers sufficient time to negotiate a new contract with their supplier of choice.

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000768/12**
**do Komisji**
**Paweł Zalewski (PPE)**
*(31 stycznia 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Handel UE – Maroko

W najbliższych dniach będzie poddane pod głosowanie dossier dotyczące porozumienia pomiędzy Unią Europejską a Królestwem Maroka w sprawie wzajemnych środków liberalizacji w odniesieniu do produktów rolnych oraz produktów rybołówstwa. Jest to dossier wzbudzające sporo kontrowersji wśród przedstawicieli różnych ugrupowań politycznych w Parlamencie Europejskim.

W nawiązaniu do niego chciałbym zapytać Komisję, czy przewiduje się zapewnienie ścisłego monitoringu importu towarów rolnych będących przedmiotem głosowanej umowy oraz czy KE, wykorzystując instrumentarium prawne Unii Europejskiej (np. działania ochronne, antydumpingowe, klauzule ochronne), przewiduje podjęcie działań korygujących w sytuacjach uzasadniających ich zastosowanie.

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji**
*(19 marca 2012 r.)*

Zawarcie porozumienia, którego dotyczy zapytanie Szanownego Pana Posła, zostało zatwierdzone przez Parlament Europejski w dniu 16 lutego 2012 r. Spowoduje ono wzmocnienie kanałów współpracy dwustronnej oraz klauzul ochronnych w celu dopilnowania, aby zawarte w umowie postanowienia dotyczące przywozu produktów rolnych, ryb i produktów rybołówstwa były przestrzegane. Wzmocnione środki ochronne zapewnią UE narzędzie na potrzeby ograniczania przywozu z Maroka, jeśli będzie on powodował poważne zaburzenia rynków lub poważne szkody dla sektorów produkcji. Władze Maroka mogą oczywiście odwołać się do tych samych środków w wypadku zakłóceń wywołanych przez przywóz z UE.

W porozumieniu utrzymano obecnie obowiązujący system cen wejścia i kontyngentów taryfowych dla produktów wrażliwych. Odnośnie do pierwszej z powyższych kwestii, system cen wejścia będzie nie tylko właściwie stosowany, ale również, w ramach reformy wspólnej polityki rolnej, Komisja zaproponowała rozwiązania mające na celu lepsze wdrożenie mechanizmów tego systemu.

Odnośnie do kontyngentów taryfowych Komisja uznaje znaczenie ścisłego nadzoru nad przywożonymi ilościami. Powyższe odzwierciedla system podwójnych kontroli, którego podstawę stanowi deklaracja ilości wywożonych przez podmioty z Maroka (oficjalne dane publikowane przez – EACCE – Niezależny Organ Kontroli i Koordynacji Eksportu (fr. *L'Etablissement Autonome de Contrôle et de Coordination des Exportations*) oraz dane dotyczące przywozu rejestrowane codziennie przez ograny celne państw członkowskich UE. Dane te są przekazywane służbom Komisji za pomocą systemu monitorowania przywozu. Na koniec dane te są weryfikowane w odniesieniu do liczb znajdujących się w referencyjnej bazie danych Komisji – COMEXT.

Komisja będzie nadal prowadzić szczegółowy monitoring w celu zapewnienia, tak jak to miało miejsce do tej pory, przestrzegania odpowiednich ograniczeń kontyngentowych dla przywozu produktów rolnych z Maroka.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000768/12**
**to the Commission**
**Paweł Zalewski (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EU-Morocco trade

The file on an agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco concerning reciprocal liberalisation measures on agricultural and fishery products will be put to the vote in the next few days. The issue has sparked a great deal of controversy among the representatives of the different political groups in the European Parliament.

With this in mind, is the Commission intending to ensure that imports of the agricultural goods covered by the agreement concerned will be strictly monitored? Is the Commission intending to use EU legal instruments (e.g. protective and anti-dumping measures or safeguard clauses) where justified?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The conclusion of the Agreement that the Honourable Member is referring to was approved by the European Parliament on 16 February, 2012. It will strengthen the existing channels of bilateral cooperation and safeguard clauses so as to make sure that the provisions on imports of agricultural products, fish and fishery products included in the Agreement are duly respected. The reinforced safeguard measures will equip the EU with a tool to restrict imports from Morocco if they cause serious disturbances to markets and/or serious damage to the production sectors. Morocco, of course, can have recourse to the same measures in the event of similar disturbances caused by imports from the EU.

The Agreement maintains the system of entry prices and tariff quotas for sensitive products currently in place. As regards the former, not only it will continue to be properly applied but also, as part of the reform of the common agricultural policy, the Commission has proposed solutions to better implement the mechanisms of this system.

As for tariff quotas, the Commission recognises the importance of close surveillance of quantities imported. This is reflected in a system of double-checks, which is based on the declaration of the quantities exported by the Moroccan operators (official figures issued by EACCE — L'Etablissement Autonome de Contrôle et de Coordination des Exportations) as well as daily records of imports by the custom services of the EU Member States. These data are transmitted to the Commission services through a system of imports monitoring. Finally, the data are cross-checked with the figures held in the Commission's reference database, COMEXT.

The Commission will continue the close monitoring in order to ensure that relevant quota limitations for Moroccan agricultural exports are being respected as it has been the case up to date.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000769/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Fiona Hall (ALDE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — EUBAM Rafah Mission

The answer to Written Question E-007913/2011 given by the Vice-President/High Representative on 10 October 2011 showed that the European Union has expended some EUR 9.5 million on the EU common security and defence mission EUBAM Rafah during the period from July 2007 to date (some 62 % of the total expenditure on that mission). There is, however, little evidence to suggest that the mission was able to fulfil its mandate during that period.

— In light of this, could the Vice-President/High Representative explain the ongoing political justification for the continuation of that mission?

— Could the Vice-President/High Representative confirm whether alternative uses of these resources which would better contribute to an improvement of the situation of the people of Gaza have been considered?

— If so, could the Vice-President/High Representative indicate what alternatives have been considered, and why have they been rejected?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(17 April 2012)*

The Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA), the Agreed Principles for Rafah Crossing of 15 November 2005 between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and the Agreed Arrangement on the European Union Border Assistance Mission at the Rafah Crossing Point on the Gaza-Egypt Border (EUBAM Rafah), concluded on 25 November 2005 constitute the basis for EUBAM Rafah.

EUBAM Rafah has been dormant since 2007 due to Hamas' control of the Gaza strip. Consequently the mission has been considerably downsized to just 13 international Staff.

Nevertheless the EU considers maintaining the *acquis* of the AMA and the EU's third party role as important and stands ready to redeploy to the crossing point should the political and security conditions allow. The EU continues to monitor developments in this regard.

The EU looks forward to continuing to make every effort for a comprehensive CSDP engagement in the future, which could include deeper integration of the two current CSDP Missions (EUBAM Rafah and EUPOL COPPS). In order to improve effectiveness and to gain efficiencies across the two ongoing missions, measures have been foreseen which, on the one hand, guarantee maintaining the full scale of tasks implied in the current mandates and, on the other hand, lead to synergies and possible cost reductions.

The EU is currently reviewing its CSDP engagement in the Middle East and is envisaging administrative and organisational measures in order to achieve greater efficiencies and cost reductions through a better and joint use of resources.

However, any change to the mandates of the CSDP missions must be agreed with the local parties. The HR/VP remains in very close contact with the Israeli and the Palestinian authorities to this end.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000771/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(31 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Diversificarea surselor de aprovizionare cu petrol

Având în vedere decizia privind instituirea unui embargo imediat aplicat noilor contracte pentru importul de petrol brut și produse petroliere din Iran, precum și faptul că aproximativ o cincime din exporturile de petrol ale Iranului au ca destinație Uniunea Europeană, principalii beneficiari fiind Italia, Grecia și Spania, Comisia este rugată să precizeze ce măsuri are în vedere pentru a sprijini diversificarea surselor de aprovizionare cu petrol a statelor membre.

**Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei**
*(27 februarie 2012)*

Țițeiul și produsele petroliere sunt, în general, comercializate pe piețele internaționale atunci când indisponibilitatea rezervelor de la un anumit furnizor poate fi compensată prin surse alternative de aprovizionare, așa cum s-a întâmplat în cazul rezervelor din Libia în 2011. Rafinăriile sunt, în primul rând, cele care decid cu privire la sursele alternative pe care le utilizează.

În cazul în care există dificultăți de aprovizionare, Comisia și Consiliul vor colabora cu statele membre, cu părțile interesate și cu partenerii internaționali relevanți în scopul de a căuta alternative de aprovizionare.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000771/12**
**to the Commission**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Diversification of sources of oil supply

Taking into consideration the decision to implement an immediately applicable embargo on new contracts for imports of crude oil and petroleum products from Iran, as well as the fact that approximately one-fifth of Iranian oil exports have the EU as their destination, the principal beneficiaries being Italy, Greece and Spain, can the Commission specify what measures it envisages to support the diversification of sources of oil supply for the Member States?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

Crude oil and petroleum products are generally traded on the global international market where unavailability of supplies from a particular supplier can be compensated by alternative sources of supply as happened with Libyan supplies in 2011. It is primarily up to the refiners to decide on which alternative sources they use.

In case of difficulties of supply, the Commission and the Council will collaborate with Member States, stakeholders and relevant international partners in order to seek alternative supplies.

*(Versiunea în limba română)*

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000773/12**
**adresată Comisiei**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(31 ianuarie 2012)*

*Subiect:* Revizuirea legislației în materie de siguranță maritimă

Având în vedere experiența în urma naufragiului Costa Concordia, Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

1. Ce intenționează în ceea ce privește revizuirea legislației în materie de siguranță maritimă?

2. Ce sume de bani au fost cheltuite în perioada actuală de programare financiară pentru a finanța studii privind siguranța maritimă?

3. Care a fost, în aceeași perioadă, bugetul Agenției Europene pentru Siguranță Maritimă (EMSA)?

**Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei**
*(28 februarie 2012)*

1. Comisia va continua procesul actual de revizuire a legislației UE în vigoare privind navele de pasageri, proces lansat în 2010. În cadrul acestei revizuiri, Comisia intenționează să examineze aspecte critice cum ar fi stabilitatea navelor în urma avariilor, modalități și proceduri de evacuare, formarea echipajului de bord și comunicarea cu pasagerii. În primăvară se va lansa o consultare publică, iar în aprilie Comisia intenționează să organizeze o conferință privind siguranța navelor de pasageri. Comisia are, de asemenea, intenția de a colabora cu IMO în privința acestui important subiect. În ceea ce privește accidentul în care a fost implicată nava „Costa Concordia", Comisia așteaptă date concludente rezultate în urma anchetei actuale, pe baza cărora va trage concluzii și va lua măsuri corespunzătoare.

2. Până în prezent, s-au alocat aproape 37 milioane EUR pentru inițiative legate de siguranța maritimă în cadrul a 14 proiecte desfășurate sub egida celui de-al șaptelea Program-cadru al Comisiei. În propunerea acestor proiecte de cercetare au fost implicate companii europene din sectorul maritim. La derularea proiectelor au participat șantiere navale, operatori de nave, societăți de clasificare, instituții de cercetare, universități și asociații din domeniu, toate instituții de primă importanță în Europa.

3. Bugetul total al Agenției Europene pentru Siguranță Maritimă pentru perioada 2007-2012 se ridică la 312,6 milioane EUR.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000773/12**
**to the Commission**
**Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Review of maritime safety legislation

In the wake of the Costa Concordia shipwreck, can the Commission state:

1. what its intentions are regarding a review of maritime safety legislation;

2. what amount was spent in the current financial period for the financing of studies on maritime safety;

3. what the budget allocation was for the same period for the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(28 February 2012)*

1. The Commission will continue with its ongoing review of the existing EU passenger ship legislation, which started in 2010. In this revision the Commission intends to look at critical issues such as ship stability after damage, evacuation means and procedures, crew training and communication with passengers. A public consultation will be launched in spring and the Commission intends to organise a conference on passenger ship safety in April. The Commission also intends to work in tandem with IMO on this important subject. With regard to the accident of the *Costa Concordia*, the Commission intends to await relevant findings of the ongoing investigation to learn the necessary lessons and take the relevant initiatives.

2. Up to now, almost EUR 37 million have been allocated to initiatives related to maritime safety in 14 projects under the Commission's seventh Framework Programme. European companies from the maritime sector have been involved in proposing these research projects. Major European shipyards, ship operators, classification societies, research institutions and universities and associations in the field have been involved in the execution of the projects.

3. The total budget of the European Maritime Safety Agency for the years 2007-2012 amounts to EUR 312.6 million.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000776/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)**
*(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Πετρελαϊκό εμπάργκο κατά του Ιράν

Σε συνέχεια της απάντησης του Επιτρόπου Ενέργειας, κ. Έτινγκερ, στις 16.1.2012, σε κοινοβουλευτική ερώτησή μου υπ' αριθμόν E-011035/2011 σχετικά με τον εφοδιασμό της Ελλάδας σε πετρέλαιο, και λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις αποφάσεις της συνόδου των Υπουργών Εξωτερικών της ΕΕ στις 23.1.2012 αναφορικά με το πετρελαϊκό εμπάργκο κατά του Ιράν, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί ότι η απάντηση του κ. Έτινγκερ ότι «η Ελλάδα μπορεί να εφοδιάζεται από αλλού με πετρέλαιο» έχει επαφή με την πολιτική και οικονομική πραγματικότητα, εφόσον είναι αυτονόητο ότι, εκτός του Ιράν, υπάρχουν εναλλακτικοί προμηθευτές πετρελαίου, αλλά το πρόβλημα της Ελλάδας έγκειται στην αδυναμία της να εξασφαλίσει πίστωση από τους προμηθευτές δεδομένης της οικονομικής κατάστασης και του φόβου χρεοκοπίας; Δεν θεωρεί ότι υποτιμά το πρόβλημα εφοδιασμού της χώρας από εναλλακτικούς προμηθευτές, οι οποίοι δεν δέχονται να πωλούν στην Ελλάδα το πετρέλαιο χωρίς χρηματικές εγγυήσεις (γεγονός που θα μπορούσε να πλήξει ακόμη περισσότερο την προβληματική ελληνική οικονομία);

2. Δεδομένου ότι, στην ανακοίνωση του Συμβουλίου Εξωτερικών Υποθέσεων της 23ης Ιανουαρίου, δεν αναφέρονται συγκεκριμένα μέτρα για τη στήριξη της Ελλάδας και τη διασφάλιση εναλλακτικών πηγών προμήθειας πετρελαίου, ενώ οι επιπτώσεις του εμπάργκο έχουν ήδη οδηγήσει σε μικρή αύξηση των τιμών των καυσίμων, τι μέτρα προτίθενται να λάβουν προκειμένου να εξασφαλισθεί η αδιάκοπη τροφοδοσία της Ελλάδας σε πετρέλαιο, και πέραν του Ιουλίου, από εναλλακτικούς προμηθευτές που θα πωλούν πετρέλαιο στην Ελλάδα με ευνοϊκούς όρους αντίστοιχους με αυτούς που προσφέρει το Ιράν;

**Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(7 Μαρτίου 2012)*

1. Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση της κατάστασης και των προκλήσεων που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα. Οι κυρώσεις της ΕΕ στις εισαγωγές πετρελαίου από το Ιράν περιλαμβάνουν μεταβατική περίοδο για προϋπάρχοντα συμβόλαια, ειδικά για να δοθεί ο απαιτούμενος χρόνος προσαρμογής στο μέτρο. Μετά τη μεταβατική αυτή περίοδο, οι χώρες χρειάζεται να έχουν διαφοροποιήσει τις εισαγωγές τους ώστε να μην εξαρτώνται από το Ιράν για αργό και πετρελαιοειδή, και να έχουν προχωρήσει σε διακανονισμούς εφοδιασμού από άλλους προμηθευτές στην παγκόσμια πετρελαιαγορά.

2. Η ΕΕ είναι έτοιμη να συνδράμει την Ελλάδα στις προσπάθειές της προσέγγισης των βασικών χωρών παραγωγής κατά τις συζητήσεις της για εναλλακτικές πηγές προμήθειας αργού πετρελαίου, στηρίζει δε τις προσπάθειες της Ελλάδας να μετριάσει τις τυχόν αρνητικές επιπτώσεις από το εμπάργκο ιρανικού πετρελαίου.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000776/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Oil embargo on Iran

Following the answer by the Energy Commissioner, Mr Oettinger, on 16.1.2012, to my parliamentary question No E-011035/2011 on Greek oil supplies, and taking into account the decisions of the meeting of EU Foreign Ministers on 23.1.2012 regarding the oil embargo on Iran:

1. Does the Commission consider that Mr Oettinger's answer that 'Greece can be supplied by others with oil' is in touch with political and economic reality, since it is clear that, apart from Iran, there may be other oil suppliers, but the problem for Greece is its inability to secure credit from these suppliers, given the country's economic situation and the fear of bankruptcy? Does he not think that he is underestimating the country's supply problem with other suppliers, given that the latter will not sell oil to Greece without financial guarantees (a fact that could further damage the problematic Greek economy)?

2. In the communication from the Foreign Affairs Council of 23 January, there was no reference to specific measures to support Greece and to ensure alternative supplies of oil, while the impact of the embargo has already led to a slight rise in fuel prices. In view of this, what measures are going to be taken to ensure an uninterrupted oil supply to Greece and ensure that, after July, alternative suppliers will sell oil to Greece on reasonable terms comparable to those offered by Iran?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

1. The Commission is aware of the situation and the challenges faced by Greece. EU sanctions on oil imports from Iran include a transition period for prior contracts, especially to allow time to adjust to the measure. After this transition period, countries need to have diversified away from imports of Iranian oil and oil products, and to have made arrangements to source from other suppliers on the global oil market.

2. The EU stands ready to assist Greece in its outreach towards key producer countries in its deliberations to source alternative crude oil supplies, and supports Greece's efforts to mitigate any negative impact of the Iranian oil embargo.

*(Dansk udgave)*

**Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000777/12**
**til Kommissionen**
**Dan Jørgensen (S&D)**
*(31. januar 2012)*

*Om:* Svins velfærd

Ifølge rapporter fra Levnedsmiddel-og Veterinærkontoret giver nogle dyrlæger i visse medlemslande utilsigtet ukorrekte råd til deres svineavlerkunder, hvad angår de skridt, de skal tage med henblik på at opfylde kravene i Rådets direktiv 2008/120/EF.

Det ser ud til, at nogle dyrlæger rådgiver kunderne om, at tilrådighedsstillelse af metalkæder eller plastiktyggelegetøj er tilstrækkeligt til at opfylde kravene i direktivets kapitel I, stk. 1, i bilag I, ifølge hvilket svin skal »have permanent adgang til en tilstrækkelig mængde materiale, som de på rette vis kan undersøge og rode i«. Det ser også ud til, at nogle dyrlæger rådgiver deres kunder om, at haleklipning er tilladt, selv om de ikke har ændret »utilstrækkelige miljøforhold eller driftsledelsessystemer« forud for klipningen som påkrævet i stk. 8 i kapitel I.

Påtænker Kommissionen at drøfte det tilrådelige i den rådgivning, der gives til dyrlæger, med dyrlægeorganerne med hensyn til de skridt, dyrlægernes kunder skal tage for at opfylde ovenstående bestemmelser?

**Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli**
*(2. marts 2012)*

Kommissionen vil gerne understrege, at det primære ansvar for gennemførelse af dyrevelfærdslovgivningen ligger hos de relevante myndigheder i medlemsstaterne, der skal oplyse deres embedsmænd om de nærmere fastlagte procedurer og tilbyde dem passende uddannelse.

For at sikre en harmoniseret anvendelse af bestemmelserne arrangerede Kommissionen integrerede kurser i gennemførelsen af direktiv 2008/120/EF om beskyttelse af svin ([1]) i forbindelse med programmet »Bedre uddannelse — større fødevaresikkerhed«, der henvendte sig til embedsdyrlægerne.

Med hensyn til privatpraktiserende dyrlæger har Kommissionen vedtaget en meddelelse om EU-strategien for dyrebeskyttelse og dyrevelfærd 2012-2015 ([2]). Strategien omfatter udarbejdelse af EU-retningslinjer for beskyttelse af svin i 2013. Som led heri bliver repræsentanterne for de privatpraktiserende dyrlæger (FVE) hørt.

([1]) EUT L 47 af 18.2.2009.
([2]) KOM(2012)0006 endelig. http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/docs/aw_strategy_19012012_en.pdf.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000777/12**
**to the Commission**
**Dan Jørgensen (S&D)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Welfare of pigs

It appears from reports by the Food and Veterinary Office that in certain Member States some veterinarians may be inadvertently giving incorrect advice to their pig farmer clients as to the steps they need to take in order to meet the requirements of Council Directive 2008/120/EC.

It seems that some veterinarians may be advising clients that the provision of metal chains or plastic chew-toys is sufficient to meet the requirements of paragraph 4 of Chapter I of Annex I to the directive, which provides that pigs 'must have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities'. It also appears that some veterinarians may be advising clients that it is permissible to tail-dock even where they have not changed 'inadequate environmental conditions or management systems' before docking as required by paragraph 8 of Chapter I.

Does the Commission plan to discuss with veterinary bodies the advisability of guidance being provided for veterinarians regarding the steps their clients need to take to comply with the above provisions?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

The Commission would like to underline that primary responsibility for the implementation of animal welfare legislation lies with the relevant Member States' authorities, which shall provide documented procedures to their official staff as well as appropriate training.

In order to ensure a harmonised application of the requirements the Commission integrated training sessions on the implementation of the directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs ([1]) in the Better Training for Safer Food Programme intended for official veterinarians.

Regarding private veterinarians, the Commission adopted a communication on the EU strategy for the Protection and Welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([2]). The strategy foresees the development of EU guidelines on the protection of pigs in 2013. As part of this process, representatives of private veterinarians (FVE) will be consulted.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009.
([2]) COM(2012) 6 final, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/docs/aw_strategy_19012012_en.pdf

*(Wersja polska)*

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000781/12**
**do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej / Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)**
**Konrad Szymański (ECR)**
*(31 stycznia 2012 r.)*

*Przedmiot:* Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – sytuacja w Syrii a bezpieczeństwo cywilów

Obecnie bezpieczeństwo cywilów w wielu rejonach Syrii jest poważnie zagrożone. Liczba ofiar konfliktu (zabitych i aresztowanych) nieustannie rośnie, a oficjalne statystyki przedstawiane przez ONZ są niższe niż szacunkowe dane organizacji broniących praw człowieka. Od połowy marca 2011 r. protesty antyrządowe są coraz bardziej brutalnie tłumione, w związku z czym nieuchronnym zagrożeniem jest dalsza militaryzacja konfliktu w Syrii.

W jaki sposób Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel zamierza zapobiec dalszej militaryzacji tego konfliktu?

Jakie środki dyplomatyczne się przedsiębierze w celu skłonienia rządu Rosji do zaprzestania dostarczania broni syryjskiemu reżimowi? Czy kwestia ta została poruszona na szczycie UE-Rosja, który odbył się w dniu 15 grudnia 2011 r. w Brukseli?

Jakiego wsparcia Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel udziela pokojowym grupom wchodzącym w skład syryjskiej opozycji? Jakie działania podejmuje UE w celu wspierania dialogu między grupami oporu, zwłaszcza grupami wywodzącymi się z różnych kręgów syryjskiego społeczeństwa (głównie mniejszości, takich jak alawici, druzowie, chrześcijanie i Kurdowie)?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton**
**w imieniu Komisji**
*(27 kwietnia 2012 r.)*

UE potępiła przemoc i represje stosowane przez reżim Syrii wobec jej ludności we wszystkich swoich oświadczeniach i w konkluzjach Rady. Unia wspiera obywateli tego kraju i nieustannie współpracuje z przedstawicielami syryjskiej opozycji, którzy sprzeciwiają się stosowaniu przemocy, wykluczeniu i opowiadają się za wartościami demokratycznymi. UE zachęca działaczy opozycji w tym kraju do podejmowania wszelkich wysiłków na rzecz zwiększenia koordynacji działań prowadzących do pokojowej transformacji Syrii w państwo demokratyczne, stabilne, otwarte dla wszystkich obywateli oraz gwarantujące mniejszościom ich prawa.

Od maja 2011 r. UE obowiązują nałożone na Syrię środki ograniczające, w tym embargo na broń. Regularnie wprowadzane są także nowe sankcje. Dopóki trwają represje, UE będzie kontynuowała swoją politykę nakładania dodatkowych sankcji, które skierowane są przeciwko reżimowi, a nie przeciwko ludności cywilnej.

Ponadto, aby ułatwić wspólne zrozumienie reakcji wspólnoty międzynarodowej na dalszą przemoc w Syrii, UE podjęła także współpracę z Rosją. Kwestię tę poruszono również podczas ostatniego szczytu UE-Rosja, który odbył się w dniach 14-15 grudnia 2011 r. UE była zatem rozczarowana rosyjskim i chińskim weto w dniu 3 lutego 2011 r. odnoszącym się do rezolucji Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ. Unia wciąż wzywa wszystkich jej członków do szybkiego przyjęcia stanowczej rezolucji w sprawie Syrii. Jej stanowisko jest jasne: społeczność międzynarodowa ponosi odpowiedzialność za zapobieżenie dalszemu rozlewowi krwi i prawdziwie dramatycznej sytuacji humanitarnej.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000781/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Konrad Szymański (ECR)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Situation in Syria and the safety of civilians

The safety of civilians in large areas of Syria is currently under serious threat. The number of victims of the conflict killed or arrested is constantly growing, while the official figures quoted by the UN are lower than the estimates of the human rights organisations. Since mid-March 2011 the violent repression of anti-government protests has only escalated, and thus the further militarisation of the conflict in Syria is an imminent threat.

How does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to prevent further militarisation of the conflict?

What diplomatic measures are being taken to put pressure on the government of Russia to bring the supply of arms to the regime in Syria to an end? Was this issue discussed at the EU-Russia summit held on 15 December 2011 in Brussels?

What support is being given by the Vice-President/High Representative to the non-violent groups within the Syrian opposition? What is the EU doing to encourage dialogue between the resistance groups, especially those from different population groups within Syrian society (particularly the minorities, such as the Alawites, Druze, Christians, and Kurds)?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 April 2012)*

The EU has in all its statements and Council conclusions condemned the violence and repression carried out by the Syrian regime against its citizens. It stands by the Syrian people and continues to engage with representative members of the Syrian opposition, which adhere to non-violence, inclusiveness and democratic values. The EU encourages the Syrian opposition to make all efforts to strengthen coordination on the way forward in order to realise an orderly transition to Syria that is democratic, stable, inclusive and that guarantees minority rights.

The EU's restrictive measures are in place in Syria since May 2011, which include an arms embargo. New measures have been introduced regularly. The EU will continue its policy of imposing additional measures against the regime, not to the civilian population, as long as repression continues.

The EU has also engaged with Russia with a view of promoting a common understanding on the international community's response to the continued violence in Syria. The issue was also raised at the latest EU-Russia Summit on 14-15 December 2011. The EU was, therefore, disappointed by Russia and China's vetoes on 3 February 2011 of a UN Security Council Resolution. The EU continues to urge all its members to agree swiftly on a strong resolution on Syria. The EU's message is clear: the international community has a responsibility to prevent further bloodshed and a truly dramatic humanitarian situation.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000782/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Citizens' initiative

The Lisbon Treaty introduced the 'citizens' initiative', allowing one million citizens from a number of Member States the possibility of calling on the Commission to bring forward new proposals. How is this new procedure working in practice to date?

**Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 February 2012)*

As required by the Lisbon Treaty the procedures and conditions for the Citizens' Initiative have been set out in a regulation adopted by the Parliament and the Council on 17 February 2011 ([1]). This regulation will only start to apply as from 1 April 2012; therefore we do not have any experience in practice so far.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative, OJ L 65, 11.3.2011.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000783/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Update on Iceland's application to join the EU

Can the Commission provide an update on Iceland's application to join the EU? What chapters remain open?

**Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission**
*(14 March 2012)*

Since the official opening of the accession negotiations with Iceland in July 2010, 11 out of the total 33 chapters set out for negotiation have been opened. Out of these, eight have been provisionally closed ([1]).

The other three open chapters ('Public procurement', 'Information society and media' and 'Financial and budgetary provisions') comprise so-called 'closing benchmarks', where Iceland needs to continue progress in aligning with the EU *acquis* before negotiations can be provisionally closed.

In two chapters ('Agriculture and rural development' and 'Regional policy'), Iceland has been asked to present strategies and plans for development of its policies in these areas. This will serve as a basis for a decision to open the negotiations.

The Commission is working closely with the Icelandic authorities to sustain the pace of negotiations under the Danish Presidency. Two Accession Conferences are foreseen in March and June 2012.

The second Progress Report, assessing Iceland's preparedness for accession, was presented on 12 October 2011 as part of the annual enlargement package. It provides a comprehensive overview of Iceland's preparations for accession and indicates priority issues to be addressed. The report is available under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/is_rapport_2011_en.pdf whereas the country conclusions can be found under:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/is_conclusions_en.pdf

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([1]) Free movement of workers, company law, intellectual property law, enterprise and industrial policy, trans-European networks, judiciary and fundamental rights, education and culture, and science and research.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000787/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Developing green collar jobs

What is the Commission doing to develop green collar jobs?

Is there an overall EU strategy?

**Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 March 2012)*

As identified in the EU2020 strategy, the transition towards a green and resource efficient economy is one of the main structural transformations affecting our society. Moreover, job growth in the green economy has been positive throughout the recession and is forecast to continue to be quite strong. In addition to growth of the eco-industry itself, sustainable and resource efficient products and services enabling productivity gains and innovative processes throughout the economy will be a major source of new jobs. A vast number of ongoing Commission initiatives already focus on meeting the employment and skills needs of a green economy, these include for instance:

— several initiatives that support development of professions linked to energy efficiency ([1]) ([2]);

— a large-scale research project ([3]) seeking for a classification of 'green jobs' ([4]);

— a project on new and emerging health and safety risks associated with new technologies in green jobs ([5]).

The Commission is currently considering the ways to support job creation especially in the green economy ('green jobs'). The results of this work will make part of the Employment package to be presented by the Commission later this spring. Indeed, supportive labour markets policies and instruments, including better anticipation of skills needs, are essential for the development of a green and resource efficient economy. The Commission also committed to develop an EU Skills Panorama and a European sector Council on skills for green and greener jobs ([6]).

([1]) Linked to the implementation of Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (Art.14); Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings (Art. 20); proposal for a directive on energy efficiency (Art. 13).
([2]) Build-up skills, RES-Compass, Install+RES, European certified Heat Pump installer scheme, EUREM — European Energy Manager, QualiCert, etc.; available at: http://learn-energy.net/training/projects.php.
([3]) The NEUJOBS project financed by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme.
([4]) http://www.neujobs.eu/.
([5]) First results are available at: http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/foresight-green-jobs-drivers-change-TERO11001ENN/view and http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/foresight-green-jobs-key-technologies/view.
([6]) COM(2011) 571 final.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000788/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Drug importation

What strategies are in place to tackle the growing problem of drug importation into the EU in the period 2012-14?

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

The European Commission has helped develop a comprehensive and balanced EU response to drugs, guided by the EU Drugs Strategy (2005-2012) ([1]), endorsed by the European Council in 2004. The strategy is implemented through concrete actions, set out by action plans (the current one covers the period 2009-2012 ([2])). The Danish Presidency has just launched preparatory steps for the elaboration of the next EU Drugs Strategy, post 2012.

In the context of trafficking, the Commission, jointly with the Member States, the Council and the competent European agencies have implemented the European Pact to combat international drug trafficking ([3]). This seeks to build synergies between the structures and organisations targeting the trafficking in cocaine and heroin, and the proceeds of drug traffickers. They are now embarking on the implementation of the Pact on synthetic drugs ([4]) and of the 2011-2013 EU Policy Cycle ([5]) to combat organised and serious international crime, including drug trafficking.

Furthermore, the Commission is considering a new legislative proposal revising the framework Decision 2004/757/JHA ([6]) on drug trafficking, to ensure a more effective approximation of rules on drug trafficking offences and sanctions across the EU.

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([1]) CORDROGUE 77, 15074/04, 22.11.2004.
([2]) 2008/C 326/07.
([3]) CORDROGUE 40, 8821/10, 20.5.2010.
([4]) CORDROGUE 66, 15544/11, 14.10.2011.
([5]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/117583.pdf
([6]) Council Framework Decision 2004/757/JHA of 25 October 2004 laying down minimum provisions on the constituent elements of criminal acts and penalties in the field of illicit drug trafficking, OJ L 335, 11.11.2004, pp 8-11.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000789/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EU airline blacklist

Does the Commission have any plans to implement an EU airline blacklist in an effort to improve coordination of aviation safety standards?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(23 February 2012)*

Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 ([1]) adopted by the Parliament and the Council mandates the Commission to set up (and update) a EU-wide safety list of airlines which for safety reasons would be either fully prohibited to fly in the EU (Annex A of the list) or would be subject to operating restrictions, i.e. authorised to use only specific aircraft for flights into the EU (Annex B of the list). The regulation applies to all licensed air carriers without discrimination, whether they are EU carriers or not. The safety list has been operational since March 2006.

The safety performance of both European and foreign air carriers is already reviewed on a regular basis by Member States, the Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency in the context of the regular updating of the EU safety list and is discussed at every meeting of the Air Safety Committee. The consultations held with the competent authorities of the Member States and the air carriers concerned have however not led the Commission to decide any operating ban or operating restrictions affecting EU carriers so far, since the air carriers concerned have implemented corrective action plans considered acceptable or the competent authorities had themselves taken effective enforcement actions. However, following this regular review, several EU air carriers have stopped their operations or have had their operations significantly limited.

The Commission will continue to be vigilant on EU carriers and will not hesitate to propose measures regarding those carriers, should there be evidence of safety concerns identified that would not be appropriately mitigated.

([1]) OJ L 344, 27.12.2005, p. 15-22.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000790/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Pan-European e-government services

Can the Commission identify the level of interoperability that exists between EU national administrations in the context of the provision of pan-European e-government services?

Are there plans to introduce interoperability measures?

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The Commission's main tool to foster interoperability is the ISA Programme ([1]), which supports cross-border electronic collaboration between administrations. The Honourable Member is referred in particular to the Interoperability Communication ([2]) including the EIS ([3]) and the EIF ([4]).

The proposed 'Connecting Europe Facility' ([5]) provides for the deployment of infrastructures aimed at promoting the interconnection and interoperability of online public services for the digital single market.

Furthermore:

— ISA also supports solutions including the IMI ([6]) and the OSS-based ([7]) platform for European Citizens' Initiatives.

— The NIFO ([8]) and the IMM ([9]) are aimed at measuring the alignment of National Interoperability Initiatives with the EIF and the interoperability readiness of the Member States' administrations. The Commission now collects usage statistics of interoperability solutions supported by ISA ([10]).

— Within the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, the ICT-PSP ([11])addresses interoperability challenges through large scale pilot projects ([12]).

— The Commission develops solutions to prevent new barriers to cross-border procurement (e.g. an expert group on e-tendering, the work stream on e-procurement monitoring and benchmarking, as well as other initiatives through PEPPOL ([13])).

— In the framework of the 'Points of Single Contact' set up under the Services Directive ([14]), legal and practical measures have been taken to improve the cross-border use and interoperability of e-signatures, such as common e-signature formats based on profiles developed by ETSI ([15]) and supported by OSS made available to the Member States.

— The new e-Government Benchmark Framework will address interoperability under the 'Seamless Government' Benchmark.

([1]) ISA = Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations. See OJ L 260, 3.10.2009.
([2]) Towards interoperability for European public services, COM(2010) 744 final.
([3]) EIS = European Interoperability Strategy.
([4]) EIF = European Interoperability Framework.
([5]) COM(2011) 665 final.
([6]) IMI = Internal Market Information System.
([7]) OSS = Open Source Software.
([8]) NIFO = National Interoperability Framework Observatory.
([9]) IMM = Interoperability Maturity Model.
([10]) Consolidated figures should be available during 2012.
([11]) ICT-PSP = Information Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme, one of the three specific programmes of the Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme (2007-2013).
([12]) See http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/lsp/index_en.htm
([13]) PEPPOL = Pan European Public Procurement Online. See http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/apps/projects/factsheet/index.cfm?project_ref=224974
([14]) Directive 2006/123/EC of 12 December 2006, OJ L 376, 27.12.2006.
([15]) ETSI = European Telecommunications Standards Institute.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000791/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* EU financial support to combat AIDS in Africa

Can the Commission state how much financial support the EU is giving to combat AIDS in Africa, and the nature of this support, and provide details of the countries which are beneficiaries of this EU support?

**Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission**
*(16 March 2012)*

The EU supports developing countries mainly through support to health sector reforms and health systems strengthening at country level in addition to thematic support addressing core health issues (as human resources for health, sustainable financing, access to medicine and so on). EU support to the global health initiatives (GF/GAVI) complements this strategy. Support to the health sector is about EUR 600 million per year, not counting general budget support which can also serve the same objectives.

EU support for the fight against HIV/AIDS is mostly channelled through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) in its fight against poverty-related diseases. So far more than EUR 922 million has been disbursed to GFATM. HIV/AIDS represents 54 % of the GFATM portfolio by disease and the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa regions represent 56 % of the GFATM portfolio by region.

This support is complemented by about EUR 250 million for HIV/AIDS over the last decade, more than two thirds of which goes to sub-Saharan Africa, to help organisations at country level run activities to complement the main country policy.

Moreover, during the Sixth and Seventh Research Framework Programme (2002-2011), a total EU contribution of EUR 205 million was given to collaborative research on HIV/AIDS and an additional more than EUR 110 million to a European and Developing Countries Trial Partnership (EDCTP) specifically with sub-Saharan Africa.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000792/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Organised crime within the EU

Can the Commission state what new measures it will implement to combat organised crime within the borderless EU?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(22 February 2012)*

The European Commission's response to organised crime is continuously adapting to the growing complexity of the situation. This is not only reflected in the new measures planned ([1]), but also in the fact that the Commission puts a lot of efforts into monitoring the effectiveness of existing measures and fine-tuning them where needed. Europol as well as other EU Agencies such as Frontex, Eurojust and CEPOL are playing an increasingly important role. Apart from proposing new European legislation and strategic policy initiatives to fight organised crime, the Commission also remains active in organising specialist networks and expert meetings allowing Member States to develop cooperation. The Commission foresees also to provide adequate funding in the years to come ([2]).

([1]) See the Commission Work Programme 2012, especially pages 12-14 of the annex where the new measures in the field of Home Affairs are listed (http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/isec/funding_isec_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000793/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Bank charges levied on transfers of funds

Can the Commission confirm that there are EU rules governing bank charges levied on transfers of funds in euros from one Member State in the eurozone to another?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

Charges for cross-border payments in euro, including charges for bank transfers, are subject to Regulation (EC) No 924/2009 on cross-border payments in the Community ([1]). The basic principle of the regulation is that charges for corresponding payment transactions offered by any payment service provider (e.g. a bank) have to be the same whether the payment is national or cross-border. The law applies to payments in euro in all Member States.

([1]) OJ L 266, 9.10.2009, p. 11.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000794/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Expansion of the Erasmus programme

Can the Commission state what measures it intends to undertake to expand the operation of the Erasmus programme in the future?

How much was spent on the programme last year?

How many students took part?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

For 2011, the budget allocation for the Erasmus programme was EUR 477 million. With this budget, it is estimated that about 240 000 students and 40 000 staff will benefit from Erasmus support for exchanges abroad during the 2011/2012 academic year.

In the context of the Youth Opportunities Initiative presented at the end of 2011, the Commission proposed to allocate additional funding in 2012 to increase the number of traineeship grants, including in the Erasmus programme.

For the period 2014-2020, the Commission has proposed that the current Erasmus programme should be integrated into a single programme for education, training, and youth named 'Erasmus for All'. For this new programme, the Commission proposes an overall budget increase of 70 % compared with current levels, which will allow over 2 million higher education students to spend part of their education and training abroad. The Commission proposes that the programme should expand both financially and geographically, enabling student and staff mobility worldwide in order to enhance international cooperation in higher education and raise the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area. Moreover, a new student loan guarantee facility will support loans to boost master's degree mobility. Support for cross-border joint degree masters programmes at master's level will also be integrated into the new programme.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000795/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Money laundering in the eurozone

Would the Commission make a comprehensive statement as to the effectiveness of existing EC laws to combat money laundering within the eurozone?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

The exisiting EU Directives and Regulation ([1]), setting out the rules on anti-money laundering (AML) apply to all Member States regardless of their membership of the Economic and Monetary Union. These rules to a large extent replicate the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendations to counter money laundering and terrorist financing, although they add certain measures that recognise the specificities of the single market. The effectiveness of these measures is difficult to assess, and this is something that the FATF has only recently started to address in its work preparing for the next round of mutual evaluations on an international level. There is today no accepted methodology for measuring effectiveness and statistical evidence (e.g. numbers of confiscations, prosecutions and suspicious transaction reports) are open to interpretation. The Commission is closely involved in this work at the international level, due to conclude later this year.

In preparation for its revision of the existing Directive and Regulation ([2]), the Commission has undertaken extensive consultation with the public and private sector and should publish an Application Report at the end of March, which will invite comments on the proposals made and the potential impact of them. The Commission should be publishing an impact assessment later this year which should include further details of how effective the current regime is, and how the envisaged changes could improve the situation.

([1]) Directives 2005/60/EC and 2006/70/EC, on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing, and Regulation 1781/2006 on information on the payer accompanying transfers of funds.
([2]) Idem.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000796/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Support of the tourism industry

Can the Commission outline the measures it is supporting to help develop the tourism industry in the EU since the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

The political framework for all actions to support tourism is presented in the communication, 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe' (COM(2010)352 final of 30.6.2010). This communication contains 21 actions which are currently implemented.

The Honourable Member can find both the communication and a complete overview of tourism actions implemented by the Commission in the Tourism Implementation Rolling Plan available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5719

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000797/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Reduction of red tape for small business

What steps has the Commission taken to reduce red tape for small businesses in Ireland since the euro crisis began in 2008?

**Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The reduction of administrative and regulatory burdens for SMEs is one of the guiding principles of the Commission Communication 'Small Business Act' for Europe (SBA) ([1]) and was identified as a priority area for action in the Review of the SBA adopted in February 2011 ([2]). The Commission is committed to assessing the impacts of its legislative proposals on small businesses (the use of the 'SME test') and promoting the application of the 'Think Small First' principle in its policies and administrative procedures (e.g. one-stop-shops, simplified access to EU programmes). The Member States are encouraged to apply these principles at national level.

The Commission has exceeded the EU administrative burden reduction target of 25 % by 2012 by having tabled proposals equivalent to more than 33 % reduction to the Parliament and the Council for adoption, potentially saving over EUR 40 billion for businesses. The recent agreement between the Parliament and the Council on exempting micro enterprises from annual accounts will also bring adopted legislation close to the 25 % target.

Moreover, the Commission seeks to minimise the regulatory burden on small businesses ([3]) by exemptions or lighter requirements for SMEs, and especially micro-enterprises, when this does not undermine the overall public policy objectives pursued through the relevant regulations.

The Irish Government has taken steps to comply with the 25 % target, which is on track to be achieved this year. To facilitate SME participation in public procurement, the Irish government issued a policy directive ([4]) in 2010 which lowered the minimum value of contracts advertised on the national public procurement portal and indicated that any company size requirements should be justified by the needs of the contract.

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([1]) COM(2008) 394 final, 25.6.2008.
([2]) COM(2011) 78 final, 23.2.2011.
([3]) See the 'Report on minimising regulatory burdens for SMEs — Adapting EU regulation to the needs of micro-enterprises' (COM(2011) 803 final, 23.11.2011).
([4]) 'Facilitating SME participation in Public Procurement'.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000798/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Providing primary education in developing countries

Could the Commission make a statement outlining what programmes it is pursuing to provide primary education to children in developing countries?

Could the Commission also state the financial level of this support and explain how these programmes are administered?

**Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission**
*(9 March 2012)*

In line with the European Consensus on Development, Accra Agenda for Aid effectiveness and the Staff Working Document 'More and better education for all in developing countries' issued in 2010, the European Union supports the balanced development of education systems in partner countries, with particular attention to equal access to education, in particular primary education, and improving the quality of education. In the current programming period (2007-2013), the EU supports basic education in 48 developing countries, mainly through bilateral programmes, with a total amount of around EUR 2.2 billion.

The EU supports politically and financially specific global and regional initiatives. In the Global Partnership for Education (former Education for All Fast Track Initiative) whose main objective is to **ensure that all children have greater access to school, stay in school longer, and receive a quality education**, the Commission concentrates on reinforcing the country focus, promoting aid effectiveness and improving the governance of the partnership. In the Copenhagen pledging conference in November 2011 donors pledged more than USD 1.5 billion for the Global Partnership for Education Fund for 2011-2014, and made a commitment to increase bilateral education aid and improve its effectiveness over the next three years. Developing country partners pledged to raise domestic funding for basic education by more than USD 2 billion and committed to improve education access and quality. All government partners committed to the policy goals of improving progress in girls' education, fragile states, learning outcomes and access to education.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000799/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Peace IV Programme for Ireland

Could the Commission indicate what plans are in place to develop a Peace IV Programme for Ireland?

**Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

In the legislative package for EU cohesion policy for the period 2014-2020 currently under discussion in the Council and the European Parliament, the Commission proposes that in the case of any future cross-border programme between Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland in support of peace and reconciliation, the European Regional Development Fund intervention would aim to continue to promote social and economic stability in the regions concerned, notably by actions to foster cohesion between communities.

A possible PEACE IV programme could thus be developed under the European territorial cooperation goal.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000800/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Introduction of CCTB

Can the Commission produce any reports which show that introducing a common corporate tax base (CCTB) in the EU will help to improve the competitiveness of the eurozone?

**Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission**
*(5 March 2012)*

The Commission has assessed the economic impacts for the EU of a Common Corporate Tax Base (CCTB) and a Consolidated Common Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) in the impact assessment — Accompanying document to the proposal for a Council Directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) ([1]). No further analysis is currently planned on the CCTB.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/company_tax/common_tax_base/com_sec_2011_315_impact_assesment_en.pdf

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000801/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Development of ICT and of the information society

The Commission has put the development of ICT and of the information society, which has huge potential benefits for Europeans, at the centre of its programmes.

What is the Commission doing to make sure that certain segments of European society — such as older people and people on low incomes — are not left behind in this process?

**Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission**
*(27 February 2012)*

The Commission has launched within the framework of the Digital Agenda for Europe many actions to improve access to and benefits from ICT. For example, a new and large initiative has been launched to support Active and Healthy Ageing with the support of ICT enabled services ([1]). The Commission has also launched Digital inclusion initiatives empowering people at risk of exclusion, such as older people and those with low income, to enhance their employability, and to gain access to education, care and government services. The Commission supports initiatives such as Telecentres ([2]) that provide low-barrier access and training to digitally excluded; digital literacy and skills is a priority for the European Social Funds (2014-2020); the Grundtvig programme funds projects on ICT skills for adults; the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (ICT PSP ([3])) funds pilot projects on inclusive eGovernment, digital literacy of social intermediaries; a certification framework for ICT competences of users and practitioners has been proposed and the e-Inclusion Digital Empowerment Awards 2012 have been launched to obtain case stories on ICT for employability, reintegration and wellbeing ([4]). In addition, Member States are requested to adopt long term digital literacy policies and integrate them in social policy.

Apart from providing people with the tools to get them empowered on line, there are policies and projects to make ICT accessible for all. The Commission is preparing in 2012 a legislative proposal concerning the accessibility of public sector websites. This should increase the usability of public sector websites by users that suffer from sensory disabilities. Together with Member States research and development is undertaken via the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme, to develop new ICT solutions and services which require less specific skills.

([1]) ec.europa.eu/active-healthy-ageing.
([2]) www.telecentre-europe.org; http://www.ecei11.eu/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/ict_psp/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/einclusion/policy/competences/2012_awards/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000802/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Data roaming charges

Can the Commission provide an update on the timeline for reducing data roaming charges within the EU?

**Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission**
*(29 February 2012)*

The Commission's proposal for Roaming Regulation contains a safeguard for consumers in the form of decreasing price caps until June 2016. For the first time, data roaming services will also be covered by this safety-net. While proposed price caps ensure that consumers are not charged excessive prices the Commission's proposals also introduces a number of structural measures, such as separate sale of roaming services and wholesale access obligation. These measures, coupled with the decreasing wholesale charges, aim at enhancing competition in the roaming market leading thereby further reductions in end-user prices well below the proposed safety-net price caps.

As you will be aware, the level of maximum retail and wholesale caps and structural measures are now being considered by the co-legislators. The Commission welcomes the commitment of the EP and the Council to find an agreement on the proposed Regulation in the coming months so that consumers can benefit from lowered data roaming prices and enhanced competition already in July when the current Roaming regulation expires.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000803/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Economic activity in aquaculture in Europe

Can the Commission state what new initiatives it intends to pursue this year so as to promote greater economic activity in the field of aquaculture in Europe?

Does it agree that more marketing needs to take place?

Does it agree that the lack of information given to consumers means that in large stores only five or six species are sold, whereas there are 200 species commercially available?

**Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

The proposal for the reform of the common fisheries policy includes the development of aquaculture among its key objectives because of its potential to contribute to economic development and job creation. It is proposed to develop an open method of coordination based on EU strategic guidelines and multiannual national strategic plans. The guidelines will aim at improving the competitiveness of aquaculture and supporting its development and innovation; encouraging economic activity; diversifying and improving the quality of life in coastal and rural areas.

In the proposed reform of Common Market Organisation for fisheries and aquaculture products (CMO) a strong focus is put on the organisation of the sector in fisheries and in aquaculture. It is believed that much can be achieved in terms of added value and prices by improving the way production is planned, market analysis and marketing of products are conducted. The Commission proposes to strengthen and support producers' organisation in aquaculture.

The Commission agrees that an increased diversity of offer would release some pressure on some species that are overexploited. Availability of large number of different commercial species from catch fisheries and aquaculture is an opportunity to extend the range of sustainable quality products in the EU.

Support to marketing activities, differentiation, certification and promotion of diversification of offer is referred to in the Commission proposal for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000804/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Cheese sold to the EU

Would the Commission please provide information on which countries sell cheese to the EU, the types of cheese they sell, as well as the value and quantities involved?

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

The Honourable Member will find attached the table with the imports of cheeses by the European Union in 2011 (up to November 2011) by quantity, value, type and country of origin ([1]).

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([1]) The annex is sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat of Parliament.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000805/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* External vehicle speed control

Could the Commission indicate if it supports the development of external vehicle speed control (EVSC) and under which budget heading research or infrastructure projects relating to EVSC would be funded?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

There is no specific budget line for projects in this area, but proposals may be presented, whenever suitable, to the RDI Framework Programme 'Horizon 2020' and Structural Funds' calls for proposals.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000806/12**
**to the Commission**
**Jim Higgins (PPE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Confiscated duty-free liquids

Some passengers travelling from third countries who are transiting through EU hub airports are continuing to have their liquid duty-free purchases confiscated. Could the Commission give an update on what it is doing to end this practice?

**Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission**
*(1 March 2012)*

EU rules on the carriage of liquids apply only to flights departing from EU airports. As a general rule, liquids may only be carried in cabin baggage if they are either purchased at duty free shops at EU airports or on board EU air carriers and packed in a security tamper evident bag that displays proof of purchase on that day. Goods sold in duty free shops at EU airports and on board EU carriers conform to EU security measures, whereas this is not the case for goods sold at airports outside the EU or on board non-EU air carriers. An exemption is made for duty free goods sold at certain airports in the US, Canada, Croatia, Malaysia and Singapore, where the Commission has established that equivalent security measures are applied.

The Commission is aware of, and regrets, the inconvenience for the travelling public caused by the current restrictions on the carriage of liquids in cabin baggage. The Commission services are working hard with all parties concerned to ensure that these restrictions are replaced by a liquids screening regime in 2013 at the latest. In that respect the Commission has created the 2013-Liquids Working Group which met on 8 September and on 5 December 2011. This group of experts (Member States, industry and international partners on an ad hoc basis) has helped set up 12 liquids screening trials which are ongoing at EU airports. The Commission will also intensify and enhance its international cooperation in this respect.

The Commission will assess the situation and report to the Parliament on the situation in respect of liquids screening by the summer 2012.

*(Dansk udgave)*

**Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000807/12**
**til Kommissionen**
**Dan Jørgensen (S&D)**
*(3. februar 2012)*

*Om:* Kommissionens rolle i det europæiske partnerskab om kastration af grise

I fortsættelse af drøftelserne, der blev indledt af Kommissionen og det belgiske formandskab, enedes en række aktører i svinesektoren i december 2010 om en europæisk erklæring om alternativer til kirurgisk kastration af svin ([1]), den såkaldte Bruxelleserklæring. Underskriverne af dette dokument har forpligtet sig til at arbejde for, at kirurgisk kastration af hangrise bringes til ophør senest den 1. januar 2018. For at nå dette mål har Kommissionen oprettet og finansieret et europæisk partnerskab, der har til opgave at udvikle de nødvendige redskaber til at sikre, at kæden for svinekød i EU stadig er bæredygtig og konkurrencedygtig.

I henhold til Bruxelleserklæringen skal Kommissionen i forbindelse med dette partnerskab »spille en formidlende rolle med hensyn til at tilskynde de private parter til at underskrive denne erklæring«.

1. Hvordan forklarer Kommissionen, at kun 28 aktører har underskrevet erklæringen, og at der heriblandt ikke findes nogen detailvirksomheder eller forbrugerorganisationer?

2. Vil Kommissionen forklare, hvilke foranstaltninger den indtil nu har truffet for at finde nye underskrivere, som vil indgå denne frivillige forpligtelse?

3. Hvilke foranstaltninger vil Kommissionen træffe på kort sigt for at udvikle partnerskabet?

4. I erklæringen omtales en årlig rapport, der objektivt skal vurdere fremskridt med hensyn til ophør af kirurgisk kastration. Hvornår agter Kommissionen at offentliggøre den første rapport?

**Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af John Dalli**
*(6. marts 2012)*

Den europæiske erklæring om alternativer til kirurgisk kastration er en frivillig aftale mellem hovedaktørerne i svinesektoren om at bringe operativ kastration af hangrise til ophør senest den 1. januar 2018. Hidtil har de fleste af underskriverne været organisationer, der er direkte berørt af dette spørgsmål, heriblandt svineproducentorganisationer, slagterier, forskningsinstitutter og velfærdsorganisationer.

Kommissionen koncentrerede sig i 2011 om at sikre de finansielle midler til at udvikle de nødvendige redskaber til at gøre det lettere at bringe operativ kastration til ophør. Kommissionen offentliggjorde i august 2011 en afgørelse om et arbejdsprogram for finansieringen af EU-aktiviteter vedrørende alternativer til operativ kastration af svin ([2]). I december 2011 blev der i forlængelse af denne afgørelse underskrevet en administrativ aftale med Det Fælles Forskningscenter om udarbejdelse af EU-anerkendte referencemetoder til påvisning af ornelugt. Desuden offentliggøres der inden marts 2012 et udbud om udførelse af en undersøgelse af forbrugernes accept af svinekød og kødprodukter fra orner, der ikke er operativt kastrerede.

Der iværksættes yderligere oplysningsaktiviteter i 2012. Der vil blive oprettet en dedikeret webside inden udgangen af februar 2012. Alternativer til kastration af grise bliver et af emnerne på den internationale konference om den nye EU-strategi 2012-2015 ([3]), som det danske formandskab og Kommissionen afholder i fællesskab.

Kommissionen regner med at offentliggøre årsrapporten om alternativer til operativ kastration i marts 2012.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/farm/initiatives_en.htm
([2]) EUT C 243 af 20.8.2011.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/seminars/index_en.htm

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000807/12**
**to the Commission**
**Dan Jørgensen (S&D)**
*(3 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Role of the Commission in the European partnership on pig castration

In December 2010, further to discussions prepared by the Commission and the Belgian Presidency, several stakeholders in the pork sector agreed on the European Declaration on alternatives to surgical castration of pigs ([1]), the so-called 'Brussels declaration'. Signatories of this document committed themselves to work towards ending surgical castration of male piglets by 1 January 2018. To reach this objective the Commission had to establish and fund a European partnership whose role was to develop necessary tools to ensure that the pigmeat chain in the European Union remained sustainable and competitive.

According to the Brussels declaration, in the framework of this partnership the Commission has to 'act as a facilitator to encourage private parties to subscribe to the declaration'.

1. How does the Commissioner explain the fact that only 28 stakeholders have signed the declaration, and no retail companies or consumer organisations?

2. Could the Commissioner explain what action the Commission has taken so far to find new signatories to give this voluntary commitment?

3. In the short term, what action will the Commission take to develop this partnership?

4. The declaration provides for an annual report assessing objectively the progress made towards ending surgical castration. When will the Commission publish the first report?

**Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission**
*(6 March 2012)*

The European Declaration on alternatives to surgical castration is a voluntary agreement between the main actors of the pig sector to stop surgical castration of male piglets by 1 January 2018. So far, most of the signatories are organisations directly linked with this issue such as pig producers' organisations, slaughterhouses, research institutes and welfare organisations.

In 2011, the Commission concentrated its efforts on securing the financial means to develop the tools necessary to facilitate the end of surgical castration. The Commission published in August 2011 a decision ([2]) adopting a work programme for the financing of the activities of the EU on alternatives to surgical castration of pigs. In line with the decision, an administrative agreement was signed in December 2011 with the Joint Research Centre to develop EU-recognised reference methods for the detection of boar taint; an open call to carry out a study on consumers' acceptance of pig meat obtained from non-surgically castrated male pigs will be published before March 2012.

Communication actions will be further developed in 2012. A dedicated website will be launched before the end of February 2012. Alternatives to pig castration will be one of the topics presented at the International Conference on the new EU strategy 2012-2015 ([3]) organised by the Danish presidency and the Commission.

The Commission plans to publish the annual report on alternatives to surgical castration in March 2012.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/farm/initiatives_en.htm
([2]) OJ C 243, 20.8.2011.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/seminars/index_en.htm

*(българска версия)*

**Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-000808/12**
**до Комисията**
**Антония Първанова (ALDE)**
*(1 февруари 2012 г.)*

*Относно:* Приложението на Конвенцията за прилагане на Шенгенското споразумение в българското законодателство

Министерството на вътрешните работи на Република България (МВР) налага административни глоби на авиокомпаниите в България по Закона за чужденците в Република България (ЗЧРБ) в случаите, когато авиокомпанията превози пътници, които са допуснати да се качат в самолета от граничните органи на изходната точка (включително ако изходната точка е държава членка на ЕС и/или Шенген), но в България се третират като лица от трети държави и нелегални имигранти. Българските органи многократно се позовават на член 26 от Конвенцията за прилагане на Шенгенското споразумение (КПШС) и липсата на входна виза за България на превозените пътници.

В повечето от регистрираните случаи става въпрос за пътници — граждани на трети държави, които пристигат от държави членки на ЕС и/или държави, присъединени към Шенгенското пространство, и които имат права за дългосрочно пребиваване в тези държави и същевременно имат правата да се придвижват без ограничения във всички държави от Шенгенското пространство, но нямат необходимите входни документи за България.

В същото време, по ЗЧРБ на авиокомпаниите са възложени контролни функции, присъщи единствено на органите за граничен контрол, които българските авиопревозвачи са в обективна невъзможност да изпълнят по какъвто и да е начин, особено на чуждестранни летища.

Счита ли Комисията за приемливо:

1. от една страна, граничната полиция на изходната точка (особено в случаите, когато става въпрос за държава членка на ЕС и/или Шенген) да допуска граждани, които притежават всички необходими документи и разрешителни да живеят и работят в съответните държави от ЕС, както и безусловното право на свободно движение в Шенгенското пространство, но които нямат необходимите входни документи за България, да се качат на самолет за България;

2. на българските авиокомпании да се налагат административни глоби за това, че са превозили пътниците по точка 1, които граничната полиция не е спряла на изходната точка, и авиопревозвачите да бъдат считани за съотговорни с граничните органи? На кои международни нормативни актове би могла да се основе подобна практика?

Смята ли Комисията да извърши проверка на въпросните процедури и на начина, по който се имплементира член 26 от КПШС в българското законодателство, по-специално в ЗЧРБ?

**Отговор, даден от г-жа Малмстрьом от името на Комисията**
*(2 март 2012 г.)*

Всички лица, които пресичат външните граници на Шенгенското пространство, подлежат на гранични проверки. Тъй като България все още не участва напълно в Шенгенското пространство, при излизане се проверяват лицата, пътуващи от Шенгенското пространство за България.

Целта на тези проверки, извършвани от граничната охрана, е да се установи самоличността на лицата въз основа на пътните им документи и да се провери, че те притежават валиден документ за преминаване на границата.

Съгласно Директива 2001/51/ЕО на Съвета ([1]) превозвачите са отговорни за гарантиране на това, че гражданите на трети държави, които те превозват от трети държави в Шенгенското пространство, притежават валидни пътни документи; върху превозвачите се налагат санкции, ако транспортират пътници с недостатъчни документи, на които е отказано влизане.

Тъй като граничните проверки по вътрешните граници с България все още не са премахнати, българското законодателство може, в рамките на ограниченията, наложени от законодателството на Съюза, и по-специално от Директива 2004/38 относно правото на граждани на Съюза и на членове на техните семейства да се движат и да пребиват свободно на територията на държавите-членки ([2]), да наложи на превозвачите задължението да гарантират, че пътниците, които те превозват от Шенгенското пространство за България, имат необходимите пътни документи.

([1]) ОВ L 187, 10.7.2001 г., стр. 45.
([2]) ОВ L 158, 30.4.2004 г., стр. 77.

Проверките на самоличността, извършвани от превозвачите в този контекст, не са равностойни на проверки от страна на държавните органи по границите, тъй като те се различават по своята цел, както и по отношение на средствата, с които разполагат.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000808/12**
**to the Commission**
**Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Application under Bulgarian law of the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement

The Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria (MI) imposes administrative fines on airlines in Bulgaria under the Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (FRBA) in cases where an airline transports passengers, who have been allowed to board the aircraft by the border authorities at the point of departure (including where the point of departure is an EU and/or Schengen Member State), but who in Bulgaria are treated as persons from third countries and illegal immigrants. The Bulgarian authorities have repeatedly relied on Article 26 of the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement (CISA) and the lack of an entry visa for Bulgaria on the part of the passengers transported.

In most cases on record, it is a matter of passengers who are citizens of third countries arriving from EU Member States and/or states that have acceded to the Schengen Area, and who have the right to long-term residence in those states and, at the same time, the right to unrestricted movement in all states of the Schengen Area, but do not have the documents required for entry to Bulgaria.

At the same time, under the FRBA, airlines have been assigned monitoring functions innate solely to border control authorities, which are objectively impossible for Bulgarian air carriers to carry out in practice in any way whatsoever, especially at foreign airports.

Does the Commission consider it acceptable:

1. on the one hand, for the border police at the point of departure (particularly in the cases where this is in an EU and/or Schengen Member State) to allow citizens who have all the requisite documents and permits to live and work in the respective EU states, as well as the unconditional right to freedom of movement in the Schengen Area, but who do not have the documents required for entry into Bulgaria, to board an airplane to Bulgaria;

2. for administrative fines to be imposed on Bulgarian airlines for transporting passengers as referred to in point 1 who have not been stopped by the border police at the point of departure, and for the air carriers to be held jointly responsible with the border authorities? Which international regulatory acts would provide a basis for such a practice?

Does the Commission intend to review the procedures in question and the way in which Article 26 of the CISA is implemented in Bulgarian law, especially in the FRBA?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

All persons crossing the external borders of the Schengen area are subject to border checks. As Bulgaria does not yet fully participate in the Schengen area, exit checks are carried out on people travelling from the Schengen area to Bulgaria.

The aim of these checks, carried out by border guards, is to establish the identity of the persons on the basis of their travel documents and to verify that they are in possession of a document valid for crossing the border.

Under Council Directive 2001/51/EC ([1]), carriers are liable for ensuring that third-country nationals whom they bring from third countries into the Schengen area are in possession of valid travel documents; they face sanctions when transporting insufficiently documented passengers who are refused entry.

As border checks at the internal border with Bulgaria have not yet been abolished, Bulgarian law can, within the limits imposed by Union law and in particular by Directive 2004/38 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States ([2]), impose the obligation on carriers to ensure that passengers which they carry from the Schengen area to Bulgaria have the necessary travel documents.

Identity checks by carriers in this context are not equivalent to checks by public authorities at the borders, as they differ with regard to their objective as well as with regard to the means at their disposal.

([1]) OJ L 187, 10.7.2001. p. 45.
([2]) OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77.

*(Ελληνική έκδοση)*

**Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000809/12**
**προς την Επιτροπή**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(31 Ιανουαρίου 2012)*

*Θέμα:* Εφαρμογή της αρχής της επικουρικότητας

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο και η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή κατέληξαν σε συμφωνία για την επιβολή πετρελαϊκού εμπάργκο στο Ιράν, παρά τις ισχυρές αντιρρήσεις κρατών μελών που ζήτησαν περίοδο χάριτος για την εφαρμογή του εμπάργκο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Μπορεί να λειτουργήσει η αρχή της επικουρικότητας για την Ελλάδα σε αυτό το θέμα που αφορά την χάραξη της εξωτερικής της πολιτικής;

— Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να καταβάλει την πίστωση για την αγορά πετρελαίου και παραγώγων του από τους νέους προμηθευτές από τους οποίους θα χρειαστεί να αγοράζει πλέον η Ελλάδα;

**Απάντηση του κ. Barroso εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής**
*(2 Μαρτίου 2012)*

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να διευκρινίσει ότι η αρχή της επικουρικότητας, όπως ορίζεται στο άρθρο 5 της Συνθήκης για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, χρησιμεύει για να αποφασίζεται αν η Ένωση πρέπει να ενεργήσει σε σχέση με ένα συγκεκριμένο θέμα και, αν ναι, σε ποια έκταση. Ωστόσο, η αρχή αυτή δεν εφαρμόζεται στο ζήτημα της συμμετοχής των επιμέρους κρατών μελών στις αποφάσεις που λαμβάνονται από την Ένωση.

Επισημαίνεται επίσης ότι, στον τομέα της ΚΕΠΠΑ, οι αποφάσεις λαμβάνονται καταρχήν με ομοφωνία. Η απόφαση για την ενίσχυση των περιοριστικών μέτρων κατά του Ιράν, περιλαμβανομένης της επιβολής σταδιακής απαγόρευσης επί της εισαγωγής πετρελαίου, ελήφθη ομόφωνα από το σύνολο των κρατών μελών.

Κατόπιν τούτου, η ΕΕ είναι αποφασισμένη να εξεύρει λύση για τις χώρες της ΕΕ οι οποίες πλήττονται ιδιαιτέρως από τις κυρώσεις, όπως η Ελλάδα, η Ιταλία και η Ισπανία. Ειδικότερα, η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος/Αντιπρόεδρος Ashton διεξάγει διαβουλεύσεις με ορισμένους εναλλακτικούς προμηθευτές πετρελαίου (π.χ. με τη Σαουδική Αραβία και τα Ηνωμένα Αραβικά Εμιράτα) σχετικά με τη δυνατότητα αντιστάθμισης των ελλείψεων εφοδιασμού για τα κράτη μέλη. Εξάλλου, κατ' εφαρμογή της ρήτρας επανεξέτασης την οποία περιλαμβάνει η απόφαση περί των κυρώσεων, το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο και η Επιτροπή πραγματοποίησαν κοινή δήλωση με την οποία αναλαμβάνουν τη δέσμευση να ασχοληθούν εκ νέου χωρίς χρονοτριβή, και πάντως το αργότερο τον Απρίλιο του 2012, με το ζήτημα των κρατών μελών που εισάγουν μεγάλες ποσότητες ιρανικού πετρελαίου, προκειμένου να διασφαλισθεί με κάθε αναγκαία ενέργεια ο αδιάλειπτος ενεργειακός εφοδιασμός. Εντούτοις, προς το παρόν δεν εξετάζεται ως πιθανό μέτρο η χορήγηση πίστωσης.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000809/12**
**to the Commission**
**Niki Tzavela (EFD)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Application of the subsidiarity principle

The European Council and the European Commission have finally agreed on the imposition of an oil embargo on Iran, despite strong objections from a number of Member States that were seeking a period of grace before the embargo came into force.

I would like to ask the Commission:

— Can the subsidiarity principle apply to Greece in this matter, given that this is an issue relating to its foreign policy?

— Does the Commission intend to provide credit for the purchase of oil and its derivatives from the new suppliers from which Greece will need to make its future purchases?

**Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission**
*(2 March 2012)*

The Commission would like to clarify that the principle of subsidiarity, as defined in Article 5 of the Treaty on Eurpoean Union, serves to determine whether the Union shall act at all and to which exent. This principle however, does not apply to the question of paritcipation of individual Member States in decisions taken by the Union.

It is furthermore noted that in the area of CFSP, decisions are taken principally by unanimity. The decision to strengthen the restrictive measures against Iran, including the imposition of a phased ban on the import of oil, was taken on the basis of consensus by all Member States.

Following this, the EU is committed to finding a solution for EU countries particularly affected by the sanctions such as Greece, Italy and Spain. In particular, HRVP, Ashton has been consulting with a number of alternative oil suppliers (such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) on possible compensation of the shortfall in supply for the Member States. In addition and in line with a review clause which is part of the sanctions Decision, the European Council and Commission have made a joint declaration undertaking to revert to the issue of Member States importing a large quota of Iranian oil without delay, and not later than April 2012, with a view to ensuring through all necessary actions the continuity of energy supply. However, a credit is currently not discussed as a possible measure.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000811/12**
**to the Council**
**Nicole Sinclaire (NI)**
*(31 January 2012)*

*Subject:* Economic sanctions against Belarus

Could the Council advise me as to which Member States oppose the imposition of economic sanctions on Belarus?

**Reply**
*(2 April 2012)*

It is not Council policy to comment on the positions taken by individual Member States.

The Council takes this opportunity to inform the Honourable Member that against the background of the further deterioration of the situation in Belarus, on 28 February 2012 it strengthened restrictive measures against those responsible for the crackdown on civil society in that country.

The Council unanimously decided to add 21 persons responsible for the repression of civil society and the democratic opposition in Belarus to the list of those targeted by a travel ban and an asset freeze. These decisions come in addition to already existing measures: more than 200 individuals are already subject to a travel ban and a freeze of their assets within the EU. Moreover, the assets of three companies linked to the regime remain frozen while exports to Belarus of arms and material for internal repression are prohibited.

Further work on restrictive measures concerning those benefiting from or supporting the regime will be undertaken with a view to the Foreign Affairs Council in March 2012.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000813/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(1 de febrero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Vulneración de la normativa comunitaria en el proyecto de instalación de incineradora en O Irixo (Ourense)

El Gobierno de Galicia ha anunciado su intención de facilitar la autorización de una planta incineradora en O Irixo (Ourense) para tratar 900 000 toneladas anuales de residuos. Esta decisión determinará el futuro de los próximos 20 años en la gestión de los residuos sólidos urbanos de Galicia, con una población de casi 3 000 000 de personas. El alcance del modelo que se pretende desarrollar tiene importantes consecuencias en los aspectos estratégicos de la política ambiental y el desarrollo sostenible, así como el compromiso de Europa para combatir el cambio climático, las decisiones gubernamentales de ámbito local y regional también serán decisivas para dar coherencia y lograr que la Unión Europea y los retos de la política ambiental del séptimo programa de acción comunitaria para el período 2010-2020.

Profundamente preocupada por la falta de transparencia y por los cambios normativos de urgencia que ha realizado la Xunta de Galicia, comunico a la Comisión que procede realizar un seguimiento de este tema, ya que estos cambios pueden entrar en conflicto con los principios de subsidiariedad y de proporcionalidad previstos en el Tratado Constitutivo de la Unión Europea, pues afectan a la evaluación ambiental estratégica y al procedimiento de consulta pública. Los cambios normativos han eliminado la fase normal del procedimiento ordinario de consulta previa y participación ciudadana que incluye para ciertos proyectos, entre ellos los de las incineradoras, un «procedimiento abreviado» de autorización.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de estos cambios normativos destinados a abreviar un procedimiento de autorización de una incineradora? ¿Considera la Comisión que la aprobación ambiental realizada cumple los objetivos y la coherencia de la Directiva 2000/76/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 4 de diciembre de 2000, relativa a la incineración de residuos y de la Directiva 2008/1/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 15 de enero de 2008, relativa a la prevención y al control integrados de la contaminación? ¿Considera adecuado la Comisión permitir que se instale una incineradora sin haberse efectuado un estudio previo de alternativas para el modelo y la gestión de la ubicación y distribución de una manera transparente y con las consultas previas y de participación ciudadana? ¿Puede informar la Comisión de si este modelo de sistema de incineración es el que se apoya desde la Unión Europea?

**Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión**
*(13 de marzo de 2012)*

La Comisión no tiene noticia de este proyecto de incineradora en O Irixo (provincia de Orense, Comunidad Autónoma de Galicia, España).

En la primera fase de esta clase de proyecto se aplican la Directiva de 2011/92/UE ([1]) (conocida como la Directiva de evaluación de impacto ambiental o Directiva EIA) y la Directiva 2001/42/CE ([2]) (conocida como Directiva sobre evaluación ambiental estratégica o Directiva EAE). En la segunda fase, relacionada con el funcionamiento de esta instalación, también hay que tener en cuenta las Directivas 2008/1/CE ([3]) relativa a la prevención y al control integrados de la contaminación, y 2000/76/CE ([4]), relativa a la incineración de residuos.

A fin de conocer los pormenores del asunto, la Comisión ha recabado de las autoridades españolas competentes información relativa al cumplimiento de los requisitos pertinentes del Derecho medioambiental de la UE.

([1]) DO L 26 de 28.1.2012 (versión codificada de la Directiva 85/337/CEE relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente, en su versión modificada).
([2]) Directiva 2001/42/CE relativa a la evaluación de los efectos de determinados planes y programas en el medio ambiente (DO L 197 de 21.7.2001).
([3]) DO L 24 de 29.1.2008 (versión codificada).
([4]) DO L 332 de 28.12.2000.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000813/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Violation of Community rules by the project for an incinerator at O Irixo (Ourense, Spain)

The Galician regional government has announced its intention to authorise an incineration plant at O Irixo (Ourense), which will 900 000 tonnes of waste annually. This decision will determine how solid urban waste is managed over the next 20 years in Galicia, with its population of nearly three million. The impact of the proposed model will have serious consequences for key aspects of environmental policy and sustainable development and for Europe's commitment to fighting climate change. The decisions reached at the levels of local and regional government will be crucial in terms of ensuring coherence and of the EU's fulfilment of its environmental policy targets under the seventh Community action programme for the period 2010-2020.

In view of the disturbing lack of transparency and the emergency regulatory changes that the Galician government has carried out, I ask the Commission to follow up this issue, given that these changes may come into conflict with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality embodied in the EU Treaty since they affect strategic environmental assessment and public consultation procedures. The regulatory changes have eliminated the usual phase of prior consultation procedures and citizen participation that applies to certain projects, among them those for incinerators, in favour of a 'simplified procedure' for authorisation.

Is the Commission aware of these regulatory changes ushering in a simplified authorisation procedure for this incinerator? Does it consider the environmental approval procedure which was carried out to comply with the objectives of and to be consistent with Directive 2000/76/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 4 December 2000 relating to the incineration of waste and Directive 2008/1/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 January 2008 relating to the prevention and control of pollution? Does the Commission consider it acceptable to allow the construction of an incinerator without prior and transparent examination of alternatives concerning the model chosen and the management of the location and distribution aspects, accompanied by prior consultation and citizen participation? Can the Commission state whether this is the model for incineration systems that is supported by the EU?

**Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission**
*(13 March 2012)*

The Commission is not aware of this incinerator project at O Irixo, province of Ourense, in the Autonomous Community of Galicia, Spain.

At the first stage of this kind of project, Directive 2011/92/UE ([1]) (known as the Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA Directive) and Directive 2001/42/EC ([2]) (known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive) are applicable. At the second stage, related to the operation of this installation, Directives 2008/1/EC ([3]) concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) and 2000/76/EC ([4]) on the incineration of waste, should be also taken into account.

In order to know the details of the case, the Commission has requested information from the competent Spanish authorities concerning compliance with the relevant requirements under EU environmental law.

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([1]) OJ L 26, 28.01.2012 (codified version of Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended).
([2]) Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197, 21.7.2001.
([3]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2008 (codified version).
([4]) OJ L 332, 28.12.2000.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000814/12**
**a la Comisión**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(1 de febrero de 2012)*

*Asunto:* Central nuclear de Garoña (Álava)

Garoña es la central nuclear más antigua del Estado español. Marcada por la polémica entre Gobiernos centrales respecto a cerrar o continuar, en lugar de cerrarla en 2013, el Consejo de Seguridad Nuclear ha decidido prolongar su vida hasta 2019. Esta planta consta de un reactor de agua ligera en ebullición, con la misma tecnología instalada en Fukushima Daichi, la central más dañada tras el terremoto y posterior tsunami ocurridos en Japón y que desencadenó la peor crisis nuclear desde Chernóbil.

Consciente de este riesgo, la sociedad civil de Euskal Herria, de Álava y de Gastéiz, ha reclamado de manera reiterada y masiva en los últimos años el cierre inmediato de la central. También desde las instituciones, tanto el Gobierno autonómico como la Diputación de Álava y el Ayuntamiento de Gastéiz se han posicionado en numerosas ocasiones a lo largo de los últimos diez años en esta materia y han reclamado al Gobierno del Estado español la clausura de dicha central. Está demostrado que la prolongación de la licencia de explotación de la central nuclear de Garoña no es justificable, ya que su aportación energética está sobradamente cubierta por sistemas de generación renovable. A pesar de todo esto, en los últimos años los diferentes Gobiernos del Estado español se empeñan en prorrogar la vida de la central, poniendo en riesgo el medio ambiente y la salud de millones de ciudadanos y ciudadanas. Una decisión que solo puede responder a la connivencia por parte del Gobierno del Estado español con los intereses lucrativos de las compañías eléctricas propietarias. La Empresa Nacional de Residuos (Enresa) entregó al Ministerio de Industria a finales de diciembre el plan preliminar de desmantelamiento de la planta, en cumplimiento de la orden de cierre vigente del Ministerio de Industria para el desmantelamiento en 2013. Los indicadores técnicos han dado ya numerosas señales de que el cierre de esta planta debe ser inminente. Así, desde 1990, Garoña ha notificado 136 sucesos, 6 de los cuales han sido clasificados como «anomalías» de nivel 1 —el segundo más bajo— en la escala internacional de eventos nucleares (INES).

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la grave decisión de mantener abierta esta central nuclear? ¿Ha tenido la Comisión conocimiento del rechazo ciudadano a esta continuidad, consecuencia de una decisión política gubernamental que no tiene en cuenta los criterios técnicos y de seguridad nuclear? ¿Puede informar la Comisión de los datos de que dispone, en materia de seguridad nuclear, referidos a esta central nuclear?

**Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión**
*(7 de marzo de 2012)*

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-000254/2012 formulada por el Sr. Romeva i Rueda ([1]).

La Comisión es consciente de que, el 19 de enero de 2012, el Ministro de Industria, Energía y Turismo español pidió al Consejo de Seguridad nuclear (CSN) que examinara, desde una perspectiva reglamentaria, si existe algún impedimento para llevar a cabo una modificación de la Orden ministerial de 2009 y que informase acerca de los límites y condiciones para una prórroga por seis años de la actual licencia de explotación a su vencimiento en 2013. A la Comisión no le consta que este informe del CSN haya sido aprobado.

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000814/12**
**to the Commission**
**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* Garoña nuclear power plant (Álava)

Garoña is Spain's oldest nuclear power plant. The previous and current central governments have argued over whether it should be closed or kept open. Instead of closing it in 2013, the Nuclear Safety Council has decided to keep it going until 2019. The plant has a boiling water reactor — the same technology as Fukushima Daiichi, the plant that suffered the most extensive damage as a result of the earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan, unleashing the worst nuclear crisis since Chernobyl.

Over the last few years, civil society in the Basque Country, the province of Álava and the city of Gastéiz has repeatedly and stridently called for the immediate closure of the plant. Various institutions — including the Autonomous Government, and the Provincial Council of Álava and Gastéiz City Council — have also taken a stand on the issue several times over the last 10 years, demanding that the Spanish Government close the plant. It has been shown that there is no justification for extending the Garoña plant's operating licence, because renewable energy systems are now more than able to match its output. Despite this, however, various Spanish governments have continued to extend the life of the plant, endangering the environment and the health of millions of people. The only explanation for this decision can be that the Spanish Government is conniving with the electricity companies that own the plant in their quest for profits. In late December, Spain's radioactive waste management company Enresa submitted the preliminary decommissioning plan for the plant to the Ministry of Industry, in line with the current closure order issued by the ministry with a view to decommissioning Garoña in 2013. Technical indicators have demonstrated on a number of occasions that the plant ought to be shut down very soon. One hundred and thirty-six incidents have been reported at Garoña since 1990, six of which were classified as Level 1 'anomalies' — the second-lowest level — on the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES).

Is the Commission aware of this highly controversial decision to keep the Garoña nuclear power plant open? Is the Commission aware of the public's opposition to the plant being kept open? This is a political decision by the government that fails to take into account technical criteria and nuclear safety. Can the Commission release the data it has on nuclear safety at the Garoña nuclear power plant?

**Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission**
*(7 March 2012)*

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-000254/2012 by Mr Romeva i Rueda ([1]).

The Commission is aware that, on 19 January 2012, the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism asked the Consejo de Seguridad Nuclear (CSN) to examine, from the regulatory perspective, if there is any impediment to carrying out a modification of the Ministerial Order issued in 2009, and to inform on the limits and conditions for a six-year extension of the current operating license beyond its expiry date in 2013. The Commission does not have information indicating that this report of CSN has yet been adopted.

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

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000818/12**
**to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**
**Nicole Sinclaire (NI)**
*(1 February 2012)*

*Subject:* VP/HR — Economic sanctions against Belarus

EU travel sanctions against the Lukashenko regime in Belarus have been described as having only a 'symbolic' effect, and the situation vis-à-vis human rights abuses in that country is becoming progressively worse.

Will High Representative Baroness Ashton admit these failings, and accept that it is now time to impose targeted economic sanctions against the regime?

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission**
*(19 March 2012)*

The Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) remain concerned about the ongoing repression of the political opposition, civil society, and the independent media in Belarus since the 19 December 2010 Presidential elections.

The EU has had no choice but to respond to the deteriorating situation. The EU has been very vocal about its concerns and has decided to target those responsible for the crackdown with restrictive measures. At the same time, the EU has stepped up its engagement with Belarusian civil society and public at large.

The EU restrictive measures against Belarus allow the EU to designate persons or entities responsible for the violations of electoral standards in the last Presidential elections and for the subsequent crackdown on civil society, the political opposition and the independent media. So far, 210 individuals have been subjected to an assets freeze and visa ban. The EU has also frozen the assets of three companies, imposed an arms' embargo and restricted lending activities by the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The 23 January 2012 Foreign Affairs Council broadened the criteria for the restrictive measures to cover also persons responsible for serious violations of human rights or repression against civil society and the democratic opposition, as well as persons or entities supporting the regime or drawing benefit from it. The restrictive measures are subject to constant review and further additions of both individuals and entities may be decided by the Council at any time.

In the assessment of the Commission and the EEAS, the EU restrictive measures have had an effect and may have contributed to the release of some of the political prisoners.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000173/13**
**à la Commission**
**Gaston Franco (PPE)**
*(9 janvier 2013)*

*Objet:* Vins et spiritueux dans l'accord de libre-échange UE-Canada

Le Canada est l'un des plus proches et des plus anciens partenaires de l'Union européenne. L'UE est le deuxième partenaire commercial du Canada et le Canada est le onzième partenaire commercial de l'Union. Afin d'élargir et d'approfondir la relation commerciale Canada-UE, des négociations en vue d'un Accord économique et commercial global (AECG) ont débuté en mai 2009 lors du sommet UE-Canada à Prague. D'après les estimations d'une étude conjointe Canada-UE, un accord de libre-échange permettrait d'accroître la valeur des exportations européennes au Canada de 24 milliards de dollars. Au moment où les marchés européens déclinent en temps de crise économique, ceci ouvre évidemment des perspectives très intéressantes pour les industries européennes et un potentiel d'emplois dont on ne peut faire l'économie.

En tant que membre de la Délégation du Parlement européen pour les relations avec le Canada, il m'apparaît donc important que la Commission européenne garantisse une position équilibrée dans le cadre des négociations qui se poursuivent sur l'AECG et obtienne des contreparties du partenaire canadien pour une ouverture des marchés véritablement réciproque.

Le cas des producteurs de vins et spiritueux européens mérite à cet égard la plus grande attention. Ceux-ci rencontrent en effet de grandes difficultés pour exporter et distribuer librement leurs produits au Canada en raison:

— des pratiques discriminatoires des monopoles provinciaux canadiens qui contrôlent l'importation, la distribution et la vente de vins et spiritueux sur leur territoire,

— des modalités de distribution déloyales en faveur des vins domestiques (dans le réseau des monopoles mais aussi dans les magasins privés ou épiceries), et

— de droits de douane résiduels appliqués à ces produits.

1. L'accord bilatéral UE-Canada, révisé en 2004, établit pourtant un principe de non-discrimination des vins et spiritueux européens au Canada. Ces engagements devraient donc être soumis au mécanisme de règlement des différends de l'AECG. Qu'envisage la Commission pour s'assurer de l'élimination de ces pratiques discriminatoires dans les plus brefs délais et du fonctionnement de ce mécanisme de règlement des différends?

2. Dans les négociations en cours sur l'AEGC, que compte faire la Commission pour garantir que les monopoles canadiens ne puissent plus financer leurs activités commerciales au Canada et à l'étranger grâce aux revenus tirés de leurs activités monopolistiques?

**Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission**
*(18 février 2013)*

La Commission est parfaitement consciente de l'importance que revêtent les exportations de vins et de spiritueux de l'UE vers le Canada, ainsi que des pratiques discriminatoires appliquées par certaines provinces canadiennes en ce qui concerne les importations et la vente au détail. En raison de leur incidence sur les exportations de l'UE, ces pratiques constituent un sujet important dans le cadre des négociations sur l'AEGG.

Les négociations sur l'AEGG portent sur les pratiques discriminatoires, mais elles concernent également l'inclusion des vins et spiritueux dans l'AEGG, qui aurait pour conséquence que les pratiques discriminatoires subsistantes relèveraient des procédures de règlement des différends de l'AEGG.

La question de la suppression d'autres droits appliqués aux importations de vins et de spiritueux est couverte par les négociations sur l'AEGG relatives à l'accès au marché.

Enfin, les négociations sur les vins et spiritueux liées à l'AEGG visent également à limiter le rôle des régies provinciales des alcools («Liquor Boards») canadiennes dans le cadre des ventes extraprovinciales de ces produits.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000173/13**
**to the Commission**
**Gaston Franco (PPE)**
*(9 January 2013)*

*Subject:* Status of wines and spirits in the EU-Canada free trade agreement

Canada is one of the EU's oldest and closest partners. The EU is Canada's second largest trading partner, while Canada is the EU's eleventh largest trading partner. At the EU-Canada Summit held in Prague in May 2009, negotiations began on a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) intended to develop and strengthen EU-Canada trade relations. According to a joint EU-Canada study, a free trade agreement could potentially increase the value of EU exports to Canada by USD 24 billion. At a time when European markets are contracting because of the economic crisis, we cannot afford to ignore the attractive possibilities that an EU-Canada free trade agreement would open up for EU industry, or the jobs that would be created.

Consequently, as a member of Parliament's Delegation for relations with Canada, I feel it is important that the Commission adopts a balanced stance during the CETA negotiations and obtains assurances from Canada that it is equally committed to opening up its markets.

The case of EU wine and spirit producers deserves special attention. They currently have great difficulty exporting their products to and ensuring that they are distributed freely in Canada owing to:

— the discriminatory practices employed by Canadian provincial alcohol monopolies, which control imports and the local distribution and sale of wines and spirits;

— unfair distribution practices that benefit Canadian wines (both in state-owned liquor stores and independent shops);

— the residual customs duties imposed on wines and spirits.

1. The EU-Canada bilateral agreement, which was revised in 2004, stipulates that EU wines and spirits must not be discriminated against on the Canadian market. As Canada is not honouring its commitments, however, the matter should in principle be dealt with under the future CETA dispute settlement mechanism. What will the Commission do to ensure these discriminatory practices cease as soon as possible and that the dispute settlement mechanism is effective?

2. As regards the current CETA negotiations, what will the Commission do to ensure that Canadian liquor boards are no longer able to fund their commercial activities in Canada and abroad using revenue from alcohol monopolies?

**Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission**
*(18 February 2013)*

The Commission is fully aware of the importance of EU exports of wines and spirits to Canada as well as of a number of discriminatory practices applied by certain Canadian provinces at import and retail level. Because of their impact on EU exports, these practices represent an important subject in the CETA negotiations.

Apart from discriminatory practices, CETA negotiations also cover the inclusion of the wines and spirits Agreement in the CETA which would have as a result that remaining discriminatory practices would fall under the dispute settlement procedures of the CETA.

The elimination of other duties applied on imports of wines and spirits is covered by the CETA negotiations on market access.

Finally, the wines and spirits related CETA negotiations also aim at limiting the involvement of Canadian liquor boards in out of province sales of these products.

*(Version française)*

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-000297/13**
**à la Commission**
**Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)**
*(11 janvier 2013)*

*Objet:* Pilules contraceptives de 3e génération et Agence européenne des médicaments (EMA)

La France a pris des mesures visant à réduire la prescription de pilules contraceptives de 3e génération, qui ont un risque cardio-vasculaire accru par rapport à la 2e génération. Ces contraceptifs seront déremboursés dès le 31 mars 2013, et les médecins ont reçu l'instruction de ne les prescrire que «lorsque la pilule de 2e génération ne convient pas».

Les dernières données européennes de pharmacovigilance qui concernent ces pilules de 3e génération datent de 2011 ([1]). L'EMA écrit: «*There is no reason for women to stop taking drospirenone-containing COCs, such as Yasmin and Yasminelle, or any other COC on the basis of this review*».

Comment l'EMA peut-elle écrire qu'un sur-risque identifié (risque double de thrombose avec ces pilules par rapport aux 2G), n'est pas une raison de changer de traitement ou de réduire la prescription, quand des alternatives meilleures existent? La Commission pense-t-elle que la taille de la population cible est correctement prise en compte dans l'analyse du rapport bénéfices/risques de ces pilules contraceptives?

Comment justifier la mise sur le marché de ces pilules de 3e génération qui comportent davantage de risques que celles de 2e génération? L'EMA peut-elle alerter les États membres en leur demandant de favoriser les prescriptions de pilules de 2e génération, moins dangereuses?

Certains médicaments comme Diane 35 (autorisés en France en 1987) n'ont pas reçu d'autorisation de mise sur le marché par l'EMA, et sont aujourd'hui prescrits de façon abusive et détournée («off label use»), comme ce fut le cas pour le Médiator. Ce médicament a été créé pour traiter l'acné, mais en raison de ses propriétés contraceptives, il est également prescrit par les médecins comme contraceptif. Comment l'EMA peut-elle intervenir auprès des agences sanitaires nationales pour interdire ce type de pratiques?

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

Les autorités en charge des médicaments dans l'UE sont parfaitement conscientes que les contraceptifs oraux combinés (COC) comportent un faible risque de formation de caillots sanguins qui varie d'un type de produit à l'autre.

Le risque de thromboembolie veineuse associé aux COC de troisième génération, par rapport au risque lié aux COC de deuxième génération, a été évalué à l'échelle de l'Union européenne en 2001 ([2]). L'évaluation a montré qu'il s'agissait d'un effet secondaire grave mais rare de tous les COC et que le rapport bénéfices/risques global restait favorable. Des avertissements à ce sujet ont été ajoutés dans la notice.

Les contraceptifs oraux font en permanence l'objet d'une surveillance rigoureuse ([3]) ([4]). L'Agence passe en revue toutes les informations nouvelles afin de prendre immédiatement les mesures réglementaires appropriées et de garantir le même niveau de sécurité à toutes les femmes de l'UE. Or, il n'y a eu jusqu'ici aucun nouvel élément de preuve justifiant de modifier le profil de sécurité connu des COC.

Une nouvelle évaluation du risque de thrombose artérielle, effectuée sur la base de données de pharmacovigilance, est en cours ([5]).

De plus, les autorités françaises envisagent de faire réexaminer à l'échelle de l'Union le rapport bénéfices/risques des contraceptifs de troisième et quatrième générations.

([1]) Revue sur la drospirenone — Jasmine/yasmin: http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2011/05/WC500106708.pdf
([2]) http://www.emea.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2009/12/WC500017870.pdf
([3]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2011/05/WC500106708.pdf
([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2012/07/WC500130391.pdf, http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Minutes/2012/12/WC500135712.pdf
([5]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Agenda/2013/01/WC500137109.pdf

Diane 35 a été autorisée par les États membres pour le traitement de l'acné sévère et de l'hirsutisme modéré. Ce médicament possède également des propriétés contraceptives, mais il ne doit pas être utilisé à cet effet uniquement. Ces informations figurent dans la notice. La surveillance du comportement des médecins en matière de prescription relève de la responsabilité des États membres.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000297/13**
**to the Commission**
**Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)**
*(11 January 2013)*

*Subject:* Third-generation contraceptive pills and the European Medicines Agency (EMA)

France has taken measures to reduce the use of third-generation contraceptive pills, which have a higher cardiovascular risk factor than second-generation pills. As from 31 March 2013 the cost of third-generation pills will no longer be reimbursed, and doctors have been told to prescribe them only 'when the second-generation pill is not suitable'.

The most recent European drug monitoring data on third-generation pills is from 2011 ([1]). According to the EMA, 'there is no reason for women to stop taking drospirenone-containing COCs, such as YASMIN and YASMINELLE, or any other COC on the basis of this review'.

Given that better alternatives exist, what are the EMA's grounds for saying that the additional risks associated with third-generation contraceptive pills (which double the risk of thrombosis compared with second-generation pills) are not a reason to change contraceptive or to reduce their use? Does the Commission think that the risk/benefit analysis of third-generation pills takes proper account of the size of the target population?

How can the marketing of third-generation pills be justified, given that they pose a bigger risk than second-generation pills? Can the EMA notify Member States of the risks and encourage them to promote the use of second-generation pills?

Some drugs, such as Diane 35 (authorised by France in 1987), have not been granted a marketing authorisation by the EMA and are currently being prescribed 'off-label', as was the case with the drug Mediator. Diane 35 was originally developed to treat acne, but is also prescribed by doctors as a birth control pill because of its contraceptive properties. What representations can the EMA make to national health authorities in an effort to persuade them to ban practices of this kind?

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

The medicines authorities in the EU are fully aware that combined oral contraceptives (COCs) carry a low risk of blood clots, which differs between types of products.

The risk of venous thromboembolism in third generation COCs compared with second generation was evaluated at EU level in 2001 ([2]). It showed that this risk is a serious but rare side effect of all COCs and that the overall benefit/risk balance remained favourable. Relevant warnings were added to the product information.

Oral contraceptives are constantly and rigorously monitored ([3]), ([4]). Any new information is reviewed by the Agency with a view to promptly take appropriate regulatory actions and ensure the same level of safety protection for all women across the EU. So far however there has been no new evidence that would suggest a change to the known safety profile of the COCs.

A new review of a risk of arterial thrombosis on the basis of pharmacovigilance data is currently ongoing ([5]).

In addition, French authorities are considering triggering a review at EU level of the benefit/risk balance of contraceptives of third and fourth generation.

([1]) Review of drospirenone — Yasmin: http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2011/05/WC500106708.pdf
([2]) http://www.emea.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2009/12/WC500017870.pdf
([3]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2011/05/WC500106708.pdf
([4]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Report/2012/07/WC500130391.pdf, http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Minutes/2012/12/WC500135712.pdf
([5]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Agenda/2013/01/WC500137109.pdf

Diane 35 has been authorised by Member States for the treatment of severe acne and moderate hirsutism. It also acts as a contraceptive, but should not be used for this purpose alone. This information is included in the product information. Supervision of prescription behaviour of physicians is the responsibility of Member States.

*(Versione italiana)*

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000344/13**
**alla Commissione**
**Debora Serracchiani (S&D)**
*(15 gennaio 2013)*

*Oggetto:* Programma Croazia-Italia

La regione italiana del nord-est, il Friuli-Venezia Giulia, è fuori dalla lista delle zone di cooperazione ammissibili a beneficiare del nuovo Programma di cooperazione transfrontaliera interna Italia-Croazia 2014-2020.

Nella proposta della Commissione europea, relativa ai Programmi di cooperazione territoriale europea 2014-2020 e diretta allo Stato e alle Regioni italiane, l'elenco delle aree italiane che potranno usufruire dei Fondi europei di sviluppo regionale comprende Venezia, Padova, Rovigo, Ferrara, Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena, Rimini, Pesaro e Urbino, Ancona, Macerata, Fermo, Ascoli Piceno, Teramo, Pescara, Chieti, Campobasso, Foggia, Barletta-Andria-Trani e Bari. Dunque, se nulla cambierà, nessun territorio del Friuli-Venezia Giulia è compreso tra le «core areas» che potranno beneficiare dei fondi che saranno stanziati dall'Europa.

Considerando che:

— risale al 1978, molto prima dell'indipendenza della Croazia, la costituzione della Comunità di lavoro Alpe Adria, e al 1995 il protocollo d'intesa, con Carinzia e Veneto, firmato anche dalle contee croate Litoraneo-Montana ed Istria in vista della «Euroregione senza confini»;

— il rapporto tra la regione autonoma Friuli-Venezia Giulia e la Croazia è contrassegnato dalla sottoscrizione di intese, tra cui il Protocollo di collaborazione del 2007 fra la regione autonoma del Friuli-Venezia Giulia e la regione croata Litoraneo-Montana e quello del 2011 tra la regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia e l'Istria, nonché da numerosi incontri di vertice e da un incremento esponenziale di progettualità nei campi più diversi, dalla promozione della democrazia locale all'agricoltura,

intende la Commissione chiarire perché la regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia sia stata integralmente esclusa dal prossimo Programma di cooperazione Italia-Croazia? Concorda la Commissione sul fatto che questa lacuna del Programma debba essere colmata nel corso delle prossime negoziazioni?

**Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione**
*(7 febbraio 2013)*

Il Friuli-Venezia Giulia non è stato escluso dal prossimo programma di cooperazione transfrontaliera Italia-Croazia. Il Friuli-Venezia Giulia è una regione di livello NUTS II e la cooperazione transfrontaliera è organizzata a livello delle regioni NUTS III. Tre delle quattro province NUTS III all'interno del Friuli-Venezia Giulia soddisfano le condizioni di ammissibilità a un sostegno finanziario in linea con il capitolo transfrontaliero dell'obiettivo di cooperazione territoriale europea, segnatamente Trieste, Gorizia e Udine.

Nella lettera della Commissione agli Stati membri del dicembre 2012 cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputata si faceva un quadro preliminare delle aree su cui sarebbe stato imperniato il futuro programma transfrontaliero. Questa programmazione preliminare deve essere discussa e perfezionata in seguito all'approvazione del pacchetto legislativo per il periodo 2014-2020. La lettera comprende le province NUTS III di Trieste, Gorizia e Udine e parti essenziali del programma transfrontaliero Italia-Slovenia; purtroppo, queste aree non sono menzionate quali regioni centrali del programma transfrontaliero Italia-Croazia. Questa omissione andrà ovviamente corretta.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000344/13**
**to the Commission**
**Debora Serracchiani (S&D)**
*(15 January 2013)*

*Subject:* Croatia-Italy programme

Friuli-Venezia Giulia in the north-east of Italy has been left out of the list of cooperation areas eligible for the new 2014-2020 Italy-Croatia internal cross-border cooperation programme.

The Commission's proposal on European territorial cooperation programmes for 2014-2020, forwarded by the Commission to Italy and its regions, lists the following areas in Italy as being eligible for funding from the European Regional Development Fund: Venezia, Padova, Rovigo, Ferrara, Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena, Rimini, Pesaro e Urbino, Ancona, Macerata, Fermo, Ascoli Piceno, Teramo, Pescara, Chieti, Campobasso, Foggia, Barletta-Andria-Trani and Bari. Thus, unless something changes, no part of Friuli-Venezia Giulia has been included in the core areas which will be able to benefit from EU funding.

It should be remembered that the Alps-Adriatic Working Community was founded back in 1978, well before Croatia became independent, and that the 1995 Memorandum of Understanding between Carinthia and Veneto was signed by the Croatian counties of Litoraneo-Montana and Istria too with a view to a 'border-free Euroregion'.

The relationship between the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region and Croatia has been marked by the signing of agreements, including the 2007 Cooperation Agreement between the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region and the Croatian region of Litoraneo-Montana and the 2011 Cooperation Agreement between Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Istria, as well as by a great many summit meetings and an exponential growth in projects and ideas in a variety of fields ranging from promotion of local democracy to agriculture.

In view of all this, will the Commission explain why the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region has been totally excluded from the next Italy-Croatia cooperation programme? Would the Commission concur that this omission in the programme needs to be corrected during the next round of negotiations?

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

Friuli-Venezia Giulia has not been excluded from the next Italy-Croatia cross-border cooperation programme. Friuli-Venezia Giulia is a NUTS II level region, and cross border cooperation is organised at the level of NUTS III regions. Three of the four NUTS III regions within Friuli-Venezia Giulia fulfil the conditions to be eligible for financial support under the cross-border strand of the European Territorial Cooperation goal, namely Trieste, Gorizia and Udine.

In the Commission's letter to Member States of December 2012 referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission's preliminary views on core areas of the future cross-border programmes were set out. These are to be discussed and finalised after the approval of the legislative package for the 2014-2020 period. The letter includes the NUTS III regions, Trieste, Gorizia and Udine, as core regions of the Italy-Slovenia cross-border programme; unfortunately, they were not mentioned as core regions of the Italy-Croatia cross-border programme. Of course, this omission needs to be corrected.

*(Versión española)*

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000408/13**
**a la Comisión**
**Esther Herranz García (PPE)**
*(16 de enero de 2013)*

*Asunto:* Restablecimiento de las Medidas antidumping para las mandarinas en conserva procedentes de China

El pasado 22 de marzo el Tribunal de Justicia de la UE (asunto C-338/10) anuló el Reglamento (CE) n° 1355/2008 sobre las medidas antidumping que protegían al sector europeo de las mandarinas en conserva. La anulación se basó en razones formales como la falta de especificación de los códigos arancelarios de los productos y la clarificación de los precios de los países terceros. Sin embargo no se puso en cuestión que la venta en la EU del producto chino suponía un dumping en relación a la producción en la EU. Puesto que el problema emanaba de un defecto de forma y no de fondo, el sector confiaba en que antes del inicio de la campaña 2012-2013 la cuestión se solucionaría. Sin embargo han pasado ya nueve meses desde el dictamen del Tribunal y la campaña llega a su fin. El tiempo corre en contra del sector europeo pues cada día que pasa los importadores aprovechan para comercializar ese producto en competencia desleal, mientras que la salida de las conservas fabricadas en Europa está paralizada. El pasado 19 de diciembre la Comisión sometió a criterio de los Estados miembros una propuesta para proteger al sector europeo en la campaña 2012-2013 y estos se pronunciaron a favor.

1. ¿Ha adoptado ya la Comisión una decisión firme para restablecer medidas antidumping mediante un nuevo Reglamento?

2. ¿Esas medidas tendrán efecto retroactivo?

3. ¿Ha calculado la Comisión las consecuencias para el sector europeo por la tardanza en la entrada en vigor de estas medidas para la campaña 2012-2013?

4. ¿Piensa la Comisión abrir otra investigación para poner en marcha medidas antidumping a partir de la campaña 2013-2014?

**Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión**
*(8 de febrero de 2013)*

1. La Comisión ya ha presentado al Consejo una propuesta para restablecer las medidas antidumping. Se espera que el Reglamento del Consejo por el que se aplica la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia sea publicado este mes de febrero.

2. La decisión sobre si se percibirán los derechos con efecto retroactivo se tomará después de que estos se hayan restablecido. Para tomar una decisión sobre la retroactividad, es preciso disponer de los datos estadísticos completos de las importaciones hasta el momento del restablecimiento de los derechos antidumping.

3. El Reglamento por el que se restablecen las medidas antidumping aplica, de hecho, dos sentencias de los Tribunales europeos. Aunque muchas de las cuestiones tratadas en las sentencias eran de forma, requerían una nueva y minuciosa investigación. Obviamente, también era preciso respetar plenamente los derechos de defensa de las partes interesadas. En cualquier caso, el Reglamento se publicará en el plazo que marca la ley. La Comisión no dispone de datos que le permitan calcular las consecuencias de la tardanza en el restablecimiento. En cualquier caso, este lapso ha sido totalmente necesario para abordar las cuestiones planteadas por los Tribunales.

4. En el supuesto de que se restablezcan las medidas, si una de las partes desea que sean revisadas, puede solicitar que se abra una reconsideración provisional, como establece el artículo 11, apartado 3, del Reglamento antidumping de base. El denunciante también puede solicitar una reconsideración por expiración de medidas, según lo dispuesto en el artículo 11, apartado 2, del mismo Reglamento. Si la solicitud contiene elementos de prueba suficientes de que la expiración de las medidas podría resultar en una continuación o una reaparición del dumping y del perjuicio, la Comisión abriría debidamente una investigación.

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer P-000408/13**
**to the Commission**
**Esther Herranz García (PPE)**
*(16 January 2013)*

*Subject:* Reinstatement of anti-dumping measures on imports of preserved mandarins from China

On 22 March 2012, the European Court of Justice (Case C-338/10) annulled Regulation (EC) 1355/2008 on anti-dumping duties that protected the European preserved mandarin sector from dumped imports. The regulation was declared invalid for procedural reasons, such as the products' tariff codes not being specified and a lack of clear pricing for these products in third countries. Whether or not selling the Chinese product in the EU was a case of dumping, considering its effect on production in the EU, was not raised, however. As the dispute over the regulation on anti-dumping duties arose due to procedural not substantive errors, the preserved mandarin sector expected the issues to be resolved before the beginning of the 2012-2013 mandarin season. This was not the case — nine months have already passed since the Court stated its opinion and the mandarin season is coming to a close. Time is against the European sector: importers continue to take advantage of the lack of anti-dumping duties to engage in unfair competition, while sales of preserved mandarins produced in Europe have been brought to a standstill. On 19 December 2012, the Commission presented Member States with a proposal to protect the European preserved mandarin sector during the 2012-2013 season and it was approved.

1. Has the Commission taken a firm decision to reinstate anti-dumping duties with a new regulation?

2. Will the anti-dumping duties be applied retroactively?

3. Has the Commission calculated the effect that the delay in implementing anti-dumping measures for the 2012-2013 season has had on the European preserved mandarin sector?

4. Does the Commission plan to open another investigation, with a view to introducing anti-dumping measures from the beginning of the 2013-2014 season?

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

1. The Commission has now submitted to the Council a proposal to re-impose the anti-dumping measures. The Council Regulation implementing the Court judgments is expected to be published during the month of February.

2. The decision as to whether the duties should be collected retroactively will be taken after the duties have been re-imposed. In order to take a decision on retroactivity, it is necessary to have the full statistical data of imports up to the time of the re-imposition of anti-dumping duties.

3. The regulation re-imposing the anti-dumping measures covers in fact the implementation of two judgments by the Courts in Luxembourg. While many of the issues in these judgments were of a procedural nature, they nevertheless necessitated a thorough reinvestigation. Also the rights of defence of interested parties, obviously, needed to be fully respected. The regulation will, in any event, be published within the legal deadlines. The Commission has no data at its disposal that would allow calculating the effect of the delay of the re-imposition. In any event, this time was fully needed to address the various issues raised by the Courts.

4. In the event that measures are re-imposed, if any party wants the measures to be reviewed, it has the possibility to request an interim review, as prescribed in Article 11(3) of the basic anti-dumping Regulation. The complainant also has the possibility to request an expiry review, as prescribed in Article 11(2) of the same Regulation. If such request contains sufficient evidence that the expiry of the measures would be likely to result in a continuation or recurrence of dumping and injury, the Commission would duly open an investigation.