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 82 E/01)

Treść **Strona**

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000821/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michael Cashman (S&D)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Kazakh Government's response to protesting oil workers

According to reports, hundreds of workers at an oil facility controlled by the state-owned energy company KazMunaiGas in Zhanaozen have been protesting in an effort to obtain better salaries and working conditions since May 2011. Local authorities have declared the strike illegal, and the government response to these protests has been widespread prosecutions and the imprisonment of a large number of trade union activists. In addition, almost 1 000 workers were fired in the summer for striking. These events culminated in a violent clash between oil workers and police in Zhanaozen on 16 December 2011, in which it was reported that at least 10 people were killed.

Has the European Union been investigating these alleged repressive measures being utilised by the Kazakh Government, which violate the basic rights of the protesting oil workers?

What action, if any, has been proposed to ensure that no further violence occurs in the region?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(9 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 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 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 dialogue, so that no further violence occurs.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000822/12
alla Commissione
Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) e Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti sull'archiviazione del caso «scudo fiscale»

Con la presente interrogazione, si chiede alla Commissione di spiegare perché i servizi della stessa intenderebbero archiviare il caso in materia di «scudo fiscale» con analitico reclamo dell'11 novembre 2009.

In particolare, potrebbe la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ritiene che si possa considerare trascurabile l'impatto dello scudo, quando questo ha invece permesso il rimpatrio di oltre 100 miliardi di Euro, con un'alterazione palese delle norme antiriciclaggio e di libera concorrenza?

2. se è stato valutato il cambiamento del contesto politico italiano, dove il nuovo governo non potrebbe che felicitarsi di un obbligo di pagamento dell'IVA sulle somme rimpatriate, in quanto fino ad oggi la Commissione ha dato l'impressione di trattare la presente questione sulla base di considerazioni eminentemente politiche, anziché basarsi sul suo ruolo di «guardiano dei trattati»?

3. se sia pronta ad assumersi la responsabilità di continuare a non prendere una decisione definitiva o addirittura ad archiviare questo ricorso, in un momento in cui lo Stato membro in oggetto, l'Italia, si trova ad affrontare la necessità di recuperare risorse finanziarie significative al fine di risanare i propri bilanci?

Risposta data da Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

S'informano gli onorevoli parlamentari di quanto segue:

1. Nell'esaminare la questione i servizi della Commissione non hanno riscontrato prove tali da comprovare che durante il suo periodo di validità lo scudo ha ostacolato il buon funzionamento dei meccanismi di rendicontazione sulle attività di lotta al riciclaggio. Anzi, la Commissione è in possesso di prove evidenti del fatto che durante il periodo in questione sono state segnalate numerose transazioni sospette dagli intermediari finanziari ai fini della lotta al riciclaggio.

2. La Commissione continuerà a monitorare la questione per accertarsi che la pertinente normativa dell'UE sia applicata correttamente.

3. Le amnistie tributarie sono una scelta politica di competenza degli Stati membri, che godono al riguardo di un certo margine di discrezionalità nel rispetto dei vincoli imposti dalla normativa dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000822/12
to the Commission
Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) and Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Clarification on the closure of the 'tax shield' file

Can the Commission explain why its services apparently intend to close the file on the 'tax shield', which was the subject of a detailed complaint made on 11 November 2009?

In particular, could the Commission state:

1. Whether, in its view, the impact of the amnesty can be deemed to be minor when this has enabled the repatriation of over EUR 100 billion, patently distorting the regulations on anti-money laundering and freedom of competition?

2. Whether the change in the Italian political context has been evaluated, where the new government could not but be glad of an obligation to pay VAT on the sums repatriated, as up until now the Commission has given the impression of dealing with this issue on the basis of highly political considerations, instead of in its role as 'guardian of the Treaties'?

3. Whether it is ready to assume responsibility should it persist in failing to make a definitive decision or even in dismissing this appeal, at a time when the Member State in question, Italy, is faced with the need to recoup significant financial resources in order to consolidate its budgets?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The Honourable Member is informed as follows:

1. In their examination of the matter, the Commission's services found no sufficient evidence to substantiate claims that the scheme was, during its lifetime, an obstacle to the smooth operation of anti-money laundering reporting mechanisms. On the contrary, the Commission possesses evidence suggesting that a significant number of money laundering suspicious transactions were reported by financial intermediaries during the scheme's lifetime.

2. The Commission will continue monitoring this matter in order to ensure the correct application of EC law in this area.

3. Tax amnesties are a political choice and the responsibility of the Member States. In this respect they are permitted a certain discretion within the constraints of EC law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000823/12
ao Conselho
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(1 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: «Testes de resistência» das centrais nucleares

O Conselho Europeu de março de 2011 apelou à realização de uma avaliação exaustiva e transparente dos riscos e da segurança («testes de resistência») das centrais nucleares da UE e à realização de testes similares nos países vizinhos e à escala mundial.

Em maio, o Grupo de Reguladores Europeus em matéria de Segurança Nuclear (Ensreg) e a Comissão acordaram que deveria ser instituído um processo com duas vertentes para abranger os aspetos da segurança intrínseca e extrínseca. No que respeita à segurança intrínseca, sob a alçada dos reguladores em matéria de segurança nuclear, foram acordados o âmbito de aplicação e as modalidades dos testes, que começaram oficialmente a 1 de julho. Quanto à segurança extrínseca, foi criado em julho o Grupo *ad hoc* da Segurança Nuclear, liderado pela Presidência.

No relatório de situação da Presidência, no seguimento do Conselho Europeu, de 14 de novembro de 2011, é referido que «o trabalho intensivo realizado a nível nacional e pelos organismos competentes (Ensreg, Grupo *ad hoc* da Segurança Nuclear) a nível da UE fará com que os respetivos relatórios possam ser apresentados a tempo para o Conselho Europeu de dezembro, sob a forma de uma comunicação da Comissão que deverá ser adotada a 23 de novembro».

Assim, pergunto ao Conselho:

1. Por que motivo esta questão não consta das Conclusões do Conselho Europeu de dezembro?

2. Dispõe de informação relativamente aos relatórios supramencionados? Que avaliação faz das suas conclusões?

Resposta
(12 de março de 2012)

Em 14 de novembro de 2011 não foi realizada qualquer reunião do Conselho Europeu, pelo que não se afigura claro a que relatório de situação da Presidência a pergunta se refere.

Por conseguinte, o Conselho não dispõe das informações solicitadas pelo Senhor Deputado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000823/12
to the Council
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: 'Stress testing' of nuclear plants

The March 2011 European Council called for comprehensive and transparent risk and safety assessment ('stress tests') to be conducted on nuclear plants in the EU and for similar testing to be carried out in neighbouring countries and on a global scale.

In May 2011 the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) and the Commission agreed to establish a two-pronged approach to cover safety and security. With regard to safety, agreement was reached, within the remit of the nuclear safety regulators, on the scope of the tests and the test procedures, and testing began officially on 1 July 2011. As regards security, the ad hoc Nuclear Security Group, headed by the Presidency, was set up in July 2011.

The Presidency progress report, issued following the European Council of 14 November 2011, stated that 'the intensive work carried out at a national level and by the national agencies (ENSRED, *ad hoc* Nuclear Safety Group) at EU level, will permit the respective reports to be presented in time for the December European Council, in the form of a communication from the Commission that should be adopted on 23 November'.

1. Why was this issue not included in the December European Council conclusions?

2. Does the Council have information regarding the reports mentioned above? What is its assessment of the findings?

Reply
(12 March 2012)

There was no meeting of the European Council on 14 November 2011, therefore it is not clear to which Presidency progress report the question is referring to.

Therefore, the information requested by the Honourable Member is not available to the Council.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000825/12
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Clean air in London

Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe specifies how air quality should be assessed and managed in EU Member States, and sets objectives for air pollution levels. London has consistently failed to meet these objectives. In addition, evidence from the UK's Environmental Audit Committee suggests that air pollution causes the deaths of 4 000 people a year in London.

In light of this, does the Commission feel that the pollution reduction measures that are currently in place in London are sufficient for achieving compliance with EU clean air regulations and appropriate for bringing air pollution within legal limits?

What appropriate action does the Commission intend to take, if London continues to fail to meet EU clean air regulations, to bring air pollution within legal limits?

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

The competence to decide on the measures for achieving compliance with the EU legislation on air quality lies entirely with the Member States. This follows the 'subsidiarity' principle whereby it is acknowledged that Member States (and their local authorities) are best placed to identify the most efficient measures to address high concentration levels on their territory. The Commission's compliance checking activities focus, therefore, on the question of whether binding limit values are met and, if not, whether measures are taken to keep the exceedance period as short as possible.

The Commission started an infringement procedure against the UK in January 2009 for failing to comply with the PM_{10} limit values within the Greater London zone. The procedure is currently on hold as the UK has successfully notified an exemption to apply the daily PM_{10} limit value in London until 11 June 2011. The Commission will be in a position to verify that compliance has been reached since that date once it receives from the UK authorities the annual air quality report for 2011 (i.e. 30 September 2012). As regards NO_2, on 27 September 2011, the UK authorities submitted, by registered letter, a notification of a postponement of the deadline to apply the limit values. The Commission has nine months to assess the notification and will then decide what further action may be requested.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000826/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Prestiti BCE alle banche italiane

È noto che dal dicembre scorso le banche italiane hanno risposto in massa all'offerta della Banca centrale europea che erogava finanziamenti illimitati della durata di tre anni al tasso d'interesse dell'1 per cento. Hanno infatti ottenuto da Francoforte un prestito totale di 116 miliardi di euro, cioè il 23 % dei 489 miliardi che sono stati erogati alle banche di tutta Europa. La massiccia richiesta della banche italiane è giustificata dalla differenza tra il tasso agevolato dell'1 per cento della Banca centrale e quello del mercato che s'aggira sul 7 per cento. Le possibilità d'uso del prestito sono varie: dal riacquisto o dal rimborso delle obbligazioni in scadenza nel 2012-2013, all'acquisto di BTP (buoni del tesoro poliennali) oppure all'ampliamento del credito a imprese e famiglie. Sembrerebbe normale che la priorità fosse riservata a quest'ultima possibilità, vale a dire al finanziamento per imprese e famiglie, così fortemente colpite dalla crisi finanziaria sistemica e dalla crisi economica che ne è conseguita. Oppure questo è solo un auspicio di chi vorrebbe un aiuto alla ripresa ed allo sviluppo?

Ciò premesso, la Commissione:

1. può indicarci se il prestito è stato condizionato a certi usi?

2. In caso affermativo, il finanziamento alle imprese e alle famiglie era una condizione prevista?

3. È in grado di precisare l'ammontare eventuale di questo uso?

4. Non crede che, essendo pubblico, il denaro prestato dovrebbe privilegiare in ogni modo la ripresa anziché gli istituti di credito privati che in parte sono la causa della crisi?

Risposta data da Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2012)

Le misure rafforzate di sostegno al credito recentemente lanciate dalla Banca centrale europea (BCE) hanno la finalità di sostenere i prestiti bancari e la liquidità nei mercati monetari dell'area dell'euro. La BCE non pone alcuna condizione circa la destinazione dei crediti. È di responsabilità delle banche interessate decidere come utilizzare questi prestiti, in funzione di valutazioni relative ai rischi ed ai rendimenti.

È difficile valutare l'importo del finanziamento di lungo termine erogato dalla BCE che sarà poi trasformato in credito per le famiglie e le imprese. Nel corso della conferenza stampa del consiglio direttivo della BCE, svoltasi il 12 gennaio 2012, il presidente Mario Draghi ha affermato che la BCE osservava chiari segnali che indicavano che i prestiti concessi dalla BCE alle banche non rimanevano un semplice deposito presso la banca centrale, ma circolavano nel sistema economico. È degno di nota il fatto che nel corso del mese di gennaio alcuni segmenti dei mercati finanziari dell'area dell'euro abbiano mostrato segni di ripresa (ad esempio l'emissione di obbligazioni societarie è aumentata, i rendimenti sui titoli di Stato italiani e di altri Stati membri sono scesi, il costo dei finanziamenti in dollari per le banche dell'area dell'euro è diminuito). La Commissione sta monitorando attentamente gli sviluppi al riguardo e ritiene che si stiano progressivamente instaurando le condizioni per il miglioramento dei mercati interbancari e obbligazionari, cosa che agevolerà l'afflusso di credito all'economia reale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000826/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: ECB loans to Italian banks

It is common knowledge that since last December, Italian banks have responded en masse to the European Central Bank's offer of unlimited funding for three years at 1 % interest. In fact, they have obtained loans to the total value of EUR 116 billion from Frankfurt, that is 23 % of the 489 billion which has been allocated to banks throughout Europe. This hefty request from the Italian banks is justified by the difference between the Central Bank's subsidised rate of 1 % and that of the market which hovers around 7 %. There are various possible uses for the loan: from repurchase or repayment of bonds that are due to mature in 2012-2013, to purchasing long-term government bonds or extending more credit to businesses and families. It would seem natural to prioritise funding businesses and families, which have been hit hard by the systemic financial crisis and the resulting economic crisis. Or is this just a desire of those who would like to help recovery and development?

1. Was the loan conditional on certain uses?

2. If so, was financing businesses and families a condition that was provided for?

3. Can the Commission specify the potential amount for this use?

4. Does not the Commission think that, as the money lent was public money, it should be used to promote recovery in any way possible instead of going to private banks which are partly responsible for causing the crisis?

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

The enhanced credit support measures recently launched by the European Central Bank (ECB) aimed at supporting bank lending and liquidity in the euro area money markets. The ECB does not set any conditionality on how the credits should be used. It is the responsibility of the banks concerned to decide how these borrowed funds should be used, depending on their risk and return assessments.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of the longer-term funding provided by the ECB which will ultimately be transformed into credit for households and businesses. At the ECB's Governing Council press conference held on 12 January 2012, President Mario Draghi said that the ECB was seeing clear signs that the money lent by the ECB to banks was not simply staying in the deposit facility, but was circulating in the economy. It is noteworthy that some segments of the euro area financial markets have shown signs of improvement in the course of January (e.g. issuance of corporate bonds has increased, yields on Italian and other sovereign bonds have declined, dollar funding costs for euro area banks have decreased). The Commission is closely monitoring developments in this regard and is of the view that conditions are gradually being set for the improvement of interbank and bond markets, which will facilitate the flow of credit to the real economy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000827/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Gli abusi del diritto di famiglia tedesco

È ormai noto che il diritto di famiglia tedesco è diverso da quello delle altre giurisdizioni europee, nel senso che difende solamente l'interesse tedesco e mai quello dei bambini e del genitore straniero. Anzi, anche quando il bambino dichiara di preferire di vivere nel paese del genitore non tedesco, i tribunali tedeschi fanno coincidere il suo bene con la permanenza in Germania, persino quando è lontano dalla madre o dal padre non tedeschi. La conseguenza diretta di questo principio è che il genitore non tedesco perde sistematicamente i suoi figli e che i suoi diritti fondamentali, come il diritto ad un processo imparziale, non sono sistematicamente rispettati. Riconoscere queste decisioni da parte degli altri Stati europei equivale a riconoscere sentenze prese in un Paese che non rispetta gli stessi principi che vengono rispettati nel resto d'Europa.

Sarebbe come se riconoscessimo la decisione presa da un Paese che fa della pena di morte la sua legge: importare la decisione nelle nostre giurisdizioni corrisponderebbe a riconoscere la pena di morte. Ciò che le istituzioni europee non vogliono considerare, rispetto a questa specificità del diritto di famiglia tedesco, è che, accettando le decisioni dei loro tribunali, si importano principi che nelle altre giurisdizioni non esistono. Così diventa normale che i figli della dottoressa Marinella Colombo, o della signora Marie Galimard-Geisse — per non fare che due esempi tra le centinaia di casi presentati alla commissione delle petizioni del Parlamento europeo — non esistano più come italiani o come francesi, non possano più parlare la loro lingua materna e non pensino più in italiano o in francese, pur avendo un genitore di tale nazionalità e cultura. Saranno morti come cittadini italiani o francesi.

Ad aggravare la pesantezza morale e l'ingiustizia giuridica di una simile situazione ci si mette anche «*Der Spiegel*» che attacca con falsità chi, attraverso un'associazione europea, cerca faticosamente di far luce su questo fenomeno della sottrazione sistematica dei figli al genitore non tedesco da parte dello *Jugendamt*, anche quando i figli non sono consenzienti. La germanizzazione forzata dei bambini non sembra un'operazione che possa essere ammessa dal Regolamento (CE) 2201/2203, sempre in vigore.

Ciò premesso, la Commissione:

1. non condivide questa visione delle conseguenze subite dai genitori non tedeschi e dai loro figli nell'applicazione unilaterale del diritto di famiglia tedesco?

2. Perché rimane insensibile a questa situazione e alla denuncia fatta da «*Liberation*» ([1])?

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

Per quanto riguarda la questione della presunta discriminazione dei genitori non tedeschi obbligati a esprimersi in tedesco con i loro figli in certi incontri organizzati e sorvegliati dallo Jugendamt, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta fornita all'interrogazione scritta E-5590/09.

Il diritto a un processo equo e il diritto di intrattenere contatti diretti con entrambi i genitori sono diritti fondamentali sanciti dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell' UE. Tuttavia, ai sensi dell'articolo 51 della Carta, le sue disposizioni si applicano agli Stati membri esclusivamente nell'attuazione del diritto dell'Unione. Per quanto riguarda l'applicazione del diritto sostanziale di famiglia, spetta unicamente agli Stati membri garantire il rispetto dei loro obblighi in materia di diritti fondamentali, in conformità con gli accordi internazionali e con la legislazione interna. Pertanto, la Commissione non può formulare osservazioni sul rispetto dei diritti fondamentali da parte delle autorità tedesche nell'applicazione del diritto di famiglia sostanziale tedesco.

([1]) http://www.liberation.fr/depeches/01012384141-parents-divorces-des-deputes-europeens-epinglent-l-allemagne.

Il riconoscimento e l'esecuzione, in un altro Stato membro, delle decisioni esistenti relative alla responsabilità genitoriale emesse da giudici tedeschi sono disciplinati dal regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 ([2]). Ai sensi del considerando 21 di detto regolamento, il riconoscimento e l'esecuzione delle decisioni rese in un altro Stato membro dovrebbero fondarsi sul principio della fiducia reciproca e i motivi di non riconoscimento, come quelli definiti agli articoli 22 e 23 del regolamento, dovrebbero essere limitati al minimo indispensabile. Le disposizioni del regolamento per il riconoscimento e l'esecuzione delle decisioni emesse in un altro Stato membro si fondano sul presupposto che i singoli sistemi giuridici nazionali degli Stati membri siano in grado di fornire un livello equivalente ed efficace di tutela dei diritti fondamentali riconosciuti a livello dell'UE.

([2]) GU L 338 del 23.12.2003, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000827/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Abuses of German family law

It is now common knowledge that German family law is different from that of other European jurisdictions, in the sense that it only protects German interests and never those of foreign children and parents. In fact, even when children declare a preference for living in the non-German parent's country of origin, the German courts deem it in their best interests to stay in Germany, even when they are far away from the non-German mother or father. As a direct consequence of this, non-German parents frequently lose their children, and their fundamental rights, such as the right to an impartial trial, are often not respected. Were other European states to recognise these decisions, this would be tantamount to recognising judgments taken in a country which does not obey the same principles as the rest of Europe.

It would be the same as recognising a decision taken by a country which supports the death penalty. Giving the decision recognition within our legal system would be equivalent to recognising the death penalty. What European institutions do not want to consider with regard to this specificity of German law is that, by accepting their courts' decisions, they are introducing principles which do not exist in other legal systems. This makes it acceptable for the children of Dr Marinella Colombo or Marie Galimard-Geisse — to name just two examples amongst the hundreds of cases which have come before the European Parliament's Petitions Committee — to be considered as no longer being Italian or French, no longer being able to speak their native language or to think in Italian or French, despite having a parent of that nationality and culture. They are no longer Italian or French citizens.

The '*Spiegel*' has been aggravating the heavy moral and legal injustice of this situation by falsely attacking those who, through a European association, have tirelessly sought to shed light on the *Jugendamt*'s systematic removal of children from non-German parents, even when the children are not consenting. This forced Germanisation of children does not seem permissible under Regulation (EC) 2201/2203, which is still in force.

1. Does the Commission not share this view of the impact on non-German parents and their children of the unilateral application of German family law?

2. Why is it not doing something about this situation and responding to the accusation made by '*Libération*' ([1])?

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

As regards the issue of alleged discrimination of non-German parents who are required by German authorities to communicate with their children only in German at certain meetings organised and supervised by the Jugendamt, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-5590/09.

The right to a fair trial and the right to maintain direct contact with both parents are fundamental rights enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. However, according to Article 51 of the Charter, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. When applying substantive family law, it is for Member States alone to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position to comment on the respect of fundamental rights by German authorities when they apply substantive German family law.

Recognition and enforcement of existing decisions of German courts on parental responsibility in another Member State are governed by Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 ([2]). According to Recital 21 of the regulation recognition and enforcement of decisions given in another Member State should be based on the principle of mutual trust and the grounds for non-recognition such as those defined in Article 22 and 23 of the regulation should be kept to the minimum required. The systems of the regulation for recognition and enforcement of decisions given in another Member State are based on the premise that Member States' respective national legal systems are capable of providing an equivalent and effective protection of fundamental rights recognised at EU level.

([1]) http://www.liberation.fr/depeches/01012384141-parents-divorces-des-deputes-europeens-epinglent-l-allemagne.
([2]) OJ L 338, 23.12.2003, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000828/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Valores en el deporte

Tal como la Comisión afirma en la COM(2011)12 final, el deporte tiene una gran dimensión social que afecta sobremanera al interés global de la UE. Respeta y tiene en cuenta el principio de subsidiaridad pero recuerda que, tras la entrada en vigor del Tratado de Lisboa, es preciso reforzar la cooperación sobre el deporte a escala de la UE.

El Consejo destaca los efectos positivos que tiene el deporte sobre la integración social, la educación y la formación, tal y como se cita en el Plan de Trabajo Europeo para el deporte 2011-2014 del Consejo. Subrayando la importancia que el Consejo y los representantes de los Gobiernos de los Estados miembros dan a la educación, la formación y la buena gobernanza en el deporte. Recordando que tanto el Consejo como la UE tienen como prioridades defender y divulgar los valores sociales del deporte y, en especial, entre otros, la educación y la buena gobernanza; que la acción de la UE tiene como objetivo dar soporte a les Estados miembros y complementarlos cuando sea apropiado para solucionar problemas como la violencia y la intolerancia.

Hace unos días, tal como se muestra en el video ([1]), un jugador fue agredido, de manera voluntaria, por un jugador del equipo rival. A pesar de la claridad de las imágenes, el órgano español encargado de ejercer la potestad disciplinaria, el Comité de Competición ([2]), no ha visto ningún hecho sancionable.

Considerando los artículo 6 y 165 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, según los cuales el deporte es un ámbito que la UE deberá apoyar, coordinar o completar la acción de los Estados Miembros.

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que estos graves hechos, vistos por millones de personas y niños, han de quedar impunes y, por lo tanto, ser percibidos por la sociedad como neutros?

2. ¿Considera satisfactorio la Comisión que en el Comité de Competición español nadie vaya a ocuparse de este caso de violencia en el deporte?

3. Casos similares como el descrito han ocurrido en las últimas semanas en otros Estados Miembros, como Italia y el Reino Unido. En ellos, la comisión disciplinaria ha tomado partido en menos de 24 horas y ha condenado a jugadores por comportamientos antideportivo. ¿Está satisfecha la Comisión de saber que existen tales diferencias entre Estados Miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de marzo de 2012)

De conformidad con el Tratado de Lisboa, las competencias de la Unión Europea en materia de deporte son limitadas. Como se señala en el Libro Blanco y en la Comunicación mencionados por Su Señoría, la Comisión debe respetar el principio de subsidiariedad y la autonomía de los organismos directivos del ámbito deportivo. La definición y la aplicación de las normas deportivas relativas a la organización de eventos y a la buena conducta en el deporte de competición son responsabilidad de las organizaciones deportivas y de las autoridades de los Estados miembros. Ello incluye las posibles medidas disciplinarias en las competiciones futbolísticas. En el asunto al que se refiere Su Señoría, tal responsabilidad recae en la Real Federación Española de Fútbol y, en su caso, en las autoridades españolas competentes.

([1]) http://www.mundodeportivo.com/20120118/el-clasico-barca-real-madrid/salvaje-pisoton-de-pepe-a-leo-messi_54245077075.html
([2]) http://www.rfef.es/index.jsp?nodo=29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000828/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 January 2012)

Subject: Values in sport

As the Commission states in COM(2011) 12 final, sport has an overriding social dimension which greatly affects the EU's overall interests. It respects and pays due account of the principle of subsidiarity while recognising that, since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, there is a need for reinforced cooperation in sport at EU level.

The Council, in its EU Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014, stresses the positive effects of sport on social inclusion, education and training. The Council and the representatives of the Member States' governments attach great importance to education, training and good governance in sport; the Council's and the EU's priorities include defending and spreading the social values of sport — particularly education and good governance — and there are EU projects aiming to lend support to Member States in solving problems such as violence and intolerance.

A few days ago, as a video ([1]) shows, a footballer was deliberately assaulted by an opposing team's player. Although the images are clear, the Spanish disciplinary body, the *Comité de Competición* [Competition Committee] ([2]), did not consider that any punishable act was committed.

In light of Articles 6 and 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which consider sport to be an area in which the EU should support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States,

1. Does the Commission believe that these serious acts, seen by millions of adults and children, should go unpunished and thus be deemed normal by society?

2. Does the Commission find it acceptable that no one on the Spanish Competition Committee is going to look into this case of violence in sport?

3. Similar cases have occurred in recent weeks in other Member States such as Italy and the UK, in which the disciplinary bodies took less than 24 hours to find players guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct. Is the Commission willing to tolerate such differences in how Member States deal with such matters?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union has only limited competence in the area of sport. The Commission, as stated in the White Paper and the communication referred to by the Honourable Member, must therefore respect the principle of subsidiarity and the autonomy of sport's governing bodies. The definition and application of sporting rules concerning the organisation and proper conduct of competitive sport remain the responsibility of sporting organisations and member state authorities. This includes possible disciplinary measures in the context of football competitions. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member this responsibility belongs to the Royal Spanish Football Federation and, if applicable, to the competent authorities of Spain.

([1]) http://www.mundodeportivo.com/20120118/el-clasico-barca-real-madrid/salvaje-pisoton-de-pepe-a-leo-messi_54245077075.html
([2]) http://www.rfef.es/index.jsp?nodo=29.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000830/12
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Articolo 21 della proposta di regolamento sui pagamenti diretti agli agricoltori

L'articolo 21 della proposta di regolamento recante norme sui pagamenti diretti agli agricoltori nell'ambito dei regimi di sostegno previsti dalla politica agricola comune recita al comma 2: «Ricevono diritti all'aiuto nel primo anno di applicazione del regime di pagamento di base gli agricoltori che, nel 2011, hanno attivato almeno un diritto all'aiuto nell'ambito del regime di pagamento unico oppure hanno chiesto il sostegno nell'ambito del regime di pagamento unico per superficie, in entrambi i casi a norma del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009, purché detti agricoltori abbiano diritto all'assegnazione di pagamenti diretti a norma dell'articolo 9».

Nel secondo paragrafo del medesimo comma si fa nuovamente riferimento all'anno 2011 per quanto riguarda il diritto, da parte dell'agricoltore definito in base alla disposizione dell'articolo 9, di poter accedere ai diritti all'aiuto nel primo anno di applicazione del regime di pagamento di base.

L'articolo 21, così redatto, esclude espressamente quelle categorie di agricoltori che prima o dopo l'anno 2011 avevano (o avranno nel 2012-2013) avuto diritto all'aiuto in base al regime di pagamento unico.

Pur comprendendo l'intento del legislatore di voler evitare eventuali speculazioni a partire dall'anno 2013, ha la Commissione valutato la necessità di modificare il suddetto articolo nella parte in cui si richiama l'anno 2011 come anno di riferimento per stabilire l'erogazione dei diritti all'aiuto da concedere agli agricoltori nel primo anno di applicazione del regime di pagamento di base?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(7 marzo 2012)

Nel preparare la proposta legislativa una delle maggiori preoccupazioni è stata quella di evitare per quanto possibile potenziali distorsioni controproducenti del mercato fondiario. Di regola perciò si prevede per i beneficiari l'accesso ai diritti all'aiuto nel 2014 in relazione alle domande presentate nell'anno 2011. Oltre a questo principio generale la proposta prevede diritti all'aiuto dalla riserva nazionale a giovani agricoltori che abbiano di recente (cioè nell'anno 2012 o 2013) aperto un'azienda. Altri agricoltori che entrino nel settore agricolo nel 2012 o nel 2013 possono ottenere il diritto a fare richiesta per gli aiuti per mezzo di una clausola relativa ai contratti privati (articolo 21, paragrafo 3, della proposta legislativa sui pagamenti diretti) stipulata con un agricoltore che abbia ricevuto aiuti nel 2011 e che venda la propria azienda o parte di essa, oppure in alternativa acquistando o prendendo in cessione diritti all'aiuto da altri agricoltori.

Se inoltre uno Stato membro ritiene che la concessione di diritti all'aiuto a determinati agricoltori sia di estrema importanza in determinate regione in cui sussista il rischio di abbandono delle terre o in zone con svantaggi specifici, esso può decidere di usare la riserva nazionale a norma dell'articolo 23, paragrafo 5, lettera a) della proposta legislativa sui pagamenti diretti che consente a uno Stato membro di assegnare diritti all'aiuto agli agricoltori che operano in zone soggette a programmi di ristrutturazione e/o sviluppo connessi a una forma di intervento pubblico volta a evitare che le terre siano abbandonate e/o a compensare gli agricoltori per gli svantaggi specifici di tali zone. Sia la valutazione concreta della giustificazione per l'applicazione della disposizione summenzionata sia la definizione dettagliata di tale misura saranno di responsabilità dello Stato membro, e il diritto all'aiuto sarà soggetto alla disponibilità di fondi della riserva nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000830/12
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Article 21 of the draft Regulation on direct payments to farmers

Article 21(2) of the draft Regulation establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the common agricultural policy reads as follows: 'Farmers who, in 2011, activated at least one payment entitlement under the single payment scheme or claimed support under the single area payment scheme, both in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, shall receive payment entitlements the first year of application of the basic payment scheme provided they are entitled to be granted direct payments in accordance with Article 9.'

Article 21(2) again refers to the year 2011 in relation to the right of the farmer defined in Article 9 to receive payment entitlements in the first year of application of the basic payment scheme.

The wording of Article 21 specifically excludes those categories of farmers who were (or will be in 2012-13) entitled to payments under the single area scheme before or after 2011.

While the legislator's desire to avoid potential speculation from 2013, has the Commission assessed the need to amend the section of Article 21 specifying 2011 as the reference year for the allocation of payment entitlements to be granted to farmers in the first year of application of the basic payment scheme?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

When preparing the legal proposal one of the main concerns has been to avoid, as much as possible, any potentially negative distortions in the land market. Therefore, as a main rule, the access to the allocation of entitlements in 2014 is foreseen for the beneficiaries in respect of the claim year 2011. Further to this general rule, the proposal foresees allocation from the national reserve, to young farmers who recently (e.g. in 2012 or in 2013) set-up a holding. Other farmers entering the sector in 2012 or 2013 can obtain the right to apply for entitlements either by having a private contract clause (Article 21(3) of the legal proposal on direct payments) with a farmer who received support in 2011 and who sells his holding or part of it; or he can as an alternative buy or lease entitlements from other farmers.

Furthermore, if a Member State considers that the allocation of entitlements to certain farmers is of utmost importance in certain areas where there is a risk of land abandonment or in areas with specific disadvantages, it could consider using the national reserve according to Article 23(5)(a) of the legal proposal on direct payments. It allows a Member State to allocate payment entitlements to farmers in areas subject to restructuring and/or development programmes relating to a form of public intervention in order to prevent land from being abandoned and/or to compensate farmers for specific disadvantages in those areas. Both the concrete assessment of the justification for applying the mentioned provision and the detailed definition of such measure would be in the responsibility of the Member State and the allocation is subject to the availability of funds in the national reserve.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000832/12
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Use of EHIC cards by EU visitors to Greece

It would appear that the Greek authorities on the island of Crete are in the process of computerising the currently manual procedure for the issuing of medical prescriptions.

Apparently, this involves the mandatory inputting of both an AMKA number, issued by KEP, the Greek equivalent of the British CAB, and an IKA number, issued by the Greek equivalent of the British NHS.

EU travellers with of EHIC cards will not have either number and, given that the system does not currently accept EHIC card numbers, it appears that, once the procedures have been fully computerised, no EHIC card holders from the EU will be able to avail themselves of its reciprocal healthcare arrangements when in Greece.

— Can the Commission please investigate the matter and indicate what adjustments could be made to facilitate acceptance of a single EHIC card number, as a simple alternative to requiring both AMKA and IKA numbers, as at present?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

Under Regulation (EC) 883/2004 ([1]), if a person is staying temporarily in another EU-country, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, he/she is entitled to 'necessary' healthcare, including prescribed medicines, on the same conditions as persons insured in the country he/she is visiting. This means that the person should be treated under the same conditions, which may include paying the patient fees applicable in the country of treatment. However, if a treatment can wait until the person has returned home, then such treatment is no t considered 'necessary'. It is always the medical professional treating the person who determines if a certain treatment is necessary or not, on the basis of the disease and of how long the person plans to stay in the country he/she is visiting.

The Commission has recently been informed about the new IT system for issuing prescriptions which has been introduced in Greece. As a result, the Commission sent a letter to the Greek authorities on 14 February 2012, drawing their attention to the difficulties caused and to their obligation to assure that also persons with an Electronic Health Insurance Card can be prescribed necessary medicines on the same conditions as persons insured in Greece.

([1]) OJ L 166, 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000833/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: EU unemployment policy

Can the Commission explain to me how it intends to create jobs for young people, and at the same time pursue its 'active ageing' policy, which includes extending employment opportunities for older citizens, against a backdrop of rising unemployment across the EU?

At a time of rising unemployment, can the Commission explain from which sectors these extra jobs will come?

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

The question of supporting employment for young people and maintaining older workers longer in employment has to be considered in view of the demographic changes currently taking place in Europe. There is no trade-off between these two groups. The recently adopted Youth Opportunities Initiative ([1]) and the ongoing European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations are an expression of this complementary approach.

Today's Europe faces structural transformations which have been identified in the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular the transition towards a green and resource efficient economy, the demographic ageing of our society and its technological profound change. Transforming the economy along these paths will bring increased competitiveness and will be sources of growth and jobs. Labour market policies and instruments, including better anticipation of skills needs, should support the further development of sectors with the highest employment potential in the green and resource-efficient economy ('green jobs'), in health and social sectors ('white jobs') and in the digital economy (ICT jobs).

To support job creation, labour demand can be stimulated through incentives, improvements to the employment protection legislation in line with the principles of flexicurity, and short-time working arrangements. It can also be stimulated by supporting innovation, entrepreneurship and self-employment, and fighting undeclared work. The Commission will present new initiatives and measures in this field in the Employment Package later in spring 2011.

([1]) See Commission Communication COM(2011) 933 final of 20 December 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000835/12
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Vehicle installation requirements for mudguards

Scottish company Spraydown Ltd have developed an innovative mudguard that improves visibility and fuel efficiency, mostly in the HGV sector. The company is being threatened by the repeal of Directive 91/226/EEC, which is being replaced by Regulation (EU) No 109/2011. The company have met the requirements for component type approval but, as I understand it, they will have difficulty complying with the rules which apply to fixing the component to vehicles (91/226/EEC).

Given the benefits this product can deliver, and given that the working group of the Technical Committee — Motor Vehicles are due to meet in February, will the Commission consider allowing Spraydown to continue to be used by the industry under exemption?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The type-approval provisions for spray suppression devices and their installation on motor vehicles as incorporated in Regulation (EU) No 109/2011 have not changed significantly in comparison to the repealed Directive 91/226/EEC. Furthermore, Article 6 of the regulation states that, concerning the validity and extension of approvals granted under Directive 91/226/EEC, national authorities shall permit the sale and entry into service of vehicles and separate technical units type-approved under Directive 91/226/EEC before 1 November 2012 and continue to grant extension of approvals to those vehicles and separate technical units under the terms of Directive 91/226/EEC.

For new technologies finally, in accordance with Article 20 of Directive 2007/46/EC ([1]), Member States may, on application by the manufacturer, grant EC type-approval of a vehicle, component or separate technical unit incorporating technologies or concepts which are incompatible with one or more mandatory regulatory acts listed in this directive, subject to authorisation being granted by the Commission.

([1]) OJ L 263, 9.10.2007, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000837/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Standard sizes for cabin baggage on aircraft

Would the Commission consider imposing standard sizes for cabin baggage on aircraft, so that passengers could buy one cabin bag which would meet the requirements of every airline operating at EU airports? Passengers at the moment never know if the cabin bag they have purchased will fit the specific baggage dimensions of all airlines they will use. A standard size would allow all bag manufacturers to meet the EU standards, and therefore passengers would have greater certainty when arriving at the airport that they will not have to pay excessive hold charges because their small bag is the wrong shape but would still comfortably fit in the overhead bins.

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission does not immediately foresee to regulate the size of cabin baggage. This issue remains under the competences of air carriers and depends on various factors such as the technical standards of the cabin or commercial policies of the air carriers.

The Commission is of the opinion that passengers should be well informed before travel as to the cabin baggage size which will be accepted. This information should be easily available for passengers during and after the booking process.

The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the standard put in place by IATA ([1]), which recommends to its members a limit of 56 cm x 45 cm x 25 cm as a maximum permitted cabin bag size.

([1]) International Air Transport Association.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000838/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti alla città di Lecce

Gli enti territoriali, quali comuni e province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei fondi diretti programmati ed erogati da parte delle direzioni generali della Commissione. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio: il programma Cultura, il programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà sociale Progress, il programma per la cittadinanza Europa per i cittadini, quello per l'ambiente Life +, quello per gestire i flussi migratori (gestione flussi migratori), quello dedicato alle risorse umane (Investire nelle persone) e tanti altri.

In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Lecce ha fatto richiesta;

2. in caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati i suddetti programmi sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta data da Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2012)

La città di Lecce ha ricevuto fondi in qualità di beneficiario associato nell'ambito del programma LIFE III per il progetto «Sea-Land System» (2000). Il contributo dell'UE per il progetto è ammontato a 541 170 EUR e ha portato alla realizzazione di una piattaforma galleggiante con applicazioni wireless per il monitoraggio in tempo reale della qualità delle acque lungo le coste di Bari, Lecce e Taranto. Un impianto sperimentale per il trattamento delle acque reflue è stato costruito accanto all'impianto di depurazione già esistente a Taranto. Sono state inoltre ristrutturate tre torri costiere (una per provincia) che vengono ora utilizzate come centri educativi ambientali.

Inoltre, nel 2010, nel contesto del programma Cultura, la città di Lecce ha presentato il progetto di cooperazione PLOTS («Places Links Opportunities Transitions Stories»), che ha ottenuto un cofinanziamento di 175 000 EUR. Il progetto è ancora in corso e la relazione finale verrà presentata a maggio 2012. Nell'ambito dello stesso programma, la città ha anche presentato il progetto «Women History and Way of Life: Short Theatrical Stage-Play Festival», che non è stato selezionato.

La provincia di Lecce ha presentato, con esito negativo, richieste di finanziamenti nell'ambito del Fondo europeo per l'integrazione dei cittadini dei paesi terzi, dei programmi d'azione comunitari del Fondo europeo per i rifugiati (2009) e nell'ambito del programma Progress per il progetto «Social Inclusion through Social enterprises» (2010).

Infine nel 2010, nell'ambito del programma «Investire nelle persone» — un programma tematico nel quadro dello strumento di cooperazione allo sviluppo — la città e la provincia di Lecce hanno partecipato, con esito negativo, all'invito a presentare proposte «Rafforzare le capacità del settore culturale» con i progetti «Governance (and) art policies» e «IFC — Investing in the Future's Creativity».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000838/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programmes for the city of Lecce

Local and regional authorities, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the first possible beneficiaries of the direct funding administered and allocated by the Directorates-General of the Commission. The numerous sources of funds include, for example: the Culture programme, the Progress programme for employment and social solidarity, the Europe for Citizens programme aimed at promoting citizenship, the Life+ programme for the environment, the migration management programme,, and the programme for human resources (Investing in People).

With regard to the above and to other available programmes:

1. Can the Commission specify whether there are any programmes under which the city of Lecce has applied for funding?

2. If so, which projects have been given access to European funds, and what was the outcome of the programmes concerned?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The City of Lecce received funding under the LIFE III programme for the project 'Sea-Land System' (2000) as an associated beneficiary. The EU contribution for this project totalled EUR 541 170.00. It achieved the launching of a floating platform, with wireless applications to carry out real-time monitoring of water-quality along the coasts of Bari, Lecce and Taranto. A pilot waste water treatment plant was constructed alongside the existing depuration plant in Taranto. The renovation of three coastal towers (one per province), and their use as environmental education centres, was also completed.

Moreover, the City of Lecce successfully applied in 2010 under the Culture Programme for the cooperation project 'Places Links Opportunities Transitions Stories', which was co-funded with EUR 175 000. The project is still on going and the final report will be issued in May 2012. An application under the same program for the project 'Women History and Way of Life: Short Theatrical Stage-Play Festival' was not selected.

The Province of Lecce unsuccessfully applied for the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals and the European Refugee Fund Community Actions programmes (2009) and for the project Social inclusion through Social enterprises (2010) in the context of the Progress programme.

Finally, the City and the Province of Lecce applied in 2010, under the programme 'Investing in People' — a thematic programme under the Development Cooperation Instrument, to the call for proposals 'Strengthening capacities in the cultural sector' for the projects 'Governance (and) art policies' and 'IFC — Investing in the Future's Creativity', none of which was selected.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000840/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Calidad democrática e institucional

Reconociendo el esfuerzo de la Comisión y el Consejo Europeo por facilitar y mejorar la supervisión presupuestaria de los Estados miembros y su coordinación de las políticas económicas, en vista del actual proceso de fortalecimiento de la gobernanza económica europea, y teniendo en cuenta el paquete de seis directivas de gobernanza económica ya adoptado, las dos nuevas propuestas de directiva presentadas por la Comisión ([1]), el acuerdo intergubernamental negociado bajo el nombre de «pacto fiscal» y la Estrategia Europa 2020 y sus objetivos de innovación, empleo y justicia social, entre otros actos, cabe deducir que la responsabilidad que recae en las instituciones europeas a la hora de colegislar es cada vez mayor y que el impacto de las mismas políticas sobre los diferentes grupos de población y regiones es realmente heterogéneo. Parece indispensable mejorar la información a la que acceden los legisladores antes de tomar una decisión y parece imprescindible realizar estudios *ex ante* del impacto de las medidas económicas sobre la distribución de la renta en diferentes Estados y regiones, así como también sobre el efecto real de las medidas de prevención o sanción sobre los Estados miembros. Cabe recordar la existencia de instituciones prestigiosas que analizan el impacto previsto de las medidas económicas en los presupuestos nacionales, regionales y de las familias, como el «Congressional Budget Office» de Estados Unidos.

1. ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión presentar una propuesta legislativa para la creación de una institución independiente y pública que analice *ex ante* el impacto económico de la legislación europea?

2. Entre tanto, ¿estaría dispuesta la Comisión a hacer públicos todos los informes que elabora antes de presentar una propuesta legislativa? Si se dispone de dichos informes, ¿por qué no se han hecho públicos nunca?

3. ¿No cree la Comisión que sin esta información disminuye la calidad democrática del trabajo de los diputados al Parlamento Europeo y, por lo tanto, la de nuestras instituciones comunitarias?

Respuesta del Presidente Barroso en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de febrero de 2012)

1. La Comisión realiza evaluaciones de impacto de todas sus iniciativas que podrían tener importantes repercusiones directas en los ámbitos económico, social o medioambiental. Desde un primer estadio del procedimiento se publican orientaciones en las que se indica si la iniciativa será objeto de una evaluación de impacto o no, y las razones para ello, con objeto de mantener informadas a las partes interesadas ([2]).

Desde finales de 2006, un Comité de Evaluación de Impacto, que actúa con independencia de los servicios que formulan las políticas, examina y elabora dictámenes sobre todas las evaluaciones de impacto de la Comisión.

2. Todos los informes finales de evaluación de impacto, así como los proyectos de dictámenes de dicho Comité, se hacen públicos una vez que la Comisión aprueba la propuesta correspondiente ([3]).

3. Todos los informes de evaluación de impacto se remiten al Parlamento y al Consejo junto con la propuesta pertinente de la Comisión. En su informe especial n° 3/2010 «Evaluaciones del impacto en las instituciones europeas», el Tribunal de Cuentas Europeo observó que los usuarios de ambas instituciones consideran la evaluación de impacto útil a la hora de examinar las propuestas de la Comisión.

([1]) Regulation on the strengthening of the economic and budgetary surveillance of Member States, COM(2011)0819 final and Regulation on common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans, COM(2011)0821 final.
([2]) Véase: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/planned_ia_en.htm
([3]) Véase: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/cia_2012_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000840/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Democratic and institutional quality

Recognising the efforts made by the Commission and the European Council to facilitate and improve Member States' budgetary surveillance and coordination of economic policies, considering the current process of strengthening European economic governance, and bearing in mind the package of six economic governance directives that has already been adopted, the two new draft directives presented by the Commission ([1]), the intergovernmental agreement negotiated under the name 'fiscal pact', and the EU 2020 Strategy and its objectives of innovation, employment, and social justice, among others, one can conclude that the responsibility that falls on European institutions when co-legislating is becoming ever greater, and that the policies themselves have truly heterogeneous impacts on various population groups and regions. It seems vital to improve the information that the legislators access before making a decision, and it seems essential to conduct *ex ante* studies on the impact of economic measures on the distribution of income in various states and regions, and on the real effect of preventive or disciplinary measures on Member States. It is important to remember the existence of prestigious institutions that analyse the expected impact of economic measures on national, regional and household budgets, such as the United States Congressional Budget Office.

1. Does the Commission plan to present a legislative proposal to create an independent, public institution to analyse, *ex ante*, the economic impact of European legislation?

2. In the meantime, would the Commission be willing to make public all of the reports it prepares before presenting a legislative proposal? If such reports are available, why have they never been made public?

3. Does the Commission not believe that, without this information, the democratic quality of the work of Members of the European Parliament, and thus the democratic quality of EU institutions, is diminished?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(22 February 2012)

1. The Commission carries out impact assessments for all its initiatives expected to have significant direct impacts in the economic, social or environmental fields. Roadmaps indicating if an initiative is subject to an impact assessment or not (and why) are published at an early stage in the policy-making process to facilitate stakeholders input ([2]).

Since end 2006, an Impact Assessment Board acting independently from policy making departments examines and issues opinions on all the Commission's impact assessments.

2. All final impact assessment reports as well as the Board opinions on their draft versions are made public once the Commission approves the relevant proposal ([3]).

3. All impact assessment reports are forwarded to the Parliament and Council along with the relevant Commission proposal. In its Special Report No 3/2010 'Impact Assessments in the EU institutions', the European Court of Auditors found that users in both institutions consider impact assessment to be helpful when discussing Commission proposals.

([1]) Regulation on the strengthening of the economic and budgetary surveillance of Member States, COM(2011) 0819 final and Regulation on common provisions for monitoring and assessing draft budgetary plans, COM(2011) 0821 final.
([2]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/planned_ia_en.htm
([3]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/cia_2012_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000842/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Gestión aeroportuaria

El Gobierno español anunció el pasado lunes que suspende los concursos de licitación de los aeropuertos de Barcelona-El Prat y Madrid-Barajas y que trabaja en un nuevo modelo de gestión aeroportuaria que contempla la entrada de capital privado en un futuro, según ha adelantado la Ministra de Fomento, Ana Pastor ([1]).

El Conseller de Territori i Sostenibilitat de la Generalitat de Cataluña, Lluís Recoder, ha lamentado la decisión del Gobierno central y ha advertido de que la administración catalana no renuncia a este plan. Las razones del Conseller se vuelcan en la necesidad de contar con una infraestructura de referencia capaz de competir con el resto de Europa, porque «los aeropuertos europeos que tenemos como referentes compiten entre ellos y solo en Rumanía tienen un modelo centralizado», ha apuntado Recoder. Ana Pastor justificó la decisión por la voluntad de su ejecutivo de mejorar el valor de AENA y, por tanto, asegurar los ingresos que supondría la entrada de capital privado, y en el fondo confirmó un giro total de estrategia: «No deben competir», ha llegado a señalar la Ministra sobre El Prat y Barajas ([2]). El Teniente de Alcalde de Barcelona, Antoni Vives, considera que «es imprescindible garantizar la gestión individualizada del aeropuerto» ([3]).

La Cambra de Comerç de Barcelona también ha expresado su preocupación: «No se trata de una cuestión política, sino de competencia. El aeropuerto de Barcelona necesita instrumentos de gestión individualizada para poder competir con garantías de éxito en los mercados internacionales», considera esta institución.

Actualmente la empresa pública AENA gestiona 47 aeropuertos, de los cuales solo 8 se consideran rentables ([4]).

¿No cree la Comisión que la falta de competencia que se deriva del monopolio de AENA hace que la gestión aeroportuaria española sea poco eficiente?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de marzo de 2012)

Como declaró la Comisión en su respuesta a la pregunta E-1665/10 y P-005635/2011 ([5]), el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea no contiene ninguna base jurídica en relación a los modelos de propiedad y gestión para las empresas en general. En consonancia con el Tratado, la política europea no es preceptiva en cuanto a las estructuras que deben establecerse en la gestión aeroportuaria de cada Estado miembro. Por lo tanto, los Estados miembros tienen derecho a determinar: 1) la organización de los servicios aeroportuarios a escala nacional, regional o por aeropuerto individual y, 2) la propiedad de los servicios aeroportuarios: ya sean propiedad pública al 100 %, propiedad privada al 100 % o cualquier combinación de ambas.

Al margen de su estructura, los aeropuertos europeos están sujetos a la aplicación de las normas de competencia de la UE. Hay que señalar, sin embargo, que, hasta la fecha, no se ha presentado ninguna denuncia antimonopolio a la Comisión en relación por infracción de las normas sobre gestión aeroportuaria que menciona Su Señoría.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120123/54245758554/gobierno-suspende-privatizacion-el-prat-y-barajas.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120124/54245284564/recoder-avisa-gobierno-renunciar-ingresos-privatizacion-aeroportuaria.html
([3]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120123/54245276512/indignacion-suspension-privatizacion-aeropuerto-el-prat.html
([4]) http://www.tv3.cat/30minuts/reportatges/1826/.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000842/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Airport management

The Spanish Government announced last Monday that it is suspending the competitive tendering processes for the Barcelona-El Prat and Madrid-Barajas airports and is working on a new airport management model that includes the inflow of private capital at a later date, according to the Minister of Public Works, Ana Pastor ([1]).

The Minister for Land and Sustainability in the Government of Catalonia, Lluís Recoder, has expressed his regret at the central government's decision. He has indicated that the Catalonian government is not abandoning this plan. The Minister's reasons are based on the need to have model infrastructure capable of competing with the rest of Europe, since the European airports that serve as points of reference compete with one another, and only in Romania do they have a centralised model. Ana Pastor justified the decision on the basis of the central government's wish to increase AENA's value and thus ensure the income that would result from the inflow of private capital. She ultimately confirmed a complete reversal in strategy, stating that El Prat and Barajas should not be competing with each other ([2]). The Deputy Mayor of Barcelona, Antoni Vives, believes that it is essential to ensure individualised management of the airport ([3]).

The Barcelona Chamber of Commerce has also expressed concern, arguing that it is not a political issue, but rather a matter of competition, and that Barcelona's airport needs individualised management tools in order to be able to compete successfully in international markets.

The public company AENA currently manages 47 airports, only eight of which are considered profitable ([4]).

Does the Commission not believe that the lack of competition stemming from AENA's monopoly makes airport management in Spain inefficient?

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

As stated by the Commission in its reply to Question E-1665/10 and P-005635/2011 ([5]), the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union contains no legal basis on the model of ownership and management for enterprises in general. In line with the Treaty, European policy is not prescriptive as to the structures to be used for airport management in each Member State. Therefore, Member States are entitled to define (i) the airport services organisation at national level, at regional level or on an individual per-airport basis, and (ii) the airport services ownership: from 100 % public ownership to 100 % private ownership or different combinations thereof.

Besides their structure, European airports are subject to the application of EU competition rules. It has to be noted, however, that no antitrust complaints have been lodged with the Commission so far concerning the violation of such rules on the market referred by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120123/54245758554/gobierno-suspende-privatisacion-el-prat-y-barajas.html
([2]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20120124/54245284564/recoder-avisa-gobierno-renunciar-ingresos-privatisacion-aeroportuaria.html
([3]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20120123/54245276512/gobierno-suspende-privatisacion-el-prat-y-barajas.html
([4]) http://www.tv3.cat/30minuts/reportatges/1826/.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000843/12
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(1er février 2012)

Objet: Déconnexion des prix entre pétrole et gaz naturel

Depuis pratiquement toujours, les prix du gaz naturel sont indexés sur ceux du pétrole: Cela était défendable à une époque où le gaz naturel était un sous-produit de l'exploration pétrolière. Mais la situation a changé du tout au tout: de nouveaux champs de gaz naturel sont découverts un peu partout dans le monde et des gaz non-conventionnels s'additionnent avec force, dans certaines parties du monde, aux gisements de gaz naturel existants. Beaucoup de pays ont investi dans des installations de production et de livraison de gaz liquéfiés. Le marché est bouleversé, mais les prix du gaz pour les consommateurs continuent à s'envoler, suivant ceux du cours du pétrole.

La Commission ne devrait-elle pas prendre une initiative pour mettre fin à l'indexation des prix du gaz sur ceux du pétrole?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(5 mars 2012)

Ainsi que l'Honorable Parlementaire le sait peut-être, la Commission a déjà estimé, dans le rapport final de son enquête sectorielle sur les marchés de l'énergie publié en 2007, qu'une saine formation des prix au niveau des places de marché gazières fait mieux profiter les consommateurs des avantages de l'ouverture du marché qu'une indexation des prix du gaz sur ceux du pétrole. Ainsi que le souligne l'Honorable Parlementaire, la dissociation entre l'offre et la demande de gaz et de pétrole s'est effectivement accentuée depuis lors, ce qui limite l'influence du lien entre les prix du pétrole et ceux du gaz sur les contrats gaziers. La Commission se félicite de cette évolution qui représente une importante avancée vers l'établissement dans l'UE d'un marché intérieur du gaz naturel.

Cela étant dit, la Commission estime que — dans la mesure où un comportement anticoncurrentiel ne peut être établi — les méthodes de calcul des tarifs établies dans les contrats de fourniture de gaz sont des éléments qui relèvent d'accords privés bilatéraux entre les entreprises.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000843/12
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Separating natural gas prices from those of oil

Natural gas prices have almost always been indexed on oil prices; this was justifiable at a time when natural gas was a by-product of oil exploration. The situation is now completely different, however: new natural gas fields have been discovered all over the world, and in some places non-conventional gases are adding greatly to the number of existing natural gas deposits. Many countries have invested in facilities for producing and shipping liquefied gas. The market has changed dramatically, yet consumer gas prices continue to soar in line with those of oil.

Should the Commission not take steps to end the indexation of gas prices on those of oil?

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

As the Honourable Member may know, the Commission has taken the view, already in the 2007 Final Report of its Energy Sector Inquiry, that reliable price formation at gas hubs as compared to the oil-price indexation provide a better basis for consumers to benefit from market opening. Since then, as the Honourable Member points out, the supply demand balance for gas and oil has indeed further decoupled, which has reduced the weight of oil price links in gas contracts. The Commission welcomes this development as an important step towards establishing an EU internal market for natural gas.

That being said, the Commission considers that — to the extent that no anticompetitive behaviour can be established — pricing formulae in gas supply contracts are elements of private, bilateral agreements between undertakings.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000844/12
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(1. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Lehren aus der EHEC-Krise: Unterschiede zwischen der juristischen Definition von Erzeugnissen und der Wahrnehmung in der Bevölkerung

Angesichts einer Häufung von EHEC-Erkrankungen im norddeutschen Raum sprachen die zuständigen deutschen Behörden am 25. Mai 2011 eine Verzehrswarnung für rohe Tomaten, Salatgurken und Blattsalate aus. Als rund einen Monat später, am 5. Juli, der EHEC-Ausbruch für aufgeklärt erklärt wurde und nachweislich kein Zusammenhang mit Tomaten, Salatgurken und Blattsalaten bestand, waren auf den deutschen Gemüsemärkten bereits deutliche Verluste zu verzeichnen. Laut Deutschem Bauernverband dürfte der Gesamtschaden für die deutschen Erzeuger bei 75 Mio. EUR liegen.

Da sich die Verzehrswarnung u. a. auf Blattsalate bezog, gab es Einbußen beim Absatz von allen Salaten, und zwar unabhängig davon, ob sie zur botanischen Familie der Salate gehören oder nicht. Denn im Verständnis der Bevölkerung gehören zu den Salaten zweifelsohne auch Erzeugnisse wie Rucola, Feldsalat und Chinakohl (u. a.), die formal nicht zur botanischen Familie der Salate gehören. Dabei tragen diese Erzeugnisse zum Teil sogar den Wortteil „Salat" in ihrem Namen.

Bei der Entschädigungsregelung hat die Kommission diesem Unterschied zwischen der rechtlichen Definition eines Erzeugnisses und der Wahrnehmung dieses Erzeugnisses durch die Bevölkerung nicht Rechnung getragen. So erlauben die befristeten Sondermaßnahmen zur Stützung der EHEC-geschädigten Erzeuger (Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 585/2011 der Kommission) im Artikel 4 nur eine Stützung für „Salate", also Erzeugnisse der KN-Codes 0705 11 00 und 0705 19 00. Dies schließt die oben genannten Erzeugnisse wie Rucola, Feldsalat und Chinakohl aus.

Hieraus ergeben sich drei Fragen an die Kommission:

1. Wie ist die Kommission bisher mit dem Problem umgegangen, dass Konsumenten Salate umfassend und eben nicht nur die Salate im engeren botanischen Sinne aufgrund der amtlichen Verzehrswarnung gemieden haben?

2. Wie will die Kommission zukünftig mit diesem Problem umgehen?

3. Wie hoch war der wirtschaftliche Schaden aufgrund des verminderten Absatzes von Rucola, Feldsalat und Chinakohl in den anderen EU-Staaten?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(15. März 2012)

Nach Ausbruch der EHEC-Krise verabschiedete die Kommission umgehend die Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 585/2011 vom 17. Juni 2011 mit befristeten Sondermaßnahmen zur Stützung des Sektors Obst und Gemüse ([1]) für den Zeitraum 26. Mai bis 30. Juni 2011. Für diese Maßnahmen wurden Haushaltsmittel in Höhe von 227 Mio. EUR bereitgestellt. Die Deutschland zugewiesenen Mittel beliefen sich auf etwa 16 Mio. EUR, wodurch die Entschädigungsanträge dieses Mitgliedstaats in vollem Umfang berücksichtigt wurden.

Die Mitgliedstaaten bestätigten von Beginn der Krise an, dass in der EU Gurken, Tomaten, Salate und bestimmte Endivien-, Zucchini- und Gemüsepaprikasorten für den Frischmarkt am stärksten von der Krise betroffen waren. Deshalb beschloss die Kommission, ihre Anstrengungen auf diese Erzeugnisse zu konzentrieren.

([1]) ABl. L 160 vom 18.6.2011, S. 71, geändert durch die Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 768/2011 der Kommission (ABl. L 200 vom 3.8.2011, S. 17).

Darüber hinaus enthalten die in der einheitlichen Gemeinsamen Marktorganisation festgeleg-ten Bestimmungen für Obst und Gemüse ein breites Spektrum an Maßnahmen, die im Krisenfalle für jedes Erzeugnis herangezogen werden können. Im Rahmen von operationellen Programmen von Erzeugerorganisationen kann bis zu einem Drittel der Gesamtausgaben für das von den Erzeugern und der EU gemeinsam finanzierte Programm für sechs Krisen-präventions- und -bewältigungsinstrumente aufgewendet werden: Marktrücknahmen, Ernten vor der Reife und Nichternten, Absatzförderung und Kommunikation, Weiterbildungs-maßnahmen, Ernteversicherung und Finanzhilfen zu den Verwaltungskosten für die Einrichtung von Risikofonds auf Gegenseitigkeit. Diese Maßnahmen hätten für die anderen in der Frage der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochenen Erzeugnisse herangezogen werden können.

Bezüglich des wirtschaftlichen Schadens aufgrund des verminderten Absatzes von Rucola, Feldsalat und Chinakohl liegen der Kommission keine Informationen vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000844/12
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Lessons from the EHEC (Entero-Haemorrhagic Escherichia Coli) crisis: Differences between the legal definition of products and their perception among the public at large.

In response to a cluster of EHEC cases in Northern Germany, the responsible German authorities warned against consuming raw tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce on May 25 2011. Around a month later, on July 5, when it was declared that the source of the EHEC outbreak had been identified and there was demonstrably no link with tomatoes, cucumbers or lettuce, Germany's vegetable markets had already suffered significant losses. According to the German Farmers' Association, the total damage to German producers may amount to EUR 75 million.

Because the warning to consumers related to lettuce, among other produce, there were declines in the sale of all leaf salad produce, irrespective of whether or not they belonged to the same botanical family as lettuces. This is because, in public perception, lettuces also include produce such as rocket, field salad and bok choy, which formally speaking do not belong to the same botanical family as lettuce, although some of them actually have the word 'salad' or 'lettuce' in their names.

When setting down compensation rules, the Commission failed to recognise this distinction between the legal definition of a product and its perception among the public at large. Thus, Article 4 of the temporary special measures to support producers hit by the EHEC crisis (implementing regulation (EEC) No 585/2011 from the Commission) only allows support for 'lettuces', in other words produce under CN codes 0705 11 00 and 0705 19 00. This excludes the produce mentioned above, such as rocket, field salad and bok choy.

This prompts three questions to the Commission:

1. How has the Commission dealt to date with the problem that consumers have avoided all leaf salad products, not just the narrow botanical species indicated by the official consumer warnings?

2. How does the Commission intend to deal with this problem in future?

3. How great is the economic damage as a result of the reduced sale of rocket, field salad and bok choy in other EU states?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2012)

After the outbreak of the Escherichia Coli crisis, the Commission promptly adopted Implementing Regulation (EU) No 585/2011 of 17 June 2011 laying down temporary exceptional support measures for the fruit and vegetable sector ([1]) for the period 26 May to 30 June 2011, with a budget of EUR 227 million. The budget allocated to Germany was about EUR 16 million covering the total of the demands for compensation submitted by this Member State.

Member States confirmed right from the beginning of the crisis that cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuces and certain endives, courgettes and sweet peppers for the fresh market were the most affected products by the crisis at EU level. The Commission decided therefore to concentrate the efforts on those products.

In addition to that, the fruit and vegetables provisions of the single Common Market Organisation contain a wide range of measures that can be activated in case of crisis for any product. In the framework of operational programmes of producer organisations, up to one third of the total expenditure of the programme, which is co-financed between the producers and the EU, can be spent on six crisis prevention and management tools: market withdrawals, green and non-harvesting, promotion and communication, training measures, harvest insurance and support for the administrative cost of setting up mutual funds. These measures could have covered the other products referred in the question of the Honourable Member.

Regarding the economic damage as a result of the reduced sale of rocket, field salad and bok choy, the Commission does not have at its disposal such information.

([1]) OJ L 160, 18.6.2011, p. 71, as amended by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 768/2011, OJ L 200, 3.8.2011, p. 17.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000845/12
an die Kommission
Christian Ehler (PPE)
(1. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Lärmbedingte Betriebsbeschränkungen auf Flughäfen (KOM(2011)0828)

Die Europäische Kommission hat am 1. Dezember 2011 den Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über Regeln und Verfahren für lärmbedingte Betriebsbeschränkungen auf Flughäfen der Union im Rahmen eines ausgewogenen Ansatzes sowie zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 2002/30/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates (KOM(2011)0828) vorgelegt.

Hierzu stellen sich folgende Fragen:

1. Wie genau soll die geplante Kontrollfunktion der Kommission ausgeführt werden, und in welchem Maße greift sie in die Eigenständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten im Bereich der Lärmminderungsmaßnahmen ein?

2. Mit welcher Begründung steht die Maßnahme „lärmbedingte Betriebsbeschränkungen“ (z. B. Nachtflugverbote oder Außerdienststellung lauter Luftfahrzeuge) an letzter Stelle der zu ergreifenden Maßnahmen?

3. Wie sieht die Kommission den entstehenden Widerspruch zwischen dem erklärten Ziel der einheitlichen Anwendung von Lärmschutzmaßnahmen und der Festsetzung der Lärmgrenzwerte für den Schutz der Gesundheit durch die Mitgliedstaaten?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(2. März 2012)

1. Die geplante Kontrollfunktion, auf die der Herr Abgeordnete verweist, wird in Form einer Qualitätsprüfung des Lärmbewertungsprozesses ausgeübt werden. Die Qualitätsprüfung wird den Lärmminderungszielen oder den konkreten Maßnahmen nicht vorgreifen. Somit wird die Kontrollfunktion die Entscheidungen der Mitgliedstaaten nicht ersetzen und es wird nicht in die Eigenständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten eingegriffen.

2. Im Wortlaut des Vorschlags wird auf einschlägige Texte der Internationalen Zivilluftfahrt-Organisation (ICAO) verwiesen. Diese Texte folgen stets der genannten Reihenfolge, so dass lärmbedingte Betriebsbeschränkungen immer an letzter Stelle stehen. Mit dem Vorschlag soll dafür gesorgt werden, dass durch Fakten untermauerte Entscheidungen getroffen werden. Dabei haben die zuständigen Behörden umfassenden Ermessensspielraum, um darüber zu entscheiden, welche Kombination von Maßnahmen am kosteneffizientesten wäre.

3. Der Vorschlag überlässt es den Mitgliedstaaten, über die Lärmminderungsmaßnahmen für jeden einzelnen Flughafen zu entscheiden. Die europäischen Flughäfen sind sehr unterschiedlich; daher müssen die zu ergreifenden Maßnahmen speziell auf sie zugeschnitten sein. Dabei sollte eine Vielzahl von Zielen (darunter der Schutz der Gesundheit) berücksichtigt werden, die auf einzelstaatlicher Ebene festzusetzen sind. Daher ist es Aufgabe der zuständigen Behörden, externe Kosten, einschließlich der Folgen von Fluglärm für die Gesundheit, und Auswirkungen der Luftfahrt auf den wirtschaftlichen Wohlstand einer Region insgesamt gegeneinander abzuwägen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000845/12
to the Commission
Christian Ehler (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Noise-related operating restrictions at airports (COM(2011)0828)

On 1 December 2011 the Commission presented the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports within a Balanced Approach and repealing Directive 2002/30/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2011)0828).

1. How exactly will the Commission carry out its proposed monitoring function and to what extent will this encroach on the Member States' independence in the context of the implementation noise-abatement measures?

2. Why does the measure 'noise-related operating restrictions' (e.g. night-flight bans or phasing-out of noisier aircraft) appear last in the list of measures to be taken?

3. What view does the Commission take of the emerging contradiction between the stated aim of the uniform application of noise-abatement measures and the establishment by the Member States of noise limits to protect health?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

1. The proposed monitoring function which the Honourable Member refers to, will take the form of a quality check of the noise assessment process. The quality check will not prejudge the noise abatement objectives or the concrete measures taken. Hence, the monitoring function will not substitute Member States' decisions and will not encroach on Member States' independence.

2. The text of the proposal refers to relevant International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) documents. These documents always follow this order, putting noise-related operating restrictions last. The purpose of the proposal is to make evidence-based decisions, whereby the competent authorities have full discretion to decide on the mix of measures, based on cost-effectiveness considerations.

3. The proposal leaves it to the Member States to decide on noise abatement measures on an airport by airport basis. The characteristics of European airports are quite different from each other, and hence need to be tailor made. These measures are expected to be considered in the framework of a range of objectives, including health objectives, set at the national level. Therefore, it remains for the competent authorities to balance external costs, including health effects of air traffic noise, and welfare effects created by aviation activities in the wider region.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000846/12
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(1 februari 2012)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen zwendel met EU-subsidie bij Nederlands „moskeeverzamelgebouw"

Op 2 september 2011 beantwoordde de Commissie mijn eerste reeks vragen inzake bovenstaand dossier (E-006764/2011). In haar beantwoording gaf zij aan dat „… de financiering van het programma voor het multiculturele centrum in de Joubertstraat beperkt was tot die onderdelen van de infrastructuur die geen verband houden met religieuze activiteiten". Vandaag bleek echter uit publicaties in Nederlandse media ([1]) dat hier wel degelijk sprake van was, op zijn minst indirect. Met name bleek uitdrukkelijk dat ongeoorloofde subsidiëring van religieuze activiteiten heeft plaatsgevonden In dat kader de volgende vervolgvragen:

1. De PVV is het met de Commissie eens dat de lidstaat in kwestie primair verantwoordelijk is voor toezicht op correcte en transparante besteding van EU-subsidies/gelden. Nu de deelgemeente Amsterdam Oost geconcludeerd heeft dat de subsidiëring onterecht is geweest en het bestaande huurcontract met de moskee in kwestie is ontbonden, is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat de evident ten onrechte verleende EU-subsidie ad 1,4 miljoen euro dient te worden teruggevorderd?

2. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat zij en haar uitvoerende agentschappen en diensten voortaan veel nauwkeuriger vooraf moeten beoordelen of een aanvraag correct is gedaan door de indiener en, indien sprake is van enige religieuze connotatie, direct moet worden gecheckt of de scheiding van Kerk en Staat voldoende is gewaarborgd?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven in welke andere lidstaten vergelijkbare projecten lopen waarbij steun uit het EU budget is gevraagd?

Antwoord van de heer Hahn namens de Commissie
(6 maart 2012)

1. De medefinanciering van de EU voor het multicultureel centrum in de Joubertstraat bedroeg 0,959 miljoen EUR en maakte deel uit van een totale overheidssubsidie van 1,4 miljoen EUR. Het Europees Bureau voor fraudebestrijding (OLAF) heeft de Commissie geïnformeerd dat het hiernaar momenteel een onderzoek voert. Om de vertrouwelijkheid van het onderzoek te beschermen, kan in dit stadium geen verdere informatie worden verstrekt. Mocht het onderzoek door OLAF of de audit/het onderzoek door de Commissie of de lidstaat tot de conclusie leiden dat door de EU medegefinancierde uitgaven niet subsidiabel zijn, dan zal de Commissie de betrokken bedragen terugvorderen. In de conclusie van het onderzoek zal rekening worden gehouden met alle verzamelde elementen, met inbegrip van de in de vraag bedoelde informatie die de nationale autoriteiten hebben verstrekt.

2. De verordeningen betreffende het cohesiebeleid vereisen reeds management en controlesystemen van hoge kwaliteit conform het beginsel van gedeeld beheer. Vóór en tijdens de implementatie van het project houden de desbetreffende autoriteiten toezicht op deze systemen en brengen er verslag over uit, met inachtneming van de regels die op hun bevoegdheden van toepassing zijn. Er wordt rekening gehouden met elk element dat kan leiden tot een mogelijke inbreuk op de EU-wetgeving, de nationale wetgeving of andere toepasselijke wetgevingen. Er wordt permanent toezicht en controle uitgeoefend op de naleving van de procedures en hun doeltreffendheid.

3. De Commissie kan niet aangeven in welke andere lidstaten EU-financiering voor soortgelijke projecten is aangevraagd. De regels van het cohesiebeleid vereisen geen specifieke rapportering voor subsidies voor multiculturele centra.

([1]) O.a. regionale televisiezender AT5, Telegraaf en Elsevier.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000846/12
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Follow-up questions on fraud involving an EU subsidy for Dutch 'multi-purpose mosque building'

On 2 September 2011, the Commission answered my first series of questions regarding the above matter (E-006764/2011). In its answer, it indicated that '… the financing from the programme for the Multicultural Centre in Joubertstraat was limited to those parts of the infrastructure which were not related to religious activities'. Today, however, it was reported in the Dutch media ([1]) that such activities were indeed being financed, at least indirectly. In particular, it appears clearly that religious activities have been unjustifiably subsidised. In this connection, I would like to ask the following follow-up questions:

1. The PVV agrees with the Commission that the Member State in question has primary responsibility for ensuring the correct and transparent use of EU subsidies/funds. Now that the Amsterdam East municipal district has come to the conclusion that the subsidies were unjustified and the existing lease contract with the mosque in question has been dissolved, does the Commission agree with the PVV that the EU subsidy of EUR 1.4 million, which had clearly been provided wrongly, should be recovered?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the Commission and its executive agencies and services should from now on be far more thorough in assessing whether or not an application has been submitted properly and, if there is any religious connotation, should verify straight away whether the separation of church and state has been sufficiently safeguarded?

3. Can the Commission indicate in which other Member States similar projects are being implemented, for which support has been requested from the EU budget?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

1. EU co-financing provided to the Multicultural Centre in the Joubertstraat was EUR 0.959 million as part of a total public grant of EUR 1.4 million. The Commission has been informed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) that it is currently conducting an investigation into this matter. At this stage, in order to protect the confidentiality of the investigation, no further information can be given. Should the investigation by OLAF, the Commission or the Member State audit/investigation lead to the conclusion that EU co-financed expenditure is ineligible, the Commission will recover the amounts involved. The conclusion of the investigation will take into account all elements gathered, including information sent by national authorities and contained in this question.

2. Cohesion policy regulations already require high quality management and control systems in conformity with the shared management principle. Before and during project implementation, these systems are reported upon and assessed by the relevant authorities within the rules governing their competences. Any element which might lead to a potential breach of EU, national or other applicable law is taken into account. Respect of procedures and their effectiveness are constantly monitored and controlled.

3. The Commission cannot indicate in which other Member States EU funding has been requested for similar projects. Cohesion policy rules do not require specific reporting concerning requests for grants to multicultural centres.

([1]) Including regional TV channel AT5, Telegraaf and Elsevier.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000847/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(1º febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Italian sounding e la concorrenza sleale

Recenti fatti di cronaca hanno riportato alla luce il problema della tutela del *Made in Italy* in relazione ai cosiddetti fenomeni di «*Italian sounding*» in ambito alimentare.

La polemica sollevata in Italia ha avuto per oggetto la promozione e la vendita all'estero, da parte dello stesso Stato italiano, di prodotti tipici italiani non prodotti in Italia, quali la bresaola prodotta in Uruguay, la finocchiella, il salame toscano e il culatello prodotti con carne statunitense a marchio «Salumeria Biellese».

Tale fatto ha coinvolto principalmente la Simest, società per azioni controllata dal Ministero dello Sviluppo economico con la partecipazione di privati.

Il fenomeno è atto a rientrare nell'ampia casistica prevista dall'illecito di «concorrenza sleale» nei confronti delle aziende italiane.

Si stima che il giro di affari dell'*Italian sounding* sia superiore ai 60 miliardi di euro l'anno (164 milioni di euro al giorno), cifra 2,6 volte superiore rispetto all'attuale valore delle esportazioni italiane di prodotti agroalimentari.

La recente Legge n. 55 dell'8 aprile 2010, istituente misure di tutela del *Made in Italy* in ambito tessile «Disposizioni concernenti la commercializzazione di prodotti tessili, della pelletteria e calzaturieri», preventivamente visionata dal Parlamento europeo, ha introdotto in merito significative misure di tutela della produzione italiana, stabilendo che un prodotto si possa definire «*made in Italy*» ove la produzione sia prevalentemente avvenuta nel territorio italiano e in particolare almeno due delle fasi di lavorazione per ogni settore siano state eseguite nel territorio italiano. Tale legge istituisce anche importanti ed incisive misure sanzionatorie in caso di violazione, quali il sequestro e la confisca dei beni.

1. Come intende muoversi la Commissione per tutelare il *Made in Italy* avverso illegittimi fenomeni di *Italian sounding* anche in ambito alimentare, ove i prodotti italiani eccellono in tutto il mondo?

2. È prevista una disciplina finalizzata a tutelare i marchi e le denominazioni di origine territoriale e nazionale quale il «*Made in Italy*» da fenomeni di contraffazione o comunque di uso non veritiero atto a stravolgere la realtà dei fatti e a violare il diritto di trasparenza e di leale informazione dei consumatori?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(12 marzo 2012)

La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte già date alle interrogazioni scritte E-3995/2011 dell'onorevole Giancarlo Scottà e E-8667/2011 dell'onorevole Claudio Morganti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000847/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: 'Italian sounding' products and unfair competition

Recent news articles have brought to light the issue of protecting *Made in Italy* products vis-à-vis the phenomenon of so-called 'Italian sounding' food products.

The controversy which has arisen in Italy is centred on overseas marketing and sales, by the Italian State itself, of typical Italian products which have not been produced in Italy, such as bresaola produced in Uruguay, and finocchiella (Tuscan salami) and culatello (cured ham) made with US meat and branded 'Salumeria Biellese'.

This issue has mainly concerned Simest, a limited liability company controlled by the Ministry of Economic Development with the participation of private persons.

This phenomenon fits into the broad range of cases constituting the offence of 'unfair competition' against Italian businesses.

It is estimated that the turnover for Italian sounding products is more than EUR 60 billion per year (EUR 164 billion per day), a figure 2.6 times higher than the current value of Italian exports of food products.

The recent law No 55 of 8 April 2010, which establishes protective measures for *Made in Italy* products in the textile, leather goods and footwear sectors and is entitled 'Provisions relating to the marketing of textile products, leather goods and footwear' and was subject to prior scrutiny by the European Parliament, introduced significant safeguard measures in this field for Italian products, establishing that a product may only be defined as being *Made in Italy* when production has chiefly been carried out in Italy and, in particular, at least two manufacturing stages for each type of product were carried out in Italy. This law also establishes significant and decisive penalties for violations, such as the seizure and confiscation of goods.

1. How does the Commission intend to protect *Made in Italy* products against the phenomenon of illegal Italian sounding products, including in the foodstuffs sector, where Italian products excel worldwide?

2. Have provisions been made to protect brands and regional and national denominations of origin, such as *Made in Italy*, from counterfeiting phenomena or other misuses aimed at distorting the truth and violating the consumer's right to transparency and truthful information?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-3995/2011 by Mr Giancarlo Scottà and E-8667/2011 by Mr Claudio Morganti.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000848/12
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(31. Januar 2012)

Betrifft: Ausgaben der EU für Bildung sowie Aus- und Weiterbildung

Am 20. Dezember hat die Kommission die Initiative „Chancen für junge Menschen" verabschiedet, in der sie sich für Sofortmaßnahmen gegen die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit einsetzt und die Mitgliedstaaten unter anderem dazu aufruft, vorzeitige Schulabgänge zu verhindern. Im Rahmen der Strategie Europa 2020 ist die Schulbildung eines der fünf Kernziele.

1. Wie hoch sind die gesamten Ausgaben der EU für Bildungsmaßnahmen, einschließlich spezifischer Ausgaben im Rahmen der Strukturfonds, insbesondere des Europäischen Sozialfonds, sowie spezifischer Programme, wie des Erasmus-Programms, und welchen Anteil haben diese Ausgaben am Gesamthaushalt der EU?

2. Wie hoch sind die gesamten Ausgaben der EU für Aus- und Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen, einschließlich spezifischer Ausgaben im Rahmen der Strukturfonds, insbesondere des Europäischen Sozialfonds, sowie spezifischer Programme, wie des Programms Leonardo da Vinci, und welchen Anteil haben diese Ausgaben am Gesamthaushalt der EU?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(22. Februar 2012)

In allen Mitgliedstaaten stellt die Verbesserung und die Reform der Bildungssysteme eine Priorität in mindestens einem ihrer ESF-Programme dar. Insgesamt wurden mehr als 8 Mrd. EUR an ESF-Mitteln für diesen Bereich zugewiesen.

Andere Prioritäten im Bereich Humankapital betreffen die Erhöhung der Teilnahme an der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung und die Verringerung des Schulabbruchs. Die berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung hat in den ESF-Programmen ebenfalls einen hohen Stellenwert. Auf diese Maßnahmen entfallen mehr als 12 Mrd. EUR ESF-Mittel.

Eine dritte Priorität im Bereich Humankapital betrifft die Förderung von Forschung und Innovation durch Unterstützung von Aufbaustudiengängen und Forschung. Hierfür werden 4,3 Mrd. EUR aus dem ESF-Haushalt zur Verfügung gestellt.

Die berufliche Bildung schließlich ist als Schlüssel für einen besseren Zugang zur Beschäftigung Teil zahlreicher Maßnahmen in den Bereichen lebenslanges Lernen, Selbstständigkeit, Chancengleichheit und soziale Integration benachteiligter Bevölkerungsgruppen. Diese Prioritäten machen mehr als 40 Mrd. EUR der ESF-Mittel aus.

Die Gesamtausgaben für allgemeine und berufliche Bildung im Rahmen dieser Prioritäten entsprechen 87 % des gesamten ESF-Haushalts.

Weitere Informationen über die Ausgaben nach Programmen und Prioritäten stehen auf der ESF-Website ([1]) zur Verfügung.

Innerhalb des EU-Programms für lebenslanges Lernen wird durch das Programm Leonardo da Vinci die europäische Zusammenarbeit im Bereich der beruflichen Aus- und Weiterbildung unterstützt. Gefördert werden Aktivitäten wie Projekte zur Verbesserung der Kompetenzen, Kenntnisse und Fertigkeiten Einzelner durch einen Ausbildungsaufenthalt im Ausland oder die europaweite Zusammenarbeit zur Verbesserung der Attraktivität, Qualität und Leistungsfähigkeit der beruflichen Aus- und Weiterbildungssysteme und -verfahren.

Das Budget des Programms für lebenslanges Lernen beläuft sich auf 6,9 Mrd. EUR im Zeitraum 2007-2013; mindestens 25 % davon fließen in Leonardo da Vinci. Genauere Informationen über Projekte und Produkte können in der Datenbank ADAM ([2]) abgerufen werden.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_budgets/.
([2]) http://www.adam-europe.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000848/12
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(31 January 2012)

Subject: EU expenditure on education and training

On 20 December 2011, the Commission adopted the 'Opportunities for Young People' initiative, which promotes immediate measures to combat youth unemployment and calls on the Member States to prevent early school leaving. Education is one of the five targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

1. What is the total expenditure of the EU on education, including specific spending under the Structural Funds, particularly the European Social Fund and specific programmes, such as the Erasmus programme, and what proportion of the entire EU budget does this expenditure represent?

2. What is the total expenditure of the EU on training, including specific spending under the Structural Funds, particularly the European Social Fund and specific programmes, such as the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme, and what proportion of the entire EU budget does this expenditure represent?

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

All Member States have made improving and reforming their education systems a priority of at least one of their European Social Fund (ESF) programmes. A total of over EUR 8 billion of ESF financing has been allocated to it.

Other priorities in human capital include increasing participation in education and training and reducing early school-leaving. Vocational education and training (VET) are also significant in ESF programmes. These measures account for over EUR 12 billion of ESF spending.

A third priority in human capital is developing research and innovation through support for postgraduate studies and research. This priority accounts for EUR 4.3 billion of the ESF budget.

Lastly, training, which is the key path to better access to employment, is part of many measures focusing on life-long learning, self-employment, equal opportunities and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups. These priorities represent over EUR 40 billion of ESF resources.

Total spending on education and training under these priorities accounts for 87 % of the ESF budget as a whole.

Further information on spending by programme and priority is available on the ESF website ([1]).

Within the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme, the Leonardo da Vinci programme supports European cooperation in the field of vocational education and training. Funded activities range from projects helping individuals to improve their competences, knowledge and skills through a training period abroad, to Europe-wide cooperation to increase the attractiveness, quality and performance of VET systems and practices.

The Lifelong Learning Programme has a budget of EUR 6.9 billion for 2007-13, of which at least 25 % is allocated to Leonardo da Vinci. Details of projects and products can be found in the searchable database, ADAM ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_budgets/.
([2]) http://www.adam-europe.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000849/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Environmental impact of Italian carrier bag rules

Given that bio-based degradable plastic shopping bags made in accordance with Standard EN 13432 are:

— more expensive to make and use,

— much heavier, which adds to transport costs and takes up valuable storage space,

— emit methane when buried in landfill,

— cannot be recycled with ordinary plastic,

— only designed to degrade in the special conditions found in industrial composting, and

— not useful for compost, because Standard EN 13432 requires them to convert to CO_2 gas within 180 days,

does the Commission hold the view that they provide no environmental benefit but may have an adverse impact upon its attempts to combat climate change?

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

The Italian legislation on plastic carrier bags is currently subject to discussion with the Commission.

More generally, the Commission is currently assessing options available to reduce the environmental impacts of plastic waste and plastic bags. On the basis of this assessment, the Commission may decide on any further policy initiatives in due course.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000850/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Lawfulness of Italian rules on carrier bags

Given that it is lawful in every other Member State to manufacture and sell carrier bags made of conventional plastic and oxo-biodegradable plastic, neither of which is made in accordance with Standard EN13432, does Italy's ban on the sale of carrier bags unless they are made from compostable plastic in accordance with Standard EN 13432 violate both:

1. the free movement clause under Article 18 of Directive 94/62/EC ([1]), and

2. the principle of proportionality?

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

Italy notified a draft law prohibiting the marketing of non-biodegradable shopping bags on 5 April 2011 under Directive 98/34/EC laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations (reference notification 2011/174/I). The Commission issued a detailed opinion on 6 July 2011 with regard to the compatibility of the draft with Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste. The United Kingdom also reacted with a detailed opinion. Germany issued comments. The Commission is still discussing the matter with the Italian authorities and no detailed information can therefore be provided at this stage.

In this context, the Commission carried out a public consultation, which ended on 9 August 2011, to find the best way to reduce the use of plastic carrier bags. Following the consultation, the Commission is currently considering the various options available to reduce the environmental impact of plastic carrier bags.

([1]) OJ L 365, 31.12.1994, p. 10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000851/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Infringement proceedings against Italy in respect of carrier bag rules

Given that France made a similar proposal in 2006 which was notified to the Commission, and that the Commission and a number of Member States issued detailed opinions which caused France to abandon the project, does the Commission plan to commence immediate infringement proceedings against the Italian Government for its ban on the sale of carrier bags unless they are made from compostable plastic in accordance with Standard EN 13432?

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

The ban on plastic carrier bags has been implemented in Italy as of 1 January 2011 without prior notification of the measure to the Commission. This has led the Commission to launch an infringement procedure in April 2011.

At the same time, under Directive 98/34/EC ([1]), Italy notified a draft law prohibiting shopping bags that are not recoverable through composting or biodegrading or which do not fulfil the requirements of standard EN UNI EN 13432:2002 (reference notification 2011/174/I). The Commission issued a detailed opinion in July 2011 with regard to the compatibility of the draft with Directive 94/62/EC ([2]).

In the framework of the infringement procedure, in January 2012, Italy communicated to the Commission a measure (Decree Law 2/2012) intended to address the issue. The Commission is assessing this measure and its relevance to the ongoing proceedings.

([1]) Directive 98/34/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 22 June 1998 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations, OJ L 204, 21.7.1998.
([2]) Parliament and Council Directive 94/62/EC of 20 December 1994 on packaging and packaging waste, OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000854/12
a la Comisión
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Alexander Alvaro (ALDE), Jens Rohde (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) y Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(7 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Utilización de escáneres de seguridad en los aeropuertos del Reino Unido

El 11 de noviembre de 2011, la Comisión aprobó el Reglamento de Ejecución (UE) n° 1147/2011 relativo a las normas básicas comunes sobre la seguridad de la aviación civil en lo que respecta al uso de escáneres de seguridad en los aeropuertos de la UE, que, entre otras cosas, da a los pasajeros el derecho a oponerse a ser controlados por un escáner (corporal) de seguridad. Sin embargo, el Reino Unido ha notificado a la Comisión su intención de no permitir oposiciones, invocando el artículo 6 del Reglamento (CE) n° 300/2008, que permite aplicar medidas de seguridad más estrictas. Según parece, la Comisión está actualmente considerando su respuesta.

1. ¿En qué razones basará la Comisión su respuesta y cómo tiene en cuenta en su análisis el derecho de los pasajeros a la intimidad?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión analizar detalladamente si la evaluación del riesgo del Reino Unido es proporcional a la pérdida de intimidad de los pasajeros?

3. ¿Debe la imposición de medidas de seguridad más estrictas de conformidad con el artículo 6 del Reglamento (CE) n° 300/2008 anular o prevalecer sobre los requisitos más estrictos en materia de intimidad del Reglamento (UE) n° 1147/2011 en lo que concierne al derecho de los pasajeros a oponerse a ser controlados por un escáner corporal? Y, si es así, ¿por qué?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de marzo de 2012)

La Comisión está analizando la medida notificada por el Reino Unido relativa a la utilización de escáneres de seguridad en algunos aeropuertos del Reino Unido sobre la base de los Reglamentos **300/2008, 1141/2001 y 1147/2011**. Los escáneres de seguridad deben instalarse y utilizarse de conformidad con las condiciones indicadas en dichos Reglamentos y con los derechos y principios reconocidos por la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000854/12
til Kommissionen
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Alexander Alvaro (ALDE), Jens Rohde (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) og Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(7. februar 2012)

Om: Anvendelse af securityscannere i lufthavne i Det Forenede Kongerige

Den 11. november 2011 vedtog Kommissionen gennemførelsesforordning (EU) nr. 1147/2011 om detaljerede foranstaltninger til gennemførelse af de fælles grundlæggende normer for luftfartssikkerhed, som bl.a. giver passagerne ret til at fravælge screening med securityscanner (kropsscanner). Det Forenede Kongerige har imidlertid underrettet Kommissionen om, at det under henvisning til artikel 6 i forordning (EF) nr. 300/2008, som giver mulighed for strengere foranstaltninger, ikke vil tillade fravalg. Kommissionen overvejer tilsyneladende nu sit svar.

1. På hvilket grundlag vil Kommissionen bygge sit svar, og i hvilket omfang vil Kommissionen medtage passagernes ret til privatlivets fred i sin analyse?

2. Vil Kommissionen foretage en tilbundsgående analyse af, om Det Forenede Kongeriges risikovurdering står i et rimeligt forhold til tabet af privatlivets fred for passagerne?

3. Har indførelsen af strengere sikkerhedsforanstaltninger i henhold til artikel 6 i forordning (EF) nr. 300/2008 forrang frem for eller overtrumfer de strengere krav om privatlivets fred i henhold til forordning (EU) nr. 1147/2011 med hensyn til passagernes ret til at fravælge kropsscanning, og i givet fald hvorfor?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(7. marts 2012)

Kommissionen er i øjeblikket i færd med at undersøge den foranstaltning vedrørende anvendelsen af securityscannere i visse lufthavne, som Det Forenede Kongerige har anmeldt, på grundlag af forordning (EF) nr. 300/2008, (EU) nr. 1141/2011 og (EU) nr. 1147/2011. Securityscannere skal installeres og anvendes i overensstemmelse med betingelserne i disse forordninger og med de rettigheder og principper, der er anerkendt i Den Europæiske Unions charter om grundlæggende rettigheder.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000854/12
an die Kommission
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Alexander Alvaro (ALDE), Jens Rohde (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) und Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(7. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Einsatz von Sicherheitsscannern auf Flughäfen im Vereinigten Königreich

Am 11. November 2011 verabschiedete die Kommission die Durchführungsverordnung (EU) Nr. 1147/2011 zur Durchführung der gemeinsamen Grundstandards in der Luftsicherheit bezüglich des Einsatzes von Sicherheitsscannern an EU-Flughäfen, mit der u. a. die Passagiere das Recht erhalten, sich zu weigern, einen Sicherheits-(Körper-)Scanner zu durchschreiten. Unter Berufung auf Artikel 6 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 300/2008, der strengere Sicherheitsmaßnahmen zulässt, hat das Vereinigte Königreich der Kommission jedoch mitgeteilt, dass es beabsichtige, eine derartige Weigerung nicht zuzulassen. Die Kommission ist offensichtlich dabei, ihre Antwort hierauf zu formulieren.

1. Auf welcher Grundlage wird die Kommission ihre Antwort formulieren und auf welche Weise wird sie den Rechten der Passagiere auf Privatsphäre in ihrer Analyse Rechnung tragen?

2. Wird sich die Kommission eingehend mit der Frage befassen, inwieweit die Gefahreneinschätzung vonseiten des Vereinigten Königreichs in einem angemessenen Verhältnis zum Verlust der Privatsphäre der Passagiere steht?

3. Inwieweit muss die Durchsetzung strengerer Sicherheitsmaßnahmen gemäß Artikel 6 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 300/2008 das strengere Privatsphären-Erfordernis nach der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1147/2011 in Bezug auf die Freiheit der Passagiere, sich gegen ein Körperscannen auszusprechen, überlagern oder übertrumpfen? Falls ja, warum?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(7. März 2012)

Die Kommission prüft derzeit die vom Vereinigten Königreich notifizierte Maßnahme betreffend den Einsatz von Sicherheitsscannern an Flughäfen des Vereinigten Königreichs auf der Grundlage der Verordnungen 300/2008 und 1147/2011. Sicherheitsscanner sollten in Übereinstimmung mit den in den genannten Verordnungen aufgeführten Bedingungen sowie mit den in der Charta der Grundrechte der Europäischen Union verankerten Rechten und Grundsätzen eingeführt und eingesetzt werden.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000854/12
alla Commissione
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Alexander Alvaro (ALDE), Jens Rohde (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) e Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(7 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Utilizzo degli scanner di sicurezza negli aeroporti da parte del Regno Unito

L'11 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha adottato il regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 1147/2011 relativo alle norme fondamentali comuni in materia di sicurezza dell'aviazione civile sull'impiego degli scanner di sicurezza (*security scanner*) negli aeroporti dell'Unione europea, che tra l'altro conferisce ai passeggeri il diritto di rifiutare lo screening mediante scanner di sicurezza. Tuttavia il Regno Unito ha informato la Commissione che non intende consentire ai passeggeri di rifiutare lo screening, invocando l'articolo 6 del regolamento (CE) n. 300/2008, che consente l'applicazione di misure di sicurezza più severe. A quanto risulta, la Commissione sta attualmente considerando come rispondere.

1. Su quali basi intende la Commissione fondare la sua risposta e in che modo sta tenendo conto nella sua analisi del diritto dei passeggeri alla vita privata?

2. Intende la Commissione analizzare a fondo se la valutazione del rischio del Regno Unito è proporzionata alla perdita di privacy dei passeggeri?

3. Deve l'imposizione di misure di sicurezza più severe a norma dell'articolo 6 del regolamento (CE) n. 300/2008 prevalere o superare il requisito più rigoroso in materia di rispetto della vita privata stabilito dal regolamento (UE) n. 1147/2011 per quanto concerne il diritto dei passeggeri di rifiutare lo screening mediante scanner di sicurezza e, in caso affermativo, perché?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(7 marzo 2012)

La Commissione sta analizzando la misura notificata dal Regno Unito per l'uso di scanner di sicurezza presso alcuni aeroporti del suddetto Stato membro sulla base dei regolamenti (CE) n. 300/2008, 1141/2001 e 1147/2011. Gli scanner di sicurezza saranno impiegati e utilizzati in conformità alle condizioni stabilite in tali regolamenti nonché sulla base dei diritti e dei principi riconosciuti dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000854/12
to the Commission
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Nadja Hirsch (ALDE), Alexander Alvaro (ALDE), Jens Rohde (ALDE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE) and Gesine Meissner (ALDE)
(7 February 2012)

Subject: UK use of security scanners in airports

On 11 November 2011 the Commission adopted Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1147/2011 on the common basic standards for civil aviation security as regards the use of security scanners at EU airports, which *inter alia* gives passengers the right to opt out from going through a security (body-) scanner. However, the United Kingdom has notified the Commission of its intention not to allow opt-outs, invoking Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 which permits more stringent security measures. The Commission is apparently now considering its response.

1. On what grounds will the Commission be basing its response and in what way is it including the privacy rights of passengers in its analysis?

2. Will the Commission fully analyse if the UK's risk assessment is proportionate to the loss of passenger privacy?

3. Must the imposition of more stringent security measures under Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 300/2008 override or trump the more stringent privacy requirement of Regulation (EU) No 1147/2011 as regards a passenger's right to opt out from body-scanning, and if so why?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

The Commission is analysing the measure notified by the UK concerning the use of security scanners at some of UK airports on the basis of Regulations **300/2008 and 1141/2001 and 1147/2011**. Security scanners shall be deployed and used in accordance with the conditions indicated in these regulations as well as rights and principles recognised by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000855/12
an die Kommission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL), Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D) und Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(2. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Anhaltender Verdacht auf Verstöße gegen das Chemiewaffenübereinkommen durch das türkische Militär

Über die letzten fünf Jahre hinweg wurde das türkische Militär verdächtigt, im Kampf gegen die kurdische Guerilla PKK wiederholt illegal Chemiewaffen eingesetzt zu haben. Diese Verdachtsfälle, insbesondere der mutmaßliche Tod von 36 kurdischen Kämpfern durch den Einsatz von CS-Gas zwischen dem 22. und 24. Oktober in Kazan Vadesi (in der Nähe von Cukaca, Provinz Hakkari), haben die Spannungen zwischen den Türken und Kurden verschärft. Es ist erwiesen, dass das türkische Militär im Jahr 1999 verbotene Chemiewaffen eingesetzt hat, dass es sie zu Trainingszwecken verwendet hat und dass Führungskräfte des türkischen Militärs in der Vergangenheit den Befehl zu deren Verwendung erteilt haben. Ebenso ist es erwiesen, dass die Türkei bis 2010 verbotene Chemiewaffen gelagert und zum Kauf angeboten hat. Es gibt keine Dokumentation bezüglich der Zerstörung dieser Waffen. Andererseits haben die türkischen Behörden auf eine nicht kooperative Weise auf Initiativen reagiert, die weitere Untersuchungen zum Ziel hatten.

1. Verfügt die Kommission über irgendwelche Informationen zu Erkenntnissen über Verstöße gegen das Chemiewaffenübereinkommen durch das türkische Militär?

2. Hat die Kommission versucht, sich von den türkischen Behörden Klarheit über Erkenntnisse hinsichtlich der Lagerung und des Einsatzes von verbotenen Chemiewaffen zu verschaffen?

3. Betrachtet die Kommission die Wahrung des Chemiewaffenübereinkommens als bindende Voraussetzung für die Aufnahme weiterer Verhandlungskapitel?

4. Bestätigt die Kommission die Notwendigkeit für die türkischen Behörden, umfassende und unabhängige Untersuchungen der beschriebenen Verdachtsfälle zuzulassen?

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

Die Kommission ist angesichts des Verdachts des Einsatzes von Chemiewaffen in den vergangenen Monaten äußerst besorgt und hat das Thema gegenüber den türkischen Behörden angesprochen. Während der Gespräche auf Arbeitsebene Anfang Dezember 2011 hatte die Türkei mitgeteilt, dass eine Untersuchung eingeleitet worden sei und die Leichname der bei den Zusammenstößen getöteten PKK-Mitglieder gerichtsmedizinisch untersucht würden. Die Kommission wird die Angelegenheit jedoch weiterhin aufmerksam verfolgen.

Hinsichtlich der Beitrittsverhandlungen mit der Türkei weist die Kommission darauf hin, dass sie gemäß dem 2005 von den Mitgliedstaaten vereinbarten Verhandlungsrahmen sowie im Einklang mit den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates von Dezember 2006 stattfinden.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000855/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL), Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D) και Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συνεχείς υποψίες παραβιάσεων της Σύμβασης για τα χημικά όπλα από τον τουρκικό στρατό

Κατά τη διάρκεια των τελευταίων ετών, υπάρχουν υποψίες ότι ο τουρκικός στρατός έχει κάνει επανειλημμένα παράνομη χρήση χημικών όπλων στον αγώνα ενάντια στον κουρδικό ανταρτοπόλεμο του PKK. Οι εν λόγω ύποπτες υποθέσεις, κυρίως ο υποτιθέμενος θάνατος 36 κούρδων μαχητών από δακρυγόνο αέριο CS μεταξύ της 22ας και της 24ης Οκτωβρίου στο Kazan Vadesi (κοντά στην Cukaca, στην επαρχία Hakkari) έχουν οξύνει τις εντάσεις μεταξύ Τούρκων και Κούρδων. Έχει αποδειχθεί ότι ο τουρκικός στρατός έκανε χρήση απαγορευμένων χημικών όπλων το 1999, ότι τα χρησιμοποίησε για εκπαιδευτικούς σκοπούς, καθώς και ότι οι επικεφαλής του τουρκικού στρατού έχουν δώσει εντολή για χρήση τους και στο παρελθόν. Έχει αποδειχθεί επίσης ότι έως το 2010 η Τουρκία διατηρούσε απαγορευμένα χημικά όπλα και τα διέθετε προς πώληση. Δεν υπάρχει τεκμηρίωση σχετικά με την καταστροφή των εν λόγω όπλων. Από την άλλη πλευρά, οι τουρκικές αρχές έχουν δείξει απροθυμία συνεργασίας στις πρωτοβουλίες για τη διεξαγωγή περαιτέρω ερευνών.

1. Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή οποιαδήποτε πληροφορία σχετικά με τα ευρήματα που αφορούν τις παραβιάσεις της σύμβασης για τα χημικά όπλα από τον τουρκικό στρατό;

2. Έχει ζητήσει η Επιτροπή οποιαδήποτε διευκρίνιση από τις τουρκικές αρχές σχετικά με τα ευρήματα που αφορούν την αποθήκευση και τη χρήση απαγορευμένων χημικών όπλων;

3. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή τον σεβασμό της σύμβασης για τα χημικά όπλα δεσμευτικό όρο για την έναρξη περεταίρω διαπραγματεύσεων;

4. Αναγνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι είναι απαραίτητο να επιτρέψουν οι τουρκικές αρχές τη διεξαγωγή διεξοδικών και ανεξάρτητων ερευνών σχετικά με τις ύποπτες υποθέσεις που περιγράφονται;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή ανησυχεί όσον αφορά τους ισχυρισμούς σχετικά με τη χρήση χημικών όπλων κατά τους τελευταίους μήνες, και έχει θέσει το θέμα στις τουρκικές αρχές. Στο πλαίσιο συζητήσεων σε εργασιακό επίπεδο στις αρχές του Δεκεμβρίου 2011, η Τουρκία απάντησε ότι έχει δρομολογήσει σχετική έρευνα και ότι τα σώματα των μελών του PKK που σκοτώθηκαν στη διάρκεια των συγκρούσεων έχουν αποσταλεί στο Ιατροδικαστικό Ινστιτούτο (Forensic Medicine Institution (FMI)) για να προσδιορισθεί η αιτία θανάτου. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί το θέμα.

Όσον αφορά τις ενταξιακές διαπραγματεύσεις με την Τουρκία, η Επιτροπή τονίζει ότι διεξάγονται σύμφωνα με το πλαίσιο διαπραγμάτευσης που αποφασίστηκε το 2005 από όλα τα κράτη μέλη, και τα συμπεράσματα του Συμβουλίου του Δεκεμβρίου του 2006.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000855/12
aan de Commissie
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL), Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D) en Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(2 februari 2012)

Betreft: Aanhoudende verdenkingen betreffende inbreuken op het Verdrag inzake chemische wapens door het Turkse leger

Gedurende de afgelopen paar jaar wordt het Turkse leger ervan verdacht dat het herhaaldelijk illegaal gebruik heeft gemaakt van chemische wapens in zijn strijd tegen de Koerdische guerrillabeweging PKK. Deze verdachte gevallen, met name de vermeende dood door vergiftiging met CS-gas van 36 Koerdische strijders tussen de 22 en 24 oktober in Kazan Vadesi (in de buurt van Cukaca in de provincie Hakkari), hebben de spanningen tussen de Turken en Koerden doen toenemen. Het is bewezen dat het Turkse leger in 1999 verboden chemische wapens heeft ingezet, dat het deze gebruikte voor trainingsdoeleinden en dat Turkse militaire leiders in het verleden opdracht hebben gegeven tot het gebruik ervan. Het is ook bewezen dat Turkije tot 2010 verboden chemische wapens in opslag had en deze te koop aanbood. Er is geen documentatie met betrekking tot de vernietiging van deze wapens. Verder hebben de Turkse autoriteiten onwillig gereageerd op initiatieven die gericht zijn op verder onderzoek.

1. Beschikt de Commissie over informatie over bevindingen betreffende inbreuken op het Verdrag inzake chemische wapens door het Turkse leger?

2. Heeft de Commissie de Turkse autoriteiten om opheldering gevraagd over de bevindingen met betrekking tot de opslag en het gebruik van verboden chemische wapens?

3. Beschouwt de Commissie de naleving van het Verdrag inzake chemische wapens als een bindende voorwaarde voor het starten van verdere onderhandelingenhoofdstukken?

4. Ziet de Commissie de noodzaak ervan in dat de Turkse autoriteiten een uitgebreid en onafhankelijk onderzoek toestaan naar de hierboven beschreven verdachte gevallen?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(14 maart 2012)

De Commissie is bezorgd over het vermeende gebruik van chemische wapens in de afgelopen maanden en heeft de kwestie met de Turkse autoriteiten besproken. Tijdens werkbesprekingen begin december 2011 antwoordde Turkije dat een onderzoek gestart was en dat de lichamen van leden van de PPK die tijdens de confrontaties de dood vonden, overgebracht waren naar het Instituut voor Gerechtelijke Geneeskunde om de doodsoorzaak vast te stellen. De Commissie blijft de ontwikkelingen volgen.

Wat de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije betreft, benadrukt de Commissie dat deze verlopen volgens het onderhandelingskader dat door alle lidstaten in 2005 is goedgekeurd en op basis van de conclusies van de Raad van december 2006.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000855/12
Komisii
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL), Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D) a Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(2. februára 2012)

Vec: Pretrvávajúce podozrenia z porušovania Dohovoru o chemických zbraniach tureckými ozbrojenými silami

V posledných rokoch boli turecké ozbrojené sily upodozrievané z opakovaného nezákonného použitia chemických zbraní v boji proti kurdským povstalcom zo strany PKK. Tieto podozrivé prípady, najmä údajná smrť 36 kurdských bojovníkov spôsobená plynom CS od 22. do 24. októbra v oblasti Kazan Vadesi (neďaleko mesta Çukurca, v provincii Hakkari), zvýšili napätie medzi Turkmi a Kurdmi. Dokázalo sa, že turecké ozbrojené sily nasadili zakázané chemické zbrane v roku 1999, že ich použili na cvičné účely a že náčelníci tureckých ozbrojených síl v minulosti vydali príkazy na ich použitie. Takisto sa dokázalo, že do roku 2010 Turecko skladovalo zakázané chemické zbrane a ponúkalo ich na predaj. Neexistuje žiadna dokumentácia o zničení týchto zbraní. Na druhej strane turecké orgány neprejavili vôľu spolupracovať v súvislosti s iniciatívami zameranými na ďalšie vyšetrovanie.

1. Má Komisia nejaké informácie o zisteniach týkajúcich sa porušovania Dohovoru o chemických zbraniach tureckými ozbrojenými silami?

2. Žiadala Komisia od tureckých orgánov objasnenie zistení týkajúcich sa skladovania a nasadenia zakázaných chemických zbraní?

3. Považuje Komisia dodržiavanie Dohovoru o chemických zbraniach za záväznú podmienku na otvorenie ďalších rokovacích kapitol?

4. Uznáva Komisia potrebu, aby turecké orgány umožnili komplexné a nezávislé vyšetrenie uvedených podozrivých prípadov?

Odpoveď pána Füleho v mene Komisie
(14. marca 2012)

Komisia je znepokojená podozreniami týkajúcimi sa použitia chemických zbraní v nedávnych mesiacoch a na túto problematiku upozornila turecké orgány. Počas pracovných rozhovorov začiatkom decembra 2011 Turecko potvrdilo začatie vyšetrovania a informovalo, že telá členov PKK zabitých počas konfliktov boli prevezené do inštitútu súdneho lekárstva, aby sa zistila príčina smrti. Komisia bude túto záležitosť naďalej pozorne sledovať.

Pokiaľ ide o prístupové rokovania s Tureckom, Komisia zdôrazňuje, že sa uskutočňujú v súlade s rokovacím rámcom, ktorý bol v roku 2005 schválený všetkými členskými štátmi, a so závermi Rady z decembri 2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000855/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL), Cornelis de Jong (GUE/NGL), Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Katarína Neveďalová (S&D) and Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Persistent suspicions about breaches of the Chemical Weapons Convention by the Turkish military

Throughout the last few years, the Turkish military has been suspected of having repeatedly made illegal use of chemical weapons in its fight against the Kurdish guerrilla PKK. These suspicious cases, notably the alleged death of 36 Kurdish fighters caused by CS gas between 22 and 24 October in Kazan Vadesi (near Cukaca, province of Hakkari) have increased tensions between the Turks and Kurds. It has been proved that the Turkish military deployed banned chemical weapons in 1999, that it used them for training purposes and that Turkish military leaders have, in the past, given orders for their use. It has also been proved that until 2010 Turkey was storing banned chemical weapons and offering them for sale. There is no documentation pertaining to the destruction of these weapons. On the other hand, the Turkish authorities have reacted in an uncooperative way to initiatives aiming at further investigations.

1. Does the Commission have any information about findings regarding infringements of the Chemical Weapons Convention by the Turkish military?

2. Has the Commission been seeking clarification from the Turkish authorities on findings regarding the storage and deployment of banned chemical weapons?

3. Does the Commission consider respect for the Chemical Weapons Convention a binding condition for the opening of further negotiation chapters?

4. Does the Commission acknowledge the need for the Turkish authorities to permit comprehensive and independent investigations into the suspicious cases described?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 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 monitor the issue.

As regards the accession negotiations with Turkey the Commission underlines that they take place in line with the Negotiation Framework agreed by all Member States in 2005 and the Council conclusions of December 2006.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000856/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δολοφονίες Κούρδων πολιτών από τις τουρκικές μυστικές υπηρεσίες

Πρώην στέλεχος της τουρκικής Υπηρεσίας Πληροφοριών αποκάλυψε στοιχεία σχετικά με τη δολοφονία Κούρδων επιχειρηματιών με σκοπό την οικειοποίηση των περιουσιών τους από πράκτορες της ΜΙΤ. Το πρώην στέλεχος σύμφωνα με την εφημερίδα Taraf έστειλε πρόσφατα επιστολή στους εισαγγελείς που ερευνούν την υπόθεση Σουσουρλούκ καθώς και τις δολοφονίες Κούρδων επιχειρηματιών και του γνωστού Τούρκου επιχειρηματία Ομέρ Λουτφί Τοπάλ από άγνωστους δράστες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σχεδιάζει να λάβει υπόψη την ανωτέρω ομολογία στην έκθεση προόδου της Τουρκίας;

2. Σκοπεύει να θέσει το εν λόγω ζήτημα στη τουρκική κυβέρνηση για να πιέσει για εξαντλητική διερεύνηση του θέματος από τη τουρκική εισαγγελία, ώστε να υπάρξει δικαίωση των θυμάτων;

Απάντηση του κου Mr Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει την καταγγελία στην εφημερίδα, στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Η τουρκική εισαγγελία ευρίσκεται επί του παρόντος στο στάδιο της διερεύνησης των ισχυρισμών και η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να παράσχει περαιτέρω πληροφορίες. Εντούτοις, η Επιτροπή θα εξακολουθήσει να παρακολουθεί τις σχετικές εξελίξεις.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000856/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Murders of Kurdish civilians by Turkish secret services

A former member of staff of the Turkish Information Service has disclosed information regarding the murder of Kurdish businessmen for the seizure of their property by the Turkish Secret Service and, according to the newspaper Taraf, recently sent a letter to the prosecutors investigating the Susurluk case as well as the murders of the Kurdish businessmen and the well known Turkish businessman Omar Lutfi Topal by unknown perpetrators.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission intend to take this confession into account in Turkey's progress report?

2. Does it intend to raise this question with the Turkish Government and push for the thorough investigation of the issue by the Turkish prosecutor in order to secure justice for the victims?

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

The Commission is aware of the newspaper report the Honourable Member is referring to. At this stage the Turkish prosecutor's office is dealing with the allegations and the Commission is not in a position to provide further information. However, it will continue to monitor developments.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000857/12
a la Comisión
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(31 de enero de 2012)

Asunto: Puerto de Tazacorte (Tenerife)

A la vista de las informaciones aparecidas en los últimos días en los medios de comunicación de Canarias y las incertidumbres planteadas en relación con las obras del puerto de Tazacorte en la isla de La Palma, provincia de Tenerife.

¿Puede la Comisión informar de forma pormenorizada sobre todos los aspectos relacionados con este proyecto y en los que haya tenido intervención la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de marzo de 2012)

El puerto de Tazacorte recibió 8,3 millones de euros del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) en el marco del programa de las Islas Canarias para el periodo 2000-2006. Debido a las difíciles condiciones meteorológicas, el puerto no empezó a funcionar inmediatamente después de que terminaran las obras. Por consiguiente, se decidió construir otro dique para proteger el puerto y ampliar la zona comercial.

Se prevé que el FEDER cofinancie estos nuevos trabajos en el marco del periodo actual (2007-2013). Las autoridades españolas presentaron una solicitud de gran proyecto para el nuevo dique, que fue admitida a trámite en noviembre de 2010. Sin embargo, la tramitación de la solicitud se paralizó debido a cuestiones relacionadas con un procedimiento judicial en curso por una posible infracción de la legislación medioambiental.

La Comisión llevará a cabo un seguimiento apropiado antes de tomar la decisión final sobre la solicitud de dicho proyecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000857/12
to the Commission
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(31 January 2012)

Subject: Port of Tazacorte (Tenerife)

With regard to media reports in the Canary Islands over the last few days, and the uncertainty surrounding building work at the port of Tazacorte La Palma (Tenerife):

— Can the Commission provide detailed information on every aspect of this project and any EU involvement there has been?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The port of Tazacorte received EUR 8.3 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the Canary Islands programme for the period 2000-2006. Due to difficult weather conditions, the port was not immediately operational after the completion of the works. As a consequence, it was decided to build an additional dam in order to protect the port and expand the commercial area.

These new works are intended to be co-financed by the ERDF under the current period (2007-2013). The Spanish authorities have submitted a major project application for the additional dam which was declared admissible in November 2010. However, the processing of the application was interrupted due to issues relating to an ongoing judicial procedure concerning a possible breach of environmental legislation.

The Commission will ensure appropriate follow up before it takes its final decision on the major project application.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000858/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: EU 'official' history

Can the Commission explain to what extent the material in the planned 'House of History' will form an 'official' EU view of history?

Question for written answer E-000859/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Cost to taxpayers of the House of European History

What will the total cost to EU taxpayers of the House of European History be?

Question for written answer E-001239/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: Costs and benefits of the House of European History

In 2008, at the suggestion of its former President Hans-Gert Pöttering, the European Parliament decided to build a 'House of European History'. However, the cost of this project has already risen substantially by comparison with early estimates.

Although the museum is being funded by Parliament, the Commission has supposedly promised to make an annual financial contribution to the running costs, starting from the museum's scheduled completion in 2014 ([1]).

Can the Commission:

1. Provide an estimate of how much money it intends to contribute per annum following the completion of the museum and for how long?

2. State how many visitors are expected every year?

3. What cost-benefit analyses, if any, it has carried out in order to justify its annual contribution?

Question for written answer E-002404/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(1 March 2012)

Subject: House of European History

Can the Commission state who conducted the initial cost analysis for the House of European History project?

Was this done by an outside agency, or was it an internal exercise?

([1]) A newspaper article making this claim can be found at the following link:. http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/europaeische-union/eu-museum-stolz-und-scham-11623924.html

Joint answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

The main objective of the House of European History is to enable Europeans of all generations to learn more about their own history and, by so doing, to contribute to a better understanding of the development of Europe. It should help to explain why the European institutions were founded and developed in the second half of the 20th century. Thus, the contents to be presented in this House will allow for a comprehensive understanding of the history of the European Union within the broader context of European history.

The Commission has informed the Parliament of its willingness to contribute to the operational costs of the project. However, no discussion has yet taken place on the amount of that contribution.

The House of European History has produced its own business plan, which sets out all the important parameters of the project including estimations of development and operating costs and projections of the number of visitors. The business plan is available on the Parliament's website:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documentss/cont/dv/annexes_/annexes_en.pdf

The content is being developed by an international, interdisciplinary Academic Project Team composed of museum professionals and historians from all over Europe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000860/12
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Cameras on trucks to give a full view of the length of both sides of the vehicle

Is the Commission willing to propose an improvement to EU transport legislation that would require all large trucks to be fitted with cameras that give their drivers a full view of the length of both sides of their vehicle, thus improving road safety and bringing down the bill for serious accidents?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission will shortly report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Directive 2007/38/EC on the retrofitting of mirrors to heavy goods vehicles registered in the Community ([1]). The report will also address the effectiveness of the directive.

The Commission will then decide whether further amendments to the legislation concerning technical equipment of heavy goods vehicles are to be considered on the basis of a thorough cost-benefit analysis.

([1]) OJ L 184, 14.7.2007, p. 25-28.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000862/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καλώδιο ενεργειακής διασύνδεσης Ισραήλ-Κύπρου-Ελλάδας

Σχέδιο που ανακοινώθηκε από τη ΔΕΗ-Quantum Energy με το όνομα «EuroAsia Interconnector» έχει ως σκοπό την ενεργειακή ένωση Ελλάδας-Κύπρου-Ισραήλ που στη συνέχεια θα συνδεθούν με το ευρωπαϊκό δίκτυο. Πρόκειται για το πλέον μεγαλεπήβολο έργο που θα έχει γίνει στον κόσμο τόσο σε ό,τι αφορά το μήκος του καλωδίου όσο και το βάθος που αυτό θα ποντισθεί.

Το μήκος του καλωδίου μεταξύ Κύπρου και Ισραήλ θα είναι 155 ναυτικά μίλια, μεταξύ Κύπρου και Κρήτης 320 ναυτικά μίλια και μεταξύ Κρήτης και Πελοποννήσου 65 ναυτικά μίλια, ενώ το μέγιστο βάθος πόντισης του καλωδίου είναι τα 2 000 μέτρα και το καλώδιο, βάρους 60 κιλών ανά μέτρο, θα θαφτεί σε βάθος ενός μέτρου κάτω από τον πυθμένα της θάλασσας.

Το κόστος του έργου αναμένεται να αποσβεσθεί σε περίπου τέσσερα χρόνια. Το έργο έχει δυνατότητα μεταφοράς ενέργειας συνολικής ισχύος 2 000 MW, ενώ τα συμβαλλόμενα μέρη είναι η ΔΕΗ-Quantum Energy από την Κύπρο, η ΔΕΗ από την Ελλάδα και θεσμικοί φορείς από το Ισραήλ.

Βεβαίως, ο φόβος για το ενδεχόμενο τρομοκρατικών επιθέσεων από μεμονωμένες ομάδες ατόμων ή σαμποτάζ από γειτονικές χώρες μπορεί να αποθαρρύνει την εν λόγω επένδυση και να ακυρώσει όλα τα πλεονεκτήματα που αυτή δίνει στις εμπλεκόμενες χώρες. Επίσης, η ασφάλεια της παροχής ρεύματος θα βοηθήσει στην ενεργειακή απεξάρτηση με την ύπαρξη περισσότερων επιλογών ενεργειακής τροφοδοσίας για τη Κρήτη και τη Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία.

Η μεταφορά ενέργειας αναμένεται να ξεκινήσει από το Ισραήλ, το οποίο επιδιώκει την εξαγωγή ενέργειας που θα παράγει από το φυσικό αέριο. Παράλληλα, η Κύπρος θα μπορέσει να χρησιμοποιήσει το καλώδιο για εξαγωγή ενέργειας προς την Ευρώπη, όταν θα έχει τη δυνατότητα αυτή. Κατόπιν αυτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει για την κατασκευή του εν λόγω έργου και έχει ζητηθεί η συνεργασία της σε ζητήματα τεχνογνωσίας και μελλοντικής ασφαλείας;

2. Υπάρχουν πρότυπα ασφαλείας τα οποία οι εμπλεκόμενες χώρες θα μπορούσαν να ακολουθήσουν για τη βιωσιμότητα του έργου;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η ηλεκτρική διασύνδεση «EuroAsia interconnector» θα μπορούσε δυνητικώς να συμβάλει στην ολοκλήρωση της εσωτερικής αγοράς και στην επίλυση του προβλήματος ενέργειας των νησιών. Ωστόσο, θα πρέπει να εκπονηθεί προσεκτικά μια μελέτη περιβαλλοντικής, τεχνικής και εμπορικής σκοπιμότητας.

Ως προς το δεύτερο ερώτημα, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει επαρκείς και λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες για το έργο αυτό, ώστε να προσφέρει συμβουλές σχετικά με τους εφαρμοστέους κανόνες ή κανονισμούς.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000862/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Cable for Israel-Cyprus-Greece energy link-up

A plan announced by DEH-Quantum Energy entitled 'EuroAsia Interconnector' aims at establishing an energy link-up between Greece, Cyprus and Israel, to be connected subsequently to the European grid. It is 'the most ambitious project in the world so far, both in terms of the cable's length, and in terms of the installation depth'.

The length of the cable between Cyprus and Israel will be 155 nautical miles, between Cyprus and Crete 320 nautical miles and between Crete and the Peloponnese 65 nautical miles. The maximum installation depth of the cable will be 2 000 metres and the cable, weighing 60 kilos per metre, will be buried one metre below the sea bed.

It is anticipated that the cost of the project will be recovered in approximately four years. The project will have the capacity to transmit a total of 2 000 megawatts of energy, the contracting parties being DEI-Quantum Energy from Cyprus, DEI from Greece and the Israeli authorities.

Of course fear of possible terrorist attacks by isolated individual groups or sabotage by neighbouring states could function as a disincentive to the investment in question and nullify the advantages offered by the project to the countries involved. However, a secure electricity supply will favour energy independence, with the existence of a wider range of energy options for Crete and the Republic of Cyprus.

Energy transmission is expected to start with Israel, which is seeking to export the energy it will produce from natural gas. At the same time Cyprus will be able to utilise the cable to export energy to Europe, when it acquires that capacity.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the construction of the work in question and has its collaboration been sought in relation to questions of technical expertise and future security?

2. Are there security models that could be followed by the countries involved, in the interest of the project's viability?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

The EuroAsia interconnector could potentially contribute to the completion of the internal market and to solving the problem of energy islands. However, an environmental, technical and commercial feasibility study should be carefully conducted.

On the second question, the Commission does not have sufficient detailed information on this project to advice about applicable standards or rules.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000863/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Φόβος για κλιμάκωση των συγκρούσεων στη Νιγηρία

Στη Νιγηρία δεν έχει τέλος η τρομοκρατία που βιώνουν οι Χριστιανοί πολίτες της χώρας, οι οποίοι θρηνούν ήδη μεγάλο αριθμό νεκρών. Η δράση της μουσουλμανικής αίρεσης Μπόκο Χαράμ προκαλεί ένα διαρκές αιματοκύλισμα και οι ανταπαντήσεις πρέπει να θεωρούνται αναπόφευκτο αποτέλεσμα.

Παράλληλα, πληθαίνουν οι φωνές που μιλάνε ανοιχτά για το ξέσπασμα ενός εμφυλίου πολέμου μεγάλης κλίμακας.

Το γεγονός ότι η Νιγηρία αποτελεί τη πολυπληθέστερη αφρικανική χώρα δημιουργεί πολλούς φόβους, ευρύτερης ανάφλεξης στην περιοχή.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

1) Σε ποιές κινήσεις έχει προβεί και σχεδιάζει να προβεί για να βοηθήσει στην αποτροπή της κλιμάκωσης των διαθρησκευτικών-διεθνοτικών συγκρούσεων στη Νιγηρία;

2) Υπάρχει σχέδιο δράσης, το οποίο συστήνει στα κράτη μέλη να ακολουθήσουν για να βοηθήσουν στην αποτροπή της ευρύτερης σύγκρουσης;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιουλίου 2012)

Όπως επισημαίνουν τα Αξιότιμα Μέλη, οι συνθήκες ασφαλείας στη Νιγηρία, ειδικά στη βορειοανατολική περιοχή της χώρας, προκαλεί μεγάλη ανησυχία.

Η Νιγηρία στηρίζει πλήρως τη θρησκευτική ελευθερία, η οποία κατοχυρώνεται στο σύνταγμα της χώρας. Είναι γεγονός ότι ορισμένες από τις τρομοκρατικές επιθέσεις μπορούν να θεωρηθούν ως στοχευμένες κατά των χριστιανών με σκοπό να επιδεινωθούν οι εντάσεις και, επιπλέον, να επιτευχθεί κάλυψη από τα μέσα ενημέρωσης. Ωστόσο, είναι σημαντικό να σημειωθεί ότι οι πρόσφατες σοβαρές επιθέσεις της Μπόκο Χαράμ στο Κάνο δεν είχαν ως στόχο χριστιανούς αλλά τις κρατικές αρχές. Επιπλέον, οι παρατηρητές συμφωνούν ότι η πλειοψηφία των πολλών θυμάτων της Μπόκο Χαράμ στο Κάνο ήταν μουσουλμάνοι.

Η ΕΕ και η Νιγηρία έχουν τακτικές επαφές, οι οποίες εντατικοποιούνται.

Πιο πρόσφατα, διεξήχθη υπουργική σύνοδος Νιγηρίας-ΕΕ στην Αμπούτζα στις 8 Φεβρουαρίου 2012. Ο δανός υπουργός εξωτερικών, κ. Villy Soevndal, εκπροσώπησε την ΥΕ/ΑΠ Ashton. Θέματα ασφάλειας και συνεργασίας στην περιοχή συζητήθηκαν εκτενώς. Συμφωνήθηκε να οργανωθεί τακτικός τοπικός διάλογος για θέματα ειρήνης, σταθερότητας και ασφάλειας. Συμφωνήθηκε επίσης να προσληφθούν εμπειρογνώμονες με στόχο να προσδιοριστεί ένα πιθανό σχέδιο δράσης και να ενισχυθεί η συνεργασία στον τομέα της καταπολέμησης της τρομοκρατίας, ενώ παράλληλα να αναπροσανατολιστούν αρκετά σχέδια της ΕΕ στη Νιγηρία προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστούν καλύτερα οι βαθύτερες αιτίες των προκλήσεων σχετικά με την ασφάλεια στη βόρεια περιοχή της χώρας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000863/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Fear of the conflict in Nigeria escalating

In Nigeria, there is no end to the terrorism experienced by the country's Christian community, which is already mourning a large number of dead. The activity of the Muslim Boko Haram sect is causing endless bloodshed and reprisals must be considered inevitable.

At the same time, open talk of large-scale civil war is spreading.

The fact that Nigeria is the most heavily populated country in Africa is giving rise to fears of more widespread conflict in the region.

In view of this:

1. What action has the High Representative taken and does she intend to take to help prevent any escalation of the inter-religious, inter-racial clashes in Nigeria?

2. Does she recommend that the Member States follow any particular plan of action to help prevent the conflict from spreading?

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

As the Honourable Members point out the security situation in Nigeria, particularly in the North East of the country, is a cause for considerable concern.

Nigeria is committed to religious freedom, which is enshrined in the country's constitution. It is correct that some of the terrorist attacks can be understood as directed against Christians with the intention of exacerbating tensions and also to gain media coverage. However, it is important to note that the recent major attacks by Boko Haram in Kano did not target Christians, but the state authorities. Furthermore, observers agree that most of Boko Haram's many victims in Kano were Muslims.

The EU and Nigeria have regular contacts and they are intensifying.

Most recently, a Nigeria-EU Ministerial meeting took place in Abuja on 8 February 2012. The Danish Foreign Minister, Mr Villy Soevndal, represented HRVP Ashton. Security issues and cooperation in this area were discussed extensively. It was agreed to establish a regular local dialogue on peace, stability and security. It was also agreed to engage experts with a view to identifying a possible action plan and to enhance the cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism, while at the same time re-orienting several EU projects in Nigeria in order to better address the root causes of the security challenges in the North of the country.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000864/12
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Πολιτικές διώξεις στην Αλβανία

Το Εφετείο της Κορυτσάς επέβαλλε καταδικαστική απόφαση στον πρόεδρο της Ομόνοιας Περιφέρειας Κορυτσάς και μέλος του προεδρείου του κόμματος ΕΕΜΜ-MEGA, Ναούμ Ντίσιο.

Σύμφωνα με την απόφαση ο Ναούμ Ντίσιος καταδικάστηκε ένα χρόνο φυλάκιση χωρίς αναστολή διότι πριν ο κατηγορούμενος είχε ρίξει τσιμέντο στο χώρο πλησίον του Ιερού Ναού της Κοιμήσεως της Θεοτόκου προκειμένου να δημιουργήσει σκαλοπάτια στο μονοπάτι που οδηγεί στο Μνημείο δύο Ελλήνων πεσόντων στρατιωτών κατά τον Ελληνο-ιταλικό πόλεμο, που αναπαύονται εκεί από τον Νοέμβριο του 1940.

Η απόφαση του Εφετείου να μην αναστείλει την ποινή της φυλάκισης ενός έτους, προκαλεί έκπληξη, αφού για μία περίπτωση πλημμελήματος, όπως άλλωστε κρίθηκε, δίνεται συνήθως αναστολή. Ο Ναούμ Ντίσιος είναι υποχρεωμένος μέχρι σήμερα το πρωί (13-01) να παρουσιαστεί στην τοπική φυλακή ώστε να εκτίσει ετήσια ποινή για ένα πλημμέλημα. Σύμφωνα με το Ντίσιο τα κριτήρια είναι καθαρά πολιτικά. Παράλληλα, το κλίμα στην Αλβανία επιδεινώνεται διαρκώς απέναντι στις μειονότητες και το κλίμα φαίνεται ότι επηρεάζει και τις δικαστικές αποφάσεις.

Ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

Τί προτίθεται να πράξει προκειμένου το δικαστικό σύστημα της Αλβανίας να μην επηρεάζεται από πολιτικά και εθνοτικά κριτήρια;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν δύναται να σχολιάσει μεμονωμένες υποθέσεις και δικαστικές αποφάσεις. Ο σεβασμός του κράτους δικαίου αποτελεί βασικό στοιχείο των πολιτικών κριτηρίων της Κοπεγχάγης, τα οποία πρέπει να πληροί η Αλβανία, ως χώρα που φιλοδοξεί να ενταχθεί στην ΕΕ. Στην γνώμη της για την αίτηση της Αλβανίας για την ένταξή στην ΕΕ, που δημοσιεύθηκε τον Νοέμβριο του 2010, η Επιτροπή εντόπισε δώδεκα βασικούς τομείς προτεραιότητας που θα πρέπει να ικανοποιεί η χώρα για να προταθεί η έναρξη ενταξιακών διαπραγματεύσεων. Μέρος των βασικών αυτών προτεραιοτήτων είναι η ενίσχυση του κράτους δικαίου με τη θέσπιση και εφαρμογή μεταρρυθμιστικής στρατηγικής για τον δικαστικό τομέα, εξασφαλίζοντας την ανεξαρτησία, την αποτελεσματικότητα και τη λογοδοσία των δικαστικών θεσμών.

Η Επιτροπή παρέχει βοήθεια στην Αλβανία στο πλαίσιο του σχεδίου για την εξυγίανση του αλβανικού δικαστικού συστήματος EURALIUS (Ευρωπαϊκή αποστολή βοήθειας για το αλβανικό δικαστικό σύστημα). Το σχέδιο αυτό εφαρμόζεται σε συνεχή και προοδευτική βάση από τον Ιούνιο του 2005 και καλύπτει κυρίως: τη μεταρρύθμιση και τον εκσυγχρονισμό του δικαστικού συστήματος, της διοίκησης των δικαστηρίων, του νομικού πλαισίου, της ποινικής δικαιοσύνης και της συμμετοχής στη δικαιοσύνη.

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί την κατάσταση όσον αφορά το κράτος δικαίου, καθώς και τον σεβασμό και την προστασία των μειονοτήτων στην Αλβανία και θα παρουσιάσει την αξιολόγησή της σχετικά με την συμμόρφωση της Αλβανίας με τις απαιτήσεις που ισχύουν στους τομείς αυτούς, στην έκθεση προόδου του 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000864/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Political persecution in Albania

The Koritsa Court of Appeal has delivered a guilty verdict with regard to Naum Dishon, head of the Koritsa district 'Omonia' organisation and member of the MEGA-EEMM executive.

He has received a one-year unconditional prison term for pouring cement in an area close to the Church of the Assumption with the intention of making steps on the path leading up to the monument of two Greek soldiers who fell during the war between Greece and Italy and whose bodies have been resting there since November 1940.

The decision of the Court of Appeal to impose an unconditional one-year prison sentence came as a surprise, a suspended sentence being the standard penalty for what is regarded as a misdemeanour. Naum Dishon has until this morning (13 January) to present himself at the local jail to commence his one-year sentence for this offence. Mr Dishon himself takes the view that the judgment was politically motivated and it would appear that court judgments are in general being affected by the climate of growing hostility towards minorities in Albania.

In view of this:

What action does the High Representative intend to take to ensure that the Albanian judicial system is not influenced by political and ethnic considerations?

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

The Commission cannot comment on individual cases and court decisions. Respect for the rule of law is an essential element of the Copenhagen political criteria which Albania, as a country aspiring to join the EU, must comply with. In its Opinion on Albania's EU membership application, published in November 2010, the Commission identified twelve key priority areas to be fulfilled by the country before it can recommend the opening of accession negotiations. Strengthening rule of law through adoption and implementation of a reform strategy for the judiciary, ensuring the independence, efficiency and accountability of judicial institutions, is part of these key priorities.

The Commission is providing assistance to Albania through the project on Consolidation of the Albanian Justice System EURALIUS (European Assistance Mission to the Albanian Justice System). This project is being implemented continuously in several phases since June 2005 and covers mainly: reform and modernisation of the justice system, court administration, the legal framework, criminal justice and participation in justice.

The Commission monitors the situation as regards rule of law and respect for and protection of minorities in Albania and will present its assessment of Albania's compliance with requirements in these fields in the 2012 Progress Report.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000865/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διεθνής ρόλος του ευρώ

Η προσπάθεια ενίσχυσης του ευρώ με την παράλληλη αύξηση των αποθεματικών στο κοινό νόμισμα θα βοηθήσει στην ενίσχυση του εμπορίου των ευρωπαϊκών χωρών και της θέσης τους στο διεθνές γίγνεσθαι. Οπότε θα ήταν ευχής έργον να υιοθετήσουν το ευρώ ή να διασυνδεθούν με αυτό χώρες περί την Ευρώπη ή άλλες τρίτες χώρες.

Επίσης, το ενδεχόμενο μελλοντικής αστάθειας του δολαρίου λόγω των μεγάλων αποθεματικών σε δολάρια που κατέχουν τρίτες χώρες, αυξάνει την ανασφάλεια διεθνώς. Επιπροσθέτως, το ενδεχόμενο αυξημένης έντασης μεταξύ των ΗΠΑ και πετρελαιοπαραγωγών χωρών μπορεί να οδηγήσει σε εξίσου μεγάλες (και απότομες) αλλαγές που θα πλήξουν τη σταθερότητα που υφίσταται με τη διεθνή κυριαρχία του δολαρίου.

Μετά τις εξεγέρσεις στον αραβικό κόσμο, υπάρχει ένα παράθυρο ευκαιρίας για την προώθηση του ρόλου του ευρώ και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στην περιοχή, με το σκοπό να καταστεί η Μεσόγειος μια «ευρωπαϊκή λίμνη».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάρχουν στοιχεία που να καταδεικνύουν τη δημοφιλία του ευρώ και το μέγεθος της υιοθέτησής του από τρίτες χώρες;

2. Υπάρχουν στοιχεία σε σχέση με τη χρήση των βασικών νομισμάτων (ευρώ-δολάριο-αγγλική λίρα-γιεν) στις διεθνείς συναλλαγές προκειμένου να συναχθούν συμπεράσματα για την τύχη του ευρώ ως αποθεματικού νομίσματος;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαρτίου 2012)

Το μερίδιο του ευρώ στα διεθνή συναλλαγματικά αποθέματα αντιστοιχούσε περίπου στο ένα τέταρτο των συναλλαγματικών αποθεμάτων για τα οποία το νόμισμα είναι γνωστό από την εισαγωγή του ευρώ. Στην αρχή της παγκόσμιας χρηματοπιστωτικής και οικονομικής κρίσης κατά το 2ο τρίμηνο του 2007, το μερίδιο του ευρώ ήταν 26,4 %. Στη συνέχεια, το μερίδιό του αυξήθηκε σε 29,3 % (υψηλότερο όριο οκταετίας) το 2ο τρίμηνο του 2010 (σε σταθερές συναλλαγματικές ισοτιμίες). Τα επόμενα τρίμηνα, το μερίδιο του ευρώ μειώθηκε και αντιστοιχούσε σε 25,7 % το τρίτο τρίμηνο του 2011. Η ονομαστική αξία των ευρώ που τηρούνται σε συναλλαγματικά αποθέματα μειώθηκε από το ρεκόρ των 1,5 τρισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ το δεύτερο τρίμηνο σε 1,4 τρισεκατομμύρια ευρώ το τρίτο τρίμηνο. Επιπλέον, το ευρώ αντιπροσωπεύει περίπου το ένα πέμπτο της ημερήσιας αξίας των συναλλαγών των αγορών συναλλάγματος και το ένα τέταρτο στις διεθνείς ομολογιακές. Η τιμολόγηση των εξαγωγών αγαθών και εισαγωγών αγαθών της ζώνης του ευρώ σε χώρες εκτός της ζώνης του ευρώ γίνεται κατά κύριο λόγο σε ευρώ (68 % των εξαγωγών, 54 % των εισαγωγών), ενώ παρατηρείται μια τάση αύξησης της τιμολόγησης σε ευρώ. Η χρήση του ευρώ από χώρες εκτός της ΕΕ θεωρείται ως εξωγενής. Ούτε αποτρέπεται ούτε ενθαρρύνεται. Ο στόχος των ευρωπαϊκών κεντρικών τραπεζών (ΕΚΤ) για τη σταθερότητα των τιμών αφορά μόνο τα κράτη μέλη που συμμετέχουν στην Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση.

Σήμερα, τα καθεστώτα συναλλαγματικών ισοτιμιών των χωρών εκτός της ζώνης του ευρώ έχουν ισχυρή γεωγραφική και θεσμική υποστήριξη. Με την εξαίρεση των χωρών που συμμετέχουν στο Μηχανισμό Συναλλαγματικών Ισοτιμιών ΙΙ (ΜΣΙ ΙΙ), η απόφαση να χρησιμοποιείται το ευρώ ως νόμισμα πρόσδεσης είναι μια μονομερής απόφαση και δεν συνεπάγεται καμία δέσμευση εκ μέρους της ΕΚΤ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000865/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: The international role of the euro

The effort to strengthen the euro by increasing reserves of the common currency will enhance trade between the European countries and upgrade their international position. It would consequently be desirable for countries neighbouring Europe or other third countries to adopt the euro or to be linked to it.

Moreover, the prospect of future instability of the US dollar due to the large US dollar reserves in the possession of third countries is increasing the sense of insecurity worldwide. Additionally, the possibility of an escalation in tension between the US and the oil-producing countries could foreshadow equally great (and abrupt) changes that will affect the existing stability associated with the international predominance of the dollar.

Following the riots in the Arab world there is a window of opportunity to promote the role of the euro and the European Union in the wider region, with a view to converting the Mediterranean zone into a 'European lake'.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say whether there is evidence suggesting that the euro is a popular currency and whether any third countries are willing to adopt it?

2. Is there evidence related to the use of the main currencies (euro-dollar-sterling-yen) in international transactions that might assist in drawing conclusions about the future of the euro as a reserve currency?

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

The euro's share in international reserves has roughly been a quarter of foreign currency reserves for which the currency is known since the introduction of the euro. At the starting point of the global financial and economic crisis in Q2 2007, the euro's share was at 26.4 %. Thereafter, its share increased to an eight-year high of 29.3 % in Q2 2010 (at constant exchange rates). In subsequent quarters, the euro's share fell and was at 25.7 % in the third quarter of 2011. The nominal value of euro held in foreign currency reserves fell from a record high of EUR 1.5 trillion in the second quarter to EUR 1.4 trillion in the third quarter. Furthermore, the euro accounts for roughly one fifth in the daily turnover of foreign exchange markets and a quarter in international debt issuance. The invoicing of goods exports and goods imports of the euro area to non-euro area countries is primarily done in euro (68 % of exports, 54 % of imports) and there is a tendency towards increased invoicing in euro. The use of the euro by non-EU countries is taken as exogenous. It is neither promoted nor dissuaded. The European Central Bank's (EBC) objective for price stability only pertains to Member States that are part of the Economic and Monetary Union.

Currently, the exchange rate regimes of countries outside the euro area have a strong geographical and institutional underpinning. With the exception of those countries participating in exchange rate mechanism II (ERM II), the decision to use the euro as an anchor currency is a unilateral decision and does not involve any commitment on the part of the ECB.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000866/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στενά του Ορμούζ και του Σουέζ

Τα Στενά του Ορμούζ και του Σουέζ παίζουν σημαντικότατο ρόλο στο διεθνές εμπόριο αγαθών και πετρελαίου. Έτσι, όλες οι ευρωπαϊκές χώρες βιώνουν μια διαρκή αβεβαιότητα λόγω του γεγονότος ότι η αστάθεια στη περιοχή μπορεί ανά πάσα στιγμή να μπλοκάρει το εμπόριο, εκτοξεύοντας τις τιμές στα ύψη.

Η οικονομική σταθερότητα και η ελευθερία του εμπορίου είναι δεδηλωμένοι κοινοί σκοποί για όλους τους Ευρωπαίους.

Το Συμβούλιο αποφάσισε εμπάργκο κατά του Ιράν και η απόφαση αυτή δημιουργεί σε ορισμένα εκ των κρατών μελών τεράστιο πρόβλημα στη κάλυψη των ενεργειακών αναγκών (Ελλάδα, Ιταλία, Γαλλία, Ισπανία).

Γίνεται σαφές ότι περισσότερο από ποτέ πρέπει να εξασφαλιστεί η απρόσκοπτη ναυσιπλοΐα στην περιοχή των στενών για τη μεταφορά πετρελαίου από άλλες χώρες (Ιράκ, Κουβέιτ, Κατάρ, Μπαχρέιν, Ηνωμένα Αραβικά Εμιράτα).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Εξετάζει εναλλακτικά σενάρια για την εξασφάλιση της ελεύθερης διέλευσης των αγαθών, με ανταγωνιστικό τρόπο πέραν των στενών του Ορμούζ και του Σουέζ;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαρτίου 2012)

Τα στενά του Χορμούζ αντιπροσωπεύουν μείζονα ναυτιλιακή οδό διέλευσης για το αργό πετρέλαιο και τα πετρελαιοειδή που προέρχονται από το σύνολο των χωρών του Κόλπου, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Ιράν. Όλες οι χώρες της περιοχής, χωρίς εξαίρεση, έχουν ζωτικό συμφέρον να διατηρούν ανοικτή αυτή την οδό. Επιπλέον, ολοκληρώνεται ένας νέος σωληναγωγός μέσω των Ηνωμένων Αραβικών Εμιράτων προς την ανατολική ακτή της αραβικής χερσονήσου, η δε Σαουδική Αραβία διαθέτει επίσης σωληναγωγό που φθάνει στην Ερυθρά Θάλασσα, προσφέροντας εναλλακτική οδό.

Η διώρυγα όμως του Σουέζ διαδραματίζει περιορισμένο ρόλο ως οδός εφοδιασμού της ΕΕ με πετρέλαιο. Αυτό οφείλεται στο γεγονός ότι η δίοδος μέσω της διώρυγας δεν είναι κατάλληλη για τα μεγαλύτερα δεξαμενόπλοια τα οποία σήμερα χρησιμοποιούνται από τον κλάδο.

Η εμπορία του αργού πετρελαίου διεξάγεται εν γένει στην παγκόσμια διεθνή αγορά. Σε περίπτωση μη διαθεσιμότητας ποσοτήτων από συγκεκριμένο προμηθευτή, οι εμπορικές εταιρίες εντοπίζουν εναλλακτικές πηγές προμήθειας. Εναλλακτικές λύσεις μπορούν να δώσουν προμήθειες από τη Λιβύη, τον Καναδά, τη Δυτική Αφρική, τη Βραζιλία, την Κασπία Θάλασσα και προμηθευτές πετρελαίου και αερίου από άλλες γεωγραφικές περιοχές. Για να αντιμετωπιστεί τυχόν διακοπή της τροφοδότησης με πετρέλαιο θα μπορούσαν επίσης να χρησιμοποιηθούν τα αποθέματα πετρελαίου έκτακτης ανάγκης που διατηρούν τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ και σήμερα είναι ισοδύναμα με επίπεδο κατανάλωσης 120 ημερών.

Η Επιτροπή δεν σχεδιάζει επί του παρόντος τυχόν επιπρόσθετα μέτρα ειδικώς για τα στενά του Χορμούζ ή τη διώρυγα του Σουέζ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000866/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: The Strait of Hormuz and Suez

The Strait of Hormuz and Suez play an extremely important role in international trade in oil and other commodities, and all European countries are in a perennial state of insecurity owing to the fact that instability in the region could at any moment disrupt trade, sending prices through the roof. Economic stability and freedom of trade are declared common goals for all Europeans.

The Council's decision to impose an embargo on Iran is now making it immensely difficult for certain Member States (Greece, Italy, France, Spain) to cover their energy needs.

It has become clear that more than ever it is necessary to secure unimpeded navigation in the region of the Strait for transport of oil from other countries (Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates).

In view of this:

Is the Commission examining alternatives to the Strait of Hormuz and Suez for the unimpeded passage of goods, on competitive terms?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

The Strait of Hormuz represents a major shipping route for crude oil and petroleum products for all Gulf countries including Iran. All countries in the region without exception have a vital interest in keeping this route open. Additionally, a new pipeline through the United Arab Emirates towards the East Coast of the Arab Peninsula is being completed and Saudi Arabia also has a pipeline leading to the Red Sea, providing alternative routing.

The Suez Canal however plays a limited role as supply route of oil to the EU. This is due to the fact that the passage through the Canal is not suited for the larger oil tankers which are currently used by the industry.

Crude oil is generally traded on the global international market. In case of unavailability of supplies from a particular supplier, alternative sources of supply are identified by commercial companies. Libyan, Canadian, West African, Brazilian, Caspian and other regions' oil and gas supplies can provide alternatives. Emergency oil stocks in EU Member States, currently at a level equivalent to 120 days of consumption, could also be used to face any oil supply disruption.

The Commission does not currently envisage any additional measures specifically for the Straight of Hormuz or the Suez Canal.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000867/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κονδύλια στήριξης των ανέργων στην Ελλάδα

Καταγγελίες φέρουν την Ελλάδα να μην έχει εκμεταλλευτεί στο έπακρο τις δυνατότητες που δίνει το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό, χρηματοδοτεί μέσω του ΕΣΠΑ κοινωνικές δράσεις για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας. Ο λόγος για τα κονδύλια του ταμείου της ΕΕ, που χρηματοδοτεί το ΕΣΠΑ για τις κοινωνικές του δράσεις (Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο). Επί συνόλου κονδυλίων 4,36 δις. ευρώ, έχουν διατεθεί 965,01 εκατ. ευρώ, διαμορφώνοντας το ποσοστό απορρόφησης στο 22,11 %.

Στην Ελλάδα, με την ανεργία να κυμαίνεται στο 18 %, η άμεση αξιοποίηση των πόρων του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου είναι απαραίτητη για την ανακούφιση των Ελλήνων ανέργων και τη μελλοντική επαγγελματική τους αποκατάσταση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχουν κατατεθεί σχέδια από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για την αξιοποίηση των κονδυλίων σε κάποιο βάθος χρόνου;

2. Δύναται να αναφέρει σε ποιο χρονικό διάστημα θα υπάρξει απώλεια του υπόλοιπου ποσοστού των κονδυλίων;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Μαρτίου 2012)

1. Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει υποβάλει προγράμματα για τη μακροπρόθεσμη χρησιμοποίηση των πόρων των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων σύμφωνα με τα επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα του Εθνικού Στρατηγικού Πλαισίου Αναφοράς για την περίοδο 2007-13. Η Επιτροπή και οι ελληνικές αρχές εξετάζουν τακτικά την πρόοδο που σημειώνεται όσον αφορά την εφαρμογή αυτών των προγραμμάτων, προκειμένου να διαπιστώνεται αν η χρηματοδότηση αντιμετωπίζει τις σωστές προκλήσεις και, όπου υπάρχει ανάγκη, να προτείνεται αναπροσανατολισμός των κεφαλαίων, για παράδειγμα στην υποστήριξη της απασχόλησης των νέων.

2. Τα κεφάλαια της προγραμματικής περιόδου 2007-13 είναι διαθέσιμα για αναλήψεις υποχρεώσεων μέχρι το τέλος του 2013 και για πληρωμή μέχρι το τέλος του 2015· για τη δεύτερη περίπτωση, ισχύουν οι διατάξεις του γενικού κανονισμού των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων για την αυτόματη αποδέσμευση [1] (δηλαδή την αποδέσμευση οποιουδήποτε μέρους μιας ανάληψης υποχρεώσεων του προϋπολογισμού σε ένα επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα για το οποίο δεν υποβλήθηκε αίτηση πληρωμής στην Επιτροπή εντός 2 ή 3 ετών).

Η Επιτροπή και η ειδική ομάδα δράσης για την Ελλάδα υποστηρίζουν και θα υποστηρίξουν περαιτέρω τις προσπάθειες των εθνικών αρχών για επιτάχυνση της απορρόφησης της οικονομικής συνδρομής της ΕΕ για έργα που στοχεύουν στην καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας. Με δεδομένο το υψηλό ποσοστό ανεργίας, ούτε η Ελλάδα, ούτε η Επιτροπή έχουν την πολυτέλεια να απολέσουν κεφάλαια της ΕΕ.

[1] Άρθρο 93 παράγραφος 1 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου, της 11ης Ιουλίου 2006, ΕΕ L 210 της 31.7.2006, σ. 65.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000867/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: Unemployment funding in Greece

Greece has been accused of not sufficiently utilizing the potential of the European Social Fund, through the NSRF, to finance social actions addressing the issue of unemployment. The European Social Fund finances the social action of the NSRF. Out of a total EUR 4.36 billion, about EUR 965.01 million was allocated, a take-up rate of 22.11 %.

In Greece, where unemployment is in the region of 18 %, utilization of direct funding made available through the European Social Fund is indispensable for the relief of unemployed Greeks and for their professional future.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Has the Greek Government submitted any plans for the long-term utilisation of these funds?

— When will the remaining funds cease to be available?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

1. The Greek Government has submitted plans for the long-term utilisation of Structural Fund resources under the National Strategic Reference Framework operational programmes for 2007-2013. The Commission and the Greek authorities regularly examine progress made in implementing such programmes with a view to determining whether funding addresses the right challenges and, where necessary, to proposing that funds be rechanneled, for example, into supporting youth employment.

2. Funds under the 2007-2013 programming period are available for commitment until the end of 2013 and for payment until the end of 2015, the latter being subject to the provisions of the Structural Funds' General Regulation on automatic decommitment ([1]) (i.e. decommitment of any part of a budget commitment in an operational programme for which an application for payment has not been sent to the Commission within two or three years).

The Commission and its Task Force for Greece are supporting and will further support the national authorities in their efforts to speed up the absorption of EU financial assistance for projects targeted to fighting unemployment. Given the high rate of unemployment, neither Greece nor the Commission can afford the luxury of losing EU funds.

([1]) Article 93(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 65.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000868/12
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(14 februari 2012)

Betreft: Stijgend aantal koperdiefstallen in de spoorsector

Het aantal koperdiefstallen in de spoorsector neemt al enkele jaren toe, voornamelijk door de stijgende prijs van koper en de economische crisis. De Belgische infrastructuurbeheerder, Infrabel, telde in 2011 maar liefst 751 kabeldiefstallen. Dit zorgde voor een totale vertraging voor de reizigers van 518 uur en een kostenpost van meer dan 2 miljoen euro om de bedrading te vernieuwen. Tevens slagen de dieven erin om per diefstal steeds meer koper te stelen.

Ook andere lidstaten, zoals Nederland, Groot-Brittannië en Frankrijk, geven aan dat koperdiefstallen voor steeds meer problemen zorgen in hun land. De sector vermoedt dat er internationaal georganiseerde bendes aan het werk zijn. Ze stelen koper en proberen de buit over de grens te verkopen aan koperhandelaars. Daarom lijkt grensoverschrijdende actie aangewezen.

In haar antwoord op vraag E-008787/2011 gaf de Commissie aan dat een informeel netwerk ter bestrijding van door mobiele dadergroepen gepleegde misdrijven operationeel is sinds 28 september 2011, zoals bepaald in de Raadsconclusies van 2 en 3 december 2010.

1. Kan de Commissie meer uitleg geven over de werkzaamheden, en meer specifiek inzake koperdiefstallen, van dit informeel netwerk ter bestrijding van door mobiele dadergroepen gepleegde misdrijven? Wat heeft het netwerk reeds bereikt? Is de Commissie tevreden met de bereikte resultaten?

2. Beschikt de Commissie reeds over vergelijkende cijfers over het aantal diefstallen in de verschillende lidstaten?

3. Is de Commissie van plan om op Europees niveau nog andere actie te ondernemen om dit probleem te verhelpen? En zo ja, wat is de Commissie precies van plan en wat is de timing?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(8 maart 2012)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar het antwoord op vraag E-008787/2011 van 26 oktober 2011 ([1]). Wat betreft de resultaten van het netwerk inzake de bestuurlijke aanpak, dat zich eveneens zal richten op rondtrekkende criminele bendes (waaronder diefstal van metalen), kan de Commissie nog geen verslag uitbrengen over resultaten aangezien het netwerk pas in september 2011 is opgericht. Zij wenst echter te benadrukken dat het netwerk vooral tot doel heeft de uitwisseling van goede praktijken te vergemakkelijken. In het kader van de beleidscyclus „Harmony" vergroot EUROPOL zijn knowhow over rondtrekkende criminele bendes. Dit zou in de toekomst EU-lidstaten kunnen helpen betere operationele resultaten te bereiken met betrekking tot dit soort grensoverschrijdende criminaliteit.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000868/12
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: The rising incidence of copper theft in the railway sector

The incidence of copper theft in the railway sector has been increasing for several years now, mainly because of the rising price of copper and the economic crisis. The Belgian infrastructure manager, Infrabel, recorded as many as 751 cases of cable theft in 2011. This caused a total delay for the passengers of 518 hours, and the cost of replacing the wiring amounted to more than EUR 2 million. The thieves also manage to steal more and more copper at a time.

Other Member States, for example, the Netherlands, Great Britain and France, also report that copper theft presents an increasing problem for them. The sector suspects that this is the work of international organised criminal gangs. The gangs steal copper and try to sell their loot to copper merchants across the border. This is why it seems appropriate that there should be cross-border action.

In its answer to Question E-008787/2011, the Commission indicated that an informal network to prevent crime being committed by mobile criminal groups had been operational since 28 September 2011, as provided for in the Council conclusions of 2 and 3 December 2010.

1. Can the Commission enlarge upon the work of this network to prevent crime being committed by mobile criminal groups, and more specifically its work in relation to copper thefts? What has the network achieved so far? Is the Commission satisfied with its results?

2. Does the Commission already have in its possession comparative figures for the number of thefts in the various Member States?

3. Is the Commission planning to undertake any other action at European level to resolve this problem? If so, what exactly is the Commission planning to do and within what time-frame?

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

The Commission would like to refer to the reply it provided to Question E-008787/2011 on 26.10.2011 ([1]). As regards the output of the network on administrative approach, which will also focus on crimes committed by itinerant gangs (including metal theft), the network was only established in September 2011 and the Commission is thus not in a position to report any outputs yet. It would nevertheless like to underline that the network is above all meant to facilitate the exchange of best practices. Europol — in the context of the harmony policy cycle — is stepping up its know how on itinerant criminal gangs, which in time could help EU Member States in reaching better operational results against this type of cross border crimes.

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000869/12
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(2 februari 2012)

Betreft: Ongevallenstatistieken 2011

In 2001 stelde de Europese Commissie de doelstelling voorop om tegen 2010 het aantal verkeersslachtoffers te halveren. In 2010 werd het aantal dodelijke slachtoffers teruggebracht naar 30 800, een daling van 43 % ten opzichte van 2001. Een aanzienlijke vermindering, ook al werd de doelstelling niet gehaald. Daarom bevestigde de Commissie in 2011 opnieuw het voornemen om tegen 2020 het aantal verkeersslachtoffers te halveren. Op termijn wil de Commissie het aantal slachtoffers zelfs tot nul terugbrengen.

1. Heeft de Commissie cijfers over het aantal verkeersslachtoffers in 2011 in de Europese Unie?

2. Beschikt de Commissie over meer gedetailleerde cijfers per lidstaat? Indien ja, kan de Commissie aangeven welke lidstaten in de juiste richting evolueren en welke landen minder goed scoren?

3. Heeft de Commissie meer gedetailleerde cijfers over de oorzaken van de ongevallen en de betrokken voertuigen?

4. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfers met betrekking tot het aantal slachtoffers jonger dan 14 jaar en het aantal betrokken voetgangers en fietsers?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(9 maart 2012)

1. De Commissie verzamelt momenteel voorlopige gegevens met betrekking tot het aantal verkeersdoden voor 2011. Naar verwachting zullen de cijfers in het voorjaar van 2012 beschikbaar zijn en dan ook bekendgemaakt worden. Volgens voorlopige prognoses zal het aantal dodelijke verkeersslachtoffers in de EU een verdere lichte daling vertonen.

2. De Commissie maakt regelmatig gedetailleerde cijfers per lidstaat bekend die afkomstig zijn van de gegevensbank verkeersongelukken (CARE — Community database on Accidents on the Roads in Europe) en een scorebord waar per land het aantal verkeersdoden staat vermeld. Toegang tot dit scorebord is mogelijk via de volgende web-link:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/scoreboard_2011.pdf

Het momenteel beschikbare scorebord op basis van de geconsolideerde gegevens heeft betrekking op gegevens voor 2010.

3. De Comissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag P-0691/09 ([1]) en bevestigt dat er op basis van de beschikbare informatie geen reden is om aan te nemen dat zich veranderingen hebben voorgedaan in de oorzaken van ongevallen sedert dit antwoord werd gegegeven.

4. In 2010 vertegenwoordigden het aantal slachtoffers jonger dan 14 jaar 3 % van het totale aantal verkeersslachtoffers en het aantal voetgangers en fietsers respectievelijk 20 % en 7 %.

([1]) Beschikbaar op http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000869/12
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Accident statistics for 2011

In 2001, the European Commission set a target to halve the number of road deaths by 2010. In 2010, the number of fatalities had been reduced to 30 800 — a decrease of 43 % on 2001. This represents a significant reduction even though the target had not been reached. This is why, in 2011, the Commission reconfirmed its commitment to halving the number of road deaths by 2020. In time, the Commission even wants to reduce the number of fatalities to zero.

1. Does the Commission have the figures for the number of road fatalities in the European Union in 2011?

2. Does the Commission have more detailed figures per Member State? If so, can the Commission specify which Member States are evolving in the right direction and which score less well?

3. Does the Commission possess more detailed figures on the causes of accidents and the vehicles involved?

4. Does the Commission have figures for the number of victims under the age of 14 and the number of pedestrians and cyclists involved?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(9 March 2012)

1. The Commission is currently gathering the provisional data concerning the number of fatalities for 2011 which are expected to be available and published in spring 2012. According to the preliminary estimations, a further slight reduction of fatalities has taken place in the EU.

2. The Commission publishes regularly detailed figures per Member State from the European road accidents database CARE (Community database on Accidents on the Roads in Europe), as well as a scoreboard with country performances under following web-link: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/scoreboard_2011.pdf

The currently available scoreboard on the basis of the consolidated data refers to the 2010 data.

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-0691/09 ([1]) and confirms that there is no reason to believe on the basis of the information available that the causes of accidents have changed since this reply was given.

4. In 2010, the victims under the age of 14 represented 3 % of the total number and the number of pedestrians and cyclists involved represents 20 % and 7 %, respectively.

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/search.do.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000871/12
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(2. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Ausweisung von Asylbewerbern nach Syrien

Die anhaltende Gewalt in Syrien hat nicht nur zu einem Anstieg der Zahl der Flüchtlinge geführt, die in die Nachbarländer fliehen, sondern stellt auch die Ausweisung syrischer Asylbewerber nach Syrien durch die EU-Mitgliedstaaten infrage.

Kann die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin näher erläutern und benennen, welche EU-Mitgliedstaaten Syrien als sicheres Drittland oder als sicheres Herkunftsland eingestuft haben? Haben diese Mitgliedstaaten 2011/2012 Asylbewerber nach Syrien zurückgeschickt? Falls ja, welche Mitgliedstaaten haben dies getan, wann und in wie vielen Fällen?

Welche der EU-Mitgliedstaaten haben bilaterale Überstellungsverfahren/-abkommen mit Syrien? Welche von den Mitgliedstaaten, auf die dies zutrifft, halten sich an diese Vereinbarungen und weisen weiterhin Asylbewerber nach Syrien aus?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(3. Mai 2012)

Der Informationsaustausch zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten über ihre Asylpraxis in Bezug auf Syrien wird von der Kommission gegenwärtig über das EU-Netz für Asylpraktiker (EURASIL) erleichtert. Bisher haben die Mitgliedstaaten dem Netz nicht gemeldet, dass sie Syrien als sicheren Herkunftsstaat oder sicheren Drittstaat einstufen. Nach den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen tragen sie der derzeitigen Lage in Syrien offenbar Rechnung und stellen sicher, dass sie ihre Verpflichtungen aus den EU-Asylvorschriften und dem Völkerrecht einhalten.

Die Kommission wird die Situation weiter genau beobachten, um zu gewährleisten, dass der EU-Besitzstand im Asylbereich und insbesondere die Richtlinie über Asylverfahren ([1]) eingehalten werden. Die Richtlinie enthält Kriterien und Regeln, nach denen die Sicherheit eines Landes bewertet wird. Außerdem sollen die Mitgliedstaaten dafür Sorge tragen, dass die für Asylverfahren vorgenommene Einstufung eines Landes als sicher eine Person nicht daran hindert darzulegen, dass dieses Land in ihrem Fall nicht sicher ist, und dass das Recht auf Einlegen von Rechtsmitteln gegen eine Ablehnung des Asylantrags vorgesehen wird.

([1]) Richtlinie 2005/85/EG.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000871/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Expulsion of asylum-seekers to Syria

The ongoing violence in Syria has not only led to an increase in refugees to neighbouring countries, but also calls into question the expulsion of Syrian asylum-seekers to Syria by EU Member States.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative specify and name which EU Member States have listed Syria as a safe third country or safe country of origin? Have these Member States transferred asylum-seekers back to Syria in 2011/2012? If so, which of the Member States have done so, when and in how many cases?

Which of the EU Member States have bilateral transfer procedures/agreements with Syria? Of those that do, which Member States live up to these agreements and continue to expel asylum-seekers to Syria?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2012)

The Commission is currently facilitating exchange of information between Member States regarding their asylum practices in respect of Syria through the EU network of asylum practitioners (EURASIL). So far it has not been notified by Member States of the designation of Syria as a safe country of origin or a safe third country. From the information gathered it appears that Member States give due account to the current situation in Syria, in view of ensuring compliance with their obligations stemming from the EU *acquis* on asylum and international law.

The Commission will continue carefully to monitor the situation in view of ensuring compliance with the EU *acquis* on asylum and in particular with the Asylum Procedures Directive ([1]), which provides for criteria and rules to be taken into consideration in assessing the safety of a country. In addition, it is important that Member States ensure both that the presumption of safety of a country for the purposes of the asylum procedure does not preclude the individual from putting forward arguments to show that in his/her case the country is not safe, and that they provide the right to effective remedy against a negative decision for granting asylum.

([1]) 2005/85/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000872/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — L'ambasciata UE alle Barbados

In questi tempi di crisi, di austerità, di tagli alle spese cui sono obbligati un po' tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, dietro sollecitazione, per non dire imposizione, quando si tratta di Stati con elevato debito pubblico, della BCE e del direttorio franco-tedesco, la stampa periodica usa lo strumento dell'ironia e della denuncia nei confronti delle spese «bizzarre» che figurano nei bilanci dell'UE. Una delle bizzarrie più intriganti è rappresentata dal costo delle sue 137 ambasciate sparse per il mondo ed in particolare di quella delle Barbados con 44 addetti?

Può la Vicepresidente/Alta Rappresentante precisare quanto segue:

1. Quali funzioni svolgono i 44 funzionari assegnati all'ambasciata delle Barbados?

2. Quanti sono i funzionari assegnati alle ambasciate di New York, Tokio, Pechino, Nuova Delhi?

3. Nelle misure di austerità previste, figura anche l'eventuale riduzione del personale assegnato alle Barbados?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(12 aprile 2012)

1. La delegazione dell'UE alle Barbados si occupa delle relazioni con 10 paesi e territori, vale a dire gli Stati ACP Antigua e Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts e Nevis, Santa Lucia e Saint Vincent e Grenadine e i paesi e territori d'oltremare Anguilla, Montserrat e le Isole Vergini Britanniche.

I paesi dei Caraibi orientali sono Stati insulari di piccole dimensioni, vulnerabili e in via di sviluppo, firmatari dell'accordo di Cotonou tra l'UE e gli Stati ACP e dell'accordo di partenariato economico (APE), un accordo speciale per il commercio e l'integrazione regionale. La delegazione gestisce un importo annuale di circa 40 milioni di EUR per l' aiuto allo sviluppo, destinato principalmente a commercio, istruzione, sanità, ambiente e alle infrastrutture economiche e che riguarda anche la maggior parte dei programmi di cooperazione regionale per i Caraibi. Inoltre, la delegazione si occupa delle misure d'accompagnamento del protocollo sullo zucchero e delle misure d'accompagnamento nel settore delle banane, oltre a gestire stanziamenti speciali nell'ambito dello strumento Flex, destinati a compensare la perdita di introiti derivanti dall'esportazione di prodotti agricoli e minerari. La delegazione gestisce circa 250 milioni di EUR per le iniziative in corso.

Attualmente sono in servizio presso la delegazione 3 funzionari del servizio europeo per l'azione esterna, tra cui anche il capo delegazione, e 6 funzionari della Commissione. Il resto del personale è composto da agenti contrattuali e agenti locali.

2. Le delegazioni dell'UE sono composte da personale del servizio europeo per l'azione esterna e dei servizi della Commissione, entrambi suddivisi a loro volta in funzionari, agenti contrattuali e agenti locali. Alcune delegazioni dispongono inoltre di esperti nazionali distaccati inviati dagli Stati membri e di tirocinanti. Il numero totale delle persone impiegate, comprensivo del personale del SEAE (funzionari inclusi) e della Commissione, per le 4 delegazioni è il seguente:

New York: 61 in totale, di cui 23 funzionari del SEAE e 4 funzionari della Commissione;

Tokio: 59 in totale, di cui 9 funzionari del SEAE e 7 funzionari della Commissione;

Pechino: 138 in totale, di cui 9 funzionari del SEAE e 20 funzionari della Commissione;

Nuova Delhi: 95 in totale, di cui 8 funzionari del SEAE e 13 funzionari della Commissione.

3. Il SEAE collabora con i servizi della Commissione alla valutazione del carico di lavoro del personale della Commissione nelle delegazioni. Allo stesso tempo, il SEAE rivede la distribuzione del suo personale in modo da assicurare che tutte le delegazioni abbiano risorse sufficienti per far fronte ai nuovi compiti assegnati loro in base al trattato di Lisbona. In tale contesto, il SEAE sta valutando metodi di condivisione del personale su base regionale in modo da ottimizzare l'utilizzo di un numero limitato di addetti. La delegazione alle Barbados rappresenta un buon esempio di questa strategia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000872/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Delegation of the European Union to Barbados

In these times of crisis, austerity and spending cuts which have to be borne, to a greater or lesser extent, by all Member States of the European Union at the request — not to say (in the case of States with high levels in public debt) at the behest — of the ECB and two dominant Member States, France and Germany, magazine publications use a tone of irony and admonition when referring to 'strange' expenses appearing in EU. One of the most intriguing oddities concerns expenses related to the EU's 137 delegations around the world, especially the one in Barbados, which comprises 44 members of staff.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following:

1. What functions do the 44 officials assigned to the delegation in Barbados actually perform?

2. What is the actual number of officials assigned to the delegations in New York, Tokyo, Beijing and New Delhi?

3. Will the forthcoming austerity measures also include a possible reduction in the number of members of staff assigned to Barbados?

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

1. The EU Delegation in Barbados covers relations with 10 countries and territories, namely the ACP states Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines, and OCTs Anguilla, Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands.

The Eastern Caribbean countries are small and vulnerable island developing states, signatories of the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), a special trade and regional integration agreement. The roughly EUR 40 million annual development assistance managed by the Delegation focuses on trade, education, health, the environment as well as the economic infrastructure and includes the majority of the Caribbean Regional Cooperation Programmes. Further, the Delegation manages the Sugar protocol accompanying measures and Banana Accompanying Measures, as well as Flex special allocations to compensate for loss in export earnings on agricultural and mining products. The Delegation is managing around EUR 250 million in ongoing actions.

The officials currently serving in the Delegation are three European External Action Service (EEAS) officials, including the Head of the Delegation, and six Commission officials. The rest of the staff are Contract Agents and Local Agents.

2. EU Delegations are composed of EEAS staff and staff from the Commission services; both of these categories contain officials, contract agents and local agents. Furthermore, some Delegations will have seconded national experts sent from the Member States, as well as trainees. The numbers for total staff, EEAS staff (of which EEAS officials) and Commission staff are as follows for the 4 Delegations mentioned:

New York: 61 total — of which 23 EEAS officials and 4 Commission officials;

Tokyo: 59 total — of which 9 EEAS officials and 7 Commission officials;

Beijing: 138 total — of which 9 EEAS officials and 20 Commission officials;

New Delhi: 95 total — of which 8 EEAS officials and 13 Commission officials.

3. The EEAS is working with the Commission services on a workload assessment of Commission staff in Delegations. At the same time, the EEAS is reviewing the distribution of EEAS staff to ensure that all Delegations are resourced to meet the new tasks that fall to EU Delegations under the Lisbon Treaty. As part of this review, the EEAS is exploring ways of pooling resources on a regional basis so as to make most efficient use of limited staff numbers. The Delegation in Barbados is a good example of this.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000873/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: ΕΣΠΑ και ιδιωτική πρωτοβουλία

Σύμφωνα με άρθρο της εφημερίδας «Το Πρώτο Θέμα», είναι κοινώς αποδεκτό ότι το ζητούμενο για την Ελληνική οικονομία είναι να επανέλθει σε ρυθμούς ανάπτυξης. Δυστυχώς όμως, το Ελληνικό δημόσιο δεν διαθέτει κονδύλια για ανάπτυξη ενώ υπάρχουν ιδιωτικά κεφάλαια που βρίσκονται στο εξωτερικό από Έλληνες επιχειρηματίες και εφοπλιστές. Τα κεφάλαια αυτά βρίσκονται εκεί λόγω της οικονομικής αβεβαιότητας και του συνεχούς κινδύνου πτώχευσης της Ελλάδας.

Ταυτόχρονα παρατηρείται και αδυναμία απορρόφησης των κονδυλίων του ΕΣΠΑ, κυρίως λόγω της γραφειοκρατίας και της καθυστέρησης εγκρίσεων για τις επενδύσεις. Επίσης, το Ελληνικό δημόσιο δεν μπορεί να καταβάλλει ούτε το 5 % που του αναλογεί χάνοντας έτσι και το υπόλοιπο 95 % που προέρχεται από Ευρωπαϊκή χρηματοδότηση.

Στο άρθρο προτείνεται ο Γερμανός επικεφαλής της Task Force στην Ελλάδα κ. Ράιχενμπαχ να πείσει την ΕΕ και τον επίτροπο οικονομικών και νομισματικών θεμάτων κ. Ολι Ρεν ότι αυτό το 5 % της χρηματοδότησης που πρέπει να καταβάλλεται από το δημόσιο να μπορεί να προέρχεται και από ιδιωτικά κεφάλαια καθώς μία εγκεκριμένη επένδυση που επιδοτείται με 95 % από την ΕΕ μπορεί να προσελκύσει το ενδιαφέρον ιδιωτών επενδυτών και έτσι να επανέλθει η Ελληνική οικονομία σύντομα σε τροχιά ανάπτυξης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποια είναι η άποψη της για την εν λόγω πρόταση;

— Μπορεί η εν λόγω πρόταση να συμπεριληφθεί στις θεσμικές αλλαγές με τις οποίες ασχολείται η Task Force της επιτροπής για την Ελλάδα;

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

Για την περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2007-2013, διατίθενται περίπου 20 δισεκατ. ευρώ για την Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο των κονδυλίων της πολιτικής συνοχής, πράγμα που αποτελεί πολύ σημαντική πηγή πόρων για την προώθηση της ανάπτυξης. Μετά την πρόσφατη τροποποίηση του κανονιστικού πλαισίου της πολιτικής συνοχής, στην Ελλάδα η εθνική συμμετοχή για την εφαρμογή των προγραμμάτων που εντάσσονται στην πολιτική συνοχής της ΕΕ μπορεί να μειωθεί στο 5 % της επιλέξιμης δαπάνης των προγραμμάτων αυτών. Αυτό είχε θετικά αποτελέσματα για την Ελλάδα από απόψεως απορρόφησης πόρων. Συνολικά, έως τον Φεβρουάριο του 2012, εκταμιεύτηκαν επί τόπου σχεδόν 8 δισεκατ. ευρώ. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το γεγονός αυτό, ο κίνδυνος να μην μπορέσει η Ελλάδα να αξιοποιήσει τους πόρους που διατίθενται στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής συνοχής έχει περιοριστεί σημαντικά για το 2012.

Η Επιτροπή προέβη στη σύσταση της ομάδας δράσης για την Ελλάδα προκειμένου να τεθεί σε εφαρμογή ένα πρόγραμμα τεχνικής συνδρομής για την Ελλάδα από τα κράτη μέλη με σκοπό να στηριχθεί η υλοποίηση του προγράμματος προσαρμογής και να επιταχυνθεί η απορρόφηση πόρων της ΕΕ.

Όπως αναφέρθηκε, η Ελλάδα πραγματοποίησε ήδη σημαντική πρόοδο όσον αφορά την απορρόφηση πόρων που χορηγούνται στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής συνοχής και το ποσοστό των πόρων αυτών που έχει μέχρι στιγμής απορροφήσει είναι υψηλότερο από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ ([1]).

Τα ελληνικά επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα βασίζονται στις δημόσιες δαπάνες, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 53 του κανονισμού αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου· συνεπώς, επί του παρόντος, η ιδιωτική χρηματοδότηση δεν είναι επιλέξιμη για συμμετοχή στο μερίδιο της εθνικής συγχρηματοδότησης.

([1]) Στην περίοδο προγραμματισμού 2007-2013. Επιπλέον, το 2011 δηλώθηκαν στην Επιτροπή απαιτήσεις πληρωμών ύψους 3,3 δισεκατ. ευρώ (περιλαμβανομένων όλων των ταμείων), ενώ στο Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης (ΜΣ) είχε τεθεί ως ετήσιος στόχος να δηλωθούν 3,350 δισεκατ. ευρώ (υλοποίηση κατά 98,6 %).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000873/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework) and private initiative

According to an article in the newspaper *To Proto Thema*, it is generally accepted that Greece is seeking a return to economic growth. Unfortunately, the Greek Government does not possess the necessary funds, while private capital in the hands of Greek entrepreneurs and shipowners is located abroad because of the uncertain economic climate in Greece and the continuing danger of the country going bankrupt.

At the same time, difficulties are arising concerning the take-up of NSRF funding, primarily because of bureaucratic obstacles and delays in approving investment. Moreover, the Greek Government is unable to make even the statutory 5 % contribution and so forfeits the remaining 95 % of the funding from Europe.

In the article it is proposed that the German head of the Task Force in Greece, Mr Reichenbach, should point out to the EU and the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs Olli Rehn that the 5 % government contribution could also be obtained from private investors for whom approved investment schemes with 95 % EU funding could prove an attractive proposition, thereby facilitating rapid economic recovery in Greece.

In view of this:

— What view does the Commission take of this proposal?

— Can it be included among the institutional changes with which the Commission's Task Force for Greece concerns itself?

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

For the programming period 2007-2013 around EUR20 billion are available for Greece under cohesion policy funds, which is a very important source of resources available for its development. Following a recent amendment to the cohesion policy regulatory framework, in Greece the national contribution to the implementation of EU cohesion policy programmes can be reduced to 5 % of the eligible expenditure for such programmes. This has led to a positive development in Greece in terms of absorption. In total, up to February 2012 nearly EUR 8 billion have been disbursed on the ground. Based on this fact, the risk of Greece forfeiting cohesion policy funds is significantly reduced for 2012.

The Commission established the Task Force for Greece (TFGR) in order to set up a programme of technical assistance for Greece by the Member States to support the delivery of the adjustment programme and to accelerate the absorption of EU funds.

As mentioned, Greece has already achieved important steps in accelerating the absorption of cohesion policy funds and so far Greece has absorbed a higher percentage of the cohesion policy funds allocation than the EU average ([1]).

Greek Operational Programmes are based on public expenditure, according to Art 53 of Council Regulation 1083/2006; therefore, at present, private expenditure is not eligible to contribute to the national part of co-financing.

([1]) In the programming period 2007-2013. In addition, payment claims of approximately EUR 3.3 billion (all funds included) were declared to the Commission in 2011 against the memorandum of understanding (MoU) annual target of EUR 3.350 billion (achievement of 98.6 %).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000874/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αγωγός South Stream

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό τύπο, η κατασκευή του αγωγού South Stream θα αρχίσει τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012, ενώ προηγουμένως υπήρχαν εκτιμήσεις ότι θα άρχιζε το 2013.

Συνολικά, ο South Stream πρόκειται να καλύψει απόσταση 3 600 χιλιομέτρων. Μέσω της Βαλκανικής χερσονήσου, θα έχει δίκτυα στην Ελλάδα και στην Ιταλία. Από το έδαφος της τελευταίας θα καταλήγει στη δυτική Ευρώπη. Δεν θα διέρχεται καθόλου από την Ουκρανία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή μπορεί ο συγκεκριμένος αγωγός να καλύψει ανάγκες της Νότιας Ευρώπης;

Αποτελεί η Ρωσία στρατηγικό εταίρο της Ευρώπης όσο αναφορά την ενέργεια;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν εμπλέκεται στην ανάπτυξη και την όδευση του South Stream, έργου με χορηγούς και φορείς υλοποίησης εμπορικές εταιρείες. Ως εκ τούτου, δεν είμαστε σε θέση να δώσουμε πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις ποσότητες και τις αγορές προορισμού του φυσικού αερίου που θα μπορούσε να μεταφέρεται μέσω του αγωγού South Stream.

Η Ρωσία είναι και θα παραμείνει στρατηγικός ενεργειακός εταίρος για την ΕΕ. Το South Stream δεν αποτελεί όμως έργο προτεραιότητας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000874/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: South Stream pipeline

According to Greek press reports, the construction of the South Stream pipeline will begin in December 2012 instead of 2013 as previously thought.

In total, South Stream is expected to cover a distance of 3 600 kilometres. Crossing the Balkan Peninsula, South Stream will have networks in Greece and Italy, from whence it will reach western Europe. It will not pass through Ukraine at all.

Will the Commission say whether this pipeline can cover the needs of southern Europe?

Is Russia a strategic partner for Europe in this undertaking?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2012)

The Commission is not involved in the development and the routing of South Stream which is sponsored and developed by commercial companies. Therefore, we are not in a position to give information on the volumes and the destination markets for the gas that could be transported by South Stream.

Russia is and will remain a strategic energy partner for the EU. But the South Stream project is not a priority project.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000875/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κονδύλια για αστέγους

Οι συνέπειες της οικονομικής κρίσης πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστούν σε τοπικό επίπεδο και η κυβέρνηση να επιδιώξει κοινή δράση με τους δήμους για την προστασία των αστέγων.

Όπως είπε στη γενική συνέλευση των δήμων Αττικής η αναπληρώτρια υπουργός Εσωτερικών Φώφη Γεννηματά, οι δήμοι θα πρέπει να προχωρήσουν στην δημιουργία ειδικών χώρων, όπου οι άστεγοι θα μπορούν να διανυκτερεύσουν με ασφάλεια, να βρίσκουν τροφή και βασικές υπηρεσίες υγείας και ψυχολογικής υποστήριξης.

Η κίνηση αυτή μπορεί να γίνει σε συνεργασία με τα συναρμόδια υπουργεία Εσωτερικών, Υγείας και Εργασίας και σε πρώτη φάση να ξεκινήσει από το Δήμο Αθηναίων, που αντιμετωπίζει και το μεγαλύτερο — αριθμητικά — πρόβλημα, και στη συνέχεια να εφαρμοστεί και σε άλλους δήμους που αντιμετωπίζουν ανάλογο πρόβλημα.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η θέση αυτή έρχεται μόλις λίγες ώρες μετά τη δημοσιοποίηση του θανάτου ενός ακόμη αστέγου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν υπάρχουν σχέδια για κονδύλια προοριζόμενα για την αποκατάσταση των αστέγων, όχι μόνο στην Ελλάδα αλλά και σε άλλα κράτη της ΕΕ.

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει σχέδια για κονδύλια προοριζόμενα ειδικά για την αποκατάσταση των αστέγων στην Ελλάδα ή σε άλλα κράτη της ΕΕ.

Ωστόσο, το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) υποστηρίζει επενδύσεις στον τομέα της κοινωνικής στέγασης και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) συνεισφέρει σε δραστηριότητες για την προώθηση της κοινωνικής και επαγγελματικής ενσωμάτωσης των αστέγων. Ενώ η Επιτροπή και τα κράτη μέλη διαχειρίζονται από κοινού αυτά τα ταμεία, τα κράτη μέλη είναι αρμόδια για τον καθορισμό των προτεραιοτήτων τους χρηματοδότησης και την κατανομή των κονδυλίων στο πλαίσιο των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων τους. Στη διάρκεια της προγραμματικής περιόδου 2007-13, τα κράτη μέλη διέθεσαν κονδύλιο 10 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ σε ενέργειες για την προώθηση της κοινωνικής ένταξης των πιο ευάλωτων ομάδων στην κοινωνία. Ωστόσο, δεν υπάρχουν στοιχεία σε επίπεδο ΕΕ σχετικά με τα ποσά τα οποία διατέθηκαν απευθείας για τους άστεγους.

Στο πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο για την περίοδο 2014-20, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε τουλάχιστον το 20 % της συνολικής χρηματοδότησης από το ΕΚΤ σε κάθε κράτος μέλος να χορηγείται για την κοινωνική ένταξη και την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας. Τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει να επικεντρώσουν τους διαθέσιμους πόρους σε εκείνους τους τομείς που παρουσιάζουν τις μεγαλύτερες προκλήσεις· δεν θα υπάρχει οριοθέτηση των πόρων για ειδικούς στόχους. Κάθε κράτος μέλος θα κατανείμει επίσης τουλάχιστον το 5 % των συνολικών πόρων του ΕΤΠΑ σε ολοκληρωμένες ενέργειες για βιώσιμη αστική ανάπτυξη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000875/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Funding for the homeless

The consequences of the economic crisis must be dealt with at the local level and the government pursuing joint action with the municipalities for protection of the homeless.

As stated by Fofi Gennimatas, Deputy Interior Minister, at the general assembly of the Attica municipalities, local government must proceed to create special overnight premises for the homeless, providing them with a safe environment, food, basic health services and psychological support.

This initiative can be taken in collaboration with the ministries jointly responsible (Interior, Health and Labour), starting off in the Municipality of Athens, which faces the greatest problem (in numerical terms) and then being implemented in other municipalities facing a similar problem.

Bearing in mind that this statement comes only a few hours after notification of the death of yet another homeless person, can the Commission say whether there are plans for funds to be set aside for rehabilitation of the homeless, not only in Greece but also in other countries of the EU?

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

The Commission has no plans for funds to be set aside specifically for the rehabilitation of homeless people in Greece or any other Member State.

However, support is provided by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for investments in social housing and by the European Social Fund (ESF) for activities to promote the social and labour market integration of homeless people. While management of those Funds is shared by the Commission and the Member States, it is the responsibility of the latter to set, and to allocate financing to, their funding priorities under their operational programmes. During the 2007-13 programming period, the Member States have allocated EUR 10 billion of ESF funding to actions to promote the social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in society. However, no data on the amounts that have benefited homeless people directly are available at EU level.

Under the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020, the Commission proposed that at least 20 % of total ESF financing in each Member State will be allocated to social inclusion and poverty. The Member States will need to concentrate the available resources on those areas which are most challenging for them; there will be no ringfencing of resources for specific targets. Each Member State will also allocate at least 5 % of total ERDF resources to integrated actions for sustainable urban development.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000876/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Εξελίξεις στο Νότιο Σουδάν

Τουλάχιστον 120 χιλιάδες άνθρωποι χρειάζονται επείγουσα βοήθεια μετά τις διαφυλετικές ταραχές στο Τζόνγκλεϊ, μια πολιτεία στο ανατολικό Νότιο Σουδάν, ανακοίνωσε σήμερα ο Οργανισμός Ηνωμένων Εθνών.

«Η βία κυριολεκτικά δεν σταματά στο Τζόνγκλεϊ … Προ 15νθημέρου, κάναμε επιχείρηση -με τον χαρακτήρα του επείγοντος- για να συνδράμουμε 60 χιλιάδες ανθρώπους. Τώρα, που η βία παρατάθηκε, εκτιμούμε από την πλευρά μας ότι ο αριθμός των αναξιοπαθούντων έχει ήδη διπλασιαστεί», ανέφερε η συντονίστρια του ΟΗΕ στην περιοχή αυτήν της ανατολικής Αφρικής, Λίζα Γκραντ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή ποια είναι η επίσημη θέση της για την κατάσταση στο Νότιο Σουδάν;

Απάντηση της κας Georgieva εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Απριλίου 2012)

Όπως αναφέρεται στις απαντήσεις ([1]) σχετικά με τη βία στο Τζόνγκλεϊ του Νότιου Σουδάν, η Επιτροπή εξακολουθεί να ανησυχεί ιδιαίτερα για τις εντάσεις στο κρατίδιο Τζόνγκλεϊ. Υπάρχουν πολλές ανθρωπιστικές και κοινωνικοοικονομικές προκλήσεις λόγω της περιορισμένης κρατικής ικανότητας και της πολιτικής αστάθειας.

Η Επιτροπή είναι απόλυτα δεσμευμένη στην παροχή βραχυπρόθεσμης και μακροπρόθεσμης στήριξης στην περιοχή ώστε να εκτονωθεί η ένταση και να οικοδομηθεί μια σταθερή, βιώσιμη και ευημερούσα χώρα. Ως άμεση αντίδραση, παρέχει ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια της ΕΕ σε θύματα συγκρούσεων στο Νότιο Σουδάν, καθώς και στο Τζόνγκλεϊ. Η ΕΕ στηρίζει, επίσης, την οικοδόμηση της ειρήνης και τη σταθεροποίηση μεταξύ κοινοτήτων του Νότιου Σουδάν ως προαπαιτούμενο για την ανάπτυξη, χρησιμοποιώντας το ΕΜΔΔΑ ([2]), μη κυβερνητικούς φορείς και το θεματικό πρόγραμμα επισιτιστικής ασφάλειας ([3]).

Η Επιτροπή επικροτεί τα βήματα που έγιναν από το Νότιο Σουδάν για την επίτευξη του αφοπλισμού των πολιτών. Μέσω του μηχανισμού σταθερότητας ([4]), η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με τον ΟΗΕ, το Προεδρείο κοινοτικής ασφάλειας και ελέγχου φορητών όπλων του Νότιου Σουδάν ([5]) και τις τοπικές αρχές για να προστατεύσει πολίτες, οικογένειες και κοινότητες.

Μακροπρόθεσμα, η Επιτροπή αυξάνει τη στήριξή της στην οικοδόμηση του κράτους στο Νότιο Σουδάν, επειδή γνωρίζει ότι η ειρήνη και η ασφάλεια είναι βασικές προϋποθέσεις για βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη.

Ανησυχεί επίσης για τις πιθανές συνέπειες της απόφασης της Κυβέρνησης του Νότιου Σουδάν ([6]) να παύσει την παραγωγή πετρελαίου, και για τον αντίκτυπο που μπορεί να έχει αυτή στις προσπάθειες οικοδόμησης κράτους. Η Επιτροπή, μαζί με άλλους αναπτυξιακούς εταίρους, συντονίζει μια συνεκτική στάση ώστε να επιτευχθεί η αποτελεσματική παροχή της βοήθειας της ΕΕ.

Κατά την τρέχουσα διεθνή χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση, είναι αμφίβολο ότι δωρητές θα μπορέσουν να καλύψουν το κενό αυτό.

([1]) E-000055/2012, E-000296/2012, E-000374/2012 και E-000387/2012, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EL.
([2]) Ευρωπαϊκό Μέσο για τη Δημοκρατία και τα Δικαιώματα του Ανθρώπου.
([3]) Food Seurity Thematic Programme (FSTP).
([4]) Instrument for Stability (IfS).
([5]) South Sudan Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control (SSBCSSAC).
([6]) Government of South Sudan (GOSS).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000876/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Developments in South Sudan

At least 120 000 people need urgent help following the interracial conflict in Jonglei, a state in the east of South Sudan, the United Nations reported today.

'The violence in Jonglei hasn't stopped. Two weeks ago, we launched an emergency operation to help 60 000 people. As a result of recent attacks, we now estimate that double that number will need help' stated the UN coordinator for this area of eastern Africa, Lise Grande.

What is the Commission's official position on the situation in South Sudan?

Answer given by Mrs Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

As indicated in answers ([1]) concerning violence in Jonglei, South Sudan the Commission remains deeply concerned by tensions in Jonglei State. There are numerous humanitarian and socioeconomic challenges due to limited governance capacity and political fragility.

The Commission is fully committed to give short- and long-term support to the area so as to defuse tension and build a stable, viable, prosperous country. As an immediate response it is providing EU humanitarian assistance to victims of conflicts in South Sudan, including Jonglei.

The EU also supports peace building and stabilisation between South Sudanese communities as a precondition for development, using the EIDHR ([2]) and the Non-State Actors and FSTP ([3]).

The Commission welcomes steps taken by South Sudan to proceed with civilian disarmament. Under the IfS ([4]), the Commission works closely with the UN, the SSBCSSAC ([5]) and other regional and local authorities to secure civilians, families and communities.

In the longer term, the Commission is increasing its support to state building in South Sudan knowing that peace and security are basic prerequisites for sustainable development.

It is also concerned about the potential consequences of the GOSS ([6]) decision to shut down oil production, and the impact this may have in state-building efforts. The Commission is coordinating with other development partners a coherent position to enable effective delivery of EU assistance.

In the current international financial crisis, it is unlikely that donors will be able to fill this gap.

([1]) E-000055/2012, E-000296/2012, E-000374/2012 and E-000387/2012, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.
([3]) Food Security Thematic Programme.
([4]) Instrument for Stability.
([5]) South Sudan Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control.
([6]) Government of South Sudan.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000877/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χημικά όπλα στη Λιβύη

Ο Οργανισμός για την Απαγόρευση των Χημικών Όπλων (OAIC) επιβεβαίωσε σήμερα ότι ένα απόθεμα όπλων, το οποίο ανακάλυψε το Εθνικό Μεταβατικό Συμβούλιο μετά την πτώση του καθεστώτος του Μουάμαρ Καντάφι, αποτελείτο από χημικά όπλα τα οποία παρέμεναν αδήλωτα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή αν γνώριζε την ύπαρξη των όπλων αυτών και αν υπάρχουν στοιχεία και για εμπόριο από την πλευρά της Λιβύης των συγκεκριμένων όπλων με άλλες χώρες;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Απριλίου 2012)

Η ΕΕ ενημερώθηκε για πρώτη φορά σχετικά με την ύπαρξη χημικών όπλων που δηλώθηκαν πρόσφατα, την Δευτέρα 13 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, όταν οι αρχές της Λιβύης προέβησαν σε δήλωση.

Η ΕΕ λαμβάνει υπόψη την επιθυμία του σημερινού καθεστώτος να κοινοποιήσει όλα τα αποθέματα χημικών όπλων και ουσιών που εναπομένουν ή έχουν ανακαλυφθεί πρόσφατα, ακόμη και αν πρόκειται για μικρές ποσότητες, όπως συμβαίνει στη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση. Τούτο θα διασφαλίσει την προστασία και ασφάλεια ολόκληρου του αποθέματος χημικών όπλων.

Η ΕΕ ανησυχεί, βεβαίως, για το γεγονός ότι οι προηγούμενες αρχές δεν είχαν κοινοποιήσει αυτά τα όπλα στον Οργανισμό για την Απαγόρευση των Χημικών Όπλων (OPWC). Η ΕΕ εργάζεται με τη Λιβύη, μέσω του OPCW, για την επίλυση αυτής της κατάστασης. Η ΕΕ αναμένει ότι η Λιβύη θα συμμορφωθεί πλήρως με την Επιτροπή Χημικών Όπλων, διασφαλίζοντας ότι δεν θα παραμείνει στο έδαφός της κανένα αδήλωτο χημικό όπλο. Όσον αφορά το απόθεμα που δηλώθηκε πρόσφατα, η Λιβύη προτίθεται να διερευνήσει πλήρως τις συνθήκες που περιβάλλουν αυτό το περιστατικό, σε συνεργασία με τον OPCW.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000877/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Chemical weapons in Libya

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) confirmed today that a stock of arms discovered by the National Transitional Council after the fall of the Qaddafi regime in fact consisted of undeclared chemical weapons.

Was the Commission aware of the existence of these weapons and does data exist regarding trade in these weapons between Libya and other countries?

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

The EU was first informed of the existence of newly declared chemical weapons (CWs) on Monday 13 February 2012 when a declaration was made by the Libyan authorities.

The EU notes the willingness of the current regime to disclose all remaining or newly-discovered deposits of chemical weapons and agents, even if these are small quantities as in this case. This will contribute to ensuring the safety and security of the entire stockpile of CWs.

The EU is of course concerned by the fact that the previous authorities had not disclosed these to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPWC). The EU is working with Libya, through the OPCW, to resolve this situation. The EU expects Libya to comply fully with the Chemical Weapons Commission and to ensure that no undeclared CWs remain on its territory. As for the newly declared stockpile, Libya intends to fully explore the circumstances surrounding this incident, in cooperation with the OPCW.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000878/12
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (ECR)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: European Year for Active Ageing

Was the 'European Year for Active Ageing' a Commission initiative?

What was the expenditure for the activity?

Was there a programme of any kind? May I see it?

What was the outcome? How many elderly people were helped by the activity, if any? Have they commented on the programme? How many elderly people were assisted in my East Midlands (UK) Region?

I ask because apart from references to the activity in the European Parliament, I have seen no evidence of it at all.

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

The decision ([1]) designating 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations was adopted by Parliament and the Council at the first reading on a proposal ([2]) from the Commission. Before putting forward its proposal, the Commission conducted a public stakeholder consultation in June-July 2009 and received 132 replies in response.

The decision provides for a budget of EUR 5 million for the European Year, to be spent solely at Union level. Unlike the 2010 and 2011 European Years, the 2012 European Year makes no provision for national budgets which Member States could use to support the activities of national, regional or local organisations.

The objectives of the 2012 European Year are set out in the decision. It invites the Member States to present their work programmes to the Commission by 25 November 2011, outlining their plans for national activities under the European Year. The national work programmes are available on the official website for the European Year ([3]).

The 2012 European Year's opening conference took place in Copenhagen on 18 and 19 January 2012. It is therefore too early to report on its outcome. The decision provides that the Commission is to submit a report by 30 June 2014 giving an overall assessment of the initiatives provided for in the decision, with details of implementation and results, to serve as a basis for future Union policy, measures and actions in this field.

([1]) Decision No 940/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2011 on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012), OJ L 246, 23.9.2011.
([2]) COM(2010) 462 final of 6 September 2010.
([3]) See participating countries' programmes at http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?catId=986&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000879/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Aircraft pollution levels

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about pollution levels from aircraft taking off and landing at London City Airport near his home.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. What legislative provisions have been made by the EU to regulate noise and pollution levels?

2. Whether it is in possession of information which indicates whether London City Airport conforms to all of these requirements?

3. Which, if any, are the legislative provisions on noise and pollution that the airport currently contravenes?

4. What powers and plans it has to enforce compliance with noise and pollution requirements?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

1. The EU legislation bans the noisiest aircraft from European skies and imposes a specific noise assessment process when introducing noise-related operating restrictions ([1]). The Commission has adopted a proposal to make the assessment process more transparent and robust to find the most cost-effective solutions to mitigate the noise problems ([2]).

For emission pollution, aircraft must satisfy international standards, which have been introduced into European law ([3]). The Commission is active in the International Civil Aviation Organisation, which sets noise stringency and pollution standards for aircraft at the global level.

The EU also regulates ambient air quality by establishing pollutant concentration levels ([4]) and environmental noise by imposing the establishment of action plans for major airports ([5]).

2. The competent UK authorities have provided the Commission with the necessary information demonstrating that the relevant European legislation is adhered to.

3. On the basis of the information available to the Commission, there are no indications of contravention. As regards PM10 exceedances in the airport area, London has been granted an exemption from the obligation to apply the standards until 11.6.2011. As the data for 2011 is not yet available to the Commission it is not possible to state whether compliance has been reached since then. As regards NO_2, the UK authorities have also sought an extension of the deadline to comply until 2015. The Commission is currently assessing the request against the conditions for the extension.

4. When it receives substantiated complaints, the Commission may decide to launch the appropriate procedures to ensure that the relevant EU legislation is correctly implemented.

([1]) Directive 2002/30/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 March 2002 on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Community airports (OJ L 85, 28.3.2002, p. 40-46).
([2]) COM(2011) 828.
([3]) Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 (OJ L 79, 19.3.2008, p.1-49).
([4]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1.
([5]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002, p. 12-25.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000880/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Greek shipping tax

I have been contacted by a constituent who runs a boat charter business in Corfu, Greece, and who fully complies with all the Greek charter rules and has a full Greek charter license. He is being subjected to a new Greek tax law which stipulates that any non-Greek flagged boats must now, in addition to VAT, also pay a tax on any profit made on charters, and that this is backdated 10 years.

Greek flagged boats, on the other hand, merely pay a small shipping tax (around EUR 200 per annum for a boat the size of my constituent's boat).

Will the Commission:

1. Investigate the legality of this retrospective tax, given that it appears to discriminate arbitrarily against non-Greek flagged boats?

2. State whether this new tax, in its opinion, contravenes EC law?

3. Disclose what action it plans to take against the Greek authorities?

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

The Commission observes that the exemption from income tax described by the Honourable MEP seems to constitute state aid to maritime transport and may raise other issues of compatibility with Union law.

The Commission needs to consider all the factual elements in order to determine whether the measure complies with EC law requirements.

Should more information be necessary to allow the Commission reaching a final opinion, the Commission will contact Greece on the matter.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000881/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: The Ben Gurion University of Israel

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about a programme to convert algae to biofuels, which the EU is financing in conjunction with a consortium of companies, including the Ben Gurion University of Israel.

Could the Commission confirm:

1. If it is normal to include a university from outside the EU in a funding programme?

2. The reasons for the decision in this instance to include a university from outside the EU?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(8 March 2012)

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) has been designed as the most open research programme in respect of international participation. Indeed 14 countries, including Israel, are particularly strongly linked to FP7 through international association agreements with the EU. Such associated countries contribute financially to the programme, and legal entities from these countries can participate on the same basis — including their eligibility for funding — as those from Member States. Thus it is intended and quite normal to include legal entities, such as the Ben Gurion University, in FP7 funded projects.

Consortia are free to include partners from any country in their proposal and the consortium is evaluated as part of the evaluation procedure by independent external experts before a funding decision is taken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000882/12
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Process by which IFRS accounting standards have been adopted by the Commission

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the way IFRS have been adopted by the Commission. Article 3 of the IAS Regulation 2002 of the Council and Parliament states that the Commission can only endorse an IFRS if it is not contrary to the true and fair view principle in the 4th Accounting Directive (Company Accounts) and in the 7th Accounting Directive (Group Accounts).

The European Court of Justice holds that 'true and fair view' incorporates a standard of accounting sufficient to demonstrate the maintenance of capital by limited liability companies. Implicit in that proposition is that the statutory accounts of a company are not overstating the assets, or understating the liabilities, because if the true net terminal value (recoverable amount) of the balance sheet is less than zero (the company has no capital), the company, particularly if it is a bank, may in fact be irretrievably insolvent contrary to the interests of its creditors.

Furthermore, any company falsely stating assets at more than their recoverable amount in its accounts — hence overstating distributable profits in its accounts — may be in danger of making an unlawful distribution out of capital. Could the Commission explain:

1. Why it has used a subjective approach to endorsing IFRS whereas the true and fair view principle in law has an objective requirement to demonstrate the maintenance of capital?

2. Why it has had no endorsement process at all to assess IFRS for their use in Company Accounts, despite Article 3 of the IAS Regulation stipulating that IFRS cannot be adopted if they are contrary to the true and fair view principle in the context of the 4th Directive, i.e. Company Accounts?

3. How IAS 39 was adopted by the Commission given that it is requiring overvaluation of loans no matter how likely any diminution in value (IAS 39 Paras AG89-90), when that is contrary to the principle of capital maintenance and of the true and fair view in European law?

4. Why, in the context of his proposed audit reforms, the Commissioner has made no reference to the impact on audit quality of auditors having to apply defective accounting standards?

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

The IAS (International Accounting Standards) Regulation ([1]) stipulates that IAS can be adopted in the EU if the endorsement criteria ([2]) are met. Based on this regulation, EFRAG (European Financial Reporting Advisory Group) provides the Commission with expertise and technical advice about whether these criteria are met, including compliance with the true and fair view principle as defined in the Accounting Directives ([3]).

The regulation requires consolidated financial reports of companies listed in the EU to be prepared in conformity with IAS adopted in the EU ([4]). It allows Member States to permit or require the use of those standards also for annual accounts ([5]). The consequences of the use of IAS in annual accounts should then be considered by Member States using that possibility.

Under IAS 39 certain types of financial instruments (incl. loans) are valued at amortized cost ([6]). This method of accounting better reflects the business model of reporting entities which intend to hold their financial assets until maturity. The Commission still considers that this method should be improved, in particular, to mitigate its pro-cyclicality. In this context the IASB has undertaken a review of IAS 39 and intends to issue a new impairment model allowing banks to make more provisions on expected future cash flows.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1606/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 July 2002 on the application of international standards.
([2]) Provided for in Article 3.
([3]) Fourth Council Directive 78/660/EEC of 25 July 1978 based on Article 54(3)(g) of the Treaty on the annual accounts of certain types of companies and Seventh Council Directive 83/349/EEC of 13 June 1983 based on Article 54(3)(g) of the Treaty on consolidated accounts.
([4]) Article 4.
([5]) Article 5.
([6]) The measurement of such assets is based on the future cash flows which are expected to be collected. A diminution in value of such assets is recognised if a default event is expected as future cash flows are then expected to decrease.

The proposals on audit policy focus on clarifying the role of the auditor, improving their independence, strengthening national and European oversight and creating a European Single Market for the provision of statutory audit services. Auditors are responsible for the correct application of the principles and rules set in the accounting standards. Entities have the possibility under IFRS to provide additional information of their financial position.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000883/12
an die Kommission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(2. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Verwendung von Strukturfonds für Energieeffizienz in Griechenland

Die Kommission wird gebeten, Informationen über die Verwendung von Strukturfonds in Griechenland, insbesondere hinsichtlich der Durchführung von Programmen zur Verbesserung der Energieeffizienz, vorzulegen.

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(12. März 2012)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-010914/2011 und E-012655/2011 ([1]). Die Liste der vorrangigen Projekte, auf die sich die Frage E-012655/2011 bezieht, umfasst die Maßnahme „Energiesparen im Wohnungswesen“, die darauf abzielt, die Energieeffizienz in Privathaushalten zu fördern.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000883/12
to the Commission
Jo Leinen (S&D)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Use of Structural Funds for energy efficiency in Greece

Can the Commission provide information on the use of the Structural Funds in Greece, in particular as regards the implementation of programmes targeted at improving energy efficiency?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answers to Written Questions E-010914/2011 and E-012655/2011 ([1]). The list of priority projects to which Question E-012655/2011 refers includes the action 'Saving Energy at Housing' which aims to promote energy efficiency in private dwellings.

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000884/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(2 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Irregularidades no acesso a fundos comunitários

Foram divulgadas recentemente em Portugal eventuais irregularidades no processo que levou à requalificação da escola EB 2,3 de Cabeceiras de Basto, cujas obras foram efetuadas com recurso a fundos comunitários, no período de governação do anterior executivo.

Neste caso, o custo total do projeto foi estimado em 4 milhões de euros, tendo sido financiado em 2,8 milhões pelo POVT (Programa Operacional de Valorização do Território).

Tanto quanto se sabe, a suspeita de incumprimento das regras comunitárias na execução das obras descritas levou já à suspensão da atribuição de parte dos fundos concedidos.

Pergunto à Comissão:

— Tem conhecimento desta situação?

— Confirma a existência de irregularidades no acesso aos fundos comunitários POVT a propósito da requalificação da Escola EB 2,3 de Cabeceiras de Basto?

— Confirma que, em razão da violação de regras comunitárias, a concessão de fundos tenha sido suspensa para este projeto?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(12 de março de 2012)

Com base nas informações fornecidas pela autoridade de gestão do programa «Valorização do Território», a Comissão pode confirmar que foram concedidos 2,8 milhões de euros de financiamento do FEDER à escola básica de Cabeceiras de Basto, na região norte. Posteriormente, o montante do cofinanciamento do FEDER foi aumentado para 4 319 milhões de euros devido à necessidade de proceder a adaptações para resolver os problemas de segurança. O beneficiário adjudicou um contrato de «trabalhos a mais» correspondente aos custos suplementares, mas esta solução não foi aceite pela autoridade de gestão do programa, que a considerou contrária às regras em matéria de contratos de direito público.

Até agora, apenas foram efetuados pagamentos relativos ao contrato original do projeto, não tendo sido realizado qualquer outro pagamento a título de «trabalhos a mais», uma vez que a despesa correspondente foi considerada inelegível. A Comissão irá proceder a verificações complementares a este projeto, a fim de assegurar o seu controlo exaustivo e a legalidade e regularidade da despesa. Entretanto, e na sequência do exercício de reprogramação, este projeto foi transferido (como todos os projetos semelhantes relativos a escolas básicas) para o âmbito do programa regional «Norte».

De acordo com o princípio da gestão partilhada aplicado na gestão da política de coesão, a seleção e a execução dos projetos são da responsabilidade das autoridades nacionais. Para mais informações, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão do programa «Norte»:
www.novonorte.qren.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000884/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Irregularities in access to Community funds

It was recently revealed in Portugal that there may have been irregularities in the process leading to the upgrading of School EB 2,3 in Cabeceiras de Basto, where building work was carried out during the previous government's term of office using Community funds.

In this instance the total project cost was estimated at EUR 4 million, of which EUR 2 800 000 came from the Territorial Enhancement Thematic Operational Programme (POVT).

From what I have heard, there have been suspicions that Community rules were breached when this work was carried out, which have led to the freezing of part of the funds allocated.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

— Is it aware of this situation?

— Can it confirm that there have been irregularities in access to POVT Community funds in the upgrading of School EB 2,3 in Cabeceiras de Basto?

— Can it confirm that funding for this project has been frozen due to breaches of Community rules?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

On the basis of information provided by the managing authority of the programme 'Valorização do Território', the Commission can confirm that EUR 2.8 million of ERDF funding was allocated to the Basic School in Cabeceiras de Basto in the Norte region. Subsequently, the co-financing amount from ERDF was increased to EUR 4.319 million as a result of some necessary adaptations in order to comply with safety issues. The beneficiary did an 'additional works' contract for the extra costs but this was not accepted by the managing authority of the programme, since it considered that it did not comply with public procurement rules.

Until now, payments have only been made in relation to the original contract of the project and no further payments were made in relation to the 'additional works' contract, since this expenditure was deemed ineligible. The Commission will carry out further checks on this project in order to ensure that it has been thoroughly verified and that expenditure is legal and regular. In the meantime, and following the reprogramming exercise, this project was transferred (as all similar basic school projects) under the 'Norte' regional programme.

In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of national authorities. For more information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the 'Norte' managing authority: www.novonorte.qren.pt

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000886/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Contingentes arancelarios de la «Engraulis anchoita»

A la vista de que el autoabastecimiento comunitario de productos de la pesca ha bajado del 57 al 36 %, está en vigor el Reglamento (CE) n° 1062/2009 del Consejo, de 26 de octubre de 2009, que establece la apertura y el modo de gestión de los contingentes arancelarios de productos de pesca hasta 2012. El objetivo de esta norma es abrir, reducir o suprimir derechos de aduana de diversos productos pesqueros para garantizar a la industria comercializadora y transformadora un nivel de abastecimiento adecuado. El Reglamento autoriza además a los Estados miembros a extraer de los volúmenes contingentarios las cantidades correspondientes a sus importaciones reales.

En el anexo de esta disposición y entre las especies afectadas por esta liberalización parcial de los aranceles, figura con el número de orden 09.2770 la liberalización de 5 000 toneladas de anchoa (*Engraulis anchoita*). El periodo de contingentación abarca desde enero de 2010 a diciembre de 2012.

Una de las circunstancias que aconsejaban esta medida ha sido, en el caso de esta especie, el cierre que, en los últimos cinco años, ha sufrido la pesquería de la anchoa. Tras la reapertura de la misma, a la vista del nivel de capturas y de las expectativas de presencia de la especie en el mar, quisiéramos saber:

1. ¿Se va a revisar el Reglamento (CE) n° 1062/2009, de 26 de octubre de 2009, en lo que se refiere a los derechos aduaneros para importar anchoa?

2. En caso de respuesta afirmativa, ¿en qué plazos podría hacerse efectiva esa revisión?

3. De acuerdo con el considerando cuarto de esta normativa, ¿se ha establecido contacto con el Gobierno de España para ajustar en la práctica el funcionamiento de esta norma para el caso de la «Engraulis anchoita», tras la reapertura de la pesquería de esta especie en el Golfo de Bizkaia?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de marzo de 2012)

El Reglamento 1062/2009 establece un régimen trienal de contingentes arancelarios autónomos para los productos de la pesca que expirará el 31 de diciembre de 2012. Con objeto de evitar perturbaciones innecesarias del abastecimiento de productos de la pesca en el mercado de la UE, la Comisión, siguiendo el procedimiento aplicable, ya ha iniciado las consultas pertinentes con las partes interesadas y los Estados miembros para preparar un nuevo reglamento trienal.

A este respecto, desde el último trimestre de 2011, en el marco de los comités de la Dirección General de Asuntos Marítimos y Pesca (CCPA ([1]) y LDRAC ([2])), la Comisión ha informado y consultado a los productores y a la industria pesquera de la UE acerca del enfoque y el calendario aplicable al nuevo reglamento sobre medidas comerciales autónomas para los productos de la pesca. Estas consultas se prosiguen durante el primer trimestre de 2012.

Del mismo modo, los Estados miembros, incluida España, también han sido informados y consultados en el último trimestre de 2011 y el primer trimestre de 2012.

Las consultas de la Comisión abarcan todos los productos de la pesca contemplados en el Reglamento 1062/2009 mencionado, incluidas las anchoas, así como los criterios aplicables a la selección de los productos con arreglo a los contingentes arancelarios autónomos, incluida la situación de las reservas de la UE.

Una vez que la Comisión haya concluido sus consultas con las partes interesadas y los Estados miembros a finales de febrero de 2012, su proyecto de propuesta de nuevo reglamento del Consejo podría aprobarse en mayo de 2012. La Comisión espera que el nuevo reglamento sea aprobado por el Consejo a más tardar en noviembre de 2012 y se publique conforme al calendario previsto para que entre en vigor el 1 de enero de 2013.

([1]) Comité Consultivo de Pesca y Acuicultura.
([2]) Consejo Consultivo Regional de Flota de Larga Distancia en Aguas no Comunitarias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000886/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Tariff quotas for Engraulis anchoita

In view of the fact that EU self-sufficiency for fishery products has fallen from 57 to 36 %, Council Regulation (EC) No 1062/2009 of 26 October 2009 opening and providing for the management of autonomous Community tariff quotas for certain fishery products for the period 2010 to 2012 is now in force. The objective of this regulation is to open, reduce or eliminate customs duties for various fishery products to ensure an adequate supply to the distribution and processing industry. The regulation also permits the Member States to draw the necessary quantities from the quota amount, corresponding to their actual imports.

In the annex to the regulation and among the species concerned by this partial liberalisation of tariffs, the liberalisation of 5 000 tonnes of anchovies (*Engraulis anchoita*) appears with the order number 09.2770. The quota period runs from January 2010 until December 2012.

One of the circumstances that made this measure advisable in the case of this species was the fact that the anchovy fishery has been closed for the last five years. Now that the fishery has been reopened and taking account of the level of catches and the expected stocks of the species in the sea, we should like to know:

1. Will Regulation (EC) No 1062/2009 of 26 October 2009 be revised in relation to the customs duties for anchovy imports?

2. If so, when might this revision take effect?

3. In accordance with the fourth recital of the regulation, has contact been made with the Spanish Government to adjust the way in which this rule is applied in practice in the case of *Engraulis anchoita*, after the reopening of fishing for this species in the Bay of Biscay?

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

Regulation 1062/2009 establishes a triennial regime of autonomous tariff quotas for fishery products that will expire on 31 December 2012. In order to avoid unnecessary disruptions in the supply of fishery products in the EU market, the Commission, following the appropriate procedure, has already started the relevant consultations with stakeholders and Member States in order to prepare a new triennial regulation.

In this regard, since the last quarter of 2011, within the framework of the Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Directorate-General (DG MARE) Committees (ACFA ([1]) and LDRAC ([2])), the Commission has informed and consulted the EU producers and fish processing industry about the approach and the timing applicable to the new regulation on autonomous trade measures for fishery products. These consultations continue during the first quarter of 2012.

In the same manner, Member States, including Spain, have also been informed and consulted in the last quarter of 2011 and first quarter of 2012.

The Commission consultations cover all the fishery products of the said Regulation 1062/2009, including anchovies, as well as criteria applicable to the selection of the products under the autonomous tariff quotas, including the situation of the EU stocks.

Once the Commission has finished consultations with stakeholders and Member States by the end of February 2012, the draft Commission proposal for the new Council regulation could be adopted in May 2012. The Commission expects the new regulation to be adopted by Council at the latest by November 2012 and be published according to schedule in order to enter into force on 1 January 2013.

([1]) Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture.
([2]) Long Distance Fleet Regional Advisory Council.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000887/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(2 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Sicurezza del confine libico

Dalla caduta del regime di Gheddafi in Libia, la sicurezza ai confini di Algeria e Tunisia costituisce motivo di preoccupazione per le autorità libiche ad interim. Il 2 dicembre 2011, cittadini di nazionalità libica, armati e non, hanno minacciato le guardie di frontiera tunisine presso i punti di controllo di Ras Jdir e Dehiba. Tali punti di controllo sono i principali posti di frontiera tra i due paesi. I tunisini hanno deciso di chiudere il passaggio frontaliero e qualche giorno dopo alcuni colpi d'arma da fuoco sono stati esplosi attraverso il confine. La maggioranza delle persone e delle merci che entrano nella capitale, Tripoli, passano attraverso il punto di controllo di Ras Jdir. Anche il contrabbando di armi rappresenta un motivo di seria preoccupazione e in novembre alcuni funzionari ONU hanno incontrato il governo tunisino per discutere dell'impatto che la circolazione delle armi esercita sullo status sociale ed economico della regione e, in particolare, sul settore turistico.

Le relazioni tra l'Algeria e la Libia continuano a essere caratterizzate da forti carenze, poiché il Colonnello Gheddafi intratteneva ottime relazioni con l'Algeria. Il paese è stato inoltre accusato di avere fornito basi e persino armi alle forze pro-Gheddafi. La moglie di Gheddafi e alcuni dei suoi figli si trovano attualmente in Algeria, ma nel settembre 2011 il governo algerino ha annunciato che avrebbe riconosciuto il Consiglio Nazionale di Transizione, un segnale che ha dato adito a speranze di miglioramento nelle relazioni tra i due paesi.

Nel contempo, secondo notizie riferite dai mezzi di informazione, almeno 87 libici sono stati catturati mentre tentavano di trasferire armi a gruppi aderenti all'AQIM (organizzazione di al-Qaeda nel Maghreb islamico). Inoltre, più di 10 000 libici sono stati catturati mentre tentavano di oltrepassare il confine algerino. Sono stati inoltre segnalati altri casi di contrabbando di cibo, oro e droga.

1. Ha il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante preso iniziative finalizzate a discutere con le controparti libiche, tunisine e algerine le lacune presenti nei controlli frontalieri? In caso di risposta affermativa, qual è stato l'esito di tali iniziative?

2. Alla luce dei rischi ingenerati dal contrabbando di armi nel territorio dell'Africa settentrionale da parte di gruppi islamici militanti, quale ruolo può svolgere l'UE per contribuire ad arginare questo problema? Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante fornire alcuni esempi?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(27 aprile 2012)

Garantire un attraversamento sicuro delle frontiere libiche è una priorità sia per il governo provvisorio della Libia, sia per la comunità internazionale nel quadro del sostegno fornito alle autorità libiche. In occasione delle visite dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente a Bengasi e a Tripoli, svoltesi rispettivamente il 22 maggio e il 12 novembre 2011, è stata affrontata la questione della sicurezza delle frontiere. Inoltre, nel contesto della valutazione coordinata delle esigenze della Libia, l'Unione europea sta esaminando le necessità del paese in materia di gestione integrata delle frontiere.

La strategia per il Sahel e le riunioni «5 + 5» sono due esempi di strumenti e di consessi già esistenti in cui l'UE e gli Stati membri affrontano regolarmente questioni di sicurezza con i partner dell'Africa settentrionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000887/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Libyan border security

Since the fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya, security on the borders of Algeria and Tunisia has been a subject of concern for the interim Libyan authorities. On 2 December 2011, armed and unarmed Libyan nationals threatened Tunisian border guards at the checkpoints of Ras Jdir and Dehiba. These are the main border posts between the two countries. The Tunisians decided to close the border crossing, and a few days later gunshots were fired across the border. Most people and goods entering the capital, Tripoli, come through the Ras Jdir checkpoint. Weapons smuggling is also a serious concern, and in November UN officials met with the Tunisian government to discuss the impact of the circulation of weapons on the social and economic status of countries in the region, and in particular on the tourism sector.

Relations remain poor between Algeria and Libya, as Colonel Gaddafi was a close friend of Algeria. The country was also accused of providing bases for and even arming pro-Gaddafi forces. Gaddafi's wife and some of his children are currently in Algeria, but in a hopeful sign that relations are improving between the two countries, in September 2011 the Algerian government announced that it would recognise the National Transitional Council.

Meanwhile there are media reports which assert that at least 87 Libyans were caught while trying to transfer weapons to groups belonging to AQIM (Al-Qaeda Organisation in the Islamic Maghreb). In addition, more than 10 000 Libyans have been captured trying to infiltrate the Algerian border. Other instances have been reported of food, gold and drugs smuggling.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative taken steps to discuss the inadequacies of border controls with her counterparts in Libya, Tunisia and Algeria? If so, what were some of the outcomes?

2. In light of the dangers posed by militant Islamist groups smuggling weapons across North Africa, what role can the EU play in helping to stem this problem? Can the Vice-President/High Representative offer some examples?

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

Ensuring safe and secure passage at Libya's borders is a high priority both for the Libyan Interim Government and for the international community in the framework of its support to the authorities. Border security was discussed during the visits of the HR/VP to Benghazi and Tripoli on 22 May 2011 and 12 November 2011 respectively. Moreover, and in the context of the Libya Coordinated Needs Assessment (LCNA), the EU is leading the evaluation of needs in the field of Integrated Border Management.

The Sahel Strategy and the 5 + 5 meetings are two examples of tools and foras that already exist where the EU and the Member States regularly address security issues with North African partners.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000888/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(13 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Problemi di leadership interna nella Libia post-Gheddafi

Diversi problemi sono recentemente emersi rispetto alla capacità del Consiglio nazionale di transizione libico (CNT) di governare internamente la Libia. Il presidente del CNT, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, sta tentando di ottenere il riconoscimento dell'autorità politica di tale organo in tutto il paese, di far fronte ai problemi di governance che si presentano giorno per giorno e di creare un esercito nazionale per velocizzare il processo di disarmo.

Tuttavia, Jalil deve affrontare numerosi ostacoli, a causa della frammentazione del potere avvenuta in seguito al rovesciamento del regime di Muammar Gheddafi. Anche se il presidente del CNT rappresenta la Libia all'estero, in realtà il paese si trova sotto il controllo di numerosi consigli militari. Nell'area occidentale del paese, l'autorità è divisa tra milizie e organizzazioni militari, poiché durante la rivolta non era possibile ricevere sostegno dal CNT (con sede a Bengasi). I consigli militari hanno sede a Tripoli (consiglio guidato da Abdul Hakim Belhaj) e nelle città di Zentan e Misurata. Sono inoltre presenti altri gruppi militari tra i più disparati, in numero tra i 100 e i 300, attivi nelle vicinanze e in piccoli villaggi e suddivisi in base alle identità tribali o etniche.

Esiste il pericolo che questi gruppi armati non riconoscano la legittimità del CNT e si rifiutino di unirsi per formare un esercito nazionale. Il presidente Abdel Jalil sta cercando di incoraggiare il sorgere di un senso di solidarietà nazionale. Il 10 dicembre 2011 il presidente ha dichiarato, nel corso di una conferenza per la riconciliazione nazionale a Tripoli, che «siamo capaci di accogliere i nostri fratelli che hanno combattuto i rivoluzionari e siamo capaci di accogliere tutti coloro che hanno commesso un atto o detto una parola contro questa rivoluzione». Jalil ha anche tentato di aprire un dialogo con i comandanti militari locali.

1. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante definire il ruolo attualmente svolto dall'UE nel sostenere il processo di disarmo?

2. Ritiene il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante che sussista il rischio di una guerra civile qualora il CNT non riesca ad assorbire le milizie e gli altri gruppi militari attualmente esistenti in Libia?

3. Ha il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante intrapreso iniziative atte a discutere, con altri partner internazionali, i potenziali rischi per la Libia nel caso in cui il CNT non riuscisse a consolidare il proprio potere?

4. Inoltre, a livello regionale, potrebbero i problemi della Libia diffondersi anche ai paesi vicini?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(15 marzo 2012)

L'Unione europea finanzia da tempo le ONG internazionali che si occupano della rimozione degli ordigni inesplosi, delle armi e delle munizioni disseminati negli ex campi di battaglia. Inoltre l'Unione si avvale dei progetti che finanzia e che coinvolgono la società civile libica per sensibilizzare gli operatori di quest'ultima, e tramite questi l'intera popolazione, in merito al processo di disarmo, smobilitazione e reinserimento. Allo stesso tempo l'UE discute regolarmente il processo di disarmo direttamente con le autorità locali.

L'UE sostiene gli sforzi che l'attuale governo provvisorio sta compiendo per guidare il paese attraverso il difficile processo di transizione verso l'elezione di un Consiglio nazionale, prevista per il giugno 2012. Oltre a far fronte alle esigenze umanitarie più urgenti, l'Unione sta predisponendo sia misure immediate volte a sostenere le priorità di stabilizzazione del governo provvisorio, che programmi di sostegno a più lungo termine. L'UE ha già messo a disposizione circa 30 milioni di EUR, che si sommano agli 80,5 milioni di EUR stanziati per l'assistenza umanitaria.

L'Unione continua a impegnarsi per aiutare la Libia e gli altri paesi della regione a intraprendere un processo di transizione democratica.

Nell'ambito del dialogo generale con i partner locali e internazionali, l'UE discute regolarmente con questi dello sviluppo della situazione in Libia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000888/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(13 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Internal leadership problems in post-Gaddafi Libya

A number of problems have recently emerged regarding the Libyan National Transitional Council's ability to govern Libya internally. The president of the NTC, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, seeks to establish recognition of its political authority throughout the country, to respond to day-to-day governance issues, and to create a national army in order to speed up the process of disarmament.

Nevertheless, he faces numerous obstacles as a result of the fragmentation of authority which occurred with the overthrow of the regime of Muammar al-Gaddafi. Although the NTC president may represent Libya abroad, in reality the country is under the control of several military councils. In the west, authority is mostly divided amongst militias and military brigades, since during the uprising it was not possible to access support from the NTC (based in Benghazi). The military councils are based in Tripoli (a council headed by Abdul Hakim Belhaj), and in the towns of Zentan and Misrata. There are also some 100 to 300 other disparate military groups, which operate within neighbourhoods and small villages, and may be distinguished on the basis of their tribal or ethnic identities.

There is a danger that these armed military groups may not recognise the legitimacy of the NTC and may refuse to unite to form a national army. President Abdel Jalil is trying to foster a sense of national solidarity. On 10 December 2011, he said at a national reconciliation conference in Tripoli that 'we are capable of absorbing our brothers who fought the rebels and also capable of absorbing every person who committed an act or words [sic] against this revolution'. He has attempted to engage in dialogue with local military commanders.

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative outline the role the EU is currently taking to support the disarmament process?

2. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that there is the risk of civil war if the NTC fails to absorb the militias and other military groups which exist in Libya?

3. Has the Vice-President/High Representative taken steps to discuss with other international partners the potential dangers in Libya should the NTC fail to consolidate its authority?

4. In addition, is there the potential for a regional overspill of the problems in Libya to neighbouring countries?

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

The EU has been active funding international NGOs working on the removal of unexploded ordnances, arms and ammunition scattered in former areas of fighting. The EU is equally making use of ongoing EU-funded projects with civil society in Libya to raise awareness regarding disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration among civil society actors and, through them, the population at large. At the same time it regularly discusses the disarmament process with the authorities directly.

The EU supports the current efforts undertaken by the interim government in bringing the country through the difficult process of transition towards the election of a National Council scheduled for June 2012. Beyond tackling the most pressing humanitarian needs, the EU is already preparing both immediate measures to support the stabilisation priorities of the Interim Government as well as longer-term support programmes. Already nearly EUR 30 million has been made available, in addition to EUR 80.5 million for humanitarian assistance.

The EU remains committed to helping Libya and other countries in the region undertake a process of democratic transition.

The EU regularly discusses the developing situation in Libya with regional and other international partners as part of its general dialogue with them.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000889/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και μισθολογικό κόστος

Η Ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει δρομολογήσει τις τελευταίες εβδομάδες μια σειρά συζητήσεων αναφορικά με τη μείωση του μισθολογικού κόστους στον ιδιωτικό τομέα, καλώντας τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους να ξεκινήσουν τον κοινωνικό διάλογο (όπως προβλέπεται στην Ελλάδα), αφήνοντας να εννοηθεί ότι σε περίπτωση που τα αποτελέσματα του κοινωνικού διαλόγου δεν είναι ικανοποιητικά σε ό, τι αφορά τις προτάσεις που έχουν υποβληθεί από την τρόικα, τότε θα προχωρήσει σε παρέμβαση μέσω νομοθετικής πράξης — δημιουργώντας υποψίες υπονόμευσης της ίδιας της φύσης του κοινωνικού διαλόγου.

Το μισθολογικό κόστος στην Ελλάδα έχει ήδη μειωθεί κατά 12 % με την ενίσχυση της ευελιξίας της αγοράς εργασίας (σύμφωνα με προηγούμενες νομοθετικές ρυθμίσεις που υιοθετήθηκαν) χωρίς θετικές επιπτώσεις στην ανταγωνιστικότητα της χώρας, η οποία μειώνεται. Ταυτόχρονα, αυξάνονται τα ποσοστά φτώχειας και ανεργίας δραματικά διογκώνοντας τις κοινωνικές δαπάνες και άρα τις δημόσιες δαπάνες, ενώ διαφαίνεται ότι ένας από τους λόγους μη επίτευξης των στόχων αναφορικά με τα κρατικά έσοδα είναι ο περιορισμός της καταναλωτικής δύναμης των ελληνικών νοικοκυριών εξαιτίας της μείωσης των εισοδημάτων τους (χωρίς κριτήρια) μέσω της αύξησης της φορολογίας, της μείωσης των μισθών κ.λπ.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Δεδομένου ότι αποτελεί ένα εκ των τριών μερών της τρόικα, έχουν υποβληθεί από την Τρόικα προτάσεις στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση για μείωση του μισθολογικού κόστους στον ιδιωτικό τομέα και ποιές είναι αυτές;

2. Τα στοιχεία δείχνουν ότι η περαιτέρω μείωση του μισθολογικού κόστους δεν αποτελεί πανάκεια ούτε για την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας ούτε για την πρόληψη ή/και αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας. Αντίθετα, φαίνεται ότι μπορεί να προκαλέσει σημαντικές κοινωνικές ανισορροπίες -εντείνοντας τα φαινόμενα φτώχειας και υλικής υστέρησης- δεδομένου και του γεγονότος ότι η Ελλάδα δεν διαθέτει σύστημα ελάχιστου εγγυημένου εισοδήματος. Ποιά η άποψη της Επιτροπής, υπό το πρίσμα, αφενός, της επίτευξης των στόχων της Στρατηγικής ΕΕ2020 και, αφετέρου, της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και της οικονομικής βιωσιμότητας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση προώθησε τον διάλογο μεταξύ των κοινωνικών εταίρων, με στόχο την επίτευξη συμφωνίας για την στήριξη της ανταγωνιστικότητας, της ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης. Η έκβαση του διαλόγου αυτού δεν ήταν ικανοποιητική όσον αφορά τη διαμόρφωση μιας ελπιδοφόρας στρατηγικής, και κατόπιν τούτου, η κυβέρνηση συμφώνησε στην ανάληψη δράσης ώστε να συμβάλει στην επίτευξη των συγκεκριμένων στόχων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της θέσπισης νομοθεσίας σχετικά με τα επίπεδα των μισθών που καθορίζονται στην NGCA [1]· στη μεταρρύθμιση του συστήματος καθορισμού των μισθών και στην προώθηση της επαναδιαπραγμάτευσης των συλλογικών συμβάσεων· στην αύξηση της δυναμικής των πρόσφατων μεταρρυθμίσεων στην αγορά εργασίας· στην αντιμετώπιση θεμάτων κληρονομιάς σε πρώην κρατικές επιχειρήσεις· στη μείωση του μη μισθολογικού κόστους εργασίας και στην καταπολέμηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας και εισφοροδιαφυγής.

Την τελευταία διετία, η προσαρμογή της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας έχει διενεργηθεί κυρίως μέσω μιας απότομης απώλειας θέσεων εργασίας, με υπερβολικά αργή προσαρμογή μισθών. Επίσης, η Ελλάδα βρίσκεται αντιμέτωπη με μια μεγάλη εξωτερική ανισορροπία, η οποία πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστεί με μείωση του κόστους σε σχέση με τους ανταγωνιστές της, με περιορισμό της ζήτησης και βελτίωση της απόδοσης από πλευράς προσφοράς. Τα ως άνω οδηγούν στο συμπέρασμα ότι η περαιτέρω προσαρμογή των μισθών είναι αναγκαία για την εξασφάλιση της αύξησης της απασχόλησης και τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας μεσοπρόθεσμα.

Χωρίς αποφασιστικές προσπάθειες, η προσαρμογή θα συνεχιστεί με αργούς ρυθμούς και θα περάσει από την περαιτέρω αύξηση της ανεργίας. Προωθώντας την προσαρμογή των μισθών, το πρόγραμμα ενισχύει την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας, δεδομένου ότι η άνοδος της ανεργίας θα στερούσε από περισσότερους ανθρώπους εισόδημα από εργασία. Επίσης, σε σημαντικό αριθμό περιπτώσεων, τα άτομα με τον νέο κατώτατο μισθό πιθανότατα βρίσκονται ακόμη πάνω από το όριο της φτώχειας (που μετριέται σε σχέση με το μέσο εισόδημα).

[1] Εθνική Γενική Συλλογική Σύμβαση Εργασίας.

Ωστόσο, η εξέλιξη των μισθών πρέπει να παρακολουθείται προσεκτικά, ώστε να αποφευχθούν οι αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στη συνολική ζήτηση, ιδίως στην περίπτωση που η θετική επίδραση από την αύξηση των εξαγωγών υπολείπεται των προσδοκιών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000889/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Wage costs and boosting competitiveness

The Greek Government in recent weeks has launched a series of discussions on the reduction of wage costs in the private sector, inviting social partners to join in social dialogue (as has become customary in Greece), fostering the impression that, in the event of the social dialogue not yielding satisfactory results in terms of the proposals submitted by the Troika, it will proceed to intervention via legislative fiat — arousing suspicions of being ready to undermine anything that could legitimately be called social dialogue.

The wage cost in Greece has already been reduced by 12 % by increasing labour market flexibility (under legislative provisions already adopted) without this having any salutary effect on competitiveness, which is falling. At the same time, poverty and unemployment rates are rising dramatically, inflating social expenditures and hence public spending, while it may be surmised that one of the reasons for non-fulfilment of objectives pertaining to state revenues is the contraction of spending power of Greek households as a result of sweeping income reductions through increases in taxation, pay cuts, etc.

In this context, the Commission is asked:

1. Given that it is one of the three members of the Troika, have proposals been made by the Troika to the Greek Government on reduction of wage costs in the private sector and, if so, what are they?

2. The data indicates that further reduction of wage costs is no panacea either in terms of strengthening competitiveness or of preventing and/or dealing with unemployment. On the contrary, it evidently has the potential to generate substantial social unbalance — exacerbating poverty and material deprivation — particularly in the light of the fact that Greece has no minimum guaranteed income system. What is the Commission's view, given the objectives — on the one hand of meeting the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy and on the other of promoting fiscal restructuring and securing economic viability?

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

The Greek Government promoted dialogue between social partners viewing to reach an agreement to support competitiveness, growth and employment. The outcome of that dialogue was not satisfactory in delivering a promising strategy, therefore, the Government agreed taking action to help achieve those objectives including legislating on the wage levels set in the NGCA ([1]); reforming the wage setting system and fostering renegotiation of collective agreements; raising the potential of recent labour market reforms; tackling legacy issues in former state-owned enterprises; reducing non-wage labour costs and fighting undeclared work and social contribution evasion.

Over the past two years, the Greek labour market adjustment has been mainly through sharp employment losses, with wages adjusting in a too protracted way. Also, Greece faces a large external imbalance, which has to be overcome by cost reductions vis-à-vis competitors, demand restraint and improved performance of the supply side. These lead to the conclusion that further wage adjustment is necessary to secure higher employment and more competitiveness over the medium term.

Without decisive efforts, the adjustment would continue slowly and taking place via further increases in unemployment. Promoting wage adjustment, the programme stresses the fight against joblessness as a rising unemployment would deprive more people of labour income. Also, for a considerable number of cases, those earning the new minimum wage values are likely to be still above the poverty line (measured in relation to median income).

Nevertheless, wage adjustment has to be monitored carefully, to avoid adverse impacts on aggregate demand, particularly in case the positive impact from increased exports is smaller than hoped for.

([1]) National General Collective Agreement.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000890/12
adresată Comisiei
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(2 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Interzicerea ambalării în plastic a alimentelor destinate copiilor

Conform unor studii recente, multe ambalaje din plastic conțin substanțe chimice dăunătoare, precum DEHP și bisfenol A.

Acestea pot fi absorbite de mâncarea din interior, iar consumarea lor are urmări dăunătoare asupra sănătății copiilor.

Având în vedere aceste studii recente, are Comisia în vedere interzicerea ambalării în plastic a alimentelor destinate copiilor?

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(12 martie 2012)

Regulamentul-cadru (CE) nr. 1935/2004 ([1]) prevede ca substanțele utilizate la fabricarea de materiale destinate să vină în contact cu produsele alimentare, cum sunt ambalajele din plastic, să fie autorizate numai după o evaluare a siguranței de către Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară. Evaluarea siguranței ia în considerare posibilul transfer al substanțelor în produsele alimentare, inclusiv în produsele alimentare care sunt consumate de către copii. Substanțele pentru materiale plastice sunt autorizate împreună cu condițiile de utilizare și/sau limitele de migrare din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 10/2011 ([2]). De exemplu, utilizarea bisfenolului A este interzisă în biberoane și autorizată în alte materiale din plastic destinate să vină în contact cu produsele alimentare cu o limită de migrare de 0,6 mg per kg de produs alimentar pe baza evaluării riscurilor realizate de către Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară (EFSA). Comisia își va revizui poziția până la sfârșitul anului 2012, după ce EFSA examinează evaluarea de risc finală a ANSES ([3]) și rezultatele studiilor în curs privind dozele scăzute.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2004R1935:20090807:RO:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:012:0001:0089:RO:PDF.
([3]) Agenția franceză de securitate sanitară a alimentației, mediului și muncii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000890/12
to the Commission
Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Banning of plastic packaging for foodstuffs intended for children

According to recent studies, many types of plastic packaging contain harmful chemical substances, such as DEHP and bisphenol A.

These can be absorbed by the food contained in the packaging, and their consumption has damaging effects on children's health.

Taking these recent studies into consideration, does the Commission intend to ban plastic packaging for foodstuffs intended for children?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The framework Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 ([1]) requires that substances used in the production of food contact materials, such as plastic packaging, are only authorised after a safety evaluation by the European Food Safety Authority. The safety evaluation takes into account the possible transfer of the substances into food including food which is consumed by children. Substances for plastics are authorised together with conditions of use and/or migration limits in Regulation (EU) No 10/2011 ([2]). For example, the use of Bisphenol A is banned in baby bottles and authorised in other plastic food contact materials with a migration limit of 0.6 mg per kilogram food on the basis of the risk assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The Commission will review its position by the end of 2012 once EFSA has assessed the final ANSES ([3]) risk assessment and the results from ongoing low dose studies.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2004R1935:20090807:EN:PDF.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:012:0001:0089:EN:PDF.
([3]) French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000891/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Mejora de la participación política con apoyo de las TIC

La Comisión Europea estableció en su plan de acción sobre administración electrónica 2011-2015 una serie de ambiciosos objetivos para mejorar la eficiencia de la administración mejorando la accesibilidad de la ciudadanía tanto a sus servicios como a la información que maneja. Este plan hace hincapié, además, en la importancia que puede tener una correcta utilización de las TIC en el ahorro de costes en el sector público y en la necesidad de aprovechar las TIC para mejorar la participación de la ciudadanía y de las empresas en los asuntos públicos.

Las acciones previstas están destinadas a mejorar la capacidad y posibilidades de las personas para compartir el conocimiento de que disponen sobre materias que caen de lleno en el ámbito de la gestión pública. El plan propone incluso objetivos concretos con vistas a incentivar mecanismos de participación a nivel europeo, como la iniciativa ciudadana.

A estos efectos nos gustaría saber:

— ¿Qué avances concretos ha realizado la Comisión en el desarrollo de herramientas TIC para apoyar a la ciudadanía que se plantee poner en marcha una iniciativa ciudadana europea?

— ¿Qué proyectos de investigación en este campo se han evaluado y cuáles se van a poner en marcha dentro del objetivo «TIC para la gobernanza y modelización de políticas»?

— ¿Conoce la Comisión los trabajos que, a nivel internacional, desarrolla el centro mundial de tecnologías parlamentarias?

— ¿Conoce la Comisión las experiencias que, a nivel regional, vienen desarrollándose para profundizar en este campo, tales como el grupo de trabajo sobre democracia electrónica que funciona en la Conferencia de Parlamentos Regionales de Europa o experiencias innovadoras que se han desarrollado en algunos Parlamentos a ese nivel regional, como la experiencia «Senso alterno» de Umbria o los programas Zabalik y Parte Hartu del Parlamento vasco?

— ¿Se plantea la Comisión incorporar esas experiencias de nivel regional a los procesos de intercambio de buenas prácticas y experiencias?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de marzo de 2012)

La Comisión ha creado un registro y sitio de Internet exhaustivo y de fácil utilización ([1]) para la iniciativa ciudadana, a partir del cual los ciudadanos podrán poner en marcha y gestionar sus iniciativas. La Comisión también ha creado programas informáticos de código abierto que los organizadores de iniciativas pueden descargar y utilizar para la recogida de declaraciones de apoyo en línea.

La Acción preparatoria para la participación electrónica (2006-2009) apoyó 21 proyectos, los cuales presentaron su trabajo a los servicios del Parlamento Europeo (junio de 2010) y los resultados se hicieron públicos ([2]).

Las propuestas de este objetivo no estaban destinadas a mejorar la participación política utilizando las TIC, sino que abordaban principalmente la modelización de políticas.

La Comisión está al corriente del valioso trabajo realizado por el Centro Mundial de Tecnologías Parlamentarias. Este fomenta un diálogo estructurado entre los parlamentos y diversas partes interesadas pertinentes para potenciar el intercambio de experiencias, la determinación de las mejores prácticas y la aplicación de las soluciones adecuadas.

La Comisión está atenta a la situación en las regiones, puesto que muchas se han acogido a programas de financiación.

La Comisión sabe del grupo de trabajo sobre democracia electrónica.

([1]) Véase http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/.
([2]) Véase http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/policy/eparticipation/index_en.htm

La Comisión ha dedicado varios talleres a dar a conocer las distintas iniciativas en el ámbito de la participación electrónica. La plataforma www.epractice.eu, apoyada por la Comisión, incluye casos, noticias y comunidades de prácticas sobre la participación electrónica. Cualquier región puede presentar su caso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000891/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Improving political participation using ICTs

In its eGovernment Action Plan 2011-15, the Commission set a series of ambitious objectives to improve administrative efficiency, improving citizens' access both to its services and to the information it handles. The plan also highlights how important proper use of ICTs can be in cutting costs in the public sector, and the need to make use of ICTs to enhance the involvement of citizens and businesses in public affairs.

The actions set out are intended to improve people's ability and opportunities to share their knowledge of issues that are directly connected to public administration. The plan also proposes concrete objectives with the aim of promoting European-level participation mechanisms such as the Citizens' Initiative.

With this in mind:

— What concrete progress has the Commission made in developing ICT tools to support citizens intending to start a European citizens' initiative?

— What research projects in this area have been assessed and which ones will be implemented under the 'ICT for governance and policy modelling' objective?

— Does the Commission know what work the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament is doing at international level?

— Does the Commission know what is being done, at regional level, with a view to making further progress in this area, such as the working group on eDemocracy which operates within the Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies? Is it aware of the innovative steps that have been taken in some regional parliaments, such as Umbria's *Senso alterno* and the Basque Parliament's *Zabalik* and *Parte Hartu* programmes?

— Is the Commission intending to ensure that these regional-level initiatives are included in the arrangements for exchanging experience and best practice?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The Commission has set up a comprehensive and user-friendly website and register ([1]) for the Citizens' Initiative, from which citizens will be able to launch and manage their initiatives. The Commission has also developed free open-source software that organisers of initiatives can download and use for collecting statements of support online.

The eParticipation Preparatory Action (2006-2009) supported 21 projects. These projects presented their work to the European Parliament services (June 2010) and the relevant results were made available ([2]).

The proposals under that objective were not aimed at improving political participation using ICT. They addressed mainly policy modelling.

The Commission is aware of the valuable work done by the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament. It promotes a structured dialogue among parliaments, and various relevant stakeholders to enhance the exchange of experience and identification of best practices and the implementation of appropriate solutions.

The Commission follows developments in the regions, as many benefitted from funding programmes.

The Commission is aware of the working group on eDemocracy.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/.
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/policy/eparticipation/index_en.htm

The Commission has devoted various workshops to showcase the different initiatives in the field of eParticipation. The www.epractice.eu platform, supported by the Commission includes cases, news and communities of practice on eParticipation. Any region can submit their case.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000892/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Reutilización de información del sector público

La Comisión Europea estableció en su plan de acción sobre administración electrónica 2011-2015 una serie de ambiciosos objetivos para mejorar la eficiencia de la administración mejorando la accesibilidad de la ciudadanía tanto a sus servicios como a la información que maneja. Este plan hace hincapié, además, en la importancia que puede tener una correcta utilización de las TIC en el ahorro de costes en el sector público y en las oportunidades de negocio para los particulares que sean capaces de reutilizar los datos que almacenan las administraciones públicas con una visión innovadora.

Por ello, uno de los objetivos que se incorporan a este plan es la necesidad de emprender acciones para hacer posible la reutilización de la información del sector público (ISP). Se ha fijado como modelo de puesta a disposición de la ciudadanía de este tipo de catálogos de datos la experiencia *data.gov.uk*.

Las acciones concretas que en este campo tiene el plan prevén que, en 2011, los Estados miembros hayan aprobado un conjunto de indicadores comunes para medir el grado de reutilización de la ISP y las facilidades que se ofrecen para ello. Igualmente, la Comisión debería haber elaborado un estudio para determinar en qué medida han elaborado e implantado los Estados miembros unos catálogos de datos abiertos y/o portales sobre ISP.

A la vista de los citados compromisos:

— ¿Podría la Comisión informar si se han cumplido los objetivos señalados?

— ¿Cuál es el estado de la cuestión en 2012 en materia de reutilización de la información del sector público en Europa? ¿Qué Estados lideran la publicación de este tipo de catálogos de datos?

— ¿Han comenzado ya los intercambios de buenas prácticas en el sector público?

— ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión poner en marcha algún tipo de experiencia de intercambio también sobre modelos de negocio o buenas prácticas empresariales surgidas gracias a la explotación de este tipo de información?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de febrero de 2012)

La Comisión está comprometida firmemente con la reutilización de la información del sector público como un recurso primario para la innovación y el crecimiento de las empresas y para hacer frente a los retos de la sociedad. En su Estrategia para los datos abiertos ([1]), puesta en marcha a finales de 2011, la Comisión presenta un conjunto de medidas políticas dirigidas a garantizar que la información pública se utilice mejor para apoyar el crecimiento de las empresas y satisfacer las necesidades de los ciudadanos. Entre ellas se cuentan medidas legislativas, de despliegue y de financiación y, especialmente, una versión revisada de la Directiva sobre la información del sector público, de 2003, y una Decisión revisada que regirá la reutilización de la propia información de la Comisión.

Un estudio reciente sobre la incidencia de los portales de datos abiertos ([2]) indica que se están generalizando en las estrategias administrativas y que tienen por objeto estimular la creatividad y la innovación, además de preparar el camino para la creación de valor no prevista. Nueve Estados miembros ya han abierto portales de datos a escala nacional y la mayoría de los demás Estados miembros los está creando. Estudios similares ([3]) realizados en nombre de la Comisión ponen de manifiesto que, a pesar de esta evolución positiva, la información del sector público sigue en gran medida sin aprovechar en Europa. La estrategia de datos abiertos persigue abordar este tema.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/891.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/docs/pdfs/report/11_2012/open_data_portals.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/facilitating_reuse/economic_analysis/index_en.htm

La Comisión ha creado un grupo sobre la información del sector público compuesto por funcionarios de los Estados miembros, autoridades locales y regionales y representantes del sector privado. Contribuye al intercambio de buenas prácticas y al debate sobre la transposición en la práctica de la Directiva sobre la información del sector público y la posible creación de un portal paneuropeo de datos abiertos que ofrezca un único punto de acceso multilingüe a las series de datos reutilizables que generen los organismos del sector público de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000892/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Reuse of public sector information

In its eGovernment Action Plan 2011-15, the Commission has set out a series of ambitious objectives for improving administrative efficiency by offering citizens better access both to services and to the information handled. This plan also highlights the importance that proper use of ICT can have in terms of cost-saving in the public sector and business opportunities for individuals who can reuse the data stored by public administrations with an innovative vision.

Accordingly, one of the targets included in this plan is the need to take action to enable the reuse of public sector information (PSI). The *data.gov.uk* experience is given as an example of making this kind of data catalogue available to citizens.

The concrete actions in this area contained in the plan required the Member States, in the course of 2011, to adopt a set of common indicators for measuring the degree of reuse of PSI and the facilities provided for it. Equally, the Commission should have conducted a study to assess to what extent open data catalogues and/or PSI portals have been developed and implemented by Member States.

In view of the aforementioned commitments:

— Can the Commission state whether it has achieved the stated objectives?

— What is the situation in 2012 with regard to the reuse of public sector information in Europe? Which are the leading Member States in terms of publishing this kind of data catalogue?

— Have exchanges of good practices in the public sector begun?

— Does the Commission plan to implement a similar form of exchange experience regarding business models or good business practices that have arisen from the use of this kind of information?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(29 February 2012)

The Commission is strongly committed to the wider re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI) as a primary resource for innovation and business growth and to address societal challenges. In its Open Data Strategy ([1]) launched end of 2011, the Commission presents a set of policy actions to ensure that public data is best used to support business growth and citizen needs. These include legislative, deployment and funding measures and notably a revised version of the 2003 PSI Directive and a revised decision governing re-use of Commission's own information

A recent study on the impact of 'Open Data Portals ([2])' highlights that these are becoming mainstream in government strategies and aim at stimulating creativity and innovation and paving the way to unanticipated value creation. Nine Member States have already open data Portals at national level and most other MSs are in the process of developing them. Similar studies ([3]) conducted on behalf of the Commission show that despite these positive developments PSI remains largely unexploited in Europe. The open data strategy aims to address this issue.

A PSI Group has been set up by the Commission including Member State officials, local or regional authorities, and representatives from private sector. It helps exchange good practices, discuss the practical transposition of the PSI Directive 'and the possible development of a Pan-European Open Data Portal' offering a single multilingual access point to re-usable datasets produced by public sector bodies in the EU.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/891.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/docs/pdfs/report/11_2012/open_data_portals.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/facilitating_reuse/economic_analysis/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-000893/12
au Conseil
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(31 janvier 2012)

Objet: Contrats d'échange sur risque de crédit (CDS) sur la dette grecque

De nombreux articles de presse ont fait référence ces derniers jours aux difficiles négociations entre la Grèce et ses créanciers privés sur le coût et les modalités de la restructuration de la dette hellénique. Selon ces sources, la stagnation des négociations serait due aux intérêts divergents des représentants du secteur privé composés de banques, d'assureurs et de hedge funds. Ces derniers ne montreraient pas d'intérêt à trouver une solution à un allégement de la dette grecque. En effet, de nombreux hedge funds parieraient sur une faillite partielle de la Grèce en achetant massivement des contrats d'échange sur risque de crédit (CDS) leur permettant d'encaisser des gains substantiels en cas de défaut.

Afin d'empêcher ce genre de spéculation sur la dette souveraine d'un Etat, le Conseil et le Parlement européen avaient trouvé, le 18 octobre dernier, un accord sur le règlement sur la vente à découvert et certains aspects des contrats d'échange sur risque de crédit (COM(2010)0482), résultant en une adoption dudit règlement par le Parlement européen en session plénière, le 15 novembre 2011. Le règlement prévoit notamment une interdiction des CDS non découverts sur les obligations d'État.

1. Pour quelles raisons le Conseil n'a-t-il pas encore approuvé l'accord interinstitutionnel datant d'il y a plus de 3 mois, qui permettrait la clôture de la première lecture et l'entrée en vigueur du règlement?

2. Sachant que les CDS non découverts signés avant l'entrée en vigueur du règlement sont exclus de son champ d'application, le Conseil est-il conscient de faire le jeu de ces hedge funds en ralentissant l'entrée en vigueur de cette législation?

Réponse
(2 avril 2012)

Le 21 février 2012, le Conseil a adopté le règlement sur la vente à découvert et certains aspects des contrats d'échange sur risque de crédit ([1]), qui prévoit des exigences communes au niveau de l'UE en matière de transparence et harmonise les pouvoirs dont peuvent disposer les autorités de régulation dans des situations exceptionnelles représentant une menace grave pour la stabilité financière. L'adoption de ce règlement fait suite à l'accord intervenu en première lecture avec le Parlement européen, le 18 octobre 2011, à l'approbation du règlement par le Comité des représentants permanents, le 10 novembre 2011 et à l'adoption d'un rectificatif par le Parlement européen durant la deuxième session plénière de février 2012 tenue à Strasbourg, à la suite de la mise au point par les juristes-linguistes de sa position adoptée en première lecture le 15 novembre 2011.

([1]) Doc. 6625/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000893/12
to the Council
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(31 January 2012)

Subject: Credit default swaps (CDS) on Greek debt

Over the last few days numerous newspaper articles have referred to the difficult negotiations between Greece and its private creditors regarding the cost and practicalities of restructuring Greece's debt. According to these sources, the standstill in the negotiations is the result of conflicting interests among representatives of the private sector (banks, insurers and hedge funds). The latter do not appear to be showing any interest in finding a solution to reducing Greece's debt. Many hedge funds are reported to be gambling on a declaration of partial bankruptcy by Greece, making mass purchases of credit default swaps which would afford them substantial gains in the event of a default.

In order to prevent this kind of speculation on the sovereign debt of a Member State, on 18 October 2011 the Council and Parliament agreed on a regulation on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps (COM(2010) 0482), resulting in the adoption of that regulation by Parliament, meeting in plenary, on 15 November 2011. *Inter alia*, the regulation prohibits uncovered credit default swaps on government bonds.

1. Why has the Council not yet approved the interinstitutional agreement dating back more than three months, which would enable the first reading to be completed and the regulation to enter into force?

2. Bearing in mind that uncovered credit default swaps signed before the regulation's entry into force are excluded from its scope, is the Council aware that it is playing into the hands of the hedge funds by delaying the entry into force of this legislation?

Reply
(2 April 2012)

On 21 February 2012 the Council adopted the regulation on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps ([1]), which introduced common EU transparency requirements and harmonised the powers that Regulators may use in exceptional situations where there is a serious threat to financial stability. The adoption of the regulation followed agreement reached with the European Parliament at first reading on 18 October 2011, subsequent approval by the Permanent Representatives Committee on 10 November 2011 and adoption of a corrigendum by the European Parliament during the February II 2012 plenary session held in Strasbourg, following a legal/linguistic revision of its position adopted at first reading on 15 November 2011.

([1]) 6625/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000894/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Sugar regime transition

In the planned reform of the sugar regime, has the Commission considered the lead-time to develop new processing infrastructure as an essential criterion in determining the length of the period of transition in phasing out sugar quotas?

Will the Commission also consider that the characteristics of the future regime must be certain before any commercial investment can be made on the basis of such plans?

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

In November 2005 the Council has decided that sugar quota would be in place until 30 September 2015. The Commission has not proposed to have sugar quota beyond that date and it also has not proposed a transition period for phasing out sugar quota.

The Commission believes that any decision on investments in a sector is of a private nature.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000895/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: CAP 5 % limit accuracy

Will the Commission state how, in the context of CAP reform, those close to the 5 % figure can be certain of the accuracy of their figures, given that their accounts may well only be finalised, quite legally, months or years after the 'shut-off' date?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

With the aim to improve targeting of direct payments, the so-called active farmer rule has been proposed under Article 9 of the Commission proposal ([1]) on direct payments in the context of the CAP reform. According to the Commission proposal, Article 9(1) applies to all potential beneficiaries with the exception of those farmers under the category described under Article 9(2). The fulfilment of the criteria for receiving aid would be assessed through administrative controls and through checks carried out on-the-spot in the framework of the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), which would apply to direct support schemes also in the future ([2]). Related to this, delegated acts are foreseen under Article 9(3) of the Commission proposal to lay down criteria to establish the amount of direct payments relevant for the purpose of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 9 and to lay down exceptions from the rule that the receipts during the most recent fiscal year are to be taken into account where those figures are not available.

([1]) COM(2011) 625 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 628 final/2, Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000896/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: CAP 7 % ecological focus compliance

Will the Commission consider allowing the 7 % of ecological focus areas to be reached per region rather than per holding?

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

The objective of the ecological focus area (EFA) is to dedicate a share of the agricultural land to increasing the delivery of biodiversity and ecosystem services within Pillar 1, for example by means of landscape features, bufferstrips, land left fallow, etc. The proposal for the EFA strikes a balance between the need to take account of farm profitability thereby contributing to satisfying the global demand for food, and the need to protect the environment. The proposed 7 % reflects this balance where impacts on the market and on farmers will be compensated by long term improvement of productivity, by the fact that it is the farmer deciding where the EFA of their holding should be situated, and indeed by benefits to the sustainability of the farm arising from the EFA (e.g. improved pollination, increase in natural pest predators, reduced soil erosion, resilience to natural disasters, etc.).

Applying the EFA at regional level would entail insufficient environmental benefits, as it would allow to move the environmental improvements out of zones of intensive agriculture to other zones where the need to increase environmental performance is less urgent. In addition, in some regions where the environmental performances currently varies a lot from one farmer to another this could result in no environmental improvement on the farms needing it the most.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000897/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Definition of 'permanent grassland'

What will be allowed within the definition of 'permanent grassland' under the CAP reform?

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

Article 4(1)(h) of the legal proposal for direct payments provides for the purpose of direct payments the following definition: 'permanent grassland' means land used to grow grasses or other herbaceous forage naturally (self-seeded) or through cultivation (sown) and that has not been included in the crop rotation of the holding for five years or longer; it may include other species suitable for grazing provided that the grasses and other herbaceous forage remain predominant". The intention with the proposal is to enlarge the future definition of permanent grassland to be broader than the current one, which is limited to 'grasses or other herbaceous forage'. Areas which are eligible today remain covered by the new provisions. Furthermore, also areas or part of areas which are not only with 'grasses or other herbaceous forage' but with a certain share of other species suitable for grazing becomes eligible provided of course that there is an agricultural activity on the area. This is justified as such areas may have an important environmental value.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000898/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Barbara Matera (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Gianni Vattimo (ALDE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Paolo De Castro (S&D), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Gabriele Albertini (PPE), Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Lara Comi (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (PPE), Mario Borghezio (EFD), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Marco Scurria (PPE), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE) e Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)
(2 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Estrazione di petrolio a ridosso delle coste pugliesi nella zona tra i comuni di Monopoli e Ostuni

La società Northern Petroleum ha avviato il 20 novembre 2011 i lavori di prospezioni geosismiche per individuare eventuali giacimenti petroliferi a poche miglia dalle coste pugliesi nella zona tra i comuni di Monopoli e Ostuni in Italia. La metodologia air-gun con cui vengono compiute dette indagini consiste in violente esplosioni di aria compressa che danneggiano il pescato e l'intero equilibrio marino.

Nel territorio interessato si è sviluppata una fiorente economia turistica, con migliaia di alberghi, masserie, villaggi vacanze e bed & breakfast. Tale fondamentale settore produttivo rischia di essere definitivamente compromesso da insediamenti estrattivi, che trasformerebbero il mare da risorsa turistica ad area industriale. Inoltre nella stessa zona è insediata una delle principali flottiglie pescherecce italiane, e anche quest'attività, che già vive un momento di grande crisi, rischia una grave compromissione.

Gli enti locali — comuni, province e regioni — hanno espresso con più atti formali, amministrativi e legislativi, la loro determinata contrarietà all'insediamento di attività estrattiva nel Mare Adriatico. Tale volontà è confermata da un grande movimento di opinione, culminato il 21 gennaio scorso in una manifestazione popolare a Monopoli, con migliaia di cittadini, centinaia di associazioni — tra cui WWF e Legambiente — e tutte le istituzioni del territorio.

Alla luce di questa manifesta contrarietà delle istituzioni territoriali e della popolazione all'avvio della attività estrattiva, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. considerata la vocazione turistica e l'attività di pesca del territorio interessato, in che modo intende agire alla luce della intervenuta relazione del PE 2011/2072;

2. se intende verificare se l'attività di ricerca e la eventuale successiva attività estrattiva avviata a poche miglia dallo coste pugliesi sia conforme a quanto previsto dalla vigente normativa europea ossia la direttiva 92/43/CEE che istituisce la rete Natura 2000 che mira a conservare gli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche (la direttiva Habitat) e la direttiva 2008/56/CE che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria nel campo della politica per l'ambiente marino (direttiva quadro sulla strategia per l'ambiente marino, quale strumento primario per la protezione della biodiversità marina dell'Europa);

3. se considera urgente riesaminare gli aspetti connessi alle prospezioni e all'estrazione di petrolio, nonché un riesame della legislazione pertinente per introdurre uno specifico divieto alle ricerche offshore e alle trivellazioni quando il territorio interessato fonda la sua economia su attività fortemente legate al mare, quali turismo e pesca?

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

Nell'ottobre 2011 la Commissione ha trasmesso una proposta di adesione dell'Unione europea al protocollo della convenzione di Barcellona ([1]) relativo alla protezione dall'inquinamento derivante dall'esplorazione e dallo sfruttamento della piattaforma continentale, del fondo del mare e del suo sottosuolo ([2]). La Commissione appoggia gli sforzi prodigati nel quadro della convenzione di Barcellona per conseguire la piena ed efficiente attuazione del protocollo.

I progetti di trivellazione petrolifera che rischiano di avere un impatto significativo su un sito designato ai sensi della direttiva «Uccelli» o della direttiva «Habitat» ([3]) devono formare oggetto di una opportuna valutazione ambientale. La riduzione dei rischi d'inquinamento associati alle trivellazioni petrolifere è necessaria per contribuire a conseguire un buono stato ecologico nell'ambito della direttiva quadro sulla strategia per l'ambiente marino ([4]). La Commissione rammenta che l'attuazione corretta delle disposizioni della normativa sopra citata e di altra pertinente spetta innanzitutto agli Stati membri. Se l'Italia non adempie agli obblighi che le incombono secondo il diritto dell'UE, la Commissione prenderà le misure del caso a fronte di violazioni comprovate.

La Commissione non intende proporre divieti alle attività offshore nel settore degli idrocarburi, in quanto rispetta pienamente la sovranità degli Stati membri di sfruttare le proprie risorse energetiche. Si aspetta d'altra parte che l'attuazione corretta della normativa vigente in materia, nonché di quella futura che sarà decisa dai colegislatori in base alla proposta presentata dalla Commissione per un regolamento sulla sicurezza delle attività offshore di prospezione, ricerca e produzione nel settore degli idrocarburi ([5]), consenta un livello sufficiente di tutela dell'ambiente marino e lo sfruttamento sostenibile delle riserve offshore di combustibili fossili.

([1]) Convenzione sulla protezione dell'ambiente marino e del litorale del Mediterraneo.
([2]) Proposta di decisione del Consiglio sull'adesione dell'Unione europea al protocollo relativo alla protezione del Mare Mediterraneo dall'inquinamento derivante dall'esplorazione e dallo sfruttamento della piattaforma continentale, del fondo del mare e del suo sottosuolo, COM(2011)690 definitivo.
([3]) Direttiva 92/43/CEE del Consiglio, del 21 maggio 1992, GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([4]) Direttiva 2008/56/CE del Parlamento e del Consiglio, del 17 giugno 2008, GU L 164 del 25.6.2008).
([5]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sulla sicurezza delle attività offshore di prospezione, ricerca e produzione nel settore degli idrocarburi, COM(2011)688 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000898/12
to the Commission

Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Barbara Matera (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Gianni Vattimo (ALDE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Paolo De Castro (S&D), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Gabriele Albertini (PPE), Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Mario Mauro (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Lara Comi (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (PPE), Mario Borghezio (EFD), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Marco Scurria (PPE), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE) and Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)

(2 February 2012)

Subject: Oil drilling near the Apulian coastline in the area between Monopoli and Ostuni

On 20 November 2011, the company Northern Petroleum started seismic prospecting work in order to locate oil fields a few miles off the Apulian coastline, in the area between the municipalities of Monopoli and Ostuni, in Italy. The air-gun methodology used for prospecting consists in violent compressed-air bursts that damage fish and the entire marine ecosystem.

A flourishing tourism sector has developed in the region in question, with thousands of hotels, farmsteads, holiday complexes and bed and breakfasts. This key productive sector is likely to be permanently damaged by oil drilling sites that would transform the sea from a tourist resource to an industrial area. This area is also home to one of Italy's largest fishing fleets, and fishing, which is already going through a severe crisis, is also likely to be severely impacted.

Local authorities (in municipalities, provinces and regions) have taken several formal, administrative and legislative measures expressing their strong opposition to the establishment of oil drilling sites in the Adriatic Sea. This stance is further strengthened by a groundswell of opinion that culminated in a demonstration in Monopoli on 21 January 2012, in which thousands of members of the public, hundreds of associations — including the WWF and Legambiente — and all of the region's institutions took part.

In light of the clear opposition to oil drilling by the region's institutions and its population, can the Commission state:

1. What action it will take in light of Parliament's report No 2011/2072 (adopted), taking into account the importance of tourism in the region concerned and its fishing industry?

2. If it intends to check whether the prospecting and any subsequent drilling that may have started a few miles off the Apulian coastline comply with current EU legislation, i.e. with Council Directive 92/43/EEC establishing the Natura 2000 network with the aim of conserving natural habitats and wild flora and fauna (Habitat Directive) and with Directive 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the main measure for marine biodiversity conservation in Europe)?

3. Whether issues linked to oil prospection and drilling, as well as the relevant legislation, need urgently to be reviewed in order to introduce a specific ban on offshore prospecting and drilling where the affected region's economy is based on activities strongly linked to the sea, such as tourism and fishing?

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

The Commission submitted a proposal for accession of the EU to the Protocol to the Barcelona Convention ([1]) against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf and the seabed and its subsoil ([2]) in October 2011. The Commission supports efforts within the Barcelona Convention to achieve the full and efficient implementation of the Protocol.

Any oil drilling project likely to have a significant impact on a site designated under the Birds or the Habitats Directive ([3]) must be subject to appropriate environmental assessment. Reducing risks and pollution associated with oil drilling is necessary to contribute to achieving good environmental status under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([4]). The Commission recalls that it is primarily the Member States' responsibility to implement correctly the provisions of the abovementioned or other relevant legislation. If Italy fails to comply with its obligations under EC law, the Commission will take appropriate action if there is clear proof of an infringement.

The Commission has no plans to propose bans on offshore oil and gas activities, respecting fully the sovereign right of Member States to exploit their energy resources. At the same time, the Commission expects that the correct implementation of existing relevant legislation, as well as of future legislation to be decided by the co-legislators, following the Commission's proposal for a regulation on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities ([5]), should allow for a sufficient level of protection of the marine environment and for the sustainable exploitation of offshore fossil fuel reserves.

([1]) Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean.
([2]) Proposal for a Council decision on the accession of the European Union to the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf and the seabed and its subsoil, COM(2011) 690 final.
([3]) Directive 1992/43/EEC of the Council, of 21 May 1992, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([4]) Directive 2008/56/EC of the Parliament and of the Council, of 17 June 2008, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.
([5]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on safety of offshore oil and gas prospection, exploration and production activities, COM(2011) 688 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000899/12
al Consiglio
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(2 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Agenzie di rating

Dal credit crunch del 2007 le «Big Three» del rating hanno assunto un'influenza rilevante e spesso iniqua nella determinazione della stabilità europea.

Questa consapevolezza ha portato il Parlamento e il Consiglio ad adottare la direttiva 2009/65/CE che introduce il controllo esterno e il registro di categoria, successivamente aggiornato nel maggio 2011 e reso più stringente.

È stata inoltre istituita ESMA (European Security and Markets Authority) al fine di salvaguardare l'integrità, la trasparenza e l'efficienza del sistema finanziario comunitario. Resta inaccettabile l'influenza di questi organismi di controllo del credito sul sistema politico europeo e di conseguenza sulla vita dei comuni cittadini: basti pensare all'eccessiva tassazione imposta dal nuovo governo italiano a seguito del giudizio da esse dato sul debito del suddetto Stato membro. Inoltre, si ritiene necessario intervenire aumentando la competizione fra le agenzie di rating e agevolando l'entrata sul mercato di nuovi operatori che sono stati recentemente riconosciuti. A tale riguardo, è importante che il futuro regolamento sulle spese che le agenzie di rating dovranno pagare ad ESMA per le attività di supervisione, comporti una differenziazione in relazione all'attività di rating realmente svolte, permettendo così alle piccole agenzie di crescere.

Molte sono state le proposte delle istituzioni europee volte a limitare il potere del rating, come la creazione di un'Agenzia europea o addirittura l'esclusione degli Stati membri dal campo operativo delle suddette agenzie. Si tratta tuttavia di interventi strutturali che presuppongono effetti a lungo termine e che, nel caso della proposta in favore a un'unica Agenzia, vedono la contrapposizione di alcuni Stati membri.

Quali strumenti il Consiglio sta valutando per risolvere un problema che necessita risposte immediate e come intende differenziare la struttura delle spese che devono essere pagate ad ESMA per le attività di supervisione, fra le Big Three e le piccole agenzie di rating che si stanno affacciando sul mercato per incrementare la competizione?

Risposta
(12 aprile 2012)

Sono state presentate al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio proposte della Commissione del 15 novembre 2011 volte a modificare il regolamento (CE) n. 1060/2009 relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito ([1]) (regolamento sulle agenzie di rating) e a modificare la direttiva 2009/65/CE ([2]) (direttiva OICVM) e la direttiva 2011/61/EU ([3]) (direttiva AIFM) per quanto riguarda l'eccessivo affidamento ai rating del credito.

Queste proposte legislative intendono affrontare questioni quali il rischio che i partecipanti ai mercati finanziari facciano eccessivo affidamento sui rating del credito, l'alto grado di concentrazione nel mercato dei rating, la responsabilità civile delle agenzie di rating del credito nei confronti degli investitori, i conflitti di interesse riguardo al modello «issuer pays» e la struttura azionaria delle agenzie di rating del credito nonché questioni attinenti alla frequenza del rating ed alla trasparenza per quanto riguarda i rating del debito sovrano.

Le proposte della Commissione relative a una direttiva sull'accesso all'attività degli enti creditizi e sulla vigilanza prudenziale degli enti creditizi e delle imprese di investimento e a un regolamento relativo ai requisiti prudenziali per gli enti creditizi e le imprese di investimento (il cosiddetto pacchetto legislativo CRD IV) del 20 luglio 2011 sono state anch'esse presentate al Consiglio e al Parlamento europeo. Tali proposte cercano, tra l'altro, di ridurre l'affidamento da parte degli enti creditizi ai rating del credito esterni.

Le quattro proposte legislative vengono attualmente esaminate dal Consiglio e dal Parlamento europeo e sono soggette alla procedura legislativa ordinaria di cui all'articolo 294 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (TFUE).

([1]) GU L 302 del 17.11.2009, pag. 1. Regolamento modificato dal regolamento (CE) n. 513/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio dell'11 maggio 2011 (GU L 145 del 31.5.2011, pag. 30).
([2]) GU L 302 del 17.11.2009, pag. 32.
([3]) GU L 174 dell'1.7.2011, pag. 1.

Occorre notare che il Consiglio europeo del 23 ottobre 2011 ha dichiarato che rafforzare la regolamentazione finanziaria rimane una priorità fondamentale a livello di UE e mondiale. Ha inoltre invitato a realizzare progressi concreti a livello di G20 riducendo, tra l'altro, l'eccessivo affidamento sui rating del credito.

La questione delle commissioni che l'Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati (AESFEM) impone è disciplinata dall'articolo 19 del regolamento sulle agenzie di rating. Al paragrafo 2 di tale articolo la Commissione è incaricata di adottare un regolamento relativo alle commissioni che l'AESFEM impone mediante un atto delegato che stabilisce, tra l'altro, il tipo di commissioni e le attività per le quali esse sono dovute, il loro importo e le modalità di pagamento. L'articolo 19, paragrafo 2, secondo comma prevede che l'importo della commissione imposta a un'agenzia di rating del credito copra tutte le spese amministrative e sia proporzionato al fatturato dell'agenzia stessa. Conformemente a tale base giuridica, il 7 febbraio 2012, la Commissione ha adottato un regolamento delegato che completa il regolamento sulle agenzie di rating per quanto riguarda le commissioni imposte alle agenzie di rating del credito dall'Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati (AESFEM) ([4]).

Per quanto riguarda le commissioni per le agenzie di rating del credito più piccole, il citato regolamento delegato prevede che le commissioni annuali di vigilanza per un'agenzia di rating del credito registrata siano proporzionate al fatturato dell'agenzia stessa, come disposto dall'articolo 19, paragrafo 2 del regolamento sulle agenzie di rating. Le piccole agenzie di rating del credito non appartenenti a un gruppo di agenzie di rating sono esentate dalle commissioni annuali di vigilanza se il loro fatturato annuale è inferiore a 10 milioni di EUR. Un'agenzia di rating del credito appartenente a un gruppo di agenzie di rating viene esentata soltanto se il fatturato annuale aggregato di tutte le agenzie di rating registrate nell'UE appartenenti al gruppo è inferiore a 10 milioni di EUR.

Conformemente alle procedure di cui, tra l'altro, all'articolo 38 quater del regolamento sulle agenzie di rating il Consiglio e il Parlamento europeo stanno esaminando il regolamento delegato al fine di stabilire se sollevare o meno obiezioni al riguardo.

([4]) C(2012)582 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000899/12
to the Council
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Rating agencies

Since the credit crunch in 2007, the 'Big Three' rating agencies have gained a major and often unfair influence over European stability.

In response to this situation Parliament and the Council adopted Directive 2009/65/EC, which introduced external controls and a sectoral register and was subsequently reviewed and made more stringent in May 2011.

The ESMA (European Securities and Markets Authority) was also established, in order to ensure the integrity, transparency and efficiency of the Community's financial system. The influence exerted by these credit rating agencies on the European political system and, consequently, on the life of ordinary citizens is unacceptable: for instance, the new Italian Government has imposed an excessive tax burden as a result of the agencies' evaluation of Italy's debt. It is also thought necessary to intervene in order to increase competition among rating agencies and facilitate market entry for new operators that have recently been recognised. To this end, it is important for the new regulation on the fees that rating agencies will be required to pay the ESMA for supervisory activities to distinguish between rating agencies on the basis of the rating activities actually performed, thus allowing small agencies to grow.

European institutions have put forward a large number of ways of restricting the power of the rating agencies, such as setting up a European Agency or even removing the Member States from the scope of the agencies' rating activities. These, however, are structural initiatives whose effects will only be felt in the long term and which, in the case of the proposal for a single Agency, are being opposed by some Member States.

What measures does the Council plan to take in order to address a problem that calls for immediate solutions, and how does it intend to ensure that the ESMA's fee scale for supervisory activities differentiates between the Big Three and small rating agencies that are just starting out on the market, with a view to increasing competition?

Reply
(12 April 2012)

The Commission proposals of 15 November 2011 to amend Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies ([1]) (the CRA Regulation) and to amend Directive 2009/65/EC ([2]) (the UCITS Directive) and Directive 2011/61/EU ([3]) (the AIFM Directive) in respect of the excessive reliance on credit ratings have been submitted to the European Parliament and to the Council.

These legislative proposals aim to address issues such as the risk of overreliance on credit ratings by financial market participants, the high degree of concentration in the rating market, civil liability of credit rating agencies vis-à-vis investors, conflicts of interests with regard to the issuer-pays model and CRAs' shareholder structure, as well as frequency of rating and transparency issues with regard to sovereign ratings.

The Commission proposals for a directive on the access to the activity of credit institutions and the prudential supervision of credit institutions and investment firms and for a regulation on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms (the so-called CRDIV legislative package) of 20 July 2011 have also been submitted to the Council and the European Parliament. These proposals, *inter alia*, seek to reduce reliance by credit institutions on external credit ratings.

These four legislative proposals are currently being examined by the Council and the European Parliament and are subject to the ordinary legislative procedure as laid down in Article 294 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

It should be noted that the European Council on 23 October 2011 stated that strengthening financial regulation remains a key priority at the EU and global levels. It has also called for real progress at G20 level, on, *inter alia*, reducing overreliance on credit ratings.

([1]) OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, p. 1. Regulation as amended by Regulation (EU) No 513/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011 (OJ L 145, 31.5.2011, p. 30).
([2]) OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, p. 32.
([3]) OJ L 174, 1.7.2011, p. 1.

The issue of fees that European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) would charge is regulated by Article 19 of the CRA Regulation. Under paragraph 2 of that article, the Commission is mandated to adopt a regulation on fees to be charged by ESMA by means of a delegated act which, *inter alia*, will determine the type of fees and the matters for which fees are due, the amount of the fees and the way in which they are to be paid. Article 19(2), second subparagraph, provides that the amount of a fee charged to a credit rating agency is to cover all administrative costs and be proportionate to the turnover of the credit rating agency concerned. In accordance with this legal basis, the Commission on 7 February 2012 adopted a delegated Regulation supplementing the CRA Regulation with regard to fees charged by the ESMA to credit rating agencies ([4]).

With regard to fees for smaller credit rating agencies, the abovementioned delegated Regulation provides that the annual supervisory fee for a registered credit rating agency will be proportional to its total turnover as required by Article 19 (2) of the CRA Regulation. Small credit rating agencies which do not belong to a group of credit rating agencies would be exempted from annual supervisory fees if their annual turnover is less than EUR 10 million. Where a credit rating agency belongs to a group of credit rating agencies, it would only be exempted if the aggregate annual turnover of all EU registered credit rating agencies belonging to the group was less than EUR 10 million.

Following the procedure laid down, *inter alia*, in Article 38c of the CRA Regulation, the Council and the European Parliament are scrutinising this delegated Regulation, with a view to determining whether they will raise any objections to it.

([4]) C(2012) 582 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000900/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(2 febbraio 2012)

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È stata inoltre istituita ESMA (European Security and Markets Authority) al fine di salvaguardare l'integrità, la trasparenza e l'efficienza del sistema finanziario comunitario. Resta inaccettabile l'influenza di questi organismi di controllo del credito sul sistema politico europeo e di conseguenza sulla vita dei comuni cittadini: basti pensare all'eccessiva tassazione imposta dal nuovo governo italiano a seguito del giudizio da esse dato sul debito del suddetto Stato membro. Inoltre, si ritiene necessario intervenire aumentando la competizione fra le agenzie di rating e agevolando l'entrata sul mercato di nuovi operatori che sono stati recentemente riconosciuti. A tale riguardo, è importante che il futuro regolamento sulle spese che le agenzie di rating dovranno pagare ad ESMA per le attività di supervisione, comporti una differenziazione in relazione all'attività di rating realmente svolte, permettendo così alle piccole agenzie di crescere.

Molte sono state le proposte delle istituzioni europee volte a limitare il potere del rating, come la creazione di un'Agenzia europea o addirittura l'esclusione degli Stati membri dal campo operativo delle suddette agenzie. Si tratta tuttavia di interventi strutturali che presuppongono effetti a lungo termine e che, nel caso della proposta in favore a un'unica Agenzia, vedono la contrapposizione di alcuni Stati membri.

Quali strumenti la Commissione sta valutando per risolvere un problema che necessita risposte immediate e come intende differenziare la struttura delle spese che devono essere pagate ad ESMA per le attività di supervisione, fra le Big Three e le piccole agenzie di rating che si stanno affacciando sul mercato per incrementare la competizione?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 marzo 2012)

La Commissione condivide l'opinione dell'onorevole parlamentare sulla necessità di potenziare la concorrenza tra le agenzie di rating del credito e di agevolare l'ingresso di nuovi operatori nel mercato. Il terzo pacchetto sulle agenzie di rating del credito ([1]) contiene una serie di misure volte a ridurre le barriere che ostacolano l'accesso al mercato del rating. Ad esempio, la rotazione obbligatoria offre un'opportunità concreta alle piccole agenzie di rating del credito di competere per nuove attività, mentre una scala di rating armonizzata e una base dati pubblica (EURIX) renderanno facilmente raffrontabili tutti i rating e aiuteranno le piccole agenzie non ancora note a costruirsi una reputazione.

Per quanto riguarda i diritti che le agenzie di rating devono versare all'Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati (AESFEM) per la registrazione e la vigilanza sulle agenzie stesse, il 7 febbraio 2012 la Commissione ha adottato un regolamento delegato che è stato trasmesso al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio e che istituisce diritti consoni per le piccole agenzie di rating e per i potenziali nuovi operatori sul mercato. Ad esempio, le agenzie di rating (o, nel caso, un gruppo di agenzie di rating europee) il cui fatturato non supera i 10 milioni di euro sono esentate dal pagamento dei diritti annuali di vigilanza. Il regolamento dispone inoltre che, nel calcolare l'importo dei diritti che saranno versati dalle singole agenzie di rating, si tenga conto solo del fatturato per la fornitura di rating (e servizi ausiliari), non del fatturato globale. Per entrare in vigore il regolamento dovrà essere approvato dal Parlamento europeo e dal Consiglio.

([1]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che modifica il regolamento (CE) n. 1060/2009 relativo alle agenzie di rating del credito e proposta di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che modifica la direttiva 2009/65/CE concernente il coordinamento delle disposizioni legislative, regolamentari ed amministrative in materia di taluni organismi di investimento collettivo in valori mobiliari (OICVM) e la direttiva 2011/61/UE sui gestori di fondi di investimento alternativi, per quanto riguarda l'eccessivo affidamento ai rating del credito. Disponibile all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/agencies/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000900/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Rating agencies

Since the credit crunch in 2007, the 'Big Three' rating agencies have gained a major and often unfair influence over European stability.

In response to this situation Parliament and the Council adopted Directive 2009/65/EC, which introduced external controls and a sectoral register and was subsequently reviewed and made more stringent in May 2011.

The ESMA (European Securities and Markets Authority) was also established, in order to ensure the integrity, transparency and efficiency of the Community's financial system. The influence exerted by these credit rating agencies on the European political system and, consequently, on the life of ordinary citizens is unacceptable: for instance, the new Italian Government has imposed an excessive tax burden as a result of the agencies' evaluation of Italy's debt. It is also thought necessary to intervene in order to increase competition among rating agencies and facilitate market entry for new operators that have recently been recognised. To this end, it is important for the new regulation on the fees that rating agencies will be required to pay the ESMA for supervisory activities to distinguish between rating agencies on the basis of the rating activities actually performed, thus allowing small agencies to grow.

European institutions have put forward a large number of ways of restricting the power of the rating agencies, such as setting up a European Agency or even removing the Member States from the scope of the agencies' rating activities. These, however, are structural initiatives whose effects will only be felt in the long term and which, in the case of the proposal for a single Agency, are being opposed by some Member States.

What measures does the Commission plan to take in order to address a problem that calls for immediate solutions, and how does it intend to ensure that the ESMA's fee scale for supervisory activities differentiates between the Big Three and small rating agencies that are just starting out on the market, with a view to increasing competition?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that it is necessary to increase competition among rating agencies and facilitate market entry for new operators. The CRA3 proposal ([1]) contains a set of measures aiming to reduce barriers to entry into the rating market. For example, mandatory rotation will give a real possibility for smaller CRAs to compete for new business, whereas a harmonised rating scale and a public database (EURIX) will make all ratings easily comparable and will help smaller and less well-known credit rating agencies (CRAs) to build their reputation.

As regards the fees that CRAs will have to pay to the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) for their registration and supervision, the Commission adopted a Delegated Regulation on 7 February 2012. It was communicated to the European Parliament and the Council. This regulation sets proportionate fees for small CRAs and potential new entrants into the market. For instance, those CRAs (or, if applicable, a group of European CRAs) whose turnover do(es) not exceed EUR 10 million will be exempted from annual supervisory fees. Moreover, the regulation provides that, when calculating the amount of fees that shall be paid by individual CRAs, only the turnover from the provision of rating and ancillary services, rather than the total turnover, will be taken into account. The regulation is subject to agreement by the European Parliament and the Council before it can enter into force.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 on credit rating agencies and proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/65/EC on the coordination of laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to undertakings of collective investment in transferable securities (UCITS) and Directive 2011/61/EU on Alternative Investment Funds Managers in respect of the excessive reliance on credit ratings.
Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/agencies/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000901/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: L'euro e la Germania

L'eurozona è in ebollizione, l'euro è sotto attacco e perde valore, gli Stati membri afflitti dal debito pubblico sono colpiti da una crisi senza precedenti e i sacrifici imposti ai loro cittadini incontrano forti reazioni tra le categorie colpite. I politici si interrogano sul fatto che sia colpa della crisi finanziaria, che ha scatenato quella economica oppure se il responsabile è l'euro che non è espressione di una politica economica comune e non dipende da una banca centrale in grado di garantire la solvibilità delle banche della zona euro.

Nel frattempo la Germania, con l'aiuto della Francia, impone agli Stati membri indebitati un regime di forte austerità, con tagli giganteschi ai bilanci e quindi sacrifici enormi e non sempre equi a certe categorie di cittadini. Nello stesso tempo però, mentre si cerca freneticamente di superare la crisi della zona euro, in Germania sono stati presentati recentemente degli scenari per «il dopo euro» che contraddicono pubblicamente l'affermazione del governo che «non c'è alternativa all'euro». Il primo scenario è stato presentato su «Der Spiegel» il 16 gennaio scorso da Wolfgang Reitzle, amministratore delegato di Linde, il principale produttore di gas industriali, e il secondo sulla «Neue Zuercher Zeitung» il 19 gennaio dall'economista Renate Ohr dell'Università di Goettingen. Il primo autore propone l'uscita dall'euro e il ritorno a un deutschmark rivalutato, mentre il secondo auspica «una svalutazione esterna dei paesi in deficit» attraverso un'uscita dall'Unione monetaria, che non necessariamente significherebbe l'uscita anche dall'UE.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se ha un'opinione in merito a questi due scenari;

2. se ritiene che questa pubblica discussione sul dopo euro indebolisca la posizione ufficiale del governo tedesco e renda poco credibili e poco affidabili le proposte del cancelliere Merkel;

3. se pensa che questi scenari, qualora realizzati, porterebbero a un aumento della disoccupazione e a un aggravamento pesante dell'austerità per la popolazione?

Risposta data da Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(27 marzo 2012)

L'Unione europea non ha ancora superato questo periodo di forte crisi e diversi Stati membri devono fare fronte a sfide importanti. In particolare, tra alcuni paesi dell'area dell'euro si sono venuti a creare forti squilibri di bilancio e divari in materia di competitività.

Per reagire alla crisi straordinariamente complessa e profonda emersa in seguito a tali sviluppi si è resa necessaria l'adozione di una strategia decisa, globale e coordinata, che le istituzioni europee e gli Stati membri hanno messo a punto in stretta collaborazione. Il pacchetto rafforzato sulla governance (*six pack*, *fiscal compact*) e il giro di vite sulla sorveglianza nel quadro del semestre europeo nonché l'introduzione di meccanismi finanziari di protezione (EFSF ([1]), EFSM ([2]) e ESM ([3])) e di programmi di assistenza finanziaria a favore di singoli Stati membri sono iniziative fondamentali per superare la crisi e prevenire che tali situazioni si ripresentino in futuro.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, la Commissione ribadisce il proprio impegno incondizionato a favore dell'euro come valuta dell'Unione economica e monetaria e non intende esprimersi in merito ad eventuali scenari alternativi, né ha analizzato le conseguenze di scenari analoghi a quelli esposti dall'onorevole parlamentare. In questo contesto la Commissione non intende infine pronunciarsi in merito a questioni di politica interna relative alla Germania.

([1]) European Financial Stability Facility (sistema europeo delle autorità di vigilanza finanziaria).
([2]) European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (meccanismo europeo di stabilizzazione finanziaria).
([3]) European Stability Mechanism (meccanismo europeo di stabilità).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000901/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: The euro and Germany

The eurozone is in turmoil, the euro is under attack and losing value, public debt-laden Member States have been hit by an unprecedented crisis and the sacrifices imposed on their citizens are causing uproar among those affected. Politicians are asking themselves whether the root cause is the financial crisis, which triggered an economic one, or whether the culprit is the euro, which does not give practical expression to a common economic policy and does not depend on a central bank capable of guaranteeing the solvency of the eurozone's banks.

In the meantime, Germany, with France's support, is imposing a strict austerity regime on indebted Member States, involving massive budget cuts and, as a result, huge sacrifices that are not always fair to some sections of society. At the same time, however, whilst frantic efforts are being made to solve the eurozone crisis, 'post-euro' scenarios that publicly contradict the German Government's assertion that 'there is no alternative to the euro' are being put forward in that country. The first scenario was proposed on 16 January 2012 in *Der Spiegel* by Wolfgang Reitzle, Chief Executive of Linde, the leading manufacturer of industrial gases, and the second on 19 January 2012 in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* by the Göttingen University economist Renate Ohr. The former proposed that Germany should leave the euro and return to a revalued deutschmark, whilst the latter advocated 'an external devaluation of deficit countries' through their exit from monetary union, although this would not also necessarily entail them leaving the EU.

1. What view does the Commission take of these two scenarios?

2. Does it think that the public discussion of post-euro scenarios is weakening the German Government's official position and undermining the credibility and plausibility of Chancellor Merkel's proposals?

3. Does it think that these scenarios, if they were to come to fruition, would lead to increased unemployment and the imposition of much more stringent austerity policies?

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

The European Union indeed continues to experience a pronounced crisis, with many Member States facing considerable challenges. In particular, significant fiscal imbalances and competitiveness divergences have developed between some euro area countries.

To resolve the extraordinarily complex and profound crisis resulting from such developments, a decisive, comprehensive and coordinated strategy is necessary and has been developed by the European institutions and Member States in close cooperation. The reinforced governance package (six-pack, compact) and the reinforcement of surveillance in the context of the European Semester, the creation of financial backstops (EFSF ([1]), EFSM ([2]), ESM ([3])) as well as financial assistance programmes for individual Member States are key elements to overcome the crisis and prevent similar developments in the future.

In the light of this, the Commission remains wholly committed to the euro as the currency of the economic and monetary union and has no comment to make on any other scenario, nor has it analysed the consequences of scenarios such as those described. The Commission does not have any comments on German domestic politics in this context.

([1]) European Financial Stability Facility.
([2]) European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism.
([3]) European Stability Mechanism.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-000902/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(1. februar 2012)

Om: Polycykliske aromatiske hydrocarboner (PAH'er) i børneprodukter

Polycykliske aromatiske hydrocarboner (PAH'er) er en gruppe stoffer, hvoraf nogle er kræftfremkaldende.

Miljøstyrelsen i Danmark kunne den 13. januar 2012 offentliggøre en undersøgelse, der viste, at spor af PAH'er kunne findes i alle 20 undersøgte stykker legetøj og børneprodukter i gummi og plast. Man fandt, at der i hvert eneste produkt var mindst en ud af 18 PAH'er. Undersøgelsen viste endvidere, at undersøgte cykeldæk og håndtagene på et løbehjul havde de højeste koncentrationer af PAH'er.

Jeg er orienteret om, at Kommissionen netop nu ser på, hvordan man kan regulere PAH'er i EU.

— Hvor langt er Kommissionen nået i sin undersøgelse af regulering af PAH'er i EU?

— Støtter Kommissionen et forbud mod PAH'er i produkter til børn?

— Mener Kommissionen, at PAH'er bør inkluderes i lovgivningen om legetøj — ud over de nuværende krav om, at legetøj ikke må indeholde farlige stoffer i mængder, der kan skade sundheden?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Antonio Tajani
(22. februar 2012)

Kommissionen har kendskab til den undersøgelse, som Miljøstyrelsen har offentliggjort.

Kommissionen er forpligtet til at beskytte forbrugernes helbred, især børns, og har for nylig på mødet vedrørende REACH (registrering, vurdering og godkendelse af samt begrænsninger for kemikalier) drøftet et forslag med de kompetente myndigheder, jf. artikel 68, stk. 2, i forordning (EF) nr. 1907/2006 (REACH) ([1]) for at begrænse indholdet af kræftfremkaldende polycykliske aromatiske hydrocarboner (PAH'er) i forbrugerprodukter, som kan anvendes af børn under 14 år, i sammenhæng med dækningsområdet i direktiv 2009/48/EF ([2]) (legetøjsdirektivet). Et sådant forslag ville også omfatte produkter, der er dækket af legetøjsdirektivet.

Kommissionen er i øjeblikket ved igen at se på forslaget under hensyntagen til bemærkninger, modtaget fra eksperter blandt interesserede parter og de kompetente REACH-myndigheder, og overvejer forskellige måder til så hurtigt som muligt at træffe en afgørelse herom.

De eksisterende oplysninger, herunder resultaterne af Miljøstyrelsens undersøgelse, vil blive evalueret, inden forslaget færdigbehandles.

([1]) Forordning (EF) nr. 1907/2006 om registrering, vurdering og godkendelse af samt begrænsninger for kemikalier (REACH), om oprettelse af et europæisk kemikalieagentur og om ændring af direktiv 1999/45/EF og ophævelse af Rådets forordning (EØF) nr. 793/93 og Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 1488/94 samt Rådets direktiv 76/769/EØF og Kommissionens direktiver 91/155/EØF, 93/67/EØF, 93/105/EF og 2000/21/EF (EUT L 396 af 30.12.2006, s. 1).

([2]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2009/48/EF af 18. juni 2009 om sikkerhedskrav til legetøj (EUT L 170 af 30.6.2009, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000902/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in children's products

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are a group of substances, some of which can cause cancer.

On 13 January 2012, the Danish Environmental Protection Agency published the results of a study which showed that traces of PAHs were found in all 20 of the rubber and plastic toys and children's products examined. At least one of the 18 PAHs was present in every single one of these products. The study also found that a bicycle tyre and the handles of a scooter had the highest concentrations of PAHs.

I am told that the Commission is currently examining means of regulating PAHs within the EU.

— How much progress has the Commission made in investigating the regulation of PAHs in the EU?

— Does the Commission support a ban on PAHs in children's products?

— Does the Commission think that PAHs should be included in the legislation on toys — beyond the present requirement that toys may not contain hazardous substances in amounts which may be harmful to health?

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

The Commission is aware of the study published by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Commission is committed to the protection of consumers' health, particularly of children, and has recently discussed at the REACH Competent Authorities meeting a proposal under Article 68(2) of Regulation (EC) 1907/2006 (REACH) ([1]), to limit the content of carcinogenic PAHs in consumer articles that could be used by children under 14 years of age, in coherence with the scope of Directive 2009/48/EC ([2]) (Toys Directive). Such proposal would include articles covered by the Toys Directive.

The Commission is currently re-examining the proposal taking into account the comments received from stakeholder experts and REACH Competent Authorities and is considering different ways to finalise it within the shortest possible time.

The existing information, including the results of the Danish EPA study, will be evaluated before the proposal is finalised.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 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).

([2]) Directive 2009/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the safety of toys (OJ L 170, 30.06.2009, p. 1).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000903/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(14 februari 2012)

Betreft: Visumvrij reizen voor Kosovo

Eurocommissaris Malmström is met Kosovo in gesprek over visumvrij reizen door de EU voor de Kosovaarse burgers.

Door de EU-lidstaten Cyprus, Griekenland, Roemenië, Slowakije en Spanje wordt Kosovo echter niet als onafhankelijke staat erkend. Met betrekking tot deze lidstaten heb ik de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Dialogue launched with Kosovo on visa free travel" ([1])?

2. Wat is de positie van een Kosovaarse burger in lidstaten die Kosovo niet erkennen? Welke nationaliteit heeft iemand uit Kosovo in een lidstaat die Kosovo niet erkent?

3. Voorziet Schengen in een faciliteit visa toe te kennen aan dergelijke niet-bestaande nationaliteiten? Zo ja, op welke regel is dit gebaseerd? Hoe kan iemand visumvrij reizen op een niet-erkend paspoort?

4. Is het de Commissie bekend dat Kosovo op de corruptie-index van „Transparency International" een 2.9 scoort ([2]), wat betekent dat corruptie er wijdverbreid is? Zal dit effect hebben op de duur en inhoud van de visumonderhandelingen? Zo ja, welk effect?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(14 maart 2012)

Op 19 januari 2012 is de Commissie een dialoog over visumliberalisering met Kosovo ([3]) aangegaan. Aangezien de erkenning van staten onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten valt, kan de Europese Unie noch de Europese Commissie een standpunt innemen over de status van Kosovo. Daarom zal de Commissie deze dialoog met Kosovo vanuit een statusneutraal standpunt voeren.

De gemeenschappelijke Visumcode (Verordening nr. 810/2009) regelt de procedures en voorwaarden voor de afgifte van visa. Artikel 29, lid 2, van de Visumcode bepaalt: „Indien de lidstaat van afgifte het reisdocument van de aanvrager niet erkent, wordt gebruikgemaakt van het afzonderlijke blad voor het aanbrengen van een visum". Dat wordt gedaan in de lidstaten die Kosovo niet erkennen.

De Commissie is zich bewust van de uitdagingen waarvoor Kosovo staat bij het opbouwen van een moderne rechtstaat waarin de grondrechten worden geëerbiedigd. Om aan de voorwaarden voor een mogelijke visumliberalisering te voldoen, moet Kosovo een aantal hervormingen en maatregelen doorvoeren in de strijd tegen georganiseerde misdaad en corruptie, die een belangrijke rol zal spelen in de dialoog. De Commissie zal het Europees Parlement regelmatig op de hoogte houden van de vorderingen in de visumdialoog.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/malmstrom/news/default_en.htm#20120120.
([2]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.
([3]) Overeenkomstig Resolutie 1244/1999 van de VN-Veiligheidsraad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000903/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(14 February 2012)

Subject: Visa-free travel for Kosovars

Commissioner Malmström is in discussion with the Kosovan authorities regarding visa-free travel to the EU for Kosovar citizens.

However, Kosovo is not recognised as an independent state by EU Member States Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. I have the following questions with regard to these Member States:

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report 'Dialogue launched with Kosovo on visa free travel'? ([1])

2. What is the position of a Kosovar citizen in Member States which do not recognise Kosovo? What nationality does someone from Kosovo have in a Member State which does not recognise Kosovo?

3. Does Schengen have a facility enabling visas to be granted to such non-existent nationalities? If so, on what rule is this based? How can someone travel without requiring a visa on an unrecognised passport?

4. Is the Commission aware that Kosovo has a score of 2.9 on the Transparency International corruption index ([2]), which means that corruption is widespread there? Will this have an impact on the duration and content of the visa negotiations? If so, what impact?

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

The Commission launched a visa liberalisation dialogue with Kosovo ([3]) on 19 January 2012. As the recognition of states is a Member State competence, the European Union, including the European Commission, cannot take a position on Kosovo's status. Therefore, the Commission shall conduct the visa liberalisation dialogue with Kosovo in a status-neutral fashion.

The Community Code on Visas (Regulation 819/2009) regulates the procedures and conditions concerning the issuing of visas. Article 29(2) of the Visa Code provides that 'Where the issuing Member State does not recognise the applicant's travel document, the separate sheet for affixing a visa shall be used'. This is the practice used by Member States that do not recognise Kosovo.

The Commission is fully aware of the challenges that Kosovo faces in building a modern state based on the rule of law and fundamental rights. The fight against organised crime and corruption will play a prominent role in the visa liberalisation dialogue with Kosovo, with a number of reforms and measures for Kosovo as a condition of progressing towards potential visa liberalisation. The Commission will regularly inform the European Parliament of developments in the visa dialogue.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/malmstrom/news/default_en.htm#20120120.
([2]) http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/.
([3]) Under UNSCR 1244/1999.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000904/12
a la Comisión
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(2 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Importaciones de tomates marroquíes

España, Francia e Italia presentaron el pasado año una declaración conjunta a la Comisión Europea en donde pedían una modificación del régimen de aplicación del sistema de precios de entrada para las importaciones de frutas y hortalizas. Los tres países reclaman la incorporación, dentro del reglamento de ejecución de la Organización Común de Mercado (OCM), de las disposiciones jurídicas necesarias que permitan a las autoridades aduaneras nacionales comprobar la veracidad de las declaraciones realizadas por los importadores sobre el precio real al que han sido vendidas las mercancías.

En respuesta a varias preguntas que presenté recientemente sobre la entrada masiva de importaciones de tomates marroquíes el pasado mes de octubre, la Comisión obvia mencionar los problemas de aplicación a los que da lugar el régimen de precios de entrada en vigor.

¿Cuándo va a reconocer la Comisión los fallos del sistema?

¿Tiene la Comisión intención de proponer alguna modificación del mismo?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de marzo de 2012)

En la propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo por el que se crea la organización común de mercados de los productos agrícolas se ha propuesto un ajuste de las modalidades vigentes del sistema de precios de entrada al Código Aduanero.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000904/12
to the Commission
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Imports of Moroccan tomatoes

Last year Spain, France and Italy submitted a joint declaration to the European Commission in which they sought changes to the arrangements for applying the entry price system for fruit and vegetable imports. The three countries called for the necessary legal measures to enable national customs authorities to check the truth of declarations made by importers regarding the actual price at which they sold the goods to be incorporated into the regulation implementing the common market organisation (CMO).

In response to several questions I recently asked regarding the huge influx of Moroccan tomato imports last October, the Commission neglected to mention the implementation problems brought about by the current entry price system.

When will the Commission acknowledge the failings of the system?

Does the Commission intend to propose any amendments to the system?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

In the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Common Organisation of the Markets in agricultural products, an alignment of the current modalities of the entry price system with the Custom Code has been proposed.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000905/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(2 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Sanções faseadas impostas ao Irão

Tendo em conta:

— Os reveses das relações UE-Irão desde 2005 devido às intenções das autoridades iranianas na execução do programa nuclear, que, segundo fontes internacionais, não terá como objetivo fins pacíficos, sublinhando, simultaneamente, a falta de cooperação com a Agência Internacional de Energia Atómica (AIEA), que levou à adoção pelo CS da ONU de resoluções em 2006, 2007, 2008 e 2010;

— O último relatório da AIEA, de outubro de 2011, que reforça as dúvidas quanto ao fim do programa nuclear iraniano, uma vez que foram encontradas provas de desenvolvimento de tecnologia militar para fins nucleares;

— O facto de a dependência da UE face ao crude iraniano, em especial nos casos de Espanha, Itália e Grécia, e a procura de fontes alternativas ter levado a UE a aplicar um embargo faseado ao petróleo iraniano, de modo a não criar uma escalada nos preços do crude a nível mundial, uma vez que o Irão é o quarto maior produtor de petróleo, fornecendo cerca 450 mil barris por dia aos Estados-Membros;

— O facto de fontes governamentais de Teerão terem já anunciado que estão indiferentes às novas sanções, destacando que as «necessidades energéticas mundiais são tais que é impossível sancionar o Irão»;

Pergunta-se à Vice-presidente / Alta Representante da União para os Negócios Estrangeiros e a Política de Segurança:

1. Se o embargo imposto ao petróleo e produtos associados de modo faseado, tendo em conta o aprovisionamento de alguns Estados-Membros e o efeito do referido embargo na escalada dos preços, não põe em causa a própria essência da sanção, uma vez que a medida só entrará plenamente em vigor em julho, após a reavaliação de maio?

2. O que entende por comércio legítimo sob estritas condições? Não considera importante a elaboração de uma lista dos bens que considera comerciáveis numa altura em que se pretende sancionar um país?

3. Existe algum tipo de diálogo com os países terceiros, nomeadamente com os países asiáticos, principal destino do crude iraniano, e a Rússia, sobre a possibilidade de estes aplicarem as mesmas sanções?

4. Se já considerou quais os efeitos, em termos de aprovisionamento energético europeu, da possibilidade de as autoridades iranianas encerrarem o estreito de Ormuz, canal estratégico para o tráfego mundial marítimo de crude?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2012)

A Decisão do Conselho de proibir a importação de petróleo iraniano prevê uma exceção para os contratos concluídos antes de 23 de janeiro de 2012 até 1 de julho de 2012. Esta exceção permite um período de transição que pode facilitar a adaptação à medida. Não põe em causa a natureza intrínseca das sanções.

No que respeita ao comércio legítimo com o Irão, permite-se a sua continuação e é precisamente com base nesta lógica que se elaborou uma lista de produtos proibidos que consta das sanções em causa. As condições estritas referem-se à obrigação das instituições financeiras exercerem uma vigilância contínua sobre os movimentos das contas respeitantes ao Irão, sobre o sistema de autorizações prévias e notificações de transferências superiores a certos montantes, tal como previsto no artigo 10.° da Decisão do Conselho 2010/413, de 26 de julho de 2010, e ainda sobre outros elementos incluídos nas medidas que condicionam o comércio legítimo.

De um modo geral, a UE gostaria de ver os países terceiros a alinharem as suas medidas com as medidas restritivas da UE, desde que tais medidas sejam adotadas de forma autónoma. O mesmo se aplica no caso das recentes medidas contra o Irão e a UE mantém contactos com países terceiros sobre o assunto.

A UE está perfeitamente consciente das possíveis consequências da medida a nível internacional, bem como das eventuais reações por parte do Irão. A UE está em contacto com os seus parceiros internacionais, a fim de resolver qualquer problema que possa surgir.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000905/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Phased sanctions imposed on Iran

Having regard to:

— the setbacks in EU-Iran relations since 2005 due to Iran's intentions to implement a nuclear programme, which, according to international sources, is not for peaceful purposes, while underlining its lack of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has led to the adoption of resolutions in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010 by the United Nations Security Council;

— the last IAEA report of October 2011, which adds to the doubts about the aim of the Iranian nuclear programme, given that some of the evidence brought to light suggests that military technology is being developed for nuclear applications;

— the fact that the EU's dependence on Iranian crude oil, particularly in the case of Spain, Italy and Greece, and the search for alternative sources have led the EU to impose a phased embargo on Iranian oil, so as to avoid a rise in global crude oil prices, given that Iran is the fourth largest producer of oil and supplies the Member States with around 450 000 barrels per day;

— the fact that government sources in Tehran have already announced that they do not care about the new sanctions and have pointed out that global energy requirements are such that it is impossible to impose sanctions on Iran;

I would like to ask the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy the following:

1. Taking account of some of the Member States' provisions and of its effect on price increases, does not the phased embargo imposed on oil and related goods call into question the intrinsic nature of the sanctions approach, given that the measure will not fully come into force until July, following the reassessment in May?

2. What does she understand by legitimate trade under strict conditions? Does she not feel that it is important to draw up a list of what are considered to be marketable commodities when sanctions are to be imposed on a country?

3. Is there any kind of dialogue being carried on with third countries, especially with Asian countries, which are the main importers of Iranian crude oil, and Russia, to determine whether they might apply the same sanctions?

4. In terms of Europe's energy supply, have the possible effects of the closure by the Iranian authorities of the Strait of Hormuz — a strategic channel for global seaborne trade in crude oil — been taken into account?

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

The decision by the Council to prohibit the import of Iranian oil indeed provides for an exemption for contracts concluded before 23 January 2012 until 1 July 2012. This allows for a transition period which may facilitate adjustment to the measure. It does not call into question the intrinsic nature of the sanctions approach.

Regarding legitimate trade with Iran, this is allowed to continue and it is precisely on the basis of this logic that prohibited goods are listed in the relevant sanctions acts. The strict conditions refer to the obligation on financial institutions to exercise continuous vigilance over account activity regarding Iran and the system of prior authorisations and notifications for transfers above certain thresholds as set out in Article 10 of Council Decision 2010/413 of 26 July 2010 and other elements in the measures which condition legitimate trade.

The EU generally would like to see third countries align themselves with EU restrictive measures when it takes such measures on an autonomous basis. This is equally the case with regard to the latest measures against Iran and the EU is in contact with third countries on this.

The EU is well aware of the possible consequences of the measure on the international level, including possible reactions by Iran. The EU is in contact with international partners in order to address any such issue which may arise.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000908/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μνημόνιο και κόστος παραμονής της ελληνικής στρατιωτικής δύναμης στο Κόσοβο, στρατιωτικές συμβάσεις και ύψος εξοπλιστικών δαπανών

Είναι κοινός τόπος στην Ελλάδα ότι όσα συμβαίνουν στην ελληνική δημόσια διοίκηση τα τελευταία δυο χρόνια του Μνημονίου δεν έχουν προηγούμενο. Περικοπές μισθών και συντάξεων, κατάργηση επιδομάτων και κοινωνικών παροχών, ιδιωτικοποίηση δημοσίων υπηρεσιών, καταστρατήγηση συλλογικών συμβάσεων, παράνομες και αντισυνταγματικές απολύσεις, συστηματική καταπάτηση της κοινοτικής νομοθεσίας, εξώθηση σε παραίτηση χιλιάδων εργαζομένων και άλλα. Ανάλογη είναι η κατάσταση στο προσωπικό των ενόπλων δυνάμεων, με αποτέλεσμα να έχει δημιουργηθεί βαθύ κλίμα απογοήτευσης. Ο φόβος ότι έρχονται και χειρότερα μέτρα έχουν οδηγήσει σε κύματα παραιτήσεων και αποστρατεύσεων ικανών και έμπειρων στελεχών. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο προκαλεί οργή το γεγονός ότι στο Κόσοβο, την ίδια στιγμή που οι περισσότερες χώρες έχουν αποσύρει τις δυνάμεις τους, βρίσκονται αυτή τη στιγμή πολλές εκατοντάδες στελέχη των ελληνικών ενόπλων δυνάμεων, των οποίων η παρουσία εκεί δεν εξυπηρετεί την άμυνα της χώρας και το κόστος μισθοδοσίας,συντήρησης και κάθε άλλο έξοδο βαραίνει τον ελληνικό προϋπολογισμό.

Ανάλογα αισθήματα προκαλούν πληροφορίες, που έχουν δημοσιευθεί στον ευρωπαϊκό τύπο,ότι η Ελλάδα δέχεται πιέσεις από μεγάλες χώρες μέλη της ΕΕ να προβεί σε αγορά οπλικών συστημάτων, σε μια περίοδο μάλιστα που η οικονομική κατάσταση της Ελλάδας και των πολιτών της είναι τραγική.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με δεδομένο ότι η Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο της Τρόικας έχει προτείνει κατά καιρούς σειρά μέτρων, όπως μειώσεις μισθών, απολύσεις υπαλλήλων κλπ, για την εξοικονόμηση των δημοσίων δαπανών, προτίθεται να προτείνει και την απόσυρση των ελληνικών ενόπλων δυνάμεων από το Κόσοβο; Γνωρίζει το ετήσιο κόστος παραμονής της ελληνικής στρατιωτικής δύναμης στο Κόσοβο;

2. Με δεδομένο ότι στα ελληνικά νοσοκομεία αρχίζουν να λείπουν και τα στοιχειώδη μέσα ιατροφαρμακευτικής περίθαλψης, μπορεί να μας βεβαιώσει η Επιτροπή, ότι οι συμβάσεις που έχουν υπογραφεί και οι εξοπλιστικές δαπάνες της Ελλάδας τα δύο τελευταία χρόνια, και οι οποίες συνήθως εξυπηρετούν ανάγκες άλλες πέραν των αμυντικών αναγκών, είναι μειωμένες;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει καμία αρμοδιότητα όσον αφορά την παρουσία των ελληνικών ενόπλων δυνάμεων στο Κοσσυφοπέδιο ([1]) ή αλλού. Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει το ετήσιο κόστος της ελληνικής στρατιωτικής δύναμης στο Κοσσυφοπέδιο.

Επίσης, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει καμία αρμοδιότητα όσον αφορά τις εθνικές αποφάσεις για τις αμυντικές δαπάνες.

Η Επιτροπή καλεί το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου να υποβάλει αυτά τα ερωτήματα και τις υποδείξεις του στην Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση.

([1]) Δυνάμει της απόφασης 1244/1999 του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000908/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: The Memorandum and the cost of maintaining a Greek military presence in Kosovo, military contracts and spending on arms purchases

It is a commonplace in Greece that everything affecting the Greek public administration over the last two years as a consequence of the Memorandum is entirely unprecedented, examples being, cuts in pay and pensions, the abolition of subsidies and social benefits, privatisation of public services, circumvention of collective agreements, illegal and unconstitutional dismissals, systematic infringement of Community legislation and thousands of working people being forced into resignation. The situation is similar in the armed forces, where the resulting climate is one of profound disillusion. The fear that even worse measures are still to come has led to a wave of resignations and the demobilisation of capable and experienced cadres. It is therefore outrageous that, at a time when most countries have withdrawn their forces from Kosovo, the Greek armed forces are remaining there in their hundreds, despite the fact that their presence there is not helping to defend the country, their salaries and maintenance costs and all other expenses being met by Greece.

Similar sentiments are aroused when information comes to light in the European press that Greece is being pressured by the larger EU Member States into purchasing weapons systems at a time when the country and its citizens are facing major economic hardship.

In view of this:

1. Given that the Commission, acting within the Troika, has at times proposed a number of measures such as pay cuts, dismissals, etc., for the sake of public saving, does it agree also to propose the withdrawal of the Greek military from Kosovo? Is it aware of the annual cost of the continued Greek military presence in Kosovo?

2. Given that Greek hospitals are beginning to lack even the most basic resources in terms of medical treatment and healthcare, can the Commission assure us that the contracts signed and expenditure incurred by Greece over the last two years on armaments, which generally serve purposes over and above defence alone, are also being reduced?

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

The Commission has no competence in relation to the presence of Greek military staff in Kosovo ([1]) or elsewhere. The Commission is not aware of the annual cost of the Greek military presence in Kosovo.

The Commission also has no competence on national decisions regarding defence expenditure.

It advises the Honourable Member to refer his questions and suggestions to the Greek Government.

([1]) Under UNSCR 1244/1999.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000909/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Συλλήψεις καθηγητών, φοιτητών και δημοσιογράφων στην Τουρκία

Το τελευταίο διάστημα η τουρκική κυβέρνηση προχώρησε σε μια σειρά συλλήψεων καθηγητών, φοιτητών και δημοσιογράφων. Χαρακτηριστικές περιπτώσεις είναι αυτές της καθηγήτριας ιστορίας στο πανεπιστήμιο Μαρμαρά, Busra Ersanli, και του εκδότη-συγγραφέα Ragip Zarakolou με την κατηγορία για συμμετοχή σε τρομοκρατική οργάνωση. Τα τεκμήρια που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν είναι για μεν την Ersanli οι σημειώσεις που κράτησε, διδάσκοντας στην σειρά σεμιναρίων που οργάνωσε το κόμμα BDP, ενώ για τον Zarakolou η συμμετοχή του ως αντιπροέδρου του τοπικού παρατηρητηρίου του Ελσίνκι σε εκδήλωση του ίδιου κόμματος. Επίσης, καταγγέλλεται ότι και πολλοί φοιτητές έχουν συλληφθεί, όπως η φοιτήτρια του τμήματος Ιστορίας του πανεπιστημίου του Βοσπόρου Seyma Ozcan, με μόνο τεκμήριο μια τηλεφωνική συνομιλία ή ένα πανό που ανοίχτηκε διεκδικώντας το δικαίωμα της δωρεάν παιδείας. Αντίστοιχη μεταχείριση έχουν και πολλοί δημοσιογράφοι, όπως Ahmet Sik και Nadim Sener, επειδή αποκάλυψαν τις διασυνδέσεις των ισλαμιστών με το νέο «βαθύ κράτος», υπόθεση Ergenekon.

Με δεδομένο ότι σε προηγούμενες ερωτήσεις μου η Επιτροπή είχε απαντήσει στη μεν (E-7426/10) ότι: *«Στην Τουρκία η αντιτρομοκρατική νομοθεσία επιδέχεται πολλών ερμηνειών. Το γεγονός αυτό οδηγεί σε ποινικές διώξεις, καταδικαστικές αποφάσεις και συλλήψεις κατηγορουμένων για ενέργειες που εμπίπτουν στο πλαίσιο της ελευθερίας του εκφράζεσθαι, του συνεταιρίζεσθαι και/η του συνέρχεσθαι»*, στη δε (E-5792/09) ότι: *«Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την υπόθεση όσον αφορά το σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και των ελευθεριών και ιδίως την ελευθερία έκφρασης, την ελευθερία του συνεταιρίζεσθαι και τα δικαιώματα των εναγομένων»*, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή για τις παραπάνω συλλήψεις, και πώς τις σχολιάζει; Σε ποιο δικαστικό στάδιο βρίσκονται οι εν λόγω υποθέσεις και σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί για την άμεση απελευθέρωση των εν λόγω τούρκων πολιτών;

2. Μπορεί να μας ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή αν η Τουρκία έχει προβεί σε αλλαγές του ποινικού κώδικα, ιδιαίτερα των άρθρ. 220 και 314 του αντιτρομοκρατικού νόμου άρθρο 7/2; Εκτιμά ότι έχουν γίνει βήματα προόδου σε ότι αφορά τις διώξεις, καταδικαστικές αποφάσεις και συλλήψεις για ενέργειες που εμπίπτουν στο πλαίσιο της ελευθερίας του εκφράζεσθαι, του συνεταιρίζεσθαι και/η του συνέρχεσθαι;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί στενά τις υποθέσεις που ανέφερε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος. Όσον αφορά τον εκδότη Ragıp Zarakolu και τον καθηγητή Büşra Ersanlı, δεν τους έχει απαγγελθεί ακόμη κατηγορία και παραμένουν και οι δύο υπό προσωρινή κράτηση. Οι φοιτητές Şeyma Özcan και Benay Can του Πανεπιστημίου Bilgi τελούν υπό κράτηση από τις 6 Δεκεμβρίου 2011 για συμμετοχή στην παράνομη οργάνωση «Επαναστατική έδρα» (Devrimci Karargah). Αυτή τη στιγμή κρατούνται στη φυλακή γυναικών και ανηλίκων Bakırköy. Ούτε σε εκείνους έχει απαγγελθεί κατηγορία. Στην υπόθεση της Oda TV, στην οποία ενέχονται μεταξύ άλλων οι δημοσιογράφοι Nedim Şener και Ahmet Şık, η δέκατη ακρόαση πραγματοποιήθηκε στο 16ο Κακουργιοδικείο της Κωνσταντινούπολης στις 27 Ιανουαρίου 2012. Το δικαστήριο αποφάσισε να παρατείνει την κράτηση των προφυλακισμένων κατηγορούμενων. Η επόμενη ακρόαση ορίστηκε για τις 12 Μαρτίου 2012.

Η Επιτροπή έχει εκφράσει την ανησυχία της όσον αφορά τις συλλήψεις αυτές και έχει επανειλημμένα θέσει το ζήτημα στις τουρκικές αρχές. Η αντιπροσωπεία της ΕΕ στην Άγκυρα παρακολουθεί σημαντικές υποθέσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων όπως αυτές, μεταξύ άλλων παριστάμενη σε ακροαματικές διαδικασίες. Υπογραμμίζοντας την πλήρη αλληλεγγύη της προς την Τουρκία στον αγώνα της κατά της τρομοκρατίας, η Επιτροπή τόνισε ότι ο αγώνας αυτός πρέπει να διεξάγεται με πλήρη σεβασμό των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων και ελευθεριών.

Η τουρκική κυβέρνηση έχει καταθέσει στη Βουλή τροποποιήσεις του ποινικού κώδικα και της αντιτρομοκρατικής νομοθεσίας, που περιλαμβάνουν ορισμένες ευπρόσδεκτες προτάσεις. Ωστόσο, οι προτάσεις αυτές ελάχιστα αντιμετωπίζουν τα πραγματικά βασικά προβλήματα που υπονομεύουν την ελευθερία έκφρασης, το δικαίωμα στην ελευθερία και την ασφάλεια και το δικαίωμα αμερόληπτου δικαστηρίου. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, οι διατάξεις του τουρκικού ποινικού κώδικα, της αντιτρομοκρατικής νομοθεσίας και του κώδικα ποινικής δικονομίας, που προσδιορίζουν τα εγκλήματα που σχετίζονται με την τρομοκρατία, πρέπει να αλλάξουν ώστε να διαχωρίζεται σαφώς η ελεύθερη έκφραση της γνώμης από την προτροπή σε βία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000909/12
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Arrests of lecturers, students and journalists in Turkey

The Turkish Government has recently made a series of arrests involving lecturers, students and journalists. Typical cases are those of the History lecturer at Marmara University, Busra Ersanli, and the writer and publisher, Ragip Zarakolou, who are accused of participating in the organisation of terrorist activities. The evidence used against Ms Ersanli are the notes she kept when teaching at a series of seminars organised by the BDP Party; the evidence used against Mr Zarakolou is his participation as Vice-President of the Human Rights Association of Turkey in a demonstration by the same Party. There are also reports of many students having been arrested, such as Seyma Ozcan, a student in the History Department of Bosphorus University, the only evidence against her being a telephone conversation and a sign proclaiming the right to a free education. Similar treatment has been meted out to numerous journalists, such as Ahmet Sik and Nadim Sener, because they revealed the links between Islamists and the new 'deep state', which is known as the Ergenekon case.

Given that, in its answer to my previous question (E-7426/10), the Commission stated that: 'The interpretation of the anti-terrorist legislation in Turkey is too wide. This has led to prosecutions, convictions and arrest of defendants for acts which fall within the remit of freedom of expression, freedom of association and/or freedom of assembly', and to my question (E-5792/09) that: 'The Commission will continue closely to monitor this case as regards the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular freedom of expression, freedom of association and the rights of defendants':

1. Is the Commission aware of the aforementioned arrests and what comments does it have to make on them? At what stage in the legal proceedings are the cases in question and what action does it intend to take to ensure the immediate release of the Turkish citizens in question?

2. Can the Commission tell us whether Turkey has made any changes to the Criminal Code, in particular Articles 220 and 314, and to *Article 7/2* of the *Anti-Terrorism Law? Does it consider that progress has been made as regards prosecutions, convictions and arrests for acts which fall within the remit of freedom of expression, freedom of association and/or freedom of assembly?*

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

The Commission is following closely the cases mentioned by the Honourable Member. As regards publisher Ragıp Zarakolu and Professor Büşra Ersanlı, the indictment has not been finalised yet and they both remain in detention on remand. Students Şeyma Özcan and Benay Can from Bilgi University have been detained since 6 December 2011 for membership of the illegal 'Revolutionary Headquarters organisation'. They are now in Bakırköy Women's and Children prison. Their indictment is not finalised either. In the Oda TV case, involving amongst others journalists Nedim Şener and Ahmet Şık, the tenth hearing took place at the Istanbul 16th heavy Penal Court on 27 January 2012. The court decided to keep all detained defendants on remand. The next hearing is scheduled for 12 March 2012.

The Commission has expressed its concerns about these arrests and has raised the issue with the Turkish authorities on various occasions. The EU Delegation in Ankara monitors important human rights cases like these, including by attending trial hearings. While underlining its full solidarity with Turkey in its struggle against terrorism, the Commission has stressed it must be carried out in full respect of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The Turkish Government has presented amendments to the Criminal Code and anti-terror law to the parliament, which include some welcome proposals. However, the package does little to address the actual core problems that undermine freedom of expression, the right to liberty and security and the right to a fair trial. Most importantly the provisions in the Turkish Criminal Code, the Anti-Terror Law and the Code of Criminal Procedures, which define crimes related to terrorism, need to be changed — to make a clear distinction between the free expression of opinion and incitement to violence.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000912/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis Kasoulides (PPE)
(2 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Οι ανακοινώσεις των οργανισμών αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας και οι δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις τους

Οι οργανισμοί αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας των ΗΠΑ έχουν καθήκον να πληροφορούν τους πελάτες τους σχετικά με το πού πρέπει να επενδυθούν τα χρήματά τους, μέσω προσεκτικών, αναλυτικών αναφορών. Αποτελεί γεγονός παραδεκτό ότι δεν πρέπει να κατηγορείται ο αγγελιοφόρος, ειδικά σε περιπτώσεις όπου η αλήθεια είναι οδυνηρή.

Ωστόσο, ο τρόπος με τον οποίο οι εν λόγω οργανισμοί ανακοινώνουν τα πορίσματα των ερευνών τους με «βαθμούς» παραπέμπει στα σχολικά μας χρόνια και έχει αποκτήσει χαρακτήρα τελετουργικού που λαμβάνει μεγάλη δημοσιότητα, σαφώς εκτός του πλαισίου μιας σοβαρής οικονομικής ανάλυσης. Θα μπορούσε να παρομοιαστεί με έναν γιατρό που βαθμολογεί (π.χ. με ΑΑΑ) την κατάσταση της υγείας μας, ή με έναν δικηγόρο που βαθμολογεί τις πιθανότητες θετικής έκβασης της υπόθεσης στο δικαστήριο και ούτω καθ' εξής.

Η επίδραση αυτού του τελετουργικού εν μέσω οικονομικής κρίσης ξεφεύγει από το πλαίσιο της παροχής επαγγελματικών συμβουλών σε πιθανούς επενδυτές. Δημιουργεί έναν φαύλο κύκλο δυσμενών αντιδράσεων στην οικονομία μιας χώρας ή ενός χρηματοπιστωτικού ιδρύματος που ένας τέτοιου είδους οργανισμός υποτίθεται ότι συμβουλεύει· ο δανεισμός χρημάτων καθίσταται ακριβότερος· τα συμβόλαια αντιστάθμισης πιστωτικού κινδύνου είναι πιο ακριβά· το χρηματιστήριο επηρεάζεται αρνητικά και ούτω καθ' εξής. Προπάντων, αποκτά πολιτική σημασία, καθώς επηρεάζει παραδείγματος χάρη, την πρόθεση ψήφου των πολιτών που δεν θα διάβαζαν ποτέ μια πλήρη οικονομική ανάλυση αλλά εντυπωσιάζονται από τη σημειολογία της βαθμολόγησης. Επισημαίνονται οι δικαιολογημένα αρνητικές αντιδράσεις των Επιτρόπων Barnier και Tajani.

Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να ενημερώσει το Κοινοβούλιο σχετικά με τη δράση που σκοπεύει να αναλάβει στο πλαίσιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης σε μια περίοδο που είναι γενικά αποδεκτό ότι ολόκληρο το χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα πρέπει να ρυθμιστεί, από τη στιγμή που οι οργανισμοί αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας αποτελούν μέρος αυτού του συστήματος;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται την άποψη του Αξιότιμου Μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου ότι οι οργανισμοί αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας θα πρέπει να υπαχθούν σε κανονιστικές ρυθμίσεις. Ο ισχύων κανονισμός ΟΑΠΙ ([1]) επιβάλλει στους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας την υποχρέωση να επανεξετάζουν τις διαβαθμίσεις τους σε συνεχή βάση, διασφαλίζοντας ότι οι σχετικές μεθοδολογίες είναι αυστηρές, συστηματικές, συνεχείς και υποκείμενες σε επικύρωση με βάση ιστορικά δεδομένα και δοκιμαστικό εκ των υστέρων έλεγχο. Επιπλέον, ο κανονισμός αυτός απαιτεί από τους ΟΑΠΙ να βασίζουν τις αποφάσεις τους κατάταξης σε διεξοδική ανάλυση του συνόλου των σχετικών πληροφοριών. Οι οργανισμοί αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας υποχρεούνται επίσης να αποκαλύπτουν δημόσια τις μεθοδολογίες, τα μοντέλα και τις καίριας σημασίας παραδοχές που χρησιμοποιούνται στις δραστηριότητές τους αξιολόγησης της πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας των χωρών.

Στις 15 Νοεμβρίου 2011, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε νομοθετική πρόταση με την οποία τροποποιείται ο ισχύων κανονισμός σχετικά με τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας. Η νέα πρόταση (ΟΑΠΙ ΙΙΙ) περιλαμβάνει φιλόδοξα μέτρα για την επίτευξη των ακόλουθων στόχων άσκησης πολιτικής: οι επενδυτές να βασίζονται λιγότερο στις διαβαθμίσεις· πλέον διαφανείς και έγκαιρες διαβαθμίσεις χωρών· μεγαλύτερη ποικιλομορφία και ανεξαρτησία των οργανισμών αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας· περισσότερη διαφάνεια και συγκρισιμότητα των οργανισμών αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας· αστική ευθύνη των οργανισμών αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας.

([1]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1060/2009 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2009, για τους οργανισμούς αξιολόγησης πιστοληπτικής ικανότητας, ΕΕ L 302 της 17.11.2009, όπως τροποποιήθηκε με τον κανονισμό (ΕΕ) αριθ. 513/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 11ης Μαΐου 2011, ΕΕ L 145/30 της 31.5.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000912/12
to the Commission
Ioannis Kasoulides (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Credit rating agencies' announcements and their adverse effects

The USA-based credit rating agencies have a duty to inform their clients, by means of a careful, analytical report, as to where their money should be invested. It is acceptable that no one should shoot the messenger, particularly when the truth is painful.

However, the way they announce their findings with 'marks' reminiscent of everyone's schooldays has become a ritualistic public and media event, well outside the framework of a serious economic analysis. It is like doctors awarding marks (e.g. AAA) for the state of our health, or lawyers issuing marks regarding the chances of winning a case in court, and so on.

The effect of this ritual in times of economic crisis goes well beyond the scope of professional advice to potential investors. It creates a spiral of adverse reactions to the economy of a country or financial institution which such an agency is supposed to be advising; borrowing money becomes more expensive; credit default swaps are more expensive; the Stock Exchange is negatively affected, and so on. Above all, it acquires political significance, for instance by influencing the voting orientation of people who would never read a full economic analysis but are impressed by the semantics of the marking. The justified negative reactions of Commissioners Barnier and Tajani are noted.

Will the Commission please inform Parliament about the action it intends to take in the European Union, at a time when it is generally accepted that the whole financial system has to be regulated, since the credit rating agencies are part of this system?

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

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that credit rating agencies should be regulated. The existing CRA Regulation ([1]) requires credit rating agencies to review their ratings on an ongoing basis, ensuring that rating methodologies are rigorous, systematic, continuous and subject to validation based on historical experience and back-testing. Moreover, this regulation requires CRAs to base their rating decisions on a thorough analysis of all relevant information. Credit rating agencies are also obliged to publicly disclose the methodologies, models and key assumptions used in their sovereign credit rating activities.

On 15 November, 2011, the Commission adopted a legislative proposal, which amends the existing regulation on credit rating agencies. The new proposal (CRA III) includes far-reaching measures to attain the following policy objectives: less investor reliance on ratings; more transparent and timely sovereign ratings; more diversity and independence of credit rating agencies; more transparency and comparability of credit rating agencies; civil liability of credit rating agencies.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1060/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on credit rating agencies of 16 September 2009, OJ L 302, 17.11.2009, as amended by Regulation (EU) No 513/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2011, OJ L 145/30, 31.5.2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000913/12
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(2 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Propozycje Rządu Republiki Francji do projektu umowy międzynarodowej o powołaniu unii fiskalnej

Rząd Republiki Francji zaproponował włączenie do projektu umowy międzynarodowej o powołaniu unii fiskalnej zapisów, które umożliwią przenoszenie pieniędzy z polityki spójności na programy walki z bezrobociem w strefie euro. W tym celu miałby zostać powołany fundusz wzrostu i konkurencyjności.

Przyjęcie takiej propozycji, zdaniem wielu ekspertów, może negatywnie wpłynąć na rozwój gospodarek państw Europy Środkowej. Fundusze strukturalne dla tej części Europy są ogromną szansą na zmniejszenie dysproporcji rozwoju gospodarczego pomiędzy państwami Unii. Dalsze prowadzenie aktywnej polityki spójności jest gwarantem zminimalizowania zagrożenia, jakim jest powstanie Unii Europejskiej dwóch prędkości.

W związku z powyższym proszę o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

— jakie jest stanowisko Komisji wobec propozycji Rządu Republiki Francji?

— czy Komisja podejmie stanowcze kroki przeciwko budowie Europy dwóch prędkości, której przejawem jest m.in. projekt umowy międzynarodowej powołującej unię fiskalną?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Olliego Rehna w imieniu Komisji
(4 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Komisja jest „strażniczką traktatów", a zatem również spójności Unii Europejskiej jako całości złożonej z 27 państw członkowskich. W kontekście prac nad międzynarodowym Traktatem o stabilności, koordynacji i zarządzaniu w unii gospodarczej i walutowej (TSCG), zapewnienie spójności UE jako całości stanowi jeden z głównych celów Komisji. W znacznej mierze dzięki zaangażowaniu Komisji, TSCG podpisany w dniu 2 marca 2012 r. jest w pełni zgodny z prawem Unii i porządkiem instytucjonalnym UE. W TSCG przewidziano, że w maksymalnym terminie pięciu lat od jego wejścia w życie należy podjąć kroki w celu włączenia jego postanowień do ram prawnych Unii.

Komisja prowadzi prace w celu wprowadzenia w życie kluczowych postanowień TSCG, w miarę możliwości poprzez przepisy prawa wtórnego, na podstawie Traktatów UE oraz metody wspólnotowej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000913/12
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: French Government proposals for a draft international agreement on a fiscal union

The French Government has proposed that the draft international agreement establishing a fiscal union include provisions enabling the transfer of funds from the cohesion policy to programmes for combating unemployment in the eurozone. For that purpose, a growth and competitiveness fund would be established.

In the opinion of many experts, adopting such a proposal could adversely affect the growth of the Central European economies. Structural funds for this part of Europe offer a tremendous opportunity for reducing the disparity in economic growth between the Member States. Continued implementation of an active cohesion policy will minimise the risk of a two-speed European Union.

Given the above:

— What is the Commission's stance regarding the French Government's proposal?

— Will the Commission take decisive steps to prevent the establishment of a two-speed Europe, one of the manifestations of which is the draft international agreement establishing a fiscal union?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

The Commission is the guardian of the Treaties and therefore of the cohesion of the European Union of 27 Member States as a whole. In the context of the work on the International Treaty on Stability, Convergence, and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG), ensuring the cohesion of the EU as a whole has always been one of the Commission's central objectives. Owing not least to the Commission's involvement, the TSCG signed on 2 March 2012 is fully in line with Union law and the EU's institutional set up. The TSCG stipulates that, within five years at most of its entry into force, steps shall be taken to bring its substance within the legal framework of the Union.

The Commission is working towards making the key provisions of the TSCG operational, where possible, through secondary legislation, based on the EU Treaties and the Community method.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000914/12
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(2 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Koleje Dużych Prędkości, linia Wrocław/Poznań–Łódź–Warszawa

Minister Transportu, Budownictwa i Gospodarki Morskiej w polskim rządzie Sławomir Nowak poinformował o wstrzymaniu prac nad Kolejami Dużych Prędkości (Wrocław/Poznań–Łódź–Warszawa). Prace mają być zawieszone do 2030 r. Wstrzymanie prac Minister Transportu motywował brakiem środków finansowych. Szacowany koszt budowy linii wynosi około 20 mld zł.

W związku z powyższym bardzo proszę o odpowiedź na następujące pytania.

1. Czy w nowym okresie programowania funduszy europejskich na lata 2014-2020 Komisja przewiduje środki, które mogą być wykorzystane na realizację tego projektu?

2. Jakie źródło finansowania tego projektu może wskazać Komisja ze środków, które są w jej dyspozycji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącego Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(20 marca 2012 r.)

Komisja będzie wspierać prace dotyczące linii dużych prędkości przy pomocy środków z Funduszu Spójności, programu TEN-T, przyszłego instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" oraz innych zasobów. W szczególności linia dużych prędkości Warszawa – Łódź – Poznań/Wrocław została uwzględniona we wniosku Komisji w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej ([1]) (TEN-T) z dnia 19 października 2011 r. Uwzględniając plany byłego rządu, odcinek ten włączono również do sieci bazowej, która ma zostać ukończona do 2030 r. W projekcie wniosku Komisji w sprawie instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" ([2]) badania dotyczące linii dużych prędkości wymieniono jako kwalifikujące się do otrzymania pomocy w najbliższym okresie finansowania, tj. w latach 2014-2020.

Polska sieć kolejowa wymaga znacznej modernizacji. Poprawa jej jakości jest konieczna, aby możliwe było zaspokojenie rosnącego popytu na usługi transportowe oraz ograniczenie zależności od dostaw ropy. Priorytetem powinno być uzupełnienie transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej, zwłaszcza wzdłuż głównych korytarzy transportu towarowego w Polsce, w tym CE/E 20, CE/E 65, CE/E 75, E59 oraz CE/E 30, w przypadku których szacunkowy koszt wynosi około 20 miliardów euro. Wymaga to długoterminowych programów finansowania i zobowiązań ze strony rządów. Warunki inwestycji w infrastrukturę muszą być stabilne w perspektywie długoterminowej.

([1]) COM(2011) 650.
([2]) COM(2011) 665.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000914/12
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: High-speed rail: Wrocław/Poznań-Łódź-Warsaw lines

Poland's Minister of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, Sławomir Nowak, has announced that work on the Wrocław/Poznań-Łódź-Warsaw high-speed rail lines has been suspended, apparently until 2030, owing to a lack of funds. The cost of building the lines is estimated to be approximately PLN 20 billion.

1. In the new European financial framework for 2014-2020, does the Commission envisage that there will be funding which can be used for the implementation of this project?

2. What source of funding for this project can the Commission identify among the resources at its disposal?

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

The Commission will assist the works in high-speed rail with interventions from the Cohesion Fund, the TEN-T programme, the future CEF and other resources. More specifically, the Wrocław/Poznań-Łódź-Warsaw high-speed rail has been included into the Commission's proposal for the Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) ([1]) of 19 October 2011. With regards to the plans of the former government the section was also included into the Core network which has to be finished until 2030. In the Commission's draft proposal for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([2]) studies for the high-speed line where mentioned to be eligible in the next funding period 2014-2020.

The Polish rail network needs considerable upgrading. Network quality needs to be improved to cope with higher transport demand and reduce dependence on oil supplies. A top priority should be to complete the trans-European transport network especially along the main freight corridors in Poland including CE/E 20, CE/E 65, CE/E 75, E59 and CE/E 30 for which the estimated cost are about EUR 20 billion. This requires long-term funding schemes and commitments from governments. Conditions for infrastructure investments must be stable for long periods.

([1]) COM(2011) 650.
([2]) COM(2011) 665.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000915/12
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(2 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Rincari dei prodotti ortofrutticoli a causa del blocco dei tir

L'Italia in questi giorni è interessata dalla protesta degli autotrasportatori che, con i tir, hanno bloccato le principali arterie autostradali impedendo la regolare circolazione delle merci.

Sugli scaffali dei negozi e dei supermercati italiani ed europei cominciano a scarseggiare prodotti come arance, pomodori, melanzane e peperoni.

Le aziende, soprattutto i piccoli produttori locali del nord Italia, faticano a trovare i camion per trasportare i propri prodotti nelle altre regioni o all'estero.

La Coldiretti, una delle principali associazioni di categoria in Italia, ha lanciato l'allarme perché alcune merci rischiano di marcire e prevede danni economici ingenti per i coltivatori.

La Coldiretti ha inoltre evidenziato che gli aumenti registrati in queste ore sul prezzo di alcuni prodotti, soprattutto quelli a km 0, sono totalmente ingiustificati.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza di questo problema e indicare come intende agire per impedire che i prodotti ortofrutticoli marciscano nelle aziende?

Come intende la Commissione tutelare i consumatori rispetto all'aumento ingiustificato del prezzo di alcuni prodotti ortofrutticoli?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(6 marzo 2012)

Problemi nazionali di natura eccezionale, quali scioperi e blocchi dei trasporti interni, sono essenzialmente questioni che devono essere gestite dalle competenti autorità nazionali. La Commissione non interviene a meno che tali situazioni non incidano sulla libera circolazione di merci tra gli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000915/12
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Fruit and vegetable price increases due to HGV blockade

As we speak, Italy is experiencing a protest by lorry drivers who have blocked the main motorways with their vehicles, preventing the normal circulation of goods.

Oranges, tomatoes, aubergines and peppers have started to run out on the shelves of Italian and European shops and supermarkets.

Companies, and particularly small northern Italian local producers, are struggling to find lorries to transport their products to other regions or countries.

Coldiretti, one of the main farmers' associations in Italy, has sounded the alarm because some products are now at risk of rotting, and anticipates serious economic damage to farmers.

Coldiretti has also highlighted that the increases observed in the prices of some products in the last few hours, particularly zero-mileage products, are totally unjustified.

In light of the aforementioned, can the Commission state whether it is aware of this problem and how it intends to proceed in order to prevent fruit and vegetable products from rotting on smallholdings?

How does the Commission intend to protect consumers from unjustified increases in the prices of certain fruit and vegetable products?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

Exceptional national problems, such as a strike and internal blockade, are foremost a matter for the competent Italian authorities to deal with. The Commission does not intervene as long as it does not have any impact on the free circulation of goods between Member States.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000917/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Schutz minderjähriger Jugendlicher in der Mode- und Werbebranche

Für Werbung und Präsentationen engagiert die Mode- und Werbebranche häufig minderjährige Jugendliche als Models, die sich hierfür einem rigorosen Schlankheitswahn unterwerfen müssen, um derartige Verträge überhaupt zu bekommen. Dies führt im jugendlichen Alter nicht nur zu physischen und psychischen Problemen, sondern insbesondere auch zu gesundheitlichen Langzeitproblemen, welche der einzelne Jugendliche aufgrund seines Alters und seiner Unerfahrenheit nicht überblicken kann.

1. Ist sich die Kommission dieser Problematik bewusst?

2. Was hat die Kommission bisher unternommen, um Jugendliche darüber aufzuklären, wie gefährlich dieses Verhalten (extreme Schlankheit, Magersucht etc.) ist und zu welchen gesundheitlichen Spätfolgen es führt?

3. Was hat die Kommission bisher unternommen, um minderjährige Jugendliche in diesem Bereich zu schützen?

4. Sollte die Kommission bisher nicht tätig geworden sein, gedenkt sie tätig zu werden? Wie und womit gedenkt sie tätig zu werden?

Antwort von Herrn Dalli im Namen der Kommission
(22. März 2012)

Die Kommission ist sich der von der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochenen Problematik bewusst und hat Kenntnis von konkreten Aktionen, die professionelle Einrichtungen auf diesem Gebiet durchführen. So beschäftigt beispielsweise der Verband der spanischen Modedesigner („Association of Spanish Fashion Designers“) seit 2006 keine Models mehr, deren Body-Mass-Index unter 18 liegt.

Die Kommission hat bezüglich des Gewichts von Models in der Mode- und Werbebranche bisher nichts unternommen und gedenkt nicht, in diesem Bereich tätig zu werden. Die Zuständigkeit für diesen Bereich liegt bei den Mitgliedstaaten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000917/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Protection of minors in the fashion and advertising industry

The fashion and advertising industry frequently recruits minors as models for advertising and presentations, and these young people need to subject themselves to a crazy slimming regime in order to even win such contracts. This leads at a young age not only to physical and mental problems, but also, in particular, to long-term health problems which the young persons concerned cannot foresee due to their age and inexperience.

1. Is the Commission aware of this issue?

2. What action has the Commission taken so far to inform young people about how dangerous this behaviour (excessive thinness, anorexia etc.) is and what long-term consequences it entails for their health?

3. What action has the Commission taken so far to protect minors in this industry?

4. If the Commission has not yet taken any action, does it intend to do so? How and by what means does it intend to take action?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Members and of specific actions taken by professional organisation to address it. For example, the Spanish Association of Fashion Designers decided in 2006 to ban models who have a Body Mass Index of less than 18.

The Commission itself has not taken any specific measures regarding the weight of models in the fashion or advertising industry, and does not foresee any action in this area. This is a matter which falls under the responsibility of Member States.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000918/12
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(2 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Deficiências em infraestruturas escolares

No âmbito do Programa Nacional de Requalificação da rede do 1.° ciclo do ensino básico e da Educação Pré-Escolar (ao abrigo do Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional), o anterior executivo governamental iniciou um programa que classificou de beneficiação, ampliação e construção de estabelecimentos de ensino. Foi então comunicada a melhoria da oferta da rede escolar, do ponto de vista da cobertura geográfica, da acessibilidade e da capacidade de resposta face à procura.

Contudo, na Escola Barbosa Bocage (antiga Escola dos Lápis), na Póvoa de Santo Adrião, em Odivelas, tal não sucedeu. Inaugurada à pressa pelo anterior governo, sem as devidas condições de segurança para o seu funcionamento, apresenta vários muros que se encontram sem proteção e vedações em ferro com extremidades pontiagudas, tendo já sido registados alguns acidentes. Acrescem erros estruturais, nomeadamente com instalações sanitárias mal construídas, ou a colocação de acessórios em dimensões adequadas a adultos, ou simplesmente em medida não adequada à função a que se destinam. Além disso, foi criada uma denominada «sala polivalente», local único destinado às atividades educativas, lúdicas e sociais, designadamente, refeitório — que carece de montagem e desmontagem diária — e ginásio, pondo em causa a sua utilização capaz para qualquer um destes fins.

Pergunto à comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação? Não é suposto que os projetos das infraestruturas escolares cumpram requisitos de segurança e estruturais predefinidos para poderem beneficiar de financiamento comunitário? Como interpreta as irregularidades descritas, sabendo que a recuperação desta escola foi financiada pelo QREN?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(8 de março de 2012)

A Comissão está ciente de que, ao abrigo do quadro de referência estratégico nacional português e dos seus programas, as operações para a melhoria do ensino básico e pré-escolar, incluindo a renovação, ampliação e construção de novas instalações, estão a ser financiadas pelos fundos estruturais. Essas operações, tal como todas as operações financiadas pela política de coesão, têm de cumprir os requisitos legais nacionais e europeus pertinentes. A Comissão acompanha a aplicação desses requisitos, em estreita cooperação e parceria com as autoridades nacionais competentes em Portugal.

A Comissão visitou a escola em questão, em novembro de 2011, no âmbito de uma auditoria. Os resultados dessa missão de auditoria serão comunicados às autoridades competentes, assim que a análise estiver concluída.

De acordo com o princípio da gestão partilhada aplicado na gestão da política de coesão, a seleção e a execução dos projetos são da responsabilidade das autoridades nacionais. Por conseguinte, a fim de obter mais informações, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte diretamente as autoridades portuguesas responsáveis pela gestão do programa em causa:

Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional de Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel.: + 351 213 837 100
E-mail: presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
Website: www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000918/12
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Deficiencies in school infrastructure

Under Portugal's national programme for improving primary and pre-school education (under the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF)), the former government launched a programme for renovating, extending or building teaching establishments. It was then stated that educational provision would be improved in terms of geographical coverage, accessibility and response in order to meet demand.

However, this was not the case with the *Escola Barbosa du Bocage* — formerly *Escola dos Lápis* — a school located in Póvoa de Santo Adrião, Odivelas. The former government hastily opened this school, without first ensuring it was safe for use; it contains several exposed walls and iron fences with sharp edges, and a number of accidents have already been reported. There are other structural faults, particularly as regards poorly installed sanitary fittings and the installation of fixtures designed for adult use, or simply not fit for purpose. Moreover, a so-called 'multipurpose room' was built as a single location for educational, recreational and social activities. It is essentially a dining hall — which needs to be assembled and disassembled every day — and a sports hall, which calls into question its suitability for any of the other aforementioned purposes.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

Is it aware of this situation? Is it not the case that school infrastructure projects need to meet predefined safety and structural requirements in order to benefit from EU funding? How does it interpret the aforementioned irregularities, given that the renovation of this school was funded by the NSRF?

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

The Commission is aware of the fact that under the Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework and its programmes, operations for improving primary and pre-school education, including the renovation, extension and building of new facilities, are been financed by the Structural Funds. Those operations, as all the operations financed by cohesion policy, have to meet the relevant national and European legal requirements. The Commission monitors the application of those requirements in close cooperation and partnership with the competent national authorities in Portugal.

The Commission visited the school in question in November 2011, in the framework of an audit. The results of this audit mission will be communicated to the relevant authorities once the analysis is completed.

In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. Therefore, in order to obtain further information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the Portuguese authorities responsible for managing the programme concerned:

Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional de Lisboa
Rua Artilharia Um, 33
1269-145 Lisboa
Tel.: + 351 213 837 100
E-mail: presid@ccdr-lvt.pt
Website: www.ccdr-lvt.pt

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000919/12
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Estudio en torno a la piratería en Somalia

La semana pasada se hicieron públicas las conclusiones de un estudio que la consultora británica Chatham House ha realizado sobre el impacto económico de la piratería en Somalia. Tras efectuar varias consideraciones sobre los positivos efectos que los ingresos que se obtienen a través de esta actividad están teniendo en la economía de la zona, la autora del análisis Anja Shortland insiste en la necesidad de cambiar el actual status quo de este problema en la zona. Así la analista recuerda que existe un enorme desproporción entre el coste que tienen las operaciones desplegadas para combatir la piratería y las pérdidas que esta actividad ocasiona (entre 7 000 y 12 000 millones de dólares) y el que los piratas recaudan a través del cobro de rescates que se estima en 250 millones de dólares. La conclusión más evidente es que resultaría mucho más barato reemplazar esa fuente de ingresos por una mejor utilización y aplicación de los fondos de ayuda al desarrollo e inversiones en fuerzas de seguridad que den estabilidad en la zona.

A la vista de lo llamativo de los datos y las conclusiones:

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión Europea el contenido de este informe?

2. ¿Comparte la Comisión el análisis que se realiza en este estudio?

3. Si la respuesta es positiva, ¿qué medidas se están adoptando para mejorar el funcionamiento de la ayuda al desarrollo en la zona y para estabilizar sus instituciones?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(18 de abril de 2012)

1. La Comisión conoce el estudio publicado por Chatham House. El estudio fue financiado en el marco de un programa de la UE.

2. La Comisión respeta las opiniones del autor. El estudio es un informe académico que indica que las cifras utilizadas son estimaciones.

3. Los ámbitos de intervención propuestos en el informe son pertinentes y están en consonancia con las iniciativas recientes de la UE. En noviembre de 2011, los Ministros de Asuntos Exteriores de la UE adoptaron un marco estratégico para el Cuerno de África con el fin de aunar los esfuerzos de la UE para luchar contra algunos de los peligros que, entre otros, se enumeran en el informe.

La UE cuenta con un gran paquete financiero de cooperación con Somalia que asciende aproximadamente a 500 millones de euros, centrado en el desarrollo económico, la educación y la gobernanza. La UE financia, entre otras cosas, la formación de los jueces, la policía y los guardias de prisiones, y contribuye directamente a la formación de las fuerzas de seguridad somalíes a través de la misión de formación de la UE en Somalia. La UE también presta apoyo financiero a la Misión de la Unión Africana en Somalia (Amisom) para que lleve a cabo su cometido de crear las condiciones previas necesarias para que las autoridades somalíes proporcionen seguridad y faciliten el desarrollo de su pueblo. Además de la misión Atalanta, la UE está preparando una misión específica para el desarrollo de la capacidad marítima regional que ayudará a los Estados ribereños a crear su propia capacidad de vigilancia costera.

Además, se ha nombrado recientemente a un representante especial para el Cuerno de África cuyo cometido será abordar el problema de la piratería en Somalia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000919/12
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Study on piracy in Somalia

Last week the conclusions were published of a study on the economic impact of piracy in Somalia conducted by the British think tank Chatham House. After making a number of comments on the positive effects that the income obtained through this kind of activity is having on the local economy, the author of the study, Anja Shortland, stresses the need to change the current situation surrounding piracy in the area. The study points out that there is a huge discrepancy between the cost of the operations deployed to combat piracy and the losses that this activity causes (between USD 7 billion and 12 billion) and the amount of money that pirates collect through ransom payments, which is estimated at USD 250 million. The most obvious conclusion is that it would be much cheaper to replace this source of income with a better use and application of development aid funds and investments in security forces to bring stability to the area.

In view of these striking figures and conclusions:

1. Is the Commission familiar with the content of this report?

2. Does the Commission agree with the analysis made in this study?

3. If so, what measures are being adopted to improve the way in which development aid operates in the area and stabilise its institutions?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the study published by Chatham House. The study received funding under an EU Programme.

2. The Commission respects the views of the author. The study is an academic report, and states itself that the figures are estimates.

3. The intervention areas proposed in the report are relevant and in line with recent EU initiatives. In November 2011 the EU's Foreign Ministers adopted a Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa to focus EU efforts on addressing, *inter alia*, some threats listed in the report.

The EU has a large financial package of cooperation with Somalia, amounting to approximately EUR 500 million, focusing on economic development, education and governance. The EU funds among other things training of judges, police and prison guards and is contributing directly to training of Somali security forces through the EU Training Mission in Somalia The EU is also providing financial support to the African Union Mission in Somalia enabling Amisom to implement its mission of creating the necessary pre-conditions that will enable the Somali authorities to bring security and development to its people. In addition to the Atalanta mission, the EU is preparing a targeted Regional Maritime Capacity Building mission to help the costal states to build up their own coast guard capacity.

Furthermore, a Special Representative was recently appointed for the Horn of Africa, whose remit will be to tackle the problem of piracy in Somalia.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000920/12
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(31 gennaio 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione del principio della libera circolazione delle persone e delle merci da parte del Comune di Ligornetto, Svizzera

Ligornetto è un piccolo comune del Canton Ticino, in Svizzera, al confine con l'Italia. Vista la vicinanza con Varese, molti lavoratori frontalieri della zona attraversano il paese in entrambe le direzioni per raggiungere il posto di lavoro.

Domenica scorsa (22 gennaio 2012), seguendo il principio consolidato della democrazia diretta, una maggioranza relativa degli abitanti del comune (secondo fonti non ufficiali, 469 elettori su 1 284 votanti) ha approvato un blocco del traffico da effettuarsi tra le 5 e le 8 del mattino e tra le 16.30 e le 19.30, cioè nelle ore di punta. La campagna referendaria non si era concentrata, come si potrebbe supporre, su considerazioni ambientali, bensì sulla necessità di impedire il passaggio dei lavoratori frontalieri italiani.

1. Poiché tale misura di gestione del traffico mira specificamente ad aggirare il rispetto del trattato di Schengen da parte della Confederazione svizzera, ritiene la Commissione di essere competente a esprimersi circa la legittimità del provvedimento?

2. Ritiene la Commissione che la libera circolazione delle persone e delle merci sia assicurata dagli attuali trattati tra l'UE e la Svizzera? In caso negativo, quali azioni intende la Commissione intraprendere per garantire che le disposizioni di un trattato in vigore in un'area in cui sono presenti 500 milioni di cittadini siano applicate adeguatamente?

3. Poiché tale referendum danneggia, in particolare, i lavoratori che fanno del loro meglio per dare impulso alla crescita economica in tempi di crisi, ritiene la Commissione che sia opportuno sanare questo vulnus inferto al mercato interno?

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

In base alle informazioni di cui dispone la Commissione, le misure intraprese dalle autorità comunali di Ligornetto mirano a limitare l'ingente flusso di traffico su una strada destinata al solo accesso locale. La strada principale per i pendolari da Varese a Mendrisio, nel Canton Ticino, attraverso Stabio rimane aperta. La Commissione ritiene che tali misure non rappresentino una violazione delle disposizioni del trattato di Schengen. Tuttavia la Commissione continua a seguire la vicenda e intraprenderà le misure necessarie in caso di qualsiasi eventuale violazione futura.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000920/12
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(31 January 2012)

Subject: Violation of freedom of movement of people and goods by the Municipality of Ligornetto, Switzerland

Ligornetto is a small municipality in Switzerland, in the Canton of Ticino, on the border with Italy. Because of its closeness with Varese, many cross-border workers from this area pass through this village to reach their places of work, in both directions.

Last Sunday (22.1.2012), following the consolidated principle of direct democracy, a relative majority of the inhabitants of this municipality — according to unofficial sources, 469 out of 1 284 voters — approved a traffic blockade between 5 and 8 am and 4.30 and 7.30 pm, i.e. during peak hours. The referendum campaign was not primarily focused, as one might suppose, on environmental concerns, but on inhibiting Italian cross-border workers from passing through.

1. As this traffic management measure was intended by the Swiss Confederation to violate the spirit of the Schengen Treaty, does the Commission deem itself competent to talk about its legitimacy?

2. Does the Commission think that the freedom of movement of people and goods is assured by the current treaties between the EU and Switzerland? If not, what action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the provisions of a treaty in force over an area containing 500 million citizens will be properly enforced?

3. As this referendum is harming, in particular, workers doing their best to boost economic growth in times of crisis, does the Commission deem it correct to heal this wound to the internal market?

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

According to the information available to the Commission, the measures taken by the Ligornetto municipal authorities are aimed at limiting the large flow of traffic along a road intended only for local access. The main commuter road from Varese (Italy) to Mendrisio in Ticino (Switzerland), passing through Stabio, remains open. In the view of the Commission, these measures do not constitute a breach of the Schengen rules. Nevertheless, the Commission continues to follow the situation and will take the necessary steps if any breach should arise in future.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000921/12
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(31 January 2012)

Subject: Landings of fish caught in European seas

Further to the Commission response of 23 June 2011 and the detailed reply supplied in the annex (P-004404/2011), what is the Commission's estimate of the tonnage of fish caught in European seas and landed at European ports in the latest year for which information is available, taking into account the figures now published for 2010?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2012)

The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat a table containing relevant information.

The data represent catches made by the EU fleet in the North East Atlantic and Mediterranean. Complete data according to exclusive economic zone (EEZ) are not currently collected and it is, therefore, not possible to provide information on catches taken solely from EU waters.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000922/12
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(2 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Automatismo en la aplicación de tarifas de fraude al consumo de energía sin contrato

La sociedad de gestión de la red eléctrica de Bruselas-Capital, basándose en el artículo 194 del Reglamento Técnico de Electricidad de la región Bruselas-Capital, aplica al consumo de energía sin contrato una tarifa llamada de fraude. Esto es, reclama de forma automática al consumidor final el pago de la electricidad consumida a una tarifa de fraude, presumiendo mala fe, sin procedimiento contradictorio previo para esclarecer de manera efectiva la existencia de dicho fraude o mala fe, un posible error técnico o el mero desconocimiento del consumidor final de la situación de consumo sin contrato (situaciones muy dispares entre sí).

Mediante este automatismo, el gestor de la red de electricidad en Bruselas-Capital, sitúa la carga de la prueba del lado del consumidor final que, en principio, solo podrá evitar la aplicación de esta tarifa de fraude si demuestra que había un contrato previo y por lo tanto, no distinguiría entre conductas fraudulentas, de mala fe, o de mero desconocimiento no culposo.

En varias ocasiones, el mediador de la energía de Bélgica ha reclamado sin éxito a la sociedad de gestión de la red eléctrica Bruselas-Capital que aplique una tarifa normal al consumo realizado sin contrato y de buena fe, y no de consumo con fraude y de mala fe.

— ¿Considera la Comisión que la aplicación de un precio de fraude, sin procedimiento contradictorio previo, presuponiendo dicho fraude y situando la carga de la prueba en el consumidor está de acuerdo con la legislación europea, teniendo especialmente en cuenta el desequilibrio significativo entre las partes en detrimento del consumidor que ello supone?

— ¿Considera la Comisión que el artículo 194 de este reglamento está de acuerdo con la legislación de la UE vigente en relación a la liberalización del mercado de la electricidad, así como las directivas de protección de los consumidores, teniendo en cuenta que éste permitiría al gestor de la red aplicar una tarifa de fraude de manera automática, presumiendo por consiguiente voluntad de defraudar en cualquier consumo eléctrico sin contrato?

— ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión, como garante del cumplimiento de la legislación europea, dirigirse a las autoridades belgas y al gestor de la red eléctrica a fin de que procedan a la necesaria modificación del Reglamento para garantizar en este sentido la defensa de los derechos de los consumidores?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de marzo de 2012)

1. La Directiva 93/13/CE ([1]) introduce el concepto de «buena fe» a fin de prevenir desequilibrios importantes y la Directiva 2009/72/CE ([2]) contiene disposiciones sobre la protección de los consumidores. La Directiva 93/13/CE no es aplicable cuando no exista un contrato entre un consumidor y un proveedor. De forma análoga, la Directiva 2009/72/CE no aborda las situaciones en que el consumidor no sea un «cliente» de los servicios eléctricos, es decir, cualquier persona física o jurídica que compre electricidad. Normalmente hace falta una relación contractual entre el consumidor y el proveedor para esas compras.

2. La Directiva 2009/72/CE establece el derecho al servicio universal, pero esto debe entenderse también como relacionado con los derechos de los clientes de los servicios eléctricos. Aunque la Directiva no considera los casos del consumo de energía por parte de quienes no sean clientes, hace responsables a las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación de la fijación de las condiciones de conexión y acceso a las redes nacionales. Según la información que obra en poder de la Comisión, la autoridad de reglamentación de los mercados del gas y la electricidad de la región de Bruselas está estudiando publicar un dictamen interpretativo sobre el artículo 194 a que se refiere Su Señoría.

([1]) Directiva 93/13/CEE del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 1993, sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con consumidores (DO L 95 de 21.4.1993).
([2]) Directiva 2009/72/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009, sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior de la electricidad y por la que se deroga la Directiva 2003/54/CE (DO L 211 de 14.8.2009).

3. Puesto que el Derecho de la UE no contiene normas directamente aplicables al consumo de electricidad por quienes no sean clientes, no se puede analizar más a fondo la conformidad de la legislación del Estado miembro con el Derecho de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000922/12
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Automatic application of fraud tariffs for energy consumption without a contract

On the basis of Article 194 of the Electricity Technical Regulation for the Brussels-Capital region, the company managing the Brussels-Capital electricity grid applies a so-called fraud tariff to consumption of energy without a contract. This means that it automatically charges the end consumer the fraud tariff for the electricity used, presuming bad faith, with no right of appeal to effectively determine the existence of fraud or bad faith, or whether this is due to a technical error or simple ignorance by the end consumer of the fact that he is consuming energy without a contract (which are all very different situations).

By means of this automatic procedure, the Brussels-Capital electricity grid manager places the burden of proof on the end consumer who, in principle, can only avoid being charged this fraud tariff if he can show that a contract existed previously meaning that there would be no way of distinguishing between fraudulent conduct, bad faith, or simple innocent ignorance.

The Belgian Energy Ombudsman has unsuccessfully demanded on several occasions that the Brussels-Capital electricity grid management company charge a normal tariff where energy is consumed without a contract in good faith, and not one for fraudulent use and bad faith.

— Does the Commission believe that charging a price for fraud, with no right of appeal, presupposing the existence of this fraud and placing the burden of proof on the consumer, is an action that complies with EU legislation, particularly in view of the considerable imbalance existing between the parties to the detriment of the consumer?

— Does the Commission believe that Article 194 of this regulation complies with EU legislation in force on liberalisation of the electricity market, or with the Consumer Protection Directives, bearing in mind that this regulation makes provision for the grid manager to apply a fraud tariff automatically, thus presuming that there is an intention to defraud in any consumption of electricity without a contract?

— Has the Commission thought, as guarantor of compliance with EU legislation, of approaching the Belgian authorities and the electricity grid manager so that they amend the regulation as necessary to ensure consumers' rights in this regard are protected?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

1. Directive 93/13/EC ([1]) introduces a notion of 'good faith' to prevent significant imbalances and Directive 2009/72/EC ([2]) contains provisions for consumer protection. Directive 93/13/EC is not applicable if a contract is not established between a consumer and a supplier. Similarly, Directive 2009/72/EC does not address situations where the consumer is not an electricity 'customer', i.e. a natural or legal person purchasing electricity. A contractual relation between the consumer and the supplier is normally needed for such purchases.

2. Directive 2009/72/EC establishes the right to universal service which, however, must also be understood as relating to electricity customers' rights. While the directive does not consider cases of energy consumption by 'non-customers', it makes national regulatory authorities responsible for setting conditions for connection and access to national networks. According to information available to the Commission, the regulator of gas and electricity markets for the Brussels region is considering issuing an interpretative opinion on the article 194 referred to by the Honourable Member.

3. Given that EU legislation does not contain provisions directly applicable to electricity consumption by 'non-customers', the conformity of Member State legislation with EU legislation cannot be further assessed.

([1]) Directive 93/13/EC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts, OJ L 95, 21.4.1993.
([2]) Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000924/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Protecția beneficiarilor de servicii turistice

Uniunea Europeană dispune de o „listă neagră" a companiilor aeriene care nu prezintă încredere în ceea ce privește siguranța navigației. Având în vedere acest model, ar putea avea Comisia în vedere realizarea unei „liste negre" similare a agențiilor de turism europene, pentru a informa potențialii clienți cu privire la acele agenții care nu își respectă angajamentele contractuale?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(21 martie 2012)

Astfel cum se prevede în Comunicarea Comisiei ([1]) „*Europa, destinația turistică favorită la nivel mondial — un nou cadru politic pentru turismul european*", Comisia este preocupată să faciliteze instituirea unei mărci europene a turismului de calitate, pentru a îmbunătăți transparența și comparabilitatea cu privire la calitatea serviciilor turistice europene. Recunoașterea la scară europeană a calității serviciilor ar contribui, de asemenea, la facilitarea alegerii serviciilor turistice și, în mod indirect, la creșterea încrederii consumatorilor.

De asemenea, Comisia revizuiește, în prezent, directiva privind pachetele de servicii pentru călătorii, aceasta având ca scop protejarea consumatorilor care cumpără pachete de servicii turistice care includ, în mod normal, transportul și cazarea, achiziționate împreună de la organizatori de călătorii și agenții de turism.

În contextul activităților în curs de desfășurare privind revizuirea directivei, obiectivele principale ale Comisiei sunt îmbunătățirea funcționării pieței interne și menținerea unui înalt nivel de protecție a consumatorilor. Desigur, Comisia are intenția de a aborda noile evoluții ale pieței, de a soluționa lacunele legislative și, de asemenea, de a clarifica diferitele obligații și responsabilități ale părților profesionale la contract, cum ar fi răspunderea pentru executarea defectuoasă a contractului. Comisia nu are în vedere elaborarea unei liste negre a agențiilor de turism europene, similară așa-numitei „liste negre" a transportatorilor aerieni, prevăzută în Regulamentul 2111/2005 ([2]).

([1]) COM(2010) 352 final.
([2]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 2111/2005 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 14 decembrie 2005 de stabilire a unei liste comunitare a transportatorilor aerieni care se supun unei interdicții de exploatare pe teritoriul Comunității și de informare a pasagerilor transportului aerian cu privire la identitatea transportatorului aerian efectiv și de abrogare a articolului 9 din Directiva 2004/36/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000924/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Protecting recipients of tourism services

The European Union has at its disposal a black list of airline companies that are untrustworthy in terms of navigation safety. Taking this as a model, might the Commission envisage drawing up a similar black list of European travel agencies, to inform potential customers of agencies that do not respect their contractual obligations?

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

As envisaged by the Commission communication ([1]) 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe', the Commission is working to facilitate the establishment of a European Quality Tourism Label, in order to improve transparency and comparability with regard to the quality of European tourism services. An EU-wide recognition of the quality of the service would also contribute to facilitating the choice of tourism services and, indirectly, would increase consumer confidence.

The Commission is currently also revising the Package Travel Directive, which protects consumers who purchase package holidays, normally consisting of transport and accommodation purchased together from travel organisers and travel agents.

In the context of the ongoing work on the revision of the directive, the Commission's main objectives are to improve the functioning of the internal market and to maintain a high level of consumer protection. It is certainly the Commission's intention to address new market developments, to close legal gaps and also to clarify the various obligations and liabilities of the professional parties to the contract, such as the liability for improper performance of the contract. The Commission does not envisage drawing up a black list of European travel agencies, similar to the so-called 'blacklist' of air carriers found in Regulation 2111/2005 ([2]).

([1]) COM(2010) 352 final.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2005 on the establishment of a Community list of air carriers subject to an operating ban within the Community and on informing air transport passengers of the identity of the operating air carrier, and repealing Article 9 of Directive 2004/36/EC.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000926/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Grup de lucru pentru Marea Neagră

Problemele pescuitului în ţările riverane Mării Negre sunt dezbătute în cadrul unui „Grup de lucru pentru Marea Neagră", grup care aparţine de GFCM (General Fisheries Commision for the Mediterranean — Comisia Generală pentru Pescuit în Marea Mediterană). Având în vedere faptul că problemele în discuţie au un caracter specific, se impune crearea unui grup de lucru distinct pentru Marea Neagră. Comisia este rugată să informeze Parlamentul dacă are în vedere măsuri pentru înfiinţarea unui astfel de grup, în conformitate cu necesităţile reale şi solicitările actorilor privaţi şi publici implicaţi.

Răspuns dat de dna Damanaki în numele Comisiei
(8 martie 2012)

Cu ocazia celei de-a 35-a sesiuni a Comisiei Generale pentru Pescuit în Marea Mediterană (CGPM) (Roma, mai 2011) s-a decis, la iniţiativa delegaţiilor UE, bulgară şi română, instituirea unui grup de lucru pentru a facilita activitatea de consultanţă a Comitetului ştiinţific consultativ pe tema Mării Negre şi pentru a promova cooperarea regională în domeniul pescuitului şi în ceea ce priveşte problemele de mediu.

Prima reuniune a grupului de lucru a avut loc la Constanţa (România, 16-18.1.2012) şi au participat peste 40 de oameni de ştiinţă şi responsabili din ţările costiere ale Mării Negre (Bulgaria, România, Turcia, Ucraina, Rusia şi Georgia), precum şi din partea Agenţiei Europene pentru Controlul Pescuitului, FAO, Comisiei Mării Negre şi Comisiei Europene.

În cadrul grupului de lucru s-au discutat realizările, deficienţele şi lacunele în materie de pescuit şi acvacultură în Marea Neagră. **În special, participanţii au subliniat lipsa unui cadru de cooperare şi de reglementare care să implice toate cele şase ţări riverane. Ca principală cerinţă pentru procesul decizional bazat pe consultanţă ştiinţifică a fost identificată disponibilitatea unor informaţii şi date actualizate şi fiabile în domeniul pescuitului.** Grupul de lucru a identificat o serie de domenii prioritare pentru activitatea ulterioară, precum şi acţiunile pe termen scurt şi mediu necesare pentru abordarea acestora. Aceste acţiuni vor îmbunătăţi cunoştinţele privind sectoarele pescuitului şi acvaculturii şi vor permite satisfacerea necesităţilor şi solicitărilor reale din partea actorilor publici şi privaţi implicaţi.

A doua reuniune va avea loc în primul trimestru al anului 2013.

Comisia Europeană va urmări îndeaproape punerea în practică a activităţii grupului şi va promova coerenţa şi transparenţa acţiunilor planificate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000926/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Black Sea Working Group

Fishery problems in the Black Sea countries are currently debated within the framework of a 'Black Sea Working Group', a group which belongs to the GFCM (General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean). Taking into consideration the fact that the problems discussed have a specific character, the creation of a dedicated working group for the Black Sea is necessary. Can the Commission inform Parliament whether it envisages measures for the establishment of such a group, in conformity with the actual necessities and the requests of the public and private actors involved?

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

During the 35th session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (Rome, May 2011) it was decided on the initiative of the EU, Bulgarian and Romanian delegations to set up a Working Group (WG) to facilitate the work of the Scientific Advisory Committee in delivering advice for the Black Sea and to promote the regional cooperation in the field of fisheries and environmental issues.

The first meeting of the WG took place in Constanta (Romania, 16-18/01/12) and was attended by more than 40 scientists and managers from the Black Sea coastal countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia) as well as from the European Fisheries Control Agency, FAO, Black Sea Commission and the European Commission.

The WG discussed achievements, deficiencies and gaps related to fisheries and aquaculture in the Black Sea. In particular, participants pointed out the lack of cooperative and regulatory frameworks involving all **six bordering countries. Availability of updated and reliable fisheries information and data was identified as the main requirement for decision-making based on scientific advice. The WG** identified a number of priorities for further work and short and medium term actions needed to address them. These actions will improve the knowledge of fisheries and aquaculture sectors and help to satisfy actual necessities and requests from the public and private actors involved.

The second meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2013.

The European Commission will closely follow the implementation of the work of the group and will promote coherence and transparency in the planned actions.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000927/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Refacerea efectivului de porcine în România

În cadrul şedinţei Comitetului permanent pentru lanţul alimentar şi sănătatea animalelor (6 decembrie 2011), România a fost autorizată să comercializeze şi să exporte carnea de porc pe piaţa intracomunitară şi în ţările terţe. De la instituirea interdicţiei, la data aderării, efectivul de animale din specia porcine a scăzut în România cu circa două milioane de exemplare. Comisia este rugată să precizeze care sunt soluţiile optime de sprijin pentru refacerea efectivului de porcine.

Răspuns dat de dl Dalli în numele Comisiei
(3 februarie 2012)

Comercializarea cărnii de porc româneşti în alte state membre ale UE a fost supusă restricţiilor din cauza pestei porcine clasice (PPC). Recent, comerţul a fost autorizat prin intermediul unui „sistem canalizat", creat în România, care include crescătorii de porci, abatoare şi unităţi selecţionate, cu un nivel înalt de biosecuritate, igienă şi supraveghere în privinţa PPC ([1]). Se aşteaptă ca România să realizeze progrese suplimentare în privinţa eradicării PPC, ceea ce ar duce la înlăturarea restricţiilor rămase.

Programul naţional de dezvoltare rurală al României pentru perioada 2007-2013 include măsuri în sprijinul modernizării exploataţiilor agricole şi al investiţiilor pentru îmbunătăţirea prelucrării şi comercializării produselor agricole, care acoperă şi sectorul porcinelor. Cu toate acestea, achiziţionarea de animale nu este eligibilă pentru finanţarea din Fondul european agricol pentru dezvoltare rurală (FEADR), în conformitate cu articolul 55 alineatul (2) din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1974/2006 al Comisiei ([2]).

([1]) Decizia 2008/855/CE a Comisiei din 3 noiembrie 2008 privind măsurile zoosanitare de combatere a pestei porcine clasice în anumite state membre. JO L 302, 13.11.2008. Astfel cum a fost modificată ultima dată prin Decizia de punere în aplicare 2010/40/UE a Comisiei.

([2]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1974/2006 al Comisiei din 15 decembrie 2006 de stabilire a normelor de aplicare a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 1698/2005 al Consiliului privind sprijinul pentru dezvoltarea rurală acordat din Fondul European Agricol pentru Dezvoltare Rurală (FEADR). JO L 368, 23.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000927/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Regeneration of the pig population in Romania

At the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health held on 6 December 2011, Romania was authorised to market and export pig meat on the Community market and to third countries. Since the introduction of the export ban when Romania joined the EU, the head of porcine species in Romania had fallen by around two million. Can the Commission specify what optimal aid solutions there are for regenerating the pig population in Romania?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

Trade of Romanian pigmeat to other EU Member States was restricted due to classical swine fever (CSF). Trade has recently been authorised via a 'channelled system', developed in Romania, which includes selected pig farms, slaughterhouses and establishments with high biosecurity, hygiene and surveillance for CSF ([1]). Romania is still expected to make further progress on the eradication of CSF, as this would lead to the repeal of the remaining restrictions.

The National Rural Development Programme of Romania for the period 2007-2013 includes measures supporting the modernisation of agricultural holdings and investments aiming to improve the processing and marketing of agricultural products, covering also the swine sector. However, the purchase of animals is not eligible for funding by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), according to Article 55 (2) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 ([2]).

([1]) Commission Decision 2008/855/EC of 3 November 2008 concerning animal health control measures relating to classical swine fever in certain Member States. OJ L 302, 13.11.2008, as last amended by Commission Implementing Decision 2012/40/EU.

([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006, of 15 December 2006, laying down rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1685/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), OJ L 368, 23.12.2006.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000928/12
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Negarea Holocaustului în Federația Rusă

În Rusia, o placă comemorativă care onora memoria evreilor uciși la Zmiyevskaya Balka (august 1942, considerată cea mai mare atrocitate a Holocaustului în Rusia, cu circa 27.000 de victime), a fost înlocuită cu o alta care nu menționează că victimele erau evrei, ci „cetățeni pașnici din Rostov-pe-Don și prizonieri sovietici". Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă are intenția de a aborda, în relațiile bilaterale cu Federația Rusă, acest caz de negare a Holocaustului.

Răspuns dat de doamna Ashton în numele Comisiei
(5 martie 2012)

Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte al Comisiei (IR/VP) mulțumește distinsului deputat pentru aducerea în atenție a acestui caz. Delegația UE în Federația Rusă studiază cazul în detaliu. Chestiuni de această natură au mai fost aduse în discuție în trecut, în cadrul dialogului UE cu Federația Rusă, în principal în contextul consultărilor bianuale în materie de drepturile omului. Următoarea reuniune de consultări ar urma să aibă loc în luna mai 2012. Aceasta va fi prima ocazie de a aborda chestiunea în mod oficial cu interlocutorii din Federația Rusă. Preocupările legate de rasism, xenofobie și de infracțiunile inspirate de ură fac parte integrantă din dialogul UE cu Rusia și reprezintă o componentă importantă a discuțiilor purtate cu ocazia consultărilor cu această țară.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000928/12
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Holocaust denial in the Russian Federation

In Russia, a commemorative plaque which honoured the memory of the Jews killed in Zmiyevskaya Balka in August 1942 (this is considered the greatest Holocaust atrocity in Russia, with some 27 000 victims) has been replaced with one that does not mention that the victims were Jews, describing them instead as 'peaceful citizens of Rostov-on-Don and Soviet prisoners'. Will the Commission raise this case of Holocaust denial in its bilateral relations with the Russian Federation?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is grateful to the Honourable Member for bringing this case to her attention. The EU Delegation in the Russian Federation is looking into it closely. Questions of this nature have been raised in the EU's dialogue with the Russian Federation in the past, primarily in the context of the twice-yearly human rights consultations. The next meeting of the consultations should take place in May 2012. This would be the next opportunity to formally address the question with the Russian interlocutors, as appropriate. Concerns relating to racism, xenophobia and hate crimes are part and parcel of the EU's discussions with Russia, and a regular part of discussions at its consultations.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000930/12
do Komisji
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(2 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Metody pomiaru zanieczyszczenia powietrza

Czyste powietrze to bezsprzecznie jedno z podstawowych dóbr, do którego dostęp powinien być zagwarantowany dla każdego człowieka. Rzeczywistość jest jednak inna. Wiele miast i regionów Europy walczy z problemem zanieczyszczonego powietrza. Unia Europejska, wychodząc naprzeciw temu wyzwaniu, w dyrektywie 2008/50/WE w sprawie jakości powietrza i czystszego powietrza dla Europy opracowała środki mające przyczynić się do poprawy jakości powietrza w Europie.

Zgodnie z tą dyrektywą stężenie pyłu w powietrzu atmosferycznym mierzone jest zgodnie z normami EN 12341 i EN 14907, które opierają się na amerykańskich badaniach sprzed 20 lat. Metoda ta jest przestarzała i zawiera poważne błędy metodologiczne. Pierwszy błąd dotyczy błędnej konstrukcji używanego do badań próbnika. Powietrze do wlotu próbnika zasysane jest zawsze ze stałą prędkością, niezależnie od prędkości wiatru. Powoduje to, że cząsteczki stałe powietrza wyrzucane są z próbnika. Im silniejszy wieje wiatr, tym bardziej stężenie pyłu w badanym powietrzu zmniejsza się. Drugi błąd polega na tym, że badania przeprowadzane są na wietrze o dużych prędkościach (2-10 m/s). Nie uwzględnia się wpływu na poziom stężenia zanieczyszczenia wiatru o małych prędkościach, podobnych do prędkości zasysania powietrza przez próbnik (0.1-2 m/s), gdzie ilość wyrzucanych z próbnika cząstek stałych jest znacznie mniejsza.

Podsumowując, przy badaniu wiatru o większych prędkościach przyrząd nie mierzy właściwego stężenia. Błędy mogą dochodzić do kilkudziesięciu procent właściwego stężenia, co powoduje duże zmiany w mapach odzwierciedlających zanieczyszczenie powietrza w Europie.

1. Czy Komisja podejmie działania w celu sprawdzenia metod badania stężenia zanieczyszczeń powietrza zawartych w dyrektywie?

2. Czy Komisja zamierza porównać badania przeprowadzone zgodnie z normami EN 12341 i EN 14907 z badaniami wykorzystującymi inne, nowsze metodologie badawcze?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(19 marca 2012 r.)

1. Podstawę dla metod stosowanych na potrzeby badania stężenia zanieczyszczeń powietrza stanowią normy EN 12341 i EN 14907, ustanowione w drodze szeroko zakrojonych badań i autoryzacji ze strony CEN (Europejskiego Komitetu Normalizacji) 264 (jakość powietrza). Grupa robocza CEN składa się ze specjalistów w dziedzinie pomiarów zanieczyszczeń pyłowych. Przeprowadzili oni przegląd odnośnej literatury z tej dziedziny, a także sprawozdań z testów próbników i badań w terenie. Eksperci wiedzą, że skuteczność pobierania próbek przez zalecany system zależy od prędkości wiatru, jednak ta zależność dotyczy przede wszystkim dużych cząsteczek, których średnice przekraczają wielkości określone w przepisach.

Komisja prowadzi regularne kontrole stanu wykonania dyrektywy w sprawie jakości powietrza za pomocą wzajemnych porównań na szczeblu europejskim (np. EUR 24851 EN [1]) zmierzające do harmonizacji metod pomiarowych stosowanych przez sieci monitoringu państw członkowskich.

2. Obecnie CEN prowadzi przegląd obydwu norm z uwzględnieniem zdobytych doświadczeń. W chwili obecnej Komisja nie przewiduje udzielenia CEN mandatu w celu rozważenia nowych metody badawczych.

[1] Lagler, F. et al., A Quality Assurance and Control Program for PM2.5 and PM10 measurements in European Air Quality Monitoring Networks, EUR 24581-2011, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union (Lagler, F. et al., – Program zapewniania jakości i kontroli dla pomiarów pyłów PM2,5 i PM10 w europejskich sieciach monitorowania jakości powietrza, EUR 24581-2011, Luksemburg: Urząd Publikacji Unii Europejskiej).

Niemniej jednak w ramach trwających prac badawczych finansowanych ze środków siódmego programu ramowego na rzecz badań (FP7) prowadzony jest przegląd obecnych technologii monitorowania jakości powietrza stosowanych w miastach europejskich, ich standardowych procedur operacyjnych i sprawozdań z testów równoważności (z uwzględnieniem pyłów), a także określa się obszary, w których niezbędna jest poprawa. Więcej informacji na temat powyższego działania zatytułowanego AirMonTech można znaleźć na stronie internetowej: http://www.airmontech.eu/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000930/12
to the Commission
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: Methods of measuring air pollution

Clean air is unquestionably one of the basic goods, access to which should be guaranteed for everyone. The reality, however, is different. Many cities and regions in Europe are struggling with the problem of polluted air. Embracing this challenge, the European Union, in its Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, developed measures aimed at improving the quality of air in Europe.

Pursuant to the directive, dust concentration in the air is calculated in accordance with EN 12341 and EN 14907 norms, which are based on American research dating back 20 years. This method is out of date and includes serious methodological errors. The first error concerns the inappropriate construction of the probe used for the research. The air in the inlet is always sucked in at a constant speed, regardless of the speed of the wind. This results in particulate matter being thrown out of the probe. The stronger the wind, the more the dust concentration decreases in the tested air. The other error consists in the research being carried out under strong wind conditions (2-10 m/s). The level of dust concentration caused by a mild wind of a speed similar to that at which the air is sucked into the probe (0.1-2 m/s), where the quantity of particulate matter removed from the probe is significantly smaller, is not taken into account.

In short, when the tests are performed under strong wind conditions the device does not provide an accurate measure of the concentration. Errors can be as high as several dozen percent of the actual concentration, which results in significant changes on the maps showing air pollution in Europe.

1. Will the Commission take steps to check the methods used to test the concentration of air pollution provided for in the directive?

2. Is the Commission intending to compare the tests conducted in accordance with EN 12341 and EN 14907 norms with the tests using other, newer research methodologies?

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

1. The methods used to test the concentration of air pollution are based on the EN 12341 and EN 14907 standards, which have been established through testing and validation by the CEN (Comité Européen de Normalisation) European Committee for Standardisation 264 (Air Quality). The CEN Working Group is composed of experts in the field of particle measurement. They reviewed the relevant literature in the field as well as test reports of wind tunnel and field experiments. The experts are aware of the fact that the sampling efficiency of the recommended system depends on wind speed, but this dependency is mainly for large particles above the diameters regulated in the legislation.

The Commission performs regular checks of the state of implementation of the air quality Directive through intercomparisons performed at European level (e.g. EUR 24851 EN ([1])) with a view to harmonising the measuring methods used by Member States' monitoring networks.

2. Currently both standards are under revision by CEN, taking into account the experience gained. The Commission does not plan at this point to mandate the CEN committee to consider newer research methodologies.

Nevertheless, ongoing research, funded by the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research (FP7) is currently reviewing the existing air quality monitoring technologies currently used in European cities, their standard operating procedures and equivalence test reports (including for particulate matters), and is identifying future needs for improvement. More info on this FP7 activity, entitled AirMonTech, is available from: http://www.airmontech.eu/.

([1]) Lagler, F. et al, A Quality Assurance and Control Program for PM2.5 and PM10 measurements in European Air Quality Monitoring Networks, EUR 24581-2011, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000932/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δήλωση του Επιτρόπου Ρεν για διεύρυνση του ύψους της οικονομικής στήριξης προς την Ελλάδα

Σε συνέντευξή του στο Reuters την Πέμπτη 26.01.2012 ο Ευρωπαίος Επίτροπος Όλι Ρεν τόνισε ότι θα χρειασθούν περισσότερα δημόσια κεφάλαια για το νέο πακέτο στήριξης της Ελλάδας, ώστε να καλυφθεί το χρηματοδοτικό κενό της χώρας, εφόσον καταλήξουν επιτυχώς οι διαπραγματεύσεις για το PSI.

— Είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει για το ύψος του χρηματοδοτικού κενού το οποίο εκτιμάει ότι θα χρειασθεί για το νέο πακέτο στήριξης της Ελλάδας;

— Για ποιούς λόγους κατά την εκτίμηση της Επιτροπής το αρχικώς εκτιμούμενο ως επαρκές κεφάλαιο των 130 δις ευρώ χρειάζεται πλέον περαιτέρω διεύρυνση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει περαιτέρω στοιχεία για να διαβιβάσει στο Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, πέραν των δημοσίων δηλώσεων του Προέδρου της Επιτροπής και του αρμόδιου για τις οικονομικές και νομισματικές υποθέσεις Αντιπροέδρου της Επιτροπής. Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος παρακαλείται επίσης να ανατρέξει στη δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας της 20ής Φεβρουαρίου 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000932/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(1 February 2012)

Subject: Statement by Commissioner Olli Rehn on increasing financial assistance for Greece

At a Reuters news conference on Thursday 26 January 2012, European Commissioner Olli Rehn emphasised that more public funds would be needed for the new support package for Greece in order to plug the country's financial gap if the private sector involvement (PSI) negotiations were successful.

— Can the Commission put a figure on the amount it thinks will be needed for Greece's new support package in order to plug the country's financial gap?

— Why does the Commission believe that the amount of EUR 130 billion, which was originally deemed sufficient, now needs to be increased?

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

The Commission has no further elements to forward to the Honourable Member, besides the public statements of the President of the Commission and of the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Economic and Monetary Affairs. Please also see the Eurogroup statement of 20 February 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000933/12
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(3. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: EU-Förderungen an ein polnisches Unternehmen zum Auf- und Ausbau des Paczkomaty-Systems

Vor rund 10 Jahren begann eine österreichische Firma — ein 1968 gegründetes, mittelständisches Unternehmen mit Sitz in Linz — gemeinsam mit einer großen deutschen Logistikgruppe mit der Entwicklung von Paketautomaten (KePol-Systeme) zur Automatisierung der sogenannten ersten und letzten Meile im Post- und Logistikbereich.

2008 kam es zu einer Ausschreibung um eine automatisierte Paketlösung durch ein polnisches Unternehmen, an der auch das besagte österreichische Unternehmen teilnahm und im Lauf derer es zum Austausch von Know-how zum Thema KePol kam.

Das polnische Unternehmen sagte die Ausschreibung ab und begann mit der Entwicklung eines eigenen Systems, das sich optisch und funktional so eng am KePol-System orientierte, dass kaum eigenständige Unterscheidungsmerkmale erkennbar waren.

Das österreichische Unternehmen hat im Lauf des Entwicklungsprozesses mehrere Millionen Euro investiert, die von punktuellen Förderungen durch den FFG (FFF) selbst oder durch Kundenaufträge erbracht wurden.

Das polnische Unternehmen erhielt im Gegenzug für den Nachbau des Systems allein 2008 und 2009 rund 15 Millionen Euro — dreimal so viel, wie sie aus der Veräußerung der eigenen Aktien erwirtschafteten.

Die Bewilligung der Fördermittel für den Ausbau des „revolutionären" Paczkomaty-Systems ist unter obiger Sachlage nur schwer nachvollziehbar und stellt eine Verzerrung des freien Wettbewerbs dar.

Folgende Fragen sind in diesem Zusammenhang zu stellen:

1. Welcher Aspekt des Projekts wurde als förderungswürdig eingestuft und warum?

2. Wurde nicht erkannt, dass es sich um ein Plagiat handelt, und sollen EU-Fördermittel Plagiaten gewidmet sein?

3. Sind Förderungen unter diesem Titel zulässig?

4. Ist sich die Kommission dessen bewusst, dass durch diese Fördermaßnahmen nicht Innovation und Weiterentwicklung gefördert werden, sondern vor allem Nachahmung, und dass hier innerhalb der EU aktive und massive Eingriffe in die Wettbewerbsgleichheit stattgefunden haben und noch stattfinden?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(20. März 2012)

Der Herr Abgeordnete nennt kein konkretes Unternehmen als Empfänger der EFRE-Unterstützung; deshalb kann keine genaue Auskunft gegeben werden. Allgemein merkt die Kommission jedoch an, dass der Beschwerdeführer — falls ein polnisches Unternehmen unrechtmäßige Praktiken angewendet hat — beschließen könnte, auf die Rechtsmittel der nationalen Verwaltungs- oder Gerichtsverfahren zurückzugreifen.

Gemäß dem für die Kohäsionspolitik geltenden Grundsatz der geteilten Verwaltung fällt die Auswahl und Durchführung von Einzelprojekten in den Zuständigkeitsbereich der nationalen Behörden. Die Kommission wird bei den zuständigen polnischen Behörden weitere Informationen einholen, um sicherzustellen, dass die Vorschriften für Strukturfonds und staatliche Beihilfen ordnungsgemäß befolgt wurden. Im Fall eines Verstoßes gegen die Vorschriften kann die Kommission zu Unrecht gezahlte Beträge wieder einziehen. Der Herr Abgeordnete wird über das Ergebnis dieser Untersuchung unterrichtet. In der Zwischenzeit empfiehlt die Kommission dem Herrn Abgeordneten, die Verwaltungsbehörde des Programms direkt zu kontaktieren:

Ministerstwo Rozwoju Regionalnego (Ministerium für Regionale Entwicklung)
Direktor Marcin Łata
Managing Department for Competitiveness and Innovation Programmes
ul. Mysia 2, 00-496 Warschau
Tel.: +48 22 330 33 26, 330 33 27
Telefax: +48 22 330 33 60
E-Mail: po-ig@mrr.gov.pl

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000933/12
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: EU funding for a Polish company to set up and expand the Paczkomaty system

Around 10 years ago, a medium-sized company located in Linz, Austria, founded in 1969, began working with a large German logistics group on the development of package systems (KePol systems) for automating the so-called first and last mile in mail and logistics operations.

In 2008, a Polish company initiated a tendering procedure for an automated package solution in which the aforementioned Austrian company participated and during which an exchange of expertise took place between the companies in relation to KePol.

The Polish company cancelled the tender and began developing a system of its own that was so similar to the KePol system in visual and functional terms that there were almost no appreciable differences between them.

During the development process, the Austrian company invested several million euro, provided through specific funding from the FFG (FFF), by the company itself, or through customer orders.

In 2008 and 2009 alone the Polish company received around EUR 15 million — three times the amount raised from the sale of its own shares — in payment for licences to reproduce the system.

In the light of these facts, it is difficult to understand why funding for the 'revolutionary' Paczkomaty system was approved, and such approval constitutes a distortion of free trade.

The following questions need to be asked in this context:

1. Which aspect of the project was judged eligible for funding and why?

2. Was it not recognised that this is a case of intellectual property theft, and should EU funding be given to stolen concepts?

3. Is funding under this heading admissible?

4. Is the Commission aware that these funding measures do not promote innovation and development, but rather mainly benefit imitation, and that in this case significant, active interference in equal competition has taken place and is still taking place within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Honourable Member does not name any particular company as a beneficiary of ERDF support and therefore it is not possible to provide specific replies. As a general comment, the Commission notes that if there have been unlawful practices by a Polish company, the complainant could decide to use means available in accordance with national administrative or legal procedures.

In line with the shared management principle governing cohesion policy, the selection and implementation of individual projects is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission will make further enquiries with the competent Polish authorities in order to ensure that Structural Fund and state aid rules have been properly observed. In case of any wrong-doing, the Commission may recover any amounts unduly paid. The Honourable Member will be informed of the results of this enquiry. In the meantime, the Commission would suggest that the Honourable Member contact directly the programme managing authority:

Ministry of Regional Development
Director Marcin Łata
Managing Department for Competitiveness and Innovation Programmes
ul. Mysia 2, 00-496 Warszawa
Tel.: +48 22 330 33 26, 330 33 27
Fax: +48 22 330 33 60
Email: po-ig@mrr.gov.pl

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000934/12
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Varroa mite and honeybee health

Is the Commission aware of any research being carried out using ultrasound in the fight against the Varroa mite?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The Commission is not aware of specific research being carried out using ultrasound technology in the fight against *Varroa*.

The Commission is supporting research projects with the objective to improve bee health and will continue in the coming years to put emphasis on innovative approaches to address bee health issues, including *Varroa* control.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000935/12
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Bird trapping — mist nets

Does the Commission have in place, or does it intend to put in place, any regulations regarding the sale of mist nets currently used for illegally trapping birds?

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

The use of any type of net to catch birds is prohibited under Article 8 of the Birds Directive ([1]). However nets, in particular mist nets, may be legally used under derogation for scientific reasons or to permit, under strictly supervised conditions and on a selective basis, the capture of certain birds in small numbers. There is currently no European legislation prohibiting the sale of mist nets at EU level though some countries have such prohibitions in place. The Commission does not at present intend to propose such legislation.

The Commission is aware that the illegal trapping of birds is still practised in the EU and has initiated a set of actions aimed at eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds in the EU in collaboration with Member States and stakeholders.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000936/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: 'One bag' rule

Is the Commission aware that the 'one bag' rule imposed by European low-fare airlines, which have a dominant position in particular airports, means that regional airports in Ireland and elsewhere in the EU are put in the very difficult position of not being able to insist on airlines allowing passengers to carry airport shopping on board, for fear that a large airline would pull out of that airport?

Does the Commission not feel the time is right to protect regional airports, which rely on passengers shopping at the airport to keep landing charges low?

The Commission's argument that this is a matter for commercial negotiation is not very pertinent to regional and smaller airports, which are at the mercy of airlines that threaten to pull routes unless their specific conditions are met by the airport in question. Would the Commission consider revising its position in order to protect smaller airports and to ensure the passengers can carry on board a reasonable amount of airport shopping?

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

The Commission is aware of the 'one carry-on bag' policy operated by certain airlines.

Carriers licensed in a Member State are directly bound by the EU Aviation Acquis, including the rules on air passenger rights and the Air Services Regulation (EC)No 1008/2008 ([1]). The rule under Article 22 of this regulation is the freedom of airlines as to their fares policy for the carriage of passengers. Article 23 of the regulation imposes the obligation of transparency notably as regards the total price of the ticket. This also applies to the conditions for the carriage of luggage that they could put in place.

Regarding the way passengers are affected by the one bag policy rules, the Commission notes that the strictness with which these policies are implemented in practice may vary between carriers and between staff members of a same carrier. In practice, while some air carriers would require passengers to pay an additional fee for carrying these extra items, other air carriers would accept that passengers carry on board, for instance, one item plus a laptop or a handbag. A number of airports have been able to negociate with airlines a relaxation of the one bag rule. ([2])

In the framework of the current review of Regulation (EC)No 261/2004 on air passenger rights, the Commission has launched a public consultation that will remain open until 11 March 2012. This provides the opportunity for interested parties to contribute with their assessment and possible solutions to relevant issues, also as regards the evolution of market practices on luggage allowances.

([1]) OJ L 293, 31.10.2008, p. 3-20.

([2]) Under Article 10 and Annex II of Regulation (EC)No 1107/2006, concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air, these passengers may, in addition to medical equipment, transport of up to two pieces of mobility equipment per disabled person or person with reduced mobility without additional charge, including electric wheelchairs. It is to be noted that items such as medicines, baby food and milk or cameras can be contained in a normal-size cabin luggage. As to airport purchases (including duty-free items), it is the passenger's responsibility to ensure that they can be contained in his/her carry on bag in case such a policy is practiced by the airline with which they are flying.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000937/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 3 d.)

Tema: Jaunų verslininkų rėmimas

Siekiant pažangaus, tvaraus ir integracinio Baltijos jūros regiono augimo, būtina jaunimo įtrauktis ir užimtumo didinimas. Sėkminga integracija į darbo rinką, didesnis jaunų žmonių judumas yra svarbūs veiksniai, padedantys išlaisvinti jų potencialą. Puoselėjant verslumu grindžiamą mąstyseną reikia skatinti jaunimo domėjimąsi verslu ir norą siekti verslininko karjeros. Jauniems žmonėms reikėtų suteikti daugiau galimybių įgyti verslininkystės patirties ir atitinkamai juos remti.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Remti jaunus verslininkus“.

Noriu paklaust Komisijos, kokiomis priemonėmis skatinamas didesnis jaunų verslininkų judumas ir tarpvalstybiniai jaunų verslininkų tinklai?

Kokios iniciatyvos šiuo metu pradėtos, siekiant skatinti jaunimo verslumą?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

Kiek lėšų reikalinga ir kiek lėšų šiuo metu skirta šiam projektui įgyvendinti?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 13 d.)

Programa „Erasmus jauniesiems verslininkams“ skatinamas verslininkų judumas ir tarpvalstybiniai ryšiai bei Europos įmonių internacionalizacija. Siekiant, kad nauji ar būsimi verslininkai įgytų įgūdžių sėkmingai įkurti, vystyti ir valdyti smulkų verslą, jiems suteikiama galimybė 1-6 mėn. dirbti kartu su patyrusiais verslininkais kitoje valstybėje narėje.

Ši programa, kurios metinis biudžetas siekia 5 mln. EUR, vykdoma nuo 2009 m. Paraiškas dalyvauti programoje pateikė apie 4 500 verslininkų, iš kurių daugiau nei 450 – iš Baltijos jūros regiono šalių. Šiuo metu šiame regione vykdoma apie 200 mainų, o bendras mainų skaičius siekia 950.

Programą įgyvendina verslininkus skatinančios ir remiančios verslo paramos organizacijos iš visų Baltijos jūros regionui priklausančių valstybių narių.

Pagal ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategiją už jaunųjų verslininkų paramos projektą atsakinga Danijos verslo tarnyba (angl. *Danish Business Authority*). Užmegzti pirmieji ryšiai. Tolesnė veikla, priskirta aštuntajai prioritetinei sričiai („Smulkiojo verslo akto Europai įgyvendinimas“), vykdoma prižiūrint Danijai ir Vokietijai.

Pagal atvirąjį koordinavimo metodą švietimo ir mokymo srityje įsteigta verslumo ugdymo darbo grupė. Įgyvendinant strategijos „Europa 2020“ iniciatyvą „Judus jaunimas“ aktyviau remiamas jaunimo verslumas – didinamas judumas pagal Erasmus užimtumo programą, skatinamas verslumo mokymas Europos inovacijos ir technologijos institute ir aktyvesnis jaunų tyrėjų dalyvavimas versle pagal programą „Marie Curie“. Siekiant skatinti jaunimo užimtumą ir verslumą taip pat siūlomas finansavimas pagal Mokymosi visą gyvenimą programą.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000937/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Support for young entrepreneurs

In order to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the Baltic Sea Region, we must involve young people and increase employment. Successful integration into the labour market and enhanced mobility are important factors helping to unlock their potential. In order to foster an entrepreneurial mindset we need to encourage young people's interest in business and the desire to pursue a career in business. Young people should be given more opportunities to acquire entrepreneurial experience and should be supported accordingly.

One of the projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region makes provision for: 'Support for Young Entrepreneurs'.

I would like to ask the Commission what methods are being used to promote greater mobility among young entrepreneurs and cross-border networks for young entrepreneurs?

What initiatives have currently been taken to encourage enterprise among young people?

Which countries are involved in the implementation of this project?

How much funding is required, and how much funding has already been allocated to the implementation of this project?

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

The Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme promotes mobility and cross-border networking among entrepreneurs and the internationalisation of European enterprises. New or would-be entrepreneurs can work alongside experienced ones for a period of one to six months in another Member State to acquire skills necessary to successfully start, grow and manage a small business.

The programme is operational since 2009, with an annual budget of EUR 5 million. Some 4 500 entrepreneurs have applied to the programme, including over 450 from the Baltic Sea Region. Around 200 exchanges have been established from this region so far, out of 950 exchanges overall.

Business support organisations from all Baltic Sea Region Member States are currently implementing the programme through promotion and supporting entrepreneurs.

In the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the Danish Business Authority is responsible for a project to 'promote young entrepreneurs'. Initial contacts are being established. Follow-up is taking place within Priority Area 8 'implementing the Small Business Act for Europe' under the responsibility of Denmark and Germany.

Under the Open Method of Coordination in the field of Education and Training, a Working Group on Entrepreneurship Education has been established. Via the 'Youth on the Move' Europe 2020 initiative, support to youth entrepreneurship has been reinforced by increasing Erasmus work placement mobility, promoting entrepreneurship education by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology and enhancing business participation of young researchers through the Marie Curie Programme. The Lifelong Learning Programme also offers funding to promote employability and entrepreneurship among young people.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000938/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 3 d.)

Tema: Naujos verslo perspektyvos ir bendradarbiavimas aplinkosaugos technologijų srityje

Susirūpinimas aplinkosauga ir augantis visuomenės spaudimas keičia verslo sąlygas visame pasaulyje. Įmonėms, kurių veikla pagrįsta aplinką tausojančiais principais, atsiveria naujos verslo galimybės. Tai lemia vartotojų prioritetų teikimas gaminiams, mažai žalingiems aplinkai ir sveikatai, ir investuotojų ir partnerių reikalavimai.

Aplinkosaugos technologijos gali suteikti teigiamą impulsą ekonominei ir socialinei pažangai. Būtina skatinti ir sudaryti sąlygas mažoms ir vidutinėms įmonėms puoselėti tvarią plėtrą aplinkosaugos technologijų srityje, kaip vieną iš Baltijos jūros regiono augimo ir konkurencingumo aspektų.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Siekti atverti naujas verslo perspektyvas, stiprinti bendradarbiavimą aplinkosauginių technologijų srityje“.

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokiomis priemonėmis siekiama stiprinti bendradarbiavimą aplinkosaugos technologijų sektoriaus mažose ir vidutinėse įmonėse?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

Kiek lėšų reikėtų ir kiek šiuo metu skirta šiam projektui įgyvendinti?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 19 d.)

Veikla, kuria siekiama sustiprinti mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių (MVĮ) bendradarbiavimą aplinkosauginių technologijų srityje, iš esmės vykdoma įgyvendinant pavyzdinį projektą „Glaudesnis bendradarbiavimas aplinkosauginių technologijų srityje siekiant atverti naujų verslo perspektyvų“. Šiam projektui vadovauja Lenkijos mokslo ir aukštojo mokslo ministerija.

Baltijos jūros regiono šalių aplinkosaugos srities MVĮ remti taip pat parengti trys mažesni projektai. Jais sukuriama tvirta žinių ir technologijų kritinė masė bei nustatomi bendri veiksmai, kuriais siekiama skatinti eksportą.

Įgyvendinant šiuos projektus („BioNutCut“, „DeepEntech“ ir „eFrontrunner“) sprendžiami įvairūs klausimai, susiję su MVĮ skatinimu taikyti aplinkosaugines technologijas. Šiuose projektuose, kuriems įgyvendinti siekiama gauti 8 mln. EUR bendro finansavimo lėšų, dalyvauja partneriai iš visų Baltijos jūros regiono valstybių narių ([1]). Projektas „Mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacijos tvariai gamybai“, kuriuo MVĮ skatinamos diegti esamas ekologines inovacijas, jau gavo finansavimą – pagal Tarpvalstybinę Baltijos jūros regiono programą jam skirta 3 mln. EUR.

([1]) Danija, Estija, Latvija, Lenkija, Lietuva, Suomija, Švedija, Vokietija.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000938/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: New commercial prospects and cooperation in the field of environmental technologies

Concern for the environment and growing public pressure are changing the conditions for business throughout the world. New business opportunities are opening up for companies whose activities are based on consideration for the environment. This is down to consumers giving priority to products that are less harmful to the environment and to health, as well as the demands of investors and partners.

Environmental technologies can give a positive boost to economic and social progress. It is essential to encourage and enable small and medium-sized enterprises to foster sustainable development in the field of environmental technologies, as one of the aspects of growth and competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region.

One of the main projects of the second pillar of the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region makes provision for: 'The opening up of new business prospects and the enhancement of cooperation in the field of environmental technologies'.

I wish to ask the Commission how cooperation in small and medium-sized enterprises in the environmental technologies sector is to be enhanced?

Which countries are involved in the implementation of this project?

What funds are required, and what funds are currently allocated to implement this project?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The work to deepen the cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the field of environmental technology is mainly done through the Flagship Project 'Develop deeper cooperation on environmental technology to create new business opportunities'. The project is led by the Polish Ministry for Science and Higher Education.

Three sub-projects have been developed that share the aim of supporting Baltic Sea Region SMEs in the environmental sector. These create a strong critical mass in knowledge and technology, and joint actions with respect to export promotion.

These projects (BioNutCut, DeepEntech and eFrontrunner) are all tackling different aspects of promoting environmental technologies with SMEs. Between them the projects include partners from all Baltic Sea Member States ([1]). These projects seek to obtain EUR 8 million of co-financing. A project that has already received funding is the 'Sustainable Production Through Innovation in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises'. It has received EUR 3 million from the Transnational Baltic Sea Region Programme, and supports SMEs in incorporating existing eco-innovations into their operations.

([1]) DE, DK, EE, FI, LT, LV, PL, SE.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-000939/12
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 3 d.)

Tema: Mažų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacinė tvari gamyba

Šiandien dauguma įmonių patiria nuolat stiprėjantį konkurencinį spaudimą. Konkurencijos stiprėjimas vyksta dėl globalinės ekonomikos poveikio ir greitos technologijų plėtros. Kuriant novatorišką Baltijos jūros regioną svarbu, kad būtų didinamas inovatyvių idėjų ir verslumo potencialas.

Inovacijos, naujos technologijos versle bei tvarūs gamybos procesai gali paspartinti viso makroregiono ūkio plėtrą ir užtikrinti greitesnį ekonomikos kilimą. Baltijos jūros regiono konkurencingumas tiesiogiai priklauso nuo regiono įmonių inovatyvumo augimo. Inovacijos leidžia pasiekti aukštą gaminių kokybę, sukuria papildomą pridėtinę vertę ir yra ekonominės plėtros garantas.

Viename iš pagrindinių Baltijos jūros regiono strategijos antrojo ramsčio projektų numatyta: „Įgyvendinti mažų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacinės tvarios gamybos projektą“.

Noriu paklausti Komisijos, kokiomis priemonėmis siekiama didinti mažų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacinius pajėgumus ir pagerinti tvarios gamybos procesus?

Kokios šalys dalyvauja įgyvendinant šį projektą?

J. Hahno atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. kovo 16 d.)

ES Baltijos jūros regiono strategija skatinamos mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių (MVĮ) inovacijos tvariai gamybai. Tiksliau tariant, šis uždavinys sprendžiamas aštuntojoje prioritetinėje srityje „Smulkiojo verslo akto įgyvendinimas“ ([1]).

Projekte „Mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacijos tvariai gamybai“, kuriuo siekiama skatinti MVĮ gebėjimus diegti esamas ekologines inovacijas, dalyvauja svarbiausios ekologinių inovacijų srities organizacijos iš Danijos, Švedijos, Suomijos, Estijos, Lietuvos, Lenkijos ir Vokietijos. Šį projektą sudaro trys veiklos sritys, kuriose siekiama pagerinti tvarių inovacijų diegimo sąlygas: 1) didinti MVĮ informuotumą ir kompetenciją; 2) suteikti galimybę gauti finansavimą tvarių inovacijų diegimui; 3) skatinti rinkos pokyčius ir tvarių inovacijų taikymą. Šios veiklos sritys remiamos 14 projekto „Mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacijos tvariai gamybai“ strateginių veiksmų.

Pirmaisiais projekto veiksmais orientuojamasi į tai, kaip susieti 200 išskirtinę svarbą ekologinių inovacijų srityje turinčių regiono organizacijų, sukurti inovacijų duomenų bazę, kurioje būtų per 500 gerosios patirties pavyzdžių, ir sustiprinti ekologinių inovacijų vaidmenį regiono politikos darbotvarkėje. Šiuo atžvilgiu svarbus tiesioginės informacijos šaltinis yra projekto svetainė www.spin-project.eu.

Projekto „Mažųjų ir vidutinių įmonių inovacijos tvariai gamybai“ partneriai atliko tyrimus dalyvaujančiose šalyse apie kliūtis ir paskatas diegti inovacijas tvariai gamybai. Remiantis šių tyrimų rezultatais parengta apibendrinamoji ataskaita, kurioje pateikiamos nuoseklios visam regionui skirtos rekomendacijos. Šią ataskaitą galima rasti projekto svetainėje.

([1]) Europos „Smulkiojo verslo aktas“ ir jo apžvalga – tai ES ir valstybių narių MVĮ politikos sistema (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000939/12
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Stable innovative production in small and medium enterprises

The majority of companies today are experiencing constantly strengthening competitive pressure. Strengthening of competition occurs because of the effect of the global economy and rapid technological development. It is important when creating an innovative Baltic Sea Region to increase the potential of innovative ideas and entrepreneurship.

Innovation, new technologies in commerce and stable production processes can accelerate economic development throughout the whole macroregion, and can support more rapid economic recovery. The competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region directly depends on growth in the potential for innovation among the enterprises of the Region. Innovation facilitates the attainment of high product quality it creates additional value and is a guarantor of economic development.

One of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy second pillar projects makes provision for: 'A Project for the Implementation of Stable Innovative Production in Small and Medium Enterprises.'

I would like to ask the Commission by what means it is intended to increase the innovative capacities of small and medium enterprises and to improve the stability of the production process?

Which countries are participating in the implementation of this Project?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region promotes sustainable production through innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). More precisely, priority area 8 on 'Implementing the Small Business Act' ([1]) addresses this challenge.

The project SPIN (Sustainable Production through Innovation in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) brings together key institutions for eco-innovations from Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany and aims precisely at supporting SMEs' capacity to implement existing eco-innovations. This project consists of three activity areas to improve the conditions for sustainable innovation: 1) increase awareness and competences of SMEs; 2) access to finance for sustainable innovations; 3) support market transformation and the uptake of sustainable innovations. Fourteen SPIN Strategic Actions support these activities.

The project's first actions focus on connecting 200 outstanding institutions in the field of eco-innovations in the Region; developing an innovation database listing over 500 good practice examples; and enhancing the presence of eco-innovations on the policy agenda in the Region. In that respect, the project's website (www.spin-project.eu) is an important source of first-hand information.

The SPIN project partners have conducted studies in participating countries on barriers and incentives for innovations in sustainable production. On that basis, SPIN has developed a synthesis report that gives a coherent set of recommendations for the entire Region and is accessible on the project's website.

([1]) The 'Small Business Act' for Europe and its review are the SME policy framework for the EU and its Member States: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000942/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόταση της Επιτροπής για μεταρρύθμιση των κανόνων του 1995 περί προστασίας δεδομένων της ΕΕ

Με ανακοίνωση της την Τετάρτη 25 Ιανουαρίου 2012 η Επιτροπή πρότεινε τη σφαιρική μεταρρύθμιση των κανόνων του 1995 περί προστασίας δεδομένων της ΕΕ με στόχο την ενίσχυση των επιγραμμικών δικαιωμάτων στην ιδιωτικότητα και την ενδυνάμωση της ψηφιακής οικονομίας της Ευρώπης. Η πρωτοβουλία αυτή θα συμβάλει στην τόνωση της εμπιστοσύνης των καταναλωτών στις επιγραμμικές υπηρεσίες, σύμφωνα με την Επιτροπή, ενώ θα επιτρέψει στις επιχειρήσεις να εξοικονομούν περί τα 2,3 δις ευρώ ετησίως. Μεταξύ άλλων, κατά την παρουσίαση της πρότασης η Επιτροπή ανέφερε ότι οι επιχειρήσεις και οργανισμοί θα υποχρεούνται να ενημερώνουν τις εθνικές αρχές ελέγχου σχετικά με σοβαρές παραβιάσεις της προστασίας δεδομένων το συντομότερο δυνατό (εάν είναι εφικτό εντός 24 ωρών). Καθώς η συγκεκριμένη πρόταση διαβιβάζεται στον Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Οι επιχειρήσεις και οι οργανισμοί που αναφέρει η Επιτροπή καλύπτουν το σύνολο εκείνων που χρησιμοποιούν επιγραμμικές υπηρεσίες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

— Η θέσπιση του «δικαιώματος στη λήθη» που προβλέπεται στην πρόταση θα επιτρέπει στους πολίτες να απαλείφουν τα δεδομένα τους (αν δεν υφίστανται νόμιμοι λόγοι που να υπαγορεύουν τη διατήρησή τους) χωρίς την ενημέρωση του παρόχου που φιλοξενεί αυτά τα στοιχεία; Προκειμένου αυτό να είναι εφικτό, πώς θα διασφαλιστεί ότι οι πάροχοι — επιχειρήσεις και οργανισμοί — δεν διατηρούν αρχείο (backup) παρόλο που ο πολίτης έκανε χρήση του δικαιώματος στη λήθη;

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Μαρτίου 2012)

Στις 25 Ιανουαρίου 2012, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε τις προτάσεις της για μεταρρυθμίσεις σχετικά με την προστασία των δεδομένων στην ΕΕ και τις υπέβαλε στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο. Ο προτεινόμενος κανονισμός για την προστασία των φυσικών προσώπων έναντι της επεξεργασίας δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα και για την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των δεδομένων αυτών ([1]) θα αποσαφηνίσει και θα ενισχύσει τα δικαιώματα των προσώπων στα οποία αναφέρονται τα δεδομένα, καθώς και τις υποχρεώσεις των υπευθύνων επεξεργασίας σχετικά με τη διαγραφή δεδομένων που διατηρούνται χωρίς έγκυρο νομικό λόγο, παγιώνοντας ρητό «δικαίωμα στη λήθη». Αυτό θα ισχύσει για κάθε μορφή επεξεργασίας δεδομένων, είτε σε ενεργούς βάσεις δεδομένων είτε σε εφεδρικά μέσα.

Η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σχετικά με την προστασία των δεδομένων ήδη προβλέπει ότι η επεξεργασία προσωπικών δεδομένων είναι νόμιμη μόνον όταν παρέχεται έγκυρος νομικός λόγος που την δικαιολογεί. Η οδηγία 95/46/ΕC ([2]) καθορίζει πολλούς νομικούς λόγους, μεταξύ των οποίων η συγκατάθεση του προσώπου στο οποίο αναφέρονται τα δεδομένα, οι νόμιμες και συμβατικές υποχρεώσεις, τα ζωτικά συμφέροντα του προσώπου στο οποίο αναφέρονται τα δεδομένα, το δημόσιο συμφέρον και, υπό ορισμένες προϋποθέσεις, το έννομο συμφέρον του υπευθύνου επεξεργασίας των δεδομένων. Η επεξεργασία των δεδομένων πρέπει να γίνεται κατά τρόπο θεμιτό και νόμιμο, δεν πρέπει να υπερβαίνει το απολύτως απαραίτητο μέγεθος επεξεργασίας και τα δεδομένα δεν πρέπει να διατηρούνται για χρόνο περισσότερο από τον αναγκαίο για τον σκοπό για τον οποίο συλλέχθηκαν. Τα άτομα έχουν το δικαίωμα να ζητήσουν τη διαγραφή των δεδομένων που τα αφορούν και η επεξεργασία των οποίων δεν συνάδει με την οδηγία· επιπλέον, οι αρχές προστασίας δεδομένων πρέπει να έχουν την εξουσία να διατάξουν την διαγραφή τέτοιου είδους δεδομένων.

Ο προτεινόμενος κανονισμός θα θεσπίσει την υποχρέωση κοινοποίησης στις αρμόδιες αρχές και, σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις, στα ενδιαφερόμενα άτομα των παραβιάσεων προσωπικών δεδομένων. Οι κοινοποιήσεις πρέπει να πραγματοποιούνται το συντομότερο δυνατό, και εφόσον είναι εφικτό, μέσα σε 24 ώρες. Αυτή η υποχρέωση θα ισχύει για όλους τους υπευθύνους επεξεργασίας ανεξάρτητα από την υπηρεσία που παρέχουν.

([1]) COM(2012)11 τελ., http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0011:EN:NOT.
([2]) Οδηγία 95/46/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 24ης Οκτωβρίου 1995, για την προστασία των φυσικών προσώπων έναντι της επεξεργασίας δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα και για την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των δεδομένων αυτών (ΕΕ L 281 της 23.11.1995, σσ. 31-50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000942/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Commission proposal for reform of the EU's 1995 data protection rules

On 25 January 2012, the Commission announced its proposal for a comprehensive reform of the 1995 *EU data protection rules* with the aim of strengthening online privacy rights and boosting Europe's digital economy. According to the Commission, this initiative will help reinforce consumer confidence in online services and will lead to savings for businesses of around EUR 2.3 billion a year. When presenting the proposal, the Commission stated, among other things, that businesses and organisations must notify the national supervisory authorities of serious data protection breaches as soon as possible (if feasible within 24 hours). Because this proposal is being communicated to the European Parliament and to the Council, the Commission is asked:

— Do the businesses and organisations mentioned by the Commission include all those that use online services, including social networking media?

— Will the establishment of the 'right to be forgotten' provided for in the proposal enable citizens to delete their data (if there are no legitimate grounds for it to be retained) without informing the service provider hosting the data? If this is feasible, how will it be ensured that the service providers — businesses and organisations — do not keep a backup, despite the citizen having exercised his or her right to be forgotten?

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

On 25 January 2012, the Commission adopted its proposals for 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 ([1]) 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'. This would apply to all kinds of data processing, whether for active data bases or backup media.

EU data protection legislation already provides that the processing of personal data is only legitimate when a specific legal ground is given for this. Directive 95/46/EC ([2]) 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 erasure of data relating to them the processing of which does not comply with the directive; and data protection authorities must have the power to order the erasure of such data.

The proposed regulation would also introduce an obligation to notify personal data breaches to the competent authorities and — in certain cases — to the individuals concerned. Notifications should be effected as soon as possible, where it is feasible this should be done in 24 hours. This obligation would apply to all data controllers regardless of the service they provide.

([1]) COM(2012) 11 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52012PC0011:EN:NOT .
([2]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000943/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Χρηματοδότηση νέων ανθρώπων για σύσταση νέας επιχείρησης στην Ελλάδα

Είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή, βάσει των πληροφοριών που συλλέγει από τα κράτη μέλη, να με ενημερώσει σε τι ποσοστό η Ελλάδα σε σύγκριση με τους εταίρους της αφιερώνει πόρους από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία προκειμένου να ενισχυθεί οικονομικά η σύσταση νέων εταιρειών από νέους ανθρώπους; Εκτιμάει η Επιτροπή πως στην Ελλάδα διαπιστώνονται συγκεκριμένα προβλήματα που αποτελούν ανάχωμα στη δημιουργία νέων επιχειρήσεων από νέους ανθρώπους; Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει στοιχεία σχετικά με το ύψος των κοινοτικών πόρων που έχουν κατευθυνθεί στην Ελλάδα για αυτόν τον σκοπό και το αντίστοιχο των υπολοίπων κρατών μελών;

Απάντηση του κυρίου Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η ένταξη των νέων στην αγορά εργασίας αποτελεί κορυφαία προτεραιότητα για την Επιτροπή, και ειδικότερα για τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία, με δεδομένη την τρέχουσα αύξηση της ανεργίας των νέων.

Το επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα ανάπτυξης των ανθρώπινων πόρων, στο πλαίσιο του οποίου το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) συνεισφέρει 2,26 δισ. ευρώ, υποστηρίζει, μεταξύ άλλων, την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας των νέων. Η συνολική δημόσια δαπάνη για την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας των νέων ανέρχεται σε 242 εκατ. ευρώ περίπου. Οι νέοι είναι επίσης μία από τις ομάδες που ωφελούνται κατά προτεραιότητα από τα γενικά μέτρα προώθησης της επιχειρηματικότητας τα οποία εφαρμόζει η ελληνική δημόσια υπηρεσία απασχόλησης. Επιπλέον, το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης υποστηρίζει, την περίοδο 2007-2013, μια συγκεκριμένη δράση για την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας των νέων στην Ελλάδα με ποσό ύψους 39,2 εκατ. ευρώ (έχουν ήδη καταβληθεί πιστοποιημένες δαπάνες ύψους 6,6 εκατ. ευρώ). Η σχετική πρόσκληση στέφθηκε από μεγάλη επιτυχία και η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή θα στηρίξει τις ελληνικές αρχές, ενισχύοντας το εν λόγω μέτρο.

Επιπλέον, από τις 5 Ιανουαρίου 2012, η Παγκρήτια Συνεταιριστική Τράπεζα προσχώρησε στην ομάδα παρόχων μικροπιστώσεων, στο πλαίσιο του μηχανισμού μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων PROGRESS, και, ως εκ τούτου, οι έλληνες επιχειρηματίες μπορούν να λαμβάνουν μικροπιστώσεις με τη στήριξη της ΕΕ.

17 κράτη μέλη έχουν εντάξει στα εθνικά τους προγράμματα ΕΚΤ την υποστήριξη της επιχειρηματικότητας, αλλά δεν προβλέπουν συγκεκριμένα κονδύλια που να προορίζονται ειδικά για την επιχειρηματικότητα των νέων. Το συνολικό ποσό που διατίθεται για την αυτοαπασχόληση και τις νεοσύστατες επιχειρήσεις στα 27 κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ανέρχεται περίπου σε 2,5 δισ. ευρώ, ενώ από τις σχετικές εκθέσεις προκύπτει ότι, από το ποσό αυτό, περίπου 1 δισ. ευρώ, δηλαδή το 38 % κατά μέσο όρο, διατέθηκε για σχέδια έως το 2010. Ωστόσο, σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, η επιχειρηματικότητα αποτελεί ευρύτερη προτεραιότητα, με αποτέλεσμα να μην προβλέπεται κάποιο συγκεκριμένο ποσό που να προορίζεται αποκλειστικά γι' αυτήν.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000943/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Funding for young people to establish new companies in Greece

Can the Commission, on the basis of its information from the Member States, indicate to what extent Greece, in comparison with its partners, earmarks structural fund resources for the establishment of new companies by young people? Can it indicate me the amount of Community funding allocated to Greece and the other Member States for that purpose?

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

The integration of young people into the labour market is a top priority for the Commission, and in particular for the Structural Funds, given the current rise in youth unemployment.

The Human Resources Development operational programme, to which the ESF contributes EUR 2.26 billion, provides assistance *inter alia* for the promotion of youth entrepreneurship. Total public expenditure on the promotion of youth entrepreneurship stands at approximately EUR 242 million. Young people are also among the groups benefiting as a priority under the general entrepreneurship promotion measures implemented by the Greek public employment service. In addition, the European Regional Development Fund 2007-2013 supports a specific operation to promote Youth Entrepreneurship in Greece to the sum of EUR 39.2 million (6.6 million of certified expenditure already disbursed). This call was very successful and the European Commission will support the Greek authorities in increasing this measure.

Moreover from 5.1.12, Pancretan Cooperative Bank has joined the group of microcredit providers under Progress Microfinance and, thus Greek entrepreneurs can benefit from micro-credits with EU support.

Seventeen Member States have earmarked support for entrepreneurship in their ESF programmes, but no funds are set aside specifically for youth entrepreneurship. The total amount allocated to self-employment and business start-ups in the 27 Member States is around EUR 2.5 billion, and reporting shows that, of that amount, nearly EUR 1 billion, or 38 % on average, was allocated to projects by 2010. However, in some Member States, entrepreneurship comes under a broader priority and no specific amount is set aside for it.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000944/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Όξυνση του προβλήματος των αστέγων στην Ελλάδα

Η οικονομική κρίση και, ιδίως, η ανεργία που επίμονα πλήττει την Ελλάδα τα τελευταία δύο χρόνια, έχουν προκαλέσει την κατακόρυφη αύξηση του αριθμού των συμπολιτών μας που δεν έχουν πρόσβαση σε στέγη. Σήμερα, στην Ελλάδα οι άστεγοι υπολογίζονται σε περίπου 25 χιλιάδες, αριθμός τετραπλάσιος από εκείνον του 2009.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Με ποιο τρόπο μπορεί να συμβάλει στις προσπάθειες των κρατών μελών για την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου;

Είναι πρόθυμη να προτείνει συγκριμένες επείγουσες δράσεις και να κινητοποιήσει ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους για το σκοπό αυτό;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Μαρτίου 2012)

Οι εθνικές, περιφερειακές και τοπικές αρχές των κρατών μελών διαδραματίζουν πρωταρχικό ρόλο στην αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος των αστέγων. Στην κοινή έκθεση για την κοινωνική προστασία και την κοινωνική ένταξη του 2010 οι εν λόγω αρχές καλούνται να καταρτίσουν και να υλοποιήσουν εθνικά ή περιφερειακά προγράμματα δράσης σχετικά με το φαινόμενο των αστέγων. Η άμεση δράση της ΕΕ περιλαμβάνει την υποστήριξη της αξιολόγησης των στρατηγικών που επικεντρώνονται στη στέγαση, ένα νέο σχέδιο σχετικά με το φαινόμενο των αστέγων και τους μετανάστες και ένα δίκτυο ΜΚΟ στον εν λόγω τομέα Η Επιτροπή επιδιώκει επίσης να αναπτύξει καλύτερους δείκτες σε συνεργασία με την επιτροπή κοινωνικής προστασίας και την Eurostat, ενώ η συνάντηση των ατόμων που πλήττονται από τη φτώχεια το 2012 θα επικεντρωθεί στο πρόβλημα των αστέγων.

Γενικά, η Επιτροπή ενθαρρύνει τα κράτη μέλη να χρησιμοποιούν καλύτερα το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ) και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) στον τομέα αυτό. Το ΕΚΤ μπορεί να υποστηρίξει δραστηριότητες για την προώθηση της κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης και της ένταξης των αστέγων στην αγορά εργασίας ενώ το ΕΤΠΑ μπορεί να επενδύσει στην κατασκευή κοινωνικών κατοικιών.

Στο πλαίσιο του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος για την ανάπτυξη του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού 2007-2013, το οποίο στην Ελλάδα συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο, ένας άξονας προτεραιότητας με συνολικό προϋπολογισμό περίπου 274 εκατομμύρια αφορά την προώθηση της κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης και της ένταξης των μη ευνοούμενων ομάδων στην αγορά εργασίας σε μια κοινωνία ίσων ευκαιριών. Οι άστεγοι θα μπορούν ενδεχομένως να επωφεληθούν από αυτές τις παρεμβάσεις· ωστόσο, δεν υπάρχει ειδικός προϋπολογισμός που προορίζεται συγκεκριμένα για αυτή την ομάδα-στόχο.

Για την περίοδο 2014-2020 η Επιτροπή προτείνει το 20 % τουλάχιστον της χρηματοδότησης του ΕΚΤ σε κάθε κράτος μέλος να διατεθεί για την κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση και τη φτώχεια και κάθε κράτος μέλος να διαθέσει τουλάχιστον το 5 % από τα συνολικά του κονδύλια του ΕΤΠΑ για δράσεις βιώσιμης αστικής ανάπτυξης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000944/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: The worsening problem of homelessness in Greece

The economic crisis and, especially, the unemployment that has been dogging Greece for the last two years has led to a steep increase in the number of our fellow citizens without a roof over their heads. In Greece today it is estimated that there are around 25 000 homeless people, a figure that has quadrupled since 2009.

In view of this:

How can the Commission contribute to Member States' efforts to combat this phenomenon?

Is it willing to suggest specific urgent measures and to release European funding for this purpose?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Member States' national regional and local authorities have the prime role in tackling homelessness. The 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion called for them to develop and implement national or regional plans for action on homelessness. Direct EU action includes support to an evaluation of housing-led strategies, a new project on homelessness and migrants, and NGO network in this area. The Commission is also aiming at developing better indicators in cooperation with the Social Protection Committee and with Eurostat, and the 2012 Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty will focus on homelessness.

Generally the Commission encourages Member States to make better use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) in this field. The ESF can support activities to promote the social and labour market integration of homeless people, while the ERDF can investments in social housing.

Under the Human Resources Development 2007-2013 operational program which is co-financed by the European Social Fund in Greece, a priority axis with a total budget of approximately EUR 274 million is devoted to the promotion of social and labour market inclusion of disadvantaged groups in a society of equal opportunities. Homeless people could potentially benefit from such interventions; however, there is no specific earmarked budget for this target group.

For 2014-20, the Commission proposes that at least 20 % of ESF financing in each Member State is allocated to social inclusion and poverty, and that each Member State allocates at least 5 % of its total ERDF resources to actions for sustainable urban development.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000945/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πρόγραμμα Progress Microfinance για ίδρυση επιχειρήσεων

Το πρόγραμμα Progress Microfinance που τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή το 2010 αυξάνει την δυνατότητα χορήγησης μικροδανείων — κάτω των 25 χιλιάδων ευρώ — για την ίδρυση ή την ανάπτυξη μικρών επιχειρήσεων. Το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα, σε μια δύσκολη οικονομικά περίοδο, αποτελεί σημαντική πρωτοβουλία, ιδίως για την βοήθεια νέων ανθρώπων που επιθυμούν να κάνουν πράξη και να αναπτύξουν το επιχειρηματικό τους πλάνο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Κρίνεται επιτυχημένο το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα βάσει των συμπερασμάτων που προκύπτουν από τα δύο χρόνια λειτουργίας του; Είχε την επιθυμητή ανταπόκριση;

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το πόσοι νέοι επιχειρηματίες επωφελήθηκαν από το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα; Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τον αριθμό των Ελλήνων επιχειρηματιών που επωφελήθηκαν από το πρόγραμμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Μαρτίου 2012)

Το πρώτο πλήρες έτος λειτουργίας του μηχανισμού μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων Progress ([1]) ήταν το 2011. Αν και είναι πολύ νωρίς να αντληθούν συμπεράσματα σχετικά με τις επιδόσεις του, η ζήτηση από τον κλάδο και ο αριθμός των συμβάσεων που έχουν υπογραφεί με τους παρόχους μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων είναι ενθαρρυντικά. Μέχρι σήμερα έχουν υπογραφεί 15 συμβάσεις με παρόχους μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων σε 10 κράτη μέλη ([2]), γεγονός που αντιστοιχεί σε μια ικανοποιητική γεωγραφική κατανομή. Αναμένεται να υπογραφούν επιπλέον συμβάσεις στη Γαλλία, την Ιταλία και τη Σλοβενία τους επόμενους μήνες.

Με δική τους πρωτοβουλία, οι σημερινοί 15 μεσολαβητές έχουν δεσμευτεί μέσω σύμβασης να διαθέσουν 137 εκατομμύρια ευρώ περίπου σε πάνω από 10 500 μικροδάνεια για αυτοαπασχολούμενους ή μικροεπιχειρήσεις τα επόμενα χρόνια.

Όσον αφορά την Ελλάδα, υπογράφηκε σύμβαση εγγύησης για 803 250 ευρώ και σύμβαση για δάνειο εξοφλητικής προτεραιότητας ύψους 8 750 000 ευρώ με την Παγκρήτια Συνεταιριστική Τράπεζα τον Δεκέμβριο του 2011. Το ποσό αυτό αναμένεται να έχει ως αποτέλεσμα 19 εκατομμύρια ευρώ σε μικροδάνεια για μικροεπιχειρήσεις, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των νεοσύστατων επιχειρήσεων. Η δεύτερη ετήσια έκθεση της Επιτροπής, που αναμένεται να υποβληθεί τον Ιούνιο του 2012, θα καλύψει την υλοποίηση του μηχανισμού σε μεγάλο βάθος.

([1]) Απόφαση αριθ. 283/2010/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 25ης Μαρτίου 2010, για τη δημιουργία Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Μικροχρηματοδοτήσεων Progress για την απασχόληση και την κοινωνική ένταξη, ΕΕ L 87 της 7.4.2010, σ. 1.

([2]) Βέλγιο, Βουλγαρία, Κύπρος, Ελλάδα, Λιθουανία, Κάτω Χώρες, Πολωνία, Πορτογαλία, Ρουμανία και Ισπανία. Περισσότερες πληροφορίες στη διεύθυνση www.ec.europa.eu/epmf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000945/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: The progress Microfinance facility for business start-ups

The Progress Microfinance facility, launched in 2010, increases the availability of microcredit — loans below EUR 25 000 — for setting up and developing small businesses. In a difficult economic period, this programme is a significant initiative, especially in helping young people seeking to put into practice and develop their business plans.

I would like to ask the Commission:

— Based on the conclusions drawn from the two years of its operation, has the programme been successful? Has it had the intended response?

— Does the Commission have any information regarding the number of new entrepreneurs and, more specifically, the number of Greek entrepreneurs who have benefited from this programme?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

The first full year of operation for the European Progress Microfinance Facility ([1]) was 2011. Although it is therefore too early to draw conclusions regarding its performance, demand from the sector and the number of contracts signed with microcredit providers are encouraging. To date, 15 contracts have been signed with microcredit providers in 10 Member States ([2]), which is a satisfactory geographical distribution. Further contracts are expected to be signed in France, Italy and Slovenia in the coming months.

On their own, the current 15 intermediaries have committed themselves by contract to generate nearly EUR 137 million in over 10 500 microloans to self-employed persons or micro-enterprises microloans in the coming years.

As far as Greece is concerned, a guarantee agreement for EUR 803 250 and an agreement on a senior loan of EUR 8 750 000 were signed with the Pancretan Cooperative Bank in December 2011. These are expected to result in EUR 19 million in microloans for micro-enterprises, including start-ups. The Commission's second annual report, due for presentation in June 2012, will cover the Facility's implementation in greater depth.

([1]) Decision 283/2010/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 March 2010 establishing a European Progress Microfinance Facility for employment and social inclusion, OJ L 87, 7.4.2010, p. 1.

([2]) Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Spain. Further information at www.ec.europa.eu/epmf.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000946/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(9 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Διαπραγματεύσεις εθελοντικής συμφωνίας εταιρικής σχέσης (VPA) σχετικά με την επιβολή της δασικής νομοθεσίας, τη διακυβέρνηση και το εμπόριο (FLEGT) με το Βιετνάμ

Η ΕΕ έχει αναλάβει τη δέσμευση να καταπολεμήσει το εμπόριο παράνομης ξυλείας εφαρμόζοντας μια σειρά μέτρων, μεταξύ των οποίων συγκαταλέγονται το σχέδιο δράσης FLEGT του 2003 και, πιο πρόσφατα, ο κανονισμός της ΕΕ για την ξυλεία (2010). Η ανάπτυξη των εθελοντικών συμφωνιών εταιρικής σχέσης (VPA) με χώρες που εξάγουν ξυλεία αποτελεί ορόσημο για το σχέδιο δράσης. Σε κάθε συμφωνία VPA περιλαμβάνεται το επονομαζόμενο «Σύστημα επαλήθευσης της νομιμότητας» για να διασφαλίζεται ότι η ΕΕ εισάγει αποκλειστικά νόμιμα υλοτομημένη ξυλεία από χώρες-εταίρους του FLEGT.

Το 2010, η Επιτροπή ξεκίνησε διαπραγματεύσεις για σύναψη συμφωνίας συνεργασίας VPA FLEGT με το Βιετνάμ, το οποίο αποτελεί μια μεγάλη δύναμη εισαγωγής και επεξεργασίας ξυλείας στην Ασία και ένα βασικό παράγοντα σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο στο εμπόριο προϊόντων ξυλείας. Επί του παρόντος, το Βιετνάμ εισάγει το 80 % της ξυλείας που χρησιμοποιείται στην εγχώρια βιομηχανία επεξεργασίας ξυλείας, κυρίως με προορισμό τις εξαγωγικές αγορές. Υπάρχουν πολλές γειτονικές χώρες οι οποίες πραγματοποιούν εξαγωγή αγαθών προς το Βιετνάμ που μπορούν να ταξινομηθούν ως επικίνδυνες όσον αφορά τη νομιμότητα της προμήθειάς τους σε ξυλεία. Έχουν κάνει την εμφάνισή τους στον διεθνή τύπο ορισμένες δημόσια ανακοινωθείσες εκθέσεις και άρθρα σχετικά με το εν λόγω ζήτημα.

Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει σχετικά με την προσέγγιση που διαμορφώνεται από μέρους του Βιετνάμ σχετικά με τον έλεγχο της νομιμότητας της ξυλείας που εισάγεται στην εγχώρια αλυσίδα επεξεργασίας και εξαγωγής, ήτοι η αποφυγή του κινδύνου νομιμοποίησης παράνομης ξυλείας και επακόλουθης εξαγωγής της στην ΕΕ;

Οι κύριοι προμηθευτές ξυλείας προς το Βιετνάμ έχουν διαμορφώσει συστήματα για τη διασφάλιση της νομιμότητας των εξαγωγών ξυλείας ή μήπως θα τους ενδιέφερε να ξεκινήσουν και αυτοί με τη σειρά τους διαπραγματεύσεις για σύναψη συμφωνίας VPA FLEGT;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαρτίου 2012)

Στο πλαίσιο των τρεχουσών διαπραγματεύσεων για τη σύναψη εθελοντικών συμφωνιών εταιρικής σχέσης σχετικά με την επιβολή της δασικής νομοθεσίας, τη διακυβέρνηση και το εμπόριο (FLEGT VPA), η κυβέρνηση του Βιετνάμ βρίσκεται στο στάδιο καθιέρωσης συστήματος επαλήθευσης της νομιμότητας της ξυλείας το οποίο επιτρέπει την ιχνηλάτηση και τον έλεγχο της νομιμότητας της ξυλείας και των προϊόντων ξυλείας που εισέρχονται στην αλυσίδα επεξεργασίας και εξαγωγής, περιλαμβάνεται ιδίως ο έλεγχος της νομιμότητας των εισαγωγών ξυλείας για να εξασφαλιστεί ότι εφαρμόζονται αποτελεσματικά και αξιόπιστα συστήματα ελέγχου ξυλείας σε διεθνές επίπεδο.

Το Βιετνάμ εισάγει ξυλεία από περίπου 26 διαφορετικούς προμηθευτές, συμπεριλαμβανομένων ορισμένων κρατών μελών της ΕΕ. Η εξάρτηση και η ποικιλομορφία των πηγών εισαγωγής είναι μια από τις κύριες προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζουν οι βιετναμικές αρχές στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων FLEGT VPA. Μεταξύ των κύριων προμηθευτών, η Ινδονησία ολοκλήρωσε πέρυσι τις διαπραγματεύσεις FLEGT VPA και η Μαλαισία βρίσκεται σε προχωρημένο στάδιο των διαπραγματεύσεων. Το Λάος και η Ταϊλάνδη εμπλέκονται σε συναφείς με τη FLEGT δραστηριότητες που μπορούν να οδηγήσουν σε έναρξη των διαπραγματεύσεων VPA πριν το τέλος του 2012. Η ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών και οι περιφερειακές δραστηριότητες με αντικείμενο τη FLEGT αφορούσαν επίσης την Καμπότζη και τη Βιρμανία/Μιανμάρ. Οι ΗΠΑ, που θέσπισαν νομοθεσία το 2008 για την απαγόρευση της πώλησης παράνομα υλοτομημένης ξυλείας, και η Κίνα είναι επίσης κύριοι προμηθευτές ξυλείας του Βιετνάμ. Η Κίνα και η ΕΕ έθεσαν σε εφαρμογή το 2009 διμερή μηχανισμό συνεργασίας για την επιβολή της δασικής νομοθεσίας και τη διακυβέρνηση με γενικότερο στόχο τη συμβολή στη μείωση της παράνομης υλοτομίας και του σχετικού παράνομου εμπορίου σε παγκόσμια κλίμακα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000946/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(9 February 2012)

Subject: FLEGT VPA negotiations with Vietnam

The EU is committed to fighting trade in illegal timber through a number of measures, which include the 2003 FLEGT Action Plan and, more recently, the EU Timber Regulation (2010). A milestone of the action plan is the development of Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with timber-exporting countries. The VPAs contain a so-called Legality Assurance System to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported into the EU from FLEGT partner countries.

In 2010 the Commission started FLEGT VPA negotiations with Vietnam, a major timber importer and processing country in Asia, and a key global player in the trading of timber products. Vietnam currently imports 80 % of the timber which is used by its timber-processing industry, mainly for export markets. A number of neighbouring countries exporting to Vietnam can be classified as risky in terms of the legality of their timber supply. Some publicly released reports and articles have appeared in the international press about this.

Can the Commission inform me of the approach being developed by Vietnam to control the legality of the timber entering its processing and export chain, i.e. avoiding the risk of illegal timber laundering and subsequent export to the EU?

Are the main timber suppliers to Vietnam developing systems for ensuring the legality of their timber exports or would they be interested in starting FLEGT VPA negotiations as well?

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

Within the frame of the ongoing Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Voluntary Partnership Agreements (FLEGT VPA) negotiations, the Government of Vietnam is in the stage of developing a Timber Legality Assurance System that allows tracking and verifying the legality of timber and timber products entering the processing and export chain. This includes addressing the legality of timber imports to ensure that the timber control systems put in place will be effective and credible at international level.

Vietnam imports timber from some 26 different suppliers, including some EU Member States. The dependency and diversity of import sources is one of the main challenges that the Vietnamese Authorities face in the FLEGT VPA negotiations. Among the main suppliers, Indonesia concluded FLEGT VPA negotiations last year and Malaysia is at an advanced stage of negotiations. Laos and Thailand are involved in FLEGT related activities that could lead to start VPA negotiations before the end of 2012. Information exchanges and regional activities on FLEGT have also involved Cambodia and Myanmar. The USA, which enacted legislation in 2008 prohibiting the sale of illegally harvested timber, and China are also main timber suppliers to Vietnam. With China the EU started in 2009 a Bilateral Cooperation Mechanism on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance with the overall objective of contributing to the reduction of illegal logging and associated trade globally.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000947/12
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Raid aerei effettuati dalla Turchia nei confronti di villaggi abitati da cittadini di etnia curda

Nella notte del 28 dicembre 2011, due aerei da combattimento turchi hanno attaccato dei villaggi curdi situati sulle montagne del Kurdistan, al confine tra Turchia e Iraq, provocando la morte di 39 cittadini turchi di etnia curda. Il Primo ministro turco Erdogan ha dichiarato che l'obiettivo dell'attacco non erano gli abitanti dei villaggi ma i membri del PKK (Partito dei lavoratori del Kurdistan), movimento politico armato che lotta per l'indipendenza del Kurdistan dalla Turchia.

Il predetto episodio rientra nel trentennale scontro tra lo Stato e il PKK, che si stima abbia causato complessivamente la morte di decine di migliaia di persone tra civili, soldati turchi e membri del movimento.

Considerando il ruolo della Turchia come paese candidato all'adesione all'Unione europea, può la Commissione far sapere se è al corrente di quanto sopra descritto?

Può indicare se sono stati intrattenuti colloqui con la controparte turca, al fine di fare luce sull'episodio?

Può inoltre far sapere se e quali azioni sono state intraprese per favorire un miglioramento delle relazioni tra il governo di Ankara e la minoranza curda?

Risposta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(16 marzo 2012)

La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare le risposte alle interrogazioni E-000114/2012, E-000424/2012 e E-000520/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000947/12
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Turkish air raids on Kurdish villages

On the night of 28 December 2011, two Turkish combat aircraft attacked villages in the Kurdish mountains, on the border between Turkey and Iraq, killing 39 Turkish Kurdish citizens. The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, stated that the target of the attack was not the inhabitants of the villages, but members of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party), an armed political movement that is fighting for the independence of Kurdistan from Turkey.

This incident forms part of the 30-year-old conflict between the government and the PKK, which is estimated to have caused the death of tens of thousands of Turkish civilians, soldiers and PKK members.

In view of Turkey's candidacy for membership of the European Union, can the Commission say whether it is aware of the above incident?

Can it say whether discussions have been held with the Turkish authorities to shed light on this incident?

Can it also say whether action has been taken to help to improve relations between the Ankara government and the Kurdish minority, and if so, what action?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to Questions E-000114/2012, E-000424/2012 and E-000520/2012 ([1]).

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

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000948/12
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(3. februar 2012)

Om: Klage fra Danmarks Naturfredningsforening over muslingefiskeri i Natura 2000-områder

Danmarks Naturfredningsforening har ved flere lejligheder (i perioden 2008-2011) klaget over tilladelser udstedt af det danske Ministerium for Fødevarer, Landbrug og Fiskeri til fiskeri i Natura 2000-områder. Det danske Ministerium for Fødevarer, Landbrug og Fiskeri har svaret på Kommissionens henvendelse.

En afgørelse, der underkender det danske Fødevareministeriums tilladelser til fiskeri, vil fjerne grundlaget for erhvervet i Limfjorden og dermed for mere end 300 arbejdspladser i et randområde med betydelige beskæftigelsesmæssige og demografiske udfordringer.

Imidlertid bygger klagen på et spinkelt fagligt grundlag, der er behæftet med betydelige fejl. Klagen påstår eksempelvis, at fiskeriet efter muslinger årligt fjerner op til 30 000 t sten og hårdt substrat. Aktuelle undersøgelser baseret på obligatoriske indberetninger fra fiskeriet viser imidlertid, at der i hele Limfjorden opsamles <10 t sten årligt.

Ligeledes anføres det, at fiskeriet medfører ophvirvling i et omfang, der skader ålegræsset, selvom undersøgelser viser, at den nuværende fiskeripraksis er ubetydelig sammenlignet med naturlig resuspension af sedimentet.

Samlet har det ikke kunnet godtgøres, at det nuværende fiskeri har en effekt på Natura 2000-områderne af et sådant omfang, at det påvirker udpegningsgrundlaget. Dertil kommer, at fiskeriet — som det første i verden af sin slags — er blevet MSC-certificeret, og dermed er certificeret bæredygtigt og under løbende evaluering af uafhængige instanser.

Hvordan vil Kommissionen sikre, at en kommende afgørelse i sagen hviler på et solidt fagligt grundlag, herunder sikre, at det berørte erhvervs og lokalområdes synspunkter bliver hørt?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Janez Potočnik
(19. marts 2012)

Kommissionen kan bekræfte, at der i øjeblikket gennemføres en undersøgelse vedrørende muslingefiskeri med skraber i Natura 2000-lokaliteterne Løgstør Bredning og Lovns Bredning i Limfjorden. Kommissionens undersøgelse er baseret på den konsekvensvurdering, som de danske myndigheder har udarbejdet inden udstedelsen af tilladelser til muslingeskrab. Formålet er at få afklaret, hvorvidt konsekvensvurderingerne og den procedure der fører til udstedelsen af tilladelser opfylder kravene i habitatdirektivet ([1]).

Direktivets artikel 6, stk. 3 giver mulighed for, at den udstedende myndighed konsulterer offentligheden, inklusive lokale virksomheder og andre interessenter, forud for udstedelsen af tilladelser.

Kommissionen kan oplyse det ærede medlem om, at der er fremsendt en supplerende åbningsskrivelse til Danmark den 27. februar 2012 vedrørende tilladelser til muslingefiskeri med skraber i Løgstør Bredning og Lovns Bredning.

([1]) Direktiv 92/43/EØF om bevaring af naturtyper samt vilde dyr og planter, (EFT L 206 af 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000948/12
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Complaint from the Danish Society for Nature Conservation about mussel harvesting in Natura 2000 areas

The Danish Society for Nature Conservation has complained on several occasions (between 2008 and 2011) about permits issued by the Danish Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries for fishing in Natura 2000 areas. The Danish Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries has been contacted by the Commission, and has replied.

A decision overruling the Danish Food Ministry's fishing permits would put an end to the fishing industry in the Limfjord area and lead to the loss of more than 300 jobs in a peripheral region facing significant employment and demographic challenges.

However, the complaint is based on a flimsy technical argument full of major errors. For example, the complaint claims that harvesting mussels removes up to 30 000 tonnes of rock and hard substrate every year. However, current analyses based on mandatory reports from the fishery sector indicate that less than 10 tonnes of rock accumulate every year in the whole Limfjord area.

Similarly, it is stated that harvesting churns up the seabed to such an extent that it damages the eelgrass, even though analyses show that the impact of current fishing practices is negligible compared with the natural resuspension of the sediment.

Overall, it has not been possible to demonstrate that the current fishery has so great an impact on the Natura 2000 areas as to affect the basis for their designation as such. In addition, the fishery — which is the first of its kind in the world — has been MSC certified, meaning that it is certified as sustainable and is subject to ongoing assessment by independent bodies.

How will the Commission ensure that any future decision on this matter is founded on a sound technical basis, as well as ensuring that the views of the relevant business sector and local area are heard?

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

The Commission can confirm that an investigation is currently ongoing concerning mussel dredging in the Natura 2000-sites Løgstør Bredning and Lovns Bredning in Limfjorden. The Commission's investigation is based on the impact assessments that the Danish authorities have carried out prior to granting permits for the dredging. The aim is to clarify whether the assessments and the procedure leading to the granting of the permits comply with the requirements of the Habitats Directive ([1]).

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive includes a possibility for the permitting authority to consult the general public, including local companies and other stakeholders, prior to granting the permits.

The Commission can inform the Honourable Member that an additional letter of formal notice concerning the authorisations for mussel dredging in Løgstør Bredning and Lovns Bredning was issued to Denmark on 27 February 2012.

([1]) Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000950/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Legalizácia pobytu migrantov v Poľsku

Poľská vláda prijala nedávno opatrenie, na základe ktorého môžu nelegálni migranti a žiadatelia o azyl, ktorých žiadosť bola zamietnutá, získať povolenie na pobyt v Poľsku na obdobie dvoch rokov. Povolenie na pobyt im bude udelené po splnení určitých podmienok a umožní im v krajine legálne pracovať. Legalizácia pobytu imigrantov a žiadateľov o azyl v Poľsku bude prínosom aj pre poľské hospodárstvo, pretože sa z týchto osôb stanú daňoví poplatníci. Nový program obsahuje oveľa menej obmedzení ako predošlé programy, ktoré sa v Poľsku realizovali v rokoch 2003 a 2007 – žiadatelia o povolenie na pobyt sa len musia preukázať platným dokladom totožnosti, musia preukázať, že sa v Poľsku nepretržite zdržiavajú a musia predložiť čistý výpis z registra trestov.

Mieni Komisia spraviť z Poľska pozitívny príklad realistického a správneho prístupu vnútroštátnych orgánov k otázke nelegálnej migrácie?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(5. marca 2012)

Stanovenie podmienok a kritérií legalizácie pobytu nelegálnych prisťahovalcov patrí do kompetencie jednotlivých členských štátov. V európskom pakte o prisťahovalectve a azyle, ktorý Európska rada prijala v dňoch 15. až 16. októbra 2008, však členské štáty súhlasili s tým, že legalizáciu budú využívať v závislosti od konkrétneho prípadu z humanitárnych alebo ekonomických dôvodov, a nie ako všeobecné pravidlo.

Z informácií, ktoré poskytli poľské orgány, Komisia vyrozumela, že zmena a doplnenie zákona o cudzincoch prostredníctvom zákona o abolícii, v ktorom sa stanovuje legalizácia z humanitárnych aj ekonomických dôvodov pre určité kategórie štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín, sa opierali o žiadosti pochádzajúce zo širokej škály zainteresovaných strán. Celý postup legalizácie sa aktivuje na žiadosť žiadateľa, pričom sa analyzuje vždy konkrétny prípad ([1]). Podrobnosti o rozličných prístupoch členských štátov môžete nájsť v štúdii, ktorú financovala Komisia ([2]).

([1]) Ďalšie podrobnosti o tomto postupe nájdete na webovej stránke www.abolicja.gov.pl.
([2]) Štúdia o postupoch v oblasti legalizácie nelegálneho pobytu príslušníkov tretích krajín v členských štátoch EÚ (Study on practices in the area of regularisation of illegally staying third-country nationals in the Member States of the EU): http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/immigration/immigration_studies_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000950/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Legalisation of the status of migrants resident in Poland

The Polish Government recently adopted a measure on the basis of which illegal immigrants and asylum applicants, whose applications were rejected, may obtain permission to reside in Poland for a period of two years. The residency permit will be granted to them after they have satisfied certain conditions, and it will enable them to work in the country legally. The legalisation of the status of immigrants and asylum-seekers resident in Poland will also contribute to the Polish economy, as these people will become taxpayers. The new programme contains considerably fewer restrictions than the previous programmes, which were introduced in Poland in 2003 and 2007. Under the new programme, applicants for residency must only present a valid identity document, prove that they are in Poland on a continuous basis and present a clean criminal record.

Does the Commission intend to hold Poland up as a positive example of how national authorities can adopt a realistic and appropriate approach to the issue of illegal immigration?

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

Conditions and criteria for regularisation of irregular immigrants fall under national competence. However, in the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, adopted on the 15-16 October 2008 by the European Council, Member States agreed to restrict themselves to a case-by-case regularisation for humanitarian or economic reasons, rather than generalised regularisations.

From the information provided by the Polish Authorities, the Commission understands that the amendment of the Act of Aliens by the Abolition Act, providing for regularisation based on both humanitarian and economic reasons of certain categories of third-country nationals, was based on requests from a wide range of stakeholders .The entire regularisation procedure is to be activated on request of the applicant and analysed on a case-by-case basis ([1]). Details of different Member States' approaches can be found in a Commission-funded study ([2]).

([1]) Further details on this procedure are given at www.abolicja.gov.pl.
([2]) Study on practices in the area of regularisation of illegally staying third-country nationals in the Member States of the EU, available from http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/immigration/immigration_studies_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000951/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Zdieľanie zodpovednosti v oblasti migrácie

German Marshall Fund nedávno zverejnil výsledky prieskumu verejnej mienky v Spojených štátoch a piatich európskych krajinách, konkrétne vo Francúzsku, Nemecku, Taliansku, Španielsku a vo Veľkej Británii. Prieskum sa zaoberal problematikou súčasného prisťahovalectva, rovnako tiež otázkou integrácie. Hlavné závery ukazujú, že 80 % respondentov v Európe sa domnieva, že zodpovednosť za prisťahovalcov by mala byť spravodlivo zdieľaná všetkými členskými krajinami Európskej únie a nielen tzv. „krajinami vstupu". Zodpovednosť za extrémne zraniteľnú skupinu ľudí, ktorou sú utečenci a žiadatelia o azyl hľadajúci záchranu v Európe, by teda mala byť v celej Európskej únii zdieľaná aj podľa verejnej mienky.

Bude sa Komisia výsledkami tohto prieskumu zaoberať? Aký má Komisia názor na zdieľanú zodpovednosť v rámci Európskej únie v oblasti migrácie?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(2. marca 2012)

Jedným zo zistení prieskumu Transatlantické trendy: prisťahovalectvo 2011 ([1]) bolo, že 80 % respondentov súhlasilo s tým, že zodpovednosť za riešenie migrácie vyplývajúcej z arabskej jari by mali spoločne znášať všetky krajiny v EÚ, nie len krajiny, do ktorých migranti vstupujú najskôr.

Vo svojom oznámení o migrácii ([2]) Komisia zdôraznila, že migračné dôsledky arabskej jari potvrdzujú potrebu zvýšenej solidarity na európskej úrovni a lepšie rozdelenie zodpovednosti. Komisia prijala 2. decembra 2011 oznámenie o posilnenej solidarite v rámci EÚ v oblasti azylu ([3]), v ktorom sa navrhuje vytvoriť flexibilný súbor solidárnych opatrení s cieľom reagovať na rôzne potreby členských štátov. To zahŕňa dobrovoľné presídlenie osôb pod medzinárodnou ochranou vychádzajúc zo skúseností existujúceho pilotného projektu presídlenia utečencov z Malty.

([1]) Jedným z partnerov je Nemecký Marshallov fond (German Marshall Fund).
([2]) KOM(2011) 248.
([3]) KOM(2011) 835.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000951/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Burden-sharing in the area of migration

The German Marshall Fund recently published the results of a public opinion survey carried out in the United States and five European countries, namely France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. The survey looked into the issues of current immigration and integration. Its main conclusions show that 80 % of respondents in Europe believe that responsibility for immigrants should be shared fairly by all Member States of the European Union, and not just the 'countries of entry'. According to public opinion, responsibility for the extremely vulnerable group of people comprising refugees and asylum-seekers looking for a refuge in Europe should therefore be shared across the whole of the European Union.

Will the Commission take account of the results of this survey? What is the Commission's opinion on burden-sharing within the EU in the area of migration?

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

One of the findings of the Transatlantic Trends: Immigration survey 2011 ([1]) was that 80 % of respondents agreed that responsibility for dealing with migration resulting from the Arab Spring should be shared by all countries in the EU, not just by the country where the migrants first arrive.

In its communication on Migration ([2]), the Commission underlined that the migratory consequences of the Arab Spring confirm the need for increased solidarity at the European level and better sharing of responsibility. On 2.12.2011, the Commission adopted a communication on enhanced intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum ([3]) which proposes to develop a flexible set of solidarity measures to respond to different needs of Member States. This includes voluntary relocation of beneficiaries of international protection, building on the experience of the existing relocation pilot project with Malta.

([1]) One of the partners is the German Marshall Fund.
([2]) COM(2011) 248.
([3]) COM(2011) 835.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000952/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Problematika zmiešaných migračných tokov

Organizácia ICMC nedávno zverejnila svoju záverečnú správu projektu DRIVE, ktorá sa zaoberá problematikou zmiešaných migračných tokov. Správa sa predovšetkým zameriava na nedostatky v súvislosti so zaistením bezpečnosti a dodržiavaním ľudských práv a základných slobôd žiadateľov o azyl a migrantov. Obsahuje podrobné informácie, ktoré organizácia získala prostredníctvom prieskumov, ktoré sa uskutočnili v Grécku, Španielsku, Taliansku a na Malte, ako aj prostredníctvom rozhovorov s vládnymi úradníkmi, mimovládnymi organizáciami a aj samotnými migrantmi. Správa upozorňuje na skutočnosť, že v súčasnej dobe neexistuje na úrovni EÚ žiadna komplexná politika alebo rámec, ktorý sa konkrétne zaoberá zmiešanými migračnými tokmi. Rozdiely v jednotlivých politikách a súčasnej praxi spôsobujú neustále porušovanie ľudských práv a základných slobôd žiadateľov o azyl a migrantov, ktorí zároveň nemajú zabezpečený dostatočný prístup k právu na ochranu. Správa vyzýva Komisiu a jej agentúry EASO, Frontex a FRA na spoločné vypracovanie rámca, ktorý bude súčasnú situáciu riešiť.

Bude sa Komisia touto správou a jej odporúčaniami zaoberať? Ak áno, aké konkrétne opatrenia plánuje v tejto súvislosti prijať?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(13. marca 2012)

Migrácia a azyl sú ústrednou témou prebiehajúcej politickej a právnej diskusie v Európe a Komisia venuje veľkú pozornosť všetkým relevantným správam a informáciám, ktoré sú v tejto súvislosti k dispozícii. Cieľom Komisie je zabezpečiť, aby všetky politiky a postupy EÚ boli v plnom súlade so základnými právami migrantov vrátane žiadateľov o azyl a utečencov.

Do *acquis* EÚ v oblasti azylu patria pravidlá, ktorých cieľom je okrem iného zabezpečiť, aby osoby, ktoré môžu potrebovať medzinárodnú pomoc, mali účinný prístup k náležitým postupom, a to za všetkých okolností, vrátane zmiešaných migračných tokov. Komisia pozorne sleduje plnenie týchto záväzkov zo strany členských štátov a v prípadoch porušovania práva EÚ podniká náležité kroky.

Význam fenoménu zmiešaných migračných tokov bol taktiež zdôraznený aj v Štokholmskom programe, pričom všetci aktéri EÚ sa zaviazali, že sa mu budú aktívne venovať. Komisia prijala viacero legislatívnych návrhov, napr. návrh na zmenu a doplnenie smernice o azylovom konaní, ktorými sa posilňujú ustanovenia na zabezpečenie prístupu k azylovým konaniam pre osoby, ktoré môžu potrebovať medzinárodnú pomoc. Komisia dúfa, že spoluzákonodarcovia dosiahnu vyváženú dohodu o týchto dôležitých otázkach v horizonte do konca roka 2012 a v súlade s cieľmi stanovenými v Štokholmskom programe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000952/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Mixed migration flows

The International Catholic Migration Commission recently published its final report on the issue of mixed migration flows, as part of the DRIVE project. The report focuses mainly on shortcomings relating to ensuring that asylum-seekers and migrants are safe and that their human rights and basic freedoms are respected. It contains detailed information obtained by the organisation through surveys conducted in Greece, Spain, Italy and Malta, and through conversations with government officials, non-governmental organisations and actual migrants. The report draws attention to the fact that there is no comprehensive EU-level policy or framework at present which specifically addresses mixed migration flows. Differences in individual policies and current practice lead to constant violations of the human rights and basic freedoms of asylum-seekers and migrants, who are also not provided with sufficient access to the right to protection. The report calls on the Commission and its EASO, Frontex and FRA agencies to cooperate in drawing up a framework that would resolve the current situation.

Will the Commission take account of the report and its recommendations? If so, what specific measures does it plan to adopt in this context?

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

Migration and asylum related issues are at the heart of current political and legal debate in Europe and the Commission pays careful attention to all relevant existing reports and information in this respect. The Commission's objective is to ensure that all EU policies and practices fully respect the fundamental rights of migrants, including asylum-seekers and refugees.

The EU asylum *acquis* includes rules which aim *inter alia* to ensure that persons that may be in need of international protection have effective access to the appropriate procedures in all circumstances, including in situations of mixed migration flows. The Commission closely monitors the implementation of these obligations by Member States and intervenes in cases of violations of EC law.

The importance of the phenomenon of mixed flows was also emphasised in the Stockholm Programme and all EU actors committed to actively address it. The Commission has adopted several legislative proposals, including the one amending the Asylum Procedures Directive, which reinforce the provisions meant to ensure access to the asylum procedures for persons that may be in need of international protection. The Commission hopes that the co-legislators will find a balanced agreement on these important issues by the end of 2012, in line with the goals set by the Stockholm Programme.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000953/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Komunitné opatrenia ako alternatíva k zadržiavaniu prisťahovalcov

Organizácia Jesuit Refugee Service publikovala správu, v ktorej sa zaoberá problematikou alternatív k inštitútu zadržania utečencov. Zo správy vyplýva, že využívanie tohto inštitútu je zbytočné a že existujú humánnejšie spôsoby riešenia situácie, tzv. komunitné opatrenia, pri ktorých utečencovi nie je odňatá osobná sloboda. V Belgicku, Nemecku a vo Veľkej Británii sa uskutočnili projekty takýchto alternatívnych riešení, pri ktorých sa žiadatelia o azyl a nelegálni migranti mohli v danej komunite normálne pohybovať, boli im však uložené niekoľké obmedzenia. Jednotlivcom aj celým rodinám sa vysvetlilo, že ak budú s vnútroštátnymi orgánmi spolupracovať, ich situácia bude vyriešená čo najrýchlejšie a najefektívnejšie. Analýza týchto projektov ukázala veľkú snahu žiadateľov o azyl a nelegálnych migrantov spolupracovať, pričom bolo preukázané, že komunitné opatrenia sú pre štát výrazne lacnejšie ako zadržanie a navyše pozitívne prispievajú k úspešnej integrácii.

Aký má Komisia názor na komunitné opatrenia ako alternatívne riešenia k inštitútu zadržania?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(1. marca 2012)

Komisia súhlasí so záverom obsiahnutým v správe, ktorú citovala vážená pani poslankyňa vo svojej otázke, teda s tým, že inštitút zaistenia by sa mal, pokiaľ ide o azyl a migráciu, využívať iba ako posledná možnosť a len v prípade, že boli posúdené aj iné, alternatívne opatrenia, ktoré nemajú až taký donucovací charakter.

Tu možno predovšetkým uviesť smernicu Rady 2008/115/ES (tzv. „smernica o návrate“), kde sa stanovuje, že zaistenie sa môže uplatniť, len ak sa v konkrétnom prípade nedajú účinne uplatniť iné dostatočné, ale miernejšie donucovacie opatrenia. Všetky rozhodnutia o zaistení sa musia prijímať po individuálnom preskúmaní na základe objektívnych kritérií. V prípade maloletých osôb bez sprievodu a rodín s maloletými osobami sa zaistenie môže použiť len ako posledná možnosť a na čo najkratšie obdobie.

V návrhu Komisie na zmenu a doplnenie smernice Rady 2003/9/ES (tzv. „smernica o podmienkach prijímania“) sa stanovuje, že žiadateľa o azyl možno zaistiť len v tom prípade, že nemožno účinne uplatniť iné, miernejšie donucovacie opatrenia. Členské štáty by takisto mali zabezpečiť, aby sa vo vnútroštátnych právnych predpisoch stanovili pravidlá upravujúce alternatívy k zaisteniu, ako napr. pravidelné hlásenie sa príslušným orgánom, uloženie finančnej zábezpeky alebo povinnosť zdržiavať sa na určenom mieste. Cieľom tohto návrhu je zabezpečiť prísnejšie a viac harmonizované normy týkajúce sa zaobchádzania so žiadateľmi o azyl, a to aj pokiaľ ide o pravidlá upravujúce zaistenie. O návrhu momentálne rokuje Európsky parlament a Rada. Spoluzákonodarcovia sa zaviazali, že legislatívny proces v súvislosti s týmto návrhom zavŕšia do konca roku 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000953/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Community measures as an alternative to detaining immigrants

The Jesuit Refugee Service has published a report which looks into alternatives to the detention of refugees. The report shows that the use of such detention is unnecessary and that there are more humane ways to deal with the situation, so-called community measures, whereby a refugee is not deprived of personal freedom. In Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom, asylum-seekers and irregular migrants were able to move normally within a given community through projects involving such alternative solutions. However, several restrictions were imposed on them. It was explained to individuals and families that if they cooperated with national authorities, their situation would be resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible. An assessment of these projects showed a great effort on the part of asylum-seekers and irregular immigrants to cooperate, and it was shown that community measures are significantly cheaper for the state than detention, plus they positively contribute to successful integration.

What is the Commission's opinion on community measures as an alternative solution to detention?

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

The Commission shares the view expressed in the report mentioned by the Honourable Member that detention in the area of asylum and migration should be applied only as a last resort and after other less coercive alternative measures have been assessed.

In particular, Council Directive 2008/115/EC ('The Return Directive') states that detention may only be applied if other sufficient but less coercive measures cannot be applied effectively in a specific case. Any detention decision must be based on an individual examination based on objective criteria. Unaccompanied minors and families with minors shall only be detained as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

The Commission proposal amending Council Directive 2003/9/EC ('The Reception Conditions Directive') sets out that an asylum applicant may only be detained if other less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively. Member States should also ensure that rules concerning alternatives to detention, such as regular reporting to the authorities, the deposit of a financial guarantee, or an obligation to stay at an assigned place, are laid down in national law. The proposal aims to ensure higher and more harmonised standards of treatment for asylum-seekers, including in relation to rules on detention. The proposal is currently before the European Parliament and the Council; the co-legislators have committed to complete the legislative process by the end of 2012.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000954/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Nariadenie Dublin

Súdny dvor Európskej únie vydal rozsudok, v ktorom konštatuje, že členské štáty by nemali vracať žiadateľov o azyl do štátu, v ktorom prvýkrát vstúpili na územie Európskej únie v súlade s pravidlom nariadenia Dublin v prípade, že v danom štáte budú vystavení riziku neľudského či ponižujúceho zaobchádzania. Žiadatelia o azyl nesmú byť vystavení riziku porušovania ich ľudských práv a základných slobôd pre administratívne pohodlie členských štátov.

Mieni Komisia reagovať na toto rozhodnutie Súdneho dvora Európskej únie návrhmi legislatívnych zmien v súvislosti s pravidlami nariadenia Dublin?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(21. marca 2012)

Rozsudok Súdneho dvora Európskej únie z 21. decembra 2011 v spojených veciach C-411/10 a C-493/10 sa týka presunov do ktorejkoľvek krajiny, ktorá sa v zmysle nariadenia (ES) č. 343/2003 považuje za zodpovednú krajinu, a nielen do krajiny prvého vstupu na územie EÚ.

Rozsudky Súdneho dvora Európskej únie sú záväzné pre členské štáty v súlade so zásadou priameho účinku a prednosti práva EÚ. Rozsudok v uvedených veciach sa preto považuje za *acquis* EÚ.

Návrh Komisie z roku 2008 na prepracovanie dublinského nariadenia obsahoval ustanovenia o zavedení mechanizmu na pozastavenie presunov v situáciách, keď sú azylové systémy vystavené výnimočnému a osobitnému tlaku. Európsky parlament podporil návrh Komisie svojím uznesením z mája 2009 a žiadal zaviesť plnohodnotný mechanizmus rozdelenia bremena, ktorým sa zabezpečí účinná pomoc členským štátom, ktorých azylový systém je vystavený osobitnému a neúmernému tlaku. K návrhu Komisie musí ešte prijať spoločnú pozíciu Rada.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000954/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: The Dublin Regulation

The Court of Justice of the European Union has issued a judgment in which it rules that Member States should not return asylum-seekers to the state in which they first entered the territory of the European Union, as provided for by the Dublin Regulation, if there is a risk that they will be exposed to inhuman or degrading treatment in that state. Asylum-seekers should not be exposed to the risk of having their human rights and fundamental freedoms violated for the administrative convenience of the Member States.

Does the Commission intend to respond to the judgment of the European Court of Justice with proposals for legislative changes to the Dublin Regulation?

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

The ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 21 December 2011 in the joint cases C-411/10 and C-493/10 refers to transfers to any of the countries that the criteria established by Regulation (EC) 343/2003 indicate as responsible, and not only to transfers to the country of first entry in EU territory.

The rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union are binding upon Member States, in conformity with the principles of direct effect and supremacy of EC law. The judgment in the cases referred to above is therefore considered EU *acquis*.

The Commission's 2008 proposal to recast the Dublin Regulation introduced provisions setting up a mechanism for suspension of transfers in situations of exceptional and particular pressure on the asylum systems. The European Parliament supported the Commission proposal in its Resolution of May 2009 and asked for a fully fledged burden sharing mechanism providing effective support to Member States whose asylum system is faced with specific and disproportionate pressure. The Council is yet to agree on a common position on the Commission proposal.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000955/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Dramatický nárast nerovností a chudoba v Írsku

Európska sieť proti chudobe vydala správu, ktorá sa zaoberá problematikou príjmov a chudoby v Írsku. Predbežné výsledky Prieskumu o príjme a životných podmienkach v roku 2010 Úradu centrálnej štatistiky dokazujú, že riziko chudoby v Írsku narástlo z 14,1 % v roku 2009 na 15,8 % v roku 2010, a to aj napriek skutočnosti, že výška minimálneho týždenného príjmu, ktorý keď určitá osoba nedosiahne, možno ju označiť ako osobu ohrozenú chudobou, bola v roku 2010 nižšia ako v roku 2009. Výsledky ďalej poukazujú na skutočnosť, že percento ľudí v materiálnej deprivácii, ktorí si nemôžu dovoliť 2 z 11 základných potrieb, vzrástlo zo 17,1 % v roku 2009 na 22,5 % v roku 2010. Prieskum tiež upozorňuje na výrazný až dramatický nárast príjmových nerovností.

Akým spôsobom plánuje Komisia prispieť k zlepšeniu súčasnej sociálnej situácie v Írsku?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(16. marca 2012)

Komisia odkazuje váženú pani poslankyňu na svoje odpovede na písomné otázky E-10900/2011, E-10144/2011 a E-10138/2011 ([1]), v ktorých sú uvedené praktické opatrenia uskutočnené alebo naplánované Komisiou v súlade s cieľmi Európskej platformy proti chudobe a sociálnemu vylúčeniu. Tieto opatrenia zahŕňajú odporúčanie z 18. júla 2011 o prístupe k základnému platobnému účtu ([2]), odporúčanie týkajúce sa chudoby detí, ktoré má byť prijaté tento rok ([3]), a otvorenie Európskeho roku aktívneho starnutia a solidarity medzi generáciami 2012.

Okrem toho, pokiaľ ide o mechanizmy na monitorovanie pokroku pri dosahovaní cieľov stratégie Európa 2020 a dohľadu nad ním v rámci európskeho semestra, členské štáty využívajúce program finančnej pomoci EÚ/MMF ([4]) nemusia za rok 2012 predkladať osobitné dokumenty. Pravidelné podrobné správy v rámci programu a štandardné fiškálne tabuľky, ktoré poskytli, sú z hľadiska splnenia požiadaviek na podávanie správ postačujúce. Od členských štátov sa však očakáva, že budú informovať Komisiu o pokroku pri plnení svojich cieľov stanovených v rámci stratégie Európa 2020, a to aj v súvislosti so znížením počtu ľudí trpiacich chudobou alebo sociálnym vylúčením.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) Pozri: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2011/c_2011_4977_en.pdf
([3]) Pozri: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2010:1564:FIN:EN:PDF pre úplný zoznam opatrení.
([4]) Medzinárodný menový fond.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000955/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Dramatic increase in inequality and poverty in Ireland

The European Anti-Poverty Network has published a report on the issues of income and poverty in Ireland. Preliminary results of the Central Statistics Office's 2010 survey on income and living conditions show that the number of people at risk of poverty increased from 14.1 % in 2009 to 15.8 % in 2010, despite the fact that the minimum weekly at-risk-of-poverty threshold was lower in 2010 than in 2009. The results further show that the percentage of people in material deprivation who cannot afford two of the eleven basic needs increased from 17.1 % in 2009 to 22.5 % in 2010. The survey also highlights the significant and dramatic increase in income inequality.

How does the Commission intend to contribute to improving the current social situation in Ireland?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-10900/2011, E-10144/2011 and E-10138/2011 ([1]), which cite practical actions taken or planned by the Commission in line with the objectives of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion. These include the recommendation of 18 July 2011 on access to a basic payment account ([2]), the recommendation on child poverty to be adopted this year ([3]), and the launch of the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

Furthermore, as regards the European Semester provisions for monitoring and surveillance of progress under the Europe 2020 strategy, Member States subject to an EU/IMF ([4]) lending programme do not need to submit separate documents for 2012. The regular in-depth reports under the programme and the standard fiscal tables supplied satisfy the reporting requirements. The Member States are, however, expected to inform the Commission of progress towards meeting their Europe 2020 targets, including in relation to reducing the number of people experiencing poverty or social exclusion.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp
([2]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2011/c_2011_4977_en.pdf
([3]) See: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2010:1564:FIN:EN:PDF for a full list of actions.
([4]) International Monetary Fund.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000956/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Výška transakčnej dane

Komisia navrhla daň z finančných transakcií ešte minulý rok, ako možný nový zdroj do úniového rozpočtu. Sadzba pri obchodovaní s akciami a dlhopismi by bola 0,1 % a v prípade derivátov 0,01 %. Exekutíva tvrdí, že ak sa nepodarí dosiahnuť dohodu na úrovni všetkých členských štátov, bude daň presadzovať aj v rámci menšej skupiny, na základe posilnenej spolupráce, do ktorej sa musí zapojiť minimálne deväť krajín. Najväčším kritikom dane na európskej úrovni je britský premiér David Cameron z obáv, že by mohla škodiť londýnskemu finančnému centru City. Napriek tlaku zo strany Nemecka a Francúzska trvá na doterajšom postoji Spojeného kráľovstva a v prípade, že daň nebude zavedená globálne, plánuje ju vetovať.

Je podľa názoru Komisie navrhovaná sadzba 0,1 resp. 0,01 % dostatočná?

Neplánuje Komisia zvýšenie transakčnej dane, keďže ani napriek navrhovanej nízkej sadzbe to nevyzerá tak, že by k nej Veľká Británia pristúpila?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(13. marca 2012)

Minimálne sadzby, ktoré Komisia navrhuje, sa podľa článku 9 v spojení s článkom 1 a článkom 3 smernice majú v zásade uplatňovať na obe strany/protistrany zapojené do finančných transakcií. Komisia zastáva názor, že tieto sadzby predstavujú rozumný kompromis v tom zmysle, že sú dostatočne vysoké na to, aby sa dosiahol cieľ smernice, ktorým je harmonizácia, t. j. na účely zabránenia závažným narušeniam trhu, ale zároveň sú tieto sadzby dostatočne nízke na to, aby sa minimalizovalo riziko súvisiace s presunom obchodovania.

Komisia v súčasnosti neuvažuje o zmene a doplnení svojho návrhu – ani o zvýšení minimálnych sadzieb (čo by mohlo mať za následok výrazné riziko presunu obchodovania do iných lokalít a podľa rovnakej logiky aj obavy predovšetkým v tých členských štátoch, ktoré sa obávajú nepriaznivých dôsledkov na svoj vnútroštátny finančný sektor a hospodárstvo), ani o znížení minimálnych sadzieb (čím by sa ohrozil cieľ návrhu, teda harmonizácia).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000956/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Level of transaction tax

The Commission proposed a tax on financial transactions as early as last year as a possible new source of funding for the EU budget. The rate of tax for stocks and bond transactions would be 0.1 %, with derivatives taxed at 0.01 %. The EU's executive arm said that if an agreement cannot be reached by all Member States, it would push for a tax among a smaller group via an enhanced cooperation procedure, which requires the participation of a minimum of nine countries. The biggest critic of this measure at European level is the British Prime Minister David Cameron, who fears that it could harm the City of London financial centre. Despite pressure from France and Germany, the United Kingdom is maintaining its current position and plans to veto the tax if it is not introduced on a global basis.

Does the Commission consider the proposed rates of 0.1 and 0.01 % to be sufficient?

Is the Commission not planning an increase in transaction tax, as it seems unlikely that the United Kingdom will sign up for it in spite of the low rate proposed?

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

The minimum rates proposed by the Commission are to be applied, in principle, to both parties/counterparties involved in the financial transactions, subject to Article 9, read in conjunction with Articles 1 and 3 of the directive. The Commission has considered that these rates are a sensible compromise, in the sense that they are sufficiently high for the harmonisation objective of the directive to be achieved, i.e. for the purposes of avoiding significant market distortions, but also low enough so that relocation risks are minimised.

At present, the Commission does not consider amending its own proposal neither in the sense of increasing the minimum rates (which might lead to more significant risks of relocation and, by the same token, to concerns in particular on the part of those Member States who fear adverse consequences on their national financial sectors and economies) nor in the sense of decreasing the minimum rates (which would undermine the harmonisation objectives of the proposal.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000957/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Zavedenie dane z finančných transakcií

Komisia už dávnejšie predstavila návrh zavedenia dane z finančných transakcií ako možný vlastný zdroj do úniového rozpočtu v rámci návrhu finančného výhľadu od roku 2014. Niektoré členské štáty však chcú daň zaviesť skôr. Francúzsky minister pre európske záležitosti sa nedávno vyjadril, že daň sa zavedie ešte tento rok napriek výhradám niektorých členských krajín, že obmedzí hospodársku obnovu v Európe. Francúzsko chce zaviesť daň z finančných transakcií na základe medzivládnej dohody, a tým chce obísť výhrady Veľkej Británie.

Aký má Komisia názor na vyhlásenia Francúzska o zavedení dane z finančných transakcií na základe medzivládnej dohody?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(15. marca 2012)

Komisia je informovaná o aktuálnom legislatívnom návrhu vo Francúzsku s cieľom zaviesť vnútroštátnu daň z finančných transakcií od 1. augusta 2012 ešte predtým, ako Rada dospeje k záveru pri diskusii o návrhu Komisie o zavedení dane z finančných transakcií.. Komisia zaznamenala vyhlásenie zo strany Francúzska, že jeho iniciatíva sa zahrnie do smernice EÚ potom, keď bude prijatá a začne sa vykonávať.

V tomto štádiu môže Komisia preto len potvrdiť, že bude naďalej aktívne umožňovať diskusie o tomto návrhu, v kontexte legislatívneho procesu, ako v Rade, tak aj v Európskom parlamente (s ktorým prebiehajú konzultácie) s cieľom podporiť prijatie navrhovanej smernice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000957/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Introduction of a tax on financial transactions

The Commission has, for a long time now, proposed the introduction of a tax on financial transactions as a possible source of funds for the EU budget under the proposed financial perspective for 2014 onwards; however, some Member States wish to impose taxes at an earlier stage. The French Minister of European Affairs recently said that the tax will be introduced later this year, despite the reservations of some Member States that this would be a barrier to economic recovery in Europe. France wishes to introduce a tax on financial transactions on the basis of an intergovernmental agreement, thereby bypassing the objections of the United Kingdom.

What is the Commission's opinion on the French declaration on establishing a tax on financial transactions on the basis of an intergovernmental agreement?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(15 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the recent French legislative proposal to introduce a national financial transaction tax as of 1 August 2012 ahead of the final outcome of the discussions in the Council on the Commission's Financial Transaction Tax Proposal. The Commission took note of the declarations by France that this initiative would be merged into the EU directive once this will be adopted and implemented.

At this stage, the Commission can thus only confirm that it will continue to actively facilitate the discussions on this proposal held in the context of the legislative process, both in the Council and in the European Parliament (which is consulted), with a view to further the adoption of the proposed directive.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000959/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Solárna energia v Nemecku

Podľa asociácie solárneho priemyslu BSW-Solar vzrástol výkon solárnej energie v Nemecku za minulý rok o 60 %. Nemecké solárne systémy vyprodukovali v roku 2011 viac ako 18 miliárd kilowatthodín elektriny. K prudkému zvýšeniu produkcie v tomto odvetví došlo aj napriek tomu, že minulý rok sa štátna podpora pre fotovoltické inštalácie znížila o 13 %. Do roku 2020 by mali dotácie ešte v dvoch fázach klesnúť o ďalších 24 %. Podľa Spolkového združenia energetického a vodného hospodárstva BDEW dosiahol podiel všetkých obnoviteľných zdrojov na výrobe elektriny v minulom roku výšku 19,9 %, pričom v roku 2010 bol podiel obnoviteľných zdrojov energie 16,4 %. BDEW potvrdilo, že fotovoltické inštalácie boli v roku 2011 najrýchlejšie rastúcim obnoviteľným zdrojom v Nemecku v roku 2011.

Plánuje Komisia vzhľadom na tieto skutočnosti urobiť v súvislosti so solárnou energiou z Nemecka príklad „best practice“?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(27. februára 2012)

Hoci je výber systému podpory vecou vlád členských štátov, Komisia uľahčuje výmenu najlepších postupov medzi členskými štátmi, napr. prostredníctvom fóra pre zosúladenú činnosť. Nemecký zákon o energii z obnoviteľných zdrojov možno v tejto súvislosti naozaj považovať za pozitívny príklad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000959/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Solar Energy in Germany

Solar power usage increased in Germany by 60 % in 2011, according to the German solar industry association BSW-Solar. German solar systems generated more than 18 billion kilowatt hours of electricity in 2011. The sharp increase in production in this sector comes despite a 13 % reduction in state support for photovoltaic installations last year. Subsidies will be further reduced by 24 % in two phases. According to the Federal Association of the Energy and Water Industry (BDEW), the share of all renewable electricity resources reached 19.9 % in 2011, while in 2010 the share of renewable energy resources was 16.4 %. BDEW confirmed that photovoltaic installations were the fastest growing renewable resource in Germany in 2011.

In light of these facts, does the Commission plan to make a 'best practice' model with regard to solar energy from Germany?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

While the choice of the support system remains to be made by national governments, the Commission is facilitating the exchange of best practice among Member States, e.g. in the Concerted action forum. In this context, the German Renewable Energy Law can indeed be seen as a positive example.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-000960/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3. februára 2012)

Vec: Zákaz dovozu ropy z Iránu

Štáty EÚ nakupujú z Iránu 450 tisíc barelov ropy denne, čo je takmer pätina exportu krajiny, a po Číne je európsky blok druhým najväčším odberateľom ropy. Predstavitelia členských štátov však nedávno odsúhlasili zákaz dovozu ropy z Iránu. Európska únia tak stupňuje svoj tlak na Teherán, ktorý stále neposkytol dostatočné informácie o svojom jadrovom programe. Očakávané embargo doplní finančné opatrenia, ktoré nedávno podpísal prezident USA. Obavy vyjadrila v tejto súvislosti aj Medzinárodná agentúra pre atómovú energiu a Irán vyzvala, aby okamžite reagoval na obvinenia, že sa snaží vyvíjať zbraň. Vo svojej správe uviedla, že testuje vysoko výbušný materiál, čo naznačuje vývoj jadrovej zbrane.

Ako bude Komisia postupovať v prípade, že takýto spôsob nátlaku na Irán zo strany Európskej únie nebude dostatočný?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie a vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(10. apríla 2012)

V prípade, že by Rada v rámci spoločnej zahraničnej a bezpečnostnej politiky (SZBP) rozhodla, že sú potrebné dodatočné reštriktívne opatrenia proti Iránu, Komisia bude pripravená prispieť k takémuto úsiliu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000960/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Embargo on oil imports from Iran

EU Member States buy 450 000 barrels of oil a day from Iran, which is nearly one fifth of the country's exports, and the European bloc is the second largest consumer of Iranian oil after China. Representatives of the Member States have recently agreed to place an embargo on oil imports from Iran. The European Union is thus ramping up its pressure on Tehran, which still has not provided sufficient information on its nuclear programme. The planned embargo will complement financial measures which were recently signed by the US President. The International Atomic Energy Agency has also expressed concerns in this respect and has urged Iran to respond immediately to accusations that it is trying to develop a weapon. In its report, it stated that it is testing highly-explosive material, suggesting the development of nuclear weapons.

How will the Commission proceed in the event that this kind of pressure on Iran by the European Union is not sufficient?

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

In case the Council in the framework of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) would decide that additional restrictive measures against Iran would be needed, the Commission would stand ready to contribute to such an effort.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000962/12
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(3 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Represje wobec stowarzyszenia „Gołos"

24 stycznia rosyjskie niezależne stowarzyszenie „Gołos", zajmujące się monitoringiem wyborów, otrzymało pismo wzywające do opuszczenia biura z dniem 1 lutego. Właściciel pomieszczenia wynajmowanego przez członków organizacji jako powód podał odcięcie prądu między 25 lutego a 6 marca 2012 r.

Pragnę zauważyć, że do sytuacji doszło dzień przed uruchomieniem strony organizacji „Mapa naruszeń podczas wyborów 2012", która będzie miała za zadanie informowanie o wszelkich naruszeniach prawa wyborczego podczas kampanii wyborczej i samych wyborów na prezydenta, wyznaczonych na 4 grudnia 2012 r.

Przypominam, że organizacja „Gołos" również podczas wyborów parlamentarnych w 2011 r. spotkała się z prześladowaniami ze strony władz. Prokuratura wszczęła postępowanie przeciwko organizacji, a strona internetowa „Gołosu" była poddawana atakom hakerów.

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać Komisję, czy ma zamiar zbadać sprawę oczywistych represji wobec stowarzyszenia „Gołos" i podjąć interwencję w tej sprawie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel i Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(29 lutego 2012 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest w pełni świadoma sprawy poruszonej przez Szanownego Pana Posła i śledzi ją bardzo uważnie. Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych (ESDZ) spotkała się z przedstawicielami stowarzyszenia „Gołos" i wielokrotnie podnosiła kwestię stosowanych wobec niego represji podczas kontaktów z władzami Rosji.

W grudniu 2011 r. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wyraziła poważne zaniepokojenie z powodu prześladowań stosowanych przez rząd Rosji wobec tego stowarzyszenia, które utrudniały podejmowanie inicjatyw polegających na niezależnym monitorowaniu przebiegu wyborów. W rozmowie z władzami Rosji zdecydowanie podkreśliła, iż oddolne inicjatywy społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, takie jak podejmowane przez stowarzyszenie „Gołos" działania związane z monitorowaniem wyborów, są istotnym elementem społeczeństw demokratycznych. Odgrywają one ważną rolę w dzisiejszej Rosji i są kluczowym elementem przyczyniającym się do jej modernizacji. Przedstawiciele ruchów społeczeństwa obywatelskiego powinni mieć możliwość podejmowania działań i dysponować środkami do ich realizacji.

Jak Szanowny Pan Poseł z pewnością wie, stowarzyszenie „Gołos" otrzymuje wsparcie finansowe UE. W latach 2006-2013 Unia przekazała na jego rzecz kwotę ponad 520 827 EUR za pośrednictwem szeregu wspólnych projektów, które w większości związane były z wyborami, ich monitorowaniem, podstawą prawną oraz zaangażowaniem obywateli w procesy demokratyczne. „Gołos" otrzymuje również środki finansowe z państw członkowskich UE.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca będzie nadal uważnie śledzić rozwój sytuacji w okresie poprzedzającym wybory prezydenckie w marcu 2012 r. oraz będzie przypominać Rosji o jej zobowiązaniu do przeprowadzenia wolnych wyborów oraz poszanowania praw człowieka i praworządności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000962/12
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Repression against the Golos election watchdog

On 24 January, Golos, an independent election watchdog in Russia, received a letter demanding that it vacate its office by 1 February. The reason given by the owner of the premises leased by members of the organisation was that the power would be cut off between 25 February and 6 March 2012.

It is worth noting that this occurred the day before the publication on Golos's website of a 'map of violations during the 2012 elections', the aim of which is to pinpoint any breaches of election law during the election campaign and the presidential election itself, which is to take place on 4 December 2012.

Golos also encountered persecution from the authorities during the 2011 parliamentary elections. The public prosecutor's office initiated proceedings against the organisation, and its website was subjected to hacker attacks.

With this in mind, is the Commission intending to investigate this apparent repression against Golos? Does it intend to intervene in the matter?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) is well aware of the case raised by the Honourable Member, and indeed has been following it very closely. The European External Action Service (EEAS) has met with the Golos representatives and has addressed the question of their harassment with the Russian authorities on a number of occasions.

In December 2011 the HR/VP expressed strong concerns with the Russian Government's harassment of Golos, hampering their independent election monitoring initiatives. She has impressed on the Russian Government that grassroots civil society movements, such as the election monitoring activities undertaken by Golos, are important components of democratic societies. They do an essential job in Russia today and are key to Russia's modernisation. They should be allowed to work and have the means to do that.

As the Honourable Member is no doubt aware, the EU supports Golos financially. The EU is providing over a total of EUR 520,827 for the period 2006-2013 to Golos via a number of joint projects, majority of which deal with elections, election monitoring, legal basis of elections, and citizens' involvement in democratic processes. Golos also receives funding from EU Member States.

The HR/VP will continue to follow closely the developments in the run up to the Presidential elections in March 2012 and will recall Russia's commitments to free elections, human rights and the rule of law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000963/12
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Nuove targhe albanesi e rischio di «clonazione» dei veicoli italiani

Dal 2011, il governo albanese ha introdotto una nuova tipologia di targhe automobilistiche al fine di adeguare i propri standard a quelli europei. Le nuove targhe albanesi seguono quindi il sistema già in uso in Francia e in Italia, che prevede due strisce blu poste ai lati della targa e una sequenza alfanumerica di due lettere, tre cifre e due lettere conclusive, collocata tra le due strisce.

Tuttavia, mentre gli Stati membri in questione hanno mantenuto delle distinzioni grafiche al fine di evitare il reciproco «clonaggio», utilizzando quindi lettere e cifre di dimensione e carattere diversi, le nuove targhe introdotte dal governo albanese sembrano proprio «copiate» dalle targhe italiane, poiché la dimensione e il carattere delle lettere e delle cifre non mostrano differenze rispetto a quelli adottati dall'Italia. È quindi legittimo sospettare che attualmente ci siano in circolazione coppie di veicoli recanti una targa sostanzialmente identica.

Non ritiene la Commissione che le targhe «copia» possano portare a rischiosi equivoci, ad esempio fornendo alle autorità informazioni errate sulla localizzazione di un veicolo, e mettendo così a repentaglio la capacità di controllo delle autorità stesse? Se sì, e alla luce delle clausole contenute nel partenariato europeo che l'Albania ha firmato con l'UE, con cui il governo albanese si impegna a conformarsi in modo appropriato agli standard UE in materia di sistemi di identificazione dei veicoli, in che modo la Commissione intende agire?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(29 febbraio 2012)

La Commissione segnala all'onorevole parlamentare che, in forza della convenzione UNECE di Vienna sulla circolazione stradale del 1968 ([1]), ogni veicolo impegnato nei trasporti internazionali deve recare un segno distintivo indicante il paese di immatricolazione. Tale segno distintivo figura all'estrema sinistra della nuova targa di immatricolazione albanese.

Anche le targhe automobilistiche francesi e italiane, caratterizzate da una grafica simile, contengono un segno distintivo sul lato sinistro, in conformità alle disposizioni del regolamento (CE) n. 2411/98 relativo al riconoscimento del segno distintivo ([2]).

Non appare necessario alcun ulteriore intervento da parte della Commissione.

([1]) Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sulla circolazione stradale, conclusa a Vienna l'8 novembre 1968 (http://www.unece.org/trans/conventn/Conv_road_traffic_EN.pdf).
([2]) GU L 299 del 10.11.1998, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000963/12
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: New Albanian number plates and risk of 'cloning' Italian vehicles

As of 2011, the Albanian Government has introduced a new type of vehicle number plate in order to bring their standards into line with those of Europe. The new Albanian plates follow the system already used in France and Italy, which includes a blue stripe at either side of the number plate and an alphanumeric sequence consisting of two letters, three numbers and two final letters in between the two stripes.

However, whilst the Member States in question have used different size and font characters in order to avoid 'cloning' each other, the new number plates introduced by the Albanian Government seem to 'imitate' the Italian plates, using characters of the same size and font. It therefore seems fair to presume that there are currently pairs of vehicles on the roads bearing plates which are essentially identical.

Does the Commission not consider that 'duplicate' plates may lead to confusion, for example providing the authorities with incorrect information regarding the location of a vehicle, and therefore jeopardising those authorities' verification abilities? If so, and in light of the clauses within the European Partnership agreement that Albania signed with the EU, in accordance with which the Albanian government undertakes to comply properly with the EU standards for vehicle identification systems, what action does the Commission intend to take?

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

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that according to the UN ECE 1968 Vienna Agreement on road traffic ([1]), every vehicle in international transport has to bear a distinguishing sign showing the country of registration. This distinguishing sign has been incorporated into the new Albanian registration plate on the far left side.

Licence plates from France and Italy, with a similar layout, also bear a distinguishing sign on the left side of the registration plate in accordance with the requirements laid down in Regulation (EC) No 2411/98 on the recognition of the distinguishing sign ([2]).

No further action by the Commission seems necessary.

([1]) United Nations Convention on Road Traffic done at Vienna on 8 November 1968 (http://www.unece.org/trans/conventn/Conv_road_traffic_EN.pdf).
([2]) OJ L 299, 10.11.98, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000964/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Dati e statistiche sull'andamento dei consumi alimentari in Europa

Nel 2011 si è avuto in Italia un calo generalizzato dei consumi. Nel Paese, la media delle spese delle famiglie è diminuita del 6,1 %. Addirittura, nel Sud, i consumi sono crollati, registrando un meno 9,3 %.

A livello nazionale le spese delle famiglie si sono contratte per gli acquisti di automobili nuove (meno 13,7 %), di elettrodomestici bruni (meno 15,1 %), di elettrodomestici bianchi e piccoli (meno 5,4 %), di mobili (meno 1,3 %), di motoveicoli (meno 13 %), di prodotti informatici (meno 8,2 %) e di beni durevoli (meno 6,1 %). Soltanto la vendita delle automobili usate ha registrato un aumento del 2,5 %.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Può tracciare un quadro generale dell'andamento dei consumi alimentari negli Stati membri attraverso dati e statistiche?

2. A fronte del generale crollo dei consumi, con quali iniziative a livello europeo intende rilanciare la spesa delle famiglie? In particolare, quali sono i pacchetti di misure che sono stati messi in atto e quali le azioni previste per il futuro al fine di produrre effetti nel breve termine?

Risposta data da Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(29 marzo 2012)

1. Il servizio Eurostat della Commissione riceve dati sulla spesa per i consumi finali delle famiglie secondo le funzioni di consumo. La suddivisione minima di tali dati, ossia il livello a tre cifre (COICOP 3 digit), fornisce indicazioni sulla spesa per i consumi finali relativi ai generi alimentari (CP011), da cui emergono le tendenze riportate di seguito (rispetto al totale dei consumi).

Una tabella è inviata in allegato direttamente all'onorevole parlamentare e al segretariato del Parlamento.

2. Per promuovere la crescita e creare nuovi posti di lavoro sono necessarie politiche solide a livello dell'Unione europea e dei singoli Stati membri. Nell'analisi annuale della crescita per il 2012, la Commissione ha precisato le priorità politiche che l'Unione europea dovrà perseguire per ristabilire fiducia e stabilità di fronte alla crisi del debito sovrano e per rilanciare la crescita e l'occupazione. Tali priorità hanno ottenuto un vasto appoggio, anche da parte del Parlamento europeo. Un risanamento di bilancio che sia diversificato e in grado di favorire la crescita è stato riconosciuto come una priorità cruciale nelle circostanze attuali. Inoltre, l'analisi annuale della crescita delinea azioni concrete da intraprendere a livello europeo per favorire la crescita, quali avvalersi del mercato interno come motore per la crescita, mobilitare i finanziamenti dell'UE e prevedere un iter accelerato per le iniziative in grado di promuovere la crescita. Recentemente la Commissione ha lanciato una serie di iniziative mirate a beneficio degli Stati membri che devono far fronte a un tasso di disoccupazione giovanile elevato e a condizioni finanziarie rigorose. Per otto Stati membri sono stati creati gruppi di intervento (le cosiddette «action teams») al fine di contrastare la disoccupazione giovanile e migliorare l'accesso ai finanziamenti per le PMI. Il prossimo passo consisterà nell'individuare gli elementi necessari per il piano per l'occupazione giovanile e nel definire i regimi di sostegno per le PMI, i quali dovrebbero essere accelerati o beneficiare di fondi non ancora assegnati nell'ambito della dotazione del Fondo strutturale nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000964/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Data and statistics on food consumption trends in Europe

In Italy in 2011, there was a general decline in consumption. The country's average spend per household fell by 6.1 %. In the South, consumption plummeted by 9.3 %.

On a national level, households spent less on new cars (purchase expenditure down 13.7 %), brown goods (down 15.1 %), small household appliances and white goods (down 5.4 %), furniture (down 1.3 %), motorbikes/scooters (down 13 %), IT equipment (down 8.2 %) and durable goods (down 6.1 %). Only used car sales saw an increase of 2.5 %.

In light of these facts:

1. Can the Commission provide a general outline of food consumption trends in the Member States in the form of data and statistics?

2. In view of the general fall in consumption, what European-level measures will be used to boost household spending? In particular, what packages of measures have been implemented and what actions will be taken in the future to achieve fast results?

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

1. The Commission (Eurostat) receives data on final consumption expenditure of households by consumption purpose. The lowest disaggregation of these data (COICOP 3 digit) provides data on final consumption expenditure for Food (CP011) which shows the following trends (in comparison to the total).

A annexed table is sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Parliament's Secretariat.

2. Stimulating growth and creating jobs requires sound policies at EU and Member State level. In its 2012 Annual Growth Survey (AGS), the Commission has highlighted the policy priorities the European Union needs to pursue to restore confidence and stability in the face of the sovereign debt crisis and to boost growth and employment. They have been widely endorsed, including by the Parliament. Growth-friendly and differentiated fiscal consolidation was recognised as a key priority at a current juncture. The AGS set out also concrete actions at the EU level to promote growth, such as using the internal market as a growth engine, mobilising the EU budget, and fast tracking initiatives with a high growth impact. The Commission recently launched a number of targeted initiatives for the benefit of Member State that face high youth unemployment and tight financing conditions. Action teams were set up for eight Member States to fight youth unemployment and improve access to finance for SMEs. Next step involves the identification of the necessary elements of youth employment plan and the support schemes for SMEs which could be accelerated or benefit from funding not yet committed from within the national Structural Fund allocation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000965/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Strage in Nigeria

Il gruppo fondamentalista islamico «Jamà atu Sunna Liddà awati wal-Jihad», noto anche come «Boko Haram», ha effettuato una serie di attentati a Kano, nel nord della Nigeria. Gli ordigni sono stati fatti scoppiare simultaneamente provocando quasi duecento morti e decine di feriti.

Tra i bersagli, caserme di polizia e uffici pubblici e governativi. Nel giro di pochi minuti un kamikaze è riuscito a farsi esplodere contro il muro di un commissariato di polizia, un altro è saltato in aria prima che potesse centrare il suo obiettivo. Sparatorie e deflagrazioni hanno provocato incendi che hanno fatto strage anche tra i civili. Tra le vittime anche un giornalista nigeriano di Channels tv che lavorava anche per Reuters Television.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, s'interroga dunque l'Alto Rappresentante per sapere:

1. può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere quali politiche intende avviare per porre fine alle violenze e agli attentati in Nigeria?

2. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere quali politiche intende avviare per assicurare alle missioni umanitarie la possibilità di operare in Nigeria?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(7 maggio 2012)

Come sottolineato dall'onorevole parlamentare, il problema della sicurezza in Nigeria, in particolare nel nord-est del paese, desta grande preoccupazione.

È importante osservare che l'obiettivo dei recenti gravi attentati di Boko Haram a Kano non erano i cristiani, ma le autorità statali. Inoltre, gli osservatori sono concordi nel sostenere che nella maggior parte dei casi le numerose vittime di Boko Haram a Kano erano musulmane. È vero che alcuni attentati terroristici possono considerarsi attacchi contro i cristiani volti a esacerbare le tensioni e anche a ottenere visibilità mediatica. La Nigeria tutela la libertà di religione, sancita dalla costituzione.

I contatti regolari tra l'Unione e la Nigeria vanno intensificandosi.

Recentemente, l'8 febbraio 2012, si è svolta a Abuja una riunione ministeriale Nigeria-UE a cui, per conto dell'Alta Rappresentante, ha partecipato il ministro danese degli Affari esteri Søvndal. I problemi legati alla sicurezza e la cooperazione in questo settore sono stati oggetto di discussioni approfondite. È stato deciso di istituire un dialogo locale regolare sulla pace, sulla stabilità e sulla sicurezza. È stato anche stabilito di assumere esperti incaricati di individuare un eventuale piano d'azione e di intensificare la cooperazione in materia di lotta al terrorismo, e allo stesso tempo di riorientare diversi progetti UE in Nigeria per affrontare meglio le cause alla radice dei problemi di sicurezza nel nord del paese.

I partner responsabili dell'attuazione dei programmi umanitari dell'UE in Nigeria settentrionale hanno temporaneamente ridotto la loro presenza a causa dei problemi di sicurezza, ma le attività fondamentali proseguono.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000965/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Massacre in Nigeria

The Islamic fundamentalist group Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad, also known as Boko Haram, has carried out a series of attacks in Kano, in northern Nigeria. The explosive devices were all let off at the same time, killing almost 200 people and injuring scores of others.

The targets included police barracks, public buildings and government offices. In the space of a few minutes, a suicide bomber managed to blow himself up against the wall of a police station, while another exploded before he could reach his target. Gunfire and explosions caused fires which resulted in mass casualties, including among civilians. Among the victims was a Nigerian journalist from Channels TV who also worked for Reuters Television.

Given the above, can the High Representative state:

1. what steps she intends to take with a view to putting an end to the violence and the attacks in Nigeria?

2. what steps she intends to take with a view to enabling humanitarian agencies to operate in the country?

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

As the Honourable Member points out the security situation in Nigeria, particularly in the North East of the country, is a cause for considerable concern.

It is important to note that the recent major attacks by Boko Haram in Kano did not target Christians, but the state authorities. Furthermore, observers agree that most of Boko Haram's many victims in Kano were Muslims. It is correct that some of the terrorist attacks can be understood as directed against Christians with the intention of exacerbating tensions and also to gain media coverage. Nigeria is committed to religious freedom, which is enshrined in the country's constitution.

The EU and Nigeria have regular contacts and they are intensifying.

Most recently, a Nigeria-EU Ministerial meeting took place in Abuja on 8 February 2012. The Danish Foreign Minister, Mr Søvndal, represented the HR/VP. Security issues and cooperation in this area were discussed extensively. It was agreed to establish a regular local dialogue on peace, stability and security. It was also agreed to engage experts with a view to identifying a possible action plan and to enhance the cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism, while at the same time re-orienting several EU projects in Nigeria in order to better address the root causes of the security challenges in the North of the country.

Partners responsible for implementation of humanitarian EU programmes in northern Nigeria have temporarily reduced their movements due to insecurity, but essential activities keep being implemented by all of them.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000967/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Consumatori e credito al consumo online: mancanza dei requisiti di trasparenza previsti dalla direttiva 2008/48/CE

La relazione annuale della Commissione in materia di trasparenza del credito al consumo online evidenzia un dato importante: le autorità nazionali hanno rilevato che il 70 % dei siti controllati (393 su 562) richiederà «ulteriori indagini per presunte violazioni della normativa europea sulla protezione dei consumatori».

L'obiettivo primario dell'indagine consiste nell'accertare se i consumatori, prima di firmare un contratto di credito al consumo, hanno ricevuto le informazioni cui hanno diritto in virtù delle direttive europee a tutela dei consumatori. Queste le irregolarità principali individuate nei siti ispezionati:

— la pubblicità del credito non contiene tutte le informazioni richieste dalla direttiva 2008/48/CE sul credito al consumo, come il TAEG, «essenziale per confrontare le offerte»;

— l'omissione di informazioni fondamentali e chiare su tutti i vari elementi del costo totale del credito, come il tipo di tasso d'interesse, la durata del contratto di credito e i costi connessi;

— la presentazione «fuorviante» dei costi, esposti in modo falso o ingannevole.

Considerando che le offerte online di credito al consumo da parte degli istituti finanziari europei non soddisfano ancora i requisiti di trasparenza previsti dalle direttive unionali, può la Commissione riferire quali misure, in collaborazione con le autorità nazionali, intende adottare a tutela dei consumatori?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(2 marzo 2012)

L'indagine a tappeto sul credito al consumo, cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, è stata condotta dalle autorità nazionali degli Stati membri partecipanti alla rete di cooperazione per la tutela dei consumatori ([1]) istituita nel 2006.

Le risultanze preliminari dell'indagine, presentate dalla Commissione il 10 gennaio 2012, corrispondono alla prima fase di tale esercizio. La seconda, denominata «fase di esecuzione» non è ancora iniziata e le autorità partecipanti stanno contattando le istituzioni finanziarie interessate per sollecitare gli interventi correttivi eventualmente necessari.

La Commissione coordina e segue le indagini a tappeto. Essa presenterà la relazione nel 2013 sui risultati della fase di esecuzione dell'indagine.

([1]) Regolamento sulla cooperazione per la tutela dei consumatori; GU L. 364 del 9.12.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000967/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Consumers and online consumer credit: failure to comply with transparency requirements provided for in Directive 2008/48/EC

The Commission's annual report on the transparency of online consumer credit highlighted an important issue: national authorities have found that 70 % of sites assessed (393 out of 562) require 'further investigations regarding suspected violations of European law on consumer protection'.

The investigation's main objective is to ascertain whether consumers receive the information they are entitled to, in accordance with the European directives on consumer protection, prior to entering into consumer credit agreements. The main irregularities identified in the assessed sites are:

— advertising concerning credit not including all the information required by the Consumer Credit Directive 2008/48/EC, such as APR, which is 'essential for comparing offers';

— omission of basic and clear information on all the various elements of the total cost of credit, such as the type of interest rate, the term of the credit agreement and the associated costs;

– 'misleading' presentation of costs, set out incorrectly or deceptively.

Considering that online consumer credit proposals by European financial institutions still do not meet the transparency requirements provided for by the Union directives, can the Commission report on what measure it intends to take, in collaboration with national authorities, to protect consumers?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The 'Sweep' covering consumer credit, to which the Honourable Member refers, was carried out by the Member States' national authorities of the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network ([1]) established in 2006.

The preliminary findings of the sweep, presented by the Commission on 10 January 2012, correspond to the first phase of the exercise. The second, so called, 'enforcement phase' of the sweep has now started, and participant authorities are contacting the financial institutions concerned to demand corrective actions as appropriate.

The Commission coordinates and monitors the sweeps. It will report on the outcome of the sweep's enforcement phase in 2013.

([1]) Regulation on consumer protection cooperation; OJ L 364, 9.12.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000968/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Nuovi attacchi terroristici contro i cristiani in Nigeria

Gli ultimi giorni sono stati caratterizzati ancora una volta da attacchi terroristici a danno dei cristiani. Questa volta in Nigeria due attentati hanno ucciso circa 260 persone. Il primo disastro, nello stato di Bauchi, ha provocato la morte di almeno 9 persone. Nello stesso stato della Nigeria settentrionale sono state registrate altre esplosioni in due chiese, che per fortuna non hanno causato vittime ma danni alle strutture.

Il bilancio degli attacchi dello scorso venerdì a Kano è destinato ad aumentare. Si stima che i morti siano 250, ma che vi siano ancora molti feriti in gravi condizioni.

Considerando che sempre più spesso i cristiani sono vittime di attacchi violenti dettati da intolleranza religiosa, può il Vicepresidente/alto rappresentare comunicare come intende trattare con il governo nigeriano per evitare il ripetersi di episodi cruenti a danno dei cristiani e per garantire la libertà religiosa in quel territorio?

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

Come sottolineato dall'onorevole parlamentare, la sicurezza in Nigeria, e in particolare nel nord-est del paese, desta serie preoccupazioni.

La Nigeria si è impegnata a tutelare la libertà di religione, sancita dalla sua costituzione. È vero che alcuni attentati terroristici possono considerarsi attacchi contro i cristiani, allo scopo di esacerbare le tensioni e ottenere visibilità mediatica. Tuttavia, i recenti attacchi perpetrati da Boko Haram a Kano non erano diretti contro i cristiani, bensì contro le autorità statali. Inoltre, gli osservatori sono concordi nel sostenere che la maggior parte delle vittime di Boko Haram a Kano erano musulmani.

L'Unione europea e la Nigeria hanno contatti regolari, che si stanno intensificando.

Più di recente, l'8 febbraio 2012, si è svolta ad Abuja una riunione ministeriale tra la Nigeria e l'UE. Il ministro danese degli Affari esteri, Villy Soevndal, rappresentava l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton in tale occasione. In questa sede sono state discusse approfonditamente le questioni della sicurezza e della cooperazione in questo settore. Si è convenuto di istituire un dialogo locale periodico sulla pace, la stabilità e la sicurezza. È stato altresì concordato di assumere esperti incaricati di elaborare un eventuale piano d'azione e di intensificare la cooperazione in materia di lotta al terrorismo; si è inoltre deciso di riorientare diversi progetti dell'UE in Nigeria per affrontare meglio le cause profonde dei problemi della sicurezza nel nord del paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000968/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — New terrorist attacks against Christians in Nigeria

The last few days have once again seen terrorist attacks against Christians. This time around 260 people have been killed in two attacks in Nigeria. The first incident took place in Bauchi State and killed at least nine people. Other explosions were reported in two churches in the same northern Nigerian state, which luckily only resulted in structural damage and no casualties.

The death toll of last Friday's attacks in Kano is set to rise. The number of deaths is estimated at 250, but there are still many wounded in a critical condition.

Considering that Christians are more and more frequently victims of violent attacks motivated by religious intolerance, can the Vice-President/High Representative state how she intends to negotiate with the Nigerian Government to avoid repeats of these bloodthirsty actions against Christians and to ensure religious freedom in Nigeria?

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

As the Honourable Members point out the security situation in Nigeria, particularly in the North East of the country, is a cause for considerable concern.

Nigeria is committed to religious freedom, which is enshrined in the country's constitution. It is correct that some of the terrorist attacks can be understood as directed against Christians with the intention of exacerbating tensions and also to gain media coverage. However, it is important to note that the recent major attacks by Boko Haram in Kano did not target Christians, but the state authorities. Furthermore, observers agree that most of Boko Haram's many victims in Kano were Muslims.

The EU and Nigeria have regular contacts and they are intensifying.

Most recently, a Nigeria-EU Ministerial meeting took place in Abuja on 8 February 2012. The Danish Foreign Minister, Mr Villy Soevndal, represented HRVP Ashton. Security issues and cooperation in this area were discussed extensively. It was agreed to establish a regular local dialogue on peace, stability and security. It was also agreed to engage experts with a view to identifying a possible action plan and to enhance the cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism, while at the same time re-orienting several EU projects in Nigeria in order to better address the root causes of the security challenges in the North of the country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000969/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Perquisizione dei vescovadi di Gand e Bruges

L'operazione «Calice», l'inchiesta riguardante gli abusi sessuali all'interno della Chiesa del Belgio, ha portato alla perquisizione dei vescovadi di Gand e Bruges.

Sono stati acquisiti 11 dossier di ecclesiastici a Bruges e 13 a Gand. A detta del portavoce del vescovo di Bruges, le operazioni si sono svolte in un clima di calma, rispetto e collaborazione.

Considerando gli episodi di profanazione di alcune tombe registrati nel giugno 2010 a Malines, le recenti perquisizioni dimostrano un netto miglioramento nel trattamento riservato dalla polizia belga ai luoghi di culto.

Intende la Commissione assumere una posizione specifica in merito allo scandalo dei preti pedofili? Quali misure intende mettere in atto a livello europeo per evitare il ripetersi di questi abusi?

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

La Commissione non è competente a perseguire reati o a intervenire in casi specifici. Tuttavia la lotta contro l'abuso e lo sfruttamento sessuale dei minori è una priorità fondamentale per la Commissione europea, come dimostrano gli sforzi compiuti per migliorare la legislazione riguardante la protezione delle giovani vittime di abusi, il perseguimento degli autori di reato e la prevenzione di tali crimini. Tale impegno ha portato recentemente all'adozione della direttiva 2011/92/UE relativa alla lotta contro l'abuso e lo sfruttamento sessuale dei minori ([1]).

La direttiva ravvicina la definizione di venti reati, tra cui anche i nuovi reati quali l'adescamento online e l'abuso nell'utilizzo di una webcam, e stabilisce i livelli minimi per le sanzioni penali. In particolare chiunque, compiendo atti sessuali con un minore, abusa di una posizione riconosciuta di fiducia, autorità o influenza sul minore, è punito con una pena detentiva massima di almeno otto anni, se il minore non ha raggiunto l'età del consenso sessuale, e con una pena detentiva massima di almeno tre anni, se il minore ha raggiunto tale età. Al fine di facilitare le indagini e il perseguimento dei reati, la direttiva estende il termine di prescrizione per la maggior parte dei casi fino a dopo il raggiungimento della maggiore età da parte delle vittime, rimuove l'ostacolo delle regole di riservatezza per gli operatori aventi il compito principale di lavorare a contatto con i minori e incoraggia la denuncia di sospetti abusi. Le indagini e l'azione penale relative a tutti i reati non saranno subordinati alle denuncie o accuse da parte delle vittime e non verranno quindi ostacolate dall'eventuale ritrattazione da parte di quest'ultime. Inoltre inquirenti e pubblici ministeri saranno dotati di strumenti investigativi efficaci e gli Stati membri sono tenuti a organizzare unità investigative volte a individuare le vittime, analizzando in particolare la pornografia infantile.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 13 dicembre 2011, relativa alla lotta contro l'abuso e lo sfruttamento sessuale dei minori e la pornografia minorile, e che sostituisce la decisione quadro 2004/68/GAI del Consiglio, GU L 335 del 17.12.2011, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000969/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Search of the bishops' offices in Ghent and Bruges

Operation Chalice, the investigation into sexual abuse within the Church of Belgium, has led to a search of the administrative offices of the bishoprics of Ghent and Bruges.

Eleven clergy case files have been obtained in Bruges and thirteen in Ghent. According to the spokesman for the Bishop of Bruges, the operations were carried out in an atmosphere of calm, with respect and collaboration.

Considering the events of June 2010 which saw the desecration of tombs in Malines, the recent searches show a marked improvement in the Belgian police's treatment of places of worship.

Will the Commission take a specific stance with regard to the scandal of paedophile priests? What measures will it implement at European level to avoid any repeat of such abuse?

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

The Commission is not competent to prosecute crimes or to intervene in specific cases. However, fighting child sexual abuse and exploitation is a key priority for the European Commission, as evidenced by its efforts to improve the legislation governing the protection of child victims, the prosecution of offenders, and the prevention of such crimes. These efforts have recently resulted in the adoption of Directive 2011/92/EU on child sexual abuse ([1]).

The directive approximates the definition of 20 offences, covering also new offences such as online grooming or webcam abuse, and sets minimum levels for criminal penalties. In particular, engaging in sexual activities with a child, where abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child, shall be punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of at least eight years if the child has not reached the age of sexual consent, and of at least three years of imprisonment, if the child is over that age. 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. Furthermore, 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.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA, OJ L 335, 17.12.2011, 1-14.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000970/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Pneumatici riciclati: il polverino di gomma per strade eco-sostenibili

Ogni anno in Italia sono smaltiti 25 milioni di pneumatici e sono 400 mila le tonnellate di copertoni da riciclare. Il 45 % è indirizzato al recupero energetico, mentre il 20-25 % è trasformato in granuli — il cosiddetto polverino — e destinato alla manifattura della gomma.

Il trattamento degli pneumatici avviene in appositi impianti che separano la gomma dalla tela e dal metallo, recuperano poi la gomma e la frantumano in particelle sempre più piccole, ricavandone questa sabbia molto fine, detta polverino. Grazie a tali procedimenti industriali di taglio e granulazione degli pneumatici, è possibile utilizzare il polverino nella realizzazione di pavimentazioni stradali mescolandolo all'asfalto.

A tal fine, le caratteristiche dei conglomerati a base di polverino sono, oltre a una migliore drenabilità, la maggior aderenza, l'assorbimento acustico (la gomma è fonoassorbente), il risparmio energetico e di risorse naturali (si impiegano elastomeri recuperati come materiale base).

Gli ingegneri del Politecnico di Torino che stanno studiando questi fondi stradali hanno individuato diversi vantaggi, in particolare: l'energia trasferita dai veicoli in transito non viene dissipata ma assorbita, la gomma fornisce un contributo elastico e questo fattore influisce sulla durabilità del prodotto.

In Europa l'utilizzazione è ancora limitata alle iniziative «capofila» di Germania, Portogallo e Spagna.

Considerato che gli pneumatici usati e non riutilizzabili costituiscono un problema ambientale di dimensioni notevoli e considerati l'enorme ingombro nelle discariche e tutti i problemi connessi (non biodegradabilità, facilità di combustione, ristagno d'acqua con proliferazione di insetti e rischio di infezioni), può dire la Commissione se intende predisporre misure per lo studio-ricerca sui potenziali vantaggi conseguenti all'utilizzazione del polverino sui manti stradali, nonché se intende organizzare iniziative di interesse generale per promuoverne i benefici sotto il profilo della tutela ambientale e della sicurezza stradale?

Risposta data daMáire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(14 marzo 2012)

Le tecnologie di riciclaggio degli pneumatici per la realizzazione di pavimentazioni stradali sono oggi ben note e all'avanguardia. Nell'ambito dei programmi quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico presenti e passati, la Commissione finanzia dei progetti relativi all'utilizzo del polverino di gomma per il manto stradale, quali DIRECT-MAT ([1]) e PERSUADE ([2]).

Ulteriori attività di ricerca e innovazione in materia potrebbero essere sostenute nell'ambito delle tematiche relative all'ambiente e ai trasporti del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ 2007-2013), che tratta proprio di tali questioni. Per soluzioni più prossime al mercato possono essere presi in considerazione, secondo le procedure di candidatura previste e proprie di un determinato programma e invito ([3]), altri programmi finanziati dall'UE, come LIFE ([4]) o i progetti di prima applicazione commerciale nel settore dell'ecoinnovazione (CIP) ([5]).

In linea generale, l'Unione europea non sostiene tecnologie specifiche; le raccomandazioni dell'UE non riguardano l'utilizzo delle tecniche, dei materiali e dei processi esistenti per la costruzione del manto stradale, ma mirano piuttosto a favorire lo scambio di migliori pratiche. Pertanto, il modo più appropriato per promuovere tali tecnologie pare essere la realizzazione di progetti in paesi potenzialmente interessati e/o di fiere, esposizioni e conferenze tecnologiche.

([1]) http://direct-mat.fehrl.org/.
([2]) http://persuade.fehrl.org/.
([3]) Tutte le informazioni sui prossimi inviti sono disponibili ai seguenti indirizzi web:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/partecipanti/portal/page/fp7_calls
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/ecoinnovation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000970/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Recycled tyres: crumb rubber for environmentally sustainable roads

25 million tyres are disposed of and 400 000 tonnes of tyres are recycled in Italy each year. 45 % are used for energy recovery, whilst 20-25 % are transformed into granules — known as crumb — and used in the manufacture of crumb rubber.

This process takes place in special plants which separate the rubber from the canvas and metal, recover the rubber and grind it into smaller and smaller pieces until it becomes a very fine sand, called crumb. Thanks to these industrial tyre-cutting and grinding processes, the crumb rubber can be mixed with asphalt and used for road surfacing.

To that end, the features of this crumb based mixture — other than better drainage — are better adhesiveness, sound absorption (rubber soaks up sound), energy savings and natural resource conservation (reclaimed elastomers are used as a basic material).

Engineers at the Polytechnic University of Turin who are studying these road surfaces have identified various advantages, in particular: the energy transferred by moving vehicles is absorbed rather than wasted, the rubber provides resilience and this has an effect on the durability of the product. Its use within Europe is still limited to leading-edge initiatives in Germany, Portugal and Spain.

Considering that used and non-reusable tyres constitute a significant environmental issue and in view of the huge burden on landfill sites and all the associated problems (non-biodegradability, high fire risk, stagnating water with proliferation of insects and risk of infection), can the Commission state whether it intends to establish measures to enable study and research into the possible advantages associated with using crumb rubber in road surfaces, and whether it intends to launch general-interest initiatives to promote its benefits in terms of environmental protection and road safety?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

The technologies using the waste tyre crumbs in road construction are well known and belong to the state-of-the-art nowadays. In the context of past and ongoing Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, the Commission has been funding projects related to the use of tyre crumbs for pavements, like e.g. DIRECT-MAT ([1]) or PERSUADE ([2]).

Further research and innovation in this area could be supported in the context of the Environment or Transport Themes of Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), which covers these issues. For closer-to-the-market solutions, other EU funded programmes like the LIFE programme ([3]) or CIP eco-innovation market replication projects ([4]) could also be considered, following the usual application procedures, specific to a given programme and call ([5]).

In general, the European Union does not support specific technologies and there is no EU recommendation for the use of available techniques, materials or processes in the road construction but rather to promote the exchange of best practises. Thus, the most proper way to promote the use of that method seems to be via demonstration projects in targeted countries and/or via technological fairs, exhibitions and conferences.

([1]) http://direct-mat.fehrl.org/.
([2]) http://persuade.fehrl.org/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/ecoinnovation.
([5]) For information on the next calls in these themes please see the following links:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000971/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Iraq e pena di morte: il rispetto dei diritti umani e delle garanzie processuali dell'individuo

L'Alto commissario delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti umani, Navi Pillay, ha denunciato che il 19 gennaio, in un solo giorno, è avvenuta in Iraq l'esecuzione di trentaquattro persone, tra le quali due donne. Un numero tragico di esecuzioni, se si pensa all'assoluta mancanza di trasparenza nei processi ed alla vasta gamma di reati, tra i quali anche il danneggiamento della proprietà pubblica, puniti con la pena di morte in Iraq. Di contro, non si registra nessun caso di condannati alla pena capitale ai quali sia stata concessa la grazia.

Alla luce di tali fatti, si riafferma la preoccupazione della comunità internazionale ed europea per l'applicazione della pena di morte, in violazione degli standard internazionali di trasparenza processuale e delle norme sul rispetto dei diritti umani, sollecitando il governo iracheno a provvedere all'immediata moratoria.

Considerata la necessità di rivedere l'intera legislazione relativa alla pena di morte in vigore in Iraq e la necessità che venga emanato un codice penale in linea, dal punto di vista legale ed etico, con il diritto internazionale ed europeo, nel rispetto dei diritti umani, chiedo all'Alto Rappresentante Lady Ashton quali misure intenda intraprendere l'UE per difendere prioritariamente, in Iraq, il diritto del singolo individuo ad un giusto processo.

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

L'UE è vivamente preoccupata dal crescente numero di condanne a morte pronunciate e ratificate dalle autorità irachene negli ultimi mesi. Questo aumento delle esecuzioni è in chiaro contrasto con la tendenza mondiale ad abolire la pena capitale, come dimostra il sempre maggiore sostegno alle risoluzioni dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite che chiedono una moratoria sull'applicazione della pena di morte (62/149, 63/138 e 65/206).

L'UE ha invitato l'Iraq, attraverso iniziative diplomatiche realizzate nel 2011, dichiarazioni locali e, più di recente, una dichiarazione pubblica dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente, a cessare le esecuzioni capitali e ad introdurre una moratoria sull'applicazione della pena di morte al fine di abolirla. Nei paesi che insistono nel mantenere la pena capitale, questa andrebbe applicata esclusivamente ai reati più gravi e sempre nel pieno rispetto del diritto a un giusto processo. Non vi si dovrebbe mai ricorrere nei casi di condanne basate su confessioni che potrebbero essere state estorte ed è indispensabile garantire un effettivo diritto di ricorso in appello.

Come indicato negli orientamenti dell'UE sulla pena di morte adottati nel 1998 (riveduti nel 2008), l'Unione ritiene che l'abolizione della pena di morte sia essenziale per il rispetto della dignità umana e contribuisca al progressivo sviluppo dei diritti dell'uomo. L'UE è dell'avviso che la pena capitale non costituisca un deterrente efficace e renda irreversibile ogni errore giudiziario, inevitabile in qualsiasi sistema giuridico, compreso il nostro. L'Unione europea continuerà a seguire l'evolversi della situazione in Iraq e a cogliere ogni opportunità di esprimere le proprie preoccupazioni alle autorità irachene. Inoltre, l'UE ha fornito, e continuerà a fornire, assistenza nel settore dei diritti umani (attività di sviluppo delle capacità, sostegno alla società civile) e seguirà altresì il piano nazionale per i diritti umani di recente adozione (2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000971/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iraq and the death penalty: respect for human rights and procedural guarantees for the individual

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has reported that on 19 January alone, thirty-four people, including two women, were executed in Iraq. This is an appalling number of executions, considering the complete lack of procedural transparency and the vast range of offences — including damage to public property — which are punishable by death in Iraq. Conversely, there are no recorded cases of capital punishment sentences in which grace has been granted.

These facts reaffirm the fears of the international community and of the European Community surrounding the use of the death penalty, in violation of international standards on procedural transparency and human rights standards, with the Iraqi Government being urged to introduce an immediate moratorium.

Considering the need to revise the entire body of legislation relating to the death penalty currently in force in Iraq and the need for the issuance of a criminal code in line, from a legal and ethical viewpoint, with international and European law in the field of human rights, can the High Representative, Baroness Ashton, state what measures the EU intends to take to urgently defend the right of the individual to a fair trial in Iraq.

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

The EU is deeply concerned at the increasing number of death sentences handed down and ratified by the Iraqi authorities over recent months. This increase in executions clearly contravenes the worldwide trend towards abolition as exemplified by increasing support to the UN General Assembly resolutions calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty (62/149, 63/138 and 65/206).

The EU has called on Iraq, both through diplomatic demarches carried out in 2011, local statements and more recently through a public statement by the HR/VP, to cease carrying out executions and to introduce a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, with a view to its abolition. In countries which insist on retaining the death penalty, it should only be imposed for the most serious crimes, and always with full respect for the right to a fair trial. It should never be used in cases where convictions were based on confessions that may have been coerced, and an effective right to appeal must be ensured

The EU, as outlined in the EU guidelines on the death penalty adopted in 1998 (revised in 2008), considers that the abolition of the death penalty is essential to the respect of human dignity and contributes to the progressive development of human rights. It is the EU's view that death penalty does not serve as an effective deterrent, and that any miscarriage of justice, which is inevitable in any legal system including our own, would be irreversible. The EU will continue to follow developments in Iraq, and take every opportunity to raise its concerns with the Iraqi authorities. Also, the EU has provided assistance and will continue to do so in the field of human rights (capacity building activities, support to civil society). It will also follow the recently adopted National Human Rights Plan (2011).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000972/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Traffico di organi e violenze nel Sinai

Sono ancora numerose le richieste di aiuto e, di conseguenza, gli appelli da parte delle associazioni per fermare le violenze in corso nel Sinai. Al momento centinaia di profughi eritrei sono ancora nelle mani dei predoni. Le vittime parlano di continui maltrattamenti, di privazioni di cibo, di violenze e abusi sessuali. I profughi catturati vengono continuamente torturati con diverse metodologie, ad esempio scariche elettriche e bruciature con svariati strumenti.

Purtroppo, molto spesso le persone in fuga da Sudan, Egitto, Libia, Etiopia o Eritrea scompaiono nel nulla. I profughi sono vittime del traffico di esseri umani che ha raggiunto numeri spaventosi negli ultimi anni. Il mercato illegale di organi, infatti, è molto fiorente nell'Africa settentrionale e in Medio Oriente.

Considerato l'impegno di ONG e Organizzazioni internazionali per combattere il traffico di esseri umani e di organi, può dire l'Alto Rappresentante, Lady Ashton, quali sono le misure previste dall'Unione europea per sradicare questo atroce fenomeno e bloccare le frequenti violenze nelle zone di frontiera e di passaggio dei profughi?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2012)

L'Unione europea segue la questione molto attentamente attraverso la delegazione del Cairo, che mantiene contatti regolari con i ministeri egiziani degli Affari Esteri e dell'Interno e con il Consiglio dei diritti umani dell'ONU. Finora i progressi delle autorità egiziane sono stati limitati. Il governo di Al Ganzouri ha affermato che la questione del Sinai è una priorità strategica che merita una maggiore attenzione. Ciò alimenta qualche speranza che la lotta alla criminalità organizzata nella regione del Sinai venga intensificata e che le autorità egiziane s'impegnino maggiormente nell'affrontare il problema dei rifugiati tenuti in ostaggio dai trafficanti di esseri umani in quella regione e quello del commercio di organi. L'UE è pronta a sostenere le autorità egiziane in questo sforzo.

L'Unione continuerà a esortare le autorità egiziane ad adottare misure adeguate contro la tratta degli esseri umani e ad assicurare la tutela dei diritti fondamentali dei migranti e dei rifugiati che sono sotto la loro responsabilità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000972/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Organ trafficking and violence in Sinai

There are still many requests for assistance and, consequently, appeals being made by various organisations for an end to the ongoing violence in Sinai. Hundreds of Eritrean refugees are currently in the hands of smugglers. The victims speak of constant ill-treatment, deprival of food, and violence and sexual abuse. The captive refugees are repeatedly tortured in different ways, including electric shocks and branding with various implements.

Unfortunately, those fleeing from Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia or Eritrea often disappear without trace. Refugees become victims of human trafficking, which in recent years has reached frightening proportions. In fact, the black market in organs is flourishing in north Africa and the Middle East.

Given the commitment on the part of NGOs and international organisations to fighting human and organ trafficking, can High Representative Lady Ashton state what measures the EU envisages with a view to eradicating these heinous practices and putting an end to this wave of violence affecting the border areas and the routes taken by refugees?

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

The EU is following this issue very closely through its delegation in Cairo which keeps regular contacts with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and UN Human Rights Council. Progress by the Egyptian authorities has been limited so far. The Al Ganzoury government indicated that the Sinai is a strategic priority which should receive greater attention. This raises some hope that the fight against organised crime will be intensified in the Sinai region and that the Egyptian authorities will become more committed to address the issues of refugees held hostages by Human traffickers in the Sinai and of organ trade. The EU stands ready to support the Egyptian authorities in this endeavour.

The EU will continue to urge the Egyptian authorities to take appropriate measures against human trafficking and to ensure the protection of the fundamental rights of the migrants and refugees under their responsibility.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000973/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μειωμένοι ναύλοι στην ακτοπλοΐα

Εάν η πολιτεία προχωρούσε στην πλήρη απελευθέρωση των εσωτερικών θαλάσσιων γραμμών, μείωνε τον ΦΠΑ σε επιβάτες και εμπορεύματα και προσάρμοζε το ισχύον θεσμικό πλαίσιο στον κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 3577/1992, τότε το επιβατικό κοινό των ακτοπλοϊκών συγκοινωνιών θα μπορούσε να επωφελείται μειωμένων ναύλων έως και κατά 20 %, σύμφωνα με τα πορίσματα της έρευνας «Ακτοπλοϊκό κόστος και δημόσιο όφελος» που πραγματοποιήθηκε από το Ναυτικό Επιμελητήριο Ελλάδας.

Σύμφωνα με άρθρο της εφημερίδας «Καθημερινή», η άμεση μείωση του ΦΠΑ των επιβατών θα προσφέρει περιθώριο μείωσης του εισιτηρίου κατά 13 % ενώ η κατάργηση των μη ανταποδοτικών τελών μπορεί να συμβάλει στη μείωση της τιμής του ναύλου με επιπλέον 7 %, δηλαδή συνολικά 20 %. Η κατά 20 % μείωση του εισιτηρίου σημαίνει κατά 60 εκατομμύρια ευρώ φθηνότερη πρόσβαση στα Ελληνικά νησιά, με το μέσο εισιτήριο στα 20 ευρώ.

Επίσης, η εφαρμογή της Σύμβασης STCW και του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) 3577/1992 θα έχει σαν αποτέλεσμα τη μείωση του κόστους επάνδρωσης κατά 33-55 %, με αποτέλεσμα τη μείωση των εισιτήριων από περίπου 11 % στα ταχύπλοα έως 18 % στα συμβατικά πλοία. Όλα αυτά θα οδηγήσουν σε αύξηση της προσέλευσης και της τουριστικής κίνησης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σκοπεύει να παροτρύνει την Ελλάδα να εφαρμόσει τον κοινοτικό κανονισμό 3577/92 και να επιτρέψει την πλήρη απελευθέρωση των εσωτερικών θαλάσσιων γραμμών;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή λαμβάνει υπόψη τις πηγές πληροφοριών που αναφέρονται από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, δεν είναι, ωστόσο, σε θέση να σχολιάσει ενδελεχέστερα τα δημοσιεύματα του Τύπου και τις έρευνες που επικαλείται.

Η Επιτροπή επισημαίνει ότι το 2003 κίνησε διαδικασία παράβασης κατά της Ελλάδας για μη συμμόρφωση με τον κανονισμό (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 3577/92, της 7ης Δεκεμβρίου 1992, για την εφαρμογή της αρχής της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας των υπηρεσιών στις θαλάσσιες μεταφορές στο εσωτερικό των κρατών μελών (θαλάσσιες ενδομεταφορές — καμποτάζ) ([1]). Στο πλαίσιο αυτής της διαδικασίας, οι ελληνικές αρχές έχουν επιφέρει διάφορες αλλαγές στην οικεία νομοθεσία που διέπει τις θαλάσσιες ενδομεταφορές. Οι αλλαγές αυτές επέτρεψαν στην Επιτροπή να συμπεράνει ότι η Ελλάδα έχει ευθυγραμμίσει τη νομοθεσία της με τις απαιτήσεις του κανονισμού (ΕΟΚ) αριθ. 3577/92 και, τον Νοέμβριο του 2011, να θέσει στο αρχείο τη διαδικασία παράβασης.

([1]) ΕΕ L 364 της 12.12.1992, σ. 7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000973/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Reduced ferry fares

According to the findings of the survey 'Ferry costs and public benefit' conducted by the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping, if the State proceeded fully to deregulate domestic shipping lines, reduced VAT for passengers and goods and bought its current institutional framework into line with Regulation (EC) No 3577/1992, passenger fares on ferries could be reduced by as much as 20 %.

According to an article in the *Kathimerini* newspaper, immediate reduction of VAT for passengers would allow a 13 % fare reduction; while the abolition of unremunerative charges could help reduce fares by an additional 7 %, a total saving of 20 %., which would mean a reduction of EUR 60 million for access to the Greek islands, the average fare being EUR 20.

Furthermore, implementation of the STCW Convention and Regulation (EC) 3577/1992 will result in reducing staffing costs by 33-55 %, resulting in an approximate fare reduction of between 11 % on high-speed vessels and 18 % on conventional ships. All this will lead to increased tourist traffic.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to urge Greece to implement EU Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 and to allow full deregulation of the domestic shipping lines?

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

The Commission takes note of the information sources referred to by the Honourable Member, however, it is not in a position to comment more in detail on the quoted press articles and surveys.

The Commission would like to note that in 2003 it initiated an infringement procedure against Greece for non-compliance with Council Regulation (CEE) No°3577/92 of 7 December 1992 applying the principle of freedom to provide services to maritime transport within Member States (maritime cabotage) ([1]). In the framework of this procedure the Greek authorities have introduced several amendments to their laws governing maritime cabotage. Those changes allowed the Commission to conclude that Greece has aligned its legislation with the requirements of Regulation (CEE) No 3577/92 and close the infringement procedure in November 2011.

([1]) OJ L 364, 12.12.1992, p. 7.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000974/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δικαστικό σύστημα στη Τουρκία

Ολοκληρώθηκε στη Τουρκία η δίκη των κατηγορουμένων για τη δολοφονία του Αρμένιου δημοσιογράφου, Χραντ Ντιγκ το 2007. Σύμφωνα με άρθρο του Economist, η οικογένεια του και οι δικηγόροι έμειναν άφωνοι. Ο δικαστής απάλλαξε και τους 19 κατηγορούμενους για συμμετοχή σε «ένοπλη τρομοκρατική οργάνωση». Η δικηγόρος της οικογένειας περιέγραψε τη δίκη ως «κωμωδία από την αρχή ως το τέλος».

Το αποτέλεσμα της δίκης αυτής εγείρει σημαντικά ζητήματα για την απονομή της δικαιοσύνης στην Τουρκία καθώς ακόμα και οι σύμμαχοι της Τουρκίας ανησυχούν για το δικαστικό της σύστημα. Σε έκθεση του, ο επίτροπος ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης Τόμας Χάμαρμπεργκ, κατακεραυνώνει τους Τούρκους δικαστές και εισαγγελείς οι οποίοι δίνουν προτεραιότητα στη προστασία του κράτους έναντι της προστασίας των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων.

Μετά και από αυτή την εξέλιξη ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σκοπεύει να πάρει θέση για την έκβαση αυτής της δίκης;

— Σε τι ενέργειες σκοπεύει να προβεί προκειμένου να παροτρύνει μία χώρα υποψήφια για ένταξη στην ΕΕ, όπως η Τουρκία, να αναμορφώσει το δικαστικό της σύστημα έτσι ώστε να ανταποκρίνεται στα Ευρωπαϊκά δεδομένα;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Μαρτίου 2012)

Μετά από την έκδοση της απόφασης στην οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, η Επιτροπή υπενθύμισε την απόφαση του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων (ΕΔΑΔ) του 2010, σύμφωνα με την οποία η Τουρκία απέτυχε να διεξαγάγει αποτελεσματικές έρευνες για τη δολοφονία του Χραντ Ντινκ, και ως εκ τούτου δεν εξασφάλισε το δικαίωμά του στη ζωή.

Όλα τα ενεχόμενα μέρη πρέπει να λογοδοτήσουν στη δικαιοσύνη ενώ πρέπει να διεξαχθούν περαιτέρω δικαστικές έρευνες όσον αφορά τη συμμετοχή υψηλόβαθμων αξιωματούχων. Είναι σημαντικό για την Τουρκία να διορθώσει τις συστημικές αδυναμίες του συστήματός απονομής δικαιοσύνης, τις οποίες κατέδειξε η εν λόγω απόφαση του ΕΔΑΔ. Η πλήρης εκτέλεση της απόφασης του ΕΔΑΔ είναι καθοριστικής σημασίας για την Τουρκία προκειμένου να καταπολεμήσει την ατιμωρησία.

Η Επιτροπή είναι σε στενή επαφή με τις τουρκικές αρχές για να τις ενθαρρύνει και να τους παρέχει συμβουλές για περαιτέρω απαραίτητες μεταρρυθμίσεις στον δικαστικό τομέα που θα ευθυγραμμίσουν πλήρως την τουρκική νομοθεσία και δικαστική πρακτική με τα ευρωπαϊκά πρότυπα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000974/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: The judicial system in Turkey

A verdict has been reached in Turkey in the trial of the persons accused of the murder of the Armenian journalist, Hrant Dink, in 2007. According to an article in *The Economist*, his family and lawyers are speechless. The judge acquitted the 19 accused of participation in an 'armed terrorist organisation'. The family's lawyers described the verdict as a 'comedy from start to finish'.

This verdict raises serious questions regarding the administration of justice in Turkey and even the country's allies are worried about its legal system. In his report, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, condemns Turkish judges and prosecutors for giving precedence to the protection of the State over the protection of human rights.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission intend to make its position known regarding the outcome of this trial?

— Which action does it intend to take to encourage a candidate for accession to the EU, such as Turkey, to bring its legal system into line with European standards?

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

Following the pronunciation of the verdict referred to by the Honourable Member, the Commission has recalled the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) of 2010 which found that Turkey had failed to conduct effective investigations into the murder of Hrant Dink, thus not guaranteeing his right to life.

All involved need to be held accountable before the law; further judicial investigations into the implication of high ranking officials need to be conducted. It is important for Turkey to address the systemic shortcomings in its justice system as made evident in this ECtHR judgment. Full execution of the ECtHR judgment is crucial for Turkey in order to fight impunity.

The Commission is in close contact with the Turkish authorities in order to encourage and advise on further necessary judicial reforms to bring Turkish legislation and judicial practice fully in line with European standards.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000975/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Επιτόκιο δανείων για τους φοιτητές μεταπτυχιακού επιπέδου που επιθυμούν να φοιτήσουν εν μέρει ή εξ ολοκλήρου στο εξωτερικό

Η πρωτοβουλία της Επιτροπής για την καθιέρωση οικονομικών διευκολύνσεων σε μεταπτυχιακούς φοιτητές είναι σημαντική και σε κάθε περίπτωση ευπρόσδεκτη. Καθώς η Επιτροπή έχει αναφέρει πως τα επιτόκια των δανείων αυτών θα είναι σε χαμηλότερα επίπεδα από τα αντίστοιχα της αγοράς, μπορεί να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει σήμερα εκτιμήσεις σχετικά με το ύψος του επιτοκίου των δανείων αυτών;

— Υπάρχει πρόβλεψη για τους πλέον αδύναμους οικονομικά φοιτητές, ώστε να έχουν και εκείνοι πρόσβαση στα εν λόγω δάνεια;

Απάντηση της κας Βασιλείου εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η εγγύηση για τα φοιτητικά δάνεια «Erasmus Masters» προβλέπεται να αρχίσει να ισχύει το 2014 στο πλαίσιο του νέου προγράμματος «Erasmus για όλους» (2014-2020). Πρωταρχικός στόχος της πρωτοβουλίας είναι να δοθεί η δυνατότητα πρόσβασης σε προσιτά δάνεια σε όλους τους φοιτητές που επιθυμούν να σπουδάσουν στο εξωτερικό για ένα πλήρες πρόγραμμα σπουδών μεταπτυχιακού επιπέδου (Masters), κάτι το οποίο έχει χαρακτηριστεί ως μη επαρκές στη σημερινή αγορά.

Τα λεπτομερή στοιχεία της πρωτοβουλίας βρίσκονται ακόμα στο στάδιο της εκπόνησης, μεταξύ άλλων με τη διενέργεια δοκιμών προ αγοράς με χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα. Δεν υπάρχουν προς το παρόν διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες σχετικά με το(τα) επιτόκιο(α). Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος, θα μπορούσε να προβλεφθεί επίσης η επαναχρηματοδότηση μέσω της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων (ΕΤΕ), με το πλεονέκτημα η πρόσβαση σε χαμηλότερου κόστους κεφάλαια να μετακυλίεται στους δανειολήπτες φοιτητές.

Το πρόγραμμα Erasmus Masters θα συμβάλει ώστε να διαμορφωθούν ισότιμες συνθήκες για όλους τους φοιτητές που ενδιαφέρονται να πραγματοποιήσουν μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές στο εξωτερικό, συμπεριλαμβανομένων όσων διαθέτουν λιγότερα οικονομικά μέσα, διότι δεν θα απαιτεί ρητώς καμία ασφάλεια ή εγγύηση των γονέων. Αυτό θα συνδυαστεί με «προσιτούς οικονομικά» μηχανισμούς εξόφλησης, κάτι που αποτελεί πρόβλημα για τους φοιτητές από χαμηλότερα κοινωνικοοικονομικά στρώματα. Προβλέπονται εγγυήσεις για να διασφαλίζεται η προστασία των φοιτητών και να μεγιστοποιείται η ικανότητά τους να εξοφλήσουν το δάνειο, συμπεριλαμβανομένης μιας «περιόδου χάριτος» — σύμφωνα με την οποία η εξόφληση του δανείου μπορεί να αρχίσει μόνο μετά την ολοκλήρωση των σπουδών και αφού ο φοιτητής είχε τη δυνατότητα να βρει μια θέση εργασίας — καθώς και της «διακοπής των πληρωμών», σύμφωνα με την οποία οι φοιτητές μπορούν να παγώσουν την εξόφληση του δανείου, παραδείγματος χάριν σε περίπτωση ανεργίας ή μητρότητας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000975/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Loan interest rates for postgraduate students wishing to study in part or entirely abroad

The Commission's financing initiative for postgraduate students is an important and undeniably welcome development. The Commission has indicated moreover that these loans will be made available at below-market interest rates.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission have any idea what the interest rate on these loans will be?

— Is provision being made for less affluent students to have access to these loans?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(16 March 2012)

The 'Erasmus Masters' student loan guarantee is planned to be in place in 2014 as part of the new Erasmus for All programme (2014-2020). The overriding aim of the initiative is to open up access to affordable lending for students wishing to study abroad for a full programme at Masters level, something which has been identified as insufficient in the current market.

The details of the initiative are still being developed, including via pre-market testing with financial institutions. No information is currently available on the interest rate(s). As part of the scheme, re-financing could also be made available via the European Investment Bank (EIB), with the advantage of access to lower cost capital being passed on to student borrowers.

Erasmus Masters will help to level the playing field for all students interested in a Masters abroad, including less affluent ones, by explicitly not requiring either collateral or a parental guarantee. This will be combined with 'affordable' repayment mechanisms, an issue for students from lower socio economic backgrounds. Safeguards are planned to ensure protection for students and to maximise their ability to repay the loan, including a 'grace period' — whereby loan repayments only begin after studies are completed and the student has had a chance to find a job — and 'payment holidays' whereby students can freeze repayments for example in the case of unemployment or maternity.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000976/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πολιτισμός και διαρθρωτικά ταμεία στην Ελλάδα

Στον πολυετή δημοσιονομικό προγραμματισμό 2007-2013 έχουν προβλεφθεί περίπου 6 δις ευρώ για την εκπόνηση προγραμμάτων που αφορούν τον πολιτισμό, ποσό που αντιπροσωπεύει το 1,7 % του συνολικού προϋπολογισμού.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με το ύψος των πόρων που έχουν διατεθεί στην Ελλάδα και έχει απορροφήσει η χώρα μέχρι σήμερα από τις συγκεκριμένες προβλέψεις για τον πολιτισμό;

Σε σύγκριση με τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη κρίνεται ικανοποιητική η πορεία απορρόφησης των συγκεκριμένων κοινοτικών κονδυλίων από την Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Μαρτίου 2012)

Συνολικά, προβλέπεται ένα κονδύλιο 483 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για πολιτιστικές παρεμβάσεις στην Ελλάδα. Το ποσό αυτό αντιστοιχεί στο 2,4 % του συνολικού κονδυλίου για την Ελλάδα και μπορεί να κατανεμηθεί περαιτέρω ως εξής: 284 εκατομμύρια ευρώ για την προστασία και τη διατήρηση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς· 160 εκατομμύρια ευρώ για την ανάπτυξη της πολιτιστικής υποδομής· και 39 εκατομμύρια ευρώ για τη βελτίωση πολιτιστικών υπηρεσιών. Αντιθέτως, το μέσο κονδύλιο που προβλέπεται για την Ένωση είναι 1,6 % για πολιτιστικές παρεμβάσεις.

Κατά την περίοδο 2007-2013, οι πολιτιστικές παρεμβάσεις υλοποιούνται μέσω των 13 ελληνικών περιφερειακών προγραμμάτων. Σύμφωνα με τις πληροφορίες που παρείχαν οι ελληνικές αρχές επιτεύχθηκαν τα ακόλουθα ποσοστά μέχρι σήμερα:

Επιλεγμένα σχέδια: 124 %· ανατεθέντα σχέδια: 78 %· απορρόφηση: 20 %.

Ενδεικτικά, η απορρόφηση των κονδυλίων των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων (ΕΤΠΑ, Ταμείο Συνοχής και ΕΚΤ) από την Ελλάδα σήμερα αντιστοιχεί στο 41 %, ποσοστό που είναι υψηλότερο του μέσου όρου του 35 % της ΕΕ.

Όσον αφορά το πρόγραμμα «Πολιτισμός», δεν υπάρχουν εθνικά κονδύλια, επειδή τα σχέδια επιλέχθηκαν με βάση την ποιότητά τους. Για την περίοδο 2007-2013, χορηγήθηκε συνολικό ποσό 3 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ για σχέδια σε συνεργασία με ηγετική οργάνωση στην Ελλάδα. Ωστόσο, χρειάζεται προσοχή στην ερμηνεία του ποσού αυτού επειδή αντανακλά μόνο τον προϋπολογισμό που χορηγήθηκε στον επικεφαλής του σχεδίου, ενώ οι συμμετέχοντες στην οργάνωση των σχεδίων που υποστηρίζονται από το πρόγραμμα «πολιτισμός» επωφελούνται επίσης έμμεσα από τα χορηγούμενα ποσά.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000976/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Culture and Structural Funds in Greece

The 2007-2013 multiannual financial framework provides for approximately EUR 6 billion, representing 1.7 % of the total budget, for the development of programmes on culture.

In view of this:

Does the Commission have information on the amounts allocated to Greece and its take-up of funding specifically earmarked for culture?

Compared with the other Member States, is the take-up by Greece of EU funding in this area deemed satisfactory?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

A total of EUR 483 million of Structural Funds has been allocated for cultural interventions in Greece. This figure represents 2.4 % of the total allocation to Greece and can be further broken down as follows: EUR 284 million for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage; EUR 160 million for the development of cultural infrastructure; and EUR 39 million to improve cultural services. This contrasts with the average allocation across the Union of 1.6 % for cultural interventions.

During the 2007-2013 period, the cultural interventions are implemented through the 13 Greek regional programmes. According to the information received from the Greek authorities the following figures have been reached so far: selected projects: 124 %; contracted projects: 78 %; absorption: 20 %.

Indicatively, the absorption of Structural Funds (ERDF, Cohesion Fund and ESF) by Greece currently stands at 41 %, which is above the EU average of 35 %.

As to the Culture programme, there are no national allocations since projects are only selected on the basis of their quality. For the period 2007-2013, a total amount of EUR 3 million has been granted to projects with a Greek leading organisation. However, some caution needs to be exercised in interpreting this figure as it only reflects the budget awarded to the project leader, whereas the co-organisers of Culture-supported projects also benefit indirectly from the granted amounts.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000977/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Πορεία εξάπλωσης δικτύου γρήγορων διαδικτυακών ταχυτήτων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με το ψηφιακό θεματολόγιο για την Ευρώπη, θα πρέπει έως το 2013 να έχει δημιουργηθεί μία ενιαία ψηφιακή αγορά που θα βασίζεται σε γρήγορες και πολύ γρήγορες ταχύτητες διαδικτύου η πρόσβαση των οποίων θα είναι εφικτή σε όλους τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες. Στην Ελλάδα, ωστόσο, παρατηρούνται καθυστερήσεις.

— Εκτιμά η Επιτροπή ότι η Ελλάδα θα επιτύχει τον στόχο που τίθεται από το ψηφιακό θεματολόγιο; Πώς αξιολογεί την πρόοδο των εργασιών του προγράμματος ΣΥΖΕΥΞΗΣ ΙΙ;

— Θεωρεί ότι ο υψηλός συντελεστής φορολόγησης που επιβάλλεται στους χρήστες — και τούτο σε αντίθεση με αυτό που ισχύσει σε άλλα κράτη μέλη — δημιουργεί πρόσθετο πρόβλημα στην επίτευξη των συγκεκριμένων στόχων;

Απάντηση της κας Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Μαρτίου 2012)

Το Ψηφιακό θεματολόγιο για την Ευρώπη έχει θέσει ως στόχο ότι το 2013 πρέπει όλοι οι Ευρωπαίοι να έχουν πρόσβαση σε βασικές ευρυζωνικές υπηρεσίες.

Το Δεκέμβριο του 2010, η Ελλάδα είχε ευρυζωνική κάλυψη 91,2 % έναντι μέσου όρου 95,3 % για την ΕΕ των 27. Ωστόσο, η εφαρμογή του έργου για την ευρυζωνικότητα στην ύπαιθρο, καθώς και άλλων έργων σε εξέλιξη, όπως αυτό για τα δίκτυα μητροπολιτικών περιοχών, εκτιμάται ότι θα συμβάλει σημαντικά στην επίτευξη ευρυζωνικής κάλυψης στην ΕΕ κατά 100 %.

Αναμένεται ότι το έργο «Σύζευξις ΙΙ» θα συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από τα επιχειρησιακά προγραμμάτων «Ψηφιακή σύγκλιση» και «Διοικητική μεταρρύθμιση». Στόχος είναι η ανάπτυξη νέων ευρυζωνικών υποδομών μέσω επέκτασης ενός προηγούμενου έργου που είχε συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης («Σύζευξις Ι»), με χρήση οπτικών ινών για τη σύνδεση συνολικά 31 500 σημείων (δημόσια κτίρια) σε όλη την Ελλάδα, καθώς επίσης και για την ενίσχυση των τηλεπικοινωνιακών υπηρεσιών (ενδεικτικός προϋπολογισμός: 150 εκατ. ευρώ). Η υλοποίηση αυτού του έργου φαίνεται τώρα πιθανότερη, δεδομένου ότι η πρόσκληση υποβολής προσφορών αναμένεται να έχει ολοκληρωθεί έως το τέλος Μαρτίου του 2012.

Η Ελλάδα έχει επιβάλλει υψηλό επίπεδο ΦΠΑ (23 %), ενώ από τον Απρίλιο του 2010 υφίσταται επίσης ειδικός φόρος για τους χρήστες αποκλειστικά φωνητικών υπηρεσιών κινητής τηλεφωνίας και υπηρεσιών φωνής/δεδομένων, εξαιρουμένων των υπηρεσιών μόνο δεδομένων. Ο ειδικός αυτός φόρος καθιστά πράγματι τις κινητές επικοινωνίες δαπανηρότερες για τους χρήστες στην Ελλάδα. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει, ωστόσο, κανένα αποδεικτικό στοιχείο ως προς τις επιπτώσεις που αυτό το υψηλότερο κόστος μπορεί να έχει στην επίτευξη των στόχων του Ψηφιακού θεματολογίου για την Ευρώπη, καθώς και όσον αφορά την περιορισμένη αφομοίωση των κινητών ευρυζωνικών επικοινωνιών.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000977/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Progress in establishing the high-speed Internet network in Greece

According to the Digital Agenda for Europe, a single digital marketplace, based on fast and very fast Internet connections, accessible by all European citizens, should have been created by 2013. Greece, however, appears to be falling behind.

— Does the Commission believe that Greece will achieve the target set by the Digital Agenda? How does it evaluate the progress of the SYZEFXIS II project?

— Does it believe that the high tax rate imposed on users — in contrast to that applied in other Member States — is creating an additional problem in achieving these objectives?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(12 March 2012)

The Digital Agenda for Europe has set the target that all Europeans should have access to basic broadband by 2013.

In December 2010 Greece had 91.2 % of broadband coverage against an EU-27 average of 95.3 %. However, the implementation of the Rural Broadband Project, and other projects in the pipeline such as the one on Metropolitan Areas Networks should significantly contribute towards the achievement of the EU 100 % broadband coverage.

It is expected that the project 'Syzefxis II' will be co-financed by the Operational Programmes 'Digital Convergence' and 'Administrative Reform'. The goal is the development of new broadband infrastructure through the extension of a previous European Regional Development Fund-co-funded project ('Syzefxis I') by the use of optical fibre to connect a total of 31,500 points (public buildings) throughout Greece as well as to enhance telecommunication services (indicative budget: EUR 150 million). The implementation of this project now seems to be more likely with the call for tenders expected to close by end March 2012.

Greece imposes high levels of VAT (23 %) and there is also a specific tax which is applicable to users of voice only and voice/data mobile services, but excludes data only services since April 2010. This special tax indeed renders mobile communications more expensive for users in Greece. The Commission, however, has no evidence as to the impact that this higher costs may have on achieving the Digital Agenda for Europe targets and with respect to low mobile broadband take-up.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000978/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Στόχος για πρόσβαση όλων σε γρήγορες συνδέσεις διαδικτύου

Σύμφωνα με το ψηφιακό θεματολόγιο για την Ευρώπη, έως το 2013 θα πρέπει να έχει δημιουργηθεί μία ενιαία ψηφιακή αγορά που θα βασίζεται σε γρήγορες και πολύ γρήγορες ταχύτητες διαδικτύου, η πρόσβαση των οποίων θα είναι εφικτή σε όλους τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες. Σημειώνεται, ωστόσο, ότι ο στόχος αυτός βασίζεται στη προϋπόθεση ότι τα κράτη μέλη θα απορροφήσουν τους κοινοτικούς πόρους που προσφέρονται από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία για αυτόν τον σκοπό. Καθώς, ωστόσο, η οικονομική κρίση έχει καταστήσει σε πολλά κράτη μέλη δύσκολη την άμεση καταβολή της εθνικής συμμετοχής για την προώθηση των σχετικών έργων, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Εκτιμάει ότι σε κράτη μέλη που πλήττονται από την οικονομική κρίση υπάρχει κίνδυνος να παρατηρηθεί χρονική απόκλιση από το συγκεκριμένο στόχο;

— Κρίνεται ικανοποιητική η μέχρι σήμερα πρόοδος στη διάδοση του δικτύου υψηλών ταχυτήτων στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση της κας Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η ανακοίνωση για την ευρωπαϊκή ευρυζωνικότητα ([1]), στην οποία εντοπίζεται σειρά μέτρων τα οποία είναι εφαρμοστέα στα κράτη μέλη αναφορικά με τη διευκόλυνση της πρακτικής εγκατάστασης ταχέος και εξαιρετικά ταχέος διαδικτύου, υιοθετεί πλήρως τους στόχους ευρυζωνικότητας που τάχθηκαν από το ψηφιακό θεματολόγιο για την Ευρώπη ([2]) (βασικές ευρυζωνικές υπηρεσίες για κάθε ευρωπαίο μέχρι το 2013 και, μέχρι το 2020, ευρυζωνικότητα υψηλότερης ταχύτητας με παροχή 30 Mbps για κάθε ευρωπαίο, όπου ποσοστό 30 % των νοικοκυριών είναι συνδρομητές διαδικτυακών συνδέσεων παροχής άνω των 100 Mbps). Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη του γεγονότος ότι η επίτευξη των ανωτέρω φιλόδοξων στόχων μπορεί να αντιπροσωπεύει ιδιαίτερη πρόκληση για ορισμένα κράτη μέλη. Η Επιτροπή πρότεινε επομένως να αυξηθεί η αποτελεσματικότητα των πολιτικών συνοχής και αγροτικής ανάπτυξης στο επόμενο πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο (ΠΔΠ), επιβάλλοντας κατά πρώτο ενισχυμένους όρους δαπανών στη συνοχή, και κατά δεύτερο προτείνοντας νέο μέσο που στηρίζει ανοικτά και οικονομικώς ανεκτά δίκτυα υψηλής ταχύτητας και επενδύσεις σε επιγραμμικές δικτυωμένες υπηρεσίες. Το προτεινόμενο μέσο «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη» ([3]) (ΜΣΕ) περιλαμβάνει ποσό 9,2 δις ευρώ για ΤΠΕ, από τα οποία προγραμματίζεται να διατεθεί ποσό περίπου 7 δις ευρώ για επενδύσεις σε δίκτυα υψηλής ταχύτητας. Το ΜΣΕ προσφέρει την αναγκαία ευελιξία μεταχείρισης ευρυζωνικών έργων διαφορετικού βαθμού οικονομικής βιωσιμότητας από χρηματοδοτικά μέσα, καθώς και επιχορηγήσεις. Η Επιτροπή προσδοκά υψηλό επίπεδο συνέργειας με τα ταμεία συνοχής, τα ταμεία αγροτικής ανάπτυξης και τις εθνικές/περιφερειακές/τοπικές χρηματοδοτικές πρωτοβουλίες. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή έχει την πρόθεση να δημοσιεύσει προσεχώς υπηρεσιακό έγγραφο εργασίας στο οποίο εκτίθεται συνοπτικά η πρόοδος των κρατών μελών στην ανάπτυξη και κατάρτιση επιχειρησιακών εθνικών σχεδίων ευρυζωνικότητας μέχρι το 2012, και ειδικότερα σε σχέση με την επίτευξη των στόχων του ψηφιακού θεματολογίου.

([1]) ΕΕ COM: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=6594&utm_campaign=isp&utm_medium=rss&utm_source=newsroom&utm_content=tpa-46.
([2]) ΨΘΕ: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/index_en.htm.
([3]) ΜΣΕ: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/item-detail-dae.cfm?item_id=7430&language=default.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000978/12
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Access for all to fast Internet connections

According to the Digital Agenda for Europe, by 2013 a single digital market ought to have been created, based on high-speed and very high-speed Internet connections to which all European citizens will have access. This, however, depends on the take-up by Member States of EU structural fund appropriations for this purpose. In addition, the economic crisis has made it hard for many Member States to pay direct national contributions to carry out the necessary works.

In view of this:

— Does the Commission consider that Member States badly affected by the economic crisis are in danger of falling behind in this aspect?

— Does it consider progress to date in establishing high-speed Internet connections in the EU to be satisfactory?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2012)

The European Broadband Communication ([1]), which identifies a set of measures applicable to member states with respect to facilitating the deployment of fast and ultra-fast Internet, fully embraces the broadband targets set by the Digital Agenda for Europe ([2]) (basic broadband for all Europeans by 2013 and, by 2020, higher speed broadband with 30 Mbps for all Europeans with 30 % of households subscribing to Internet connections above 100 Mbps). The Commission is aware of the fact that achieving these ambitious targets may be particularly challenging for some member states. The Commission has therefore proposed to augment the effectiveness of Cohesion and Rural Development Policies in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MAFF), firstly by imposing reinforced Cohesion spending conditionalities, and secondly by proposing a new instrument supporting open and affordable high speed networks and investments in online networked services. The proposed Connecting Europe Facility ([3]) (CEF) includes EUR 9.2 billion for ICT, of which it is planned to earmark c. EUR 7 billion for investment in high speed networks. The CEF provides the necessary flexibility to address broadband projects of different degrees of financial viability by financial instruments as well as by grants. The Commission expects a high level of synergy with cohesion funds, rural development funds and national/regional/local funding initiatives. Furthermore, the Commission intends to publish shortly a staff working paper summarising the progress of member states in developing and making operational national broadband plans by 2012 and, more specifically with respect to meeting the Digital Agenda targets.

([1]) BB COM: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=6594&utm_campaign=isp&utm_medium=rss&utm_source=newsroom&utm_content=tpa-46.
([2]) DAE: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/index_en.htm
([3]) CEF: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/item-detail-dae.cfm?item_id=7430&language=default.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000979/12
aan de Commissie
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(3 februari 2012)

Betreft: Grensarbeid — Hervormingen 30 %-regeling Nederland — Vervolg

Voor een aantal specifieke banen, recruteert Nederland actief hoogopgeleide werknemers in het buitenland (o.a. Vlaanderen). Een belangrijk instrument om dergelijke grensarbeiders aan te trekken, is de zogenaamde 30 %-regeling voor extraterritoriale werknemers: dit fiscaal voordeel houdt in dat de betrokken werknemers gedurende 10 jaar een belastingvrije vergoeding ontvangen van 30 % van hun brutoloon. In mijn vraag E-009620/2011 kaartte ik reeds de problematiek aan van de 30 %-hervorming voor grensarbeiders in Nederland. De Commissie antwoordde toen: *„De Commissie is op de hoogte van het Nederlandse voornemen om bepaalde migrerende werknemers van de regeling uit te sluiten. Aangezien hiervoor nog geen concreet voorstel is goedgekeurd, vindt de Commissie het nog te vroeg om te bepalen of de hervorming al dan niet in overeenstemming zou zijn met de EU-wetgeving."*

Intussen werd eind december 2011 effectief beslist om deze 30 %-regeling niet langer toe te passen voor grensarbeiders die binnen een straal van 150 km van de Nederlandse grens wonen.

De schrapping gebeurt bovendien met terugwerkende kracht: dit betekent concreet dat alle werknemers die de 30 %-regeling toegekend kregen gedurende de laatste 5 jaar, voortaan niet meer van dit fiscaal voordeel kunnen genieten. In zijn advies van 14 december in zaak W06.11.0500/III, uitte de Nederlandse Raad van State nochtans bedenkingen bij het 150 km-criterium: *„De Afdeling is er echter niet van overtuigd dat het criterium van 150 kilometer geschikt en proportioneel is."*

Nu de beslissing in voege is, graag opnieuw volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Hoe evalueert de Commissie de territoriale beperking van de 150 km-grens? Is deze beperking die een onderscheid maakt op basis van woonplaats en inwoners van België en deels Duitsland uitsluit van de 30 %-regeling, niet in strijd met het Gemeenschapsrecht?

2. Hoe evalueert de Commissie het schrappen van de 30 %-regeling met terugwerkende kracht ten opzichte van het vertrouwensbeginsel?

3. Hoe evalueert de Commissie de overgangsmaatregelen, in het bijzonder voor werknemers die bijna 5 jaar onder het 30 %-systeem vallen? Zijn deze toereikend?

4. Hebben werknemers, die de 30 %-regeling kregen in combinatie met een verlaagd brutoloon, bij het wegvallen van de 30 %-regeling niet automatisch weer recht op hetzelfde brutoloon als hun Nederlandse collega's (art. 7 van Verordening 492/2011)?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(14 maart 2012)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de wijziging van de Nederlandse 30 %-regeling. Momenteel bestudeert zij de verenigbaarheid van de nieuwe bepalingen met het EU-recht en is zij hierover nog in contact met de Nederlandse autoriteiten.

Na haar onderzoek van de door de Nederlandse autoriteiten verstrekte aanvullende informatie zal de Commissie besluiten of naar aanleiding van deze wijziging maatregelen moeten worden genomen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000979/12
to the Commission
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Frontier workers — reform of 30 % rule in the Netherlands — follow-up

For a number of specific jobs, the Netherlands actively recruits highly-trained workers living abroad (including in Flanders). One important instrument used in attracting such frontier workers is the 30 % rule for workers resident outside the country: this tax benefit consists of granting the workers in question a tax-free allowance of 30 % on their gross pay for 10 years. In my Question E-009620/2011, I already raised the issue of changes introduced in the Netherlands to the 30 % rule for frontier workers. The Commission then replied: 'The Commission is aware of Dutch intentions to exclude certain migrant workers from the scheme. As a concrete proposal has not yet been adopted, the Commission considers it as premature to comment whether the reform would be in line with EC law'.

In the meantime, it was indeed decided at the end of December 2011 that this 30 % rule would no longer be applied to frontier workers who live within 150 km of the Dutch border.

In addition, this rule was abolished retroactively: this means in effect that all workers who enjoyed entitlement to this 30 % rule over the past five years would no longer be entitled to it in future. In its opinion of 14 December in Case W06.11.0500/III, however, the Council of State of the Netherlands raised objections to the 150 km criterion. 'The Department is not convinced, however, that the criterion of 150 km is appropriate and proportional.'

Now that the decision has been made, I would like to put the following questions once more to the Commission:

1. What is the Commission's view on restricting the rule's territorial application to 150 km from the border? Does this restriction, which discriminates on the basis of place of residence and excludes residents of Belgium and parts of Germany from the 30 % rule, not conflict with EC law?

2. What is the Commission's view on the abolition of the 30 % rule with retroactive effect in the light of the principle of the protection of legitimate expectations?

3. What is the Commission's view of the transitional measures, in particular for workers who have been entitled to the 30 % system for almost five years? Are these measures adequate?

4. Do not workers who are entitled to the 30 % rule in combination with a reduction in gross pay regain automatically, upon the abolition of the 30 %, the right to the same gross pay as their Dutch colleagues (Article 7 of Regulation 492/2011)?

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

The Commission is aware of the changes which have been made to the Dutch provisions on the 30 % rule. The Commission is currently assessing the compatibility of the new provisions with EC law and are continuing their contacts with the Dutch authorities on this issue.

After assessing the additional information from the Dutch authorities, the Commission will decide whether any follow-up measures will be taken.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000980/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Como poderá Portugal evoluir da fase de austeridade para a fase de crescimento económico, criação de emprego e geração de riqueza

Tendo em conta que:

— Em abril de 2011, o Governo português solicitou ajuda externa com o intuito de obter financiamento para garantir a sustentabilidade das contas públicas e honrar os compromissos assumidos a nível nacional e internacional;

— A Comissão Europeia (CE), o Banco Central Europeu (BCE) e o Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI) acordaram conceder um empréstimo no valor de 78 mil milhões de Euros, sendo 26 mil milhões de Euros oriundos do FMI;

— Durante os últimos meses, o Governo português tem vindo a implementar as medidas acordadas com as instituições internacionais, honrando desta forma os compromissos assumidos em matéria económica e financeira;

— O Ministro das Finanças de Portugal, Vitor Gaspar, destacou como positivo o desempenho das exportações e os progressos alcançados na consolidação orçamental, dado que o défice diminuiu de 9,8 % em 2010 para 4 % em 2011;

— O FMI referiu recentemente que «Portugal fez um ajustamento orçamental significativo em 2011 mas ficou aquém das expectativas». No entanto, vários economistas e políticos internacionais como o Presidente do Governo de Espanha, Mariano Rajoy, e o ex-prémio Nobel da economia, Joseph Stiglitz, têm vindo a defender como extremamente positivos os ajustamentos estruturais que Portugal tem realizado;

— Atualmente, a Comissão Europeia tem vindo a reforçar a ideia de lançar uma agenda para o crescimento e emprego, dinamizando assim a recuperação das economias europeias.

Como é que a Comissão avalia os progressos realizados por Portugal de acordo com o memorando de entendimento assinado entre o Governo nacional e as instituições internacionais?

Quais as políticas públicas que Portugal deve adotar para evoluir da fase de austeridade para a fase de crescimento económico, criação de emprego e geração de riqueza?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2012)

Os objetivos principais do Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal consistem em restaurar a estabilidade macrofinanceira, recuperar a confiança dos mercados e promover o crescimento económico a médio prazo. Para o efeito, o Programa prevê ações relativas à consolidação orçamental, à estabilização do setor financeiro e às reformas estruturais promotoras do crescimento.

A avaliação dos progressos é feita no âmbito de relatórios regulares de conformidade. Ver, por exemplo, o segundo relatório de conformidade relativo a Portugal em:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/op89_en.htm

Os pagamentos previstos para o resto do Programa estão sujeitos à conclusão positiva das verificações trimestrais efetuadas pela Comissão em cooperação com o Fundo Monetário Internacional e com o Banco Central Europeu. A terceira missão de verificação foi concluída com uma avaliação positiva no que respeita às condições impostas em matéria de políticas, abrindo caminho ao pagamento da terceira parcela do empréstimo de 14,9 mil milhões de euros. O terceiro relatório de conformidade deverá ser publicado em breve.

Espera-se que o rigor contínuo na aplicação das políticas consagradas no Programa reponha Portugal numa trajetória de crescimento equilibrado e sustentado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000980/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Possibilities of Portugal evolving from an austerity phase to one of growth, job creation and generation of wealth

Taking into account that:

— in April 2011 the Portuguese Government requested external aid with the objective of obtaining funding to ensure the sustainability of its public accounts and to honour its national and international obligations;

— the Commission, the ECB and the IMF agreed to grant a loan totalling EUR 7.8 billion, of which EUR 2.6 billion would be supplied by the IMF;

— during the last few months, the Portuguese Government has implemented the measures agreed with those international institutions, thereby honouring its economic and financial undertakings;

— the Portuguese Minister of Finance, Vítor Gaspar, has highlighted as positive the performance of exports and the progress achieved in budgetary consolidation, given that the deficit decreased from 9.8 % in 2010 to 4 % in 2011;

— the IMF has recently stated that 'Portugal has made a significant budgetary adjustment in 2011' but described this as falling 'short of initial expectations'; nonetheless, at international level various economists and politicians, including Spain's prime minister Mariano Rajoy and the Nobel economics laureate Joseph Stiglitz, have defended the structural adjustments made by Portugal as extremely positive;

— currently, the Commission has been reinforcing the idea of launching an agenda for growth and jobs, thereby boosting the recovery of Europe's economies,

How does the Commission assess the progress made by Portugal in line with the memorandum of understanding signed by its government and the international institutions?

What public policies should Portugal adopt if it is to evolve from an austerity phase to one of growth, job creation and generation of wealth?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The main objectives of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal are to restore macro-financial stability, regain market confidence and underpin economic growth in the medium term. To this effect, the programme foresees actions regarding budgetary consolidation, stabilisation of the financial sector and growth-enhancing structural reforms.

The assessment of progress is done in the framework of regular compliance reports (see, for instance, the second compliance report at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/op89_en.htm).

The disbursements envisaged over the rest of the programme are subject to the positive conclusion of quarterly reviews done by the Commission in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and in liaison with the European Central Bank. The third review mission has concluded with a positive assessment concerning policy conditionality, paving the way for the disbursement of the third tranche of the loan of EUR 14.9 billion and the third compliance report will be published shortly.

The continuous strict implementation of the policies enshrined in the programme is expected to bring Portugal back to a path of balanced and sustained growth.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000981/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Setores estratégicos de Portugal a longo prazo

Tendo em conta que:

— Em 1990, Michael Porter, no livro «As vantagens competitivas das nações», definiu o conceito de Cluster como uma concentração geográfica de empresas do mesmo setor de atividade que poderão concorrer entre si, mas também partilhar características e objetivos comuns nas mais diversas áreas de negócio (e.g.: tecnologia, internacionalização, inovação);

— Ao longo dos últimos anos, os sucessivos governos de Portugal têm vindo a apostar em determinados setores empresariais, alavancando áreas de especialização no território português;

— Neste âmbito, foram lançadas as Estratégias de Eficiência Coletiva (EEC) com o objetivo de dinamizar o agrupamento de empresas por região (Clusters), criar redes de inovação entre os diversos atores e potencializar a partilha de boas práticas e conhecimento;

— A 17 de julho de 2009, foram assinados os contratos de reconhecimento de 19 EEC — tipologia Clusters (11 Pólos de Competitividade e Tecnologia e 8 Outros Clusters), após um período de quase um ano, em que se procedeu à análise das candidaturas e a diversas interações conducentes à introdução de melhorias nos Programas de Ação. Todos estes projetos são financiados pelos fundos estruturais da Política de Coesão;

— No dia 26 de janeiro de 2011, a Comissão do Desenvolvimento Regional do Parlamento Europeu teve oportunidade de auscultar a opinião do responsável da Comissão Europeia pela missão à Grécia, Horst Reichenbach, referindo que o país deverá apostar na energia solar e no turismo como setores estratégicos para alavancar o crescimento económico;

A Comissão tem alguma estratégia de especialização empresarial a nível europeu que potencialize a afirmação de clusters estratégicos?

Na visão da Comissão, quais são os setores estratégicos em que Portugal deve apostar para ser um país mais competitivo à escala internacional?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(19 de março de 2012)

1. A política de coesão, nomeadamente através do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER), oferece oportunidades de financiamento para apoio das iniciativas de *clusters*.

Ao abrigo do Programa de Competitividade e Inovação, já foi desenvolvido um certo número de instrumentos, como o Observatório Europeu de *Cluster* ([1]) para promoção de atividades de identificação de *clusters*, a European Cluster Excellence Initiative, para promover a excelência na gestão de *clusters*, e a European Cluster Collaboration Platform, uma plataforma de colaboração europeia para o reforço da cooperação entre *clusters* europeus.

A Comissão promove igualmente a ligação entre a investigação e a inovação ao nível dos *clusters*. Três *clusters* portugueses, até à data, beneficiaram do programa «Regiões do Conhecimento», que reforça a cooperação entre *clusters* regionais dedicados à investigação, no âmbito do 7.º Programa-Quadro.

2. A Comissão reconhece que Portugal tem de investir em instrumentos vocacionados para a criação de um enquadramento favorável à inovação e à iniciativa empresarial e que estimulem a mudança estrutural. Promover a modernização de atividades tradicionais e a consolidação de *clusters* emergentes pode ajudar Portugal a reforçar a coesão, a aumentar a produtividade e a tornar-se mais competitivo. É por este motivo que o FEDER financia 11 Pólos de Competitividade e Tecnologia e 8 Outros *Clusters* no período de 2007/2013.

([1]) (www.clusterobservatory.eu).

Futuramente, a Comissão propõe que as estratégias nacionais ou regionais de investigação e inovação para uma especialização inteligente constituam um pré-requisito no contexto da política de coesão. Será uma oportunidade para os Estados-*Membros identificarem prioridades com base em pontos fortes, vantagens competitivas e potenciais de excelência*.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000981/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: Portugal — strategic sectors for the long term

Taking into account that:

— in 1999 Michael Porter, in his book *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, defined the cluster concept as a geographical concentration of companies within the same business sector that can compete amongst themselves but also share common characteristics and objectives in the most diverse business areas (e.g. technology, internationalisation, innovation);

— in recent years successive Portuguese governments have been investing in certain business sectors, building on areas of specialisation existing within the country;

— the Strategies for Collective Efficiency (SCEs) have been launched in this connection with the aim of boosting the grouping of companies by region (clusters), creating innovation networks linking the different players, and enhancing the sharing of best practice and knowledge;

— on 17 July 2009, the recognition contracts for 19 SCE clusters (11 Competitiveness and Technology Centres and eight 'other clusters') were signed, after almost one year of examining applications, and various interactions took place, leading to improvements in the Action Programmes; all these projects are financed from the Structural Funds in the framework of cohesion policy;

— on 26 January 2011, Parliament's Committee on Regional Development heard the head of the Commission's Task Force for Greece, Horst Reichenbach, who expressed the view that Greece needs to invest in solar energy and tourism, as strategic sectors for stimulating growth,

Does the Commission have a specialised business strategy at European level that can enhance the creation of strategic clusters?

In the Commission's view, what strategic sectors should Portugal invest in with a view to becoming a more competitive country internationally?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

1. Cohesion policy, notably through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), offers funding opportunities for supporting cluster initiatives.

Under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, a number of instruments have already been developed, such as the European Cluster Observatory (www.clusterobservatory.eu) for promoting cluster mapping activities, the European Cluster Excellence Initiative for promoting excellence in cluster management, and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform for strengthening cooperation between European clusters.

In addition, the Commission promotes a connection between research and innovation at the level of clusters. Three Portuguese clusters benefitted so far from the 'Regions of Knowledge' programme, which boosts cooperation between regional research intensive clusters, within the 7th Framework programme.

2. The Commission recognises that Portugal has to invest in instruments aimed at creating a favourable framework for innovation and business initiative and to stimulate structural change. Promoting the modernisation of traditional activities and the consolidation of emerging clusters can help Portugal in enhancing cohesion, raising productivity and becoming more competitive. This is why eleven competitive poles and eight other clusters are being financed through the ERDF in the period 2007-2013.

For the future, the Commission *has proposed that national or regional research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation will be an ex-ante* conditionality *in the context of cohesion policy. This will be an opportunity for Member States to identify priorities based on strengths, competitive advantages and potential for excellence.*

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000983/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Condannato a morte in Iran per spionaggio

Lo scorso 9 gennaio il governo iraniano ha condannato a morte per «collaborazione con un governo ostile» Amir Hekmati, cittadino iraniano-statunitense.

La presunta spia ha subito un processo iniquo ed è stata costretta a confessare in televisione di essere una spia dei servizi segreti statunitensi. Amir ha ora 20 giorni di tempo per presentare appello contro la condanna a morte decisa nei suoi confronti.

Sicuramente le recenti frizioni tra i due paesi hanno influenzato il processo ed il trattamento riservato a Amir Hekmati.

Secondo Amnesty International, nel corso del 2011 in Iran sono state eseguite oltre 600 condanne alla pena capitale.

La famiglia del giovane è scioccata ed ha dichiarato che il ragazzo è innocente ed estraneo alla CIA.

Considerato che c'è il rischio che un'altra vita venga spezzata a causa della pena di morte presente in Iran, può l'Alto Rappresentante fornire maggiori informazioni sul caso e la posizione dell'Unione europea al riguardo?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton condivide la preoccupazione dell'onorevole parlamentare riguardo al caso di Amir Mirzai Hekmati ed ha già avuto modo di esprimere forte inquietudine per le numerose condanne a morte eseguite in Iran, soprattutto nel 2011, anno in cui centinaia di persone hanno subito questa pena. In particolare, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è profondamente sconcertata dalla mancanza di un equo processo in molti di questi casi, in cui gli imputati sono stati privati del diritto di ricorso e condannati per reati che, in base agli standard internazionali, non sarebbero punibili con la pena capitale.

Migliaia di persone sono tuttora a rischio di esecuzione in Iran, incluso Amir Mirzai Hekmati. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente, in numerose occasioni, ha espresso grande preoccupazione riguardo a tali esecuzioni e, in una dichiarazione rilasciata il 5 gennaio 2012, ha esortato l'Iran a fermare le condanne a morte in attesa di essere eseguite e a introdurre una moratoria, nella quale rientrerebbe anche il caso di Amir Mirzai Hekmati. La rappresentanza locale dell'UE in Iran, garantita dalla Danimarca durante il primo semestre del 2012, dedica una costante attenzione ai casi di pena di morte e l'UE ha sollevato la questione direttamente con le autorità iraniane a Teheran e a Bruxelles. In questo contesto Catherine Ashton continuerà quindi a seguire da vicino la vicenda di Amir Mirzai Hekmati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000983/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Death sentence in Iran for spying

On 9 January 2012 the Iranian Government sentenced the Iranian-American citizen Amir Hekmati to death for 'collaboration with a hostile government'.

The alleged spy was given an unfair trial and forced to confess on television to being a spy for the U.S. Secret Service. He now has 20 days to appeal the death sentence handed down to him.

The recent friction between the two countries has undoubtedly had an impact on the trial and on Iran's treatment of Amir Hekmati.

According to Amnesty International, more than 600 people were sentenced to death in Iran in 2011.

The young man's family is shocked, and has said that he is innocent and has no connection with the CIA. Given the danger that yet another life will be taken on account of Iran's application of the death penalty, can the High Representative provide more information about this case and indicate the European Union's position?

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

High Representative /Vice-President Ashton shares the Honorable Parliamentarian's concern regarding the case of Amir Mirzai Hekmati. She has expressed deep concern regarding the number of individuals executed in Iran, particularly during 2011. Hundreds of individuals were executed last year, and HR/VP remains deeply disturbed by the lack of fair trials in a number of those cases, whereby defendants were deprived of their right of appeal and sentenced for offences which according to international standards should not result in capital punishment.

Thousands of individuals remain at risk of execution in Iran, including Amir Mirzai Hekmati. HR/VP has, on numerous occasions, expressed her deep concern regarding these executions and in a statement issued on 5 January 2012, called on Iran to halt pending executions and introduce a moratorium. This includes the case of Amir Mirzai Hekmati. The local representation of the EU in Iran, ensured by Denmark during the first semester of 2012, is following very closely death penalty cases, and the EU has raised the issue directly with the Iranian authorities in Tehran and in Brussels. HR/VP will therefore continue to monitor the case of Amir Mirzai Hekmati closely.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000984/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Americano condannato a morte in Iran

L'agenzia Fars riferisce che il cittadino americano di origine iraniana Amir Mirza Hekmati è stato condannato a morte da un tribunale di Teheran perché accusato di collaborazione con gli USA e spionaggio per la CIA.

Hekmati è stato arrestato a dicembre e, secondo le autorità iraniane, avrebbe ammesso i suoi legami con lo spionaggio americano. Il governo statunitense, invece, ha smentito le accuse di spionaggio, reclamandone la liberazione immediata e dicendo che la confessione gli è stata estorta con la forza.

Inoltre, gli USA hanno riferito che alcuni diplomatici svizzeri, che rappresentano gli interessi americani a Teheran in assenza di un'ambasciata americana, avevano chiesto il permesso di vedere il giovane, ma che ciò è stato loro impedito dalle autorità locali.

Per la legge iraniana l'imputato ha venti giorni per appellarsi. La famiglia di Hekmati negli Stati Uniti ha proclamato l'innocenza del giovane dicendo che non si tratta di una spia e che si era recato in Iran per visitare le nonne.

Si chiede pertanto:

1. L'Alto Rappresentante è a conoscenza dei fatti esposti?

2. Quali provvedimenti e azioni intende intraprendere l'Alto Rappresentante per garantire che il signor Hekmati sia giudicato nell'ambito di un processo giusto ed equo in Iran?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(24 aprile 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton ha espresso profonda preoccupazione per il numero di persone giustiziate in Iran, specialmente nel 2011, quando sono state eseguite centinaia di condanne a morte. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente si è detta profondamente turbata dalla mancanza di processi equi in molti di questi casi, in cui gli imputati sono stati privati del diritto d'appello e condannati per reati che, in base alle norme internazionali, non dovrebbero comportare la pena capitale.

In Iran migliaia di persone, tra cui Amir Mirzai Hekmati, rischiano ancora di essere giustiziate. In varie occasioni, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha manifestato grande preoccupazione per tali esecuzioni e in una dichiarazione del 31 gennaio 2012 ha esortato l'Iran, come del resto tutti gli altri Stati che continuano ad applicare la pena di morte, a sospendere le esecuzioni pendenti e a introdurre una moratoria, che comprenderebbe anche il caso di Amir Mirzai Hekmati. La rappresentanza dell'UE in Iran, assicurata da Ungheria e Polonia nel 2011, e dalla Danimarca nel primo semestre del 2012, segue con grande attenzione i casi di condanna a morte e l'Unione europea continua a esprimere la propria preoccupazione alle autorità iraniane, sia direttamente a Teheran, a Bruxelles e nelle capitali dell'Unione, sia attraverso organizzazioni multilaterali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000984/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(3 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — American citizen sentenced to death in Iran

Fars news agency has reported that an American citizen of Iranian origin, Amir Mirza Hekmati, has been sentenced to death by a Tehran court on charges of collaboration with the US and spying for the CIA.

Hekmati was arrested in December and, according to the Iranian authorities, has admitted to having links with US intelligence. The US Government, however, has denied the accusations of espionage, demanding his immediate release while stating that his confession was a forced one.

The US has also reported that a number of Swiss diplomats, who represent US interests in Tehran in the absence of an American embassy, asked for permission to see the young man, but that the request was denied by the local authorities.

Under Iranian law, the defendant has 20 days to appeal. Hekmati's family, who live in the United States, maintain that the young man is innocent, that he is not a spy, and that he went to Iran to visit his grandmothers.

1. Is the High Representative aware of the abovementioned facts?

2. What measures and steps does she intend to take to ensure that Mr Hekmati is given a fair and impartial trial in Iran?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has expressed deep concern regarding the number of individuals executed in Iran, particularly during 2011. Hundreds of individuals were executed last year, and the High Representative was particularly concerned with the lack of fair trials in a number of those cases, whereby defendants were deprived of their right of appeal and sentenced for offences which according to international standards should not result in capital punishment.

Thousands of individuals remain at risk of execution in Iran, including Amir Mirzai Hekmati. High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has, on numerous occasions, expressed her deep concern regarding these executions and in a statement issued on 31 January 2012, called on Iran, as it does on all states which insist on maintaining the death penalty, to halt all pending executions and introduce a moratorium. This includes the case of Amir Mirzai Hekmati. The local representation of the EU in Iran, ensured by Hungary and Poland in 2011, and by Denmark during the first semester of 2012, is following death penalty cases very closely, and the EU continues to raise its concerns directly with the Iranian authorities in Tehran, in Brussels, in EU capitals, and through multilateral organisations.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-000985/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(2. februar 2012)

Om: IMI-lovgivning

Artikel 10, stk. 7, i Kommissionens forslag til forordning om informationssystemet for det indre marked (IMI) omhandler eksterne aktørers adgang til IMI.

Kan Kommissionen oplyse nærmere, hvilke eksterne aktører der skal have adgang? Kan den endvidere give en mere detaljeret beskrivelse af, i hvilke tilfælde eksterne aktørers adgang er nødvendig for at fremme det administrative samarbejde?

I artikel 18, stk. 1, i forslaget til en IMI forordning foreslår Kommissionen, at ukorrekte eller ufuldstændige oplysninger berigtiges inden for en frist på 60 dage.

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, hvad den gennemsnitlige varighed af sådanne berigtigelsesprocedurer er?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(23. februar 2012)

I artikel 10, stk. 7, i henhold til Kommissionens forslag ([1]), er det fastlagt, at eksterne aktører kan anvende IMI (informationssystemet for det indre marked), når det er nødvendigt for at fremme det administrative samarbejde mellem kompetente myndigheder i medlemsstaterne, for at udøve deres rettigheder som registrerede, eller når det i øvrigt foreskrives i en EU-retsakt.

Eksterne aktører kan omfatte borgere, virksomheder og organisationer, som kan få mulighed for at kommunikere med de kompetente myndigheder med henblik på at levere eller opnå oplysninger. Brugergrænsefladen kan være en online-formular, f.eks. for at give borgerne mulighed for at ansøge om adgang til deres egne personlige data eller for at fremsende oplysninger, som myndighederne har brug for ved samarbejdet med deres modparter i andre medlemsstater. Det første konkrete eksempel på en brugergrænseflade, »når det er nødvendigt for at fremme det administrative samarbejde mellem kompetente myndigheder i medlemsstaterne,« vil være online-klageformularen, som allerede anvendes i forbindelse med SOLVIT ([2]). I betragtning af at man har planlagt en teknisk integration af it-redskabet i SOLVIT i IMI, er det ligeledes nødvendigt, at den nuværende formular forbindes med IMI.

Enhver begrænset offentlig brugergrænseflade, der udvikles, vil til enhver tid forblive helt adskilt fra IMI-anvendelsen af sikkerhedsgrunde. IMI bør fortsat være en administrativ samarbejdsplatform for offentlige myndigheder, der ikke er åben for offentligheden.

Kommissionen har ingen oplysninger om, hvor lang tid det gennemsnitligt vil tage at afslutte en berigtigelsesprocedure i overensstemmelse med artikel 18, stk. 1, i forslaget. Så vidt Kommissionen ved, er der hidtil ikke modtaget anmodninger fra registrerede om en berigtigelse af data i IMI. Ikke desto mindre er det nødvendigt, at muligheden for at fremsende og behandle sådanne anmodninger medtages i forordningen om IMI i overensstemmelse med den generelle EU-lovgivning om databeskyttelse.

([1]) KOM(2011)0522 endelig.
([2]) SOLVIT er et online-net til problemløsning, hvor EU-landene sammen forsøger at finde en pragmatisk løsning på problemer, der skyldes, at en offentlig myndighed ikke anvender lovgivningen om det indre marked korrekt, jf. http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/ .

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000985/12
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(2 February 2012)

Subject: IMI Regulation

In Article 10(7) of its proposal for a regulation on the internal market Information (IMI) System the Commission deals with access to IMI for external actors.

Can the Commission state more specifically which external actors should have access? Could it also describe in more detail cases in which access for external actors is necessary to facilitate administrative cooperation?

In Article 18(1) of the proposal for an IMI regulation the Commission proposes that inaccurate or incomplete data should be corrected within 60 days.

Could the Commission indicate the average duration of such correction procedures?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(23 February 2012)

Article 10(7) as proposed by the Commission ([1]) stipulates that external actors may use IMI where necessary to facilitate administrative cooperation between competent authorities in Member States, in order to exercise their rights as data subjects or where it is provided for by a Union act.

External actors could include citizens, enterprises and organisations which may interact with the competent authorities in order to supply or obtain information. The interface may be an online form, for example to enable citizens to request access to their own personal data or to submit information that authorities need for their cooperation with their counterparts in other Member States. The first concrete example of an interface 'necessary to facilitate administrative cooperation between competent authorities' will be the online complaint form that is already in use for Solvit ([2]). In view of the planned technical integration of the Solvit IT tool in IMI, the existing form will also need to be linked with IMI.

However any limited public interface to be developed will at all times remain fully separate from the IMI application for security reasons. IMI should remain an administrative cooperation platform for public authorities, not open to the general public.

The Commission does not have information on the average time needed to complete a correction procedure in accordance with Article 18(1) of the proposal. To its knowledge, no requests from data subjects to correct data held in IMI have been received so far. Nevertheless, the possibility to submit and handle such requests needs to be included in the IMI Regulation in line with general EU data protection law.

([1]) COM(2011)522 final.
([2]) Solvit is an online problem solving network in which EU Member States work together to solve without legal proceedings problems caused by the misapplication of Internal Market law by public authorities, see http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000986/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Financiación de un centro de experimentación animal en Lugo

El uso de animales en diversos experimentos se ha venido reduciendo desde los últimos años. Prueba de ello es la variada normativa que la Unión Europea dispone al respecto, como el Reglamento nº 15/2011 o la conocida Directiva que busca el fin del uso de seres vivos para probar ingredientes y productos cosméticos.

Resulta paradójico que el Gobierno de Galicia (España) pretenda promover un centro de experimentación animal en la ciudad de Lugo con fondos comunitarios, donde se investigará con animales como caballos, bóvidos o incluso perros bajo la premisa de que estos experimentos promoverán principalmente una oportunidad de negocio. Esto supone que fondos de los 27 irán a parar a un centro cuyo objetivo, según sus propios impulsores, es la obtención de beneficios, seguramente gracias a empresas y compañías farmacéuticas, antes que promover el supuesto avance social y humano que se le supone a los avances médicos.

La creación de este recinto ha levantado una importante oposición entre la ciudadanía, donde diferentes peticiones de firmas superan los 25 000 apoyos y organizaciones como Libera han criticado abiertamente la intención de construir un centro innecesario gracias al desarrollo y uso de métodos alternativos y respetuosos con los animales.

Teniendo en cuenta que el programa FEDER aportará el 70 % del coste final del proyecto, alrededor de 2 380 000 euros para una obra polémica e innecesaria,

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión del uso de fondos comunitarios para la construcción del centro de experimentación animal de Lugo? ¿Conoce la Comisión el contenido real de uso del citado centro? ¿Piensa que este centro se adapta a la opinión científica general de reducir el uso de animales en la investigación? ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión impulsar nuevas normativas o programas de ayuda económica para reducir el uso de seres vivos en toda clase de experimentos?

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

El FEDER no está cofinanciando el centro de experimentación animal de Lugo y tampoco existe ningún compromiso oficial de hacerlo.

Hoy en día, la seguridad de los productos farmacéuticos, los dispositivos médicos, los productos químicos y otras sustancias no puede ser determinada en medida suficientemente mediante métodos de prueba *in vitro*. Además, los animales siguen siendo necesarios actualmente para programas vitales de investigación de enfermedades como el VIH, la malaria, la hepatitis y el SRAS y de enfermedades degenerativas como el Alzheimer y la enfermedad de Parkinson, así como para la elaboración y las pruebas de inocuidad de los productos veterinarios.

Dada la necesidad constante de animales en la investigación y las pruebas de inocuidad en un futuro previsible, la Comisión considera que el planteamiento más pragmático para reducir los experimentos con animales consiste en introducir métodos alternativos que, con el tiempo, sustituyan a las pruebas con animales.

En la actualidad, todos los experimentos realizados con animales en la UE deben cumplir lo dispuesto en la Directiva 86/609/CEE ([1]). Esta Directiva será sustituida y reforzada por la Directiva 2010/63/UE, relativa a la protección de los animales utilizados para fines científicos ([2]), que entrará plenamente en vigor el 1 de enero de 2013.

Durante los últimos veinte años, la contribución de la UE a la investigación llamada de las tres R ([3]) ha ascendido a unos 200 millones de euros. Al amparo del Programa Marco de Investigación vigente (7° PM), se han comprometido hasta ahora 65 millones de euros aproximadamente para la financiación de métodos alternativos. Se dispone de más financiación para las convocatorias restantes del 7° PM.

([1]) Directiva 86/609/CEE, de 24 de noviembre de 1986, relativa a la aproximación de las disposiciones legales, reglamentarias y administrativas de los Estados miembros respecto a la protección de los animales utilizados para experimentación y otros fines científicos (DO L 358 de 18.12.1986).
([2]) DO L 276 de 20.10.2010.
([3]) «Replacement, reduction and refinement» (sustitución, reducción y mejora de la utilización de animales).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000986/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Financing of an animal experimentation centre in Lugo

The use of animals in a range of experiments has declined in recent years. This is evidenced by the wide range of European legislation on the subject, such as Commission Regulation (EU) No 15/2011 or the directive intended to ban the use of live animals in testing cosmetic ingredients and products.

It therefore seems paradoxical that the Regional Government of Galicia in Spain should be planning to promote a centre for animal experimentation in the city of Lugo using Community funds. This centre would be used to conduct research using bovine animals, horses and even dogs, the assumption being that such experiments would, essentially, represent a business opportunity. This means that funds from the 27 Member States would be allocated to a centre whose aim, according to its own promoters, is to generate profit, probably through payments from pharmaceutical companies, rather than to promote the alleged social and human progress that medical advances are supposed to represent.

The establishment of this facility has elicited strong public opposition. Various petitions have gathered over 25 000 signatures and organisations such as LIBERA! have openly criticised the plan to build a centre that is quite unnecessary in view of the development and use of alternative animal-friendly methods.

Seventy per cent of the final cost of the project is to be met from ERDF funds, which means spending approximately EUR 2 380 000 on a controversial and unnecessary venture.

Is the Commission aware of the use of Community funding for building the animal experimentation centre in Lugo? Is the Commission aware of the use that would actually be made of that centre? Does the Commission believe this centre to be in line with the widespread scientific opinion that the use of animals in research should be reduced? Does the Commission plan to promote new legislation or financial support programmes to reduce the use of live animals in all types of experiments?

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

ERDF is not co-financing the animal experimentation centre of Lugo and no formal commitment (engagement) to do so exists.

Today the safety of pharmaceutical products, medical devices, chemicals and other substances cannot be sufficiently determined with the available *in vitro* test methods. Furthermore, animals are currently still needed for vital research programmes on diseases such as HIV, malaria, hepatitis and SARS, and debilitating conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, and for the development and safety testing of veterinary products.

Given the continued need for animals in research and safety testing for the foreseeable future, the Commission considers that the most pragmatic approach to reducing animal experiments is through the introduction of alternative methods that eventually replace animal testing.

Currently all experiments performed on animals in the EU must comply with the provisions of Directive 86/609/EEC ([1]). This directive will be replaced and strengthened by Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ([2]) taking full effect on 1 January 2013.

Over the last 20 years, the financial EU contribution to Three Rs ([3]) research amounts to some EUR 200 million. Under the current Research Framework Programme (FP7), approximately EUR 65 million has been committed so far for the funding of alternative methods. More funding should become available for the remaining calls of FP7.

([1]) Directive 86/609/EEC of 24 November 1986 on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes, OJ L 358, 18.12.1986.
([2]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.
([3]) Replacement, reduction and refinement of animal use.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000987/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Traffico illegale di organi nel deserto del Sinai

Nel dicembre 2012, il Wall Street Journal ha riportato che nel Sinai egiziano il fenomeno del traffico illecito di organi umani si fa sempre più dilagante. Le vittime sono prevalentemente profughi africani provenienti da stati come l'Etiopia, l'Eritrea e il Sudan che non dispongono del denaro necessario per raggiungere l'Europa o Israele. Secondo l'organizzazione per i diritti umani «Coalition for Organ-Failure Solutions (COFS)», con sede a Washington, i profughi sono vittime di abusi come «l'espianto dei reni tramite consenso indotto, coercizione o semplice furto».

Altre organizzazioni come la «New Generation Foundation for Human Rights» riferiscono che gli organi vengono espiantati mentre i profughi sono ancora vivi. Il presidente di quest'ultima organizzazione afferma che gli organi non sono utilizzabili se sono morti. Le vittime vengono inizialmente drogate e, una volta espiantati gli organi, lasciate morire e gettate in un profondo pozzo asciutto con centinaia di altri corpi.

L'organizzazione ritiene che medici egiziani corrotti collaborino con i beduini, i quali si recano nel Sinai con strutture ospedaliere mobili per effettuare operazioni di espianto, in particolare di cornea, fegato e reni. Il dottor Fakhry Saleh, ex direttore del reparto di medicina legale del Cairo, ha scoperto che il commercio illegale di organi è una delle attività criminali più redditizie e che il commercio di organi è la seconda tipologia di commercio più redditizia dopo il traffico di armi. Secondo notizie riferite dai mezzi d'informazione, alcuni medici egiziani hanno acquistato organi da gruppi di beduini a prezzi non inferiori a 20 000 USD.

La CNN ha riportato la dichiarazione dell'ufficiale di polizia responsabile della sicurezza nel Sinai settentrionale, secondo il quale la sua organizzazione è al corrente del traffico e dei furti di organi messi in atto nell'area di sua competenza ma non è stata ancora in grado di identificare i mandanti di tali attività criminali.

1. È la Commissione al corrente del dilagante fenomeno del traffico di organi nel Sinai?

2. Ha la Commissione, in passato, preso provvedimenti atti a discutere tale problematica con le autorità egiziane? Qual è stato l'esito di tali provvedimenti?

3. È la Commissione pronta ad offrire sostegno alle autorità egiziane al fine di identificare e procedere al fermo dei gruppi coinvolti nel commercio illegale di organi?

4. Può dire la Commissione in che modo, allo stato attuale, strumenti quali la Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea e la Convenzione di Oviedo sui diritti dell'uomo e la biomedicina, nonché il suo Protocollo aggiuntivo sul trapianto di organi e tessuti umani, possono contribuire ad affrontare il problema dei trafficanti di organi che utilizzano, per le loro attività illegali, i profughi africani in Egitto e in altri stati dell'Africa settentrionale?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2012)

L'Unione europea segue la questione molto attentamente attraverso la delegazione del Cairo, che mantiene contatti regolari con i ministeri egiziani degli Affari Esteri e dell'Interno e con il Consiglio dei diritti umani delle Nazioni Unite. Finora i progressi delle autorità egiziane sono stati limitati. Il governo di Al Ganzouri ha affermato che la questione del Sinai è una priorità strategica che merita particolare attenzione. Ciò alimenta qualche speranza che la lotta alla criminalità organizzata nella regione del Sinai venga intensificata e che le autorità egiziane s'impegnino maggiormente nell'affrontare i problemi dei rifugiati tenuti in ostaggio dai trafficanti di esseri umani in quella regione e del commercio di organi. L'UE è pronta a sostenere le autorità egiziane in questo impegno.

L'Unione continuerà a esortare le autorità egiziane ad adottare misure adeguate contro la tratta degli esseri umani e ad assicurare la tutela dei diritti fondamentali dei migranti e dei rifugiati che sono sotto la loro responsabilità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000987/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Illegal organ trafficking in the Sinai Desert

In December 2012, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that in the Egyptian part of Sinai, there is a growing problem of trafficking in human organs. Most of the victims are African refugees from states such as Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan who are unable to pay the money necessary to travel to either Europe or Israel. The Washington-based human rights organisation the Coalition for Organ-Failure Solutions (COFS) states that refugees are subject to abuses such as 'removing kidneys by inducing consent, coercion or outright theft'.

Other organisations such as the New Generation Foundation for Human Rights report that organs are removed from refugees while they are still alive. The head of the foundation notes: 'organs are not useful if they're dead. They drug them first and remove their organs, then leave them to die and dump them in a deep dry well along with hundreds of bodies'.

The organisation believes that corrupt Egyptian doctors are working with Bedouins, who travel to Sinai with mobile hospital units to perform operations to remove in particular corneas, livers and kidneys. Dr Fakhry Saleh, the former head of Cairo's forensic department, has discovered that trade in illegal organs is one of the most profitable criminal activities: 'organ trade is the second most profitable trade behind only weapons trade'. Media groups report that Egyptian doctors have bought organs from Bedouin groups at prices starting from USD 20 000.

CNN has reported that, according to the police general in charge of security in Northern Sinai, his organisation is aware of organ trafficking and theft taking place in its area of operations, but the authorities have yet to identify who is behind the schemes.

1. Is the Commission aware of the growing problem of organ trafficking in Sinai?

2. Has the Commission taken steps in the past to discuss this issue with the Egyptian authorities? What were some of the outcomes?

3. Is the Commission prepared to offer support to the Egyptian authorities in identifying and apprehending groups involved in illegal organ trading?

4. At present, how can instruments such as the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Oviedo Treaty on Human Rights and Biomedicine and its Additional Protocol on the Transplantation of Organs and Tissues of Human Origin help to address the problem of illegal organ traffickers who exploit African refugees in Egypt and other states in North Africa?

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

The EU is following this issue very closely through its delegation in Cairo which keeps regular contacts with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council. Progress by the Egyptian authorities has been limited so far. The Al Ganzoury government indicated that the Sinai is a strategic priority which should receive special attention. This raises some hope that the fight against organised crime will be intensified in the Sinai region and that the Egyptian authorities will become more committed to address the issues of refugees held hostage by human traffickers in the Sinai and of organ trade. The EU stands ready to support the Egyptian authorities in this endeavour.

The EU will continue to urge the Egyptian authorities to take appropriate measures against human trafficking and to ensure the protection of the fundamental rights of the migrants and refugees under their responsibility.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000988/12
to the Commission
Seán Kelly (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Risk-Sharing Finance Facility — Implementation in Ireland

Can the Commission provide information on the implementation of the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility since its inception two years ago up to the present day? Can it give a figure on the amount of money lent from the facility to Irish undertakings and/or public bodies? Can it provide a list of beneficiaries, if available?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2012)

The Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) was established in 2007 as a novel debt financing instrument. The European Union and the European Investment Bank (EIB), as risk-sharing partners, each contribute up to EUR 1 billion to the RSFF for the period 2007-2013, thus making possible loan finance of up to EUR 10 billion for investments in R & D and Innovation.

The RSFF has been very successful and has provided loans to different target groups such as mid-sized and larger companies but also to SMEs, stand-alone projects and Research Infrastructures. Demand for RSFF loan finance has exceeded expectations by far, thus filling a prevailing market gap for higher-risk debt finance.

The RSFF was evaluated at mid-term in 2010 by a group of independent experts. The overall result of this interim evaluation was very positive. However, the experts made recommendations on how to further improve access to the RSFF, notably through a different risk-sharing approach in favour of SMEs and Research Infrastructures. The Commission fully endorsed these recommendations and amended the RSFF Cooperation Agreement with the EIB accordingly on 5 December 2011.

RSFF loan finance for investment in R & D and Innovation taking place in Ireland currently amount to EUR 15 million, as part of a larger investment carried out by an international company.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000989/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6. februar 2012)

Om: En transatlantisk nultarifaftale

I Kommissionens meddelelse fra 2010 om handel, vækst og verdensanliggender udpeges udbyggelse af handelen med EU's strategiske partnere som en central målsætning.

Transatlantisk lederskab og et transatlantisk marked er af særdeles stor betydning for den globale handelspolitik, og historisk set har EU og USA vist sig i stand til at indlede og gennemføre multilaterale forhandlinger om handelsliberalisering.

Den nuværende situation synes imidlertid at lede til mindre vilje til at udvise lederskab, og der ses ringere evne til at »få andre med« i traditionelle forhandlingsrunder.

Hvad er den aktuelle status for indsatsen for at oprette en reel transatlantisk nultarifaftale, og hvad er Kommissionens strategi og forventninger i den henseende?

Ville Kommissionen i den forbindelse overveje at indlede med en bilateral aftale, som andre lande ville kunne tiltræde, og som således kunne udvides til en multilateral aftale på et senere tidspunkt?

Fordelen ved en sådan aftale er, at den indledningsvis kan begrænses til en mindre gruppe underskrivere. Den ville således være forholdsvis ligetil at vedtage, idet det ikke ville være nødvendigt at overbevise alle WTO-medlemmer om at deltage. En sådan aftale ville udelukkende komme de deltagende lande til gode og ville i praksis indebære diskrimination af ikkedeltagende lande. Dog kunne der med tiden vedtages en multilateral aftale under WTO's auspicier, under forudsætning af at der kan opnås enighed blandt WTO's medlemmer.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Karel De Gucht
(16. marts 2012)

Kommissionen er enig med det ærede medlem i, at det transatlantiske marked spiller en central rolle for den globale handelspolitik og ligeledes er af stor betydning for bilaterale handels- og investeringsforbindelser.

På den baggrund blev Det Transatlantiske Økonomiske Råd på topmødet mellem EU og USA den 28. november 2011 pålagt at nedsætte en arbejdsgruppe på højt plan om beskæftigelse og vækst, som skal ledes af EU's handelskommissær og USA's handelsrepræsentant i fællesskab. Arbejdsgruppen blev bedt om at afdække og vurdere mulighederne for at styrke de økonomiske forbindelser mellem EU og USA, navnlig de muligheder, der i særlig grad kan støtte beskæftigelsen og væksten.

Når den analyse er afsluttet ved udgangen af 2012, vil arbejdsgruppen drøfte og anbefale, hvilke praktiske midler der er nødvendige for at gennemføre indkredsede politikforanstaltninger. Disse kunne omfatte en vifte af mulige initiativer fra øget samarbejde på lovgivningsområdet til forhandling om en eller flere bilaterale handelsaftaler om spørgsmål som f.eks. told, ikketoldmæssige foranstaltninger, tjenesteydelser, investering, udbud og andre områder.

Der vil i analysen ikke blive sat fokus på et specifikt scenario, således som det ærede medlem lægger op til, men alle muligheder er åbne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000989/12
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Transatlantic zero-tariff agreement

In the Commission's paper on 'Trade, growth and world affairs' of 2010 it is stated that enhancing trade with the EU's strategic partners is a crucial objective.

Transatlantic leadership and a transatlantic market place are particularly vital for global trade policy. Historically, the EU and the US have shown themselves capable of initiating and concluding multilateral negotiations on trade liberalisation.

The current situation, however, seems to be leading to less willingness to exercise leadership, and there is less evidence of a capacity to 'get others on board' in a traditional round of negotiations.

What is the current status of efforts to establish an actual transatlantic zero-tariff agreement, and what are the Commission's strategy and expectations in this regard?

In this context, would the Commission consider starting out with a bilateral agreement open to other countries to join, that can be expanded into a multilateral agreement at a later point?

The advantage of such an agreement is that it can initially be restricted to a smaller group of signatories. Its adoption would thus be relatively easy since there would be no obligation to persuade all WTO members to participate. The benefits would be confined to participating countries, implying discrimination against non-signatories in practice. A multilateral agreement could, however, in due course be adopted under the auspices of the WTO, although this would require a consensus among WTO members.

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

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the transatlantic market place plays a central role for global trade policy, and is equally central to bilateral trade and investment relations.

Against this backdrop, the EU-US Summit of 28 November 2011 directed the Transatlantic Economic Council to establish a joint High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth, co-chaired by the Commissioner for Trade and the US Trade Representative. It asked the Working Group to identify and assess options for strengthening the EU-US economic relationship, especially those that have the highest potential to support jobs and growth.

Upon completing its analysis by the end of 2012, the Working Group will consider and recommend the practical means necessary to implement any policy measures identified. These could include a range of possible initiatives, from enhanced regulatory cooperation to negotiation of one or more bilateral trade agreements addressing issues such as tariffs, non-tariff measures, services, investment, procurement or other areas.

The analysis will not focus on one specific scenario as referred to by the Honourable Member, but all options are open.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000990/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6. februar 2012)

Om: Et transatlantisk initiativ — varer under aftalen om informationsteknologi (ITA) og den digitale økonomi

Den aktuelle værdi af den globale import af varer under aftalen om informationsteknologi (ITA) i de lande, der er tiltrådt aftalen, var på ca. 1,310 mia. USD i 2009. En udvidelse af produktdækningen til at omfatte flere forbrugerelektronikprodukter og it-produkter ville medføre en stigning i den samlede værdi af den toldfrie import på 16,7 % til 1,529 mia. USD og således eliminere omkostninger på 11,5 mia. USD.

Handelsomkostninger som følge af ikketoldmæssige handelshindringer (NTB) i it-sektoren vurderes til at overstige 124,1 mia. USD, men dette beløb er lavere end det endelige beløb, eftersom det udelukkende er baseret på handelsomkostningerne for varer under aftalen om informationsteknologi i EU, USA, Japan, Kina og Korea. De ikketoldmæssige handelshindringer i ikt-sektoren anslås til at være endnu større.

Aftalen om informationsteknologi er på nuværende tidspunkt begrænset til toldfritagelse for it- og elektronikprodukter bortset fra forbrugerelektronik. Det største problem er, at aftalen om informationsteknologi ikke dækker ikketoldmæssige handelshindringer eller ikt-tjenester. Den tager således ikke højde for de væsentligste aktuelle bekymringer i it-industrien, som er præget af fragmenterede produktionskæder, herunder produktkonvergens og konvergens mellem produkter og tjenester. Der er et tydeligt behov for at tage stilling til de divergerende regelsæt, tekniske standarder og de forskellige testkrav, som omfatter handelsomkostninger.

Hvad er i den forbindelse status for — og hvilke tanker gør Kommissionen sig om — iværksættelsen af et transatlantisk initiativ i form af en international aftale om den digitale økonomi (IDEA) og en udvidelse af ITA-konceptet til at omfatte tjenester, ikketoldmæssige handelshindringer og andre varer?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Karel De Gucht
(8. marts 2012)

Den såkaldte informationsteknologiaftale (ITA), som fulgte i kølvandet på den første WTO-ministerkonference i Singapore i 1996, er sandsynligvis den mest vellykkede sektoraftale i WTO-regi. Men på grund af de store teknologiske fremskridt og den øgede konvergens, der har fundet sted i de seneste 15 år, mener Kommissionen, at det i høj grad er på tide at opdatere og udvide ITA.

Kommissionen mener også, at de ikketoldmæssige handelshindringer (NTB'er) for it-produkter er væsentlige, og at de muligvis svarer til eller er endnu større end de toldmæssige. Derfor foreslog Kommissionen allerede i 2008 at tage ITA-aftalen op til fornyet overvejelse og fokusere på fire forhold, nemlig at ændre produktdækningen, indføre discipliner i forbindelse med NTB'er, indføre en permanent opdateringsmekanisme og udvide medlemskabet. I 2009 gav Rådet på grundlag af dette forslag Kommissionen mandat til at indlede forhandlinger.

Det har dog ikke været muligt at indlede forhandlinger, fordi flere kontraherende parter under ITA har valgt at bilægge tvister om aftalens dækning ved sagsanlæg. Nu da de efterfølgende resultater af WTO-panelet er gennemført, er der stigende interesse blandt EU's handelspartnere for at indlede forhandlinger.

Det drøftes hovedsagelig, hvilket omfang sådanne forhandlinger helt præcist skal have. Kommissionen er af den opfattelse, at ITA-aftalen under WTO er det bedste middel til at fjerne hindringerne for handel med de produkter, der er omfattet af ITA, og hører i øjeblikket USA om denne løsning.

I forbindelse med sådanne forhandlinger bør det efter Kommissionens mening også undersøges, om det er muligt at medtage serviceydelser, f.eks. med udgangspunkt i de principper for informations- og kommunikationsteknologi, som EU og USA for nylig nåede til enighed om i forbindelse med Det Transatlantiske Økonomiske Råd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000990/12
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Transatlantic initiative — ITA goods and the digital economy

The current value of world imports of ITA (Information Technology Agreement) goods within ITA countries was approximately USD 1.310 billion in 2009. Expanding the product coverage to include a wider list of consumer electronics and IT products would increase the total value of tariff-free imports by 16.7 % to USD 1.529 billion, thereby eliminating tariff costs of USD 11.5 billion.

Trade costs due to NTBs (non-tariff barriers to trade) in the IT sector are estimated to exceed USD 124.1 billion, a figure which underestimates the total since it is based only on the trade costs of goods covered by the ITA in the EU, USA, Japan, China and Korea. For the ICT services sector, NTBs are estimated to be even more significant.

Currently, the ITA is confined to tariff elimination on IT and electronic products, excluding consumer electronics. The main problem is that the ITA does not cover NTBs or ICT services. Therefore, it does not address the main concerns of today's IT industry, which is characterised by fragmented production chains: product convergence as well as convergence between products and services. There is an evident need to address divergent regulations, technical standards and multiple testing requirements, which involve trade costs.

In this context, what is the status of — and what are the Commission's thoughts on — the establishment of a transatlantic initiative in the form of an international digital economy agreement (IDEA), expanding the ITA concept to cover services, NTBs and more products?

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

The so-called Information Technology Agreement (ITA) that resulted from the 1st WTO Ministerial Conference held in Singapore in 1996 has been probably the most successful sectoral agreement in the WTO. However, as in the last 15 years important technological progress and convergence have taken place, the Commission believes that an update and expansion of the ITA is long overdue.

The Commission agrees on the importance of Non Tariff Barriers (NTBs) in trade in IT products which may be equal or even be higher than that of tariffs. Thus, already in 2008, the Commission made a proposal for a review of the ITA based on four elements: revision of the product coverage, introduction of disciplines on NTBs, introduction of a permanent updating mechanism and expansion of the membership. On the basis of this proposal, the Council gave the Commission in 2009 a mandate to start negotiations.

However, negotiations could not start as long some ITA contracting parties opted to settle differences of opinion on the coverage of the Agreement through litigation. Now that implementation of the subsequent WTO panel findings is finalised, the interest in launching negotiations is increasing among the EU's trading partners.

The precise scope of such negotiations is mainly under discussion. The Commission considers that the WTO ITA offers the best framework to promote the elimination of barriers to trade of ITA products and is engaged in close consultation with the US to this effect.

Such negotiations should also in the Commission's view explore the possibility of including services, building e.g. on the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) principles recently agreed between the EU and the US in the context of the Transatlantic Economic Council.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-000991/12
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6. februar 2012)

Om: Barrierer for grænseoverskridende e-handel — dankortet

Der er mange forskellige måder at betale for de varer, man køber på internettet, på.

I Danmark har dankortet monopolstilling på det danske marked for betalingskort, og 85 % af danskerne bruger dankortet til at betale for deres onlinekøb. For at bruge dankortet, skal man have et dansk personnummer (cpr). Det betyder, at virksomheder skal være etableret i Danmark for at kunne bruge kortet.

Den danske lov om visse betalingsmidler giver bankerne mulighed for at pålægge internationale betalingskort udstedt i Danmark et gebyr på mellem 0,3 % og 0,75 % af købsprisen. Dette gør, at danskerne er uvillige til at betale med — eller endda at erhverve — andre betalingskort, eftersom betalinger med dankortet i henhold til loven ikke pålægges gebyr.

Der kan ved brug af internationale betalingskort udstedt i andre lande pålægges et gebyr på op til 5,75 % af købsprisen, og virksomheder, der sælger varer/tjenesteydelser til Danmark kan derfor ikke tilbyde denne mere fordelagtige betalingsform, og virksomheder, der sælger fra Danmark, skal pålægge udenlandske betalinger et ekstra gebyr.

Hvad er Kommissionens holdning til denne danske lovgivning? Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at dette udgør en væsentlig import- og eksportrestriktion — især i forbindelse med e-handel?

Agter Kommissionen endvidere at iværksætte foranstaltninger vedrørende dette krav fra de danske myndigheders sider? Såfremt dette allerede er sket, bedes Kommissionen oplyse os om den aktuelle situation angående denne procedure.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(2. marts 2012)

Lovgivningen, som det ærede medlem henviser til, er ikke længere gældende. I 2010 besluttede Kommissionen at indlede en overtrædelsesprocedure over for Danmark for at påpege problemet med diskriminerende gebyrer, der pålægges betalinger foretaget med kort udstedt i andre medlemsstater. Som følge af denne procedure er både den danske implementering af Direktiv 2007/64/EF om betalingstjenester i det indre marked (Lov om betalingstjenester) såvel som den ministerielle bekendtgørelse vedrørende denne lov (Bekendtgørelse nr. 1118/2009 om internationale betalingskort) blevet ændret.

De ændrede bestemmelser trådte i kraft i hhv. oktober 2011 og januar 2012 og er for nylig blevet anmeldt til Kommissionen.

De nye regler tillader (men pålægger ikke) de handlende at opkræve gebyr — på både danske og udenlandske kreditkort — i det omfang den handlende selv pålægges gebyr af indløseren. Samtidig forbyder de gebyrer på betalinger foretaget med danske og udenlandske betalingskort.

Kommissionen vil undersøge disse nye regler nøje, før det besluttes, hvordan der skal følges op på overtrædelsesproceduren. Såfremt Kommissionen vurderer, at de nye bestemmelser er i overensstemmelse med EU's lovgivning, vil proceduren blive afsluttet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000991/12
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Barriers to cross-border e-commerce — the Danish Dankort

There are many different ways of paying for products purchased via the Internet.

In Denmark, the Danish *Dankort* holds a monopoly position in the domestic card market, as 85 % of Danes use it to make their online purchases. A Danish identification number — CPR — is needed to use the Dankort. This means that a company has to be established in Denmark in order to use the card.

The Danish *lov om visse betalingsmidler* (Act on Certain Payment Instruments) allows banks to levy a charge on an international payment card issued in Denmark of between 0.3 % to 0.75 % of the purchase price. This means that the Danes are unwilling to pay with — or even obtain — another payment card, as the Dankort comes with zero charges according to the law.

An international payment card issued in another country may incur changes of up to 5.75 % of the purchase price. Companies selling goods/services to Denmark are therefore unable to offer this more advantageous form of payment, and companies that sell from Denmark must add an extra charge for foreign payments.

What is the Commission's position on this legislation in Denmark? Can the Commission confirm that it represents a significant import and export restriction — especially as regards e-commerce?

Moreover, does the Commission intend to take action against this requirement of the Danish authorities? If this has already been done, will the Commission tell us the current situation regarding this procedure?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 March 2012)

The legislation to which the Honourable Member refers is no longer in force. In 2010, the Commission decided to open an infringement procedure against Denmark to address the issue of discriminatory charges imposed on payments with cards issued in other Member States. As a result of this procedure, both the Danish implementation of Directive 2007/64/EC on payment services in the internal market (*Lov om betalingstjenester*) and the Ministerial Order based on this law (*Bekendtgørelse nr 1118/2009 om internationale betalingskort*) have been changed.

The modified provisions entered into force in October 2011 and January 2012 and have been recently notified to the Commission.

The new rules allow (but do not force) merchants to surcharge — on both Danish and foreign — issued credit cards, to the extent the merchant is charged himself by the card acquirer. They forbid, at the same time, imposing surcharges on payments with Danish and foreign-issued debit cards.

The Commission will asses these new rules carefully before deciding on the follow-up to be given to the infringement procedure. If it concludes to the conformity of the new provisions with EC law, procedure will be closed.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000992/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali Tranżitorju tal-Libja

Fid-dawl tal-protesti riċenti kontra l-Kunsill Nazzjonali Tranżitorju fil-Libja tul-ġimgħa li għaddiet, ir-Rappreżentant Għoli tal-Unjoni għall-Affarijiet Barranin u l-Politika ta' Sigurtà jemmen li l-Kunsill Nazzjonali Tranżitorju jeħtieġ illi jiġi mmonitorjat aktar mill-qrib mill-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' Marzu 2012)

L-UE hija involuta b'mod sħiħ fil-Libja u qiegħda ssegwi mill-qrib l-iżviluppi li qed isiru hemmhekk. Id-Delegazzjoni qiegħda f'kuntatt ta' kuljum kemm mal-Gvern Interim u kif ukoll mal-Kunsill Nazzjonali Tranżitorju. Barra minn hekk, permezz taż-żjarat regolari ta' livell għoli fil-Libja u tal-laqgħat mal-kontrapartijiet Libjani f'bosta fora, l-UE setgħet tiżviluppa djalogu intensiv u miftuħ mal-awtoritajiet li jikkonċerna l-bosta sfidi li l-Libja attwalment trid tiffaċċja. L-UE se tkompli taħdem mill-qrib mal-awtoritajiet fiż-żmien ta' qabel l-elezzjonijiet li għandhom iseħħu skont il-Pjan Direzzjonali Kostituzzjonali tal-Kunsill Nazzjonali Tranżitorju għal-Libja.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000992/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Libya's National Transitional Council

In light of recent protests against the National Transitional Council in Libya in the past week, does the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy believe that the National Transitional Council needs to be more closely monitored by the EU?

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

The EU is fully engaged in Libya and is following developments there closely. Its Delegation is in daily contact with both the Interim Government and with the National Transitional Council. Moreover thanks to regular high level visits to Libya and meetings with Libyan counter-parts in various fora, the EU has been able to develop an intensive and open dialogue with the authorities concerning the many challenges that Libya currently faces. The EU will continue to work closely with the authorities in the run up to elections which are due to be held in accordance with the National Transitional Council's Constitutional Road-Map for Libya.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000993/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — Ksur ta' projbizzjoni tal-UE fuq l-ivjaġġar

Anatoly Kulyashou, il-Ministru tal-Intern tal-Bjelorussja, reċentement vjaġġa lejn Franza minkejja li kien ġie soġġett għal projbizzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea fuq l-ivvjaġġar minħabba allegazzjonijiet ta' tortura u teħid ta' ostaġġi miġjuba kontrih.

Il-projbizzjoni fuq l-ivjaġġar għas-Sur Kuleshov tneħħiet, jew saru ċerti eċċezzjonijiet li ppermettew lis-Sur Kulyashou jivvjaġġa f'dan il-każ?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(10 ta' April 2012)

Anatoly Kuliashou għadu elenkat fl-Anness IIIa tad-Deċiżjoni tal-Kunsill 2010/639/PESK tal-25 ta' Ottubru 2010 rigward il-miżuri restrittivi kontra ċerti uffiċjali tal-Belarus ([1]) u bħala tali huwa suġġett għall-projbizzjoni fuq l-ivvjaġġar kif stipulat fl-Artikolu 1 ta' dik id-Deċiżjoni.

L-Artikolu 1 jikkonferma wkoll li għandhom ikunu l-Istati Membri li jieħdu l-miżuri meħtieġa sabiex jimpedixxu d-dħul jew it-tranżitu tal-persuni elenkati fit-territorji tagħhom, iżda l-Artikolu 1 jipprevedi wkoll għadd ta' eżenzjonijiet għal din il-projbizzjoni. Fost l-eżenzjonijiet li l-Istati Membri jistgħu jagħmlu użu minnhom hemm il-każijiet fejn l-Istat Membru huwa pajjiż li jospita organizzazzjoni intergovernattiva internazzjonali u għaldaqstant jiġġustifika l-ivvjaġġar abbażi tal-attendenza f'laqgħat intergovernattivi.

([1]) ĠU L 280, 26.10.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000993/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Breach of EU travel ban

Anatoly Kuleshov, Minister of the Interior of Belarus, recently travelled to France despite having been subjected to a European Union travel ban due to allegations against him concerning torture and hostage-taking.

Has the travel ban for Mr Kuleshov been lifted or have certain exceptions been made allowing Mr Kuleshov to travel in this case?

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

Anatoly Kuliashou remains listed in Annex IIIa of Council Decision 2010/639/CFSP of 25 October 2010 concerning restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus ([1]) and as such is subject to the travel ban set out in Article 1 of that decision.

Article 1 also confirms that it is for Member States to take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into, or transit through, their territories of listed persons, but Article 1 also foresees a number of exemptions to this ban. Among the exemptions Member States may use are cases where the Member State is a host country of an international intergovernmental organisation and where travel is justified on grounds of attending intergovernmental meetings.

([1]) OJ L 280, 26.10.2010.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000994/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Awtorità tal-VAT tal-UE

Fil-COM(2011)0851, l-Artiklu 4.3, fost dispożizzjonijiet oħra, jagħmel referenza għall-awtoritajiet nazzjonali tat-taxxa li jaġixxu kollettivament bħala awtorità tat-taxxa Ewropea għall-finijiet tal-ġlieda kontra l-frodi.

Il-Kummissjoni ġieli wettqet xi studji bl-għan li taċċerta l-fattibilità ta' awtorità vera tal-VAT tal-UE?

Jekk hu hekk, tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi xi dokumentazzjoni li rriżultat mill-istudju u/jew tiddeskrivi fil-qosor l-argumenti favur kif ukoll dawk kontra t-twaqqif ta' awtorità bħal din?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Marzu 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni ma għamlitx studji fis-sens tal-mistoqsija tal-Onorevoli Membru.

Il-ġlieda kontra l-frodi tal-VAT teħtieġ kooperazzjoni mill-qrib bejn l-amministrazzjonijiet nazzjonali tat-taxxa f'kull Stat Membru. Sabiex tiġi ffaċilitata kooperazzjoni bħal din, ġie stabbilit in-netwerk EUROFISC bir-Regolament tal-Kunsill Nru 904/2010 dwar il-kooperazzjoni amministrattiva u l-ġlieda kontra l-frodi fil-qasam tat-taxxa fuq il-valur miżjud ([1]). In-netwerk jipprovdi għodda effettiva għall-iskambju rapidu bejn l-Istati Membri ta' informazzjoni mmirata .

Dan in-netwerk ilu jopera mill-bidu tal-2011.

([1]) ĠU L 268 tat-12.10.2010, p.1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000994/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: EU VAT authority

In COM(2011) 0851 final, point 4.2 among other provisions makes reference to national tax authorities acting collectively as a European tax authority for the purpose of combating fraud.

Has the Commission ever conducted any studies with the aim of ascertaining the feasibility of a true EU VAT authority?

If so, could the Commission provide any documentation that has resulted from the study and/or outline the arguments in favour as well as those against the setting up of such an authority?

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

The Commission has not conducted studies in the sense asked by the Honourable Member.

Combating VAT fraud calls for close cooperation between the national tax administrations in each Member. To facilitate such cooperation, the EUROFISC network was established by Council Regulation 904/2010 on administrative cooperation and combating VAT fraud ([1]). The network provides an effective tool for the swift exchange of targeted information between Member States.

This network has been operational since the beginning of 2011.

([1]) OJ L 268, 12.10.2010, p. 1.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000995/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Koperazzjoni amministrattiva fil-qasam tad-dazji tas-sisa

L-Artikolu 13 tal-COM(2011)0730 jirreferi għall-bżonn kontinwu ta' qafas li jipprovdi għall-kontrolli simultanji introdotti mir-regolament attwali dwar l-istess suġġett fl-2004.

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi xi informazzjoni li tikkonċerna l-effettività tal-proċeduri amministrattivi introdotti fl-2004?

L-Istati Membri kemm il-darba għaqqdu l-isforzi tagħhom u għamlu użu minn din id-dispożizzjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(27 ta' Frar 2012)

Fil-perjodu ta' bejn l-2006 u l-2009, l-Istati Membri wettqu kull sena medja ta' 11-il kontroll simultanju taħt il-ftehimiet bilaterali. Dawn il-kontrolli twettqu barra l-arranġamenti tal-Kontroll Multilaterali (Multilateral Control — MLC) u l-Kummissjoni għandha informazzjoni limitata dwar in-natura u s-sejbiet ta' dawn il-kontrolli.

Il-Kummissjoni tħeġġeġ lill-Istati Membri li jwettqu l-kontrolli taħt l-MLC peress li dan jippermetti qsim aħjar tal-informazzjoni u l-aħjar prattika. Filwaqt li l-fokus inizjali tal-MLC kien fuq il-VAT u t-taxxi diretti, f'dawn l-aħħar snin dawn l-investigazzjonijiet koprew dejjem aktar id-dazji tas-sisa. Sabiex jissaħħaħ l-għarfien ta' din l-għodda, twaqqaf tim separat ta' taħriġ sabiex jipprovdi taħriġ lill-awdituri u lill-maniġers li huma involuti fil-kontrolli multilaterali.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tinforma lill-Onorevoli Membru li l-Istati Membri huma sodisfatti ħafna bl-użu ta' din l-għodda għall-kooperazzjoni amministrattiva. Fil-laqgħa plenarja tal-pjattaforma tal-kontroll multilaterali li saret f'Vilamoura f'Ottubru 2011, ġie indikat li attwalment l-Istati Membri kollha qed jużaw din l-għodda u li kull sena huma varati 40 kontroll multilaterali ġdid.

Fil-perjodu ta' bejn l-2004 u l-2011, ġie varat għadd totali ta' 221 kontroll multilaterali, għadd li ilu jiżdied sistematikament mill-2007. Fit-total, 11 minnhom ikopru biss id-dazji tas-sisa (5 minnhom kienu varati fl-2011) u 3 qed ikopru kemm il-VAT kif ukoll id-dazji tas-sisa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000995/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Administrative cooperation in the field of excise duties

Article 13 of COM(2011) 0730 refers to the continuing need for a framework catering for the simultaneous controls introduced by the existing regulation on the same subject in 2004.

Can the Commission provide any information concerning the effectiveness of the administrative procedures introduced in 2004?

How often have Member States combined their efforts and made use of this provision?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

In the period between 2006 and 2009 Member States conducted annually an average of 11 simultaneous controls under bilateral arrangements. These controls were carried out outside of the Multilateral Control (MLC) arrangements and the Commission has limited information on the nature and findings of these controls.

The Commission encourages Member States to conduct controls under MLC, as this allows for the better sharing of information and best practice. Where the focus of MLC initially lay on VAT and direct taxes, excises duties have in recent years become increasingly covered by these investigations. In order to enhance the knowledge of this tool, a separate training team has been set up to provide training to auditors and managers that are involved in multilateral controls.

The Commission can inform the Honourable Member that Member States are very satisfied with the use of this tool for administrative cooperation. At the plenary meeting of the multilateral control platform that took place in Vilamoura in October 2011, it was indicated that currently all Member States are using this tool and around 40 new multilateral controls are launched every year.

In the period 2004-2011 a total number of 221 multilateral controls have been launched, the number of which has systematically been increasing since 2007. In total 11 of them cover only excise duties (5 of them were launched in 2011) and 3 are covering both VAT and excise duties.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000996/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Kooperazzjoni amministrattiva fil-qasam ta' dazji tas-sisa

L-Artikolu 13 tal-proposta għal regolament tal-Kunsill dwar il-kooperazzjoni amministrattiva fil-qasam ta' dazji tas-sisa (COM(2011)0730) jirreferi għal kontrolli simultanji sabiex tiġi żgurata l-konformità mal-leġiżlazzjoni tas-sisa. Din is-sistema ilha fis-seħħ mill-2004, meta ġie introdott ir-regolament li joħloq qafas legali għall-kooperazzjoni amministrattiva fil-qasam ta' dazji tas-sisa. L-effiċjenza f'termini ta' żmien hija kruċjali f'dan ir-rigward.

Il-Kummissjoni sabet li inizjattivi tal-imgħoddi rilevanti li kienu f'konformità ma' proċeduri amministrattivi stabbiliti fir-regolament twettqu b'mod espedjenti biżżejjed?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Šemeta f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(6 ta' Marzu 2012)

Il-Kummissjoni tiġbor l-informazzjoni dwar il-kontrolli fl-istess ħin li jitwettqu skont l-Arranġamenti tal-Kontroll Multilaterali (MLC). It-tul taż-żmien tal-proċeduri tal-MLC li jinkludu kwistjonijiet dwar is-sisa kien ivarja bejn 5 xhur u sentejn u nofs, b'medja ta' madwar sena. Fl-2011, infetħu sitt kontrolli tal-MLC u dawn għadhom ma ngħalqux. Ix-xejra ġenerali turi li l-MLCs fil-qasam tas-sisa qed jingħalqu aktar malajr mill-imgħoddi. Il-firxa tat-tul taż-żmien tista' tkun ukoll minħabba l-kumplessità tal-każi investigati: ċerti każi jinvolvu biss żewġ operaturi ekonomiċi, filwaqt li oħrajn jistgħu jikkonċernaw tranżazzjonijiet ikkumplikati bejn diversi persuni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000996/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Administrative cooperation in the field of excise duties

Article 13 of the proposal for a Council regulation on administrative cooperation in the field of excise duties (COM(2011) 0730) refers to simultaneous controls for the purpose of ensuring compliance with excise legislation. This system has been in place since 2004, when the regulation creating a legal framework for administrative cooperation in the field of excise duties was introduced. Efficiency in terms of timing is crucial in this regard.

Has the Commission found that relevant past initiatives which were in compliance with administrative procedures set out in the regulation have been conducted in a sufficiently expedient manner?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2012)

The Commission collects information on simultaneous controls which are carried out under the Multilateral Control (MLC) arrangements. The duration of MLC procedures that include excise issues has varied between five months and two and half years, with an average of approximately one year. Six MLC controls were opened in 2011 and have not yet been closed. The overall trend shows that MLCs in the excise area are being closed more quickly than in the past. The range of durations may also be due to the complexity of the cases investigated: some cases only involve two economic operators, whereas others may concern complicated transactions between several persons.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000997/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Is-segwitu għall-inizjattivi tal-Forum Ewropew dwar id-Diżabilità

Wara l-laqgħa li saret mal-president tal-Forum Ewropew dwar id-Diżabilità, is-Sur Vardakastanis, f'Diċembru li għadda, il-Kummissjoni kif segwiet dak li ġie diskuss f'dik il-laqgħa? Qed jiġu previsti inizjattivi ġodda li jfittxu li jindirizzaw dawn il-kwistjonijiet?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Marzu 2012)

Il-President tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea, José Manuel Barroso, tal-Parlament Ewropew, Jerzy Buzek, u tal-Kunsill Ewropew, Herman Van Rompuy, iltaqgħu mal-President tal-Forum Ewropew tad-Diżabilità (minn issa "l quddiem il-FED), Yannis Vardakastanis, fis-6 ta" Diċembru 2011, għall-Ewwel Laqgħa ta' Livell Għoli dwar id-Diżabilità. Il-Viċi President tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea inkarigata mill-Ġustizzja, id-Drittijiet Fundamentali u ċ-Ċittadinanza, Viviane Reding, ukoll ipparteċipat fil-laqgħa.

Id-diskussjoni ffokat fuq il-progress li sar fl-implimentazzjoni tal-istrateġija komprensiva għall-ħolqien ta' Ewropa bla ostakoli għal persuni b'diżabilità sas-sena 2020 ([1]), u dwar kif il-persuni b'diżabilità qed jintlaqtu mill-kriżi.

Fl-2011, il-Kummissjoni ħabbret li se tipproponi Att Ewropew dwar l-Aċċessibilità matul il-mandat preżenti tagħha. L-għan hu li jiġi żgurat li l-persuni b'diżabilità jkollhom aċċess fuq bażi ugwali mal-oħrajn għal prodotti u servizzi ġenerali.

Ġimgħa wara l-Laqgħa ta' Livell Għoli, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea nediet konsultazzjoni pubblika dwar kwistjonijiet li jolqtu l-aċċessibbiltà ([2]), li se tibqa' sejra sad-29 ta' Frar 2012, sabiex l-inizjattiva titħejja.

B'mod parallel, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea qed tmexxi wkoll "Studju dwar l-impatt soċjoekonimiku ta' miżuri ġodda għat-titjib tal-aċċessibbiltà ta' prodotti u servizzi għal persuni b'diżabilitajiet" ([3]).

([1]) L-Istrateġija Ewropea dwar id-Diżabbiltà 2010-2020 intitolata "Impenn mill-Ġdid għal Ewropa Mingħajr Ostakoli" u d-dokumenti li jmorru magħha jinsabu hawn. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=mt&catId=89&newsId=933&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/discrimination/opinion/111207_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/contracts/206539_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000997/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Follow-up to European Disability Forum initiatives

After the meeting held with the president of the European Disability Forum, Mr Vardakastanis, last December, how has the Commission followed up on what was discussed at that meeting? Are there any new initiatives in the pipeline that seek to address these issues?

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

The Presidents of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, and of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, met with the President of the European Disability Forum (henceforth EDF), Yannis Vardakastanis, on 6 December 2011, for the first High Level Meeting on Disability. The European Commission Vice-President in charge of Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, Viviane Reding, also participated in the meeting.

The discussion focused on the progress made in implementing the comprehensive strategy to create a barrier-free Europe for persons with disabilities by 2020 ([1]), and on how disabled people are being affected by the crisis.

In 2011 the Commission announced that it will propose a European Accessibility Act in the course of this mandate. The objective is to ensure that persons with disabilities have access on an equal basis with others to mainstream goods and services.

In order to prepare the initiative, the European Commission launched a week after the High Level Meeting a public consultation on accessibility issues ([2]), which will be open until 29 February 2012.

In parallel, the European Commission is also conducting a 'Study on the socioeconomic impact of new measures to improve accessibility of goods and services for people with disabilities' ([3]).

([1]) The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 "A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe" and supporting documents are available here: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=933&furtherNews=yes.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/discrimination/opinion/111207_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/contracts/206539_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000998/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(6 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: L-impjieg tal-gradwati

Fid-dikjarazzjoni tagħha li 26% biss mill-forza tax-xogħol tal-UE għandhom grad universitarju, il-Kummissjoni tinnota li dan il-perċentwal huwa ħafna aktar baxxa milli fl-Istati Uniti. Fl-Istati Uniti, madankollu, filwaqt illi perċentwal ogħla tal-forza tax-xogħol għandhom grad universitarju, il-pajjiż huwa ffaċċjat minn eċċess ta' individwi li huma kkwalifikati żżejjed illi ma jistgħux isibu impjieg li jaqbel mal-kwalifiki tagħhom.

Fl-implimentazzjoni tal-programm ta' riforma ġenerali tal-Kummissjoni għall-edukazzjoni ogħla, il-Kummissjoni vvalutat il-kapaċità tal-ekonomija tal-Ewropa li tassorbi proporzjon ogħla ta' gradwati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(27 ta' Frar 2012)

L-istatistiki tas-suq tax-xogħol juru biċ-ċar li l-edukazzjoni għolja hija protezzjoni kontra l-qgħad, u l-gradwati huma ħafna iżjed protetti minn nies b'anqas kwalifiki jew mingħajr kwalifiki. Fl-2010 (l-iżjed figuri riċenti kompluti) ir-rata tal-qgħad fl-UE għall-popolazzjoni tal-età tax-xogħol b'edukazzjoni għolja kienet ta' 5.5% mqabbla ma' 9.7% għal dawk li għandhom edukazzjoni sas-sekondarja jew inqas. L-edukazzjoni għolja trendi wkoll pagi ogħla: L-Ewropej b'edukazzjoni terzjarja jaqilgħu medja ta' EUR 21 500 mqabblin ma' EUR 14 800 għal dawk li telqgħu l-iskola wara li jkunu għamlu s-sekondarja (2009).

Sal-2020, id-domanda għal nies bi kwalifiki għolja fl-Ewropa se tiżdied bi kważi 16-il miljun, u l-proporzjon ta' xogħol li jirrikjedi kwalifiki għolja fis-suq tax-xogħol se jitla' għal 35% (29% fl-2010).

Filwaqt li l-gradwati huma mingħajr dubju f'pożizzjoni aħjar minn dawk li mhumiex gradwati, il-livelli għoljin ta' qgħad fost iż-żgħażagħ għadhom jaffettwaw ħażin lill-Ewropa, u l-Ewropa trid tagħmel iżjed biex tkabbar l-opportunitajiet għall-gradwati. Kif ġie enfasizzat fil-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni dwar l-Immodernizzar tas-Sistemi ta' Edukazzjoni Għolja fl-Ewropa (COM(2011) 567 finali), iż-żieda fl-għadd ta' gradwati trid issir flimkien mat-titjib tal-kwalità u tar-rilevanza, inkluża ż-żieda tal-impjegabbiltà. Il-Kummissjoni tistabbilixxi l-mezzi ta' kif dan jista' jsir, bħal użu aħjar tad-dejta tas-suq tax-xogħol fit-tfassil tal-korsijiet, rwol imkabbar għall-apprendistati ta' kwalità u tagħlim imsejjes fuq il-proġetti, kif ukoll aktar opportunitajiet ta' mobbiltà fit-tagħlim — mezz ippruvat li jżid l-impjegabbiltà. F'dan ir-rigward, il-programmi tal-UE bħalma hu l-Erasmus jagħtu kontribut prezzjuż.

Barra minn hekk, "Inizjattiva ta' Opportunitajiet għaż-Żgħażagħ" imħabbra mill-President tal-Kummissjoni fid-Diskors tiegħu dwar l-Istat tal-Unjoni ta' Settembru 2011, toffri proposti konkreti biex jegħlbu l-qgħad fost iż-żgħażagħ, inkluż permezz ta' riorjentazzjoni ta' riżorsi mill-Fond Soċjali Ewropew biex jiżdiedu l-iskemi tal-apprendistat u ta' skemi għas-sejbien tax-xogħol.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000998/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(6 February 2012)

Subject: Graduate employment

In stating that only 26 % of the EU workforce holds a university degree, the Commission points out that this is far lower than in the United States. In the United States, however, while a higher percentage of the workforce hold a degree, the country is faced with a surplus of overqualified individuals who cannot find employment commensurate with their qualifications.

In implementing the Commission's general reform programme for higher education, has the Commission assessed the capacity of Europe's economy to absorb a higher proportion of graduates?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2012)

Labour market statistics clearly demonstrate that higher education is a shield against unemployment, with graduates much less exposed than people with lower or no qualifications. In 2010 (latest complete figures) the EU unemployment rate for the working-age population with higher education was 5.5 % compared to 9.7 % for those educated to secondary level or lower. Higher education also yields a wage premium: Europeans with tertiary education earn on average EUR 21 500 compared with EUR 14 800 for those who left school at secondary level (2009).

By 2020, demand for highly-qualified people in Europe will rise by almost 16 million, bringing the share of highly-qualified jobs in the labour market to 35 % (29 % in 2010).

Whilst graduates are undeniably better off than non-graduates, high levels of youth unemployment continue to blight Europe, and Europe must do more to improve graduate opportunities. As stressed in the Commission's Communication on the Modernisation of Higher Education (COM(2011) 567 final), raising graduate numbers must be coupled with improving quality and relevance, including enhancing employability. The Commission sets out ways to do this such as better use of labour market data to inform course design, an increased role for quality traineeships and project-based learning, as well as more opportunities for learning mobility — a proven way of increasing employability. In this respect, EU programmes such as Erasmus make a valuable contribution.

Furthermore, a 'Youth Opportunities Initiative' announced by the President of the Commission in his September 2011 State of the Union Address, offers concrete proposals to tackle youth unemployment, including via a re-orientation of European Social Fund resources to increase apprenticeship and job placement schemes.